



Rev. Richard "Father Dick" Gross, 91

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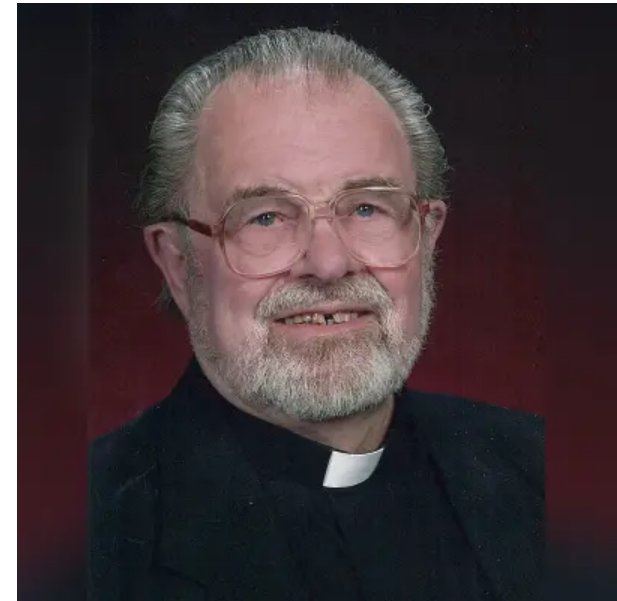
Rev. Richard "Father Dick" Gross died in his sleep on his 91st birthday, Sunday, Aug. 7, 2022, at his home at Garden View Apartments at Hilltop Health Care Center in Watkins.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m. Friday, Aug. 12, at the Church of St. Anthony in Watkins. Visitation will be from 4-7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 11, at the church with a 7 p.m. prayer service. Visitation will continue one hour prior to the service at church. Interment will be in the St. Anthony Catholic Cemetery.

Richard C. Gross was born to William and Alma (Steman) Gross in Luxemburg Township, 1.5 miles NE of Watkins on his parents' farm. He attended St. Anthony Parochial School in Watkins, and graduated from Kimball High School with the Class of 1949. After high school, he worked as a carpenter's helper, cheese plant employee at Watkins, at a railroad company in Minneapolis where he prepared box cars for grain shipments, and as a busboy at Charlie's Café Exceptionale. On Dec. 8, 1952, he was drafted into the United States Army during the Korean War. He was sent to Japan on July 4,

1953, and attended a six-week engineer training school. he was relocated to northern Japan near Sapporo, Hokkaido. He became a military policeman with the 545th 1st Cavalry stationed at Chitose where he and 11 others maintained law and order for two regiments.

He took a three-month early release to attend college at St. John's University as an engineering student. Following a retreat between semesters of his freshman year, he "finally" answered the call to serve God's people as a diocesan priest. After two years in the minor seminary at St. John's, he entered the St. Paul Seminar. Father Dick was privileged to be ordained in his home parish, on Feb. 22, 1962, and he celebrated his first Mass at St. Anthony on the following Sunday, Feb. 26. Following ordination, he served in the New Ulm Diocese in the following Catholic parishes: St. Mary in New Ulm, 1962-1967; St. Cyril & Methodius in Taunton, 1967-1970; Co-Rector of Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Ulm, 1970-1972; St. Joseph, Rosen, and St. James in Nassau, 1972-1980; St. Mary in New Ulm, 1980-1987; St. Anastasia in Hutchinson, 1987-1995; and his home parish of St. Anthony in Watkins, 1995-2001. Father Dick retired from active ministry July 1, 2001, and since then has been living in Watkins.



Father Dick had many interests in life including reading, fishing, golfing, hunting, bowling, and traveling. He went to Central and South America in 1970, and took numerous fishing trips to Canada. He also enjoyed many vacations to Alaska with friends from 1991-2000. During one month in both 1987 and 1990, he provided ministry for a parish in Nome, Alaska. After retiring in 2001, he served at parishes in rural Alaska over Christmas and Easter. He was in Barrow, Alaska, during the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks at the World Trade Center in New York. He also served at the parish in Coopers Landing, Alaska, during the summer months from 2001 until 2011.

Father Dick belonged to many organizations and received many awards. His favorite was a plaque from Compassionate Friends, an organization to support families who lost young children from disease or accident, which he helped found in the early 1980s. Father Dick had a wide range of talents and gifts he shared with people of all ages. He was especially known for his ministry to the dying and their families.

Father Dick was preceded in death by his parents, numerous uncles and aunts, his sisters Rosemary Kaufman and Elizabeth Pfannenstien, brother Harold Gross, and brothers-in-law Earl Kaufman and Don (and Marge) Pfannenstien.

He is survived by his sister Alice (and Ted) Krebsbach, brother Ronald (and Karen) Gross, sister-in-law Georgia (Lahr) Gross, and many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the Gethsemane Chapel located in Garden View at Hilltop Health Care Center in Watkins, or to the donor's choice. Arrangements are with Ertl Funeral Home in Watkins. May he rest with the Lord.