



Vatican City, 15 September 2026

Dear friends and devotees of the Venerable Servant of God Cardinal François-Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận,

September 16 will mark the twenty-fourth anniversary of his passing into Heaven. It is an occasion that brings us together spiritually each year in remembrance, gratitude, and prayer, but it also invites us to recognize how his witness continues to speak to the Church and to the world today.

The past year has offered us some particularly significant signs.

On March 25, at the Apostolic Palace of the Lateran, the Postulation, together with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the Dicastery for the Clergy, the Diocese of Rome, and the Città Nuova Publishing House, organized the conference “François-Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận. Witness of Hope,” on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of his book *The Path of Hope*.

Precisely in the place where, in 2013, the diocesan phase of the Cause had concluded, we were able to hear testimonies, words, and music that brought to life the image of a shepherd who knew how to transform imprisonment, isolation, and the deprivation of freedom into a space of encounter with God, of forgiveness, and of love for every person. The Holy Father Leo XIV also chose to accompany that gathering with a message of his own, recalling the continued relevance of the Cardinal’s fervent Christian witness.

During the conference, the biography written by his sister, Élisabeth Nguyễn Thị Thu Hồng, and published in Italian by Città Nuova, was also presented. Through the affectionate yet concrete recollections of a sister, we can gain a closer understanding of the family roots of his faith, his human and spiritual journey, the sufferings he endured, and that inner freedom which no prison could take from him.

Another sign, particularly precious to all of us, came from the encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*. In no. 125, Pope Leo XIV included the Venerable François-Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận among those witnesses who, “under harsh and often inhuman conditions,” embodied “the hope of the Gospel and the dignity of the human person.”

It is a recognition that fills us with gratitude, but above all helps us to understand even better the heart of his witness. Cardinal Văn Thuận did not merely speak of hope: he held fast to it when, humanly speaking, all seemed lost. He did not merely teach forgiveness: he chose to love those who guarded him and held him prisoner. He did not merely defend human dignity: he knew how to recognize and respect it in every person, without distinction.

His life reminds us that history can truly change when even a single person takes the Gospel and the dignity of all people seriously. It also reminds us that good does not advance automatically, but requires perseverance, remembrance, conversion, and the ability to start anew after every trial.

On this anniversary, we invite each of you to join us in prayer, asking the Lord that the witness of Venerable Cardinal Văn Thuận may become ever better known and that his message of hope, reconciliation, and peace may be welcomed. Let us continue to entrust our intentions to his intercession and pray that the Cause may proceed according to God’s will.



His spiritual legacy does not belong only to the past. It is a message for our time: to choose God in the present moment, to love without delay, to forgive unconditionally, and never to let suffering have the last word. “Those who truly love,” wrote Cardinal Văn Thuận in *The Path of Hope*, “sacrifice themselves constantly but never speak of it.” And he urged: “You must sacrifice yourself, not others.”

With gratitude and united in prayer,

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