



St. Peter's Abbey
Muenster, Sask. Canada

October 17, 2017

Brother Wolfgang Thiem, OSB

For more than three decades, the monks and guests at St. Peter's Abbey looked forward to savouring the greenhouse tomatoes grown by Br. Wolfgang each spring. He planted them early in his monastic room and then transferred them to the greenhouse he had built. It is a tradition that will be sorely missed.

Br. Wolfgang was born on April 28, 1924 in Schwab Gmund, Germany. The Second World War was devastating Europe when he graduated from high school.

At the age of 18 he was drafted into the air force and then transferred to an anti-aircraft unit in Germany. He attended a driving school, learning the mechanics and function of motorcycles, cars, trucks and tractors. At the end of the war, Br. Wolfgang was taken prisoner by the Americans on Christmas Eve in 1945. He then spent three-and-a-half years as a Prisoner of War working on a farm in France.

Br. Wolfgang came to Canada in 1953 and joined *Voluntas Dei*, a secular institute founded by an Oblate priest in Trois Rivieres, Quebec. He worked in brick-laying in the summertime, and in the winter he did inside carpenter work. He helped construct buildings for the secular institute in Whitehorse and Haiti, among other places.

In 1971, Br. Wolfgang spent a few months at the Trappist monastery in Manitoba. He then decided to visit St. Peter's Abbey, which he read about in the *Prairie Messenger*. Br. Wolfgang entered the novitiate and made his profession of vows on March 21, 1973.

His talents kept him busy in carpentry, masonry, gardening and as a cantor at divine office. During his final years, Br. Wolfgang grew sunflowers and harvested the seeds to feed the chickadees in the winter. He enjoyed listening to international news and reading about news events on his computer.

On Oct. 9 he fell and broke his right femur. Eight days later, in University Royal Hospital in Saskatoon, after a heart attack and his lungs and kidneys shutting down, he died. At age 93, he was the oldest monk at St. Peter's.

For the repose of his soul each priest of our community will offer three Masses. In the other houses of our congregation he is recommended to the usual suffrages for deceased confreres.

Peter Nowaczyk, O.S.B.

Abbot and Community