

Fr. G. Mathew

★ (Continued from Page 1)

of what was facing him, of the depression and anxiety. In doing so, he reached out to countless people who later contacted him telling him of the help he gave them in their own struggle.

When asked why he was exerting so much precious energy for such a purpose, he candidly replied, "If I can do more, I will. By the grace of God, I don't want my life to be wasted."

Monsignor John Slater, rector of St. Peter's Cathedral and a close personal friend, in the closing remarks of his homily at Tuesday's funeral, raised that question and answered for all present by saying, "You will agree that it was not."

Monsignor Slater had been with Father Daly the evening he died as he had been every day throughout his illness.

In his homily he spoke of the assignments Father Daly had undertaken and noted that "he always went the extra mile - with characteristic initiative, sensitivity, style and flare."

Suffice it to say here," he added, "that whatever forms Father Daly's priestly mission assumed, it was always an authentic proclamation, in word and action, of Christ's saving Gospel of redemptive love for all."

"Suddenly, 16 months ago, our Lord called Father Matt to make with him an arduous way of the crosses. As the terminal illness followed its relentless course, he fought...to maintain some semblance of normalcy...Finally overwhelmed by weakness, he entered a period of enforced leisure, a great but stern grace in which to put his soul, his life, in order for that last - and longest - mile to eternity."

Father G., Matthew Daly was born in Erie, December 5, 1929, the only son of G. Mathew and Josephine Fischer Daly. He studied for priesthood at The Pontifical College Josephinum, Worthington, Ohio, where he was ordained on June 4, 1965.

He served at Sacred Heart Parish, Sharon, until 1969, when he was vice-chancellor of the diocese for a year as well as a part-time member of Cathedral Prep's faculty.

He became headmaster of Bradford Central Christian High School, Bradford, in 1960, and in 1962 returned to Erie as assistant headmaster at Cathedral Prep as well as director of John Vianney Home for Retired Priests.

He was pastor of St. Lawrence Parish, Albion from 1971 until 1977 during which time he undertook construction of the new parish church, a modern building filled with art and artifacts of historical value.

The stained glass windows came from the original chapel of the Erie Sisters of St. Benedict while additional windows were obtained from the former St. Joseph's Orphanage. The baptismal font (in which his mother had been baptized) was rescued from St. Michael's Church, Erie, following a fire which destroyed that building in 1975.

When he became pastor of St. Patrick's Parish on October 1, 1977, he assumed leadership of a prestigious old parish, the former cathedral of the diocese, which had fallen on extremely difficult times. Changing neighborhoods and declining population on the lower east side placed the future of the once-prosperous parish and school in jeopardy.

He immediately became involved in community affairs and worked with the Bayfront Eastside Task Force to effect a number of changes in that neighborhood.

He undertook extensive programs to renew Irish ethnic interest in the parish. He founded the Knights of St. Patrick in 1978, was one of the founders of the Irish Cultural Society, organized the restoration of an annual St. Patrick's Day parade and planned and executed all of those events around the parish church.

When that church was extensively damaged in a 1978 fire, he undertook a complete renovation which restored one of the diocese's

Daly buried Tuesday



THE BODY of Father G. Matthew Daly is carried into St. Patrick's Church on Monday morning. His funeral procession to the church was led by the Cathedral Prep Band which then played the Irish song, "Danny Boy", as the body was carried into church. Following the

most historical churches to its original grandeur. His work at revitalizing the parish and its neighborhood were beginning to show results in a number of areas by the time he first became ill in May 1981.

