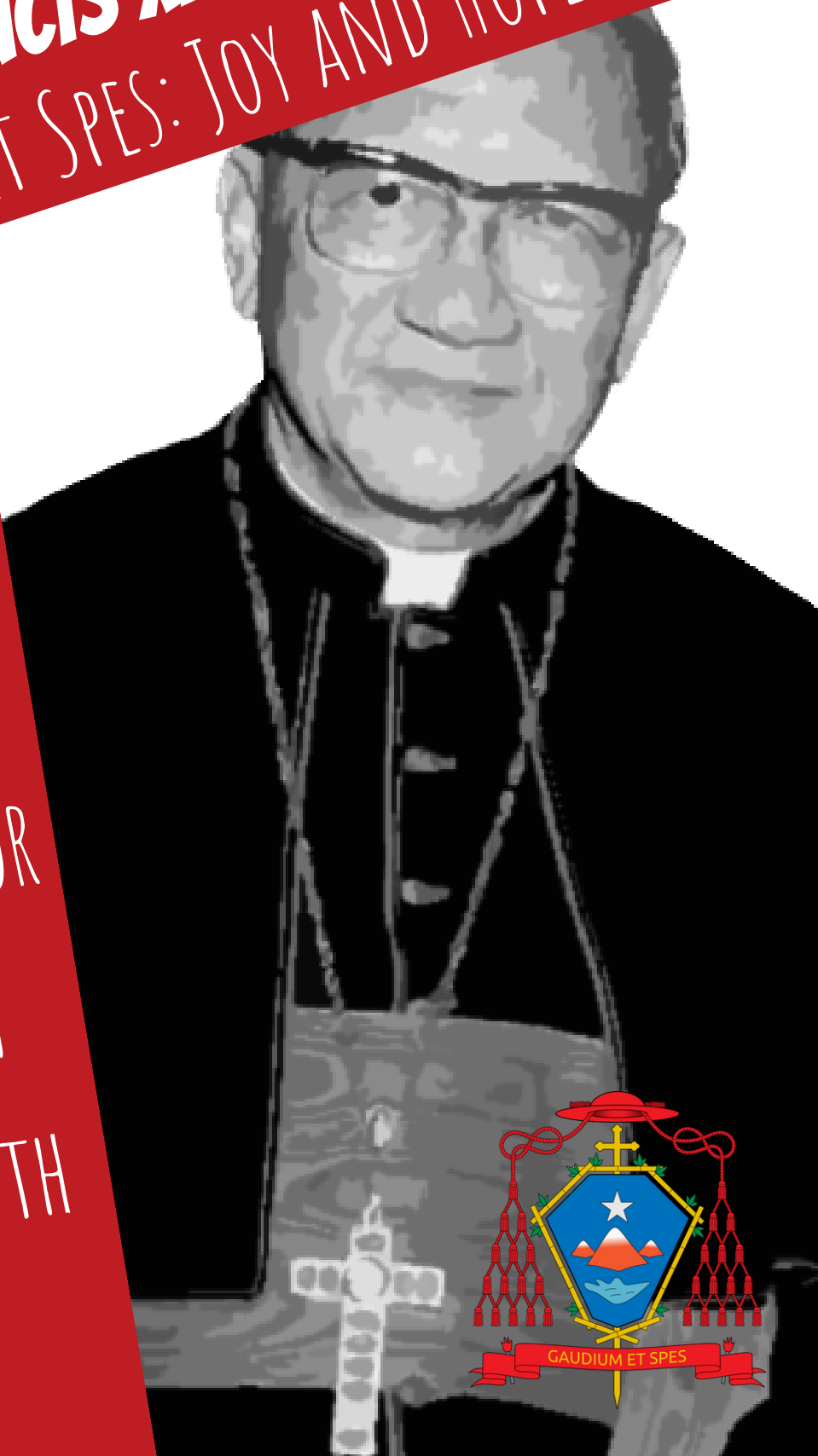


CARDINAL FRANCIS XAVIER VAN THUAN

GAUDIUM ET SPES: JOY AND HOPE!



RESOURCE PACK FOR
POST-PRIMARY
SCHOOLS / YOUTH
GROUPS



- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -

This resource book is designed to celebrate the life of Venerable Cardinal François-Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận, an incredible example for believers everywhere.

Feel free to use whatever elements of this resource you feel best suit the ability and age of the young people you teach / work with.



