

Kính xin quý Cha vui lòng
tắt điện thoại di động.





**Con xin kính
chào
quý
Cha**

“ạ!”

-Frère: I say KOOOOOL

-All: *It's cool in here, it
must be a VIET
in the atmosphere.*

- Frère: I say KOOOOOL

- All: *It's cool in here, it
must be YOUTH
in the atmosphere.*

- Frère: O, e, o, e, o

- All: *Cool, cool, cool*

“Frere, can we talk!”



**“SEE,
IT BACKFIRES!
SHE’S STUCK!”**



“Are you praying now?”

YES!

**WHEN MY HEART
IS CONNECTED TO
JESUS'S HEART**

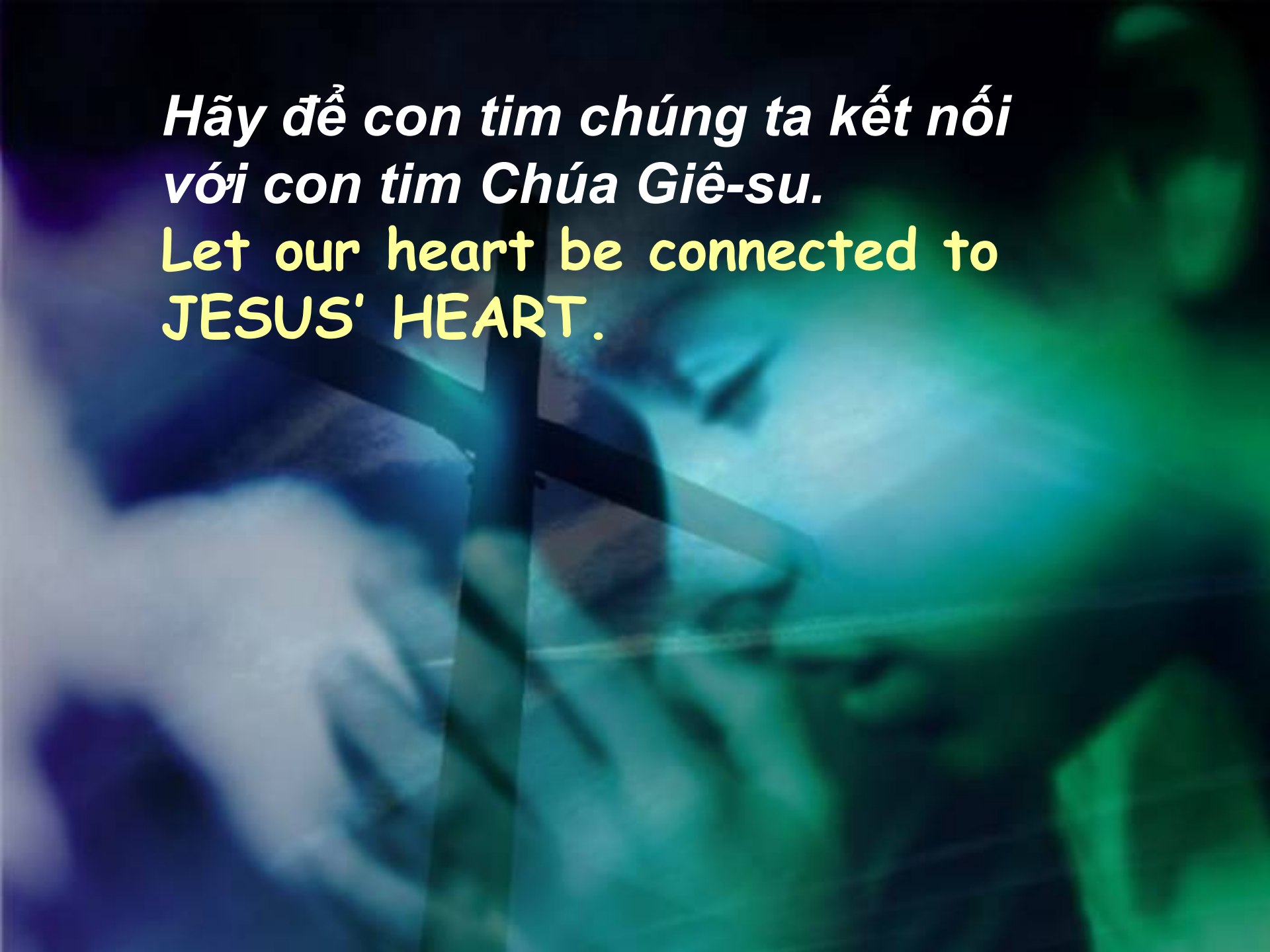


“See, she comes back”



*Hãy để con tim chúng ta kết nối
với con tim Chúa Giê-su.*

Let our heart be connected to
JESUS' HEART.





Gioan 13: 23

Trong số các môn đệ, có một người được Đức Giê-su thương mến. Ông đang dùng bữa, đầu tựa vào lòng Đức Giê-su.

One of his disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining at Jesus' side.



The lesson I've
learned from our
youth:

PRAYER is
when our heart is
connected to
JESUS' Heart.



**Nhân
danh
Chúa Cha
Chúa Con
và Chúa
Thánh
Thần.**

AMEN.

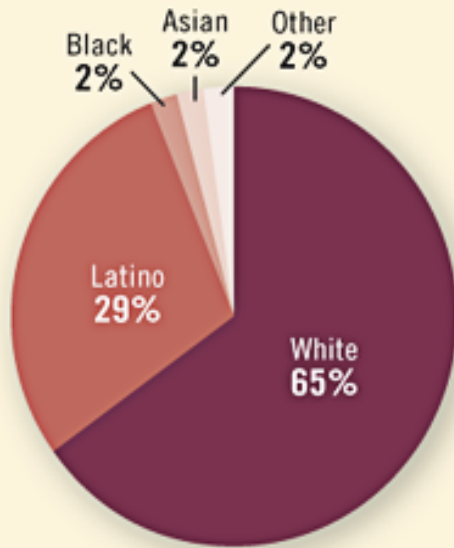


- NHÌN VÀO MỸ
- NGHĨ VỀ MÌNH

The Church, by the Numbers

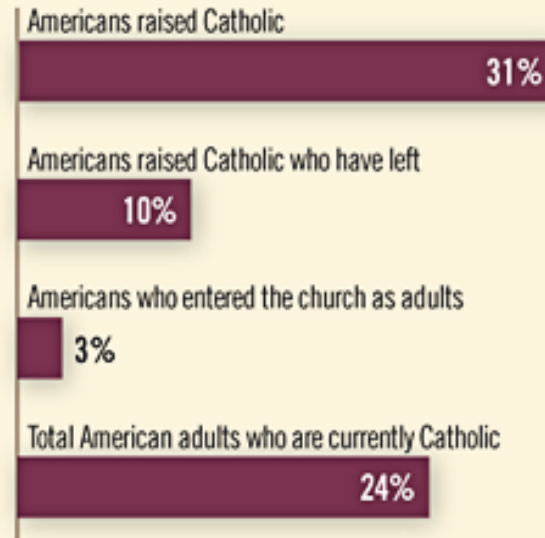
Who They Are

With 64.4 million members, the American church is Catholicism's third largest and most diverse. It is expected that Latinos will make up 50 percent of Catholics by around 2030.



Keeping the Faith

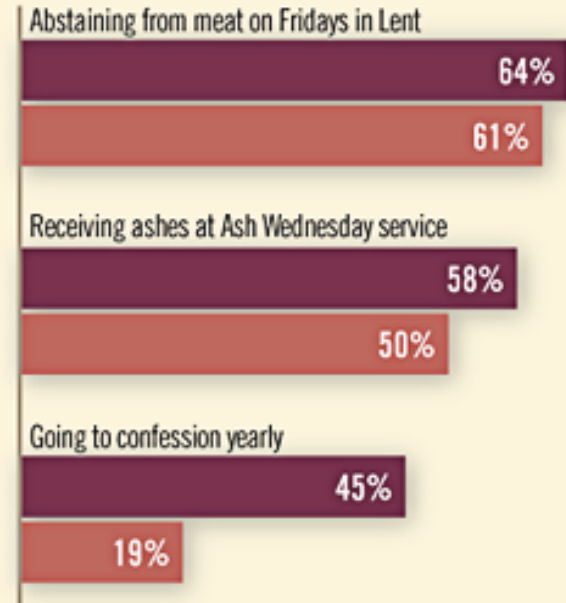
More Catholics leave the religion of their childhood than do members of any other church. Still, the Catholic Church follows only Judaism and Mormonism in holding on to its members.



Changing Practices

Pope Benedict has encouraged a return to traditional rituals and practices.

