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Vietnamese faithful pray beside the grave of Fr. Francis Xavier Truong Buu Diep at Tac Say Pilgrimage Center in southern Vietnam. Father Francis, a martyr, is to be canonized as a Catholic saint on July 2 at the center. (Courtesy of Mary Nguyen)

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Holiness, in Vietnam, is not an idea. At Tac Say Pilgrimage Center in Bac Lieu province in southern Vietnam, it is remembered through a priest who refused to leave his people during the war, who chose to die in their place, and whose grave continues to draw thousands who come seeking his intercession. Fr. Francis Xavier Truong Buu Diep's life and death inspire devotion not only in Vietnam but also among many Vietnamese living abroad.

Father Francis was born Jan. 1, 1897, in Long Xuyên, a city in southern Vietnam. In 1924, he was ordained a priest in Phnom Penh by Bishop Jean-Baptiste-Maximilien Chaballier, a French missionary. A few years later, he was sent to serve as parish priest of Tac Say Parish, in Bac Lieu province, also in southern Vietnam.

Between 1945 and 1946, southern Vietnam was unstable in the aftermath of World War II, as conflict grew between Vietnamese nationalist forces and returning French authorities and many parishioners were forced to leave their homes. The superior of Bac Lieu Diocese and French priests advised Father Francis to go to Bac Lieu for safety, promising he could return to Tac Say when the situation stabilized. He refused saying, "I live among my flock, and if I die, I will die among my flock. I will not go anywhere."



The remains of Fr. Francis Xavier Truong Buu Diep were moved to Tac Say Parish in 1969, 23 years after soldiers killed him in the wake of the war. (Courtesy of Mary Nguyen)

In 1946, he was arrested along with more than 70 parishioners at Tac Say Parish. Soldiers planned to kill them all, but Father Francis said he was their shepherd and asked to die in their place. The others were released, but he was taken and killed in a nearby pond.

The parishioners later found his body. He had been beheaded and his body bore multiple wounds. He had been stripped of his clothes, like Jesus on the cross. Yet his hands remained folded on his chest, as if he was praying, and his face was calm, without any sign of fear. Father Francis died as a martyr on March 12, 1946, and was buried at Khuc Treo Church.

Twenty-three years later, in 1969, his remains were exhumed and moved to Tac Say, where he had served as pastor for sixteen years.

I traveled for nearly 12 hours to Tac Say Pilgrimage Center to visit Father Francis' tomb. According to tradition, the parish celebrates an annual memorial Mass to pray for him. When it first began, only a few people attended, but it has become a very large pilgrimage, gathering Catholics and non-Catholics across Vietnam as well as those living abroad who also return to pray at his tomb.

Father was a shepherd who not only gave his life for his flock but he always showed God's mercy to everyone, especially non-Catholics, the poor and those in need. Many people report blessings through his intercession: couples who prayed for children, unemployed people who found work, and the sick who were healed.

