

SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 5 Father John E Boll, Thuy Nguyen, Ha Nguyen, Nieces, Dat Q Nguyen, Nephew No 85

Father Joseph Mary Nguyễn Xuân Hương

Native of Lưu Phương, Phát Diệm, Ninh Bình, North Vietnam

Priest of the Diocese of Sacramento

Pastor of Saint Anne Parish, South Sacramento, California

October 22, 1946 – July 17, 2021



Joseph Mary Nguyễn xuân Hương, son of Nguyễn văn Quý and Phạm thị Ngoan, was born in the village of Lưu Phương, Phát Diệm, Ninh Bình, North Vietnam on October 22, 1946, the first child of seven born in the Nguyễn family. He was baptized on October 26, 1946 at Phát Diệm Cathedral, where his father gave him the Christian name, Joseph. Joe received his First Holy Communion in 1952, and the Sacrament of Confirmation in 1954 by Bishop Lê hữu Từ, the Bishop of the Diocese of Phát Diệm.

Joe Hương's father, Nguyễn văn Quý, was born in Ninh Cường, in the province of Bùi Chu, North Vietnam. As a young man, he moved to Lưu Phương to look for a better job where he met his future wife, Phạm thị Ngoan. They were married on April 12, 1944, both having a strong devotion to the Catholic faith. Early in their marriage, they lived in North Vietnam where they began farming as means of support for their growing family.



Phát Diệm Cathedral in North Vietnam

BEGINS SCHOOL IN NORTH VIETNAM AND SETTLES IN SAIGON



Joe at nine years of age

Joe Hường began his primary education at Trần Lục in North Vietnam in 1952. Then in 1954, the country was divided by the Geneva Accords, the Communist forces in the north of Vietnam took over the region that included Hanoi and the nearly all – Catholic village where Joe and his family lived. In a courageous move, Joe and his father Quý, along with the nearly one million other North Vietnamese, headed South to Saigon in hopes of finding peace. Shortly after Joe and his father left their village, Joe’s mother, Ngoan and his sisters, Kình and Khiêm also left on a quest to head South.

The young family reunited at Hải Phòng and eventually settled in Saigon. Joe’s father supported his wife and young children by becoming a barber while Joe’s mother prepared food each day and sold it in front of their home.



Joe’s childhood home, Saigon 1970

Once settled in Saigon, Joe Hường continued his elementary education at Thánh Tâm, Phú Thọ. Joe completed elementary school in 1957 and for the three years following his elementary education, he attended several schools, Hoài An, Trần Lục and Võ Trường Toản. His studies there prepared him for a transition to higher education at Chu Văn An and Lê Bảo Tịnh. While attending school, he helped his parents care for his younger siblings. Each morning before school, he rode his bike to deliver the newspaper to local neighborhoods to earn money.

The Nguyễn family enjoyed less than a decade of peace in Saigon before the Communist forces began to invade the southern provinces of Vietnam.



Nguyễn Văn Quý and Phạm Thị Ngoan, Parents of Father Joe Hương



The Nguyễn Family, Saigon 1965

L-R Back Row: Cường, Kính, Ngoan, Quý, Joe Hương
Front Row: An, Minh, Nam, Khiêm

Joe Hương was born and raised in a family with a deep Catholic faith. His mother and father taught him how to pray the rosary and offer daily devotions to the Blessed Mother. Joe's devotion to the Blessed Mother was so extraordinary that he included Mary as part of his name. As a young boy, he had dreams of entering the seminary. As this young boy soon became a young man, he was met with obstacles that stood in the way of his dream. Joe's family was quite poor and could not financially support his further education, and also, the Communist regime regulated those entering the seminary. He also knew that in times of war, men were not entering the seminary – most of the young men were obligated to join the military. In addition, according to Vietnamese culture, the eldest son bears a responsibility to care for his parents. At that time, Joe's hopes and dreams of entering the priesthood were diminished and like most young men of his age, he joined the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN).

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT DIỆM



President Ngô đình Diệm

In 1963, South Vietnam President Ngô đình Diệm was assassinated in Saigon and this tragic event set into motion a time of chaos throughout Vietnam.

Within a few years after the assassination of President Diệm, Joe Hương and thousands of his fellow countrymen joined the US backed Army of the Republic of Vietnam forces fighting against the Việt Cộng, the North Vietnamese Army.

JOSEPH HƯƠNG BECOMES A NAVIGATOR OF THE ARVN

On June 20, 1966, when Joe Hương was twenty years old, he enlisted in the South Vietnamese Air Force service as a radio operator.

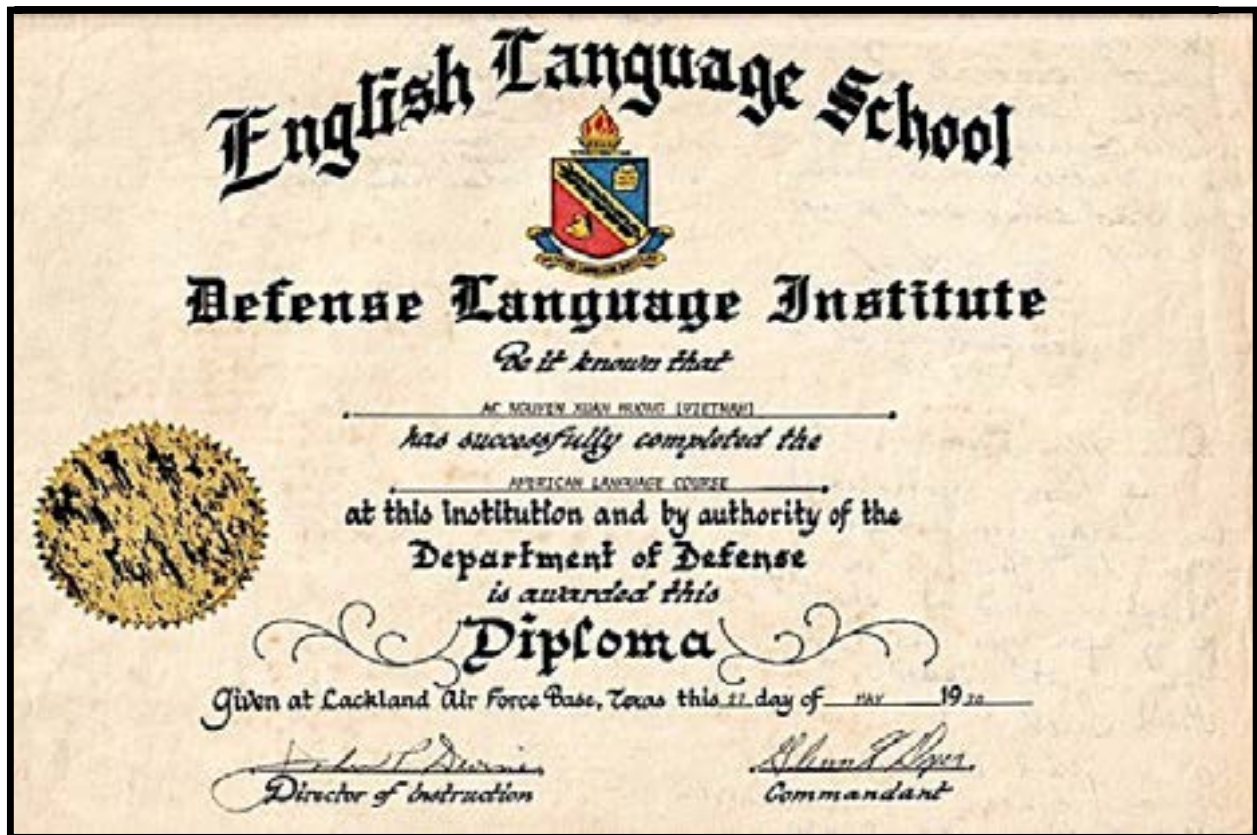
By the time of the Tet Offensive – a massive onslaught by the Việt Cộng and North Vietnamese Army in 1968 – death had become a familiar sight to this young airman, Joe Hương. “This really broke my heart” Joe recalled. “I lost many relatives. Every week I had to bury a friend of mine.”

A desire to overcome a sense of powerlessness, Joe said, also helped fuel his aspiration to become a priest. One day in the midst of the bloody days of TET, he said, he encountered a South Vietnamese soldier whose foot had been blown off by a landmine. The young man had been left to die. “I wanted to console this soldier and give him hope for the life to come. I said to myself, “Someday, I want to give Communion.”

On April 9, 1970, Joe Hường, along with a few other Vietnamese Air Force men, left Saigon Airport en route to Lackland Air Force Base to attend The Defense Language Institute, English Language School. This six-week specialized training offered assistance in gaining professional technical skills as well as offering students from around the world the opportunity to increase proficiency of the English language. Following his training at Lackland Air Force Base he transferred to Fort Worth, Texas for additional training until August 9, 1970. Following the training, Joe flew from Fort Worth to Travis, California, before returning to Saigon on August 13, 1970.



**Joe Hường received a Diploma in Defense Language Institute,
Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio 1970**



Joe Hường successfully completed the American Language Course at Lackland AFB, Texas 1970



Travis Airport, California, USA
Waiting to return to Saigon, Vietnam, August 9, 1970

While serving the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, Joe Hường studied Civil Law at the University of Saigon, with plans to become a lawyer. All the while, he kept his faith close to his heart by serving the Archdiocese of Saigon, holding a responsible position as a leader in the Vietnamese Charity Association and he continually sang praises to the Lord as a member of the Hồn Quê Choir at the Notre Dame Cathedral of Saigon.



Joe Hường takes an Oath to be a Member of the Charity Association in the presence of Bishop Trần thanh Khâm, Betania Monastery, Vietnam 1970



**The Hồn Quê Choir with Archbishop Nguyễn văn Bình, Saigon 1973
Joe Hường is first on the right in the front row**

In 1972, Joe Hường became an Air Force navigator with the rank of 1st lieutenant and was associated with Air Force Headquarters at Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base, often requiring him to fly low above the dangerous Hồ Chí Minh Trail. “I had to serve my country during the war,” he said. “I witnessed so many tragedies in my country, so many friends die, so many houses burn, so many of my people suffer a lot. One time, I remember I saw about 300 to 400 people die overnight right by my village.” Joe said. He flew missions in which he came perilously close to losing his life four times.



Joe Hường completes his Training Program as Navigator, March 27, 1972



Navigator Training Graduation Class of 1972

Joe Hường is third on the right in the front row



In 1973, Joe Hường became a member of the 718th Electronic Reconnaissance Squadron, also known as Thiên Long, following the establishment at Airbase Tân Sơn Nhất. The squadron was led by Lieutenant Colonel Nguyễn hữu Bách, under the command of Unit 17 of Division 7 of the General Staff in charge of signal intelligence.

While operating EC-47 aircraft, the squadron members worked to intercept enemy communications detect airborne radio direction of enemy aircraft, often remaining in enemy territory for three to five hours while identifying the exact coordinates of enemy targets.

Being a member of the squadron came through a highly selective process, including polygraphs tests and adherence to special rules and regulations. The operations remained top secret, even immediate family was not aware of the activities conducted by the 718th Squadron Thiên Long.

The dangerous missions of the 718th EC-47 Squadron actively contributed to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and aided in discovering and destroying many enemy targets.

ỦY - NHIỆM - THƯ

VIỆT-NAM CỘNG-HÒA
BỘ QUỐC- PHÒNG
BỘ TƯỚNG-TRAM-MƯƠI/QUYNCH
TỔNG-CỤC CHIẾN-TRANH CHÍNH-TRỊ
NHÀ TUYỂN ỦY CÔNG GIÁO

THAM CHIẾU : Huấn Thụ Điều Hành Ban Dự-Định Quân-Nhân Công-Giao
Số 3114/TUOC/GV, ngày 08-10-72 của Nhà TUOC.

Số: 014 /TUOC.

Linh Mục: Giáo sư Nguyễn Văn Lạc giáo sư Đại Học Sư Phạm TP. HCM

Tên Cần Ủy Nhiệm: Giáo sư Nguyễn Văn Lạc

Ban vị: Sư - Đoàn - 5 Thống Quân KBC 452A

Vào chức vụ: Đầu - Đợt

Kết thúc: 01 - 09 - 1974

Nguyện xin Chúa Thánh Thần hỗ trợ anh em trên boóc đờng Phục vụ
Giáo Hội và Quân Đội.

KBC 452A ngày 1 tháng 9 năm 1974.

KIẾN - THỊ:
TỔA TƯỚNG GIÁM-MỤC SAIGON
Ngày 1 Th. 9. 1974

[Signature]
PHÓ TƯỚNG GIÁM-MỤC SAIGON

[Signature]
Linh Mục NGUYỄN VĂN LẠC

ESCAPE FROM VIETNAM IN 1975

As the American Government decided to end its costly involvement in the Vietnam War and as the Việt Cộng battled for the defeat of the South, the day of no return came on April 29, 1975, when Joe's life and the lives of his 37 fellow airmen would change forever.

Joe Hương and his fellow Army soldiers of the Republic of Vietnam stayed in an underground tunnel through the early hours of what became the fall of Saigon. "About 4 in the morning, the communists shot rockets into Tân Sơn Nhứt Airport," said Joe, adding that people were killed and planes, hangers and houses destroyed in the attacks. "At first, I had no intention of leaving Vietnam, but on that day, when the communists had surrounded the base, I tried to get out and reunite with my family but I could not leave. At that point, I knew that if I stayed in Vietnam I would be killed."

He convinced the others to join him as they fled through a hail of rocket fire to an EC-47 plane so they could escape from Vietnam on the final days of the war to a place of safety.

As the plane started down the runway, the Việt Cộng attempted to shoot the plane down, but by the sheer grace of God, no rockets hit the plane as they soared into the air and headed for Utabao, Thailand without any maps to guide them. "I did not have a map for the freedom flight, I had to use my memory of what my country looked like," he said. Joe safely landed the plane in Thailand, where he remained for three days while arrangements were made for him to emigrate to Guam.

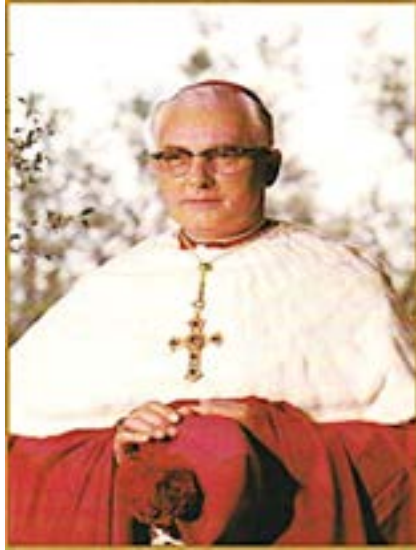
JOSEPH NGUYỄN XUÂN HƯƠNG ARRIVES IN CALIFORNIA

From Guam, Joe Hương was relocated to the United States, where he was originally slated to settle in Florida, however, on a fuel stop in California, he learned that a Vietnamese priest, Father Long, whom he had known from his military service in Vietnam, was living in a refugee camp in Southern California. On that day, Joe decided to remain in California. Following a short stay at Camp Pendleton, Joe was sent to the former state-owned DeWitt medical facility in Weimar, California until he could be resettled. "There was no Vietnamese priest, so I began giving catechism classes in the evening and a prayer service at the medical center chapel," Joe said.

It was while contemplating God's plan for his life in the chapel at the Weimar Institute, the desire to become a priest began to flourish. Joe recalled, "I had thoughts of becoming a lawyer, a leader of my community. When I came here, I changed my mind. I had already served my country for almost ten years. I thought maybe it's time to seek another way to serve my people. I think maybe America is the land of opportunity."

A doctor from Sacramento, Joseph Murphy, who was visiting Weimar, stopped by the chapel while Joe Hương was leading a prayer service. "He asked if I was a priest and when I said 'No,'

he asked, 'Do you want to be?' 'Yes', I replied" Joe recalled. Hearing the young man's immediate response in the affirmative, the doctor took the news to Bishop Alden J. Bell.



Bishop Alden J. Bell

On June 27, 1975 Father James Kidder, Diocesan Vocation Director, drove to Weimar to meet Joe Hường and was impressed with Joe's leadership qualities as well as his keen desire to become a priest. Father Kidder would soon recommend Joe as a seminarian candidate for approval by Bishop Bell.

Before this recommendation could take place, Joe needed a sponsor in order to leave the refugee camp. Father Carroll Laubacher, SJ, of Saint Ignatius Parish in Sacramento had learned of a young Vietnamese man with a desire to become a priest. Joe had found his sponsor in Father Carroll Laubacher and on July 1, 1975, Father Laubacher drove to the refugee camp, Hope Village, and took Joe to his parish.

On July 18, 1975, Joe received the good news that he was accepted as a candidate for the seminary to begin his studies in the fall as a seminarian for the Diocese of Sacramento.

JOE HƯỜNG BEGINS HIS STUDIES FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

Joseph began his studies in English and Philosophy at Saint Patrick's College in Mountain View, California as a seminarian for the Diocese of Sacramento. "I was the only Vietnamese in school with 45 others. I could speak only a little English," Joe recalled. As he broke through the language barrier, Joe began to see, "God chose me to be a priest." He attended the seminary college from 1975 to 1981 when he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy on June 13, 1981 from the Mountain View seminary.

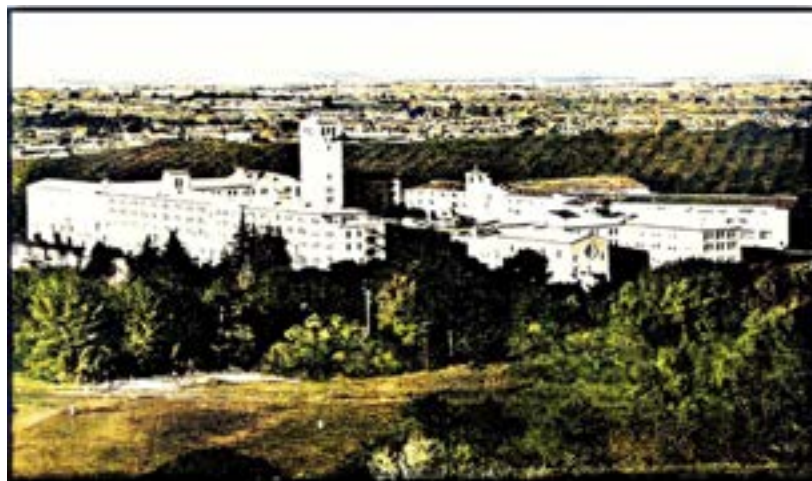


Photo from the Diocesan Archives

Saint Patrick's College, Mountain View, California



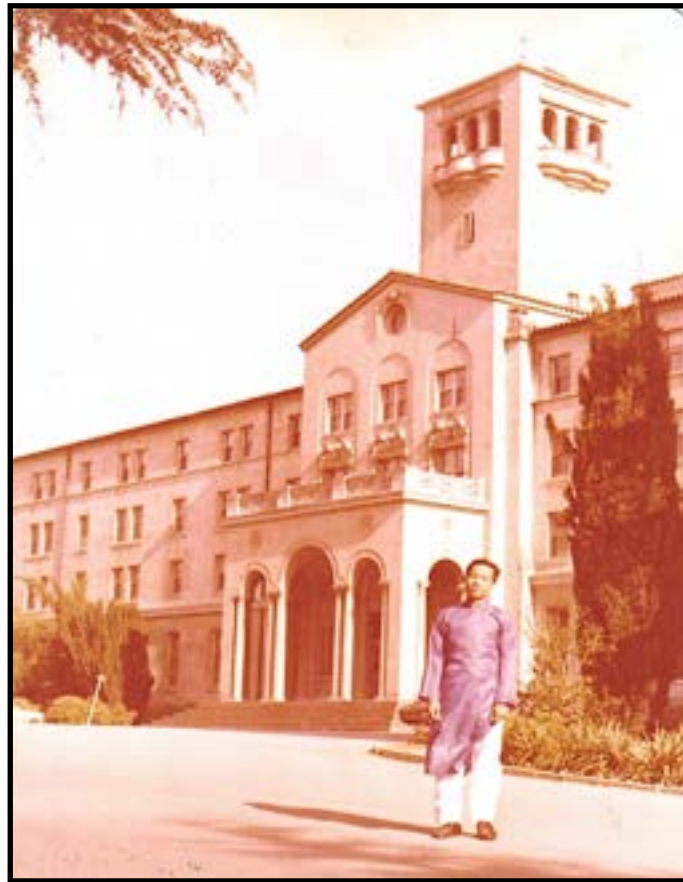
With Doctor Joseph Murphy 1976



With Monsignor James Kidder 1984



With Father Carroll Laubacher, SJ



Saint Patrick's College, Mountain View, June 6, 1976



Joe Hường gathers with friends at Saint Patrick's College on March 10, 1978 to celebrate receiving a letter from his family in Vietnam, the first communication with them in three years.

Joe is first on the left in the front row

Joe Hường was not afraid of hard work and during his time in the seminary, he spent his summers and Christmas breaks working at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. He also supported himself during his years of study by working at the Calvary Cemetery in Citrus Heights, taking care of the lawns, mowing and doing other work.

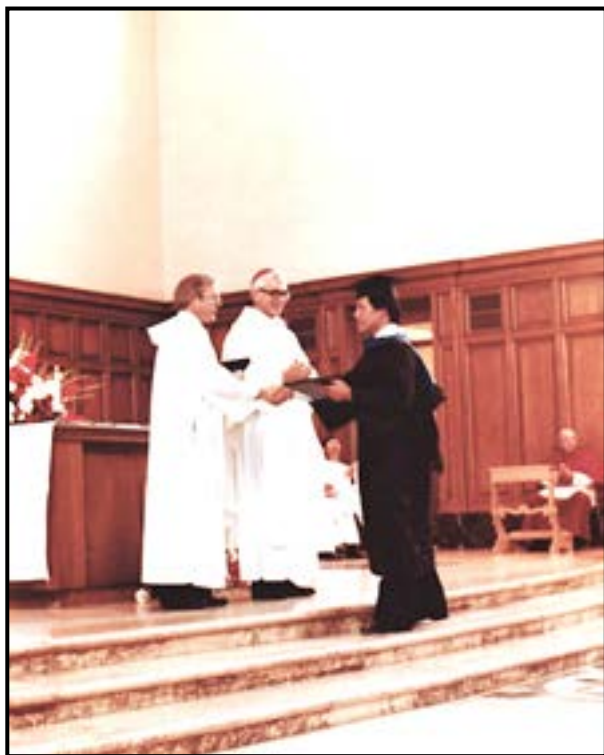


Calvary Cemetery, Citrus Heights 1978



Calvary Cemetery, Citrus Heights 1983

Graduation Ceremony from Saint Patrick's College, Mountain View in 1981



Monsignor Kidder congratulates Joe Hường on his Graduation from College

Saint Patrick's College

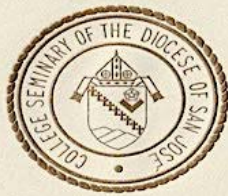
*This Diploma witnesses that
Nguyen Xuan Huong
has fulfilled the prescribed requirements and
is recommended by the Faculty for the Degree of*

Bachelor of Arts

in Philosophy

*with all the Rights and Privileges pertaining thereto
Conferred at Mountain View, California*

June 13, 1981



Pierre Du Maine
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Gerald Brown, S.S.
President

K. MacDonagh, S.S.
Academic Dean

Joe Hường's College Graduation Diploma

A MOVE TO SAINT PATRICK'S SEMINARY IN MENLO PARK

In the fall of 1981, Joe Hường transferred to Saint Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park to begin his four years of theological studies. He was ordained a transitional deacon in the chapel of Saint Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park on October 6, 1984. He served as a transitional deacon at Saint John Vianney Parish in Rancho Cordova from April 14 to October 5, 1985.