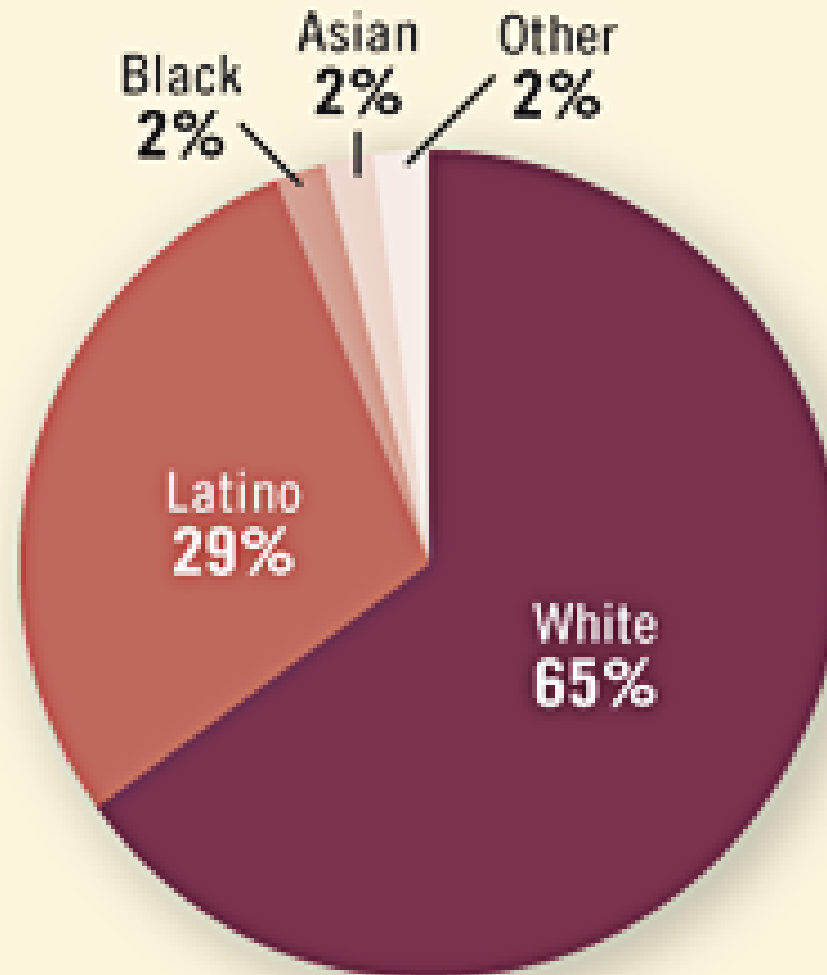
■ Born before 1943 ■ Born after 1981



US NEWS & WORLD REPORT
March 28, 2008

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Americans raised Catholic

31%

Americans raised Catholic who have left

10%

Americans who entered the church as adults

3%

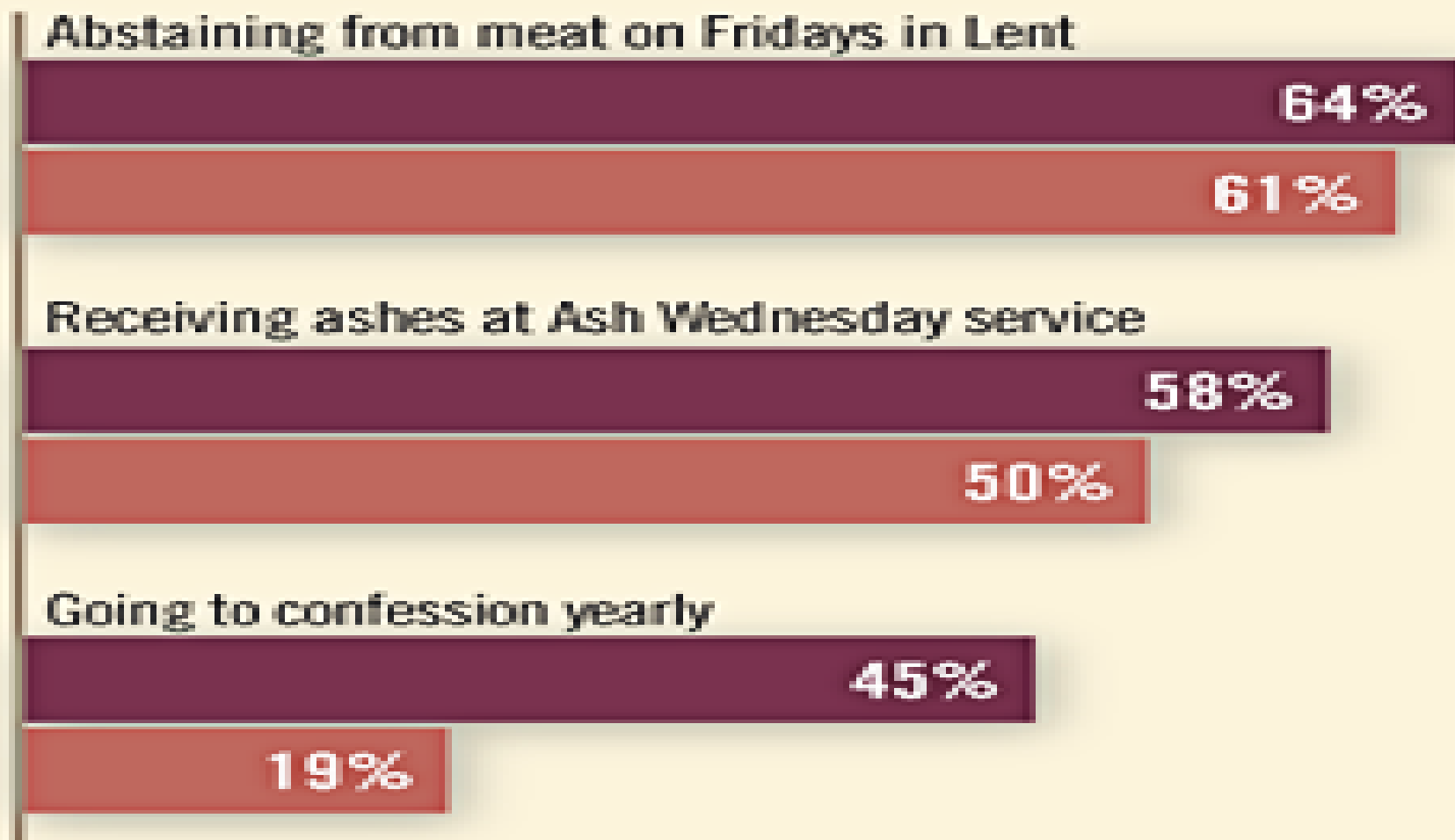
Total American adults who are currently Catholic

24%

Changing Practices

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■ Born before 1943 ■ Born after 1981



- **Còn mình – công giáo Việt Nam ở Mỹ, thì sao?**
- **Có chắc mình sẽ không bị lôi cuốn vào sự trệt dốc này không?**



**From USCCB:
24% of American
is Catholic
30% of
Vietnamese
American is
Catholic.**

**In Viet Nam:
Catholics are 7%
of population**

**Pump Pump Pump it up
Pump that Jesus Spirit up**

**Keep keep keep it up!!!
Keep that Jesus spirit up!!!
Shout shout shout it out!!!**

Shout that Jesus spirit out!!!

G.....o o o o o o o o o Jesus!!

**Làm sao 30% này không
giảm khi tuổi “già” tăng
và “rụng” ?!**

- **“Về đời” giới trẻ Việt Nam ở Mỹ rất thành công, mang lại hy vọng và “Viet Pride” ...**

Older than 25 who has 4 Years College Degree

A: 17.2%; VA: 18.2%

Graduate Degree: A: 10%; VA: 7%



From Northwestern University/ AM 740 Radio
Average High School Students:
Caucasian : 2.0; Hispanic: 1.5
African: 1.8; Jewish: 2.5
Asian: 2.8



- “Về đời” giới trẻ Việt Nam ở Mỹ rất thành công, mang lại hy vọng và “Viet Pride”
- “Về đạo” thì sao ?

