

FATHER ARTHUR JOHN KLEPL. SDB.

Father Klepl was born in Dresden in Germany on November 15th 1856, of non-Catholic parents. After having received a scientific training in one of the best national schools, he entered the University of Leipsic where he obtained his degree in Chemistry. His studies and laboratory activities did not prevent him from being concerned with religious problems but he could find no solution in the various Non-Catholic organisations he consulted.

After spending some time in the United States, he came to England, where he found lucrative employment with Lever Brothers. Here it was that the grace of God enlightened his mind and he eventually joined the Catholic church. His conversion initiated a prolonged period of prayer, mortification and reflection. Feeling himself called to a more perfect life, he followed Our Lord's words to the letter, selling all he possessed and giving the proceeds to the Little Sisters of the Poor. He then applied to the Salesians to be accepted as an aspirant, arriving penniless at Battersea one day in 1895. He completed his studies for the priesthood and was finally ordained a priest in 1903 at Wonersh by the Bishop of Southwark. After ordination he joined the teaching staff at Battersea as a Science teacher. He also helped as librarian in the school.

Fr. Klepl was an exemplary religious, particularly as regards the vow of poverty and the simplicity of his prayer life. He made every effort to direct all his thoughts and actions to the glory of God. This became more obvious as the maladies of old age clouded his declining years and made it impossible for him to continue his daily Mass. He made up for his inability to say Mass by frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

He spent the final days of his long life in the silence of his room, preparing himself for the end. Comforted by all the prayers and sacraments of our holy religion, he died peacefully on the 8th May 1939. One can truly say that his life was clearly divided into two parts; one, of his searching humbly for the true religion, and the other part, in his most sincere and fervent practice of that religion.

All the confreres are persuaded that the edifying life of this holy priest has brought many blessings on this house of Battersea. They join with me in asking the charity of your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Fr. F. V. Couche. SDB.

Fr. John Kepl. . . died at Battersea, London on the 8th May 1939, aged 82, in the 43rd year of profession and the 38th of his priesthood.