

A custom of long standing at Marianist celebrations is the singing of the *Er Lebe Hoch*, a German toasting song which translates something like "May he live well." As to how far back the *Er Lebe Hoch* has been a part of SM folkways is hard to determine. One jubilant recalls having learned it at the Dayton postulate in 1929, and it wasn't new then!

Thanks to Bro. Don Hebler of the former Cincinnati province and Brothers Novosal and Schnepf of the former St. Louis Province, a plausible solution seems to have been found as to the origin of the toasting song that has become a tradition among American Marianists.

The *Er Loebe Hoch* did not come to the US with the pioneer Alsatian Brothers. According to Fr. Theodore Koehler, himself an Alsatian, that song is unknown in those parts. Rather, the *Er Loebe* is of German folk origin and was probably sung among the German-American settlements in this country.

According to Brother Novosal, who is archivist for the former St. Louis Province, it was Bro. Louis Thein who made the song an SM characteristic. As to the origin of the song, among the personal effects of Bro. Lawrence Gonner was found a book of *Neues Deutsches Lieder* published by D. C. Heath in this country during 1931, as part of its Modern Language Series. On page 43 of this volume is found the song reproduced below. The version familiar to Marianists appears to be an adaptation of it.

Er lebe hoch!

Volkswaise

Die Melodie eignet sich auch sehr gut zu einem englischen Toast: Long may he live!

Lebhaft

Er le - be hoch, er le - be hoch! Er le - be hoch, er le - be hoch, hoch,
er le - be hoch, .
hoch,
hoch, hoch, er le - be hoch!
er le - be hoch, . . . er le - be hoch,
hoch, hoch, hoch,
Zweimal wiederholt, immer stärker und bewegter.