



# THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



## The Cardinal Kung Foundation

Press Release – October 19, 2009

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### The Oldest Priest of the Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport Died

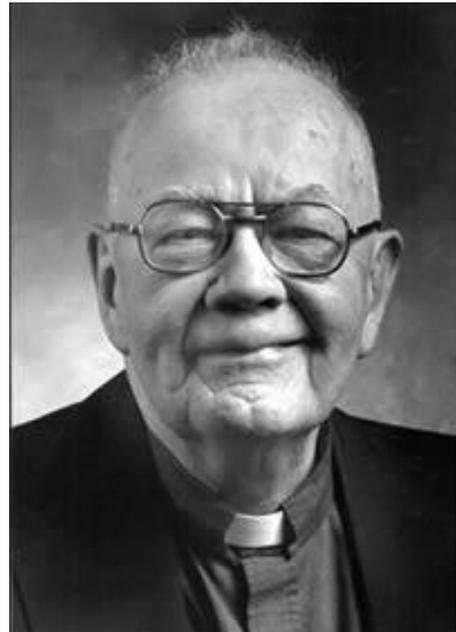
Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A. — Right Rev. Monsignor John V. Horgan-Kung, retired pastor, missionary, and archivist of the Catholic diocese of Bridgeport, passed away on October 16 at the Queen of Peace Residence in Queens Village, NY. He was 94, and had been in declining health for some time.

Monsignor Horgan-Kung was born on April 5, 1915, in Waterbury, Connecticut. He attended Washington School, Saint Francis Xavier School, and Crosby High School in Waterbury, Connecticut. He entered Saint Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield in 1933. Upon graduation, he headed to France to study philosophy and theology at Saint Suplice Seminary in Paris (1937-38), and did a final year of theology in Limoges, France (1939-40).

Monsignor Horgan-Kung was ordained to the priesthood on August 10, 1940, in Saint Joseph Cathedral in Hartford by Bishop Henry J. O'Brien.

For the first 20 years of his priesthood, Father Horgan served in several Connecticut parishes, including Immaculate Conception in Baltic (1940-42); Saint Paul in Kensington (1942-48); Saint Francis in Torrington (1948-52); Saint Mary in Norwalk (1952-58); and Saint Joseph in Danbury (1958-60). In 1960, he was appointed pastor of Our Lady of Peace Parish in Stratford, a post he held for three years.

In 1963, Bishop Walter Curtis invited Father Horgan to become the first superior of a new mission established by the Diocese of Bridgeport in Chiclayo, Peru. There he served for three years with two other diocesan priests, Father John Tomis and Father Robert Luther.



Father Horgan returned to the diocese in 1966 to become pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in South Norwalk. That same year, he was named a Prelate of Honor, with the title of Monsignor, by Pope Paul VI.

After two years at Saint Joseph's, Msgr. Horgan suffered a heart attack. He convalesced at St. Joseph's Manor in Trumbull, which would become his new ministry, serving as chaplain to the residents for the next seven years. During that time, he also served briefly as administrator of Holy Cross Parish in Fairfield.

In 1975, Msgr. Horgan was appointed archivist of the Diocese of Bridgeport, with residence at Saint James Parish in Stratford.

In 1986, Msgr. Horgan retired and moved his residence to the Queen of Clergy Residence for retired priests in the former Saint Joseph Hospital in Stamford. Two years later, he welcomed a new resident who would become a friend and soulmate: Ignatius Cardinal Kung Pin-Mei, released after 33 years in a Chinese prison and exiled to the United States to live with his nephew, Joseph Kung. The two clerics communicated in French, and for 12 years shared a special relationship. Msgr. Horgan was the confessor to Cardinal Kung also for 12 years from 1988 until Cardinal's death in 2000.

Upon his dear friend's death in 2000, Msgr. Horgan added his last name to his own as a final tribute. His new name became Horgan-Kung. That year, Msgr. Horgan-Kung became one of the first residents of the new Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of Clergy Retired Priests' Residence in Stamford.

In June 2006, because of his failing health, he moved to the Queen of Peace Residence in Queens Village, New York under the supervision of the Little Sisters of the Poor whose founder, St. Marie de la Croix Jugan, was just canonized in Rome by Pope Benedict XVI.

It is interesting to note that when Msgr. Horgan-Kung's good friend, Cardinal Kung, died, the cardinal was the oldest cardinal in the College of Cardinals. When Msgr. Horgan-Kung died, he was the oldest priest in his Diocese of Bridgeport.

Msgr. Horgan-Kung is predeceased by his parents Timothy and Elizabeth Horgan, and by two brothers. He is survived by his niece Brenda Hartigan Zamary and her husband John of Newtown, Connecticut, niece Maura J. Alexander and her husband John of Florida, nephew Thomas V. Hartigan and his wife Marilyn of Florida, nephew Dr. Francis X. Hartigan and his wife Judy of Nevada, and 10 grand nephews and nieces.

The body will be received at the Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist, 279 Atlantic Street, Stamford, Connecticut at 2 pm Wednesday October 21. A wake will also be held at The Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist on the same day from 4 to 8 pm. A Mass of Christian Burial in Extraordinary Form will be celebrated at noon Thursday October 22 with Very Rev. John Bevins as the principal celebrant at the Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist. Bishop William Lori, the Bishop of Bridgeport, will preside and preach. Interment will follow after the Mass on Thursday at the Calvary Cemetery, East Main Street, Waterbury, Connecticut. Arrangements are being handled by Kelly-Brennan Funeral Home. Condolences may be sent to Msgr. Horgan-Kung's executor Joseph Kung, Cardinal Kung Foundation, PO Box 8086, Stamford, CT 06905.