

## Nguyen appointed vicar for parish

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The Vietnam native recently transferred from St. Vincent de Paul to join the Rev.

Chacko Puthumayil as a fellow parochial vicar at St. Laurence parish.

Nguyen escaped to Thailand with his family in 1977. His father, a military officer

imprisoned by the communists who occupied South Vietnam, managed to escape

and load his family onto a self-made boat under the cloak of night. After an encounter with sea pirates, the refugees were rescued and flown by Catholic Charities to the state of Rhode Island. Nguyen was 10 years old.

Nguyen and his brother and sister learned English quickly. Raised by Catholic parents, Nguyen served as an altar boy, and once, when asked by a teacher in sixth

grade what he wanted to be when he grew up, he replied without hesitation that he

wanted to be a priest.

After attending the University of Rhode Island, Nguyen transferred to Louisiana

State University to complete his education. There he joined a Vietnamese religious

order, where he relearned his native language and focused on clinical pastoral education. Soon thereafter, Methodist Hospital in Houston offered him a job as chaplain in 1997, and Nguyen made Texas his home.

In September 1997, he entered St. Mary's Seminary at St. Thomas University, where

the Rev. Drew Wood served as his spiritual director. In 2000, Nguyen was ordained

at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Houston and was assigned to St. Vincent de Paul, where

he served as parochial vicar until his transfer to St. Laurence.