5-06-07	THÁNG 11-12/2024		THANG 3-4-5-6		THANG 8-9-10				
024	01-02-03/2025		7-8/2025		11-12/2025				
TẶ ƠN CHA	LÊ THỊ TUYẾT HỒNG	Q1-TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB THUẬN THẢO	GỎ VẤP-TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	BRIAN - JENNY - PHUNG	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	PHÊRÔ VÔ NGỌC KHÁNH LY	TRACH NHAM HÀ HANG	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB NGUYỄN THỊ BẢO NGA	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	PATRICK - PHƯƠNG NGUYEN	THUY SI	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	NGHĨA - TANTA LÊ	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB DÙNG - LIÊN	LA-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	THANH - HỒNG - THI	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB MARIA NGUYỄN MINH CHÁU	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	TRẦN THỊ HƯƠNG	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	VÔ THỊ NGỌC LINH	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB ANNA HỒ THỊ LIÊN	LONG HẢI-YÚNG TÁU	TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN THỊ CẨM TIỀN	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	MARIA NGỌC HANH	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB LISA PHƯƠNG HOÀNG	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB TƯỚI - CỤC	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB LIÊM - CATHY	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN THỊ THANH	Q.BÌNH TÂN	TẶ ƠN CHA	LƯƠNG ĐỨC THẮNG	CANADA	TẶ ƠN CHA	DẶNG VIỆT ANH	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GIUSE LÊ HOÀNG KINH LUÂN	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	HUYỀN THỊ TUYẾT VÂN	CANADA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB NGUYỄN TUYẾT HỒNG	SJ-CA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	PHAO LÔ BUI QUANG TRUNG	ĐỒNG THÁP	TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN THỊ THANH	CANADA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB KHANH HOÀNG	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB THỐNG - THY - KAKA - LYNA	CANADA	TẶ ƠN CHA	TÊRÊSA LÊ THỊ KIM THÚY	THÚ ĐỨC	TẶ ƠN CHA	HUYỀN THÁI MINH	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
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TẶ ƠN CHA	GB AUGUSTINO QUANG - DUY	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB NGUYỄN SINH	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB LÂM THỰC NHIỀU	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB JACOBE CHÁU - TỬ	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	TONY VAN PHAM	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	LƯƠNG THỰC NGHI	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB AUGUSTINO TÀI - MINH	CÁN THƠ	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB TUẤN LOAN	Q.12-TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	LƯƠNG CẨM THÁNH	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	NHI NGUYỄN	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA	ROSA LIMA LÝ KIM HỒNG	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	LƯƠNG NGỌC GIA	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
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TẶ ƠN CHA	GB HỒNG BẢO TOÀN	CANADA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB HOA - KIM BA	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	LÂM THỰC DIỄN	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	DẶNG VINH	CANADA	TẶ ƠN CHA	CROFTON TEO XHI YONG	SINGAPORE	TẶ ƠN CHA	TRẦN KIẾT VAN	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	TÊRÊSA KIM THOA	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	LIN GUET LINH	SINGAPORE	TẶ ƠN CHA	ANDY TRAN	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA
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TẶ ƠN CHA	GB C.B HỒ TẤN QUÂN	THỦ ĐỨC-TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	HỒ NGỌC CƯỜNG	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB RICHARD YU	TX-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB LÊ HOÀNG LONG	NHÌN KIỂU-CÁN THƠ	TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN THÁI LAN THẢO	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	HỒNG THỀM	TX-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB PHAO LÔ - TÊRÊSA - BẠT - HÀ	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	GIUSE DINH XUÂN CAO	TP CÁN THƠ	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB HOÀNG NHẤT BÀN	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	BÌNH CÔNG PHƯƠNG	KHÁNH HÓA	TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN THỊ ANH THƯ	THUY SI	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB ANTHONY - MICHAEL HOANG	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	LÊ THỊ LỆ HẰNG	MỸ HIỆM-SỐC TRĂNG	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB PHÊRÔ NGUYỄN DUY MÃN	ĐỒNG NAI	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB NGUYỄN THỊ HỒNG	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB ANTON GIUSE TRẦN VĂN TỬ	TIỀN GIANG	TẶ ƠN CHA	MARIA MAI THỦ NGA	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	MARIA NGUYỄN THỊ THU HIỀN	VĨNH LONG	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN THỊ THÙY TRANG	Q.12-TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB HÙNG HOÀNG - ANH MAI	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB NGUYỄN ĐỨC HÙNG	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB TINO NGUYỄN - LINDA	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA	CECILIA ĐOÀN DUY HẰNG	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	BAO ANH NGUYEN	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB THU - HÙNG	AUSTRALIA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GHIAN DON BOSCO NGUYỄN MINH TÂN	HIỆN HÓA-ĐỒNG NAI	TẶ ƠN CHA	HÙNG PHẠM	GA-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB THÚY GARRY NGUYỄN	NSW-SYDNEY	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB ANH - AN - ANGELINA - AIDEN	CA-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	CỤC NGUYỄN	GA-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB TRIẾT - TERRANCE NGUYỄN	NSW-SYDNEY	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB HÙNG - LIÊN	ĐÀ NẴNG	TẶ ƠN CHA	NEWTON PHẠM	GA-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN HOÀNG THỨ AN	VĨNH LONG	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB VIỆT TRẦN - AN LÝ	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	VIVIAN PHẠM	GA-USA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	Galaxy A15	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	MARIA MAI THỊ THẢO	ĐẮK NÔNG	TẶ ƠN CHA	GIUSE LÊ VĂN HÙNG	SÀI GÒN-THÀNH HÓA	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB LINH - VINH	SÀI GÒN	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB TRUNG - HỒNG	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	PHẠM ANH ĐÀO	KIÊN GIANG	TẶ ƠN CHA
TẶ ƠN CHA	GB QUAN XUÂN VINH	USA	TẶ ƠN CHA	GB ĐỨC - PHỤNG	TPHCM	TẶ ƠN CHA	NGUYỄN MINH LỘC	CANADA	TẶ ƠN CHA

Plaques at Tac Say Pilgrimage Center list the names of people who return to give thanks after receiving favors through the intercession of Fr. Francis Xavier Truong Buu Diep, a Vietnamese priest who was martyred in 1946. (Courtesy of Mary Nguyen)

According to Vietnamese custom, anyone who receives a blessing, returns to give thanks. Their names are written on boards at the Pilgrimage Center: "My name is ... I come from Dong Nai province," or "from the USA," or "from Canada." There are so many names they cannot all be counted.

I have also felt his love for me. About 20 years ago, I could not travel to his tomb, so I prayed in front of his portrait. Through his intercession, God healed me of an ear infection. Since then, the illness has never returned, and I have visited him many times to give thanks, remembering his soul in my daily prayers.

My own experience is just one of countless testimonies of Father Francis' intercession. His life of holiness continues to inspire and guide the faithful, a devotion now recognized by the church which has officially recognized his holiness.

Vietnam will witness its first-ever [canonization](#) celebration. The Diocese of Can Tho received a letter from the Holy See approving the canonization of Fr. Francis Xavier Truong Buu Diep. His beatification Mass will be presided over by Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, the special representative of Pope Leo XIV, on July 2 at Tac Say Pilgrimage Center.

I am truly happy for all Vietnamese believers, Father Francis is not only a faithful servant of God, but also a holy pastor, always pleasing to God in word and action. And now we know he has a special place in God's heart.

May God give me a holy life so that like him, I can love and serve everyone without distinction — the poor and the rich, Catholics and non-Catholics and to bring God's love to the sisters in my community, my neighbors, my family and those in difficult situations, like a true disciple of Christ.

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