

Rev. Monsignor John Anthony Coelho-Harguindeguy

April 17, 1941 - June 13, 2023

It is with great sadness that the Diocese of Fresno announces the death of Rev. Monsignor John Coelho-Harguindeguy on June 13, 2023 at the Nazareth House in Fresno, California. Msgr. John was ordained April 29, 1967 by Most. Rev. Aloysius Willinger, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Monterey-Fresno. He attended seminary at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California from 1961 to 1967.

A native of the Central Valley, Msgr. John was born on the family dairy in Lemoore, California to John Coelho and Gelminia Berberia. After his father's passing, Msgr. John was lovingly adopted by the father who raised him, Martin Harguindeguy.

Monsignor served in many parishes throughout the Diocese of Fresno. His first appointment was as an Assistant at St. Francis Cabrini in Huron where he felt at home on the west side of the valley. Soon thereafter, his spiritual journey of priesthood led him to many other phenomenal parishes – 11 to be exact. When asked which parish was his favorite, he mentioned they all were but one that resonated with him the most was his first appointment as a Pastor at Holy Ghost, now Our Lady of Miracles, in Gustine, California. His reasoning was not only the ability to celebrate mass in English, Spanish and Portuguese, but the feel of the love and support from the community made him feel at home. He was also proud to bring back the Parochial School after

14 years of being closed.

During his priestly journey, he served at St. Anthony in Atwater, the Shrine of St. Therese, St. Joseph's in Los Banos, Our Lady of Lourdes in Corcoran, Our Lady of Mercy, Sacred Heart and St. Patrick's in Merced, and as Rector of St. John's Cathedral and Pastor of St. Anthony of Padua in Fresno.

On January 16, 1996, Father John, at the time, was presented by His Holiness John Paul II with the Prelate of Honor.

On his final appointment, Monsignor was proud of one of his most major accomplishments – the building of the new St. Peter Prince of the Apostles Catholic Church in his hometown of Lemoore. In his own words, “it was the fulfillment of dream to build a church.” He took pride of being a priest of the people, for the people. Amidst the busy life of priesthood, Monsignor always made sure to make time for his parishioners. It was important to him to be present for his community.

Monsignor is preceded in death by his parents; his brother Salvador Harguindeguy in 2019 and by a nephew, Marty Harguindeguy.

He is survived by his brother, Martin Harguindeguy and his wife Mary of Fresno; his sister-in-law Corlane Harguindeguy and many nieces, nephews and extended family members.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt appreciation to his dear friends, Victor and Noemi Baca and his brother Priests throughout the Diocese of Fresno.

Visitation will be held at Chapel of the Light Funeral Home on Thursday, June 29, 2023 from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Monsignor will lay in state at St. John's Cathedral on Thursday, June 29, 2023 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. A vigil service will commence at 7:00 p.m.

Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church on Friday, June 30, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Interment will follow at St. Peter's Catholic Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

St. Peter's Cemetery

264 N. Blythe Avenue
Fresno, CA 93706

Previous Events

Viewing

JUN 29. 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM (PT)

Chapel of the Light
1620 W. Belmont Avenue
Fresno, CA 93728
michael@chapelofthelight.com
<http://www.chapelofthelight.com>

Viewing

JUN 29. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

St. John's Cathedral
2814 Mariposa Street
Fresno, CA 93721

Vigil Service

JUN 29. 7:00 PM (PT)

St. John's Cathedral
2814 Mariposa Street
Fresno, CA 93721

Funeral Mass

JUN **30**. 10:00 AM (PT)

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
5770 N. Maroa Avenue
Fresno, CA 93704

Tribute Wall

TM

“ I remember father John when he was in seminary in the middle 1950s. I was an alter boy at St Mary’s in Sanger. He was sent to Sanger to help farther Losada and to learn his trade. We looked up to him and he helped us with our Latin responses during mass. I remember when all the alter boys in the diocese would go for a roller skating party in Visalia. Father John couldn’t skate and would fall every time he tried, but he wouldn’t give up. He finally mastered it. After about 2 years he was transferred to another diocese and we lost track of him. I’m glad he succeeded and am sure that he was a great asset to the church. I’m sure he is being missed.

