



St. Francis, Milwaukee: 1916 Clericate—First row: Otto Krismer, Columban Schaeffner, Bernard Heilig, Benno Aichinger, Pius Stutze r, Gaudentius Rosmann, Placidus Sauer, Sebastian Schaff, Edmund Kramer ; Second row: Adelelm Biller, Otto Thienel, Anselm Leahy, Alexis Gore, Peter Schambeck, Xavier, William Peters, Henry Barth, Brs. Cl eofos and Joachim [Westphalian Province], Hugo Knappe; Third row: Richard Brunner, Wilfrid Wolf, Dominic Meyer, Regis Neeser, James Fleischmann, Louis Biersack, Clement Neubauer, Bertram Grismer

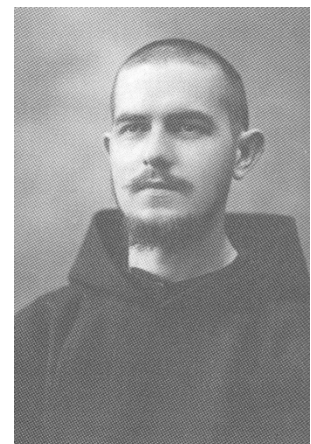
Alexis Gore, O.F.M. Cap.—1894-1943

Initiator of Americanizing the Capuchin Educational System

Thomas Gore was born to Thomas F. and Bridget Bennett-Gore in the Rose Hill section of Yonkers, New York on 13 November 1894. Thomas attended Sacred Heart Grade School and became acquainted with the Capuchins. Thomas was among the first graduates of the St. Joseph Seraphicate in Yonkers. He then attended the Scholasticate at Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin where he received the name *Alexis*.

Alexis was invested at St. Bonaventure's, Detroit on 22 July 1912, joining our brother Anselm Leahy, who was invested fifteen days earlier. Following his first profession on 22 July 1913, he began his studies at St. Francis Friary in Milwaukee, WI. He pronounced his final commitment at St. Francis on 22 July 1916. Alexis was ordained to the priesthood, along with Anselm, at St. Francis Church in Milwaukee on 22 April 1919.

After ordination, he served for a few months at St. Michael's in Brooklyn, NY and then joined the teaching staff of St. Lawrence College while also serving as assistant director of the Scholasticate. He spent his summers taking graduate courses at Marquette University.





Alexis was later transferred to St. Anthony in Marathon, WI to teach philosophy. Five years later, poor health caused his transfer to Sacred Heart High School in Yonkers, NY where he served as assistant principal, taught Latin and Religion, founded the Capuchin Mothers' Guild, and edited the *Seraphic Chronicle*.

Some years before Alexis' arrival at Sacred Heart in September, 1923, the pastor, Josaphat Muesig, had begun Yonkers first Catholic High School. It had its origins in the church basement as a commercial high school. The following year [1924] when the Seraphicate moved to the Glenclyffe property, the commercial high school moved to the building formerly housing the Seraphicate.

In November 1925, Cyprian Abler became pastor of Sacred Heart. He realized that if the school were to succeed, its graduates had to have a diploma recognized by the State of New York. The directors of the state university system, or the Regents, prepared yearly *Regents Examinations* which were based on a course of studies mandated by that body. The students needed to pass the tests to obtain such a certification.

When Alexis arrived in Yonkers, he was given the task to explore the ramifications of seeking state recognition. He contacted the State educational authorities and began working with them to receive proper affiliation and accreditation. Other seminaries in the New York area were also contacted. Many already had begun or made such a move. Alexis concluded that the Regent course of studies had some features superior to that found in the province. Agitating for a reform, Alexis favored Americanizing the province's educational system. Up to that time it had been modeled upon that of Europe. The new system meant a four year high school program, followed by a four-year college program. It demanded changes both at Calvary and at Garrison.

Alexis became the foremost proponent of academic excellence at St. Lawrence in Mt. Calvary. As a result, he was named Rector of the College [1934-1943] and was directed to reform the curriculum and to bring it up to modern standards, which he accomplished. *"It was a delicate task for an outsider [an easterner] to come to the college with a plan of reform and this all the more when the college enjoyed an enviable reputation among the clergy and institutions of the Midwest. It speaks well for the good will of the faculty and the tact of the new Rector that the reorganization of the course of studies was effected so smoothly."*

Meanwhile Alexis' health continued to deteriorate. When he began to become severely disoriented, he was anointed and taken to St. Agnes Hospital where the doctors held out little hope for his recovery.

Sr. Angeline, the general superior of the Agnesian Sisters, and a number of her Sisters were at his side when he breathed his last. Alexis died in Fond du Lac on 24 January 1943 at age 48, after 30 years of religious life and 23 years in the priesthood. He was the first Rector of Calvary to die in office. He is buried at Mt. Calvary.

Above: Dominic Meyer, Gilbert Heuel, Alexis and Sylvester Briellaier

Sources

- "Catalogue of St. Lawrence College" 1934-1942
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- "Necrology-Father Alexis of Yonkers," *The Messenger*, Vol. VIII, March 1943, pp. 86-93.
- "Lady Poverty Revisited: A History of the Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order", Baer, Campion- 2005, pp. 30-32.
- "Sesquicentennial Jubilee Catalog of the Calvary Province", McSherry, Patrick- 2007, p. 104.
- Archives of the Province of Saint Mary of the Capuchin Order