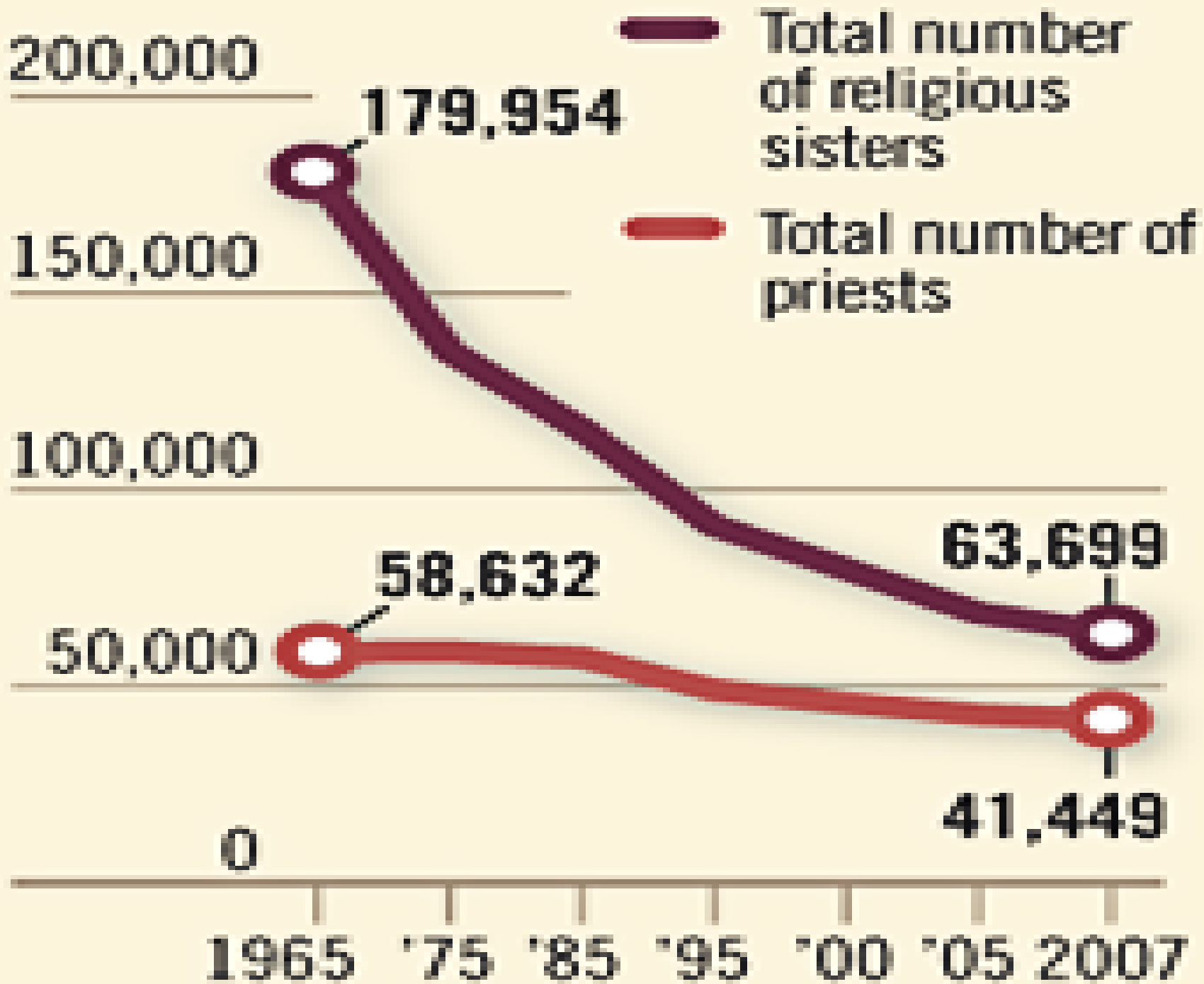
Có một người VỮNG TIN vào
giới trẻ công giáo Việt Nam ở
Mỹ và “thách đố” chúng mình
với cái nhìn “tiên tri” của ngài!


**Hãy giữ vững chân tính
Việt Nam của các con,
chân tính công giáo
của chúng con.**

**Remain faithful to your
Vietnamese identity,
to your Christian
identity.**

**ĐTC Gioan Phao-lô II,
ngày 15.08.1993,
Đại Hội Giới Trẻ Thế Giới
tại Denver, USA**





A close-up photograph of a priest in purple and gold vestments performing a ritual. He is holding a white host in his right hand and a chalice containing red wine in his left hand. The background is a dark blue wall.

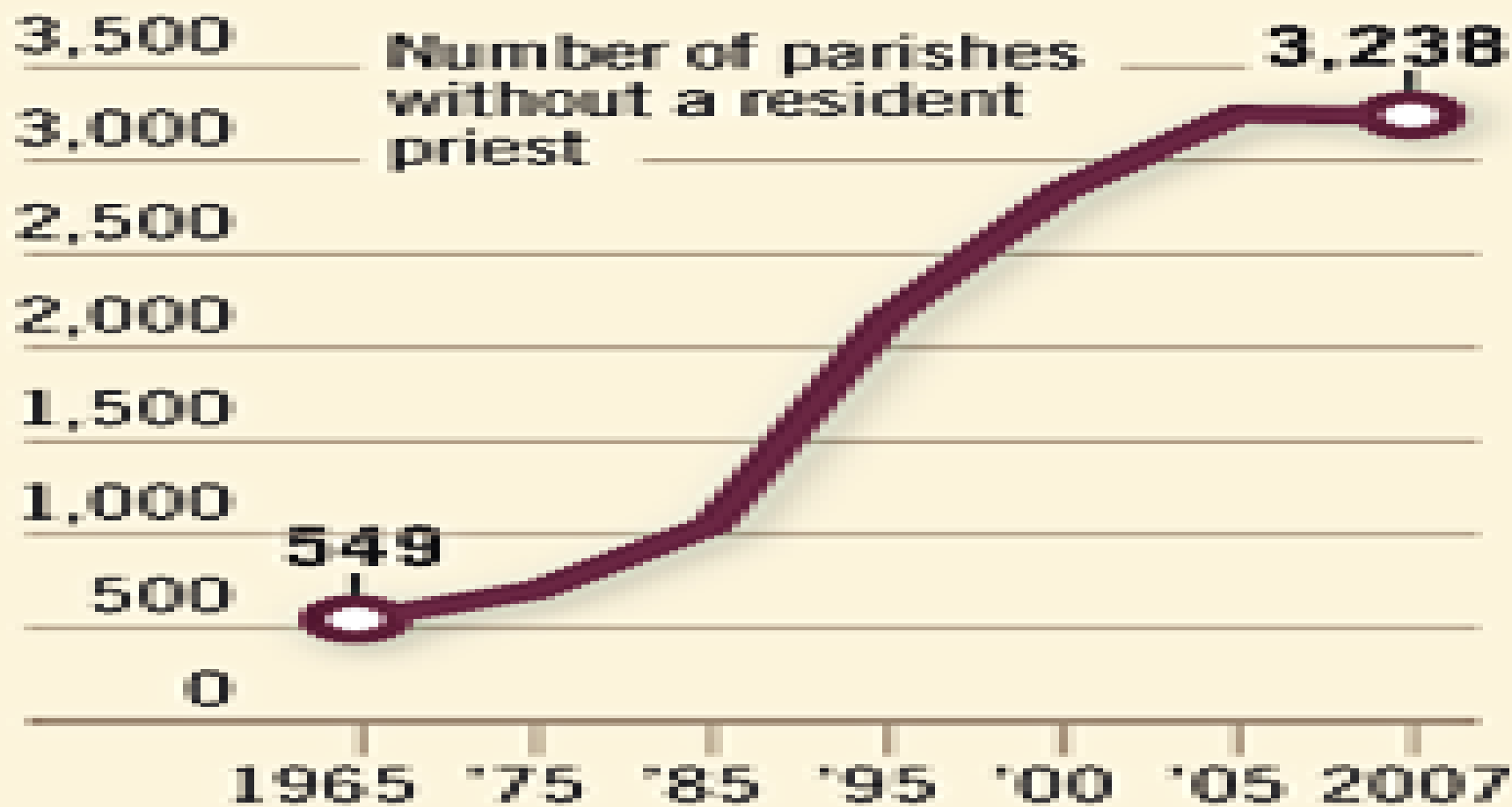
In 1999, Asian American Catholics are 2.6% of US Catholics, yet 9% of newly ordained priests are Asian Americans.

2009 in San Jose, 33% of newly ordained priests are Vietnamese Americans.

35 new Vietnamese Priests in summer 09

Parishes Without Priests

The declining number of priests has left laypeople to take on some duties of the clergy, including serving communion, in many churches.



**Vietnamese Communities, Missions or
Parishes Without Vietnamese Priest in
the USA !?!?!?**

NHỮNG ĐIỀU HAY

“-Việt Nam
-công giáo
của chúng con.”





