

# diocesan directory

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## Diocesan Officials

### A. Ordinary of Vinh Diocese



**Bishop Paul Nguyen Thai Hop, O.P.** was born on Feb. 1, 1945 in the northern Nghe An province. He accompanied his family on the 1954 exodus to South Vietnam after French troops were defeated by communists. 10 years later he entered a Dominican novitiate in Vung Tau city. He studied philosophy and theology at local Dominican institutes in 1965-1972 while studied Orient philosophy at a university in Sai Gon and obtained a BA in 1971. After he was ordained a priest on August 8, 1972, he was sent to further his studies at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1972-1978 and obtained a doctorate in Western philosophy. He also studied political business at the University of Geneve in 1978-1979. Then he taught in Peru from 1981-1991. Three years later, he obtained a doctorate in moral theology from a Brazilian university. He taught at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome from 1996-2004. After he returned to Vietnam, he taught at local Church institutes and state-run universities.

Pope Benedict XVI appointed him bishop of the northern Vinh diocese on May 13, 2010. His episcopal ordination was on July 23 that year.

Bishop Hop serves as head of the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace of the Vietnam Bishop's Conference.

The bishop speaks English, French, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

*Address:* Xa Doai Bishop's House, Nghi Dien ward, Nghi Loc district, Nghe An province

*Phone:* +84 38 3861 171

*Mobile:* +84 918 456 754

*Fax:* +84 38 3861 215

*Email:* [paulthaihop@yahoo.com](mailto:paulthaihop@yahoo.com)

**Previous Ordinaries**

*Bishop Paul Marie Cao Dinh Thuyen (2000 - 2010)*  
*Bishop Pierre Jean Tran Xuan Hap (1979-2000)*  
*Bishop Pierre Nguyen Nang (1971-1978)*  
*Coadjutor Bishop Paul Nguyen Dinh Nhien (1963 - 1969)*  
*Bishop Jean Baptiste Tran Huu Duc (1951-1971)*  
*Bishop Andre Leonce Eloy (1913-1946)*  
*Bishop Francoise Belleville (1911-1912)*  
*Bishop Louis Marie Pineau (1886-1910)*  
*Bishop Yves Marie Croc (1877-1885)*  
*Coadjutor Bishop Guillaume C. Masson (1846-1853)*  
*Bishop Jean Dennis Gauthier (1846-1877)*



Bishop Hop's coat of arms

**B. Other Diocesan Officials****Vicar General: Father Peter Nguyen Van Vien**

*Address:* Vinh Thanh Major Seminary - Nghi Dien village, Nghi Loc district, Nghe An province, Vietnam

*Phone:* +84 907 949 340

*Email:* [peternguyenvanvien@hotmail.com](mailto:peternguyenvanvien@hotmail.com)

**Secretary: Father Peter Nguyen Van Huong**

*Address:* Xa Doai Bishop's House, Nghi Dien ward, Nghi Loc district, Nghe An province, Vietnam

*Phone:* +84 38 3861 171

*Mobile:* +84 986 764 939

*Email:* [tgmvinh@gmail.com](mailto:tgmvinh@gmail.com)

**Treasurer: Father Anthony Tran Van Cong**

*Address:* Xa Doai Bishop's House, Nghi Dien ward, Nghi Loc district, Nghe An province, Vietnam

*Mobile:* +84 986 764 939

*Email:* [antoncong@yahoo.com](mailto:antoncong@yahoo.com)

**Council of Consultors**

- Father John Baotist Nguyen Khac Ba
- Father Peter Tran Phuc Chinh

- Father Martin Nguyen Xuan Hoang
- Father Francis Xavier Hoang Sy Huong
- Father Peter Nguyen Van Huong
- Father Joseph Hoang Thai Lan
- Father John Nguyen Hong Phap
- Father Anthony Pham Dinh Phung
- Father Francis Xavier Vo Thanh Tam
- Father Peter Nguyen Van Vien
- Father Peter Nguyen Van Vinh

#### **Presbyteral Council**

*Chairman:* Bishop Paul Nguyen Thai Hop

*Vice-chairman:* Father Peter Tran Phuc Chinh

*Secretary General:* Father John Nguyen Hong Phap

#### Members:

- Father Anthony Pham Dinh Phung
- Father Martin Nguyen Xuan Hoang
- Father Paul Bui Dinh Cao
- Father Peter Nguyen Van Vinh

