

Diocese of Orange to Honor 117 Vietnamese Martyrs of Brutal Catholic Persecution

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Vietnamese Parishioners Expected to Attend 40th Annual Celebration MEDIA PASS REQUIRED

Garden Grove, Calif., (November 18, 2019) – On Saturday, November 23, 2019 at 10 a.m., The Bishop of Orange, Most Reverend Kevin Vann and Bishop Thanh Thai Nguyen, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange will participate in a majestic procession and Mass in tribute to the Vietnamese Martyrs at the Christ Cathedral in Garden Grove. The persecution of Catholics in Vietnam from 1789 to 1861 resulted in the deaths of 117 faith leaders. These martyrs were canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1988. Overall, it is estimated that more than 100,000 Vietnamese Catholics were slain during this bloody period.

“I am privileged to join Orange County’s Vietnamese community in honoring the sacrifice and courage of these many holy Martyrs. They gave themselves readily in defense of their beliefs and faith. The Vietnamese Martyrs serve as an inspiration to live one’s faith completely and give without reservation,” said Bishop Nguyen, who is the only Vietnamese Catholic Bishop in the United States, serving the large immigrant Vietnamese population in the world.

This community event takes place each year coinciding with the feast day of the Vietnamese Martyrs, which is the 24th of November. The Vietnamese Martyr celebration draws thousands of Vietnamese throughout Southern California dressed in the traditional *Ao Dai*, a traditional long flowing silk garment. The festivities this year will feature traditional Vietnamese music and dancing, hymns sung in both Vietnamese and English, a theatrical depiction of “The Sacrifice of Our Martyrs,” a procession within the hall and the celebration of the Eucharist.

“The persecution suffered by Catholics in Vietnam is a very important part of our history and identity. I look forward to our community uniting in observance of this feast day, recalling past struggles and looking toward a promising future together,” concluded Bishop Nguyen.

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History of Catholic Persecution in Vietnam:

The persecution of Catholics in Vietnam began in 1798 when King Canh Minh of the Nguyen’s dynasty, issued an anti-Catholic edict that identified Catholicism as a religious sect introduced by foreign powers to persuade the working class into revolt. In response to this edict the government directly attacked the 37 parishes and seminaries established in Dinh Cat, Vietnam – demolishing structures and killing all parishioners present. More than 100,000 Catholics were martyred as a result of this edict over the 63 year Catholic persecution in Vietnam.

Schedule:

10 a.m. – Procession Noon – Mass

About the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange

With 1.3 million Catholics, 57 parishes, 5 Catholic centers, and 41 schools, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange is one of the largest and most diverse faith communities in the United States. The Diocese empowers Catholics across Orange County to have an active life of faith that is integrated and woven into the fabric of their daily lives through the community and sacramental life of the Church. Under the leadership of Bishop Kevin Vann, the Diocese works to establish and support dynamic, vibrant parishes and schools welcoming all to live the Gospel with faith, joy, charity and unity. Christ Cathedral, the spiritual home of the Diocese, was dedicated in July 2019.

Learn more about the Diocese of Orange at <https://rcbo.staging.wpengine.com>.

MEDIA PASS REQUIRED

If photographing or covering this event, please email tkincaid@rcbo.org or cmontes@rcbo.org for a media pass, which allows you to enter the grounds and Cathedral.

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