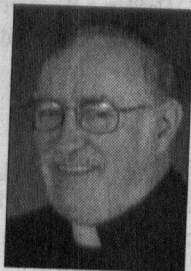


Fr. John Bolan

Fr. John Bolan, C.P.P.S., 83, died on Friday, Oct. 22, 2010 in the Holy Family Hospice in Parma, where he had been residing for several weeks. Fr. Bolan had been in declining health in recent months.



He was born on Jan. 28, 1927, in Union, N.J., to Francis and Margaret (Crowe) Bolan. He entered the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in 1941 and was ordained on June 4, 1953.

Fr. Bolan was a pastor and a hospital chaplain. After his ordination he was assigned as an assistant pastor to St. Anthony Church in Falls Church, Va.; Our Lady of Grace Church in Highland, Ind.; and St. Joseph Church in Dayton. In 1965, he was named an assistant chaplain at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Dayton.

He returned to parish ministry in 1966 as assistant pastor of St. Boniface Church in Piqua. In 1970, he was named pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Bradford, Ohio, where he served for seven years. Fr. Bolan was named pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Maria Stein, in 1977.

In 1983, he became a chaplain at Timken Mercy Hospital in Canton. He continued his hospital ministry even after he was named associate pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Cleveland in 1984, with a special assignment to Deaconess Hospital in Cleveland.

From 1987 until the time of his retirement, Fr. Bolan was a chaplain at the Veterans' Administration hospital in Cleveland.

Fr. Bolan is survived by a sister and her husband, Catherine and Robert Lanes of Alachua, Fl., and their children, Beth Battinelli; Susan Lohr, and Robert Lanes Jr., all of New Jersey; and Cathryn Mary Lanes of Alachua; three great-nieces and one great-nephew; and by his dear friends Joseph and Jayne Neelon and their children, Joseph Jr. and Elizabeth, who cared for him in his final illness.

At the veterans' hospital, Fr. Bolan was a special friend to veterans battling alcohol abuse. He was very candid about his own struggles with alcoholism; he was a faithful member of Alcoholics Anonymous, serving as a sponsor to many, and at the time of his death had been sober for 26 years.

As a chaplain with the VA, he once wrote, "every day I come into contact with people who are in recovery from substance abuse. I want to reach out to them, to let them know they're not alone. That's my idea of spirituality: how we relate to other people. It lies in how we interact with them, how we can talk so they will listen and listen so they will talk. It's how we can bring things out into the open that have been dark, festering secrets. Those are the kind of secrets that can kill a guy. But as a recovering alcoholic I know that things will never get better until you can bring them out into the light."

Fr. Bolan was a supporter of Catholic education, an avid golfer, a former member of the National Ski Patrol and a lifelong fan of the Chicago Bears. His friend Joseph Neelon described him as "a total man of service. If you would look up priest in a dictionary, you would find his picture." Family members remember him as a warm and loving uncle who would never leave a family gathering without blessing his nieces and nephew.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. Vincent de Paul, 13400 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, Oct. 28, with Fr. Robert Clancy presiding. Viewing will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 26 from 6 to 9 p.m. and Wednesday, Oct. 27 from 2 to 4 p.m. and from 6 to 9 p.m. at Walter E. Martens and Sons Funeral Home, 9811 Denison Ave., Cleveland.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at St. Charles Center, Carthage, at 2 p.m., Friday, Oct. 29, 2010, with V. Rev Larry Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S., presiding. Burial will follow in the Community cemetery.

Viewing hours at St. Charles will be held after 4 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 28 with a wake service at 7 p.m.

At Fr. Bolan's request, memorial contributions may be made to an education fund for the Neelon children at Unity Catholic Federal Credit Union, 4410 Rocky River Dr., Cleveland, Ohio, 44135.

Hogenkamp Funeral home in St. Henry is handling local arrangements.