

August 12, 2005

Father Ivan 'John' Lavrih



Father Lavrih was born Aug. 2, 1915, at St. Vid pri Sticni, Slovenia, Yugoslavia. He was ordained July 2, 1939 by the Most Reverend Gregorij Rozman, bishop of Ljubljana, Slovenia, Yugoslavia.

During World War II, he was an editor of the Slovenian Catholic newspaper, *Slovenski Dom*, and supported the efforts of freedom fighters. He was imprisoned on separate occasions by the Italians, Germans and Russians. He spent many months in prison, but escaped execution after fleeing from a work detail and crossing the Alps.

In 1949, after serving four years as a refugee priest in an Austrian parish, Father Lavrih was admitted to America through the sponsorship of Bishop Carroll of Wichita. He was assigned to St. Mark Parish at St. Marks (1949-50).

In the Dodge City diocese he served in the following parishes: St. Joseph, Ellinwood (1950-51); Sacred Heart, Pratt (1951-53); St. Lawrence, Jetmore, with St. Anthony, Hanston (1953-59); St. Anthony, Liberal (1959-69); St. Nicholas, Kinsley (1969-80), and St. Anthony, Fowler (1980-90).

In 1990 he retired to the Priest's Retirement Center in Wichita. He published his memoirs, written in his native language, in a volume entitled *V Primezu Revolucije* (2001). He died Aug. 12, 2005 at Via Christi Regional Medical Center – St. Joseph Campus at the age of 90.

Bishop Gilmore and the Most Reverend Eugene Gerber, bishop emeritus of Wichita, concelebrated the funeral Mass at St. Anthony Church in Fowler. Father Lavrih was buried in his homeland in the cemetery at St. Vid pri Sticni, Ljubljana, Slovenia.