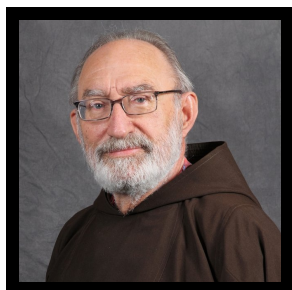


Neerology

Peter Kutch
1940 -2015



Peter Paul Kutch was born January 12, 1940 in Gary, Indiana to Peter and Maria Kutch. His father was a supervisor at the steel mills in Gary. Peter's family was very loving of four brothers and four sisters; Peter was the youngest of eight children. In the 1940s two of his brothers, Herman and Leo, were shot down in separate flights over the Pacific Ocean during the Second World War. Their bodies were never recovered. It was a great loss to the family.

As a young child Peter had an early interest in music. To the surprise of his parents, at the age of four or five he started playing the piano by ear. They soon got him piano lessons and as a child he would go to Chicago alone for lessons. His love for music would last his whole life.

Peter went to Holy Angels Catholic Grade School. When he was in the eighth grade his pastor was promoting St. Lawrence Seminary at his parish. Three of his friends said they were going there and wondered if Peter was interested, so he went along with them. His friends left St. Lawrence after the first year, but Peter loved St. Lawrence. He thought that the friars were always so happy during his time there, and so he became interested in Capuchin life. He decided to join the order after a year in college at St. Lawrence.

Peter was invested as a Capuchin novice in August of 1959 at Huntington, Indiana. It was a large class. He spent his novitiate there and was given the name Alban. After making his first profession of vows in 1960, Peter went to Crown Point, Indiana to continue his studies for the next four years. Peter loved community life and how the brothers and clerics worked together. However, he never understood the separation between clerics and lay friars that we had at that time. From Crown Point, the next step was St. Anthony's in Marathon for theological studies. On October 6, 1966 Peter was ordained a priest by Bishop Tracey. After ordination he had "Fifth Year" in Milwaukee, which was an opportunity for the young priests to get pastoral experience.

In 1968 Peter went to Rensselaer, Indiana to obtain a degree in music and organ. From there he went to St. Lawrence Seminary to teach music and direct the band. He taught the first year or two with Myron Kowalsky. He shared his love and knowledge of music with his students and encouraged his students to also have a love for music. This assignment lasted for 19 years and was filled with his love and enthusiasm for teaching.

While at Calvary Peter also received his first assignment to a parish as pastor of "little" St. Joseph Parish in St. Joe, Wisconsin, population "not many" as a homemade sign on each end of the village proudly proclaimed. He loved parish work and had parish assignments for much of the rest of his Capuchin life including St. Joe, St. Patrick Parish in St. Paul, Minnesota, and then back again at St. Joe, Holy Cross Parish in Mt. Calvary, and St. Cloud Parish in St. Cloud. It was at this time that he became the first pastor of the "Holy Land Cluster" of parishes and laid the groundwork for what would become St. Isidore the Farmer Parish under one of his successors.

Peter said he was interested in people and he didn't like to see people hurting. As pastor he could help them spiritually or in their own difficulties of life. He accompanied the people in his care and was with them at their baptisms, weddings and funerals. Peter was interested in and enjoyed people and their stories. He called it being nosy, but he was such a great listener and empathized with the difficulties or problems of anyone who came to him. Sometimes he had suggestions, but often he knew what one was experiencing because he had gone through it himself. He encouraged people who came to him. Peter said that the province made the choices as to where he was stationed and the people where he was stationed would say that Peter made the choice to wholeheartedly love them and serve them.

Peter also spent two years at St. Fidelis Friary in Appleton, Wisconsin as local minister and director of our provincial retirement community. In his last days Peter stated with conviction that he never had a bad assignment. Peter served on the Provincial Council for one term. He said it was a good way to serve the province, but also observed that at times knowing too much could be a burden. Peter thought that sometimes we forget how gifted and blessed we are. Peter thought that we are especially blessed with our young friars and that we have so much to be thankful for.

Peter's last years were at St. Clare Friary in Chicago where he served as a member of the post-novitiate formation team. He liked being with the young friars. He thought the young friars were pulled in so many directions and that it was important for them to have a good community to come home to. Peter helped provide that fraternal presence, a role he had hoped to continue for many more years upon his retirement as a member of the team in the autumn of 2014. An added bonus for Peter during these Chicago years was that he was also close to his family for the first time in many years.

Peter was a funny guy, compassionate, and a great listener to those who needed it. This is why he was successful in parish work and was loved by his brothers in the community. Traveling with Peter was always fun, though the trips were usually not overly organized, which at times gave us trouble. He was interested in so many things: he loved music, art, and architecture. I had the same interests and so we got along. Peter also encouraged me when I needed it, a true Capuchin brother to me.

Peter's memorial card for his ordination contained a quote which inspired him all those years: "When through one man a little more joy, peace, and love come into the world then that man's

life has meaning." Being a Capuchin helped Peter to do just that and there is no doubt that he had great joy in his life.

Peter was a Capuchin brother first, and then a priest, pastor, confessor and always a friend. Peter died at St. Paul Home in Kaukauna, Wisconsin on March 2, 2015 at the age of 75. His funeral liturgy was celebrated at St. Isidore the Farmer Parish - Holy Cross Church, Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin. He is buried in the Capuchin Cemetery, Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin.

— Michael Gaffney