



July 17, 2020

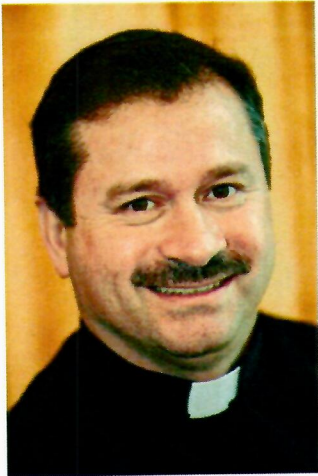
What will separate us from the love of Christ?
Romans 8:35

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Grace and Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. What will separate us from the love of Christ? These are the words of Scripture from St. Paul to the Romans. St. Paul tells us nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Who brings us to know Christ? We do.

Your pastor, Father Bart Garcon, S.M.M. is leaving to serve the holy people of St. Andrew Parish in Orlando. I am grateful to Father Garcon for bringing you to Christ and guiding you to understand your baptismal call so that you are also able to bring those whom you encounter to know Jesus.

Father Raul Valdez is appointed parochial administrator of St. Jude Catholic Church effective August 1 to guide you in your Catholic faith. Let me introduce you to him briefly:

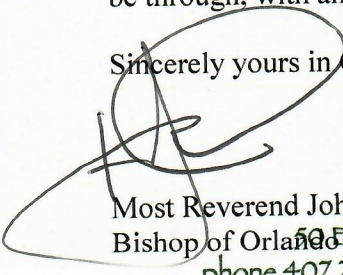


Father Raul Valdez grew up in Guadalajara, Mexico, the seventh of nine children. He comes from a family of carpenters and furniture makers. In his hometown, he attended public school and bit by bit got involved with the local church where he met the Xaverian religious order. After high school, he received training as an auto mechanic, but then decided to enter the Xaverian community. "My family was surprised when I decided to enter religious life," he said. Valdez spent his novitiate year in Salamanca, Spain, studying philosophy and later studied at seminaries in Mexico City. After finishing his philosophy studies, he spent one year in London studying English. He continued his studies in the Philippines where he spent five years living and working with the people, assisting with youth ministry and parish social ministry advocating on behalf of poor squatter communities. He added Tagalog to his list of languages. While in the Philippines, he decided to leave the Xaverians. He continued to work in the Philippines for another two years, but eventually felt called to return to seminary training. He

returned to Mexico and finished his theology training at a Jesuit university in Mexico City. While there, he heard about the need for priests in the Orlando Diocese. He was ordained on May 29, 2004 by Bishop Norbert Dorsey. He has served as a parochial vicar for the San Jose Mission in Pierson; Santo Toribio Romo Mission in Mascotte; St. Mary Magdalen in Altamonte Springs; Blessed Sacrament in Clermont; St. Peter in Deland; St. John Vianney in Orlando; and most recently Blessed Trinity in Ocala.

Please welcome Father Valdez with grace and faith. I pray with you during this time of transition. May we be through, with and of God, that nothing can separate us from Him.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Most Reverend John Noonan
Bishop of Orlando

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