

✠ THE VERY REVEREND ROBERT GREGORY LYONS, O.P. ✠

On February 9, 1955, the Very Reverend Robert Gregory Lyons died in St. Joseph's Infirmary, Louisville, Kentucky. He had been ill for one month and in his last week realized that his long life of almost 81 years was drawing to a close.

Father Lyons was born in Washington, D. C., on February 18, 1874, one of six children of Denis J. and Mary O'Mara Lyons. He attended St. Aloysius Grammar School in that city, and went to St. Laurent College, Montreal, Canada, for his secondary school training. At Mt. St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Md., Robert Lyons received his college education. His Dominican Novitiate at St. Rose Priory, Springfield, Ky., began with the clothing in the habit of the Order on September 10, 1896. One year later Brother Gregory, as he was called in Religion, made profession of vows in the same convent. Following his studies in philosophy and theology at St. Joseph's Priory, Somerset, Ohio, he was ordained a priest there on July 22, 1904 by Bishop James J. Hartley of Columbus. Father Lyons took his final year of theology at the newly opened Convent of the Immaculate Conception in the city of his birth.

In September, 1906 his many years of Dominican service to the Church were begun as a parish priest in Holy Name Church, Kansas City, Mo. Father Lyons' next assignment was to Holy Rosary Priory, Minneapolis, Minn., in March, 1908. He then went to Holy Trinity, Somerset, Ohio to help with parish work and the *Rosary* magazine. The year 1914 brought Father Lyons to St. Louis Bertrand Priory, Louisville, Ky., where he labored for the remainder of his long life. In 1918 he was made sub-prior, an office dutifully fulfilled by him until his death 37 years later.

During his several decades of service at St. Louis Bertrand's, Father Lyons baptized 632 persons and officially witnessed 519 marriages. He was confessor and counselor to thousands of Louisville Catholics. For many years the Holy Name Society was also under his direction. He served too as chaplain for the Sisters of Good Shepherd, Sisters of Mercy, Visitation Home, Holy Rosary Academy, and the Carmelite Monastery. Forty years ago Father Lyons was chaplain at the House of Correction, which was then located on the present site of the University of Louisville. On July 22, 1954, when he celebrated his golden jubilee as a priest, a grand expression of gratitude was given to Father Lyons for his priestly labors in Louisville. Archbishop John

A. Floersch presided at the Mass of thanksgiving offered in St. Louis Bertrand's Church. A testimonial luncheon was held in the Pendennis Club, and in the evening the people of Louisville, who were close to Father Lyons' heart, expressed their personal congratulations in the parish hall. During the jubilee celebration, he received a congratulatory letter from Vice President Nixon and was made a Kentucky Colonel by Governor Lawrence Wetherby.

In St. Louis Bertrand's Church on February 12th the Most Rev. John A. Floersch, Archbishop of Louisville, offered the solemn funeral Mass for Father Lyons. The deacon was Very Rev. Albert Musselman, O.P., with Rev. Joseph Briggs, O.P., acting as subdeacon. Diocesan priests served as minor ministers at the Mass. The eulogy was preached by Rev. Edward Finnen, O.P. Present at the Mass were the Most Rev. Charles G. Maloney, Auxiliary Bishop of Louisville, the Very Rev. William D. Marrin, O.P., Vicar Provincial of St. Joseph's Province, four Monsignori and a number of Dominican and diocesan priests. The burial took place at St. Rose Priory Cemetery, Springfield, Kentucky.

To Father Lyons' nieces and to all his friends *Dominicana* offers deepest sympathy. *May his soul rest in peace!*