Photo by John E Boll

Saint Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park, California



**Candidacy Officiated by Bishop Daniel Francis Walsh at
Saint Patrick's Seminary Chapel, Menlo Park, April 29, 1982**



**Installation in Ministry as Lector by Bishop Daniel Francis Walsh at
Saint Patrick's Seminary Chapel, Menlo Park, October 6, 1982**



**Ministry of Acolyte by Bishop Daniel Francis Walsh at
Saint Patrick's Seminary Chapel, Menlo Park, October 20, 1983**



With Bishop Daniel Walsh at Saint Patrick's Seminary Chapel, October 20, 1983

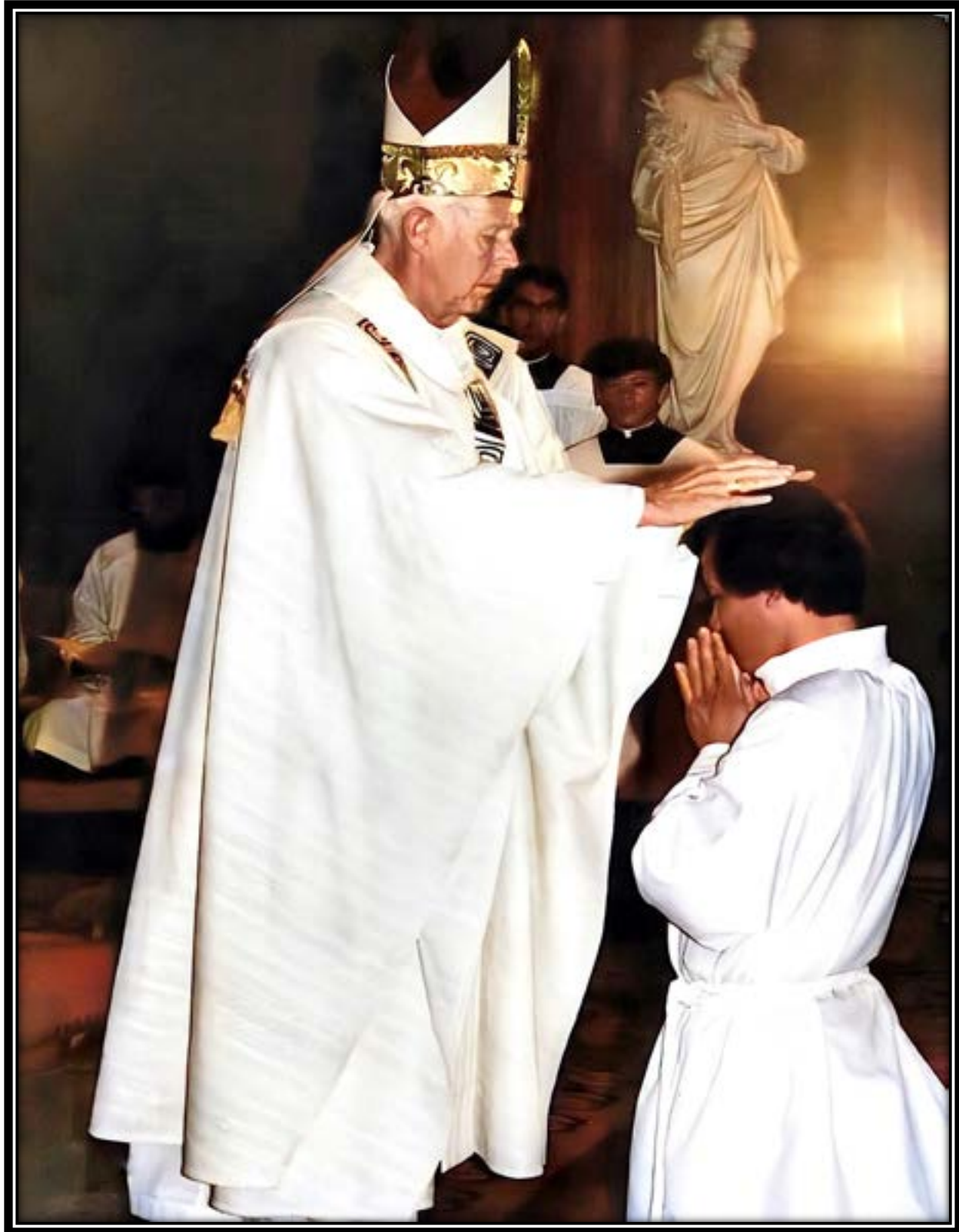
**DIACONATE ORDINATION AT SAINT PATRICK SEMINARY CHAPEL,
MENLO PARK ON OCTOBER 6, 1984**



Promise of obedience to Bishop Quinn and his successors



Joe Hường lies prostrate during the Litany of Saints, praying that all the Saints being summoned in prayer will bless him and his future ministry



**Bishop Francis A. Quinn ordains Joe Hường a Deacon
Saint Patrick's Seminary Chapel, Menlo Park
October 6, 1984**



Deacon Joe Hường receives his Diaconate Dalmatic Vestment



Bishop Quinn presents the Book of the Gospels to Deacon Joe Hường





Deacon Joe Hường's family offers a Thanksgiving Mass of his Ordination to the Diaconate, Saigon, Vietnam 1984





Saint Patrick's Seminary, Faculty and Seminarians, Menlo Park, March 1982

Seminarian Joe Hường is fifth on the left in the third row



Saint Patrick's Seminary, March 13, 1985

Deacon Joe Hường is third on the right in the front row



With Father Frank Norris at Saint Patrick's Seminary, March 13, 1985

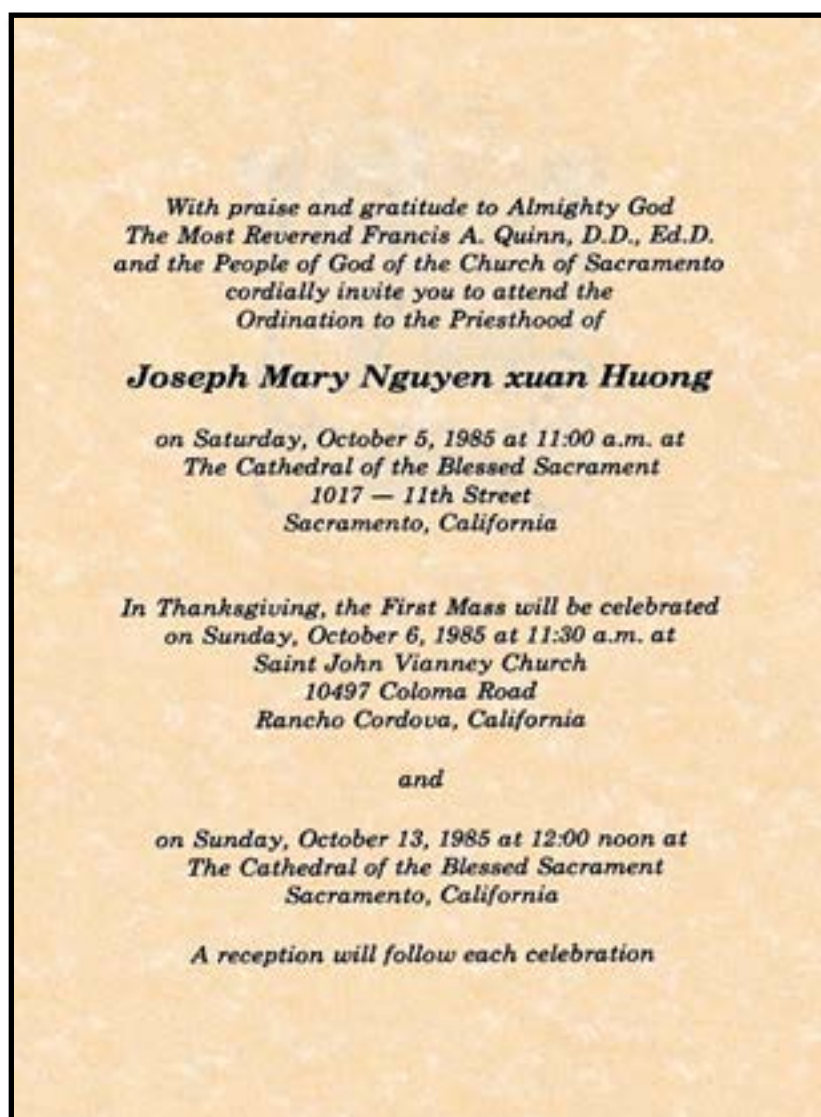


With classmates at Saint Patrick's Seminary, March 13, 1985

ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

The Cathedral of The Blessed Sacrament in Sacramento was the setting for an extraordinary day in the life of Deacon Joseph Mary Nguyễn xuân Hương. For on this day, October 5, 1985, just seventeen days shy of his 39th birthday, Deacon Joe Hương was ordained as the first Vietnamese to be ordained as a Catholic priest in the Sacramento Diocese and also one of two Vietnamese to be ordained in the state of California. Bishop Francis Quinn was the main celebrant of the ceremony with two Bishops assisting, Bishop Alphonse Gallegos, Auxiliary of Sacramento, and Vietnamese Bishop James Huỳnh văn Cửa, all surrounded by a large number of priests and over 1,000 faithful who gathered for the special day.

After his priestly ordination, he continued his work at Saint John Vianney Parish as a parochial vicar until December 9, 1985.



**The Invitation to Deacon Joe's Ordination to Priesthood
And to his First Masses**



Vời lòng cảm tạ Thiên Chúa là Cha Toàn Năng
Đức Giám Mục Phanxicô A. Quinn, D.D., Ed.D.
và Dân Chúa thuộc Giáo Phận Sacramento
Ông Và Bà Nguyễn Văn Quý
Xứ An Lạc – Tổng Địa Phận Sài Gòn
Trân trọng kính mời

Quý Vị

*Dự Lễ Truyền Chức Linh Mục
của trường nam chúng tôi là*

Giuse Maria Nguyễn Xuân Hương

tự Quốc Hùng

*Ngày Thứ Bảy mồng 5 tháng 10 năm 1985
hỏi 11:00 giờ sáng*

*tại Nhà Thờ Chính Tòa Sacramento
1017 – 11th Street
Sacramento, California*

*Tân Linh Mục sẽ dâng Thánh Lễ Mở Tay
Ngày Chủ Nhật mồng 6 tháng 10 năm 1985
hỏi 11:30 sáng*

*tại Nhà Thờ Thánh John Vianney
10497 Coloma Road
Rancho Cordova, California*

và

*Tân Linh Mục sẽ dâng Thánh Lễ Tạ Ôn
Ngày Chủ Nhật 13 tháng 10 năm 1985
hỏi 12:00 giờ trưa*

tại Nhà Thờ Chính Tòa Sacramento

Xin vui lòng dự tiệc trà sau mỗi Thánh Lễ



Giuse Maria NGUYỄN XUÂN HUƠNG
tự Quốc Hùng

Sinh ngày 22 tháng 10 năm 1946 tại
làng Lưu Phương, huyện Kim Sơn, tỉnh
Ninh Bình, Giáo Phận Phát Diệm, Bắc Việt.

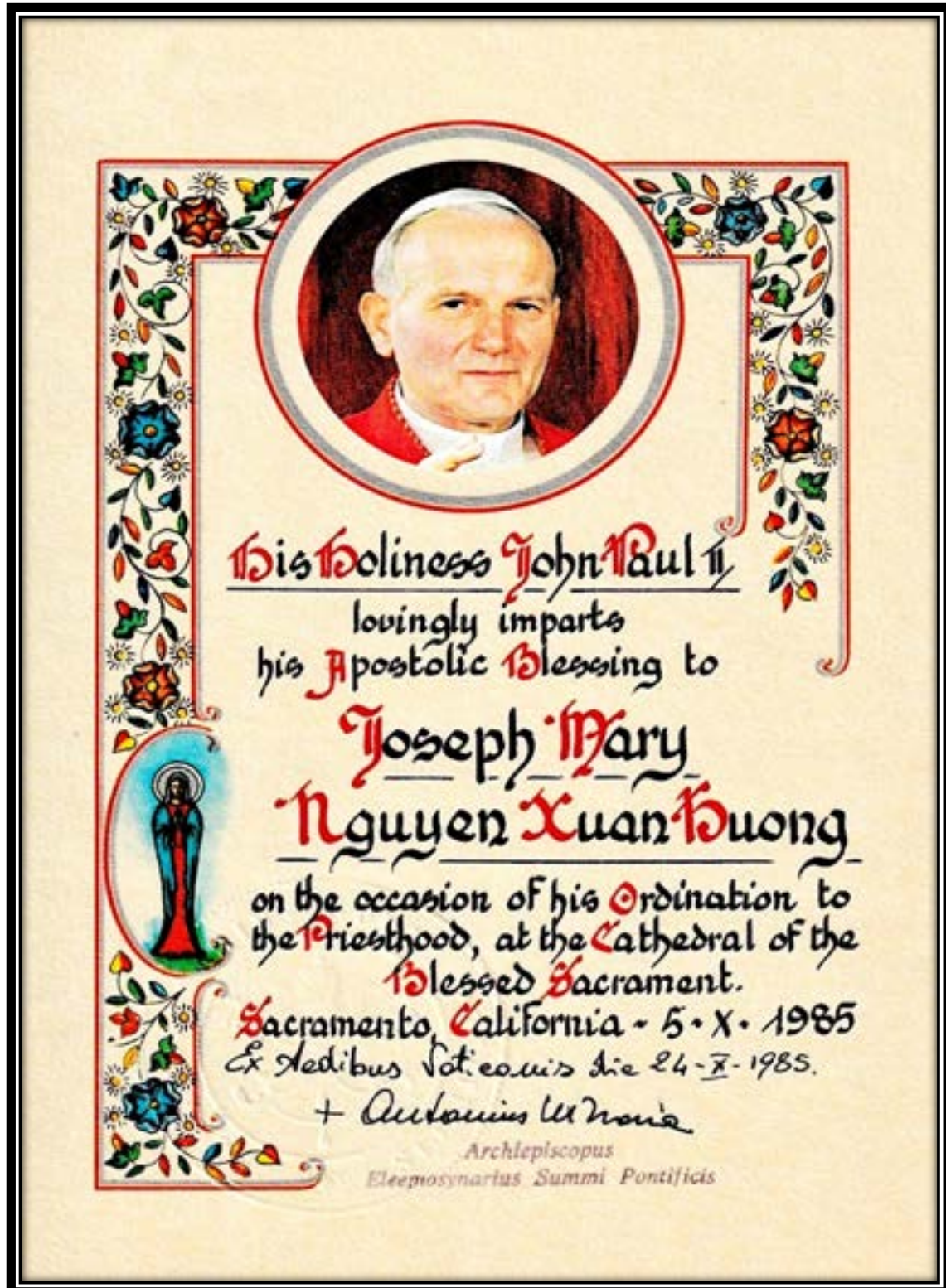
Con Ông Phêrô Nguyễn Văn Quý, tự
Văn Hóa và Bà Phạm Thị Ngoan.

- 1952 Chịu lễ lần đầu
- 1953 Lãnh Bí tích Thêm Sức bởi tay Đức Cha
Lê Hữu Tứ, Giám Mục Phát Diệm
- 1963-66 Tổng Thư Ký Đoàn Thanh Niên Công Giáo,
Họ Trị Sở, Xứ An Lạc, Hạt Chí Hòa, Saigon.
- 1966-75 Phục vụ trong Binh Chủng Không Quân với
cấp bậc Trung Úy Phi Hành.
- 1971-75 Trưởng Khố Giáo Vụ của Tổng Đoàn Chiến
Sĩ Bắc Ái Việt Nam.
Tổng Thư Ký Ca Đoàn Hồn Quê.
- 1972-75 Tổng Thư Ký Ban Đại Diện Quân Nhân Công
Giáo thuộc Bộ Tư Lệnh và Sư Đoàn 5 K.Q.
- 1975 Nhập Giáo Phận Sacramento.
Theo học tại Học Viện Thánh Patrick (Mt. View)
và Đại Chủng Viện Thánh Patrick (Menlo Park)
- 1984 Chịu chức Phó Tế (Phó Tế Việt Nam tiên khởi
của Đại Chủng Viện Thánh Patrick, Menlo Park)
- 1985 Chịu chức Linh Mục (Tân Linh Mục Việt Nam tiên
khởi của Giáo Phận Sacramento, California)

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His kindness endures forever."

"Hãy cảm tạ Chúa vì Người hảo tâm, vì đức từ bi của Người tồn tại đến muôn đời."

Psalm 106.1

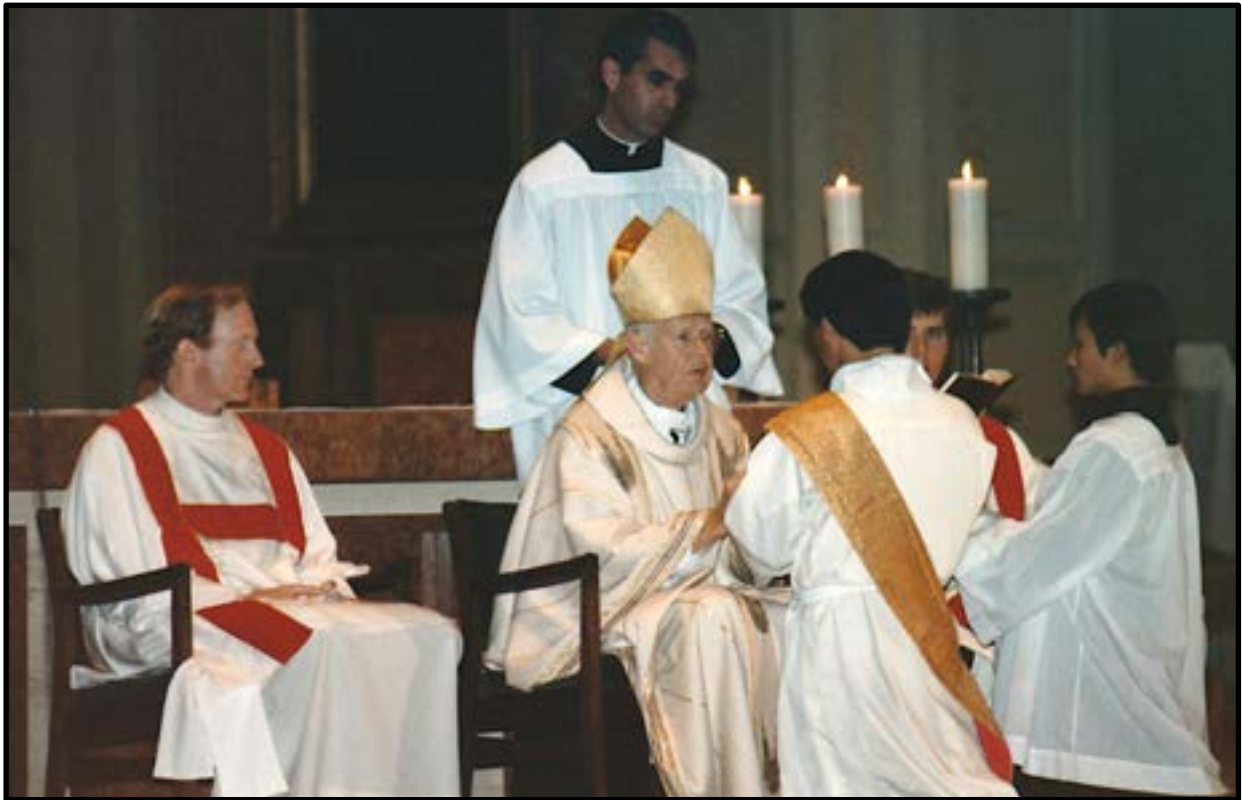


"Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will."

"Lạy Chúa, này con xin đến để thực thi ý Ngài."