**NGÀY
THÁNH MẪU
Hằng năm ở
Dòng Đồng Công**



Mỗi 3 năm:
VYC
WYD

NHỮNG ĐIỀU HAY

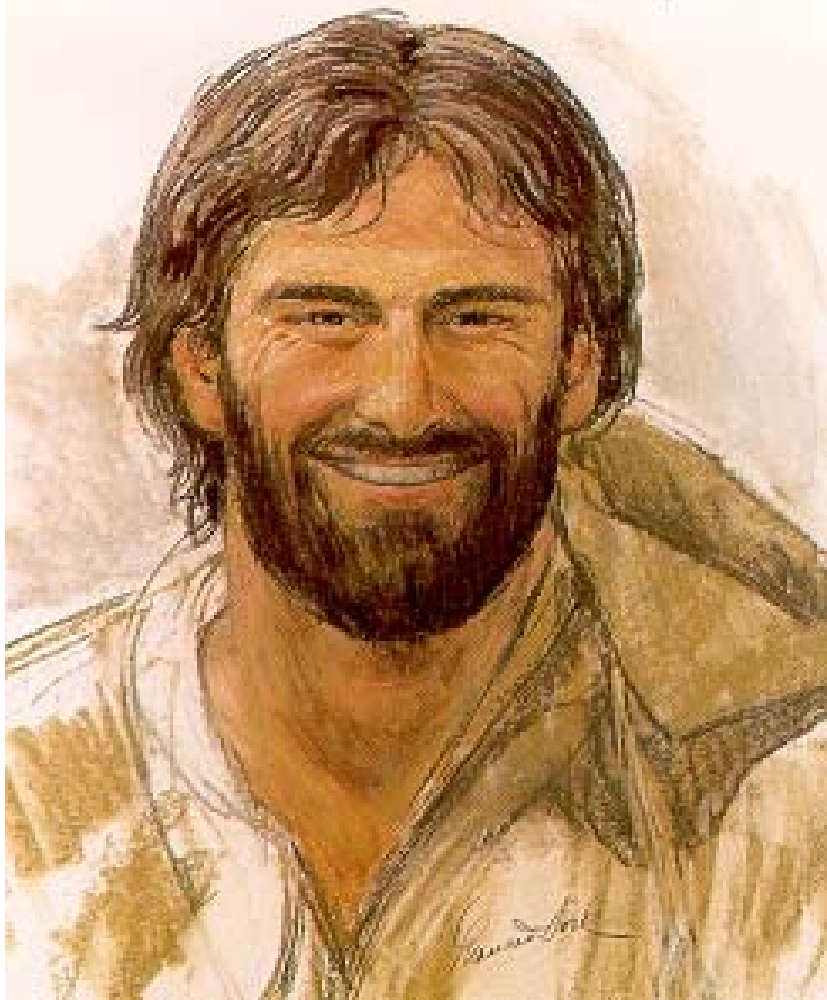
- Ngày Thánh Mẫu
- VYC
- WYD

**Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể, Hướng Đạo,
Thanh Sinh Công, Hùng Tâm Dũng Chí*

**Chương Trình Giáo Lý Việt Ngữ*

**Giúp Lễ, Ca Đoàn*





HAI ĐIỀU CẦN CHÚ TÂM GIÚP
GIỚI TRẺ CÔNG GIÁO VIỆT NAM
Ở MỸ

-“Bỏ đạo” (xin lắng
nghe Cha
Quang)

-“Bỏ lễ”

-“Bỏ Giáo Hội
Công Giáo”

-“Bỏ giáo xứ
Việt Nam”



1- THÁNH LỄ

2- CÔNG BẰNG XÃ HỘI

(Social Justice. JP II Generation)

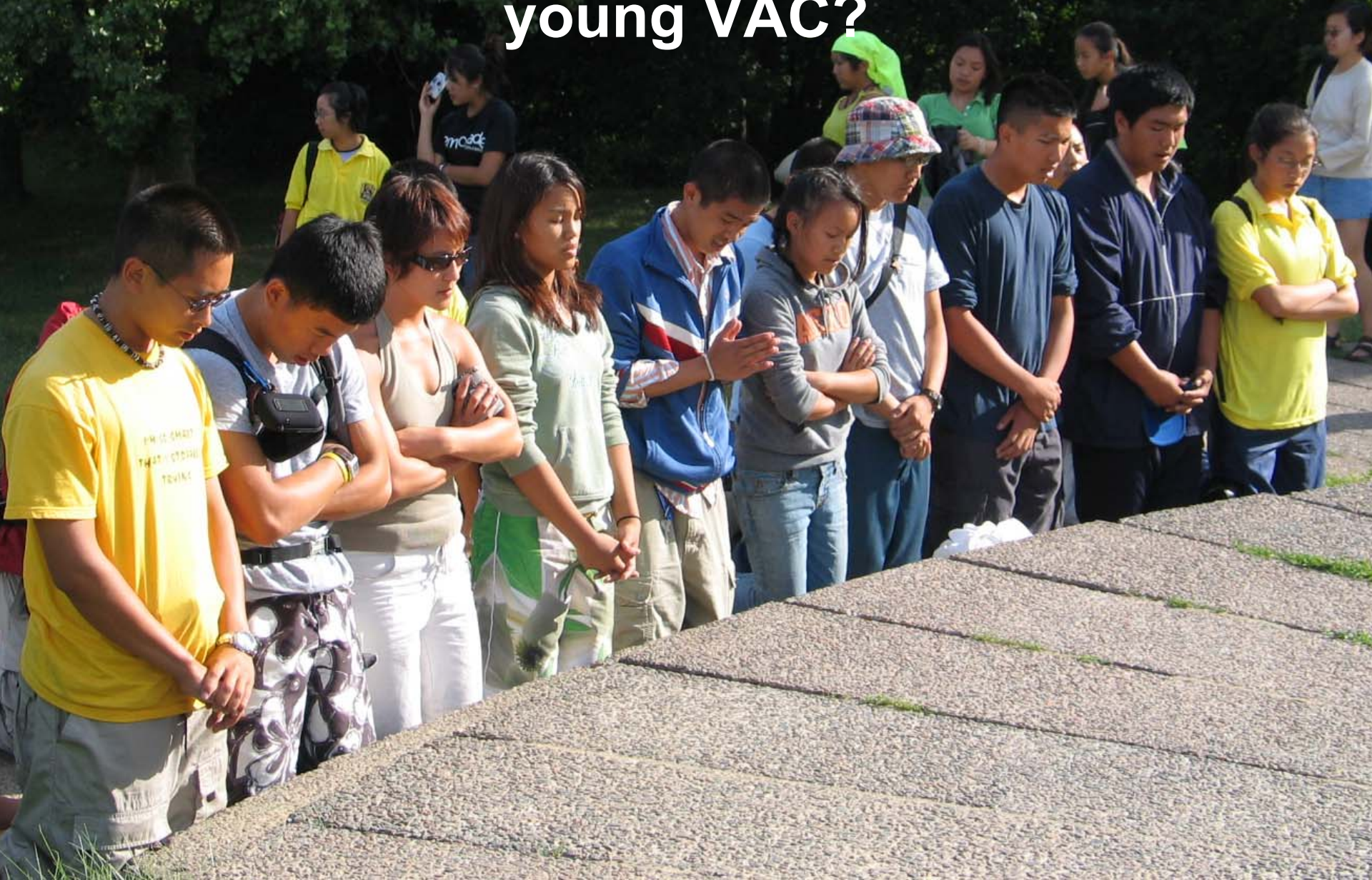
Xin chia sẻ những gì con nghe nơi
vài bạn trẻ



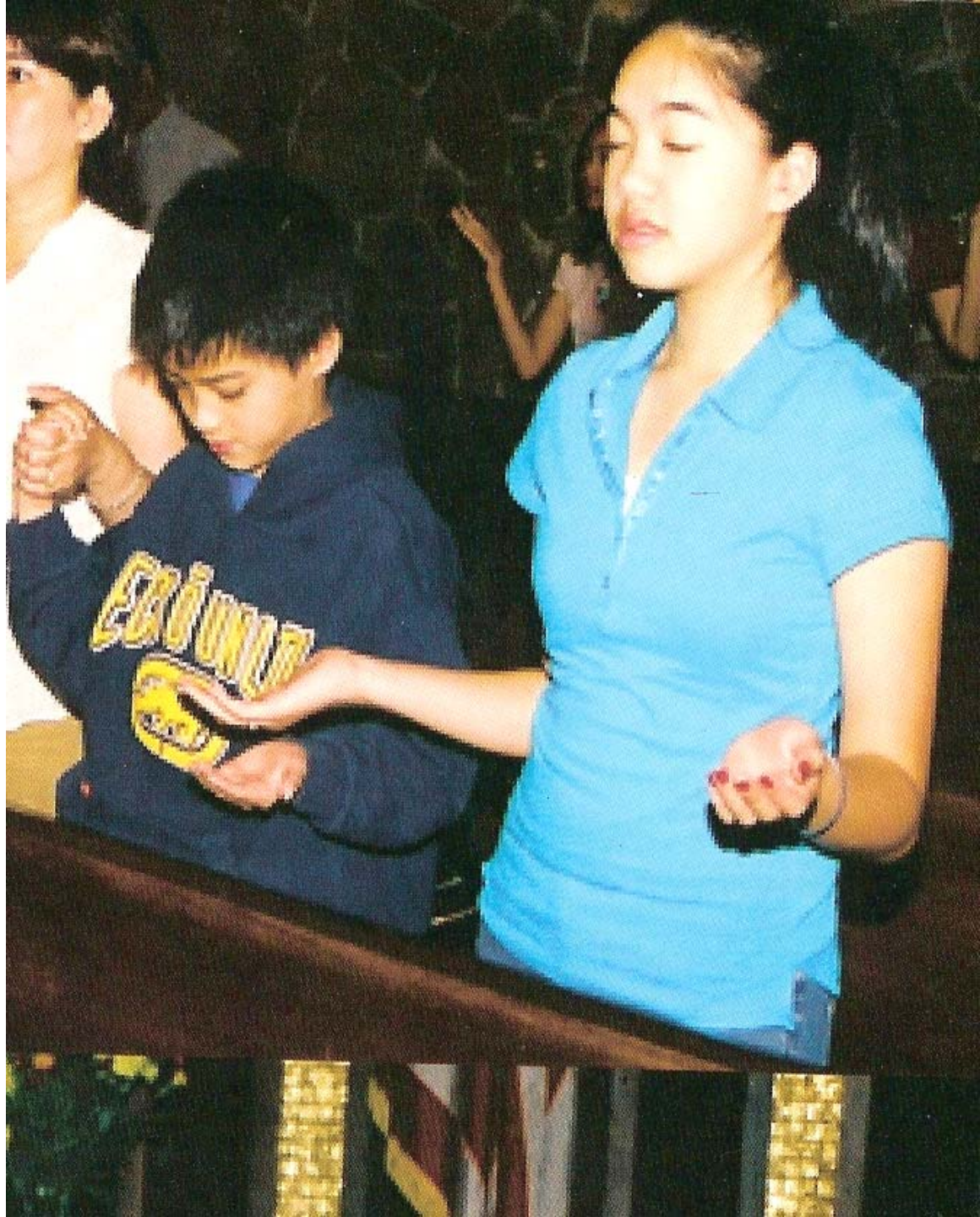
**1- Why some of our
YOUNG Vietnamese
American Catholic
friends (VAC) quit
going to Mass or
quit the Church?**



2- What can our priests do to help these young VAC?



