



+ BISHOP RICHARD JOHN GARCIA

Priest for the Archdiocese of San Francisco 1973 -- 1981
Priest of the Diocese of San Jose 1981 -- 1997
Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento 1997 – 2006
Bishop of the Diocese of Monterey 2006 – Present

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Fr John E Boll, Diocesan Archivist

Richard John Garcia was born on April 24, 1947 in San Francisco, the middle child of three born to John Manuel and Anita Adame Garcia, immigrants from the state of Jalisco, Mexico. He was raised in San Francisco and began his education at St Patrick Parish School in San Francisco. His kindergarten teacher, Sr Eulalia Zúniga, DC, recalls: "I remember he was very eager to learn and he was very serious, but he had such a wonderful smile – still has it. Richard was very independent. He wanted to do everything for himself. His English was limited when he started school but he worked very hard on learning the English words. He worked on pronouncing his words better. If he wasn't sure of something, he always asked and he always did his little assignments. He was a very good student, very studious and very kind and thoughtful. He had good rapport with people. He was always very kind to his little companions." These natural positive qualities given to Richard from the beginning of his life would become great assets in fulfilling the plan God had designed for him.

After his grammar school years, Richard entered St Joseph Seminary in Mountain View as a high school freshman. After graduating from high school, he spent his first two years of college at St Joseph Seminary and then transferred to St Patrick Seminary in Menlo Park for his last two years of college and four years of theology. Two of his classmates at Menlo Park were Fathers Joseph Ternullo and John Sullivan from Sacramento. Richard was ordained a priest on June 15, 1973 at Sacred Heart Church in San Jose where he had served as a seminarian and a deacon.

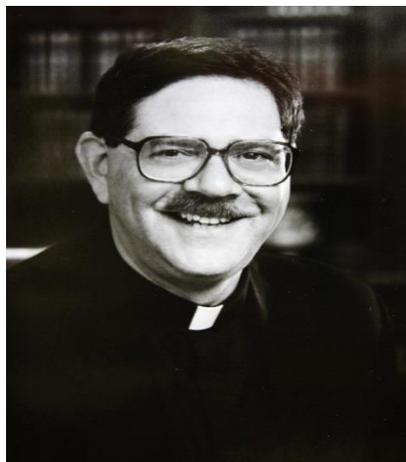
His first priestly assignment was St Catherine Parish in Morgan Hill. The young, energetic and popular priest was involved in all areas of parish life, especially in local farm worker issues. Fr Garcia met Cesar Chavez in 1971 and was inspired to devote part of his ministry to farm workers at the various ranches in the Santa Clara Valley. His ministry to Latinos became more intense during the years of 1977-80 when he served as coordinator of the Hispanic Apostolate in Santa Clara and director of the Centro Pastoral in San Jose. He was also involved in community organizing in east San Jose.

In 1981 the Vatican created the Diocese of San Jose, carving from the Archdiocese of San Francisco. Bishop Pierre DuMaine was named founding bishop of the new diocese. Richard became a priest of the Diocese of San Jose at this time. Bishop DuMaine sent Fr Garcia to Rome for further studies at the Angelicum University. From 1984 to 1989, Fr Rich taught at St Patrick Seminary and from 1989 to 1991 he was a teacher and prefect of discipline at St Joseph Seminary in Mountain View. He also served as the director of vocations and vicar for clergy in the Diocese of San Jose. Fr Garcia's gentle and unpretentious approach to ministry appealed to many.

Fr Richard grew up in a Spanish speaking family and became comfortably bilingual and bicultural

during his years of school and ministry. These qualities caught the attention of the Congregation for Bishops in Rome as they looked for qualified Hispanic priests for the office of bishop.

Since the death of Bishop Alphonse Gallegos in 1991, the Sacramento diocese had to get along with only one bishop, the diocesan ordinary. With the continuing growth of the diocese and increased demands, Bishop William Weigand sent a letter to Rome requesting the appointment of an auxiliary bishop for Sacramento. On November 25, 1997, Pope John Paul II responded to Bishop Weigand's request by appointing Fr Richard Garcia, pastor of St Leo Parish in San Jose, as Titular Bishop of Bapara and auxiliary bishop of Sacramento.



Bishop-elect Garcia was ordained a bishop on January 28, 1998 in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament by Bishop William Weigand and co-consecrators San Francisco Archbishop John R Quinn and San Jose Bishop Pierre DuMaine. Bishop Francis Quinn was the homilist at the ordination Mass and he urged Bishop Richard to keep up a regimen of prayer, work, study, rest and exercise. Not just physical exercise, but also intellectual. "You do not want to be body by Nautilus and brain by Mattel," Bishop Quinn said.

Bishop Weigand appointed Bishop Garcia Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, Vicar for Clergy, Episcopal Vicar for Hispanics and Vicar for Education and Vocations. But Bishop Garcia is a pastoral priest at heart and during his nine years in Sacramento he often visited parish schools to talk with the students, especially those he would confirm. He celebrated Baccalaureate Masses for the Catholic high schools of the diocese and was a great help to Bishop Weigand. He represented the Diocese of Sacramento at countless pastoral and civic groups during his nine years as auxiliary bishop of Sacramento. Bishop Rich was a friend to the priests, deacons, seminarians, religious and laity throughout the diocese.



Photo by John E Boll 2013

San Carlos Cathedral, Monterey

Bishop Sylvester Ryan of Monterey reached the age of 75 and after his letter of resignation was accepted by Pope Benedict XVI, the pope appointed Bishop Garcia the fourth bishop of Monterey on January 19, 2006. Bishop Garcia was installed as bishop on January 30, 2007 at the Monterey Convention Center in downtown Monterey at a beautiful and joyful liturgy in the presence of the Apostolic Delegate Pietro Sambini, bishops from the Western United States, and priests, deacons, seminarians, religious and laity from near and far.

Since his appointment as bishop of Monterey, Bishop Rich has continued to be the friendly and caring person he has always been and is well loved by the people of his diocese. Now, at the age of 65, he has another ten years to serve the Church of Monterey in the spirit of the Good Shepherd. We wish Bishop Rich good health and much happiness as he continues his ministry in one of the most beautiful places on earth.



Bishop Richard John Garcia's Coat of Arms
"In Him We Live"