

 Sections

Los Angeles Times

CALIFORNIA

Father Fernando Villalobos; Aided Poor in Central Valley

L.A. TIMES ARCHIVES

JAN. 3, 1986 12 AM PT

Father Fernando Villalobos, known for his work in combatting gangs while working with the poor in the Stockton Roman Catholic Archdiocese, died Tuesday in his native Costa Rica. He was 38.

Villalobos, who served the Latino community in the six-county diocese until last summer, suffered a heart attack during surgery for a herniated spinal disc in a hospital in the Costa Rican capital of San Jose, according to his cousin, Alexis Rodriguez Venavedes.

Among other things, Villalobos worked to combat gang warfare in San Joaquin Valley barrios and to impose tighter standards on U.S. Border Patrol agents pursuing illegal

alien farm workers. He was also credited with negotiating an end to a two-week wildcat tomato strike in 1983.

Villalobos organized and led a statewide convention of Latino laity last May in Fresno. The convention of 1,500 Catholics made recommendations on the needs of California Latinos and the role of the church.

“I’m shocked. Our paths crossed so often in our lives,” said Los Angeles Archbishop Roger Mahony, the former Stockton bishop who ordained Villalobos in 1979. “For whatever the reason, God wanted to take him home.”

Mahony and Villalobos both left the Stockton diocese last summer. Mahony said his friend was planning to join him in Los Angeles in just a few months, after studies in Mexico.

MORE TO READ

‘Daylighting,’ a new law that California drivers must know to avoid a ticket next year

Feb. 6, 2024



L.A.’s monster storm was even worse in some areas than the alarming forecasts

Feb. 7, 2024

