



Born on April 18, 1897 in Cibakháza, Hungary, Fr. Leonard entered the novitiate on the eve of the First World War, August 14, 1914. He was ordained a priest on July 31, 1921 after obtaining his teaching credentials in Classics and French. Until 1948 Fr. Leonard taught Latin and French in the Cistercian School of Baja, Hungary, where he was one of the most popular and respected teachers and a well known civic leader.

Fr. Leonard was best remembered for having started a water sports center on the Danube in Baja, Hungary. Thousands of Hungarian youth, inside and outside the local Cistercian school, took part in the program.

When the order was suppressed in 1950, Fr. Leonard had no choice but to perform menial tasks for a few years to make ends meet. Three years after the suppression of the order he was arrested on drummed up charges, interrogated and tortured. He was sentenced to 14 years in prison for conspiracy and high treason against the People's Republic. He was freed from prison by the Freedom Fighters of 1956, who had him released as a political prisoner. In November of that year, when the revolution failed, Fr. Leonard left Hungary, fearful of being forced to return to prison.

After working as a chaplain in various refugee camps, he joined the community of Dallas on February 2, 1960. He served as chaplain to the Hungarian community and took care of the abbey's sacristy.

In the early 1960's the Prep School students often saw Fr. Leonard carrying his boat down to the Trinity River for his daily exercise. He dreamed of recreating the water sports club of his younger years. Fr. Leonard also wished to publish a critique of Marxism. He died after a stroke on November 14, 1978.

FR. LEONARD

- 1897-1978
- Born: April 18, 1897
- Entered Zirc on Aug. 29, 1914
- Ordained: July 31, 1921
- Moved to Our Lady of Dallas: Feb. 2, 1960
- Died: Nov. 14, 1978