LINKS TO JUNIOR CYCLE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1.5 explore the presence of religious themes in contemporary culture through an examination of art, music, literature or film
- 1.8 describe the role of prayer in the lives of people of faith
- 1.12 synthesise and consider the insights gained about how people express and live out their beliefs, religious or otherwise
- 2.8 present stories of individuals or groups in the history of two major world religions that have had a positive impact on the lives of people because of their commitment to living out their beliefs.
- 2.9 describe how the faith of a believer can change at different stages in life
- 3.1 examine different sources of values and ways in which the values of a person relate to their everyday choices, their relationships, and their responsibilities to others
- 3.2 reflect upon and discuss what it means to be moral, why people living in society need to be moral and what are the influences on and the sources of authority for a person's moral decision-making

JUNIOR CYCLE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - CBA 1: A PERSON OF COMMITMENT

During a period of three weeks, with support/guidance by the teacher, students will research and report on a person whose religious beliefs or worldview have had a positive impact on the world, past or present.

LINKS TO LEAVING CERTIFICATE NON-EXAM FRAMEWORK FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Section A: The Search for Meaning

Topic 1: Contemporary expressions of the search for meaning.

- The great questions concerning the goal and purpose of life, the meaning of good and evil and the experience of suffering.

Topic 3: The meaning of suffering and evil as understood by a religious perspective.

- Examples of people whose lives are influenced by their faith.
- The role of religious faith in Ireland today

Section D: Morality in Action

Topic 1: Becoming Moral

- Why be moral? Influences on moral principles: peers, family, media, culture, religion, etc.
- The role of religion in informing conscience?

Topic 2: Morality and Religious Belief:

- The Christian understanding of sin and reconciliation

Topic 3: Moral Dilemmas

- Examples of moral decision-making in action.
- The role of religion in moral decision-making.

Section E: God-Talk

Topic 1: My Image of God

- My image of God.
- Images of God in art/music/literature & contemporary culture.

Topic 3: God "in the bits'n'pieces of the everyday":

- Implications of images of God for life.
- Signs and rituals- special moments of God's presence.

Section G: Celebrating Faith

Topic 2: Prayer

- Exploring prayer as a need to communicate with God.
- Examples of prayer from different religious traditions.
- Sacred spaces

Topic 3: Meditation and Contemplation

- The human need for reflection in a busy world
- The use of sacred and inspirational texts in meditation

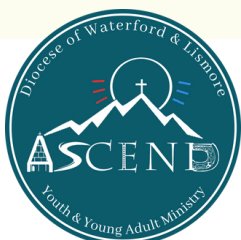
Section H: Story

Topic 1: Story

- Stories that carry meaning and have transformative power.



Topic 3: God's unfolding Story

- Where is God speaking today?
- All part of God's story?
- The student's story



RESOURCE PACK PRODUCED BY ASCEND: WATERFORD AND LISMORE YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Website: www.waterfordlismore.ie/youth-ministry

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Email: youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie

Disclaimer: Throughout this resource you will find links to external websites. Although we make every effort to ensure these links are accurate, up to date and relevant, Ascend Youth & Young Adult Ministry cannot take responsibility for pages maintained by external providers. If you come across any external links that don't work, we would be grateful if you could report them to us at youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie. While we strive to provide only links to useful and ethical websites, we have no control over the content and nature of these sites and the links to other websites do not imply a recommendation for all the content found on these sites.

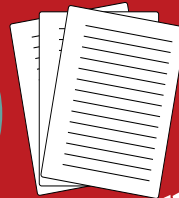


INDEX

*"Looking at the past
to lament it is useless.
Looking at the past to
be proud of results is
dangerous. Looking
at the past to learn
from it is wise."*

Cardinal Van Thuan

Page 1	Who was Cardinal Van Thuan?
Page 3	Cardinal Van Thuan Bio
Page 4	What's in a Name?
Page 5	Movie Poster
Page 6	Motto for Life!
Page 7	Wordsearch
Page 8	Dear Cardinal
Page 9	Doodle Prayer
Page 10	What Forgiveness Means
Page 12	Wordsearch Answers



CARDINAL NGUYEN VAN THUAN

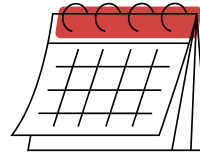
MODERN DAY MARTYR & PROPHET OF HOPE

"Jesus I will not wait. I will live the present moment and fill it with love."