Tom McFarland - February 07, 2025 at 08:55 PM

MP

“ Marlene P. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. Monsignor John Anthony Coelho-Harguindeguy.

Marlene P. - June 30, 2023 at 12:34 PM



“ Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rev. Monsignor John Anthony Coelho-Harguindeguy.



June 30, 2023 at 08:30 AM



“ *Serene Reflections Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Rev. Monsignor John Anthony Coelho-Harguindeguy.



June 30, 2023 at 08:30 AM

IB

“ Our family memories about Monsg. John begin in the early 70’s when for the first time he visited our parents in TJ. Accompanying him was at that time a dear friend of his, our uncle Lupe Perezchica, as well as Aunt Micaela, both very active at Sacred Heart Church in Merced.

It did not take long for our father, John Gonzalez to get Father John and Los Amigos de los Ninos a non profit organization also from Merced to become involved with an all girls orphanage in Tecate, MX “Casa Salvatierra”.

I distinctly remember Father John was a heavy smoker and my father said to him “we need your cigarette money to keep Salvatierra going”. Monsg. did stop smoking (for a while) and the orphanage prospered.

Los Amigos de los Ninos also had a parent program called “Padrinos”. Perishers would commit to a girl and her financial needs. Letter as and visits were also exchanged.

Monsg. became a very important figure in our family. He was present for our parents’ 25th wedding anniversary, for our own wedding (1975), and for the weddings of 5 other sisters. Later he would also come down to SD to baptize our children.

Monsg. presided at our father’s funeral services in 1988.

Father John honored us as well by becoming our first born’s Godfather.

Fernando & Irene Barajas



Irene Barajas - June 24, 2023 at 07:55 PM

“ Our family memories about Monsignor John start around 1970 when "Father John" came to visit my parents at our home in Tijuana with my uncle and aunt Lupe Perezchica, my mother's oldest brother, and very good friend of Monsignor, and Micaela Perezchica, her sister, who was very active and involved at Sacred Heart Church in Merced where Father John had arrived recently. This visit was the first of many to come and greater projects to be made, both my father and Monsignor had a strong will to serve and they did.

With "Father John" at one end and my father on the other, an orphanage for girls was formed in Tecate Baja California, it was a barely surviving small catholic school at that time COLEGIO SALVATIERRA, now a strong school in the community, I distinctly remember Father John smoked a lot, and my father said, I now need your cigarette money to keep Salvatierra going, it was not just cigarette money that kept the project going, but he did stop smoking , Los Amigos de los Niños was a non profit formed by Monsegnior to get the community in Merced involved, a foster parent program was formed called PADRINOS, perishers would commit to a girl and her financial needs, and they would exchange letters and visits.

Monsignor became a very important figure in our family, he was present for out parents 25th wedding anniversary celebration, for our wedding and my other sisters that married, for out children's and grandchildren's baptisms and if that was not enough he embraced our first born Joni as her godfather



Joni Barajas - Antillon - June 23, 2023 at 03:32 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Rev. Monsignor John Anthony Coelho-Harguindeguy.*



June 18, 2023 at 04:41 PM



“ *I worked for Msg. John for 9 years at St. Anthony's school. He was always so very kind to us. When my mom passed away he allowed her to stay in the church overnight after the rosary because he said he understood what it was to lose your mother. When he took his trip to Medjugorje he came by the office to ask all of us if we had any special requests that he could bring along with him and when he came back he brought each and everyone of us a medal from there which he has blessed for us. He was always so thoughtful. He will be deeply missed. May he rest in peace.*