Psalm 40





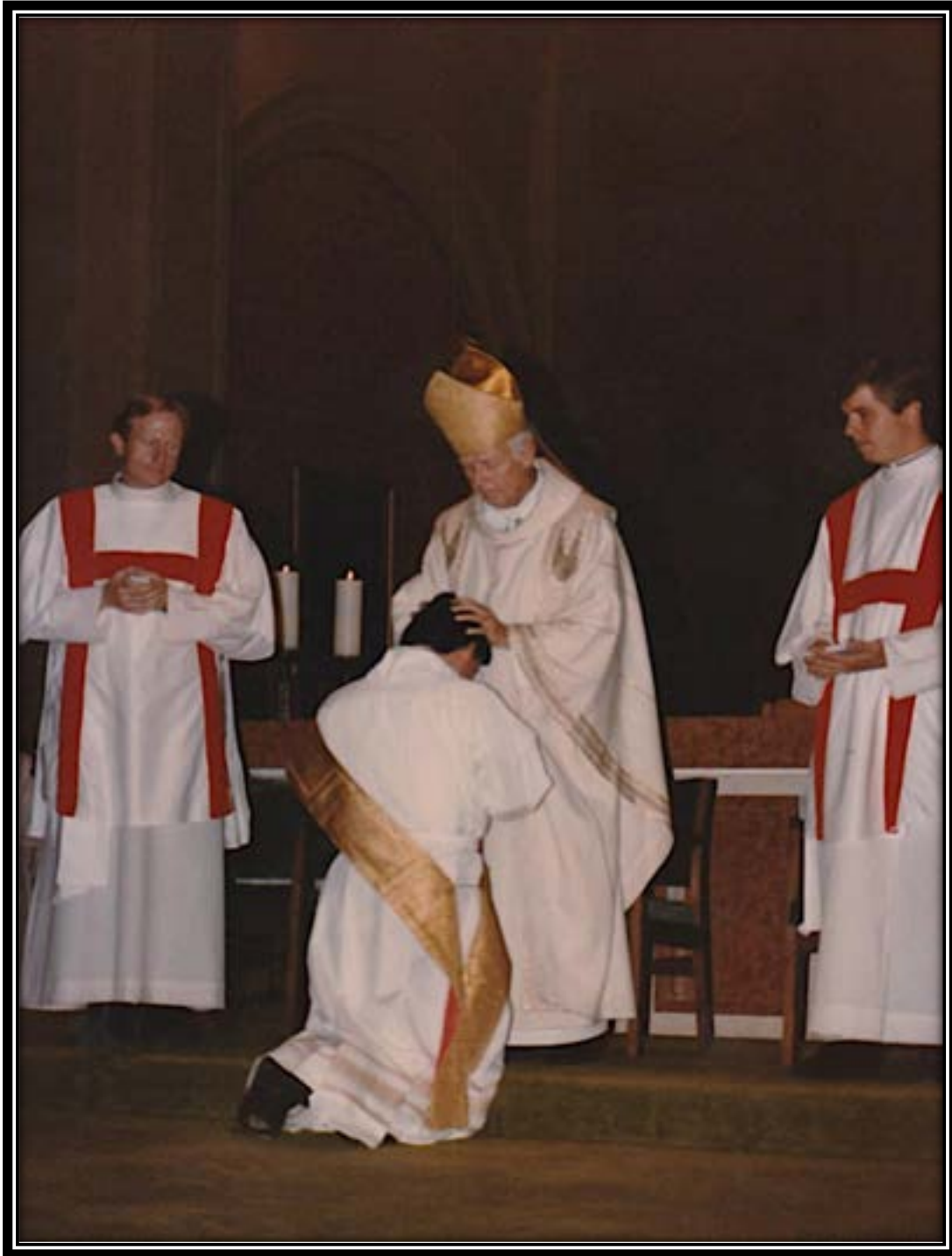
Promise of obedience to Bishop Quinn and his successors



Deacon Joe Hường prostrates himself, the whole community sings the Litany of Saints

*"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you
to go and bear fruit."*

*"Không phải con đã chọn Thầy, nhưng chính Thầy đã chọn con và cử con
để con ra đi, sinh được nhiều hoa trái."* *John 15:16*



**Bishop Francis A. Quinn ordains Joe Hường a Priest on October 5, 1985
Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Sacramento**



Monsignor James Kidder lays hands on Father Joe



Fr. Carroll Laubacher, SJ, lays hands on Father Joe



Priests lay hands on Father Joe Hường



Father Joe Hường kisses Stole assisted by Father Hoàng minh Thư



Father Joe Hường receives Vestment from Father Thư



Bishop Quinn anoints Father Joe Huong's hands



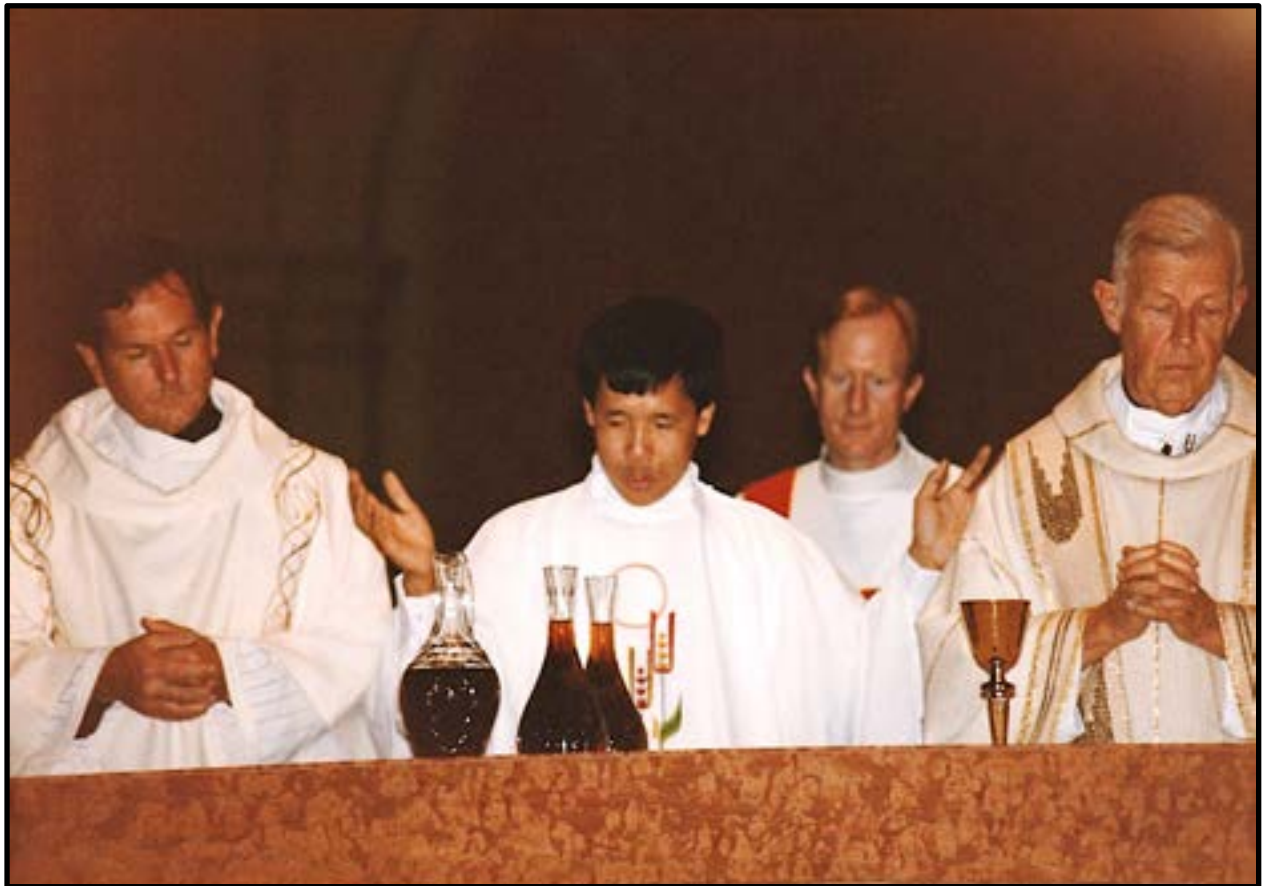
Bishop Quinn presents the Chalice and Paten to Father Joe Huong



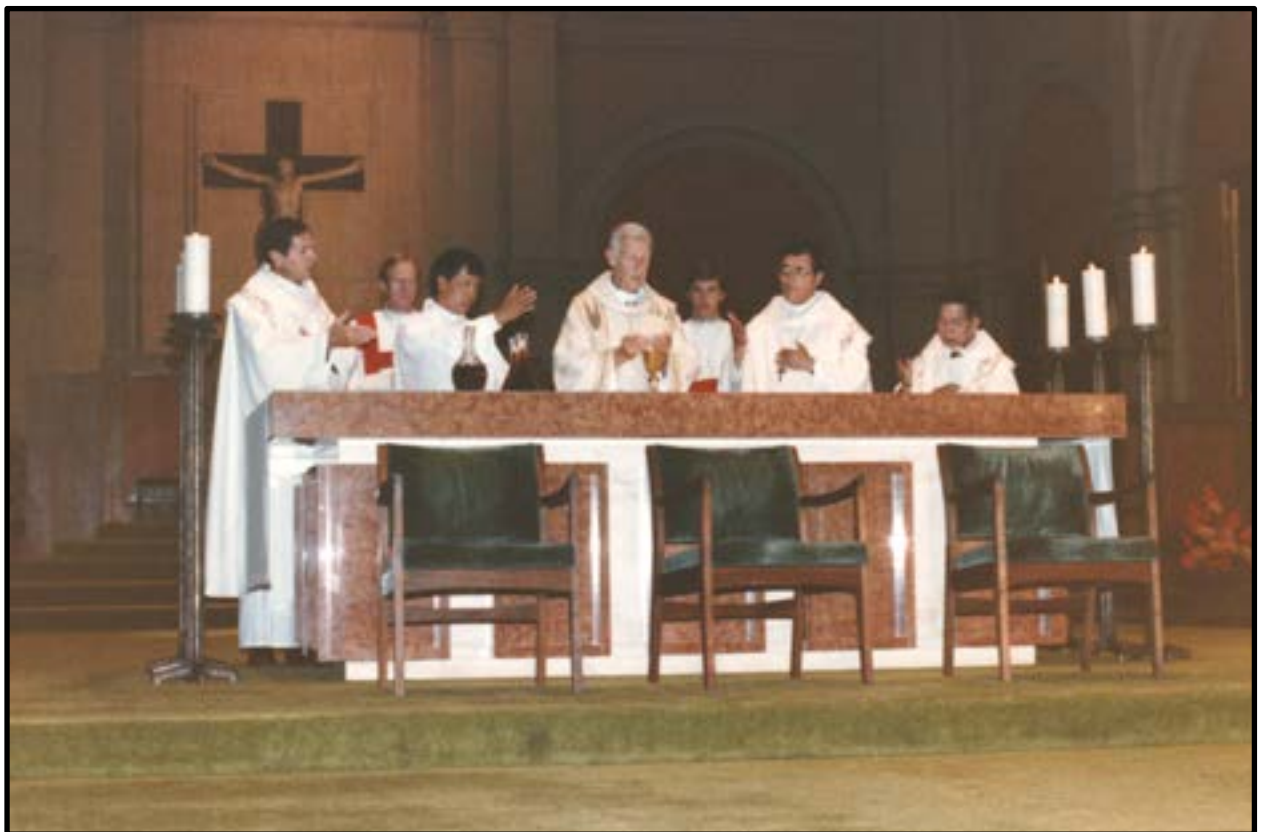
Bishop Quinn gives Father Joe Hường the Sign of Peace



Priests give Father Joe Hường the Sign of Peace



The newly ordained Father Joe Hường concelebrates the Eucharist with Bishop Quinn





Father Joe Hường extends First Blessing to Bishop Quinn



L-R: Bishop Quinn, newly ordained Father Joe Hường, Bishops Cúa and Gallegos and Doctor Murphy at the reception following the Ordination Mass



Father Joe Hường's parents attend the Thanksgiving Mass of his Ordination to Priesthood, Saigon, Vietnam 1985



FIRST MASS

On the day following his ordination, Father Joe Hường celebrated his first Mass at Saint John Vianney Church in Rancho Cordova in the presence of Bishop Alphonse Gallegos and Bishop Huỳnh văn Cửa, priests, his family, friends and parishioners.



Father Joe celebrates his First Mass on October 6, 1985 at Saint John Vianney Church



THANKSGIVING MASSES



Father Joe Hường celebrates his First Mass of Thanksgiving on October 13, 1985 at the Cathedral of The Blessed Sacrament, Sacramento



Thanksgiving Mass on October 20, 1985 at the Vietnamese Martyrs Church, Sacramento



Thanksgiving Mass at Saint Ignatius Church on November 3, 1985, the parish which sponsored Father Joe at the refugee camp at Weimar

FIRST ASSIGNMENT, SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, AUBURN

On December 9, 1985, Bishop Quinn appointed Father Joe Hường as parochial vicar to Saint Joseph Parish in Auburn to assist Father Anthony Traynor who was the pastor. Father Joe served the Auburn parish for a year and a half until April 1, 1987. The working relationship between Father Traynor and Father Joe was not as positive as Bishop Quinn had hoped, so he decided it was best to give Father Joe a new assignment.

SECOND ASSIGNMENT, SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, LINCOLN

Bishop Quinn contacted Father John Boll, pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, Lincoln, to see if he was willing to take Father Joe Hường as a parochial vicar. Since the Lincoln parish had two missions, Saint Daniel Church in Wheatland and Saint Boniface Church in Nicolaus, and Father John was the only priest assigned in the parish, he was happy to welcome Father Joe to the Lincoln parish.

Father Joe's appointment as parochial vicar of Saint Joseph Parish, Lincoln, began on April 1, 1987. As a recently ordained priest with a lot of energy, Father Joe wanted to do a lot of things to help the Lincoln parish grow. He loved to preach and celebrate Mass and gave a lot of energy to that ministry. Each Sunday, he recorded his homily, later listening to the recording to improve his homiletic skills.

Father Joe made friends with the recently established Knights of Columbus Council in the parish and encouraged the Knights to take on various projects to improve the facilities of the parish. He asked them to build a large cross outside the Lincoln church so it would be easily identified as a church. That cross is still standing at the old church, which was later sold to another Christian church when Saint Joseph Parish relocated to its new facilities.



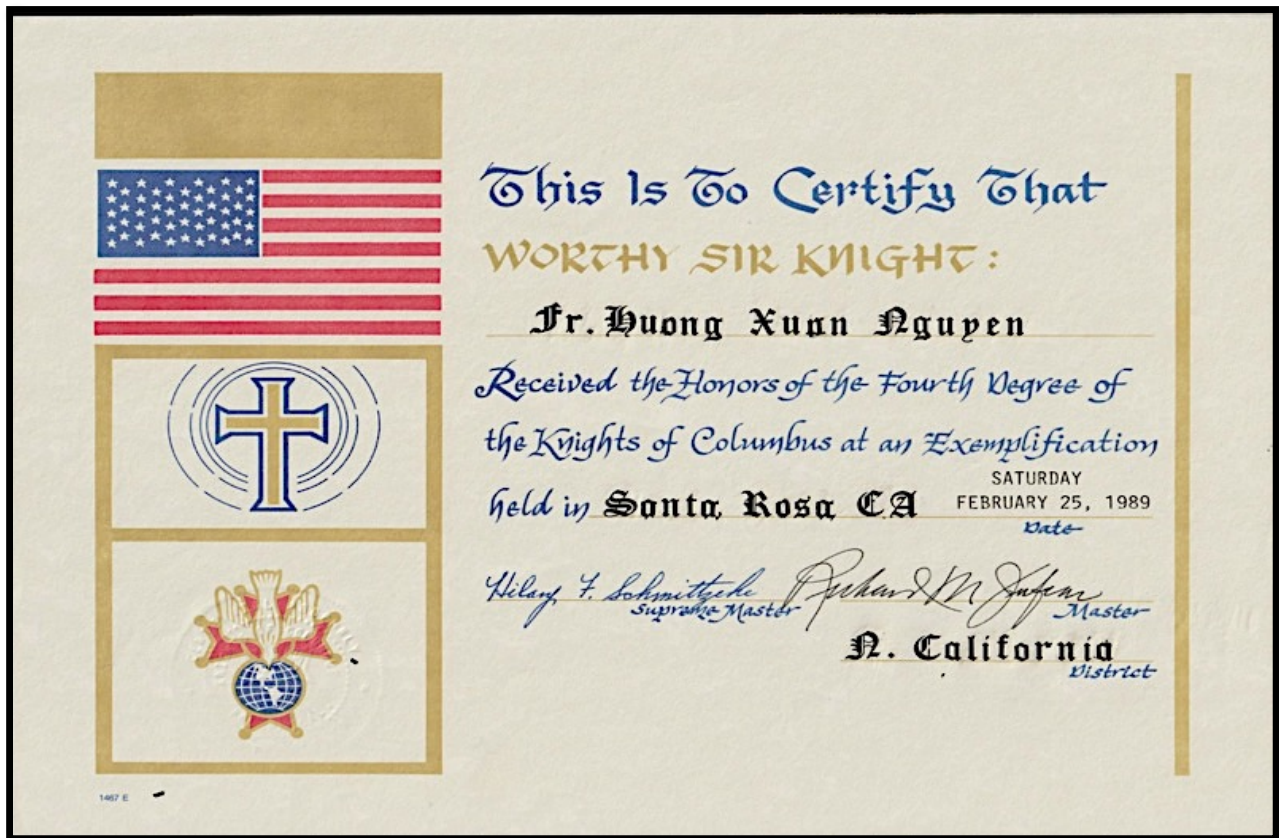
Photo by John E Boll

**The Original Saint Joseph Church with outside Cross designed by
Father Joseph Hương**

During his time at Saint Joseph Parish, Father Joe served as Auxiliary Chaplain at Beale AFB for four years. He was always available to people whenever his ministry was needed.

In the summer of 1992, Father Joe was able to take part in a three-month priestly study sabbatical in Jerusalem offered by Saint John's University School of Theology, Collegeville in Minnesota.

Father Joe served as parochial vicar of Saint Joseph Parish, Lincoln, until January 1993, having served the Lincoln community for nearly six years. He made many friends during his years serving the three churches of Saint Joseph Parish in Lincoln, Wheatland and Nicolaus.



Father Joe becomes the Fourth Degree of the Knights of Columbus on February 25, 1989,
 Northern California District in Santa Rosa

FATHER JOE HƯƠNG REASSIGNED TO THE AUBURN PARISH

On December 12, 1993, Father Joe Hương was reassigned to Saint Joseph Parish in Auburn as parochial vicar to serve alongside the newly appointed Pastor, Father John Molumby. He served the Auburn parish for nearly two years until August 31, 1995. He would serve as parochial vicar in one more parish until he was appointed parish administrator and then pastor.



Photo b John E Boll

Saint Joseph Church, Auburn

NEXT ASSIGNMENT, SAINT ISIDORE PARISH, YUBA CITY

Father Joe Hương's fourth assignment was parochial vicar to Saint Isidore Parish in Yuba City beginning September 1, 1995. The pastor of the parish was Father Joseph Bishop. Although Father Joe Hương and Father Bishop came from diverse backgrounds, the two had a natural working relationship, bringing the people of Saint Isidore Parish together as one. Upon the retirement of Father Bishop, Father Manuel Soria was appointed pastor of the parish. Father Joe remained as parochial vicar in Yuba City until January 4, 2000 when he was assigned Parochial Administrator at Saint Paul Parish in Knights Landing, California.



Photo by John E Boll

Saint Isidore Church, Yuba City

THE DEATH OF FATHER JOE HƯƠNG'S FATHER



His father Nguyễn văn Quý, was hospitalized at Sutter Roseville Medical Center. Upon Father Joe's return to the Saint Isidore rectory in Yuba City from visiting his father, he was summoned back to the hospital where his father had peacefully passed away on January 5, 1996 at the age of 80.

Masses of Christian Burial were celebrated on Monday, January 8 at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Lincoln, on Tuesday, January 9 at Saint Isidore Catholic Church in Yuba City, and Wednesday, January 10 at the Vietnamese Martyrs Church in Sacramento. Father Joe was the celebrant at all three Masses. His father was laid to rest at Saint Mary Cemetery in Sacramento, California.

Nguyễn văn Quý

February 2, 1915 – January 5, 1996



Saint Mary Cemetery, Sacramento

Father Joe Hương with his mother Ngoan and siblings

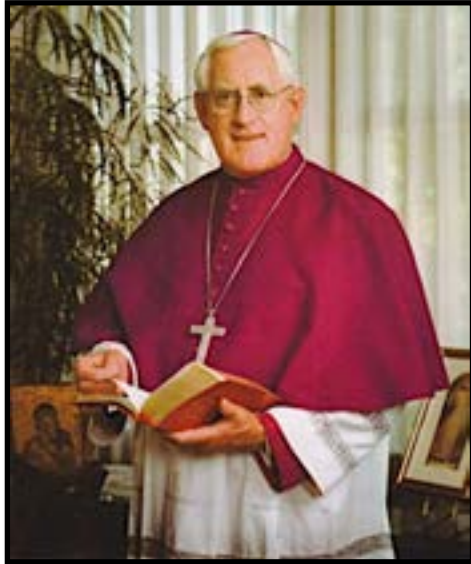
A few weeks after the death of his father, Father Joe Hường returned to Vietnam for the first time since 1975 to celebrate a Memorial Mass for his father at his home parish in Saigon. While his visit was accompanied with sadness at the loss of his father, Father Joe was eager to see his sister Khiêm's family and likewise, they anxiously awaited their reunion.



Father Joe, center, celebrates a Memorial Mass for his father in the Chapel, Saigon, February 24, 1996



TIME TO BECOME A PASTOR



Bishop William K. Weigand

On January 5, 2000, Bishop Weigand appointed Father Joe Hường administrator of Saint Paul Parish in Knights Landing and a year later, on February 1, 2001, he appointed Father Joe pastor of the same parish.

Father Joe served as pastor of Knights Landing and its mission, Saint Agnes Church in Zamora, for three years until August 20, 2004.

When members of the Priests' Personnel Board came to Knights Landing to meet with the parish community to discuss the needs of the parish in preparation for the appointment of a new pastor, the people had nothing but the highest admiration and love for Father Joe who

had served this small parish community exceedingly well. Father Dan Looney, who represented the Personnel Board, was deeply moved and gratified to know how much Father Joe was loved by this bi-lingual parish community.



Photo by John E Boll

Saint Paul Church, Knights Landing

Bishop Weigand's Pastoral Visit to Saint Paul Parish, July 30, 2000



While Pastor of Saint Agnes Church in Zamora, Father Joe Hường set out to renovate the mission church in anticipation of the 95th Anniversary of its dedication. At the time, the parish did not have the assets to complete the projects. Father Joe, Deacon Antonio Gonzales and the parishioners of Saint Agnes constructed an ambitious plan to raise the needed funds. Through proceeds from a walk-a-thon, the selling of memorial bricks and donations from the friends of Father Joe, the money became available to renovate the interior of the church, replace the roof and construct the large cross overlooking the Saint Agnes Church and Shrine. The completion of the project came with the new Saint Agnes statue in front of the church building.



Saint Agnes Church in Zamora, prior to renovation, March 2000



**Father Joe is cheered on by his mother as he participates in a walk-a-thon,
Knights Landing, March 29, 2003**



Interior Renovation, Saint Agnes Church, May 8, 2003

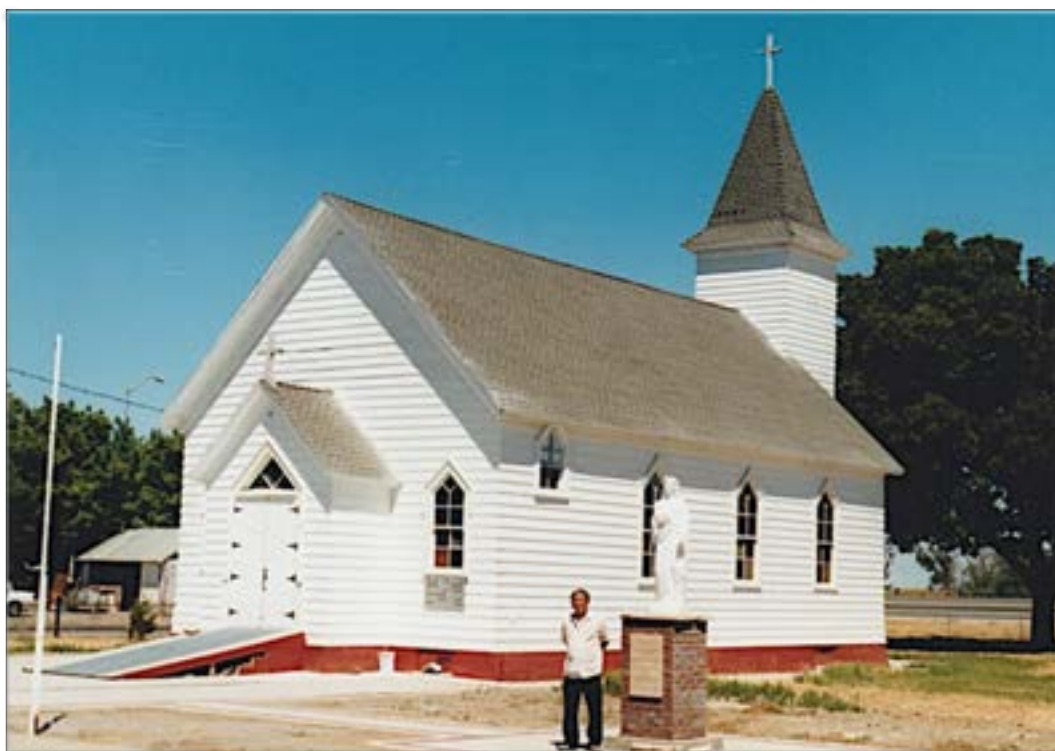


Outdoor improvements, Saint Agnes Church, March 27, 2004



Raising the large Cross, Saint Agnes Church, April 22, 2004

On May 29, 2004, Bishop William Weigand celebrated the 95th Anniversary Mass of the newly renovated Saint Agnes Church and offered his blessing on the newly constructed outdoor cross and Saint Agnes Shrine.



