

## ***Spotlight on the Brothers...***

Brother William (Conrad Kirchhoff or Kirchoff) arrived at Most Holy Redeemer on East Third Street in Manhattan, on July 5, 1890 to become the janitor. His duties were varied, but he grew to know every inch of the MHR campus.

Brother William was born in Widenbrueck, Westphalia, on February 15, 1853. On August 27, 1877 he entered as a candidate and made his profession on April 11, 1883. Brother William was stationed at North East, Saratoga, Rochester, the Bronx, and then for 38 years at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York City. Here he was porter until his death in 1928. He was propagator of the Purgatorian Society. He also won great renown for his

love of prayer, his spirit of faith and humility.

Brother William found himself in the middle of a sensational court case in 1897 when a New York City Police Officer, Frederick Smith, responded to an alarm at Most Holy Redeemer. Someone had tampered with the poor box and the alarm rang in Brother's room. He quickly summoned Smith and his partner, Conklin. Together they investigated the scene in the Church and Smith gave pursuit to the thief.

In short, two pistol shots rang out and the Officer was felled by the bullets of the gun of one Fritz Meyer. The brother ran to the officer's aid and thence to the rector to fetch the oils to anoint him. This was done moments before Smith breathed his last.

No longer was Brother William destined for janitorial duties. He had become so famous he was made porter to the house—a position he held until his death.

On September 1, 1928 he was taken sick and forced to retire to his room, for the first time in years. After a few days he rallied again and was at his office; however, he was soon forced to bed again by a relapse; he had contracted pneumonia. He died on September 11, 1938. Brother was in his 75<sup>th</sup> year.

Father Schagemann, his Rector, upon his death had a notice printed and sent out to members of the Purgatorian Society. It goes as follows:

Brother William, C.Ss.R.

This good Brother, a most zealous promoter of the Purgatorian Society, died on September 11, 1928 after a brief illness. For nearly forty years, Brother William devoted himself with untiring energy to the work of making this Society known, and with greatest care and diligence he attended to the numerous details of this good work. Through the extensive correspondence which he conducted in my name and in the name of my predecessors in office, through



his unfailing gentleness and kindness manifested toward those who came in person to this office, through his spirit of ardent faith and tender piety, he gained a host of friends. In behalf of good Brother William, I ask of these good friends the alms of prayer for the repose of his soul. —Ed.

**Br. William (Conrad) Kirchoff, CSSR**  
**Born: February 15, 1853**  
**Professed: April 11, 1883**  
**Died: September 11, 1928**