**3- What can our
priests do to
help YOUTH
MASS?**



1- Why some of your YOUNG Vietnamese American Catholic friends (VAC) quit going to Mass or quit the Church?

I think it's a generation thing.

My generation is a selfish and independent generation. We want to do things ourselves and succeed on our own, and sometimes we just don't want to give God all the credit for our success. Going to church and mass is giving God the credit, praising God.

Also with “senior” priests telling us how to live our lives doesn't go well with us either. Who is this man to tell me what to do? He is Vietnamese and of an entire different generation. How can he relate to me?

With un-relatable priests, church becomes really boring. Since it's so boring, going to mass becomes an inconvenience in our selfish lives.

- **The message received at church are not relevant to our lives.**
- **Lack of an *inviting and friendly community* to connect to and to pray with**

There's actually two types here. The first, which I'm not as concerned about, are the ones who no longer attend VIETNAMESE mass, but have found other means of acquiring their daily bread. For instance, locating an American priest or a parish where they understand a little bit better, or perhaps a priest who has captivating and down to earth sermons, more attuned to their situation.

The second group are the ones who quit entirely, due to lack of interest or belief. These are the ones who do not understand the sermon, get bored with mass, have no reason to go once their parents stop making them.

Typically, I think the breaking point is the Liturgy of the Word and the sermons.

The ceremonial aspects of the Eucharist is ok, because they're involved and going through the motions. But the breaking point which drives them away is the understanding of the Word, and the sermon that follows. At times, the sermon is mundane, monotone, or too conceptually intense, and not enough real life examples on who people can take the message of the Word into their lives.

Language barrier has been and will continue to be a big issue. Prayers, readings, responses, homily, etc. are all in VN so how can we *participate* if we cannot understand. Most of the time it is done through memory and conditioning but we don't understand the meaning behind what we are hearing and responding to. We feel that if we are a good person, why must we go to Church to prove it.

Some of our young friends probably stop going to mass because they have lost their faith in God and they don't know how to reconnect with him again. They then become lost and confused and start relying on other things like distractions. They probably then feel like going to church is useless if their relationship with God is going nowhere and that maybe God has abandoned them.

Certainty/Comfort

At times, there's *no direct support for the youth.* The youth is very needy at times because they are growing. They don't know what's right or wrong. They need *a guiding figure* to provide the values of the Church. They need someone to show them there are ways to grow to become closer to God. That usually happens through example. Having a spiritual leader, a friend, or a safe place to gather is crucial. All of these are the foundations to help build the youth. They are looking for safety.

Variety

A lot of times, people are so focused on efficiency that we sacrifice the chance to make mistakes and add to the mass. A perfect mass is a mass that allows for people to make mistake and grow. There's no room for growth because sometimes the youth are fearful they will be lectured. This might not be too much of a problem, depending on the level of connection and trust between the youth and the spiritual director. Mass needs to be done a certain way and the youth becomes intimidated to explore because the harsh reactions they've might have seen in the past toward radical thinking.

Variety

Sometimes it has become, the "same ol' thing" each and every week. *The variety comes in connecting with youth in hospitality, choir music, liturgy team, and most importantly homilies.* The homilies are spiritual nourishment for the intellect. It is the calm for the soul. The homilies will give the spice to the Liturgy of the Word and to something that is seen as "boring".

Significance

The youth are important. Not because they are the future of the Church. We hear that too often. That's nothing to them. It's great to say the youth are the future of the Church. That's a no brainer. However, we don't treat them the way they need to be treated due to our prejudgment of what youths are. *The youth stereotypes prevent many from making youths feel special.* They need to be acknowledged as a human being. They have a lot of insecurities.

Significance

Sometimes they never grow out of it. Being a person of Christ, I try to see that. After I see it, I use a lot of my effort to bring it out for them to save their special-ness, whether musical talents, humor, or a shoulder to cry on. *Everyone has something to offer to the table.* They are important in Church life, but most important, they are important in this life.

Connection/Love.

Some just feel they don't fit in or belong. This is up to the everyone to create the environment. It's a lot of work. Loving is not easy, but everything that is worth in has never been easy. The community is challenged to continually find ways to love. To seek out the quiet ones who try to hide and let them know they are loved.

Growth

A priest puts this into words for me. *Keep your faith. Grow it.* There's need to be growth from different sources. Eucharist, Readings, service, evangelizing, self-reflection, challenge to take on different meanings to life. If there's no growth, then we become stagnant. *If we are stagnant, we are dying. Growth needs to happen!*

Contribution

Encourage others to take part WITH GUIDANCE. Everyone wants to help, but not everyone knows exactly where they belong. We need to continually challenge them to contribute in all avenues they feel is fit.

Nature/Culture:

We are the generation of Multi Personality disorder. Our lives are not linear and revolve around endless activities and objectives to achieve, a culture of restlessness. An hour set aside for church doesn't seem efficient when you can pray and serve God elsewhere that is more meaningful.

Non-Accepting Community:

A culture of fear, judging, and un-forgiveness.

“I’m not a Jesus freak, heck, I’m not even sure if I believe in God so... can I still sing in the choir?” I need to find a community where I can be free and explore my **WHOLE** self.

Parents:

Parents are less forceful or too much forceful.
They never explain the “why,” but only
demand. Plus, it’s fun to rebel!

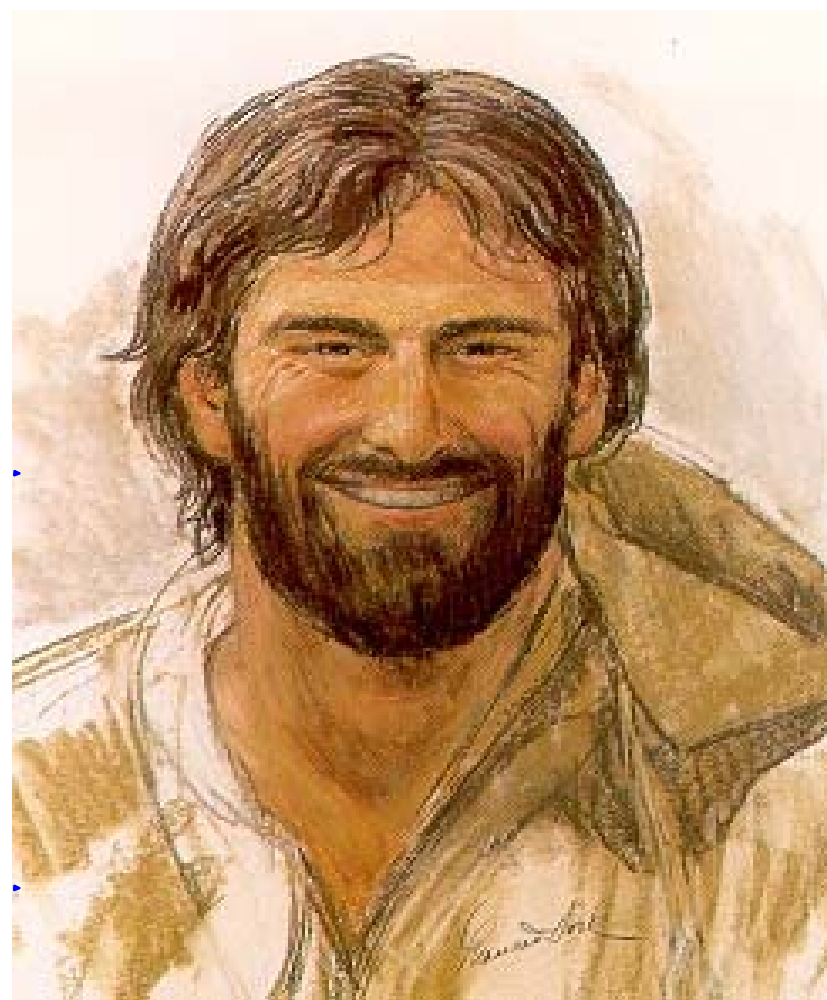
Non-Progressive Thinking:

The Church is universal, there are many different types of Catholics--liberals, conservatives, practicing, non-practicing, etc. *Vietnamese-American Youth tends to be the “liberal” types, waiting for the Church to catch up.*

