



Wilfrid Wolf, O.F.M. Cap.—1896-1924



Joseph Wolf, the son of George and Jennie Williams-Wolf was born in New York City on 28 March 1896. Shortly after his birth his family moved to East New York, Brooklyn where he attended Saint Michael Elementary School from 1902-1909. At the age of thirteen he began his studies at the Seraphicate in Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin and graduated in June, 1914.

He entered the Capuchin novitiate at St. Bonaventure in Detroit on 07 July 1914 and received the religious name "Wilfrid". One year later Wilfrid pronounced first vows on 07 July 1915. He began his philosophical studies at St. Francis Friary in Milwaukee, WI and continued his studies at the newly-built St. Anthony Friary in Marathon, WI where he was perpetually professed on 08 July 1918. It was during this time frame as a student that Wilfrid contracted typhoid fever and what would later be diagnosed as the dreaded Spanish influenza which affected the world population from 1918-1920's.

Above is the first student body at St. Anthony Friary in Marathon-1918: Seated: Augustine Weber, Otto Thienel, Alexis Gore, Xavier Daisy, Benno Aichinger [director], Adelelm Biller, Anselm Leahy, Peter Schambeck and William Peters; standing: James Fleischmann, Richard Brunner, Louis Biersack, Regis Neeser, **Wilfrid Wolf**, Henry Barth, Adelbert Donlon, Irenaeus Reinl, Dominic Meyer and Lawrence Merten.

Left-seated are Titus Tettenborn and Peter Schambeck;
Second row-Xavier Daisy, Otto Thienel and Irenaeus Reinl
Top row-Wilfrid Wolf and Regis Neeser -Milwaukee, WI 1917

Following his theological studies, Wilfrid was ordained to the priesthood on 21 September 1921 in Marathon, Wisconsin. The photograph on the cover of this issue was taken on the day of Fr. Wilfrid's ordination.

Front row kneeling [l-r]: Eugene Rascher, Lawrence Merten, Raphael Poeppel, Henry Barth, Alphonse Heckler, and Ferdinand Stippich; second row: Placidus Sauer, Callistus Stippich [kneeling], Jerome Kobel, Mark Stier, Herman Buss [kneeling], Adelbert Donlon, Apollinaris Baumgartner, Dominic Meyer [kneeling], Cosmos Niedhammer, Romuald Joos, and Pancratius Krieg; third row: **Wilfrid Wolf**, Andrew Neufeld, Sylvester Brielmaier, Matthew Niedhammer, and James Fleischmann, top row: Giles Witmer and Seraphin Winterroth.

Although his health was precarious, Wilfrid traveled east and celebrated his First Solemn High Mass on Sunday, 02 October 1921 at St. Michael Church in Brooklyn, New York.

Shortly after his ordination this brilliant and talented young priest continued to be affected by the reoccurring symptoms of the Spanish influenza. Wilfrid was sent to Roswell, New Mexico and for a time there were promises of complete recuperation. It was noted by Capuchin James Fleischmann, a contemporary of Wilfrid, who wrote: *St. Michael in East New York: A historical sketch compiled for the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee* [1935] that "he never showed any signs of discouragement, but seemed to be quite resigned to God's Holy Will. Among the brothers he always showed a jovial sociability and pleasant disposition."

According to an article in the *Roswell News* [21 October 1924], "during his time at St. Mary in Roswell, New Mexico [1921-1924] he made a host of friends among the Protestants as well as the Catholics, while ministering to the patients at the hospital."

In the company of his mother and father, Wilfrid died at the age of 28 in St. Mary Hospital on 21 October 1924 after ten years of religious life and three years in the priesthood.

According to the *Chronicles* of St. Michael Friary in Brooklyn, Wilfrid's body, accompanied by his mother and father, arrived in Brooklyn on Sunday 26 October at noon. It was placed in St. Michael Church where at 7:45 p.m. Vespers for the dead were sung. The following day, Monday, 27 October, Matins and Lauds were recited at 10:00 a.m. followed by a Solemn Requiem Mass celebrated by [Frs.] Fulgence Brem, Theodosius Foley and Titus Tettenborn. In the sanctuary were Fr. F. Chary and his assistant from Blessed Sacrament Church in Brooklyn and Capuchin [Frs.] Fidelis Reiser, Cassian Burgert, Martin Schechtel, Basil Gummermann, Felix Schell, Adelbert Donlon, Irenaeus Reinl and [Br.] Robert Disbrow. Interment followed at the Capuchin friars' cemetery at Sacred Heart in Yonkers, New York.

To the reader: the above presentation was gleaned from several sources including: *The Death of Joseph Wolf* *Roswell News* 21 October 1924; *Chronicle of St. Michael Church and Friary* 1923-1947, No. 2; *St. Michael in East New York: A historical sketch compiled for the occasion of St. Michael Church's Diamond Jubilee*, by James Fleischmann, O.F.M. Cap.-1935; *The Necrology of the Province of St. Joseph* [referencing the *Provincial Archives*], and the *Sesquicentennial Jubilee Catalog of the Calvary Province* prepared by Patrick McSherry, O.F.M. Cap.-2007



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