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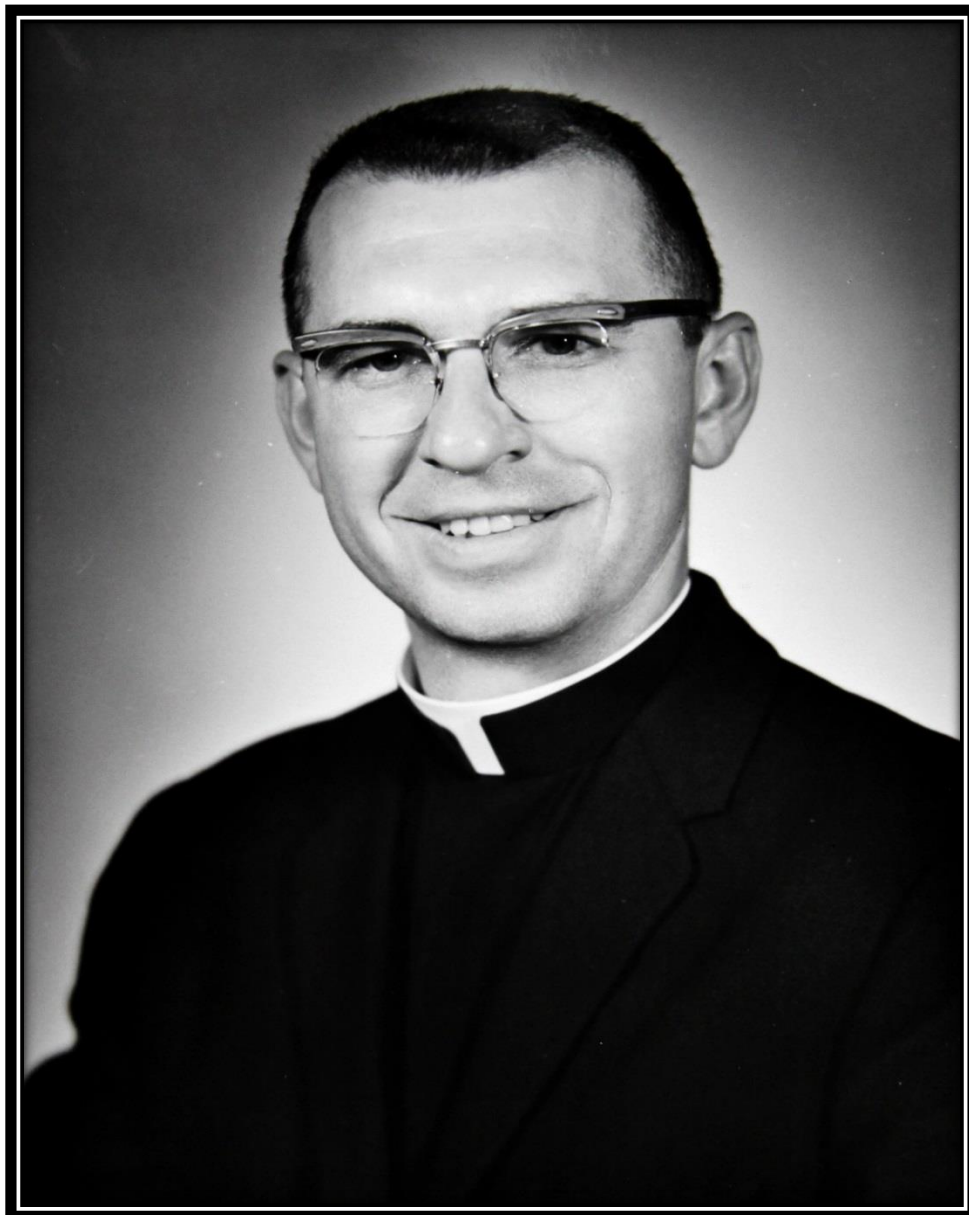
FATHER EUGENE G LUCAS

Native of Adena, Ohio

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

Pastor and Leader of the Hispanic Apostolate

1930 -1996



Father Eugene G Lucas

Eugene Lucas, born to Peter M and Mary Lucas, was a native of Adana, Ohio. He attended Saint Charles Minor Seminary in Columbus, Ohio and Saint John Vienney Seminary in Steubenville, Ohio. His parents moved to Woodland, California so he sought permission to transfer to the Diocese of Sacramento. He completed his studies at Saint Patrick Seminary in Menlo Park, California and was ordained to the ministerial priesthood on March 26, 1955 in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament.



