



Fr. Christopher Rábay was born on December 1, 1919 in Kisigmánd, Hungary. He graduated from the Benedictine High School of Gyôr. In 1939, after a year of college, he entered the novitiate of the Cistercian Abbey of Zirc. There he studied philosophy and in the Dominican Theologate of Budapest he obtained his licentiate degree (S.T.L.). He was ordained to the priesthood on May 18, 1944. For a year he served as the secretary of the abbot of Zirc.

When the Communists came to power in Hungary in 1948 he became a political refugee studying in Fribourg, Switzerland. A year later he immigrated to the USA and lived for a short time in the Cistercian monastery of Spring Bank. In 1954, he was among the first Cistercians to come to Texas. For two years he lived in Fort Worth and taught at Our Lady of Victory, the provincial house and school of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur. He was on the faculty of the University of Dallas at its inception in 1956 and taught theology at the university until 1988. From 1988 until his retirement from teaching in 1993 he taught theology at Cistercian Preparatory School. He served as prior of the Cistercian Abbey for several terms (1964-1967, 1988-1994). On April 1, 1975 he was elected for a year as prior administrator of the Abbey.

A man of exceptional warmth and humor, Fr. Christopher found his vocation in uniting the teaching of theology with spiritual guidance. With his cheerful service to God and to the needs of God's people, he has deeply affected many priests, nuns and students at both the University of Dallas and Cistercian Prep. School. On April 20, 1999 he was diagnosed with inoperable cancer which the doctor's believed would cause his death within a week. God ordained differently. For three months he lived in the monastery preparing in quiet peace for God's final call. He died peacefully on July 29, 1999.

FR. CHRISTOPHER

- 1919-1999
- Born: Dec. 1, 1919
- Entered Zirc in 1939
- Ordained: May 18, 1944
- Moved to Texas: 1954
- Died: July 29, 1999