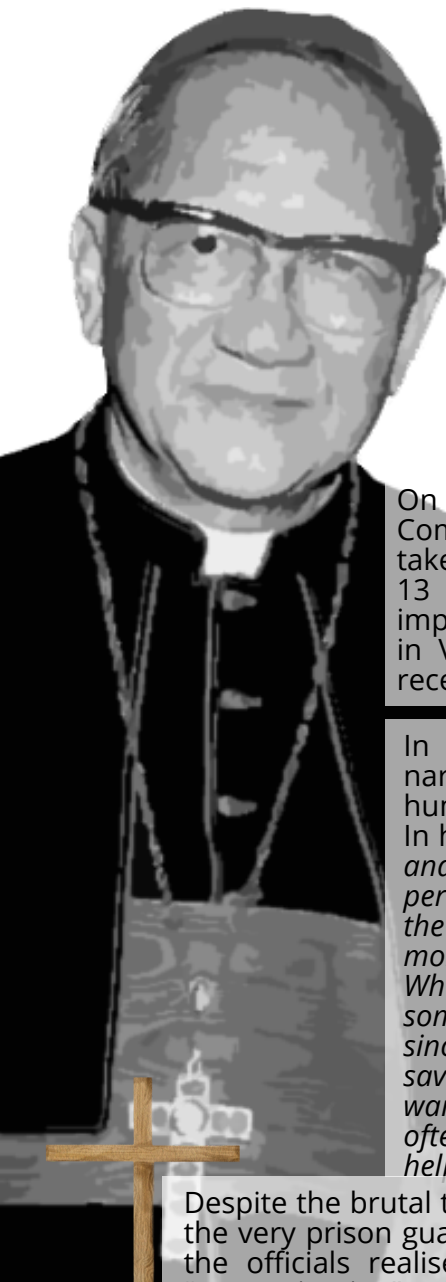
JCRE: LD 1.8 / 2.2 / 2.8 / 2.9 / CBA1
SENIOR RE NON-EXAM: A1 / A3 / 02 / 02 / H1 / H2

WHAT AGE WERE YOU 13 YEARS AGO?

CAN YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU WERE LIKE THAT LONG AGO?



WHO WAS CARDINAL VÂN THUAN?



Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan was born on April 17, 1928 in Vietnam, the eldest of 8 children. Thuan's family had been Catholic for generations, and he was even related to martyrs in the past. He was raised in a deeply faithful environment, with his mother in particular being an incredible example of faith, teaching her sons Bible stories, stories of Vietnamese martyrs, the life and example of St Thérèse of Lisieux. She instilled in him too the value of love and forgiveness, which he would so greatly need later in life. Van Thuan loved his homeland of Vietnam dearly. He was ordained a priest in 1953 and spent some time in parish life as well as a hospital chaplain.

He then moved to Rome where he was recognised as a brilliant student and writer. He later returned to Vietnam where he was appointed Bishop in 1967. He chose as his motto "Gaudium et Spes" (Joy and Hope), because he desired to be an apostle of joy and hope.

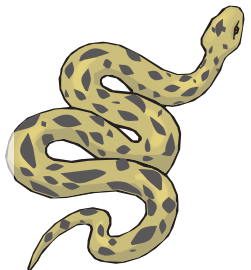
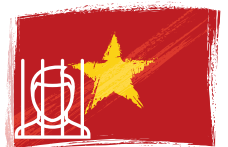


On August 15, 1975, he was put under house arrest by the Vietcong, a Communist-led army and guerrilla force. His situation escalated when he was taken without trial to a prison in North Vietnam where he would spend the next 13 years, nine of which were in solitary confinement. During his years of imprisonment he wrote 'The Road of Hope', advice to all the Catholic Vietnamese in Vietnam and abroad, by using scraps of paper from a calendar block he received from some visitors before his solitary confinement.

In his early time in prison, he was confined in an extremely narrow space without windows, suffocating with heat and humidity, often finding it difficult to breathe.

In his own words: *"They tortured me by leaving me under lights day and night for ten days and then depriving me of all light for long periods. One day in the darkness I noticed a tiny hole through which the light shone. From then on I used put my nostrils there to breathe more easily."*

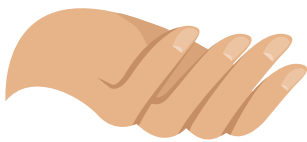
"Whenever there were floods snakes used to invade my cells and sometimes climb my legs to avoid the water.... I had no toilet but since I received hardly any food I had little need of one.... Prayer saved my life. In moments of great suffering, sometimes when I wanted to pray I could not. I was desperately tired, sick and hungry... often I was tempted to despair and rebellion. But the Lord always helped me."