Photo by John E Boll 2012

St Isidore Church, Yuba City

Named Parochial Vicar of Saint Isidore Parish

Soon after his ordination, Father Lucas was assigned as parochial vicar to Saint Isidore Church in Yuba City from 1955 to 1958. In 1958, he began a ministry at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Sacramento as an assistant to Father Anthony Maio. He served the Hispanic community at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church for 10 years until 1968.

Appointed Pastor of winters

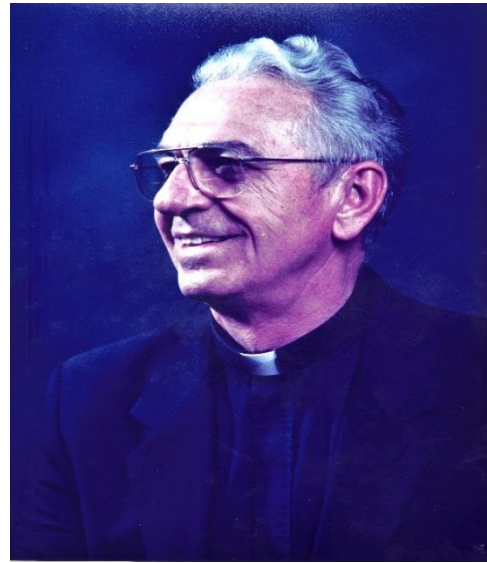
In 1968, Father Lucas was appointed pastor of Saint Anthony Parish in Winters where he served until 1973. In 1973 he became chaplain to the California Medical Facility in Vacaville with residence at Saint Mary Parish in Vacaville until 1975.

During the 1960s and 70s, Father Lucas worked with lay organizations including the Christian Family Movement and the Cursillo movement.

Director of the Hispanic Apostolate

In 1981, Father Lucas became director of the Hispanic Apostolate for the diocese and served in this role until 1985. He was one of the early pioneers who ministered to Hispanic people. He spent more than 30 years in Hispanic ministry in the diocese. One of his priest friends stated that Father Gene was a priest who could relate to the needy, the poor, and those who were deprived of most of the blessings the United States could offer.

Father Lucas then served as parochial vicar of Saint Joseph Parish in Marysville from 1987 to 1989.



Return to Winters as Pastor

In 1989, Father Gene returned to Saint Anthony Parish in Winters to be pastor for a second time. He remained in Winters as pastor until 1992. In 1994, he was appointed pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Rio Vista and served there until September 1996 when he retired from active ministry at the age of 66.



Photo from Winters Parish Archives

Father Lucas Celebrates First Communion in Winters



Photo by John E Boll 2012

Saint Anthony Church, Winters

Father Lucas moved to San Francisco and rented a house owned by Paul Diebels who had been a priest of the Diocese of Sacramento until he left active ministry. He had served as director of LAMP in Mexico for many years.

On December 10, 1996, Father Gene was with his long-time friend Paul Diebels having a meal together in a restaurant near Stanford University in Palo Alto when he was stricken with a massive heart attack and died. Unfortunately, he had only three months to enjoy his short retirement when God suddenly called him home.

His Funeral Mass was celebrated on December 14, 1996 by Bishop William Weigand and the priests and people of the diocese in Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Sacramento. He was laid to rest in the priests' section of Saint Joseph Cemetery in Woodland, not far from the graves of his parents.

As his tombstone says, Father Gene "gave his life for Hispanics and the poor." He worked hard to champion the rights of Hispanics and the poor throughout the Sacramento Valley. He was loved and admired by the Hispanic community and the poor for whom he gave his life in service. May he now dwell in peace in the joy of God's Kingdom where justice, love and peace reign eternally.



Headstone of Father Eugene G Lucas, Saint Joseph Cemetery, Woodland



Photo by John E Boll 2014

The New Saint Anthony Church, Winters



Photo by John E Boll 2014

Plaza of the new Saint Anthony Church

*May Father Gene Lucas who
Served the poor and forgotten
Now enjoy the fullness of life
In the Kingdom of God*

Rest in peace, Father Gene!