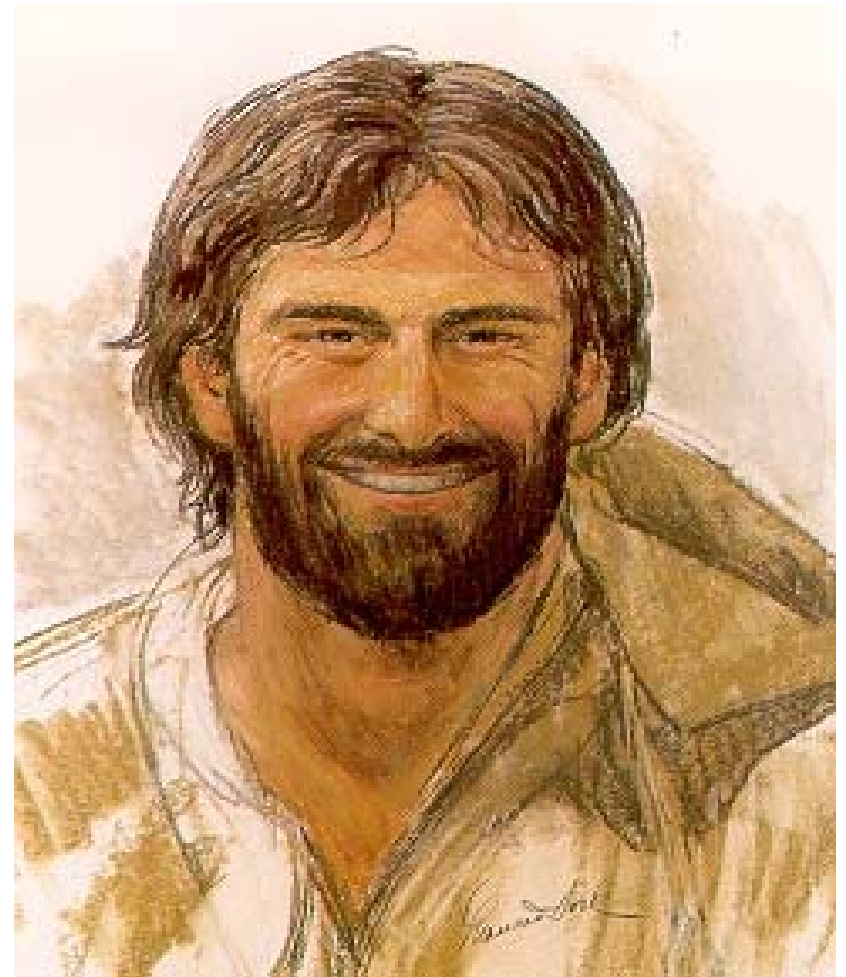
ll: .et's
some .esus'

ll: .et's
the .esus'

ll: .et's
the .esus'



ll: .et's
to .esus'



.t's .esus'

2- What can our priests do to help these young VAC?

- We don't know who they are, but their friends and relatives who do go to mass know. *So an outreach program through their friends would be the first step* ('bring a friend to church day :-)')
- *A warm, bright color brochure about the mass/community for assembly to bring to friends/family members...etc..)* People start to go to a mass because of their friends. Yet they stay because of the God that they see and experience through the welcoming community and *the prayerfulness and meaningfulness that the presider shows.*

Try not to use the same homily because one group may understand why the other doesn't. *Develop social programs before/after mass where youth can gather. This gets them more involved with the church.*

- Be more welcoming, hospitable, kind, and open to what our youth have to say. *Let the youth know that you care by interacting with them.* Maybe going out to big events or even small get-togethers with them and try your best to connect with the youth and give them advice not coming from a priest, *but as a friend.*

- The more the community sees that the priests are welcoming and warming and wanting to help the youth grow into a better place for them to grow and expand their experiences as a Youth Catholic, then it will motivate them to want to become better Catholics and maybe even into great leaders one day.

- Get to know the youth, what they need spiritually, and just get to know what's up with the youth these days. I feel as though a lot of the priests are out of touch with the younger generation, but there are a few who have been able to incorporate themselves into the youth community. They become role models and I really look up to them.

Build a team that makes it a priority to grow spiritually as well a team that's not willing to let their standards fall.

- **Be good examples... no, be GREAT examples... be *holy* priests, *saintly* men!**
- **Celebrate Mass and the Sacraments with great intention and conviction.**
- **Preach the GOSPEL... preach with zeal and passion (in word and deed)... connecting with the lives of the people.**

(Lil John's Rap 😊)

Frère: WHAT?

All: CLAIM YOUR FAITH.

Frère: WHAT?

All: BE PROUD, DUDE!

Frère: YEAH! OK.

All: WHAT?

Frère: CLAIM YOUR FAITH.

All: WHAT?

Frère: BE PROUD, DUDES!

ALL: YEAH! OK.

3- What can our priests do to help YOUTH MASS?



- Be more attentive to: *listen*
- *Engage and tap into* the gifts of the young people, as well as the older generation
- *Challenge* people (old and young) to feel responsible/accountable for what they bring as they come to Mass... “you get what you put into it.”

- Be open for constant renewal and attentive to the Spirit's movement in the lives of young people, all the while remaining faithful to the beauty that also comes from our rich tradition... *there are many young people who are looking for both*



there are many young people who are looking for both

What a youth mass community needs and hope for is *a caring priest, a shepherd, who walks with them.* Only by spending time playing, eating, talking, and praying with them that they'd know they are worth something, worth the priest's and parish's time and resources, and they'd show how "broken" they are. *Then the message that the priest proclaims on Sundays would make sense to them.*

*a caring priest, a shepherd,
who walks with them.*



...as long as the caring, and love for the community shows through.

I'm certain that every homilist know their own strength in that department.. (please don't tell cha ... ;-) but he is not usually as eloquent as cha ..., *but we love him because somehow we know that he cares* through his words.



I'm certain that every homilist know their own strength in that department.. (please don't tell cha ... ;-)) but he is not usually as eloquent as Fr., but we love him because somehow we know that he cares through his words.

- And young adults are uhhh.. young adults with all of the angst, inexperience, and shortcomings of people who are still finding their ways in life, trying to recognize God ...
please be patient with them. They need guidance more than scolding :-), love more than hearing that their priest is too busy to care for them.

The priests/parish should also take time and help those *who are further on the spirituality path*, those who've been with the community for a little while and need guidance to go further. these are the ones who EM, lector, sing ... week in week out. these are the core volunteers that make sure that the microphones are on, and the lector schedules is updated and train the new comers.

- [1] empower them to take charge of all of the ministries: music, arts & environment, lector, EM, ... etc. In the beginning, a bit of catechesis and lots of encouragement go a long way

[2] once they take charge of the mass for a bit, teach them the symbols, the meanings behind the rituals. challenge them to see beyond all that rituals and signs.

- It is important that people are welcoming... making friends and pulling people in.
- It should be FUN to join the community, if not, relaxing. People shouldn't see it as a task.

- This is a bit difficult because each youth is unique in their search. One's high-energy evangelism might not work with someone looking for inner peace. A mix is typically best. Show that God has might, but also silence.
- Typically, when organizing an event, we keep in mind to have a mixture of both. If it's too hyped up, they are easily tired, and there is no soul searching. If it's a constant prayer session, we get kids who fall asleep. The events which are most memorable and uplifting are the ones w/ a good mix of both.



- It also helps the community when they see that the mass is successful and there is a large audience. It feeds onto itself. *When other youth see that their friends are going and that the mass is full and lively, they're more motivated to come.*

- Ministry is organized and run by youth, but under the guidance of someone who is knowledgeable about the ins and outs of what happens during mass and why things are done a certain way. It's good to be creative and make mass more appealing but be appropriate for the setting at the same time. *Having a dedicated youth minister to oversee youth ministries gives the youth masses direction.*

- A community of welcoming friends and peers where they feel belong
- A place where they can share their faith lives with, including their peers, their presiders, the guests
- A place where they feel God as real as the emotions boiling in their hearts
- A place they know they can make a difference, and that they are valuable and of high worth

- **Many youths are displaced because there's no clear leadership. They are looking for leaders in the spiritual ones (priests, deacons, etc). The priest needs to be challenging, radical, unafraid. At same time, they need to be understanding, flexible, and be willing to ask this question:
WHAT MUST I DO to make _____ a more (welcoming/loving/challenging/youthful/spiritual) place. This question depends on the vision of where the leadership wants to take their community.**

- **Radical**
- **Creative**
- **Energetic**
- **Welcoming**
- **Warm**
- **Connected with Christ**
- **Connected with their community**
- **Connected with the less fortunate.**



1- THÁNH LỄ
2- CÔNG BẰNG
XÃ HỘI
(Social Justice)

**As I started high school, I
began to lose my faith- I
couldn't see any point in these
prayers I kept saying in
Vietnamese or sitting in church
for an hour when I couldn't
understand a thing.**

Since I was finally going to join Leadership class, I decided that this was the year I was going to make people care or change the world. *This would be my way of getting closer to God.*



