

Br. Otger De Vent

Born at Asten, Holland as Fredericus Bernardus De Vent, he entered the Capuchin Order on September 7 1931 at Tilburg and made his first profession as a friar on September 8, 1932. He was ordained a priest on August 28, 1938 at Udenhout Holland. After his ordination, he became a teacher of French at the minor seminary at Langeweg. In 1949, he left for Canada where to his disappointment he was again asked to teach French at the minor seminary of St. Francis of Assisi in Blenheim, Ontario.

In 1952 he realized his dream of becoming a pastor in a parish. He was pastor until 1954 at Sacred Heart Parish, St. Boniface and until 1960 of the Sacred Heart Parish, Princeton, Ontario. Br. Otger was greatly preoccupied in providing catechism for the children of Princeton, by first having the sisters teaching in the church basement. Then with permission from the Bishop, he bought a property and built St. Francis School. Although the schools in those days were usually named after the Church, an exception was made in tribute to the Capuchin Friars and the school's founder. In 1960, he was appointed as Pastor and builder of Holy Cross Parish in Georgetown Ontario. It was an exciting time after Vatican II and Father Otger attempted to instill some of the new liturgical and theological insights from the Council. He not only built a new Church and school but also was quite devoted in building the people of God. Br. Otger's time at Holy Cross was some of the happiest years of his life. He was always seen in his black suit and collar which were always impeccable He identified strongly to his clerical status and truly reflected a strong Dutch view of life. He started a publication for Catholic Flemish and Dutch people called "Between us" (Onder ons).

As he grew older and suffered health issues the Bishop of Hamilton asked that he be replaced as pastor. He was asked to retire in one of our Canadian friaries. Instead he chose to return to Netherlands in 1982. And yet, at the request of his old parishioners, he returned to Georgetown in 1984 with his sister to celebrate a parish picnic with them. He died in a motel while visiting the town of Leamington an hour away from our friary in Blenheim on February 26, 1984 at the age of 71.

His remains were sent back to Holland and buried on March 3rd, 1984 at Eindhoven, Netherlands