Father Joe in front of the newly renovated Saint Agnes Church, August 15, 2004

NAMED PASTOR OF SAINT PETER PARISH, DIXON

In July 2004, while Father Joe Hường was on pilgrimage in Rome, he received a telephone call from Bishop William Weigand who asked if he would be willing to accept a new assignment to the parish of Saint Peter in Dixon.

On August 20, 2004, Bishop Weigand appointed Father Joe pastor of Saint Peter Parish in Dixon. His pastorate in Dixon was relatively short in duration, only two years and a month, ending on September 26, 2006.

Father Joe was also appointed as dean of the Yolo/Delta Deanery by Bishop Weigand in 2005, a position he served until 2006 when he became pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Marysville.



Photo by John E Boll

Saint Peter Church, Dixon



Father Joe's Installation Mass as Pastor of Dixon, November 21, 2004

Presiding, Bishop Richard J. Garcia, Auxiliary Bishop of Sacramento



Father Joe and parishioners install the big Cross in Saint Peter Church, May 23, 2006

APPOINTED PASTOR OF SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, MARYSVILLE

It was Bishop Weigand who next appointed Father Joe Hường to the pastorate of Saint Joseph Parish in Marysville on September 27, 2006. Soon after his arrival in the Marysville parish, Father Joe began an ambitious project to renovate the basement of the church building, which had been unused for fifty years. He converted the basement into a parish food pantry and youth center, transforming the space into an attractive area where parish groups could meet together for both apostolic and spiritual purposes. Father Joe loved working on projects such as this because it challenged him to transform a rundown building into a beautiful and useful space once again.

Father Joe was also appointed as dean of the Sutter Buttes Deanery on March 1, 2008 by Bishop Weigand and he served in this role until January 1, 2010 when he was given his final parish assignment in Sacramento.

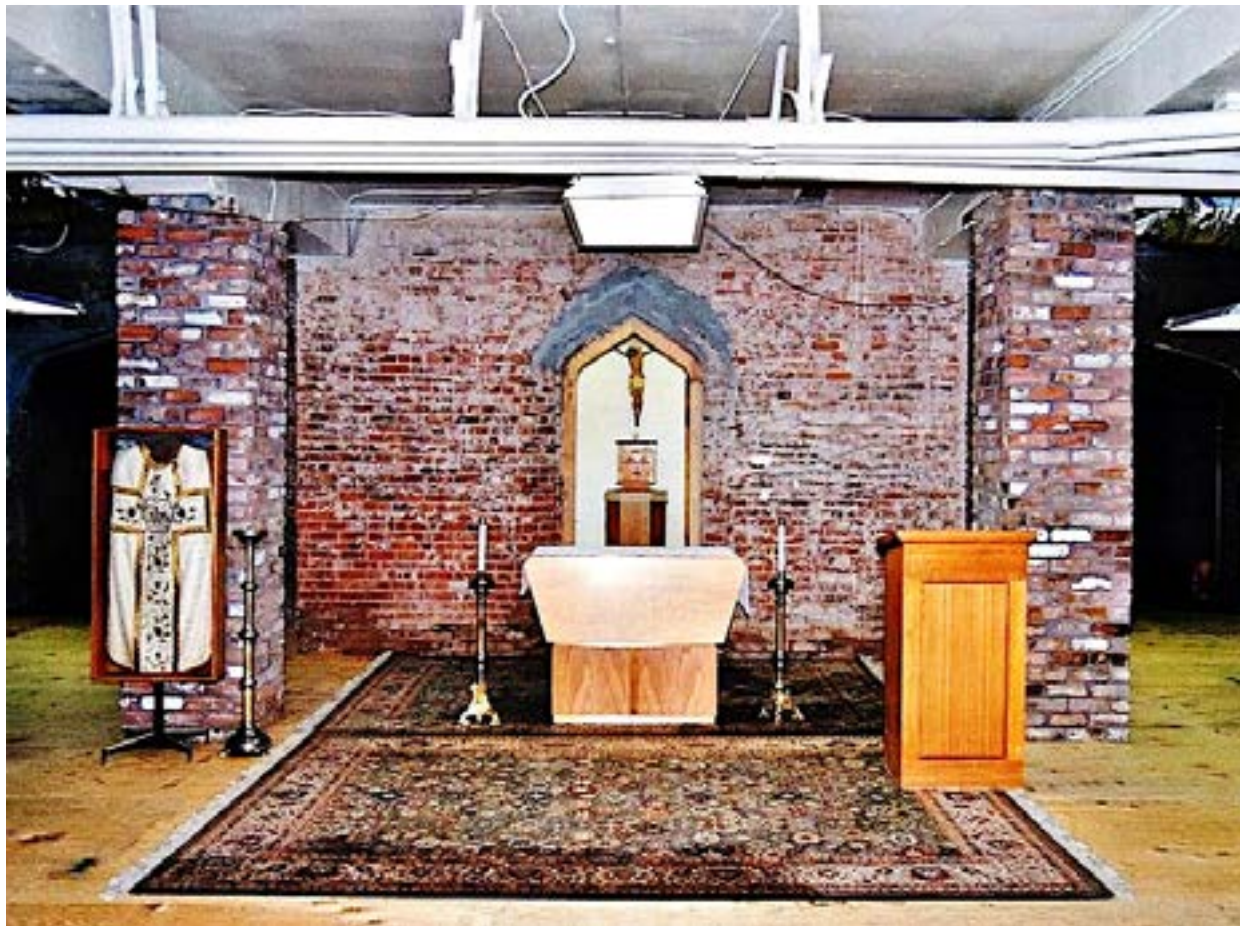


Photo by John E Boll

Saint Joseph Church, Marysville



Basement prior to renovation, Saint Joseph Church, Marysville, January 22, 2007



The renovation of the basement at Saint Joseph Church, Marysville, September 13, 2007

FINAL APPOINTMENT, SAINT ANNE PARISH, SACRAMENTO

On January 1, 2010, Bishop Jaime Soto, who succeeded Bishop Weigand as bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento, appointed Father Joe Hương pastor of Saint Anne Parish in South Sacramento. The church was in need of repair so Father Joe set the wheels in motion to address the situation. He had the personality and keen ability to pull together people who had the skills and resources to get the job done. When the renovation project was complete, there was a beautiful church fully renovated with a new marble altar, ambo and presider's chair that was quarried from the marble quarries of his native land of Vietnam. In a special tribute, Father Joe donated the new marble appointments in the church in honor of his parents.



Saint Anne Church, prior to renovation, January 30, 2010



Renovation work begins on Saint Anne Church



Renovation work continues on Saint Anne Church



Father Joe and parishioner Jose Cruz install and unveil the new cross, March 19, 2010



Never a dull moment for Father Joe Hường





Father Joe oversees the long-awaited arrival of the new Altar, Ambo and Presider's chair made from Vietnamese marble to be included in the renovations of Saint Anne's Church, Sacramento 2010

FATHER JOE HƯƠNG CELEBRATED HIS 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION

On October 9, 2010, Father Joe celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving at Saint Anne Church, celebrating his 25 years of Priesthood. Bishops Francis Quinn and Dominic Mai thanh Lương concelebrated, alongside their fellow priests. Monsignor David C. Quitugua, longtime friend of Father Joe, was the homilist at this celebratory Mass.



Concelebrating Priests at Father Joe's Thanksgiving Mass



Father Joe resides at his Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Mass of Ordination



Father Joe's Mother at his 25th Anniversary Mass of Ordination



Many parishioners and friends attend Father Joe's 25th Anniversary Mass of Ordination



Father Joe with Bishops Mai thanh Lương and Francis Quinn offer a blessing at the 25th Anniversary of Father Joe's Ordination Mass

Shortly thereafter, the major renovations in the church continued with the installation of the new marble altar, ambo and Presider's chair. New flooring and the addition of a chapel completed the renovation work.





The Installation of the new Altar, Ambo and Presider's Chair





The renovation of the Church is progressing



On July 23rd, 2011 at 11:00 a.m., the parishioners of Saint Anne Parish joined together with Father Joe Hường and Bishop Jaime Soto as the celebrant, to proclaim the 50th Anniversary of the founding of Saint Anne Church and to celebrate a Mass of Dedication of the new altar in the beautifully renovated church.



Bishop Jaime Soto comes to Saint Anne's Church to Anoint the Altar and celebrates the First Mass of the newly renovated Church



Bishop Soto anoints the new Altar



Father Joe incenses Bishop Jaime Soto



Bishop Soto, with Concelebrating Priests, celebrates the First Mass on the New Altar



Photo by John E Boll

The Newly Renovated of Saint Anne Church, Sacramento

In 2012, Father Joe Hường installed and dedicated this statue of the Blessed Mother, fashioned from marble in his native country of Vietnam. This addition has created a quiet place of reflection for parishioners and guests at Saint Anne Church.



The new Statue of the Blessed Mother of God



THE DEATH OF FATHER JOE HƯƠNG'S MOTHER



Father Joe's mother, Phạm thị Ngoan died on June 9, 2013 in Sacramento at age of 93, her mind still sharp, with Father Joe, his sister Khiêm and her children at her side.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on June 17, 2013, with Bishop Jaime Soto as the main celebrant and Monsignor James C. Kidder was the homilist at Saint Anne Church in Sacramento. Father Joe's mother was laid to rest next to his father, Nguyễn văn Quý at Saint Mary Cemetery, Sacramento, California.

Phạm thị Ngoan

April 7, 1920 – June 9, 2013



Father Joe wearing the white headband, a traditional Vietnamese sign of respect and mourning



Bishop Soto celebrates the Funeral Mass for Phạm thị Ngoan



Father Joe concelebrates the Funeral Mass with Bishop Soto



Bishop Soto incenses the casket of Phạm thị Ngoan



Father Joe blesses the casket of his mother



Father Joe Hường held a special place in his heart for his mother and the sacrifices she made for her children. In a loving tribute, Father Joe wrote these last words to his mother:

Lời Cuối với Mẹ

Mẹ ơi con biết nói gì đây trong khi chúng con từ biệt mẹ lần cuối này. Xin cho con được tỏ vẻ với mẹ chỉ vài lời thôi. Chúng con kính nhớ mẹ khi xưa. Ôi biết bao tháng năm vất vả ngược xuôi để nuôi đàn con thơ. Mẹ chẳng nề chịu khó nhọc, lặn lội sớm chiều để nuôi chúng con nên người. Cuộc đời của mẹ đã cho chúng con biết bao nhiêu tháng năm đầm ấm vui tươi.

Chúng con xin cúi đầu tạ ơn mẹ. Xin mẹ tha thứ những lầm lỗi chúng con đã làm để cho mẹ phải đau lòng. Xin mẹ hãy ra đi trong an bình để hưởng Thánh Nhan Chúa và gặp gỡ đại gia đình thân yêu. Xin mẹ cầu nguyện cho chúng con.

Xa
con
lòng
Đắng cay thêm Mẹ lòng con phiền
có
đâu
yên



Father Joe Hường Parents' final resting place, Saint Mary Cemetery, Sacramento, CA

On April 1, 2019, Father Joe Hường served as a pallbearer at Bishop Francis Quinn's funeral. Bishop Quinn ordained Father Joe to the Priesthood in 1985.



Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Sacramento

In the later months of 2020, in the midst of the Covid pandemic, the many guidelines set forth to prevent the spread of disease also prevented the use of the missalettes during the celebration of Mass. Through monetary donations from his friends in the Sao Mai Choir, Father Joe was able to install two screens with projectors, allowing his parishioners to remain actively involved in the Mass. Due to his declining health, Father Joe was not privileged to offer Mass with the use of the new screens and projectors. They now remain a reminder for his parishioners of his love for singing in the celebration of Mass.



As the sun was shining brightly on October 4, 2020, a small group of parishioners was preparing for a surprise outdoor celebration to honor their beloved Father Joe Hường on the 35th Anniversary of his Ordination. Although the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions prevented a large gathering of parishioners and friends, this small but mighty group made sure that Father Joe was celebrated for his dedication to the Church.



April 17th, 2021 marked a special day for the young members of Saint Anne's as Father Joe Hường celebrated two Masses of First Holy Communion. Less than a month later, on May 1st, 2021, Father Joe celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation with his growing parish. Due to his declining health, this was the final Mass that he would be able to offer for his family of Saint Anne Parish.



First Holy Communion on April 17, 2021



Confirmation on May 1, 2021

Father Joe Hường grew up speaking the Vietnamese language and found great joy in ministering to the Vietnamese parishes in California, offering Mass and spiritual retreats as often as he could. In addition, he was fluent in both English and Spanish, which enabled him to serve the major language groups in the Diocese of Sacramento. He served Saint Anne Parish just months shy of two complete six-year terms as pastor. He was planning to retire on July 1, 2022.

FATHER JOE HƯƠNG BECOMES AFFLICTED WITH CANCER

Father Joe Hường was stricken with cancer before it became a known reality. Early in the new year of 2021, Father Joe was diagnosed with stage four cancer. With his deep faith and commitment to the church, along with his love for his parishioners, he remained steadfast in ministering to his parish community for as long as he could. Father Joe was determined to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with his parish candidates. This Mass, held on May 1, 2021, was the last Mass he was able to celebrate with his parishioners.

Father Joe remained at the Saint Anne's rectory, where his two nieces, Thúy and Hà, nephews, Đạt and Nguyễn, and his sister, Khiêm, stayed 24 hours a day to care for him. His niece Thúy, a medical doctor serving in Ironton, Ohio, flew to Sacramento to oversee the care of her beloved uncle, Father Joe.

Father Joe grew weaker as the cancer continued its vicious attack on his body. Bishop Soto asked Father Mieczyslaw "Mitch" Maleszyk, pastor of the neighboring Saint Anthony Parish in the Pocket Area, to temporarily take over the administration of the parish during Father Joe's illness. Father Soane Kaniseli, a former pastor of Saint Anne Parish who is now retired, agreed to celebrate the parish Masses until the new parish administrator, Father Lawrence Kithinji, arrived in the parish on July 1, 2021 to take over the pastoral leadership of the parish.

DEATH COMES TO FATHER JOSEPH MARY NGUYỄN XUÂN HƯƠNG

Father Joe Hường had purchased a home for himself in the area not far from Saint Anne Parish where he had planned to retire on July 1, 2022. His sister Khiêm's family took him to his home on June 17, 2021 and stayed with him day and night until Father Joe quietly and peacefully breathed his last breath at 4:52 a.m. on Saturday, July 17, 2021. His sister Khiêm and her children were by Father Joe's side as the Lord called him home to the Kingdom of Heaven. He died at the age of 74, just three months shy of his 75th birthday and less than three months short of his 36th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood.

Father Joe Hường will be remembered as the first native-born Vietnamese Roman Catholic priest in Sacramento diocese and one of two Vietnamese born priests to be ordained in the state of California.

FUNERAL LITURGY CELEBRATED FOR FATHER JOSEPH MARY NGUYỄN XUÂN HƯƠNG

A Vigil was held for Father Joe Hương at Saint Anne Church on Tuesday evening, August 3, 2021. The celebrant of the Vigil was Father Nguyễn quốc Tuấn, SDB, a good friend of Father Joe and homilist at the Vigil was Monsignor David C. Quitugua from the Archdiocese of Agana, Guam, a lifelong friend of Father Joe at Saint Patrick Seminary in Menlo Park.

Saint Anne Church was filled with Father Joe's family members, parishioners of Saint Anne Parish, and friends from near and far. The liturgy and the homily were very moving for all who attended the Vigil.



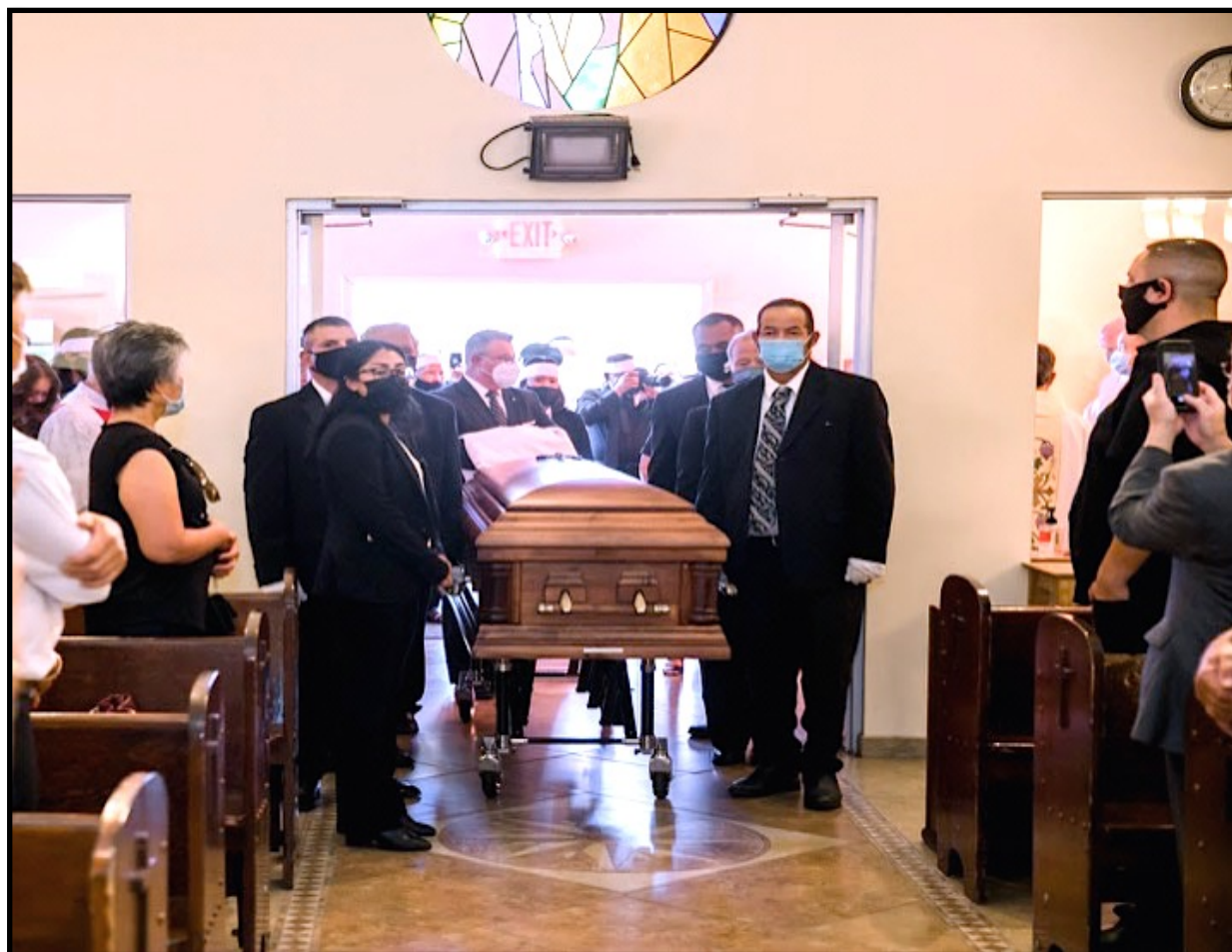
The Diocesan Catholic Cemetery Funeral Service brings the body of Father Joe to Saint Anne Church for an Evening Mass for the Parishioners of Saint Anne Parish



Monsignor Dominic Đỗ văn Đĩnh, a lifelong friend of Father Joe blesses the white headband

*Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

*Kìa Chúa kêu mời. Này con đáp lời.
Vì con nghe tiếng Chúa trong đêm gọi con.
Nhờ Chúa dẫn đường, con bước tới cùng.
Và trong tim ủ ấp bóng hình dân Ngươi.*





Homily given by Monsignor David C. Quitugua, a classmate and close friend of Father Joe



The Knights of Columbus present a Resolution of Condolence to the Nguyễn Family

*I am the Bread of life.
You who come to me shall not hunger;
and who believe in me shall not thirst.
No one can come to me unless the Father beckons.*

*I am the Resurrection, I am the life.
If you believe in me, even though you die, you shall live forever.*

*And I will raise you up, and I will raise you up,
and I will raise you up on the last day.*



The Concelebrants at the Mass for Father Joe Hường at Saint Anne Church, Sacramento



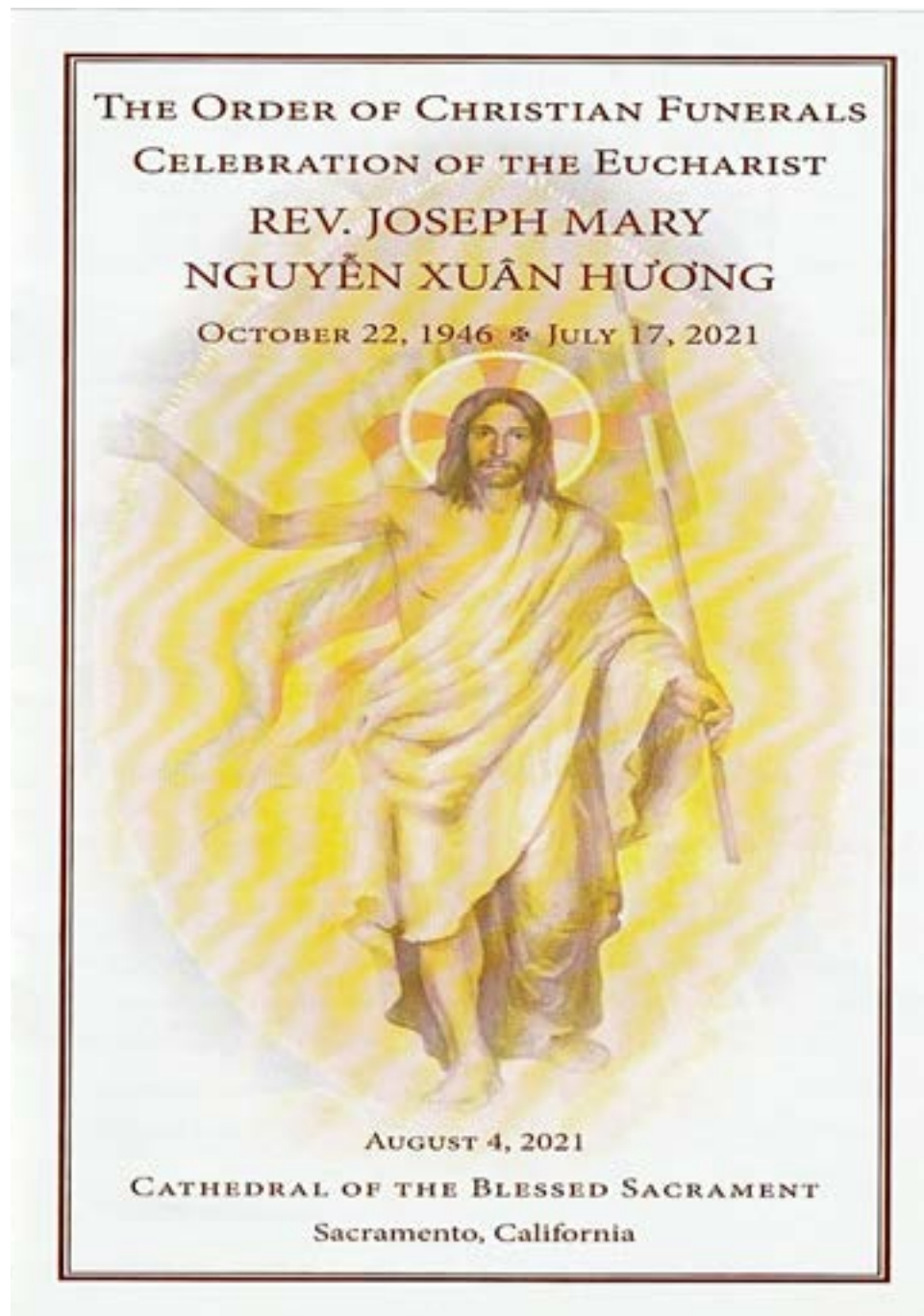
The Knights of Columbus Honor Guard keep watch after the Funeral Liturgy at Saint Anne Church



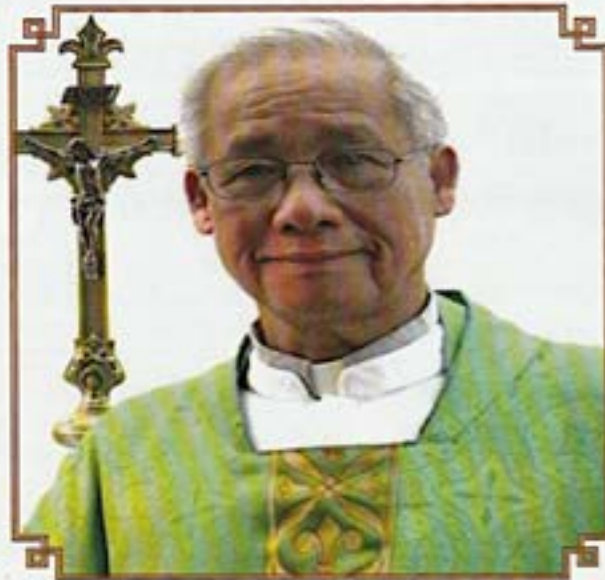
After the Funeral Liturgy at Saint Anne Church, the Body of Father Joe Hường is taken back to Saint Mary Funeral Home for the Funeral Mass at the Cathedral

FUNERAL MASS AT THE CATHEDRAL

On Wednesday, August 4, the Feast of Saint John Vianney (Patron Saint of parish priests) the Mass of Christian Burial for Father Joseph Mary Nguyễn xuân Hương was celebrated at 10:00 a.m. Bishop Jaime Soto, Bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento, Bishop William K. Weigand, Bishop Emeritus of Sacramento and many brother priests from the Dioceses of Sacramento, Stockton, San Jose and San Francisco as well as Father Joe's family, parishioners and friends from the parishes he had served during his 36 years of priestly ministry, were all present at the Solemn Requiem Mass.



