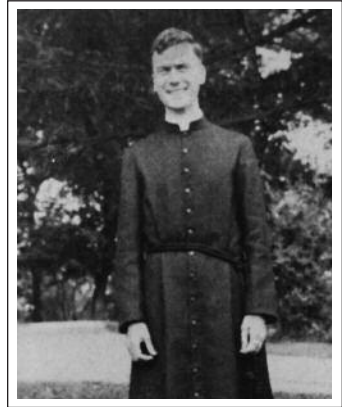


Fra. Theophane Prenderville, SCJ 1910-1939

Richard (Theophane) Prenderville was born in Brooklyn, NY, just after the turn of the century. He applied to Sacred Heart Monastery at 25, and was accepted in November, 1935.

Being an "older vocation," his first year was spent catching up to those who had gone through the minor seminaries. A heavy course load in Latin, Greek and preparatory college courses filled Fra. Theophane's schedule. In most respects, he was a typical young man studying towards the priesthood.



Fra. Theophane Prenderville, SCJ

However, several months into his novitiate a fellow novice had a heart attack. Fra. Theophane wrote in his diary, "Dear Jesus, please lift me up to Thee. Sanctify my soul quickly; help me to be like my patron; make me a martyr... Take my life as a victim of love, that my fellow novices may persevere and become holy priests and religious."

He later revealed to a close friend that he had offered himself for his confrere, hoping to assume the heart trouble "to become a true victim-soul of the Sacred Heart." The friend later wrote that although the offer was a generous one, he feared that Theophane had become a bit over-zealous. However, within just a few days, the stricken student lost all signs of heart trouble. Seeing the doctor instead was Fra. Theophane.

Four years after beginning his studies with the Priests of the Sacred Heart, Fra. Theophane died from heart failure. Although friends were still skeptical about the causes leading up to his death, "None of us could doubt that he had pursued and won an intimate love of the Sacred Heart which the world would never understand and we could dare dream to be possible in so ardent a manner, in so short a time," wrote a classmate.

March 27, 1939