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## Rev Fr John Augustine "Buddy" "Gus" Geiger

BIRTH	23 Apr 1931 Logan, Hocking County, Ohio, USA
DEATH	23 Mar 1995 (aged 63) Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio, USA
BURIAL	Oak Grove Cemetery Logan, Hocking County, Ohio, USA
MEMORIAL ID	83986928 · View Source

John was the son of John Edward Geiger and Emma Loise Rowland and was Ordained a Priest on May 25, 1951. [sic]

In Remembrance Of John A. Geiger

Those of us who have been in regular contact with John Geiger over the years knew about his recent diagnosis of cancer, and the subsequent treatments he received in great hopes of finding a cure and resulting prolongation of his life.

About a month ago, John started to have severe reactions to his cancer treatments that necessitated his hospitalization at Mt. Carmel Medical Center. On St. Patrick's Day, in progressively deteriorating health, John was transferred to hospice care at Manor Care Nursing Home in Westerville, Ohio.

He died in the early morning of Thursday, March 23, 1995, at 6:10 a.m. His death brought an end not only to his battle with cancer, but also his struggle of the past nine years.

For over twenty-eight years, John Geiger served the Church of the Diocese of Columbus ably and well in various capacities: associate pastor, teacher, editor of the Catholic Times, and as pastor of two parishes.

The ministry of a diocesan priest is exercised in collaboration with and under the supervision of the diocesan Bishop. Priests are human, as we all are. All of us struggle with our imperfections, our human weaknesses, our blind spots, and our private demons. And with God's grace and our cooperation,

we are able to accomplish much good in spite of our flaws.

There also can occur in a priest's life certain crises and difficulties that interfere with the effectiveness of his ministry. It is at these times that a priest must seek help. If he fails at this, then the Bishop must intervene for the good of the church community as well as the good of the individual priest.

For reasons known only to him, John resisted the assistance offered to him by Bishop Griffin and would not cooperate with the program presented to him. Because of this, John was suspended from the exercise of his priestly ministry.

On March 22nd, the day before he died, the Bishop visited John at Manor Care. John asked to have his suspension lifted, and the Bishop graciously agreed to do so.

The Roman Catholic Funeral Rite admonishes the preacher at a funeral to remember that he is not the judge of the deceased, either for good or for ill. That being said, I can't help but think that if John had followed the directions of the Bishop and the advice of those he trusted, perhaps his history these past nine years would have been dramatically different.

John was an intelligent, sensitive and talented person. He always considered himself an artist, and had a definite artistic temperament: always engaging, and at times, difficult.

Although suspended, he exercised a kind of ersatz ministry as a cab driver, banquet server, and artist. Always friendly, and polite, with irrepressible good humor, John was, in many ways, a lovable eccentric, a gentle gadfly who never gave up hope that everything would somehow get better. His career as a cab driver, banquet server and artist achieved mixed results. While the success he longed for eluded him, he never succumbed to hopelessness or despair.

He depended on his friends for quite a bit. His cousin Florence was particularly kind and helpful to him. Many of us tried to help, sometimes against our better judgment, because we loved him and cared for him. Sometimes, our helping became enabling. He never took criticism very well, and avoided us for a time when we offered it. In July and August of 1994, he had an art show at the Bermuda Onion Resturant in Columbus' Short North. I've duplicated his "Facts about Gus" at the end of this

memoriam.

I hope we can remember John in the good times: during his years of active ministry, his legendary Beethoven's Birthday parties, and the moments he ministered to us when we were in need. John was co-pastor of St. Michael Parish in Wothington, Ohio at the time of my father's death in 1977. His sensitive, compassionate and helpful ministry at that time was a great comfort to me and my family.

On Wednesday, March 22, I visited John at Manor Care. He was having great difficulty feeding himself and was drifting in and out of consciousness. I administered to him the "Last Rites": Confession, Anointing and Viaticum. He received these sacraments with humility, reverence, faith and gratitude.

He went to God less than twelve hours later, strengthened by the same sacraments he had administered to others for so many years. In the end, he died reconciled to God, his family, his Bishop and I hope, to himself.

One of his favorite artistic subjects was the phoenix (or regal eagle), rising from the ashes. We pray that the Lord will gather John into the arms of His love and mercy and give him fullness of life and peace in the Kingdom yet to come.

Eulogy given by Msgr. John K. Cody

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**Created by:** Rob Schrader

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