



Fr. Baltasar S. Szarka was born on September 13, 1925 in Baja, Hungary. He graduated from the Cistercian School of Baja and on August 29, 1943 entered the novitiate of the Cistercian Abbey of Zirc. He studied philosophy and theology first in Zirc, then in Lille, France, where he was ordained to the priesthood in 1949.

Because of the Communist takeover in his homeland which involved the suppression of his monastery, Fr. Baltasar was unable to return to Hungary. After three years of priestly ministry in Paris, he came to the United States, where in 1952 he joined the Cistercian monastery of Spring Bank in Wisconsin. After a couple years in Wisconsin he moved to Texas to join his fellow Cistercians who had just started a new monastery in Irving.

While obtaining his master's in French at Southern Methodist University, he taught at St. Edward's high school in Dallas, then for two years at Cistercian Preparatory School. In 1961 he began working at St. Francis Church in Grapevine. He became its full-time pastor in 1963 and served that parish community for the rest of his active life.

When celebrating the 40th anniversary of his priestly ordination in 1989, he was able to see the abundant fruits of his priestly life and ministry in a flourishing Catholic community and a beautiful church built by his parish. Due to illness he retired in 1997, and returned to his monastic community in Irving.

Fully absorbed in his priesthood, Fr. Baltasar never ceased to teach the people around him about the love of Christ. In spite of his debilitating illness he continued to radiate happiness in life and care for others. A true shepherd of his flock and faithful servant, he entered into the joy of his master as he died on April 1, 2000.

FR. BALTASAR

- 1925-2000
- Born: Sept. 13, 1925
- Entered Zirc on Aug. 29, 1943
- Ordained: 1949
- Moved to Our Lady of Dallas: 1956
- Died: April 1, 2000