#### **Diocesan Marriage Tribunal**

*Judicial Vicar:* Father Francis Xavier Vo Thanh Tam

*Defender of the Bond:* Brother Joseph Nguyen Thanh Mai



A gathering of children on mid-autumn festival



Elderly people given free food on Tet festival or lunar new year

## **Statistics**

### **A. Catholic Population**

As of Dec. 31, 2009, Vinh diocese had 492,971 baptized Catholics, representing 9.13 percent of all 5,400,000 people in the territory. During 2009, the diocese recorded 12,410 baptisms, 9,313 Confirmations and 6,271 marriages.

#### **People in the Diocese**

- Baptized Catholics: 492,971 or 9.13%
- Members of other Christian denominations: data not available
- Followers of other religions (Buddhism and other indigenous faiths): data not available

### **B. Diocesan and Religious Priests**

Diocesan Priests: 184 (All Vietnamese)

Religious Priests: 3 (All Vietnamese)

### **C. Religious Brothers, Sisters**

Religious Brothers: none

Religious Sisters: 697 (All Vietnamese)

**D. Lay Missionaries, Catechists**

Catechists: 7,575 (All volunteers)

**E. Seminaries, Houses of Formation**

Minor seminary: none

Major seminary: 1

Major seminarians: 79

Seminary candidates: 35

**F. Deaneries in Diocese are: Bao Nham, Bot Da, Cam Xuyen, Can Loc, Cau Ram, Cua Lo, Dong Nghia, Dong Trooc, Hoa Ninh, Huang Phuong, Ky Anh, Minh Cam, Nhan Hoa, Ngan Sau, Nghia Yen, Thuan Nghia, Van Hanh, Van Loc, Xa Doai**

**G. There are 172 parishes and 722 subparishes and mission stations in the diocesan territory**



Vinh Thanh Major Seminary



People attending Mass inside the Cathedral.

PHOTO ON TOP:

Cathedral of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Bishop's house

## Diocesan Activities and Organizations

### A. Major Diocesan Commissions and Organizations

- Commission for Charitable and Social Actions  
*In-Charge:* Father Peter Nguyen Van Vinh
- Commission for Christian Education  
*In-Charge:* Father John Baptiste Nguyen Khac Ba
- Commission for Cultural Affairs  
*In-Charge:* Father Peter Nguyen Hieu Phuong
- Commission for Doctrine for Faith  
*In-Charge:* Father Martin Nguyen Xuan Hoang
- Commission for Evangelization  
*In-Charge:* Father Peter Tran Phuc Chinh
- Commission for Holy Music and Arts  
*In-Charge:* Fathers Dominic Pham Xuan Ke and Joseph Nguyen Cong Binh
- Commission for Justice and Peace  
*In-Charge:* Father Gerard Nguyen Nam Viet
- Commission for Migrant workers  
*In-Charge:* Father Joseph Phan Sy Phuong
- Commission for Religious  
*In-Charge:* Father John of God Nguyen Phuoc
- Commission for Social Communication  
*In-Charge:* Father Gerard Nguyen Nam Viet
- Commission for the Laity and Family  
*In-Charge:* Joseph Hoang Thai Lan

- Commission for Youths and College Students  
*In-Charge: Father Francis Xavier Hoang Sy Huong*

## B. Catholic Educational Institutions

### Kindergartens: 6



A Church-run clinic providing health care for poor patients



Church people distributing food relief to flood victims in October 2010

## C. Catholic Social Welfare

- Centers for orphans, children with physical disabilities: 5
- Houses for elderly: 7
- Dispensaries: 21
- Clinics: 1
- Houses for retired clergy: 1

## D. Social Communications

- Legion of Mary
- Kolping Society
- Association of Sacred Heart of Jesus
- Association of Saint Therese
- Third Franciscans
- Movement of Children of the Eucharist

## Religious Congregations, Societies and Institutes

### A. Religious Institutes of Men

- Congregation of God's Word ~ **CGW**
- Third Franciscans ~ **TF**

### B. Religious Institutes of Women

- Lovers of the Holy Cross of Vinh ~ **LHCV**
- Missionaries of Charity of Vinh ~ **MCV**



Pilgrimage center of  
Saint Anthony Padua



Catholics attending Mass at Tho Ninh church

### General Characteristics of the Diocese



In a land area of 30,594.90 square kilometers, the diocesan territory covers northern central provinces of Ha Tinh, Nghe An and Quang Binh.