Despite the brutal torture and dehumanization he suffered, Van Thuan always strove to love the very prison guards who abused him. Initially his guards were changed every 15 days, but the officials realised that he was converting these young jailers and so to avoid him "contaminating" others decided to leave those five with him. These young men became friends and students of Van Thuan. He spoke to them about his family, his travels. He taught them English, French and Latin. Although religious symbols were prohibited, he convinced one to bring him a little wood and he fashioned a cross. Another brought him some electric wire and loaned him a pliers for four hours, to enable him to make a chain for his cross.

FOLIO

GAME-CHANGER SERIES: CARDINAL VAN THUAN: MODERN-DAY MARTYR AND PROPHET OF HOPE



Upon his initial arrest he was unable to take anything with him, but was given permission the next day to write to his friends to ask them to bring his clothes. He asked them to include some wine "as medicine for stomach aches". Using the wine and some tiny pieces of bread, Van Thuan celebrated Mass in his tiny cell with three drops of wine and one drop of water in his palm. "This was my altar, my cathedral."



Archbishop Thuan was released from prison in 1988 and then exiled from his beloved homeland of Vietnam in 1991. Pope John Paul II named him president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in 1998 and created him a cardinal in 2001. He died of cancer Sept. 16, 2002. Cardinal Van Thuan died in 2002 in Rome and was declared Venerable by Pope Francis in 2017. In spite of the persecutions imposed on the Church and on himself personally, he always lived and preached forgiveness and reconciliation.

NOW WATCH THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS | EPISODE 4: VEN. FRANCIS XAVIER NGUYEN VAN THUAN



1. What is your initial response to the life of Cardinal Van Thuan?
2. If you could ask him one question, what would it be?

FIVE RULES FOR MY LIFE

Ten Rules of Life of Nguyễn Văn Thuan

1. I will live the present moment to the fullest.
2. I will discern between God and God's works.
3. I will hold firmly to one secret: prayer.
4. I will see in the Holy Eucharist my only power.
5. I will have only one wisdom: the science of the Cross.
6. I will remain faithful to my mission in the Church and for the Church as a witness of Jesus Christ.
7. I will seek the peace the world cannot give.
8. I will carry out a revolution by renewal in the Holy Spirit.
9. I will speak one language and wear one uniform: Charity.
10. I will have one very special love: The Blessed Virgin Mary.



ROAD OF HOPE:
THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF
CARDINAL NGUYEN VAN THUAN (TRAILER)



CLOUD OF WITNESSES:
VENERABLE CARDINAL FRANCIS VAN THUAN

LOOK UP MATTHEW 5:10-12- HOW DOES THIS QUOTE RELATE TO THE LIFE OF CARDINAL VAN THUAN?



**PRAYER OF
CARDINAL
VAN THUAN:**

Cardinal Van Thuan initially struggled to pray in prison, until he realised how closely God was with him, even in his darkest moments. One prayer he particularly loved to recited was the Litany of Saints, which he called his prayer for liberation:

From all evil, Lord save your people. From every sin, Lord, save your people. From everlasting death, Lord, save your people. By your death and rising to new life, Lord, save your people. By your gift of the Holy Spirit, Lord, save your people.

YOU CAN BE A GAME-CHANGER LIKE CARDINAL VAN THUAN!

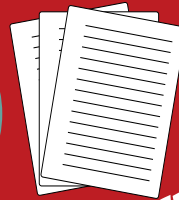
- Ask God for the grace to be able to forgive and love at all times.
- Wear a cross / crucifix around you neck.
- Post some quotes from Cardinal Van Thuan - he had a great sense of humour and understanding of the human heart.
- Make a commitment to prayer, even just 5 minutes a day.
- Create a piece of artwork / video / poem / song inspired by his life!



GAME-CHANGER PLAYLIST!

Listen to and think about how they reflect the life and witness of Cardinal Van Thuan. Click the titles.

- "Even unto death" (Audrey Assad)
- "Nearness" (Jenn Johnson)
- "Raise a Hallelujah" (Bethel)
- "While I'm Waiting" (John Waller)
- "Remembrance" (Matt Maher)



CARDINAL NGUYEN VAN THUAN

FILL IN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT CARDINAL VAN THUAN:

Date of birth:

Place of Birth:

Full Name:

Did his family practice their faith?