"In Caritate non Ficta"



REV. JOSEPH MARY
NGUYỄN XUÂN HƯƠNG

OCTOBER 22, 1946 ✦ JULY 17, 2021

ORDINATION MASS – OCTOBER 5, 1985

PRINCIPAL CELEBRANT

Most Rev. Jaime Soto

CONCELEBRANTS

Most Rev. William K. Weigand
Priests of the Diocese of Sacramento
Visiting Priests

HOMILIST

Rev. Msgr. James Kidder

LECTORS

Dr. Thúy Nguyễn, Vũ Trần

PALLBEARERS

Rev. Alban Uba, Rev. Roland Ramirez,
Rev. Joseph Huyen Nguyen, Rev. Hao D. Dinh,
Rev. Paul-Cuong Phan, Rev. Peter Luc Phan

GIFT BEARERS

Hà Nguyễn, Đạt Nguyễn,
Nguyễn Nguyễn, Hạnh Trần

MUSICIANS

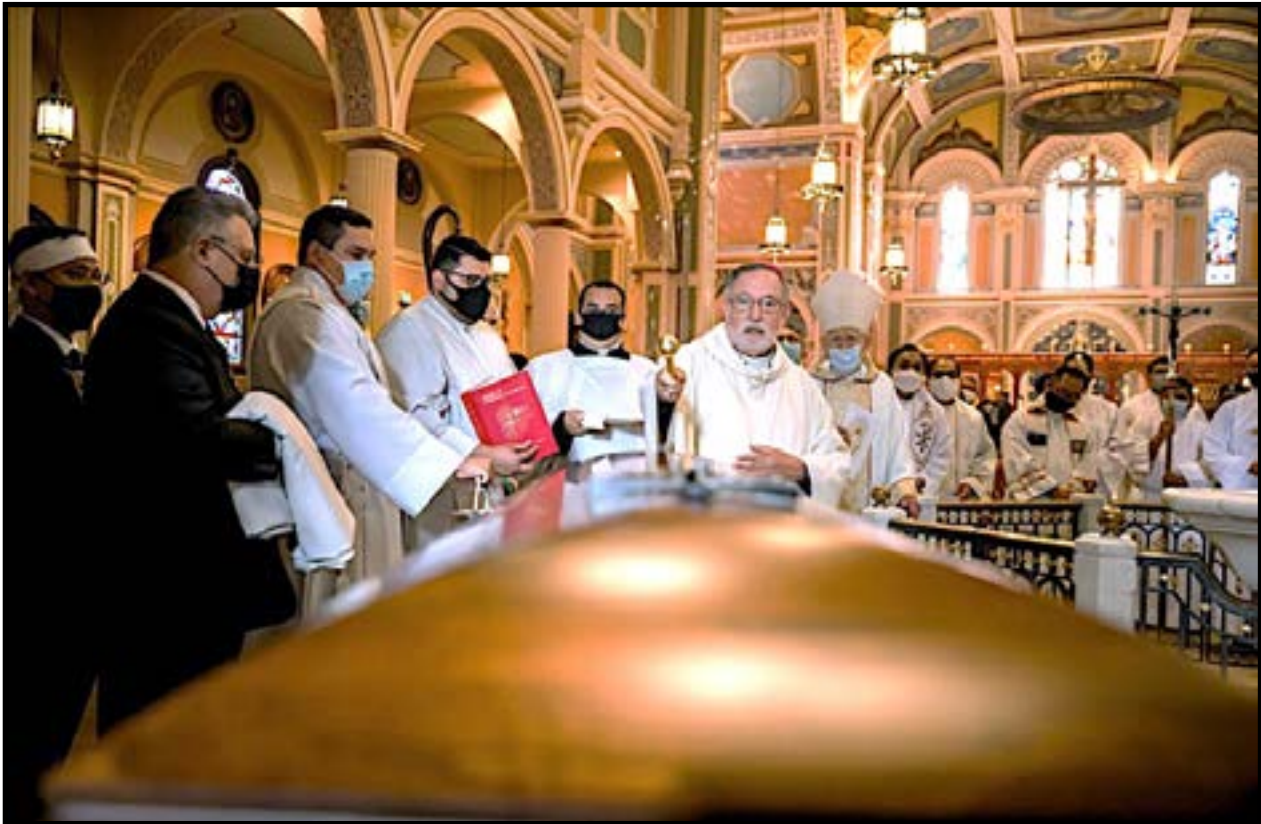
Choir of St. Anne's Parish
Sesilia Eke, *director & cantor*
Choir of Vietnamese Martyrs Parish
Ly Pham, *coordinator*



Arrival of the hearse at the Cathedral for the Funeral Mass



At the Introductory Rites of the Funeral Liturgy, Bishop Soto sprinkled Father Joe Hường's casket with holy water, saying, "In the waters of baptism, Father Joe Hường died with Christ and rose with him to a new life. May he now share with him eternal glory."



“There is one thing I ask of the Lord, only this do I seek: to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.”

“Có một điều tôi xin Chúa, một điều tôi kiếm tìm, đó là tôi được cư ngụ trong nhà Chúa suốt đời tôi.”

Psaln 26:4



Entrance Rite with Bishops Soto and Weigand



Procession of the casket into the Cathedral





After the proclamation of the Gospel, the Gospel Book is placed on Father Joe's Casket

The homilist at the Funeral Mass was Monsignor James Kidder who was the Sacramento Diocesan Vocations Director when Father Joe made initial contact with the diocese. Even though California and the world was still in the grip of the Covid-19 virus, the Cathedral was filled with those who knew and loved Father Joe.



Monsignor James C. Kidder was the homilist





The Beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer



Concelebrating Priests at Father Joe Hường's Funeral Mass



After the Rite of Communion, Bishop Soto offered the prayers of Final Commendation, praying, "Trusting in God, we have prayed together for Father Joseph Hương and now we come to the last farewell. There is sadness in parting, but we take comfort in the hope that one day we shall see Father Joseph again and enjoy his friendship. Although this congregation will disperse in sorrow, the mercy of God will gather us together again in the joy of his Kingdom." Bishop Soto then incensed the body of Father Joe while the community sang, "Saints of God, come to his aid! Hasten to meet him, Angels of the Lord! Receive his soul and present him to God the Most High."





Bishop Soto blesses Father Joe Hường's Body



Bishop Soto incenses Father Joe Hường's Body for the Final Time

At the conclusion of the Funeral Liturgy, the body of Father Joe was taken out of the Cathedral to begin the final journey to Saint Mary Cemetery for the Rite of Committal and burial.



Procession out of the Cathedral

“I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and anyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

*“Ta là sự sống lại và là sự sống.
Ai tin Ta, dầu có chết, cũng sẽ được sống.
Và kẻ nào sống mà tin Ta, sẽ không phải chết muôn đời.”*

John 11:25-26

FINAL FAREWELL TO FATHER JOE HƯƠNG

As the casket was brought to the hearse in front of the Cathedral, the priests of the diocese sang together the “Salve Regina” in Gregorian Chant, commending Father Joe to the special care of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, the Christ.



The Bishops and Priests chant the “Salve Regina” as a final farewell to Father Joe

*Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiae: vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exsules, filii Evae. Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum
valle. Eia ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte. Et Iesum,
benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.
O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.*

*Hail, Mary, Mother and Queen of tender mercy, our life, our comfort, and our hope, we hail you.
From this foreign land Eve's sons and daughters cry to you. So lost, so full of fear, we mourn, we
grieve, we sigh from this tearful vale of exile. Ah, then, our help, our advocate and guide, turn
now to use the gaze of your all loving eyes, so full of mercy. And Jesus your Son, and Lord, your
womb's most blessed fruit show him to us when we complete our sojourn.
O gentle, o loving, o beloved, o Virgin Mary.*

*Lạy Nữ Vương, Mẹ nhân lành làm cho chúng con được sống, được vui, được cậy.
Thân lạy Mẹ, chúng con con cháu Evà, ở chốn khách đầy, kêu đến cùng Bà;
Chúng con ở nơi khốc lóc than thở kêu khẩn Bà thương.
Hỡi ôi! Bà là Chủ bầu chúng con, xin ghé mặt thương xem chúng con.
Đến sau cõi đầy, xin cho chúng con được thấy Đức Chúa Giêsu, Con lòng Bà gồm phước lạ.
Ôi khoan thay, nhân thay, dịu thay, Thánh Maria trọn đời đồng trinh.*



Bishop William K. Weigand blesses Father Joe Hường's Casket





Hà Nguyễn offers a final farewell to her uncle, Father Joe Hương



FATHER JOE HƯƠNG'S FINAL PROCESSION TO SAINT MARY CEMETERY

The body of Father Joe was taken in procession to the Priests' Section of Saint Mary Cemetery in Sacramento for the Rite of Committal and burial. Monsignor David C. Quitugua was the presider of the Rite of Committal. After the lowering of the casket into the grave, the family and friends of Father Joe slowly departed, knowing they will see him again in the glorious Kingdom of God on the final day.



Monsignor David C. Quitugua blesses Father Joe Hương' Casket



Monsignor Dominic Đỗ văn Đĩnh blesses Father Joe Hương's Casket



Monsignor David Quitugua gives the Cross to Father Joe's Family



Lowering of Father Joe Hường's Casket into the grave



Father Joe's Casket lowered into the grave is covered with roses and head bands which is part of the Vietnamese Funeral Tradition

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to Almighty God our brother Joseph Mary Nguyễn xuân Hương, and we commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

*The Lord bless him and keep him,
The Lord makes his face to shine upon him and be gracious to him,
the Lord lift up his countenance upon him and give him peace.*



Photo by Ha Nguyen

Headstone of Father Joe Hương, Saint Mary Cemetery, Sacramento

*The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want.
 In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
 Beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul.
 He guides me in right paths for his name's sake.
 Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil;
 for you are at my side with your rod and your staff that give me courage.
 You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes;
 You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
 Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life;
 And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for years to come.*

*Chúa là mục tử chăn dắt tôi, tôi chẳng thiếu thốn gì.
 Trong đồng cỏ xanh tươi, Người cho tôi nằm nghỉ.
 Người đưa tôi tới dòng nước trong lành và bổ sức cho tôi.
 Người dẫn tôi trên đường ngay nẻo chính vì danh dự của Người.
 Lạy Chúa, dầu qua lối âm u, con sợ gì nguy khốn, vì có Chúa ở cùng.
 Con trông Ngài bảo vệ, con vững dạ an tâm.
 Chúa dọn sẵn cho con bữa tiệc ngay trước mặt quân thù.
 Dầu con, Chúa xức đượm dầu thơm, ly rượu con đầy tràn chan chứa.
 Lòng nhân hậu và tình thương Chúa ấp ủ tôi suốt cả cuộc đời,
 và tôi được ở trong đền Người những ngày tháng, những năm dài triền miên.*

Psalm 23



Photo by Ha Nguyen

**Father Joe Hương's grave in the Priests' Circle
where he was laid to rest next to his friend Father Benedict S. DeLeon,
Saint Mary Cemetery, Sacramento**

*My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless His Holy Name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord, and never forget all His blessings.*

*Linh hồn tôi ơi, hãy chúc tụng Chúa!
Con người tôi ơi, hãy chúc tụng Thánh Danh Người.
Linh hồn tôi ơi, hãy chúc tụng Chúa, và chớ khá quên mọi ân huệ của Người.*

Psalms 103

FATHER JOE HƯƠNG'S FAMILY MEMBERS

Father Joe was preceded in death by his parents Nguyễn văn Quý and Phạm thị Ngoan, and his brother Nguyễn văn Nam. He is survived by his two sisters, Kình and Khiêm and three brothers Cường, Minh and An. He also survived by five nieces, Thúy, Hà, Hạnh, Vi, Thảo; nine nephews, Đạt, Nguyễn, Vũ, Bảo, Huy, Hoàng, Toàn, Phúc, Chương; three grand-nephews and two grand-nieces.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Father Joe Hương was not typical in any sense of the word. He was not quiet and reserved but outgoing, friendly and vocal. He loved to engage people in conversation, and when it came to clergy gatherings, he always had something to say about the topic at hand. Father Joe was often funny and engaging. He liked a neat and clean home and did his part to keep his living quarters looking good.

When Saigon was being attacked by the Việt Cộng in 1975 and South Vietnam was about to fall to the Communists, Joe sprang into action and convinced his fellow airmen to get into the EC-47 airplane that was ready for takeoff because this was their last chance to escape the onslaught of their country by the attacking Việt Cộng. He was a natural leader who was willing to take risks when the world around him was collapsing. Had he and his fellow airmen not flown out of South Vietnam that day, they may not have survived.

Once Joe arrived in America, he saw his chance to fulfill his dream of being a Catholic priest. He took action and let his interest be known that he would like to become a priest. Doctor Joseph Murphy contacted the Diocese of Sacramento for Joe and Father James Kidder, Vocations Director, soon visited Joe. Shortly after, Bishop Alden Bell accepted Joe as a seminarian for the Diocese of Sacramento.

Father Joe was unique, one of a kind. Not only did he learn English but also Spanish so he could minister in three languages, Vietnamese, English and Spanish. He served the Diocese of Sacramento for 36 years and provided for his parish, Saint Anne, until he was no longer physically able.

Father Joe's earthly journey is completed and the glorious Kingdom of God lies before him as Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Father Joe's father Peter Nguyễn văn Quý and his mother Anne Phạm thị Ngoan and his deceased brother Joseph Nguyễn văn Nam and all the saints welcome him to his final home in the Kingdom of God.

Knights of Columbus

Resolution of Condolence

Council Number 1869

In memory of Brother **Fr. Joseph Huong Nguyen**

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom, to call from our midst our beloved Brother, who departed this life **the 17th day of July, 2021** and

Whereas, by his death, our Council has sustained the loss of an exemplary Catholic gentleman and worthy Knight of Columbus; therefore, be it

Resolved, that our departed Brother be remembered daily in a special Mass offered for the repose of the souls of all deceased Brother Knights at St. Mary's Church, the birthplace of the Order, in New Haven, Connecticut; be it further

Resolved, that while we bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, we mourn the loss of our Brother who has been taken from us, and be it further

Resolved, that this testimonial of condolence, duly signed and sealed, be offered to the family of our departed Brother Knight as an expression of our heartfelt sympathy.



Jelly P. Thomas
David Shewles
Alfred P. ...



Knights of Columbus

Centennial Assembly #1903

Folsom, California

Resolution of Condolence

IN MEMORY OF

Reverend Sir Knight Huong X. Nguyen



Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God in His infinite wisdom to call from our midst our Beloved Brother who departed from this life on

July 17th, 2021, and

Whereas, by his death our Assembly has sustained the loss of a devout Catholic and worthy Knight; Therefore, be it

Resolved, that while we bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, we mourn the loss of our Brother who has been taken from us, and be it further

Resolved, that our departed Brother be remembered daily in a special Mass offered for the repose of the souls of all deceased Brother Knights at St. Mary's Church, the birthplace of the Order, in New Haven, Connecticut; be it further

Resolved, that this testimonial of condolence, duly signed, be offered to the family of our departed Brother Knight as an expression of our heartfelt sympathy.

William A. ...
SIR KNIGHT WILLIAM A. ... FAITHFUL NAVIGATOR

David H. ...
SIR KNIGHT DAVID H. ... HONOR GUARD COMMANDER
Patrick C. ...
SIR KNIGHT PATRICK C. ... MEMORIAL CHAIRMAN



Western States District
Knights of Peter Claver and Ladies Auxiliary

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

Father Joseph Huong Nguyen

WHEREAS Father Joseph Huong Nguyen joined our Noble Order December 2nd, 2016, at St Anne's Council, Sacramento, California. He served as Chaplain for Council and Court 175, until going home on July 17, 2021.

WHEREAS Father "Joe" was a Priest for 36 years, serving as the Pastor of St Anne's Church for over ten years!

WHEREAS Joseph Huong Nguyen honorably served as a Navigator for the South Vietnamese Air Force.. He was a decorated for having provided critical "strategic services" to U.S. military forces during the Vietnam Conflict!

WHEREAS Father was very enthusiastic in providing spiritual and fraternal support to all visiting Clavers be it; District Conferences, Area and local Unit Initiations. Very gracious to Visitors to St Anne Church, Father "Joe" was always accommodating in allowing visiting Claver Officers to address the Parishioners at the end of Mass. Father Joe's smiling face and hospitality will be sorely missed. However, his spirit of "Unity, Friendship, and Christian Charity" will remain his legacy at St Anne's Church!

Therefore be it resolved that we ; BROTHER BRUCE SAMPSON and LADY RENITA LLOYD, Deputies of the Western States District, on behalf of the members offer our condolences and prayers to the family of our beloved Brother who gave so much to God, Church, and Community.

Given this 3rd day of August in the year of our Lord, 2021



Bruce Sampson
BROTHER DEPUTY BRUCE J. SAMPSON

Renita Lloyd
LADY DEPUTY RENITA LLOYD

On July 16, 2022 at 11 a.m., Bishop William K. Weigand and his brother Priests, the family of Father Joe Hường, parishioners and friends gathered at Saint Anne Church, Sacramento, to celebrate the Eucharist on the First Anniversary of Father Joe's Death.



