



## Tomas Gonzalez

September 22, 1940 - April 13, 2019

Tomas González passed peacefully at the age of 78, in Fresno California on April 13, 2019.

He was born on September 22, 1940 in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, and immigrated to the United States, in 1943, during WWII with his family. He grew up in Detroit, Michigan.

in 1964 he graduated from Wayne State University, in Michigan, with a Bachelor's degree in Sociology.

He met his wife, Enriqueta Limas in Catholic Youth groups in Detroit. They were married in 1964 and began their family. Enriqueta's life was cut short by cancer and she passed in 1977 leaving Tomas as the single father of six children.

He was a firm believer in Roman Catholic Liberation Theology, which motivated and influenced how he lived his life.

In 1969, he moved his young family from Michigan to California for a position teaching Ethnic Studies at Fresno State. He was part of the original faculty of the La Raza Studies Program. The program was cancelled due to the hostile cultural and political climate. (See the book, *The Slow Death of Fresno State: A California Campus Under Reagan and Brown*, by Kenneth Seib.) La Raza

Studies program was cancelled in the middle of the semester, leaving many students without classes, (some of whom could not graduate that year because of losing credits), and left faculty without jobs. Many of these students and faculty went on to form their own Chicano university.

In 1970, Tomas co-founded La Universidad de Aztlan, and later he co-founded Colegio de la Tierra, a community college offering AA degrees and transferring students to 4 year colleges and universities. They had a schedule of classes, which also included eco, small scale farming.

He assisted more than 10,000 people in gaining citizenship and taught thousands more in English as a second language over his lifetime and influenced many more with his dedication and commitment to social and economic justice.

Back in the 90's, he was a regular on a KNXT Catholic Television, Channel 49, discussing matters related to Liberation Theology, and Social Justice.

In his later years he became more and more concerned about the planet and climate change.

He spent the last years of his life battling cancer. His illness forced him to stop working, and to rest. His family was there for him. His son Miguel and his wife, Yvonne, helped him recover from surgery to remove most of the cancer, which gave him several more years to live. He enjoyed all of his grandchildren. He loved going on small trips to Santa Cruz to visit his daughter Maria, going to San Francisco and Yosemite with his son Ernesto, going to Ukiah to see visit his daughter Gloria's family, going to Cuca's Mexican restaurant to have menudo with his son Tomas, and enjoying meals with his son Juan's family.

He is preceded in death by his wife Enriqueta Limas González. He never

remarried.

He is survived by his 6 children: Juan González, Maria González, Ernesto González, Tomas César González, Miguel González, and Gloria González Campise, and his seven grandchildren.

A Memorial Mass will be held at Saint John's Cathedral on Friday, June 14, 2019 at 10:30 a.m.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

JUN 14. 10:30 AM (PT)

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

# Tribute Wall

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“ *My condolences on the passing of this caring and thought provoking man. I was a student at Colegio de la Tierra from 1975-77, after I had returned from the military. One of the great memories was when we cancelled classes at the beginning of a new school year to go support Cesar Chavez and Prop 13. Si Si con Catorce! We handed out bumper stickers, leaflets and held picket signs at various spots around LA. One great moment was when we human bill boarded along highway 1 for miles. I remember being picked up to go back to the church where we were staying, and drove for what seems like miles of the picketeres all along the highway. I was there when the property was bought and we were working in the farm behind the school south of Visalia. Beautiful dreams and vision. May He Rest in Peace. Ray Olais*

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**Raymond Olais** - August 07, 2023 at 11:09 PM



“ *Tomas Gonzalez*

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September 15, 2022 at 09:34 PM