Aspects of the Catholic faith Cardinal Van Thuan particularly practiced:

What kind of Bishop was he?

Examples of how Cardinal Van Thuan served others:

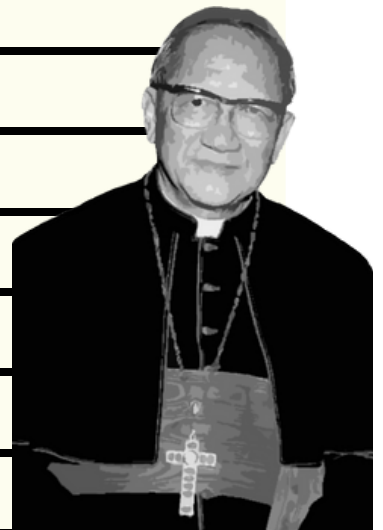
How he used his life to spread the faith:

How he dealt with suffering:

Date of death:

Cause of death:

Canonised?





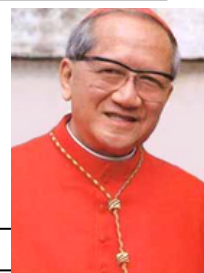
WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*"DO NOT FEAR,
FOR I HAVE
REDEEMED YOU;
I HAVE CALLED YOU
BY NAME;
YOU ARE MINE.
ISAIAH 43:1.*

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR NAME MEANS? IF NOT, LOOK IT UP!
DO YOU THINK THE MEANING SUITS YOU? EXPLAIN

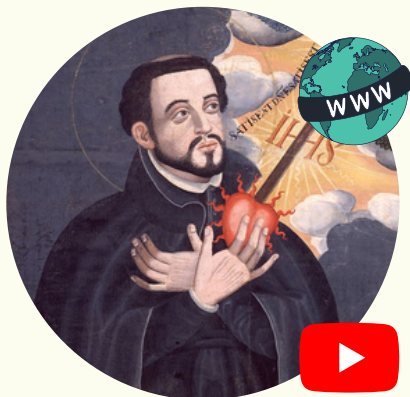
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE NAME FRANCIS MEANS?

The name Francis is primarily a male name of Latin origin that means From France Or Free.
How is this significant for the kind of person Cardinal Francis Xavier Van Thuan was?



MEET SOME OTHER FAMOUS GUYS CALLED FRANCIS!

CLICK THE LINKS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM.
WHAT STRIKES YOU THE MOST ABOUT THEIR LIVES?



ST FRANCIS XAVIER



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI



ST FRANCIS DE SALES

DO YOU NOTICE ANY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THEIR LIVES AND VENERABLE CARDINAL VAN THUAN?

CHECK OUT THESE OTHER INSPIRATIONAL MARTYRS

CLICK THE LINKS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM.
WHAT STRIKES YOU THE MOST ABOUT THEIR LIVES?



ST MAXIMILIAN KOLBE



ST. ANDREW DUNG-LAC



ST OLIVER PLUNKETT

HOW CAN MARTYRS LIKE THESE HELP AND INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY? REFLECT/DISCUSS.

- ASCEND YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE) -

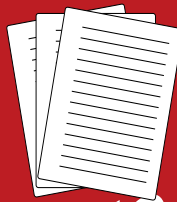


MOVIE POSTER



If you were to produce a movie based on the life of Cardinal Van Thuan, what would you call it, who would play the role of Van Thuan, what you include on a poster and why? Create your poster in the space below. Be prepared to explain your choices.

CARDINAL VAN THUAN'S MOTTO



- When a Bishop is elected they choose a motto and a crest for their episcopacy.
- Cardinal Van Thuan chose the motto "Gaudium et Spes" (Joy and Hope" when he became Bishop.
- What relevance do you think this had for his life?



MY MOTTO FOR LIFE

If you had to choose a motto to live your life by, something really meaningful that you could come back to time and time again if you drifted from your faith or your ideals or principles, what would it be?

Why would you choose that particular motto? What would it signify for you?