Bishop Emeritus William Weigand and Fellow Priests concelebrate Mass on the First Anniversary of Father Joe's Death at Saint Anne Church, Sacramento



Saint Anne Parish Choir



Sao Mai Choir



**Father Joe's family alongside Bishop William K. Weigand and Monsignor James Kidder
After the First Anniversary of Father Joe's Death
Saint Anne Church, Sacramento
July 16, 2022**



Monsignor David C. Quitugua, Father Joe's family and friends gather to offer prayers and sing in honor of Father Joe's 75th birthday on October 23, 2021 at Saint Mary Cemetery



Father Nguyễn quốc Tuấn, Father Joe's family and friends gather to sing and remember him in prayer on the first anniversary of the death of Father Joe at Saint Mary Cemetery, July 16, 2022

**FATHER JOE HƯƠNG'S JOURNEY OF LIFE THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS
FROM HIS DAYS OF YOUTH TO PRIESTHOOD**



1959



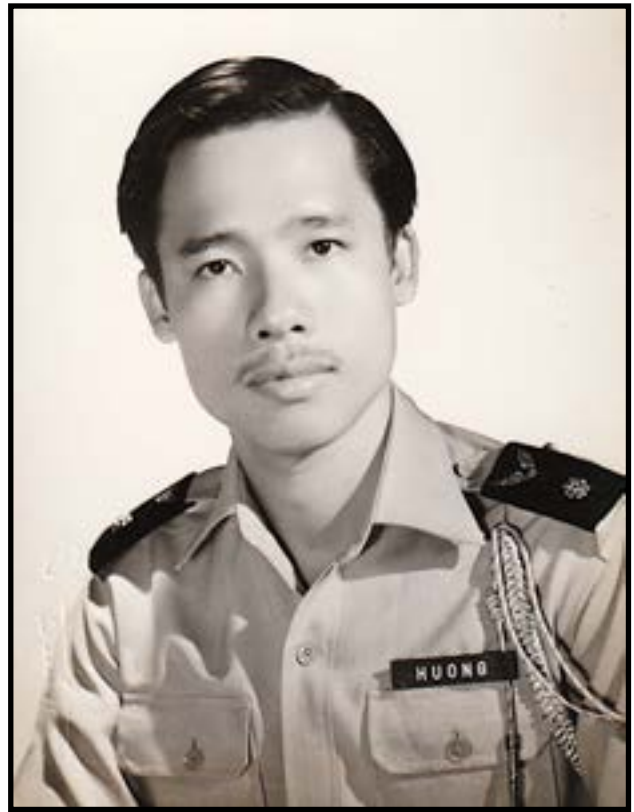
1966



1967



1970



1972



1974



1979



1984



October 6, 1984



October 5, 1985



1985



1988



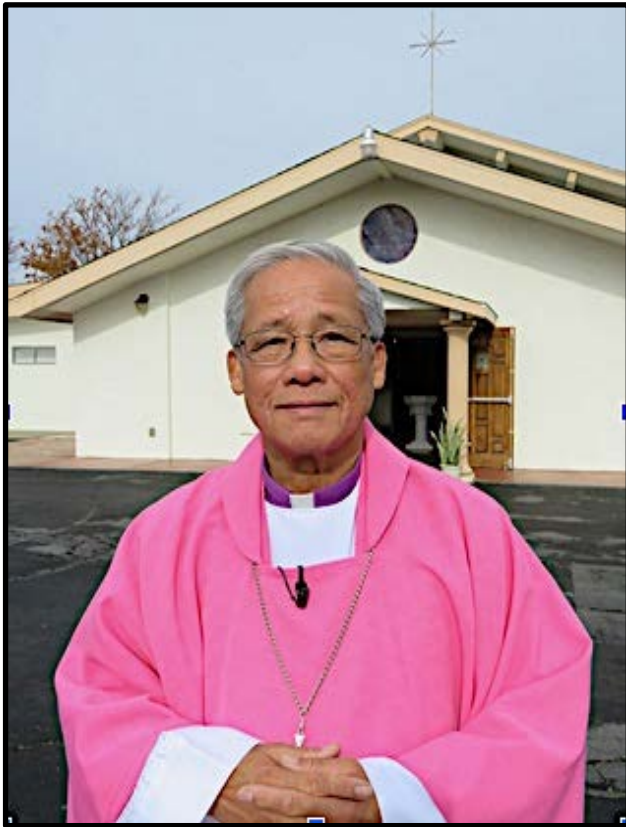
1989



2008



2012



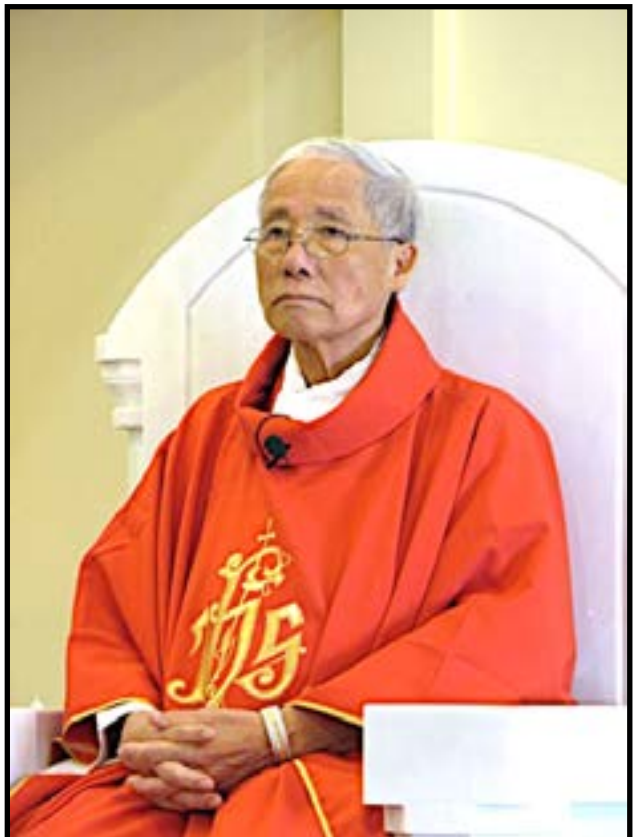
2016



November 10, 2020



Christmas 2020



April 2, 2021

FATHER JOE HƯƠNG'S FAMILY AND TREASURED MEMORIES



Father Joe Hương's Grandmother, Nguyễn thị Đào in 1963



An Lạc Church, Saigon, December 1969

**L-R Back Row: sister Khiêm, Ngoan, Father Joe's mother,
Quý, Father Joe's father, Father Joe Hương
Front Row: brothers An, Minh**

In April 1990, Father Joe Hường was once again reunited with his family, just as he was in Southern Vietnam in 1954. This reunion was one of great joy and hope as Father Joe sponsored his parents and two siblings, An and Cường and Cường's young family in becoming United States citizens.



Father Joe with his Parents, Lincoln, California 1990



Father Joe with his parents and siblings and their families, Lincoln 1994



Father Joe with his parents, Quý and Ngoan, at their Golden Wedding Anniversary at Saint Joseph Church, Auburn, April 16, 1994



Father Joe's parents at their Golden Wedding Anniversary Reception



Father Joe, visiting Vietnam for the first time after leaving in 1975, paused for a photo in front of his childhood home with his nieces and nephews, Saigon, February 1996



Father Joe returns to Vietnam a second time with his mother, August 1996



Father Joe with his mother, siblings and their families on the Feast of the Holy Family at Saint Isidore's Rectory, Yuba City, December 27, 1998



Santa Claus, also known as Father Joe, makes a visit to Father Joe's mother and family, Christmas 2002



Father Joe accompanied his mother to the audience with Pope John Paul II at Piazza of Saint Peter's Basilica, Vatican City on November 8, 2000 to celebrate her 80th birthday during the Holy Jubilee Year



Father Joe and his mother visit Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem 2000



Father Joe, along with his mother and nieces, congratulate Bishop Dominic Mai thanh Lương following his Ordination as the first Vietnamese - American Bishop, June 11, 2003.



Father Joe and his family with Cardinal Roger Mahony, June 11, 2003



Father Joe with his mother, Christmas 2011, at Saint Anne Church



Christmas 2019 at Saint Anne Church, Sacramento



Father Joe with his mother and his sister's family after celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation of his nephew Đạt at Saint Isidore Church, Yuba City, April 27, 2002



Father Joe's nephews Đạt and Nguyễn, receive their College Diploma



Father Joe's niece Thúy Nguyễn, receives her M.D. Diploma



Father Joe's niece Hà Nguyễn, receives her Pharm.D. Diploma

FATHER JOE HƯƠNG LIFE OF MILITARY AND ADVENTURE



Gò Công 1967



Trà Vinh 1968



Vĩnh Bình 1968



Thủ Đức 1971



Thủ Đức 1973



Trường Tiền, Huế 1973



Phú Bài, Huế 1973



Joe Hương flew from Huế to Đà Nẵng in 1973



Thien Mu Temple (Chùa Thiên Mụ), Huế 1973



Sông Hương, Huế 1973



The International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima on February 1, 1974
Ghi dấu ngày Joe Hương được theo thánh tượng Nữ Vương Hòa Bình đi Huế, La Vang, Đà Nẵng, Qui Nhơn, Biên Hòa ngày 1 tháng 2, năm 1974



Joe Hương says goodbye to the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady Fatima at Tân Sơn Nhứt Airport, Saigon 1974



Basilica of Our Lady of La Vang, Huế 1974



Joe Hường kneels in prayer at what remains of the original Basilica of Our Lady of La Vang, Huế 1974



Cầu Hiền Lương, Cồn Phụng 1974



Vĩnh Long 1974



With Archbishop Nguyễn Văn Bình, Saigon 1974

Joe Hương is first on the left



With Bishop Phạm Ngọc Chi 1974

Joe Hương is second on the left

718th Squadron Thien Long EC-47 (Phi Doan 718 Thiên Long EC-47), gathered in Sacramento, October 2010, to honor Father Joe Hương on his 25th Anniversary to the Priesthood, followed by a celebratory reunion party.



Father Joe, surrounded by fellow military squadron 718 members, celebrating his 25th Ordination Anniversary



Squadron 718 Thiên Long EC-47 Reunion 2014

FATHER JOE HƯƠNG LIFE OF MINISTRY

“The Good Shepherd has laid down his life for his sheep.”

John 10:11



**With Bishop Alfonso Gallegos
Following his Ordination as a Bishop, November 4, 1981**



**With Bishop Francis Quinn
After Christmas Mass at the Cathedral of The Blessed Sacrament, Sacramento 1982**



Father Joe first Anointing of the Sick at a convalescent home, Rancho Cordova 1985



Father Joe teaches Catechism Class for Children 1987



Father Joe blesses the Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital 1995



Father Joe celebrates the Jubilee Year of 2000 at Saint Isidore Church, Yuba City



**Father Joe Hường is with Bishop Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận
at Vietnamese Catholic Congress, Houston, Texas 1997**



Father Joe Hường, alongside the newly named Vietnamese Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận in Rome, February 21, 2001



Father Joe Hường's mother, Ngoan and sister Khiêm with the newly name Vietnamese Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận



Father Joe Hường at Pontificio Collegio San Pietro Chapel, beside him is Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận's casket, September 20, 2002



Father Joe gives a blessing to Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận's casket at Pontificio Collegio San Pietro Chapel, September 20, 2002



**Funeral Mass of Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận,
Saint Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, September 20, 2002**



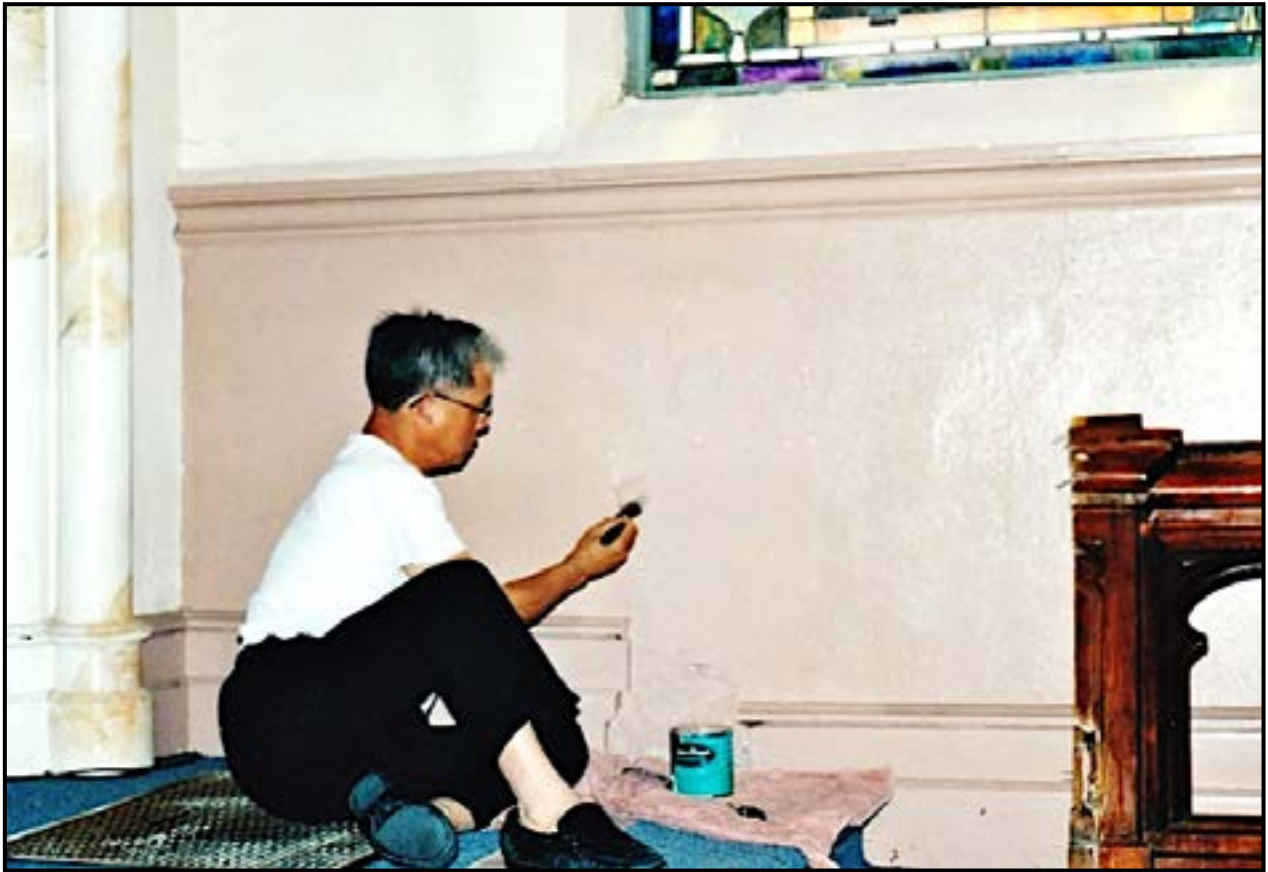
**Father Joe Hường at the Rite of Committal and burial of Cardinal Francis Xavier
Nguyễn văn Thuận, Campo Verano Cemetary in Rome, September 21, 2002**



Blessing the animals, Dixon 2005



Teaching the Children Catechism at the Camp, Dixon 2005



Saint Peter Church, Dixon 2006



Father Joe and parishioners walk-a-thon, Saint Joseph Parish, Marysville 2007



Father Joe celebrates Mass at the Catholic Cemetery on Memorial Day, Marysville 2007



Bishop Jaime Soto visits Saint Joseph Parish, Marysville, to bless the statue of Our Blessed Mother, December 8, 2007



Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, Marysville 2008



Basement of Saint Joseph Church, Marysville 2008

Father Joe Hường found great joy in offering Mass and was devoted to assisting couples as a spiritual advisor at the Marriage-Family Enrichment Program in San Jose. He was also an active participant and spiritual leader in Cursillo, both in San Jose and Sacramento.





Hard at work, maintaining the grounds of Saint Anne Parish!





Working at Saint Anne Parish





Never a Dull Moment!





Father Joe lighting the Easter Candle, Easter Vigil at Saint Anne Church 2010



Bishop William Weigand Blessed a new outdoor Cross, Saint Anne Church 2010



**With Bishop William Weigand
After the Feast Day Mass of Saint Peter Chanel 2010**



Father Joe joins the Saint Peter Chanel Feast Day celebration, Saint Anne Parish Hall 2010



Procession of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Saint Anne Church 2010



Father Joe conducts a Bible Study for Saint Anne's parishioners 2013

Saint Anne Parish Festival 2016





In 2016, members of The Knights of Peter Claver gather with their Chaplain Father Joe Hường



Feast of Saint Peter Chanel, Saint Anne Church 2017



Father Joe serves as Master of Ceremonies for the Vietnamese Priests Convocation Emmaus VII at San Jose, California, October 2017



Vietnamese Priests Convocation Group Photo with Bishop Emmaus VIII at Christ Cathedral, Garden Grove, California, October 2019



Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Saint Anne Church, Sacramento 2019



March 28, 2020



April 8, 2020

The restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic did not stop the faithful from gathering as Father Joe presented the Holy Sacrament contained in the monstrance during outdoor benediction at Saint Anne Church, Sacramento CA



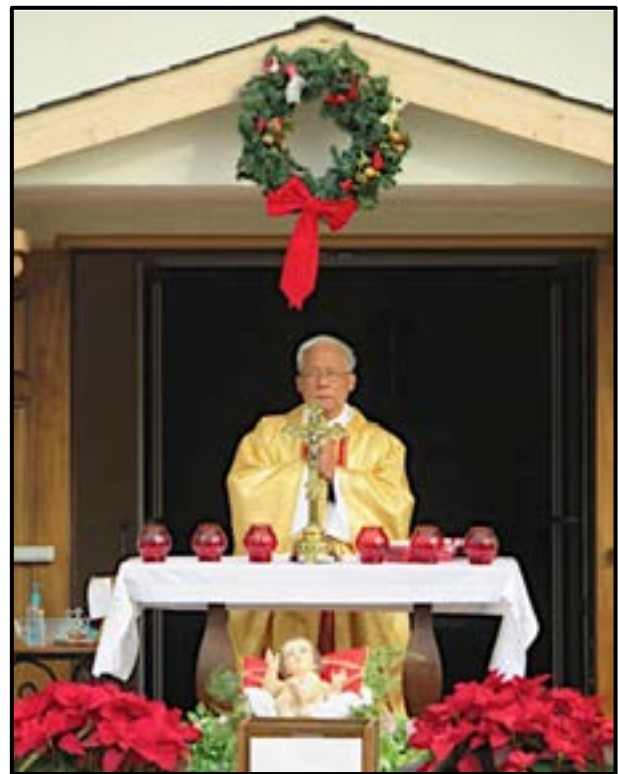
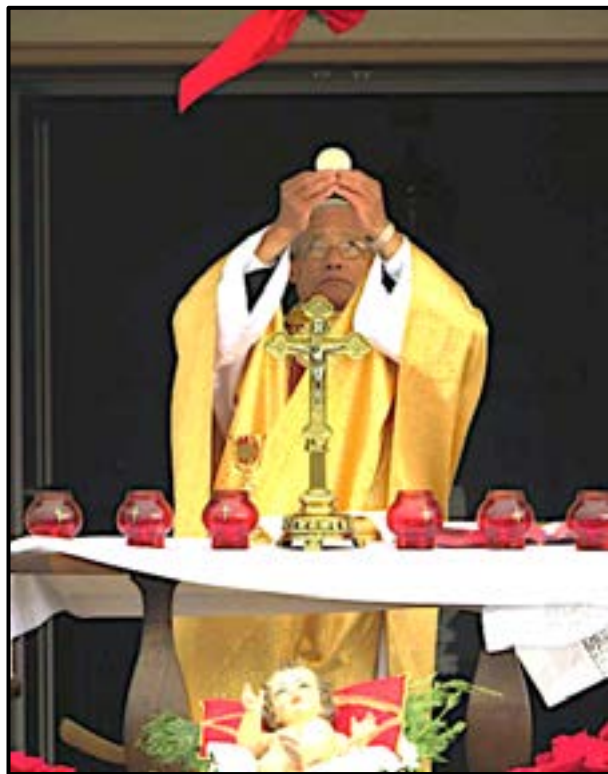
Thanksgiving Day Mass at Saint Anne Church, Sacramento, November 26, 2020



The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary 2020

*Immaculate Mary, your praises we sing.
You reign now in heaven with Jesus our King.
Ave, Ave, Ave, Maria! Ave, Ave, Maria!*

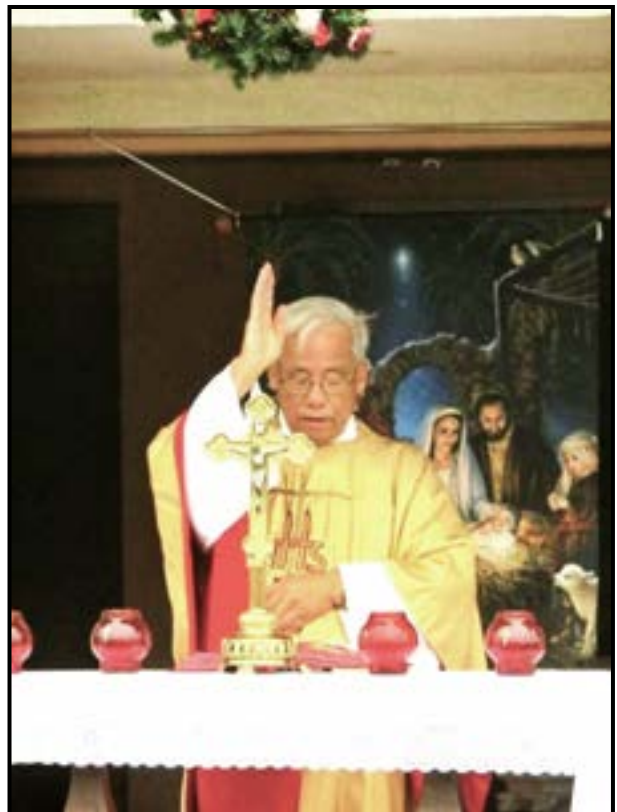
Christmas Mass at Saint Anne Church, Sacramento 2020



*Đêm Thánh vô cùng giây phút tung bìnng, đất với trời xẻ chữ đồng.
Đêm nay Chúa Con thần thánh tôn thờ, canh khuya giáng sinh trong chốn hang lừa.
Ôn châu báu không bờ bến, biết tìm kiếm củ a chi đèn.
Ôi Chúa thiên đàng cam nếm cơ hàn, nhủp chén phiền vương phong trần.
Than ôi Chúa thương người đến quên mình, bơ vơ chốn quê nhà lúc sinh thành
Ai ham sống trong lạc thú, nhớ rằng Chúa đang đèn bù.*



**Holy Family Mass
Saint Anne Church, December 27, 2020**



**Solemn Mass of the Epiphany of the Lord
Saint Anne Church, January 2, 2021**



Stations of the Cross on Good Friday at Saint Anne Church, April 2, 2021

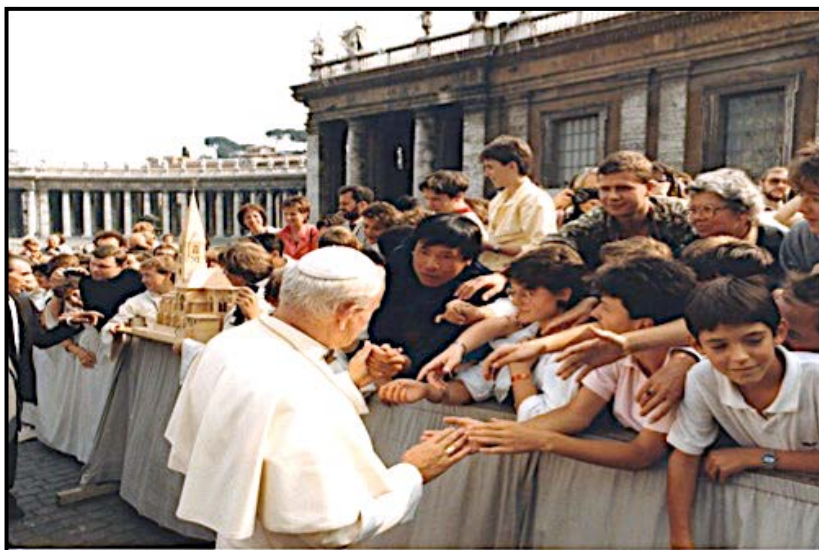
Easter Sunday Mass at Saint Anne Church, April 4, 2021



FATHER JOE HƯƠNG LIFE OF PILGRIMAGE

Father Joe had a deep love for travel, especially his many pilgrimage trips to Rome, Italy and to the Holy Land. He often expressed that, for him, travel to such holy places offered a spiritual renewal. Upon his return home, he eagerly awaited the opportunity to share his travel stories and experiences with his family, friends and parishioners.

Many of those who were privileged to travel with him will recall that, no matter the destination, the first stop on the journey was always a church for prayer and to learn the history of the spiritual locations.



Father Joe attends for the first time a General Audience with Holy Father John Paul II, October 15, 1986



Private Audience with Holy Father John Paul II, November 3, 1987

Father Joseph talks with Pope John Paul II regarding the upcoming canonization of Vietnamese martyrs



117 THÁNH TỬ ĐẠO VIỆT-NAM
LOS 117 SANTOS MÁRTIRES DEL VIET-NAM
LES 117 SAINTS MARTYRS DU VIET-NAM
ROMA. 19-06-1988

On June 19, 1988, Father Joe Hường joined thousands of Vietnamese people who traveled to Rome from all over the world to participate in the joyful moment of their history, the canonization ceremony of the Vietnamese martyrs.

One of the martyrs being canonized is Father Joe's great-great-granduncle, Joseph Hoàng Lương Cảnh, who was beheaded in 1838 by Emperor Ming Mạng for his Christian beliefs. "I am very proud to be a Vietnamese Catholic" Father Joe said. "I received my faith not easy. The blood and tears of my ancestors are part of that." The ceremony was so dear to his heart, Father Joe traveled to Rome eighteen days prior to the ceremony to welcome those attending the historic day.



