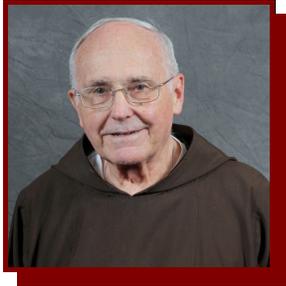


Neerology

John Kocian
1931- 2018



Roger Joseph Kocian was born in Green Bay, Wisconsin, the second child of Louis and Dorothy Kocian, on September 14, 1931. He attended Annunciation Parish grade school, and graduated from Green Bay West High School in 1950. After working briefly in the warehouse of the Morley-Murphy Company, he joined the United States Navy in 1951, where he served until 1955. During his time in the Navy, he played in the band and lived in the chaplain's quarters as a general assistant. He found this time significant in his search for his calling in life. The solitude and atmosphere of prayer nourished his desire for deeper friendship with God. Out of this grew his spirit of loving friendship with others which manifested itself in so many ways to so many people. He came into contact with the Capuchins while he was stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas. After being discharged from the Navy, he joined the order the following year at Holy Cross Friary in Mt. Calvary and became "John," although his family continued to call him Roger all his life. He made perpetual profession in 1961.

At age five or six he began playing the cornet and joined his family members in making music in the Green Bay area, his father playing the clarinet, and his sister and mother playing the piano. In high school he played first chair cornet in band. He also played in the pep band for a local football team sponsored by the Acme Packing Company, later known as the Green Bay Packers. Throughout his life he entertained groups playing his cornet with a hand puppet pressing the valves.

John spent thirteen years (1963-76) doing maintenance at Saint Felix Friary in Huntington, Indiana in the company and under the tutelage of Conrad Herman. From 1976 to 1984 he was a member of the staff at the province's House of Prayer, after which he was assigned to Monte Alverno Retreat Center, where he served in doing maintenance, as vicar and member of the preaching staff, as well as preparing meals for the friars and staff when the regular cook was off. When the province closed the retreat center, John retired at St. Fidelis Friary until his death.

Throughout his life, John's faith found expression both in devotional practices including his daily recitation of the rosary, his attendance at daily Mass, and in his care for the "little people" who surrounded the friaries in which he was stationed. In his later years, John was a beacon of light for the friary of St Fidelis as an example of devotion to the Eucharist, both in his participation at Mass and his many hours spent each day in front of the Blessed Sacrament. He had the custom of moving a chair early in the morning right next to the tabernacle and pouring out his heart and mind, even his sighs. Friars witnessed this. His union with Christ sustained a joy in him even through the emotional and physical pains of his humble life.

John never wanted to complain. He was a very agreeable person to live with. And when he could, he reached out to others in care. John was diagnosed with leukemia. As the disease

progressed he had a hard time swallowing his pills, but he kept on dutifully trying. He became thin and weak because he also had a hard time swallowing food. He was found on the floor one morning in his room. His yells for help were very weak and he couldn't reach the button he needed to push for assistance, having forgotten to wear his pendant. He was transferred to St. Paul's Elder Services in Kaukauna where he passed away, with Werner Wolf at his bedside, at 3:45 p.m. on July 28, 2018.

John loved to "scoot" around St. Joseph Cemetery in Appleton on his battery operated scooter. He desired to pray at the grave sites of the friars and other people that he knew. Now he rests with his Capuchin brothers in the same cemetery where he spent so much time, almost on a daily basis.

~ Keith Clark, with input from Ron Smith and Jerome Schroeder