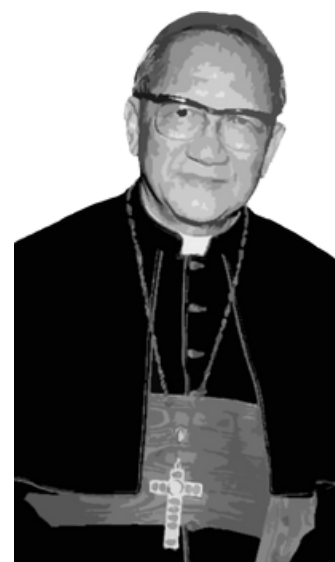
CREATE YOUR OWN CREST HERE WITH THAT MOTTO (LIKE THE ONE ABOVE). INCLUDE SYMBOLS OF WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU!



WORDSEARCH

FIND ALL THE WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH CARDINAL VAN THUAN IN THE WORDSEARCH

S C R E T R E E Y F V G W I I L D E K D
 E R A V V N B T M R M L W O X W R O L C
 K L E R W E E E A C X O J Q F I M Y Z K
 A C M I D O D M R N Q V Z F W G Q Q T V
 N D A N L I R U E V I E L C S D R A U G
 S N A L C P N W G N A M I W X U G L M Q
 Z A V I E T N A M P I R A F M W D E O H
 T L N H L N G P L D T F S T X M R N C D
 S E F S B H D B S C U S N P N C C N I A
 E M R I S E G A E Q E U P O Y O E O S Y
 R O A L N C P L R N E R R Y C R C R X R
 R H M G O Z E K K B I H N D F U Y K K M
 A X T N J Y Y R R S L J Y R A T I L O S
 E M Q E Z U A U O T X O S H R K A K B F
 S V A Y Y D Q N U V I T C A G U F T I K
 U W N S J N E X I L E D M K C J I B S R
 O H V D S C Z P P T Z W Z P Z X G B H V
 H C R O S S D E B U A P R A Y E R W O G
 S S E N E V I G R O F L W L X U M S P A
 S E P S T E M U I D U A G M U H O P E H



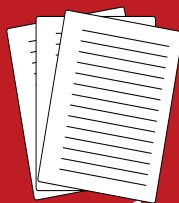
Bishop | calendar block | Cardinal | confinement |
 contaminate | cross | darkness | electric wire | English |
 exiled | forgiveness | French | Gaudium et Spes | guards |
 homeland | hope | house arrest | Latin | love | martyrs |
 Mass | medicine | mercy | palm | pliers | prayer | prison |
 snakes | solitary | Vietnam



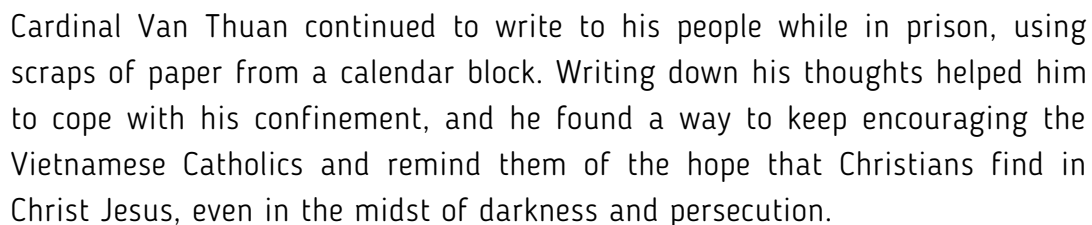
QUICK FIRE QUIZ!

Choose at least ten of the words / phrases in the list above and work as a team to explain how they relate to the life of Cardinal Van Thuan as quickly as you can. Who can explain the most words?





DEAR CARDINAL...



Reflect on his life and legacy in the format of a letter to Cardinal Van Thuan. Maybe you could write about the challenges you face in your life, or the questions his story raised for you, or any aspect of his story that you found inspiring, or difficult to understand. The important thing is to respond personally and honestly - whatever form that takes for you!

[illegible]



CLICK HERE FOR SOME
RELAXING
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC



DOODLE PRAYER



Allow yourself some space to sit and reflect.

You might prefer to play some music in the background, or just sit in silence.

Reflect on the quote from Cardinal Van Thuan below, which helped him to love those who persecuted him, and pray with it.

Allow ideas, thoughts and images that come to you as you pray to form part of your doodle prayer. Maybe names will come to mind - people to pray for; or things in your life you feel you need to change; maybe situations you need to bring to God and ask for His help in will surface...

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your heart and your thoughts. This is a particular space you are creating for God in your life today. Speak, and listen.

*YOU HAVE
THE LOVE OF CHRIST
IN YOUR HEART.
LOVE THEM
AS JESUS LOVES YOU"*



What Forgiveness Means



FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US

"To love means loving the unlovable. To forgive means pardoning the unpardonable. Faith means believing the unbelievable. Hope means hoping when everything seems hopeless."
GK Chesterton



WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE HARDEST CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS TO LIVE OUT?