The diocese is surrounded by Thanh Hoa province in the north, the sea in the east, Quang Tri province in the south and Laos in the west.

Ha Tinh province's capital is Ha Tinh city, Vinh city is the capital of Nghe An province and Dong Hoi city is the capital of Quang Binh province.

#### Climate

The diocese has a tropical climate under the influence of the East Asia monsoon. It has two seasons - dry season and rainy season. Three provinces have different temperatures.

In Ha Tinh province, the temperature in winter is 18-22 degrees Celsius and in summer is 15.5-33 degrees Celsius. The rainy season lasts from August to November and the dry season lasts from December to July.

Nghe An province has the average annual temperature of 23-24 degrees Celsius.

Quang Binh has the dry season lasting from April to August and the rainy season lasting from September to March. Its average annual rainfall is 2,000-3,000 millimeters and average annual temperature is 24-25 degrees Celsius.

#### Population

Kinh or majority Vietnamese and some ethnic minority groups of Chut, Ede, Hmong, Kho Mu, O Du, Man, Muong, Tay, Thai and Tho.

#### Language

Vietnamese is mainly used in the diocesan territory. Local dialects are in use among ethnic groups.

#### Economy

In 2010, the annual per capita income was 14.16 million dong (US\$677.5) in Nghe An province, 14 million dong (US\$670) in Quang Binh province and 11 million dong (US\$526) in Ha Tinh province.

Local people mainly cultivate crops, catch fish and produce salt from sea water and handicrafts. Some do business in Laos.

#### Transportation

Main vehicles used in the area include motorbikes, bicycles, buses, boats, trains and airplanes. Vinh Airport, that is five kilometers away from Vinh city, has flights to and from Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city.

**Religions**

The diocese has followers of Buddhism, Protestantism and indigenous faiths of Cao Dai and Hoa Hao.

**Brief History**

Foreign Jesuits worked in the three provinces as early as in 1629. There were many parishes and Church facilities serving thousands of local Catholics in 1634. Many local Catholics and foreign missionaries were killed during religious persecution by soldiers.

Nam Dang Ngoai (South Tonkin) vicariate was established in 1846. Then it had 66,350 Catholics at 18 parishes served by 35 Vietnamese priests, four foreign priests, 75 catechists, 69 seminarians, 220 Religious.

From 1846 to 1946, the vicariate was headed by five foreign bishops who established many parishes, built churches, schools, hospitals, the bishop's house, seminaries and composed prayers books in the local language.

The vicariate was renamed after Vinh vicariate in 1924 and elevated to diocese in 1960, when the Vietnam Bishops' Conference was established. The late Bishop John Baptist Tran Huu Duc was the first Vietnamese bishop of the diocese.

After French troops were defeated by communists in 1954, estimated 50,000 priests, Religious and Catholics had to flee to southern Vietnam. In 1966-1972, the local Church was badly affected by the Vietnam War. Many local churches were collapsed or damaged, Catholics had to move to other places and religious activities were limited.

In 1988, the local Church reopened its major seminary that gives priestly formation to students from Vinh and Thanh Hoa dioceses.

In recent years, the local Church has built new churches and facilities and revived old parishes and associations. The diocese aims to train catechists, lay leaders, priests and Religious. Diocesan committees and advisory, presbyteral, pastoral and finance councils are established. Funds for pastoral activities and flood victims are created.

Another its top priority is evangelization. Local Catholics are urged to evangelize themselves, their families and other people. They are also asked to reach out to people, work for the common good, live out their faith publicly, bravely go beyond their old faith practices and see signs of time to reach out to other people.

Vinh diocese is suffragan of Ha Noi archdiocese. Its titular is the feast of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15.

The website of Diocese is available at: [www.giaophanvinh.net](http://www.giaophanvinh.net)

*< Last updated on: April 5, 2011 >*

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