

## ***Brother Isidore Rothenbacher SDS***



**Birth: December 17, 1886**

**Profession: June 12, 1921**

**Death: September 23, 1971**

**Buried in St. Nazianz**

Brother Isidore Rothenbacher (birth name: Michael) was born in 1886 near Stuttgart, Germany, in the little village of Herbertschofen. His father, a butcher, had died before his birth. His mother was a seamstress. After finishing seventh grade, he worked on his family's farm in order to support himself and his mother. In 1913, he entered the Society as a candidate in Hamberg, Austria, but a week before he was to begin Novitiate, he was drafted into the German army. In 1917, while serving in France, he was captured by English soldiers and imprisoned for two years. After his release, he returned to Austria and began his Novitiate. He made his profession of vows on June 12, 1921. After serving in Lochau, he came to the United States in 1923, to the Salvatorian Mission House in Elkton, Maryland, where he ministered for the next thirty-nine years, managing the six-hundred acre farm and the large dairy herd. In 1962, he went to manage the farm at Mother of the Savior Seminary in Blackwood, New Jersey. Bro. Isidore retired in 1967 to the retreat house in Colfax, Iowa, where he spent many hours outdoors working on the grounds and gardens. Following a brief illness, he died on September 23, 1971, at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa, and he was buried in the community cemetery in St. Nazianz, Wisconsin. He is remembered as a simple, quiet and delightfully humorous man who dedicated himself completely to the community. One famous story that Salvatorians love to tell about Bro. Isidore goes back to his days in the German army during World War I. As a corporal, he was sent back from the front lines to obtain supplies for the soldiers. One of the things they needed was straw for the soldiers' bedding. The private in charge of the supply shed didn't want the corporal to take any of the straw. When the private refused to obey his orders, Bro. Isidore slapped the young private and made him give him what he asked for. The private turned out to be Adolf Hitler. Years later, when Bro. Isidore would tell the story, he would add that, had it been a few years after that, he never would have gotten away with it and lived!

