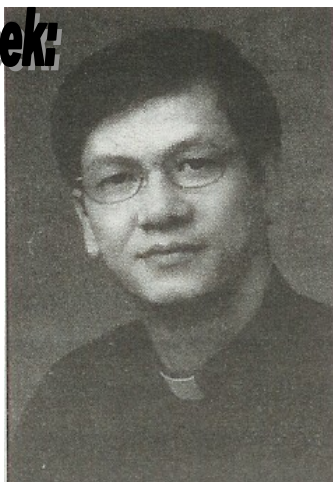


## **Priest of the Week:**

James Van Nguyen was born in Saigon, Vietnam, in 1962. His road to the priesthood proved to be long and difficult. One of ten children in a Catholic Family whose father was a teacher, James attended Catholic schools and entered a minor seminary at the age of 11. The first of a series of problems for James began when in 1975 the newly installed Communist government restricted the school's operations, eventually closing it five years later.



**Fr. James Van Quoc  
Nguyen  
Parish Priest**

While this placed a roadblock to his call to be a priest, it did not stop him from serving Christ in other ways. James returned to his home parish to teach catechism and Scripture to young people. At the same time he earned a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry through the University of Saigon. However, his church activities led to government harassment in the form of being detained, questioned and threatened with prison on more than one occasion. One of James' brothers was arrested for similar reasons and died in prison in 1987.

Fearing arrest, he escaped to Thailand where he spent the next six years working at a refugee camp, serving at the camp's parish church, hospital and post office. He was eventually forced to return to Vietnam where he was placed under renewed government scrutiny. Fortunately, by this time two of his siblings were living in the United States. Through their assistance James was able to leave the country for a final time in 1999.

His older brother, Fr. Khiet Nguyen, had been ordained a priest for the Diocese of Tulsa three years before. Through his encouragement, James came to Oklahoma and later restarted his long delayed seminary formation. On May 31, 2008, James was ordained a priest at Holy Family Cathedral in Tulsa.

Fr. James Van Nguyen currently serves as the associate pastor of Holy Family while his brother Khiet is the pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Skiatook. May God continue to strengthen them both to serve the people of the Church as holy priest.