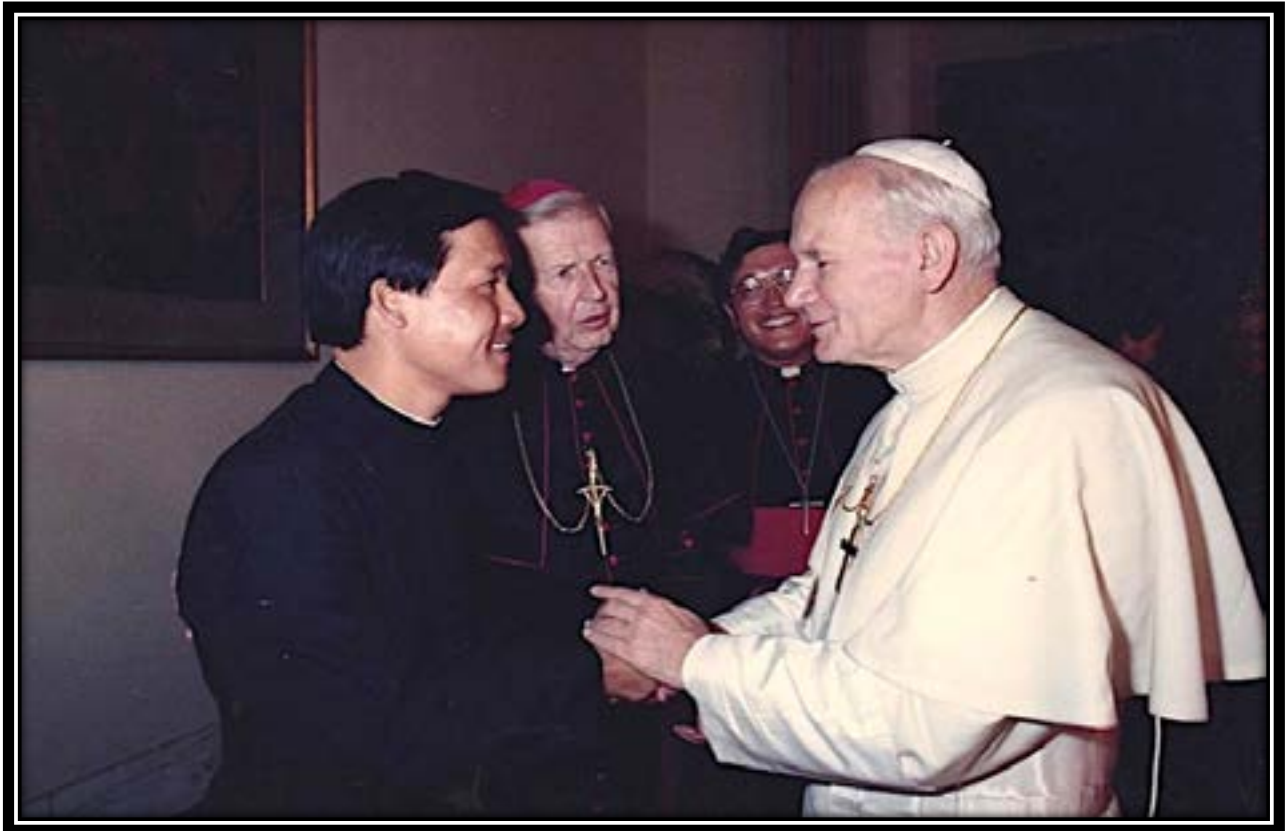
The Canonization Ceremony of Vietnamese Martyrs at Saint Peter's Square, June 19, 1988



Saint Peter's Square, Vatican City, Rome, June 19, 1988



Father Joe concelebrates Mass with Holy Father John Paul II in his private Chapel, June 9, 1988



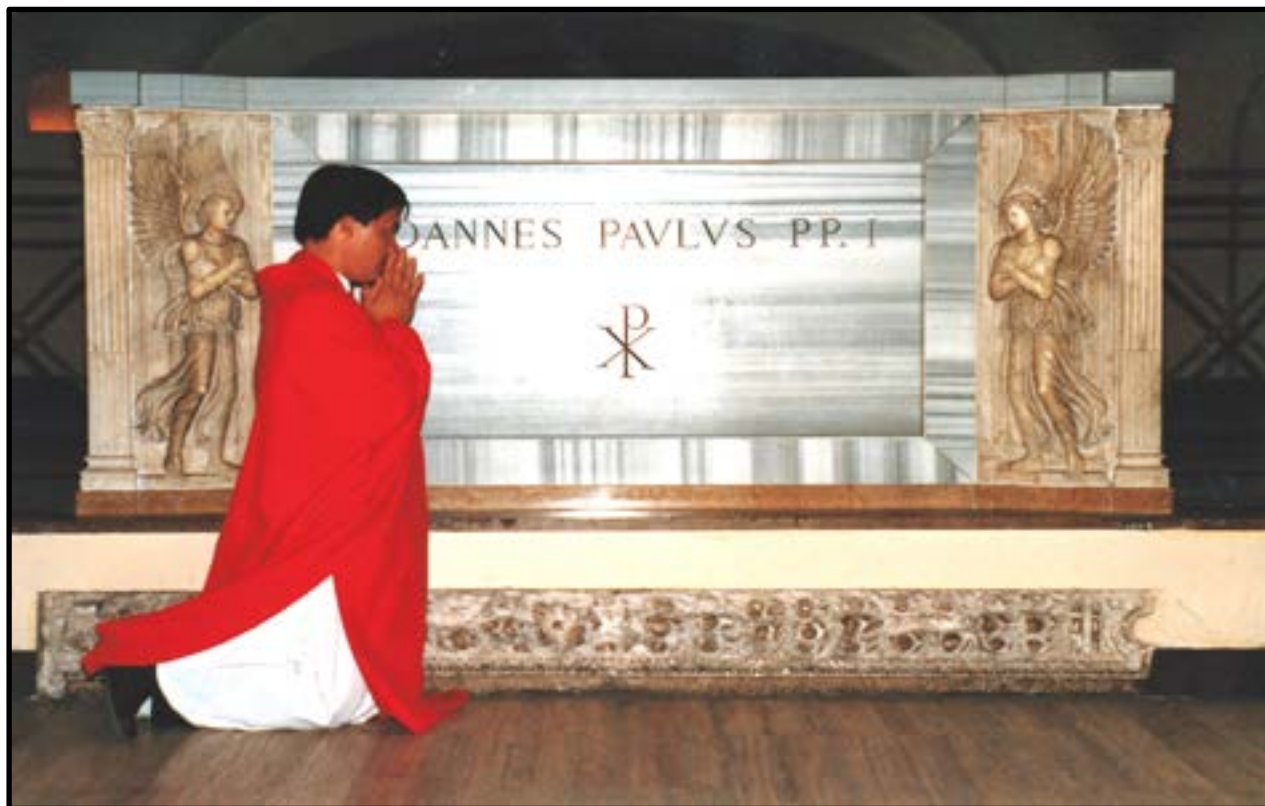
Private Audience with Holy Father John Paul II, June 7, 1988

Bishops Francis A. Quinn and Alphonse Gallegos were in Rome for their "Ad Limina" Visit to the Holy See
Father Joe was in Rome to attend the canonization of the Vietnamese martyrs saints



Saint Peter's Square, Vatican City, Rome 1988

Father Joe, first on the right, is with the California Bishops who are in Rome for their Ad Liminia Visit



Father Joe prays at the Tomb of the Pope John Paul I, Rome 1988



The relics of Saint Maria Goretti, Nettuno, Italy 1988



Father Joe with Archbishop Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận at Priests Retreat, Rome 1990



Foyer Phat Diem, Rome 1990

L- R: Father Joe, Archbishops Nguyễn văn Thuận, Nguyễn văn Bình and Bishop Nguyễn văn Sang



Pope John Paul II Blesses the Statue of Our Mother that Father Joe acquired in Rome, June 19, 1991



Father Joe receiving Papal Blessing in his private Library 1992



Private audience with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican City, Rome 1992

L-R: Father Hoàng minh Thư, Monsignor Trần ngọc Thụ, Bishop Nguyễn văn Sang and Father Joe



Father Joe with Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Saint Peter's Square, Vatican City, Rome 1995

Ten years later Cardinal was elected as the Pope



Father Joe receiving the Holy Communion during Mass at Saint Peter's Chair 1998

The Cardinals had already entered the conclave when Father Joe Hường arrived at Saint Peter's Square, and he, along with thousands of other pilgrims, waited with great anticipation for the hopeful news of the election of Pope John Paul II's successor. After a lengthy wait, he witnessed the plume of white smoke from the Sistine Chapel, announcing to the world the election of a new Pope, Pope Benedict XVI.



Father Joe is at the First General Audience of Pope Benedict XVI, April 27, 2005



Father Joe offers prayer of the faithful at Saint Peter Basilica, Vatican City 2009



Year for Priest, Rome, June 7, 2010



Saint Peter Basilica, Vatican City, Rome 2018



Father Joe holding the flag of Vatican City, surrounded by Vietnamese holding the flag of Việt Nam Cộng Hòa, Saint Peter's Square 2015



Father Joe celebrates Mass at the tomb of Saint Francis, Assisi, Italy 1988



Basilica of Saint Francis, Assisi, Italy 2017



Father Joe with a relic of Blessed Anrê Phú Yên, a Vietnamese martyr at the headquarters of the Jesuits, Rome 2018



Father Joe visits the tomb of Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận at Campo Verano Cemetery, Rome 2009



Father Joe celebrates Mass at Santa Maria della Scala Church, Rome, Italy 2019



Santa Maria della Scala Church 2019



Father Joe celebrates Mass at the Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth 2015



The Church of the Mount of Beatitudes, Galilee 2014



Father Joe kisses rock at Chapel of Primacy on the Sea of Galilee 2015



Father Joe Renews Baptism Vows in the Jordan River, Galilee 1990



A boat ride on the Sea of Galilee 2015



Mount of Temptation 2014



Cave of Qumran near Dead Sea where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered



Father Joe celebrates Mass at the Church of All Nation, Mount of Olives, Jerusalem 2019



**The Lord's Prayer in the Church of the Pater Noster,
Mount of Olives, Jerusalem 2014**



Olive Trees at Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem 2014



The stone imprinted with the footprint of Christ in the Chapel of the Ascension, Mount of Olives, Jerusalem 2014



The statue of the Virgin Mary in the Church of Dormition on Mount Zion, Jerusalem 2014



The Stone of Anointing in the Holy Sepulchre Church, Jerusalem 2014



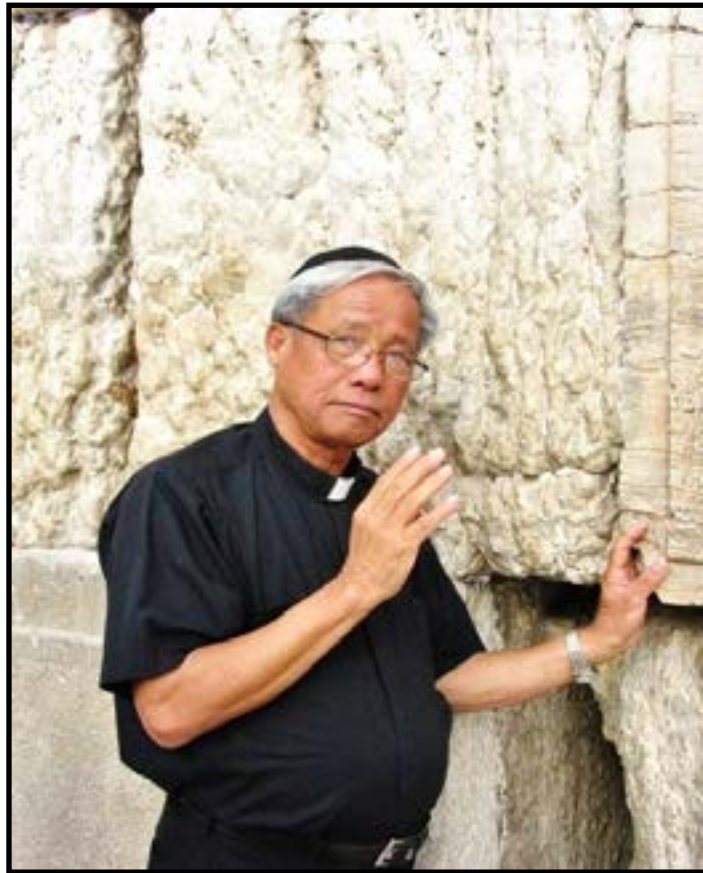
The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Mount Calvary, Jerusalem 2014



Father Joe celebrates Mass with Monsignor David C. Quitugua at the Calvary Altar, Jerusalem 2005



Father Joe kisses the tomb of Christ inside Holy Sepulchre Church, Jerusalem 2005



Western Wall, Jerusalem 2014



Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem 2014



The Church of Visitation, Ein Karem, Jerusalem 2014



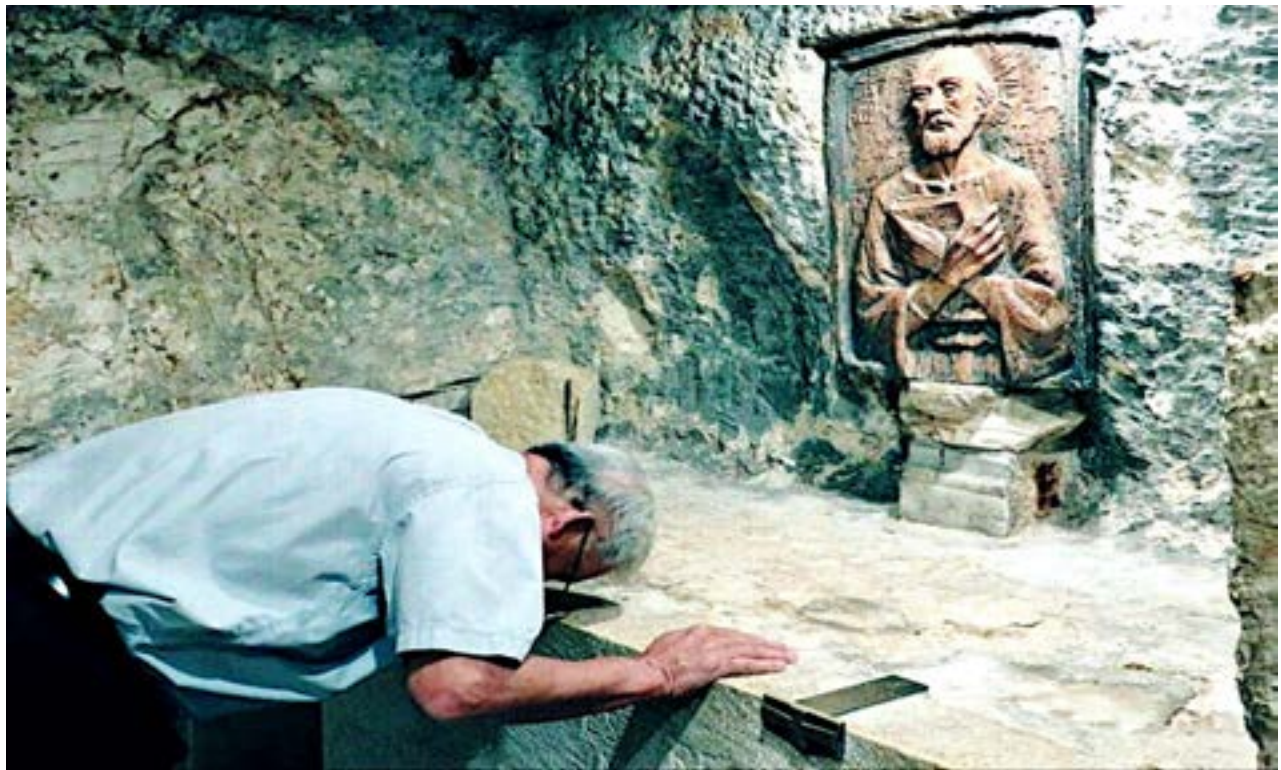
The Birthplace of Saint John the Baptist, Ein Karem, Jerusalem 2014



Father Joe kneels before the Grotto of Nativity, the Birthplace of Jesus, Bethlehem 2005



Father Joe kisses the Grotto of the Manger, Bethlehem 2015



Saint Jerome's Cave, Bethlehem 2019



Father Joe serves as Master of Ceremonies for the Dedication Mass of the statue of Our Lady of La Vang, in the garden of the Basilica of Our Lady Ark of the Covenant, Kiryat Yearim, Israel, October 17, 2018



Father Joe celebrates Mass in the garden of the Basilica of Our Lady Ark of the Covenant 2019





The Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, France 1992



Father Joe celebrates Mass at Chapel of Apparitions in Fatima, Portugal 2000



Phát Diệm Cathedral, January 19, 2008

This was Father Joe's first return to North Vietnam since leaving with his parents in 1954



Di Linh leprosarium, Lâm Đồng, Vietnam 2008



The National Shrine of Saint John Neumann, Philadelphia 2015



Our Lady of La Vang Chapel at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. 2016

*Chí cao vượt núi sông trùng điệp,
Thân mòn lặn ghềnh thác bao la.
Trái tim son sắt không lay chuyển,
Dạ lòng bền bỉ chẳng lung lay.
Đội đá vá trời cơn sóng nước,
Lao đao lèo lái giữa cuồng phong.
Ơ Chúa trợ phù mau thắng vượt,
Nghĩa Cha bồi đắp sắp công thành. Amen*

Father Joe Hươg, Sacramento, October 20, 1985

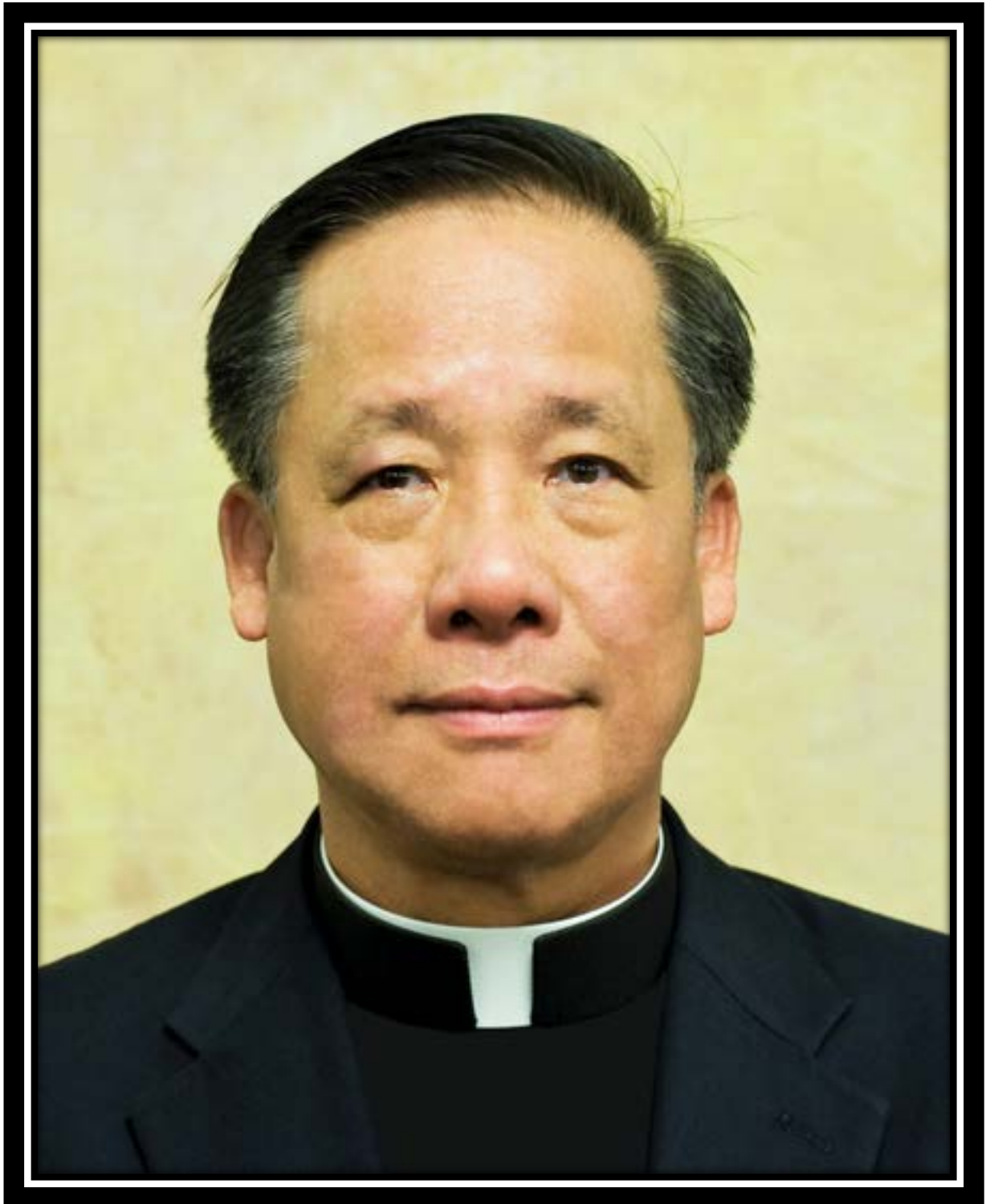
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*Con ơi đừng để điều gì làm con phiền lụy
Chớ sợ hãi nao núng trước khó khăn.
Vì mọi sự đều đổi thay trong giới hạn
Duy một mình Chúa là Đấng chẳng hề thay đổi.*

*Con ơi, hãy kiên tâm vững chí
Và sau hết con sẽ tìm được
Tất cả sự sung mãn
Chạy kề bên Chúa
Sống thân mật với Ngài
Và không gì làm con xao xuyến
Vì Thiên Chúa là cùng đích mọi sự.*

Thánh Teresa thành Avila

“In Caritate non Ficta”



Father Joseph Mary Nguyễn Xuân Hương

MONSIGNOR JAMES KIDDER'S REMEMBRANCES



Soon after the Fall of Saigon, April 1975, the Weimar Facility near Colfax was used to receive and process South Vietnamese military personnel because of the staggering refugee crisis that developed at the end of the Vietnam War. President Gerald Ford immediately sought United States reception of the South Vietnamese military due to life threatening retaliation of the North Vietnamese who had overtaken Saigon.

Doctor Joseph Murphy, who was involved at the facility, called the Vocations Office to inform us that a soldier there had interest in becoming a priest. I drove to the center and was introduced to Joseph Nguyen X. Huong who quickly and determinedly transitioned from a South Vietnamese soldier who had fought for freedom

to United States seminarian for the Diocese of Sacramento who would enjoy and appreciate that freedom by being ordained a priest, and would work diligently to offer that freedom to most of his family whom he would arrange to follow him here.

It was a God-sent and memorable meeting! I had feared we might need a translator, but I quickly ascertained that what was lacking in his ability in English was well overcome by his communication of obvious sincerity, friendliness and conviction. His introduction to English had already occurred when he had been sent earlier to a base in San Antonio, Texas for training in flight navigation. As he spoke to me of his desire for priesthood that developed through the horrors of accompanying many of his friends through injury and to death, he brought up a concern of his that arose at Weimar. Among the evacuees, as they weighed what was in store for them in a country they had not realized they would be entering, some of their leaders told them that since they were in a country that was not Catholic, they should not show that they are Catholic, in order to get along well. Father Joe's own leadership became apparent. He spoke up vehemently: if they were Catholic, they should show they are by what they live and say. The new country has the freedom they fought for, so it would allow them to be Catholic. "Be Catholic", he said. He had no doubt he would remain Catholic and would be able to become a Catholic priest.