Georgina Gambero Reynolds - June 15, 2023 at 07:25 PM

MH

“*Msgr. John will be missed as a dedicated servant of God and the people to the he served. We will miss him as a brother, brother-in-law and Uncle John. He gave of himself to everyone who needed a Priest right then and there. We were lucky. We were given blessings at every family occasion. He blessed our wedding vows last Dec. 12. We were hoping and praying that we would have our 25th wedding anniversary blessed by him. But as we cling to our beliefs, he will be giving us a heavenly blessing this December 12 alongside our Virgen de Guadalupe.*



Mary V Harguindeguy - June 15, 2023 at 07:17 PM

CL

Years ago I met Msgr John when he was at St. John's. As a city of Fresno employee we assembled food baskets to give to the needy and Msgr helped us distribute the food. He was always friendly, down to earth and available! He was also funny! Years later, we were reacquainted at St. Anthony's. He later married my husband Doug and me at St. Agnes Church. I know Msgr better than Doug and found out he was leading a pilgrimage to Greece. Doug did not want to go. Said it wouldn't be fun going with Deacon Ed Valdez and especially Msgr John. It wouldn't be fun he said. Well we went and they became close friends. They had the best time along with Bob Milla, a retired police sergeant. It was during that trip, we met msgr's goddaughter Joni Barajas. She was dedicated to him. Later we went to Holy Land with Msgr; Doug really liked him. We were blessed to spend part of the morning with Msgr the day before he passed. He slept peacefully. God bless Msgr John he has now met Jesus face to face. Msgr has done so much for the Catholic community...well done good and faithful servant. You are missed but will never be forgotten.

Love, The Lombardi's

Carla Lombardi - June 19, 2023 at 04:12 PM

LF

“ *Luso-American Family purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Rev. Monsignor John Anthony Coelho-Harguindeguy.*



Luso-American Family - June 15, 2023 at 01:55 PM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Rev. Monsignor John Anthony Coelho-Harguindeguy.*



June 14, 2023 at 07:48 PM

KY

“ Our sympathy and prayers go out to Monsignor John's family. We knew him from his time at St. Anthony of Padua. He was such an inspiration and a kind person. He will be truly missed.

Kathryn York - June 14, 2023 at 05:30 PM

MR

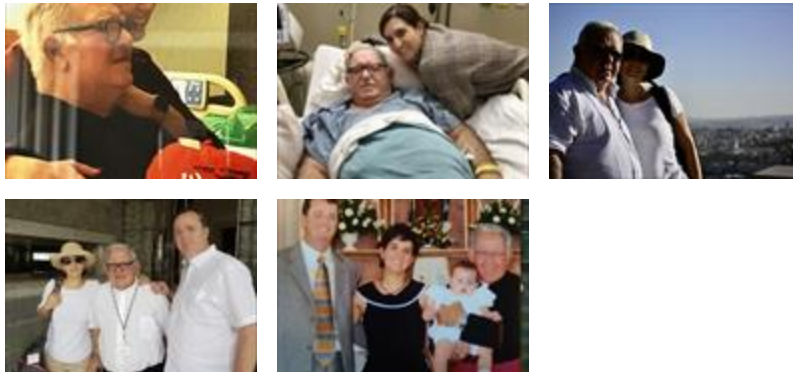
“ Our most sincere condolences on the passing of Msgr. John Coelho Harguindeguy. He was a stellar priest and always friendly to our funeral home.
We are honored to serve his family and his family at the Diocese of Fresno.

With Deepest Sympathies,
Michael Rabara and Staff of Chapel of the Light

Michael Rabara - June 14, 2023 at 11:35 AM

JA

“ Gracias por acompañarme y guiarme siempre a lo largo de mi vida. Me vas hacer mucha falta, pero se que desde el cielo me seguirás cuidando.



Joni B Antillon - June 14, 2023 at 03:24 AM

MF

I was blessed to have gone to confession and attend his celebration of Holy Mass before COVID at St. Mary's in Visalia. He was a wonderful priest. My condolences to his extended family and friends. May Fr. John rest in peace.

Mary F - July 06, 2023 at 10:37 AM