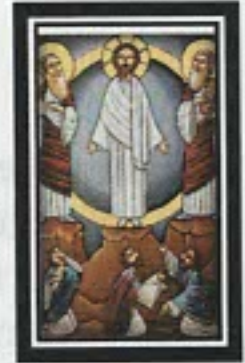




*Our Lady of Grace Church  
3433 Somerset Ave.  
Castro Valley, CA 94546  
1-510-537-0806*



*Transfiguration Church  
4000 E. Castro Valley Blvd.  
Castro Valley, CA 94552  
1-510-538-7941  
May 1, 2026*



*Order of Friars Minor Conventual  
19950 Anita Ave.  
Castro Valley, CA 94546*

My Dear Brothers and Sisters of Transfiguration,

May the Lord grant you His peace.

I assume by now, you have all been informed of the sad news. The Franciscans, though we have only recently begun our ministry among you, nonetheless feel deep affection for you and for this parish. All of us, friars and parishioners alike, have been following the various stages of the Mission Alignment Process (MAP) that the Diocese of Oakland started several years ago. While we might have hoped for a different outcome, dioceses and the Church are still facing serious demographic and administrative challenges throughout the United States. We must all renew our confidence in Divine Providence and ask the Lord to continue to shepherd His flock.

In his second letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul makes this observation:

We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven. Now the one who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a first installment. So, we are always courageous (2 Cor 5:1, 5-6).

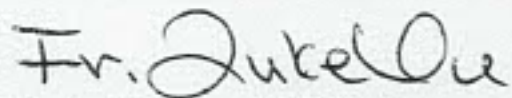
The Church, as we know, is not brick and mortar, but living stones built by Christ into a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5). In 1954, the immediate aftermath of the Geneva Accords, Catholic churches in Vietnam were ransacked and burned to the ground by Communist aggressors. Today, the Church in the country of my birth is flourishing because God is greater than human designs and all the plans that humankind can devise. May we not hope for His transformative power to work new miracles among us here in the East Bay?

Many of you may already have read in various Catholic and secular news sources about the astonishing number of conversions to the Church this year. All throughout the United States, dioceses are reporting an increase in the number of people being received into the sacramental life of grace at the Easter Vigil. It should be clear to us that the Church is not merely a human institution characterized only by the weaknesses that afflict it. Indeed, God is the Master of our lives. Let us entrust ourselves all the more to His providential care. Our immediate task is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. No reconfiguration of diocesan ministries will ever change that fundamental characteristic of our Christian discipleship.

Since we first clustered in 2022, we have come together in amazing ways. I have seen your faith. Your labor of love and steadfastness of hope always inspired me. Although this decision stirs up many emotions, I am hopeful that we come together as a community of faith and Christian discipleship. Over the next few weeks, the pastoral team and I are available to discuss this decision and what it means for our future. Together we will continue to overcome this challenge and stay on the mission.

In the short term, you and the friars together will be waiting for further information from the Diocese of Oakland. Know that you and your families are in our prayers every day.

Peace to you and all good.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Luke Vu". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Luke Vu, OFM Conv.  
Parochial Administrator