Father Louis Stasker, PSS, was rector of Saint Patrick's College Seminary and Father James Tucker, PSS, a psychologist, was its admissions director when I sought Joe's acceptance. The question arose, should Father Joe spend time increasing his knowledge of English before starting his College

studies, or could he improve it through his studies. He interviewed well and the decision was reached in favor of his immediate entrance. He met his challenge well through his diligence and gumption as well as his intelligence.

His years at Saint Patrick's Seminary were happy ones. He very much liked theology and appreciated his professors. Father Frank Norris, a peritus at Vatican Council II and an Ecumenist and he became lasting friends and Father never lost his desire to keep delving into theology. At diocesan priests' study days, he was a constant enthusiastic participant seldom revealing a tentative thought.

His assignments as a priest were varied. His concept of the diocesan priesthood was clear - he was ordained to serve all the people to whom he would be assigned and was to serve them with all he had. As he put this into action, his parishioners responded with esteem and gratitude. He never requested what might have been easier: to just serve the Vietnamese, though serve them well he did. The new country in which he arrived without intent became his country very much by his proud intent. He adopted the United States as much as it adopted him.

The freedom he experienced here in his life as a priest he wanted for his family as well whom he loved and appreciated so dearly. He worked quietly, effectively and unceasingly to bring them here and share it with them, his parents, two sisters, three brothers and their families.

When Father Joe was approaching 70 years of age, and his term as pastor of Saint Anne Parish, Sacramento was about to expire, he asked me if I thought that he should retire. I responded by asking him if he continued to enjoy his pastorate there, to which he responded with great feeling, "YES!" I then asked him if his health remained good. He said he was well. He continued serving well in a new term during which he would leave us, having given all he had. His last parish Mass that he celebrated included his conferring Confirmation. He passed out before Mass was ended, and was hospitalized. He quickly declined because of cancer, and when I gave him the Sacrament of the Sick and Viaticum, his last Communion, the only disappointment he expressed was that he wished he had more energy to continue serving his people. He died having given his all. He died just before the current usual age of pastors' retirement; I believe his retirement is in heaven.

MONSIGNOR DAVID C. QUITUGUA'S REMEMBRANCES



David Quitugua and Joe Hường as Classmates at Saint Patrick Seminary, Menlo Park, CA

On April of 1975, Saigon fell and the reality of the event took on a dramatically different meaning than just a news report on television for a tiny island in the Pacific. More than 110,000 refugees came to the island of Guam to be sheltered temporarily while they were processed for relocation in different places in the United States. The number of refugees exceeded the population of the island. Several “tent cities” sprang up in no time in different areas of the island. The military and

the Governor assured the population that the passage of the refugees would have minimal impact on the daily affairs of the people.

Little did I know that the refugee situation was to have an even greater impact on me. That same year, 1975, I entered the seminary in Mountain View, California at Saint Joseph’s College. On the first day when we gathered for orientation, I saw a person standing at the door of the meeting room with the biggest smile and an outstretched hand greeting just about everyone who entered. His words, “Hello! My name Joseph!” This phrase was repeated many times. When the meeting began, I noticed he was still standing at the door with his big smile. I stood up, went to him, and invited him to have a seat next to me. This was the beginning of a 46-year friendship. A Vietnamese refugee became a name and a person to me.

Joseph and I were both beginning our first year in the seminary. He belonged to the Diocese of Sacramento and I to the Diocese of Agana. I soon went on to a different level because he had to spend several years studying English. However, we always remained close friends.

Once he came to me asking, “What means ‘rat’?” I asked him why he wanted to know. He showed me a pocket dictionary and said in his rudimentary English, “It says rat means rodent. I look up rodent. It says rat. Crazy dictionary!” So, I explained to him what rat meant. He got angry. Again, I asked why the sudden interest in “rat”. He said someone told him, “You dirty rat.” I had to explain that it was just an expression and in the context coming from the person who told him, it was a joke. He did not like the joke.

He had a difficult time learning English, learning a different culture, and learning the required Theology and Philosophy courses, even learning a different diet. However, he never gave up. In fact, because of the pastoral need, later on in his priesthood, he learned Spanish—well enough to celebrate Mass and preach. One of his greatest fortes and love became the Liturgy. He was careful to observe the smallest detail to accomplish a beautiful and solemn celebration at all times.

Everyone who knows Father Joe will agree that he is an extrovert to the extreme. It was interesting that almost everyone in the seminary referred to him as “Commander Huong!” We saw he clearly was a leader. Joe told me many times that while in the Vietnamese Air Force as a navigator, his friends would refer to him as “Father Joe.” They knew he had a spiritual side to him. The interesting thing was that as extroverted as he was, I was introverted. Many seminarians could not understand how the two of us became friends, being so opposite in character—a boisterous “commander” and a silent hermit.

Hardship was no stranger to Father Joe. He saw his country fall to the Communists. He had to leave his family and start a new life in a different culture. He was challenged with new things to learn. There was a time when the suffering took its toll on him. He became depressed. His hair started falling out. He almost became bald overnight. There were several times when I spent hours just keeping him company so that he would break out of his depression. He cried many tears. With prayer, perseverance and counseling, he was able to be freed from that ordeal.

A hobby of his was photography. He loved taking pictures, was good at it, and did not restrict himself to a particular topic. Portraits, landscapes, statues, churches, anything could be the focus of his sophisticated Canon camera and multiple lenses. He left behind quite a collection of photographs developed from film. Digital pictures were still years away.

Father Joe was ordained to the priesthood on October 5, 1985. It didn’t take long for him to be assigned as a Pastor of a parish. His leadership skills were recognized and well utilized.

He was able to bring his Mother and Father, and several relatives to the United States.

I called Father Joe on the phone from Guam. “Remember, we had lunch with a Cardinal in Rome?” I asked. “Yes,” he answered. “You said he was released from prison by the Vietnamese government and allowed to leave the country?” “Yes,” he answered. “Did he write books?” “Yes.” “Was The Road of Hope one of his books?” “Yes.” “Is he Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn văn Thuận?” “Yes.” “Why didn’t you tell me?” “I did. You didn’t pay attention!” Cardinal Francis Xavier, may he rest in peace, wrote consistently on the theme of hope despite suffering. His cause for canonization is ongoing. Father Joe knew many people including some very holy and special ones.

Father Joe was really quite healthy. It was a shock to learn that he had cancer. It was a greater shock to learn that he succumbed so quickly after the diagnosis. He was a priest for 36 years and lived to be 74 years old.

Throughout the years of his priesthood, there was one phrase which he constantly sang. It was in Latin: "Sit nomen Domini benedictum." This is a segment of the blessing of a bishop at the dismissal in Mass. It means: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." That's how I wish to end this short tribute to my friend, Father Joe. "Sit nomen Domini benedictum. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" May he rest in peace!

Saint Jerome said, "The friendship that can cease has never been real." I have been blessed with a friendship that never ceased. We became so close, toward the last years of our friendship, he started calling me "Brother." I will miss him and I will forever cherish the memories.

REMEMBRANCES OF FATHER JOE HƯƠNG BY PARISHIONERS

Dr. Richard Brouette, a parishioner of Saint Isidore, Yuba City CA

I had the pleasure of knowing Father Joe Hương for over a quarter of a century. I worked closely with him and knew him well. I hesitate to call him "my" friend since the personal pronoun would suggest exclusivity. He was my dear and close friend: a true brother in Christ. But he was more than just my friend, he was a friend to everyone. He was, as Saint Paul wrote, "everything to everybody". He embodied Christ approaching us to seek fellowship with our God.

When I met him in late 1996, he was an associate at Saint Isidore in Yuba City. I was married and had a special needs daughter with a second daughter on the way. He was a good priest: interested in his parishioners, who gave practical, short, and easy to understand homilies. He did not stand out to me until I stood out to him, in terms of my need. My wife and children were badly injured in a freeway collision and my wife lost the baby and was flown to one hospital in one city in one county and my daughter to another. I went daily to visit each and found no matter the day or hour he had been there visiting them himself. My wife was not even Catholic and her own Lutheran Pastor did not visit either my wife or daughter once in the week, while Father Joe visited each daily as well as reaching out to me. My wife died and my daughter was crippled. He still visited her when she came home a quadriplegic and for the rest of his life, no matter which parish he served or assigned, he would visit her. Whenever she was hospitalized, no matter what city or which hospital, even before the smartphone or social media to guide him, he would find her and visit her.

I was a personal physician to him and his family in which role I could observe his role of father to the nieces and nephews he brought from Viet Nam. He saw to his mother, sister, and her children with a diligence rarely seen these days. He kept his mother at home and cared for her for decades

until she died in her late 90's. He encouraged his nieces and nephews to settle here and advance their education. I saw 3/4 become doctors and serve their communities.

I visited him at many parishes and saw how quickly he assumed leadership and won the respect of his parishioners. He was very culturally sensitive and welcomed these to worship together, be they Filipino, Tongan, Vietnamese, or Hispanic.

I advised him on the COVID epidemic, watched him follow every precaution to avoid illness, yet insisted on comforting the sick until he became ill as well. He never recovered, he went back to work, drove himself to help others but weakened due to cancer – set loose by the COVID, blinding and injuring the immune system. He nobly bore the illness, heard confessions and dispensed spiritual counsel from his death bed. Dressed in his vestment in his bed he was carried on to the altar each Sunday to celebrate Mass until almost the very end, with no complaints and nothing but praise for God in his mercy and love.

Cathy Reyes, a parishioner of Saint Paul Parish, Knights Landing CA

There are so many good things I could say about Father Joe and one thing that I know for sure is I love him very much. He is a great influence on the men in my family. He took the time to explain when there was a need for more understanding. He was kind and yet he showed us that we must all work hard and sacrifice our personal comfort to make the journey up the mountain to get to heaven.

He made us all want to do as much as we could for our parish. Our churches were packed when he was here. His sermons were so very interesting, sincere and faithful to Catholic doctrine. He told some of his stories but always made me feel there was so much more for him to tell. I very much want to see him in the next life where he will tell us the rest of the story. He made us work hard but also feel safe that we are on the right track to get to heaven. May he rest in peace.

Monica Gutierrez, a parishioner of Saint Anne Parish, Sacramento CA

I have been a member of Saint Anne Parish for 22 years. Father Joe came to us 12 years ago and he came in ready to whip us into shape. He was such a doer, our poor little church had little to no renovations for many years. Until he came in and in one quick move he put in air conditioning, roof, floor, and a new altar, which his dear mother donated without hesitation. He never, not once, not a single time, stopped because of money. He always said "God will provide; we will find the money," and it always came.

Aside from his weekly Sunday Sermon, this was a man that lived by his faith. He actually lived by it. He talked about teaching our children by doing. This was a man that taught us by his actions. He lived by the church's laws and yet still called himself a sinner; he never claimed self-perfection or claimed to have a place earned in heaven. He asked us to pray for him, he asked us to pray and

love with our hearts and to feel the word of the Lord, not to just hear it, not to read it and listen and forget it, but to actually feel our faith, to live by our faith.

He taught a class to us, maybe 20-30 members, we would go during the week and he would teach us the history of the church, a “behind the scenes,” if you will. He told us how the operation of our church was designed and why it worked. He wanted us to be educated in our faith, to answer questions, to defend ourselves with knowledge when faced with other religions. He wanted us to be strong.

Every Sunday, he would ask us about the previous Sunday’s readings, what days we celebrated and why. Those who attended regularly knew not to sit in front because he would call on you, subsequently laughter would take over the church because we could not recall the answers. He would not get upset, he would shake his head or hit his forehead and give us the answer, and he would say “I will ask again next week.”

I learned to take notes and prepare beforehand by reviewing the readings or looking up information online. He invited us to study our church, our religion. But mostly he invited us to live by the word, to be kind, generous, forgiving. In all my years, I can honestly say he has been my religious teacher. I will never forget the way he would call my name “Monica” but more like “Moonnicca”; I can still hear him, I can still see him greeting us on Sunday. Joining us for hot chocolate on cold nights during holiday events.

He will remain in my heart, in my children’s hearts, and in my family’s heart. I hope to make him proud; I pray he will continue to watch over us and I especially hope he is reunited with his parents in heaven. We miss him terribly but I am so happy to have been one of his sheep, for he was our shepherd, our teacher. He made us understand the goodness of the Lord; there is no way to ever thank him. I will remember him in my prayers as that is what he would have wanted.

I love you Father Joe and I will miss you.

Barbara Montgomery, a parishioner of Saint Anne Parish, Sacramento CA

I had the privilege of working with and spending my faith journey for 10 years with Father Joe. He had an enthusiasm and energy for his faith and enjoyed fellowshiping with his faith community. He spent most of his life researching, studying, and visiting all the various locations described in the Bible. Father Joe was willing to share his knowledge with those around him.

I had the good fortune of going on a pilgrimage with him in 2017, in which we explored the many historically religious sites in Paris, Our Lady of Lourdes, Barcelona, Our Lady of Fatima, and some went on to Rome. Father Joe’s knowledge of the religious sites far exceeded any tour guide. We were so blessed to have him on the pilgrimage. Father Joe loved sharing the information he had gathered throughout the years and loved fellowshiping with the parishioners, “Let’s Chit Chat,”

as he would say, sharing his years of knowledge and love of God. His love of God, infectious smile, and joy in serving will remain with me forever. He will be missed.

Father Joe worked so hard improving the grounds at Saint Anne but especially spent most of his time focused on the inside of the church. In the church, the flooring was replaced from carpet to tile, walls and tapestry were removed, and beautiful marble priest chair, altar, and ambo was donated by his family. It brought him so much joy being able to make the church a place where people want to worship and spend time with God. Every church season was an adventure, especially the Christmas and Easter seasons. He will be missed.

Over the years watching Father Joe and his love and commitment for the Lord, for the church, and for his family, there's only one phrase that always comes to mind and brings me comfort at this time of loss and is the ultimate expression of God's love for us is: "My Son, job well done." All that Father Joe has done with his earthly life, he is with the Lord right now. He will be missed.

Vickee Devera, a parishioner of Saint Anne Parish, Sacramento CA

Father Joe,

You were unique, one in a million characters and so you will always be in our hearts. We miss you.

You have given so much, our thank you seem so small compared to all that you have done for us, your parishioners. Thank you for keeping us grounded always; lending a helping hand; imparting to us your knowledge about the "The Divine Word"; always hands on just about practically everything there was to do in and around the church.

Your service to Saint Anne Catholic Church and her parishioners was outstanding. You made us come together, regardless of color and status in life.

Thank you for your support to the El Shaddai DWXIPFI Charismatic Group of Sacramento Chapter; we flourished because of you.



O God, You called your servant Joe Hươ'ng to be a priest.

He faithfully fulfilled his ministry to your Church.

Grand that he may rejoice forever in the fellowship of your Saints.

Lạy Chúa, Chúa đã chọn tôi tớ Chúa là linh mục Giuse Maria Nguyễn xuân Hươ'ng, để thi hành nhiệm vụ tư tế trong Hội Thánh. Chúng con nài xin Chúa cho linh hồn Cha được hưởng sự thanh nhàn và hạnh phúc giữa Các Thánh trên trời.

REFLECTIONS IN REMEMBRANCE OF UNCLE JOE HƯƠNG BY DR. THÚY NGUYỄN, FATHER JOE'S NIECE



Dr. Thúy Nguyễn

On January 5, 1996, my family was awakened with the heartbreaking news of the passing of my dear grandfather, Nguyễn văn Quý. We were all deeply saddened - I remember my mother was at a loss with recurring thoughts of not seeing her beloved father for the last time. All that we could do was pray and ask God to help us through the difficult time. Two weeks after the death of my grandfather, we received more unexpected news. My mother's brother, our Uncle Joe Hương, who my siblings and I had never met, was coming to Vietnam – over 20 years after leaving his beloved country during the fall of Saigon. Little did we know that this meeting with our uncle, who lived so far away, would forever change our lives for the better.

I remember the very first time I saw Uncle Joe - he was so observant, with a big smile and a very outgoing personality. In this short visit, Uncle Joe knew that the future for my family in Vietnam was limited. In less than a year, Uncle Joe had obtained our sponsorship to become citizens of the United States.

In April 1997, we arrived at the San Francisco airport, the last of his immediate family to join him in this land of opportunity. We stayed with Uncle Joe for a short time before settling into our first apartment. Within two weeks, we were enrolled in school to learn the English language. Uncle Joe told us, in order to succeed, we had to obtain an education and learn to speak the language.

Shortly after our move, my parents divorced and Uncle Joe stepped in to take the role of the father figure. Uncle Joe was the generous supporter, the observer, the voice of reason - the one we could count on to listen and advise, to encourage and remind us that when one door closes, another door opens and most importantly, have trust in God.

His generosity was beyond measure. As a young medical student, I did not have a car. When I told him that I did not have transportation for school and could not afford to purchase a car, without hesitation, he shipped his car from California to West Virginia so that I could continue my medical school rotations. His instinctive trait to protect and provide was deeply rooted from the time he was a young man. He saved his earnings from the military and gave it to his mother to purchase rice and food for the family. Instead of eating his military provided meals each day, he took the

food to his siblings. This was just the beginning of his ministry to others. Uncle Joe held a special place in his heart for the poor, often giving food and clothing to the homeless and those in need.

In January 2008, I was privileged to accompany Uncle Joe on a two-week trip to Vietnam. During this journey, we made a special stop at Di Linh, a leprosy camp in Central Vietnam. Uncle Joe had always held a special place in his heart for the poor but this trip was even more poignant as he sat down and shared a meal with them and offered a blessing. The residents of the camp were very poor and often without visitors, and even necessities such as clothing. As part of his mission trip to Di Linh, he wanted to ensure that the residents, who would remain there for the rest of their lives, were left with clothing and monetary funds to provide for their needs.

Just as he shared a meal with those in the leprosy camp, it was often the mission of Uncle Joe to talk to people and share the love of God with them. He enjoyed talking to people, often starting a conversation with complete strangers! He always made a point to talk about God – he always said talking to others was just one way of bringing people closer to God.

Not only did Father Joe provide a ministry to his parishioners and friends, he provided me, my sister and brothers with love, guidance, and wisdom to fulfill our dreams. Without him, our lives would not be what they are today.

Returning home for Christmas to visit Uncle Joe was customary for me and my siblings. Due to the pandemic, I did not travel home for Christmas 2020 – just a few weeks later, Uncle Joe received the diagnosis of terminal cancer. His faith and trust in God helped him to process and accept the overwhelming reality.

Even those who work in the field of medicine are not prepared for such devastating news since he was very active and quite healthy. I was blessed to have the ability to travel to California and work remotely, allowing me, along with my mother, sister and brothers, to care for Uncle Joe. As his illness progressed and he grew weaker, his doctors advised him to rest but he wanted to celebrate Masses for as long as he could. In keeping with his favorite motto: "In Caritate non Ficta" which means "In love there is no deceit", "Yêu thương không giả dối", his love and dedication to the Church and caring for his parishioners brought him great joy.

One more day is never enough to spend when we face the realization that our time together is short. About a week before Uncle Joe passed, he told me that the angel came down to get him but my siblings and I were not ready to let him go so the Lord would let him stay just a little while longer. I held his hand and whispered in his ear that we would be okay and we must accept and trust what God has planned for us. We are never ready to say goodbye, but the Lord has a plan for us and sometimes the plan is difficult for those left behind. My family and I are thankful that we were able to be at Uncle Joe's side when God called him home on July 17, 2021.

Uncle Joe's continued desire was for us to be happy and to live and practice our Catholic faith. To say our lives were blessed is not nearly enough for all that we have been afforded, thanks to Uncle Joe. As a young man and in every day of his life, it was the mission of Uncle Joe to bring God to others. He often ended conversations with "God Bless You", and so now I say, God Bless You, Uncle Joe for bringing God, in the presence of yourself, to my family and so many others. One more day is never enough time to "thank you."

Uncle Joe, please watch over and guide us, pray and intercede for us and know that we love you and you will remain in our hearts forever. With the faith and hope that we have, we will see you again one day.

WORD OF THANKS



Father Joe with niece Hà Nguyễn

On behalf of the Nguyễn family, I, Hà Nguyễn, the niece of Father Joe Hương, give thanks to the Lord, who, in His infinite love, called our Uncle Joe to follow in His footsteps to become a servant and shepherd of His flock. With the guidance and protection of our Blessed Mother, Father Joe remained a good and faithful servant

We offer thanks to the 117 Vietnamese Martyrs and the Catholic missionaries who came to Vietnam, introduced God and spread His Word to the Vietnamese people; they even sacrificed their lives because of their faith.

Thanks to grandfather Nguyễn văn Quý and grandmother Phạm thị Ngoan who nurtured, loved, supported and set good examples in Uncle Joe's life.

Heartfelt thanks to the Diocese of Sacramento for opening the door for our Uncle Joe Hương to fulfill his dream that God has planned for him.

Thank you, Uncle Joe Hương, for your love, generosity, compassion, sacrifice and dedication of your life not only for the Catholic Church but also for your brothers and sisters and their families. We are truly blessed and grateful to have had you, our Uncle Joe, as a priest in the Nguyễn family.

Thank you, Uncle Joe, for seeing the opportunity for my entire family and sponsoring us to come to the United States.

Thank you, Uncle Joe, for your unconditional love – you were always there for us in every moment of our lives. You cheered with us during the happy times and comforted us with positive words of encouragement during the difficult times. You walked with us as we built our dreams and because of you, our hopes and dreams are being fulfilled. The times that we have shared together will forever be treasured.

In reflecting on the last months, we spent together, the privilege of caring for our Uncle Joe was the greatest gift. Thank you, Uncle, for the opportunity to care for you, our time together will forever be cherished.

Although he was a “planner”, there were things that he had not preplanned. He entrusted my siblings and me to plan his Vigil and Funeral Liturgy, and we were honored to do so.

Last but not least, to the many parishioners and friends, the people of God who loved and supported our Uncle Joe, throughout his priestly ministry and those whom he had the privilege to serve on this Earth, thank you for remaining the faithful friend to our uncle, Father Joe Hương.

My family and I remain grateful for the opportunity to share in both photographs and words the life story of our beloved uncle, Father Joseph Hương. Through his collection of photographs and detailed chronicles of his life stories, we are able to offer a glimpse into the life of a young Vietnamese boy with a desire to support, protect and love his family who then dedicated his life to support, protect and love his brothers and sisters in Christ.

*Uncle Joe Hương, We Love and Miss You.
You Are Forever in Our Hearts.
Until We Are Reunited Once Again.*



*Chúng con cậy vì Danh Chúa nhân từ cho linh hồn linh mục
Giuse Maria Nguyễn xuân Hương được lên chốn nghỉ ngơi.
Hãy xem thấy mặt Đức Chúa Trời sáng láng vui vẻ vô cùng.*

*Eternal rest grant unto Reverend Father Joseph Mary
Nguyễn xuân Hương, O Lord.
And may your light shine on him forever.*

*Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell.
Lead all souls to heaven, especially those who are most in need of Thy mercy.*

Amen.