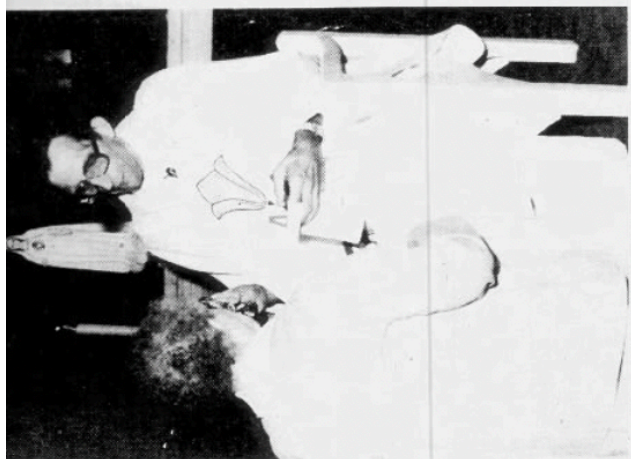
Translation of his body to St. Patrick's Church took place on Monday morning at 11 a.m. with the Cathedral Prep Band leading the funeral cortege through downtown Erie. When his body arrived at church and was removed from the hearse, the Prep band played the hymn, "Danny Boy."

Following the translation, his body lie in state in the church until the funeral Mass on Tuesday morn-

ing. With retired Bishop Alfred Watson presiding, Father Casimir Bogniak, Vicar for the Northern Vicariate, was principal celebrant. Father Bogniak, representing Bishop Michael Murphy who is presently in Rome, said the bishop had called that morning from Rome and specifically asked that his sympathy be extended to the parish and to Father Daly's parents. The bishop celebrated Mass in Rome earlier that day for Father Daly.

Father Daly's parents, his only survivors, led the assembly of mourners for the Mass. His mother, who herself is seriously ill, was able to attend the Mass.

Burial was at Calvary Cemetery.



FATHER G. MATTHEW DALY, himself extremely ill with cancer, celebrated a special Mass at St. Patrick's Church, Erie, on August 17 during which time he led an overflow crowd of other cancer victims in prayer. That event so weakened him that he was unable to celebrate Mass again. He died early Saturday morning at St. Joseph's Hospital, Erie, after a long and arduous struggle that was marked largely by comforting and counseling other cancer victims.

Fr. G. Mathew Daly was buried Tuesday

Over 150 priests, countless sisters and a congregation that overflowed the church gathered for the funeral of Father G. Mathew Daly, Saturday, Oct. 9, at the rectory following a heroic 17-month struggle with cancer.

The 52-year-old priest died early Saturday, Oct. 9, at the rectory following a heroic 17-month struggle with cancer.

His 27-year priesthood achieved perhaps its greatest contributions in the last months he suffered from cancer. During that period of time, despite extensive periods of hospitalization and treatment, he spent endless hours working with and counseling other cancer victims.

On August 17, he celebrated a Mass at St. Patrick's Church for a congregation which included a large number of cancer patients as well as other sick and elderly persons. That would be the last day he would celebrate Mass.

The event so weakened him that he was hospitalized within a few days. Following a two-week hospital stay, he returned home where he died early Saturday.

During that time he was under the care of Mrs. Virginia Leopold, a registered nurse and herself the mother of a priest, Father Gregory Leopold.

"It was one of the blessings of my life," she said as she attended his wake at St. Patrick's Church.

"Since his own mother is so ill and unable to care for him, God at least must have intended for another priest to be with him."

During the past year, he spent long hours on the telephone, even when he himself was confined to bed, during which time he comforted and counseled other cancer victims.

In a lengthy August interview in the Lake Shore Visitor, he spoke of the difficulty of coping with his illness but of the broader need to turn that illness into goodness.

"You're always asking, 'Why me?'" he said, "and you get into where with it. You have to begin to ask, 'Why not me?'"

He returned to his suffering and pain? And you can't really resolve that unless you believe in God. You have to come to the realization that there must be some purpose somewhere along the line as to why you became ill and suffer. People who don't have faith would continue to ask, 'Why? and then you can't fare it.'"

In that interview, which has been reprinted in the November issue of Catholic Digest, he spoke of the complete gamut of emotions which cancer patients face.

He spoke of anger, of resenting people who were well, of the shock

(See FR. G. MATTHEW DALY, P. 12)