My salute to the
beauty of our
youth's **faith**



**Beauty is not
always
pretty!**





Build house for the poor in Cà Mau



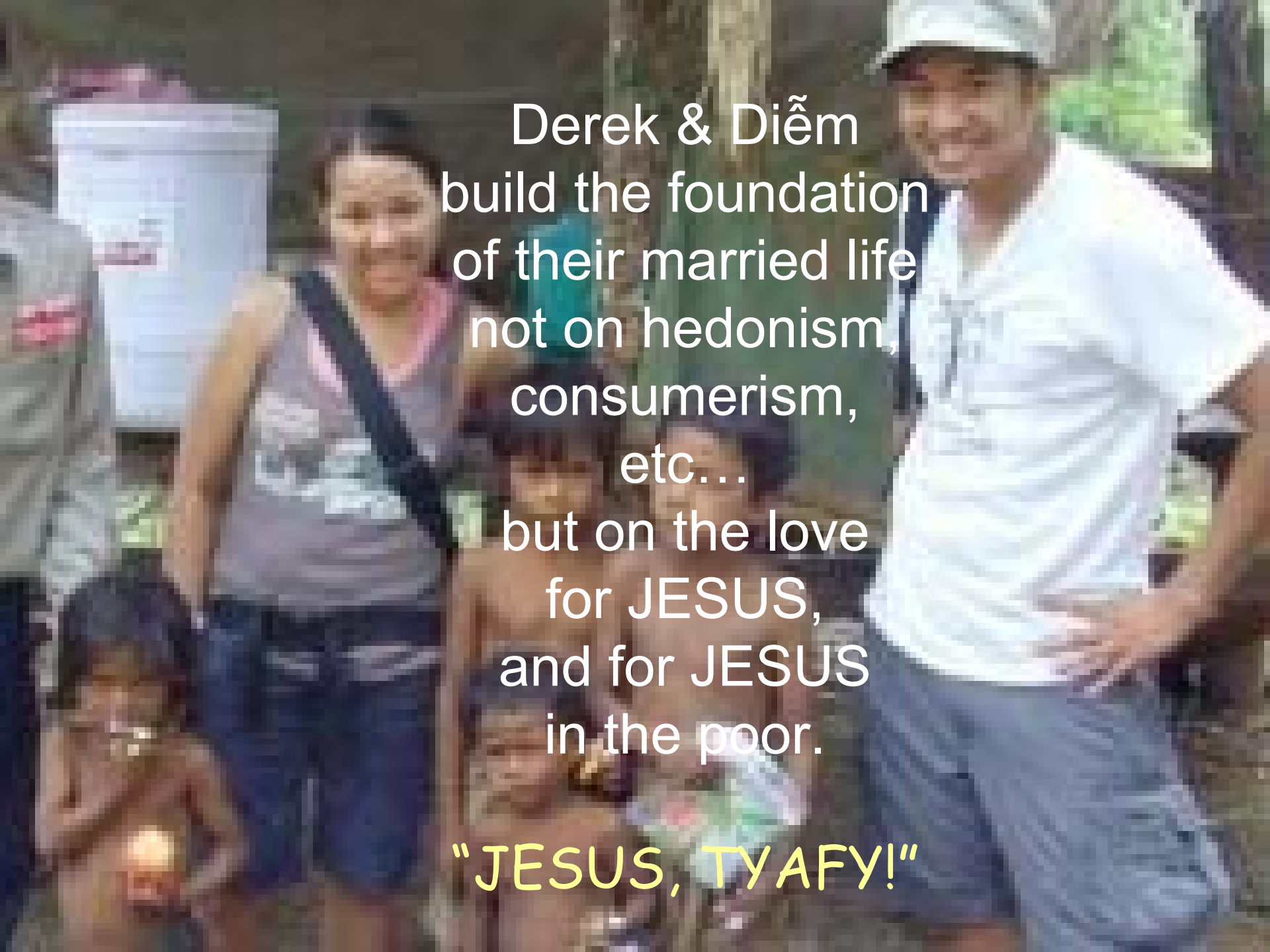


The nine toe foot of Kim Le



From a H'mong church in the mountain of Yên Bái, to her honeymoon among the poor in Cambodia





Derek & Diễm
build the foundation
of their married life
not on hedonism,
consumerism,
etc...

but on the love
for JESUS,
and for JESUS
in the poor.

"JESUS, TYAFY!"



Derek and the orphans in Cambodia



Diễm and the children at Viet Village in Cambodia

I am proud to be Vietnamese. This pride to be Vietnamese puts my American ties to shame. It humbles me. I had just graduated from college, I had just got a new jacket as a graduation gift, I had just eaten a delicious meal at a trendy restaurant, but I had still complained about how restless and unsatisfied I was. So who was I to come up the mountain and help the needy when they had helped me? Who was I to make them happy when they knew happiness a lot better than I did?

That feeling that I had felt at the beginning wasn't just pride, but gratitude; gratitude that I have this Vietnamese side of me to save me from my American tendencies, gratitude that my parents came from humble beginnings to give me so much, gratitude that Viet Nam still holds this simplicity to slap me in the face and allow me to reflect upon myself and to grow to be a worthy definition of Vietnamese American.

Before, I would just write off Viet Nam as something of my parents, Viet Nam, nhưng là của Bố Mẹ. But now that I've been to Viet Nam, that I've "come home" to Viet Nam, I know it as Viet Nam CUA CON.

*But now that I've been to Viet Nam,
that I've "come home" to Viet Nam,
I know it as Viet Nam CUA CON.*









HALLONG

**Xin cho con trái tim si
ngàn đời tình mến
không nhạt phai.**





A leper missionary





Even a communist with 28 years in the Communist Party became Catholic!







**How beautiful
<3 <3 <3
With the terminally
ill children with
AIDS.**

Have loving FUN with the children with AIDS



May the eyes of
your hearts be
enlightened!
(Ephesians 1: 18)



No FEAR
being close to
the children with
AIDS



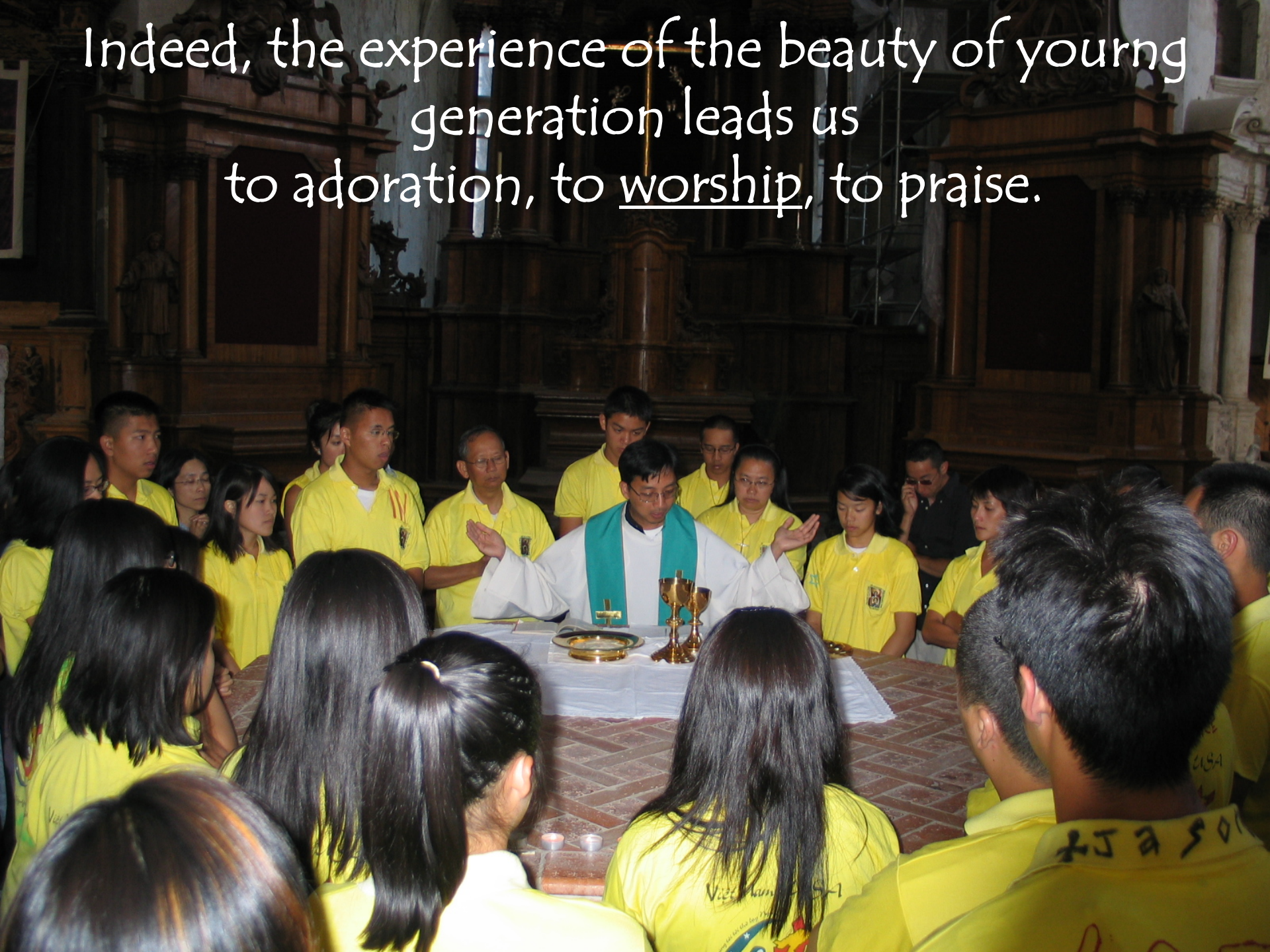




A group of people, mostly wearing green shirts, are kneeling in prayer on a dirt path in a cemetery. In the background, several large wooden crosses stand on a grassy hill, surrounded by trees. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a religious gathering.

