

Legacy Project

July 25th

Brother Theophane (John) Schmitt, C.S.C.

born: 1 June 1911

died: 25 July 1963



Theophane was born in Decatur, Indiana. He joined Holy Cross in 1930, entered the juniorate and novitiate at Notre Dame, and made first vows in 1932. He studied at Notre Dame and earned a bachelor's degree in 1936. His first assignment was to teach at Watertown and then he became vocation recruiter until 1945. He was selected to be the first headmaster and superior of a new school, Gilmour Academy, in Gates Mills, Ohio. It gained a reputation for high standards and excellence under his guidance. In 1953, Theophane was assigned to Rome to supervise the construction of the new Generalate and seminary building. He did yeoman work in adapting to Italian ways and was able to convince the architects and crew to construct a fitting building to everyone's satisfaction. Theophane stayed on as the General Steward until 1956 when he was elected to the General Council as First Assistant. Theophane often visited the Brothers in Ghana and when his tour ended in Rome, he requested to be sent to West Africa to head the new foundation in Liberia. In 1962, his wish was granted and he became the headmaster and superior of St. Patrick's High in Monrovia. A year later, a speeding auto struck his car and he died of injuries a few weeks later. The Community lost the talents, practical judgment, self-confidence and zeal of this exemplary leader.

*Be an example to all in the way you speak and behave,
and in your faith and love. -- 1 Timothy 4:12*

*Leadership is based on a spiritual quality; the power to
inspire others to follow. -- Vince Lombardi*