WHAT DO YOU THINK FORGIVENESS MEANS? HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE FORGIVEN SOMEONE?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ "FORGIVENESS" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



What does Fr Mike claim is one of the most radical teachings of Christianity?

What do we pray at the centre of the Our Father?

WHAT FORGIVENESS MEANS (AND WHAT IT DOESN'T MEAN!)



- Forgiveness doesn't mean you're no longer _____.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean you have to be _____ with this person again.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean that you _____ them.

When you forgive, why do you **not** have to feel like you have forgiven someone?

When you forgive, why do you **not** have to feel like you are hurt anymore?

When you forgive, why do you **not** have to feel like you should trust them again?

WE CAN UNDERSTAND FORGIVENESS IN TERMS OF JUSTICE.

Justice = what I _____
or what another person _____.



IN TERMS OF FORGIVENESS THAT MEANS:
"I'M NOT GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY BACK
WHAT YOU OWE ME."

Retell the parable of the unforgiving servant in your own words:



STEPS TO FORGIVING SOMEONE:

1 (JUSTICE) Write down: _____

2 (FORGIVENESS) Look at list and say: _____

WHAT FORGIVENESS MEANS [LUKE 6:27-38](#)



Forgiveness gives us the freedom to _____.

Forgiveness is a big deal, so before we do any of these steps we need to ask for God's grace, for the Holy Spirit to help us, for Jesus to guide our thoughts and actions, and to trust in the Father.



BONUS

6:52 MINS



Watch the short YouTube clip, [The Story of Jennifer Trapuzzano](#).

How do you react to Jennifer's ability to forgive in this situation?

Try to find any other incredible stories of forgiveness to share with others!



Now Read Luke 6:27-38



This Gospel passage is a continuation of Jesus' Sermon on the Plain (or on the Mount depending on which Gospel you are reading). He holds up for us an incredibly high standard of living - the Christian standard: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. This is tough, really tough! Is it impossible? By human standards, yes, but by God's grace, thankfully no. Jesus calls us to love and view others as He does if we want to call ourselves a follower of His. Jesus calls us to give and not count the cost, or as we looked at in Fr Mike's video, to count the cost and still forgive. This passage directly follows the Beatitudes, the path to joy Jesus promises us. Lack of forgiveness can enslave us, hold our hearts hostage, eat away at our joy and our ability to love. This is not living life to the full. This is not a path to joy. Jesus also knows we're weak and frail. He modelled for us how to live this way by His own life and death. He promises us all the help that we need. If we wait until we feel like doing any of this, that feeling may never come. Love is a decision, forgiveness is a decision. If you are struggling to forgive, make a decision to set your heart free, by God's grace.

MISSION!

ARE THERE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU STRUGGLE TO FORGIVE? PEOPLE WHO HAVE WRONGED YOU AND HURT YOU? PEOPLE WHO OWE YOU A DEBT, WHO HAVE COST YOU SOMETHING IN YOUR LIFE? IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU CAN START THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS, FOLLOW FR MIKE'S ADVICE. IF YOU STRUGGLE WITH THAT, BEGIN BY PRAYING FOR THE GRACE TO WANT TO FORGIVE THEM, AND COMMIT TO THAT PRAYER.



PRAYER TIME!

Jesus, You are the source of all joy and peace. You know that there are areas of my life and people in my life that have caused me pain, and it can be difficult for me to forgive. I'm not sure if right now I even want to forgive. But I pray now for the grace to want to let your healing into my life. To make room for Your healing, I know there are things I need to let go of. Fill my heart with Your love, and grant me the grace I need to decide to take a step towards forgiveness today, no matter how small that step may be. Amen



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON FORGIVENESS



- Forgiveness - Matthew West
- From the Inside Out - Hillsong
- O Come to the Altar - Elevation Worship
- Forgive our sins as we forgive - Koine Music
- A Heart that Forgives - Kevin Levar
- Forgive - This Hope Music
- Love Your Enemies - Kyle Sigmon
- Bless those who curse - Robert Martin
- O God Forgive Us - For King & Country
- Letting Go - Jeremy Camp

Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



9:40 MINS

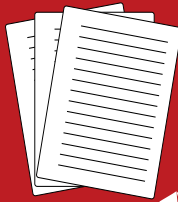


Fr Mike Schmitz: Why is it so hard to forgive yourself?

