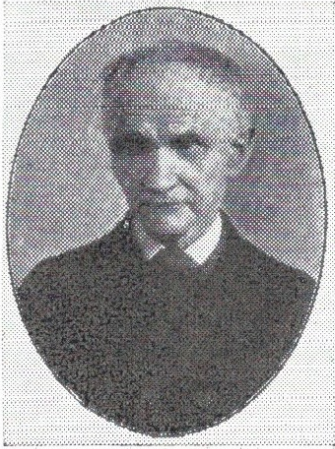


BRO. MAGNUS BAUR

1829 -- 1910

SEPTEMBER 13



Brother Magnus Baur died in the service of the Blessed Virgin at San Antonio, September 13, 1910, at the age of 81.

He died as he had lived, a man of God, a true servant of Mary. Patient and submissive to the last, he was glad that they would lay him to rest beside the friends he had known and loved,—Father Eligius Beyrer, Brothers Charles Francis, Damian Litz, August Segui and others whose names are recorded on the headstones in our little cemetery in San Antonio. Death has taken him away, but only to enroll him as our intercessor in heaven.

Brother Magnus Baur was born in Achstetten, Germany, September 7, 1829. We know next to nothing of his childhood. He had pious, God-fearing parents, who trained him early in the practice of virtue, and taught him to be devout to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He would often relate how readily the good Mother of God answered a prayer of his while still a child and on a pilgrimage to one of her shrines in Suabia. Kneeling there before her statue and praying as he saw others do, yet not knowing what to pray for in particular, he suddenly remembered his fondness for grapes. He therefore asked the Blessed Virgin in her kindness to give him at some time as many grapes as he could eat. He had scarcely left the church when he saw a woman with a basket on her head beckoning to him from across the street. He ran to her. Then she, planting at his feet her basket filled to the top with the most luscious grapes, said to him: "Now, son, eat all the grapes you like."

It is interesting to note how a kind Providence led Brother Magnus into the Society of Mary. He himself often told the story. As a young man he was apprenticed to a master cabinet-maker, with whom he also resided. It was a custom of the household to serve wine at the noonday meal. Magnus remarked one day that he had better not take wine, as it did not seem to agree with him. The master then advised him to go to a nearby saloon, and to take a glass of beer after his meal. Magnus went to the saloon, and while there, entered into conversation with a young man who had but recently returned from the Marianist novitiate at St. Remy. This young man had been dismissed because he could not abstain from smoking. He spoke about the Brothers of Mary and of their beautiful establishment at St. Remy. "That would be the place for me," said Magnus, and before they parted, they agreed to go there together.

When the master heard of it, he was angry, and at once discharged his apprentice. That suited Magnus exactly, and the next day he and his companion set out for St. Remy, where he was admitted to the novitiate. His friend was readmitted, but did not persevere. Brother Magnus took pleasure in telling the story in later years, whilst he invariably added, "So you see I got my vocation in a saloon."

Brother Magnus entered the Society of Mary in 1849. He spent several years at St. Remy, but it seems he never mastered the French language, for he had to make use of an interpreter at his monthly direction. It was at one of these interviews that he volunteered to go to the missions in America, and he was accordingly appointed to San Antonio, where he arrived in 1856. He was employed in teaching at St. Mary's College for a time, after which he was appointed assistant to the Brother steward. In this capacity he daily made the necessary purchases for the establishment. He also helped to build St. Mary's church, and for ten years performed the duties of sacristan.

During the last years of St. Mary's history as a boarding college, Brother Magnus did his utmost to render service wherever he could. He was charged with the care of the lamps before the invention of electric lighting, was carpenter,

glazier, and butler. In 1894, at the opening of St. Louis College, he was assigned to the community of the new establishment, where he continued with the same willing and cheerful disposition to be helpful in many ways until old age forced him to retire.

Brother Magnus was indeed an ideal religious. His beautiful example was an incentive to all his fellow Brothers to lead a truly monastic life, in the midst of their intensive active life. His career was not a brilliant one in the popular acceptance of the term. In his own simple, unassuming way he observed the Rule punctually, and performed his daily actions as best he could in the presence of God and for the love of God. The most remarkable thing about Brother Magnus was his life itself and the spirit that dominated it: the spirit of faith, of self-effacement and sacrifice, the spirit of humility, obedience and retirement, as indicated by the Rule. He was above all a man of prayer; not by any means given to scruples, but guided by faith and common sense. He was by nature and grace endowed with a disposition as happy and light-hearted as that of a child. Whilst engaged in manual labor, his lips constantly moved in prayer. Often when alone and unobserved, he gave vent to his pious sentiments in song.

His deeply religious spirit was always in evidence. The thought of death and of eternity was habitual with him. For years before his death he frequently spoke of soon "going home." When he had to have a piece of clothing replaced by a new garment, he would say, "Now that will last until I go home."

Brother Magnus was naturally kind-hearted and obliging. During the fifty-four years he spent in San Antonio, no one ever saw him angry. He was fond of a good joke even when at his own expense, and always enjoyed a hearty laugh. He performed the daily round of his duties most faithfully, despite fatigue and occasional indisposition. But he never allowed his occupations to interfere with the requirements of the Rule. His exactness in the least point of regularity was such as we find in the lives and records of religious of heroic mould.