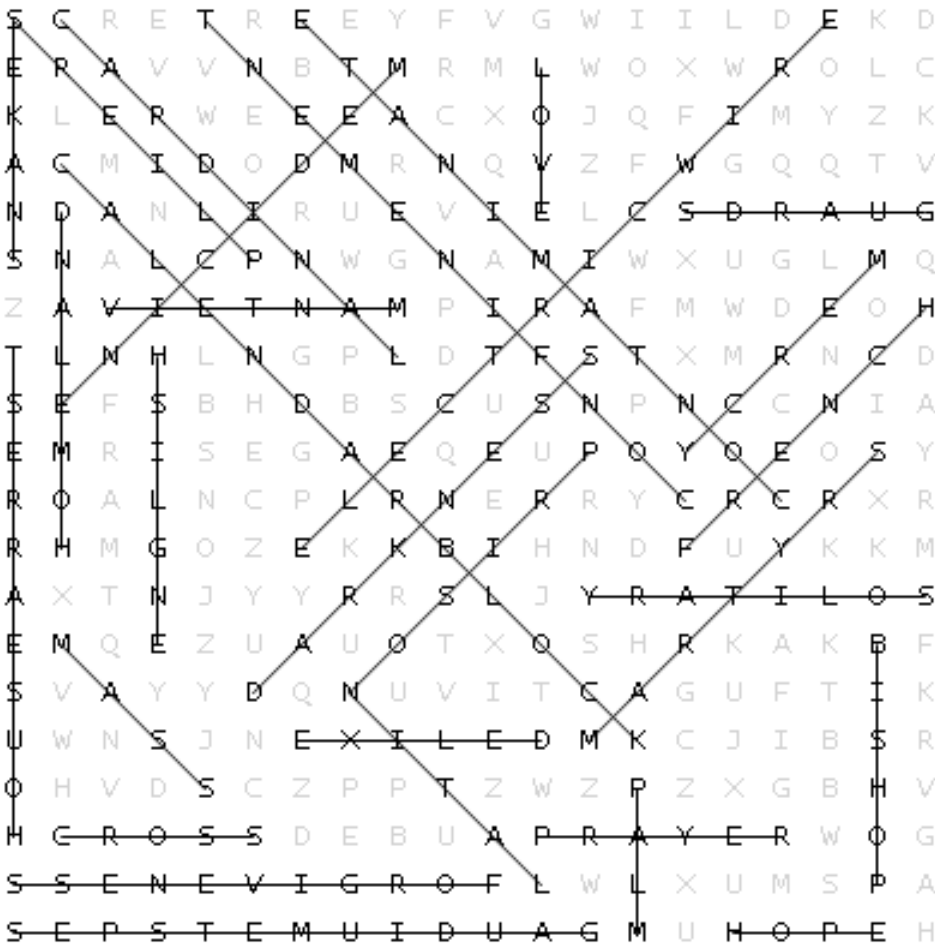
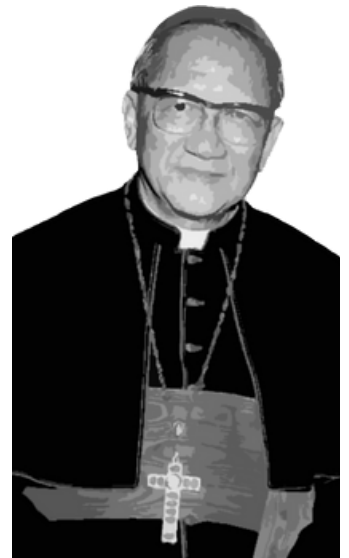
6:52 MINS



Witness of Mercy: The Story of Jennifer Trapuzzano



WORDSEARCH ANSWERS



Bishop | calendar block | Cardinal | confinement |
contaminate | cross | darkness | electric wire | English |
exiled | forgiveness | French | Gaudium et Spes | guards |
homeland | hope | house arrest | Latin | love | martyrs |
Mass | medicine | mercy | palm | pliers | prayer | prison |
snakes | solitary | Vietnam



QUICK FIRE QUIZ!

Choose at least ten of the words / phrases in the list above and work as a team to explain how they relate to the life of Cardinal Van Thuan as quickly as you can. Who can explain the most words?



NOTES

Resource Pack produced by Ascend: Waterford & Lismore Youth & Young Adult Ministry



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Email: youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie



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