Indeed, the experience of the
beauty of our young generation leads us
to adoration, to worship, to praise.

Indeed, the experience of the beauty of young generation leads us to adoration, to worship, to praise.



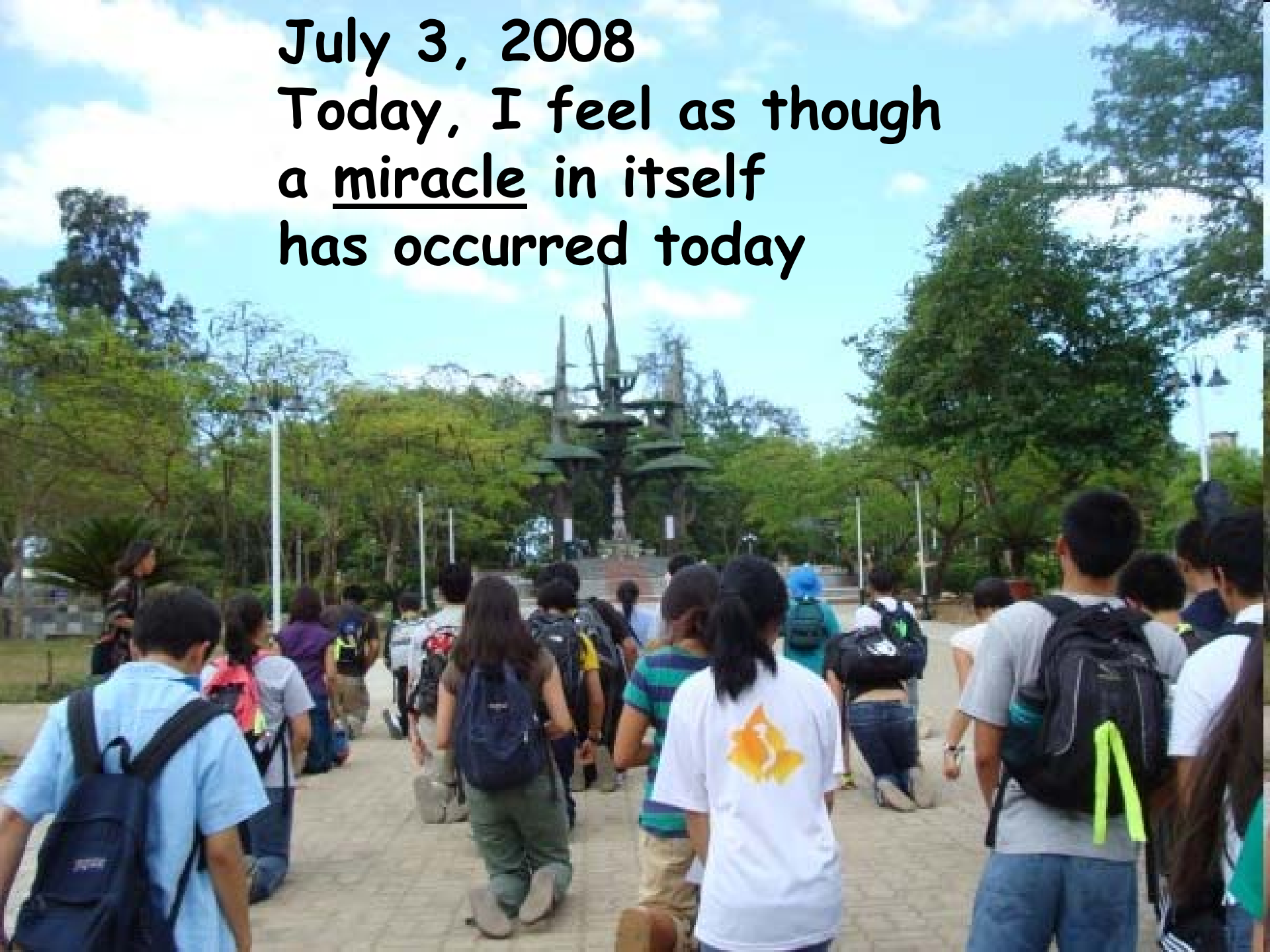


Indeed, the experience of the beauty of young generation leads us to adoration, to worship, to praise.



JULY 3rd, 2008

July 3, 2008
Today, I feel as though
a miracle in itself
has occurred today



when we were reciting the
rosary on bended knees it
began to rain.

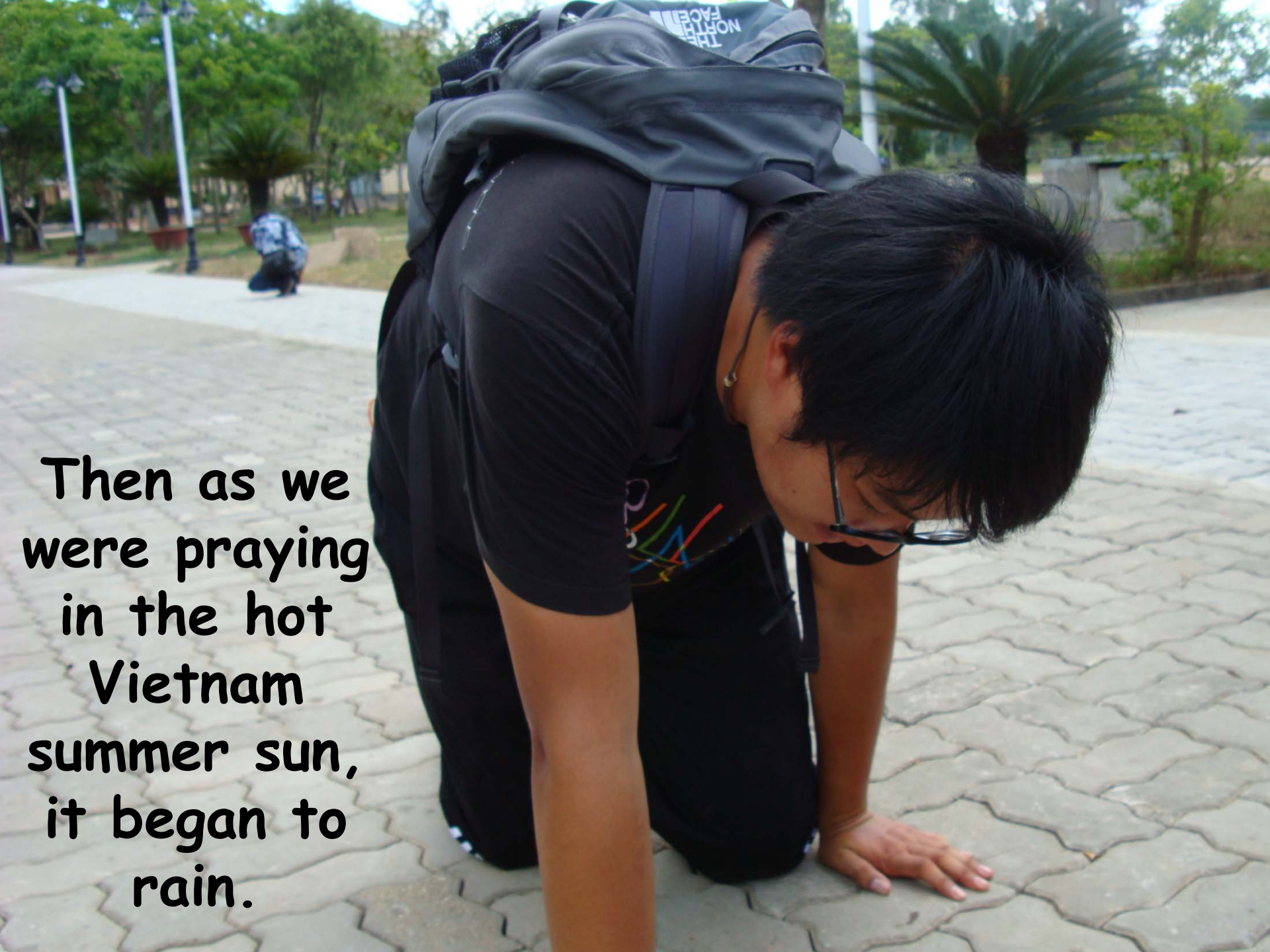


I, unfortunately could be on my knees because I wore a dress making kneeling almost unbearable.





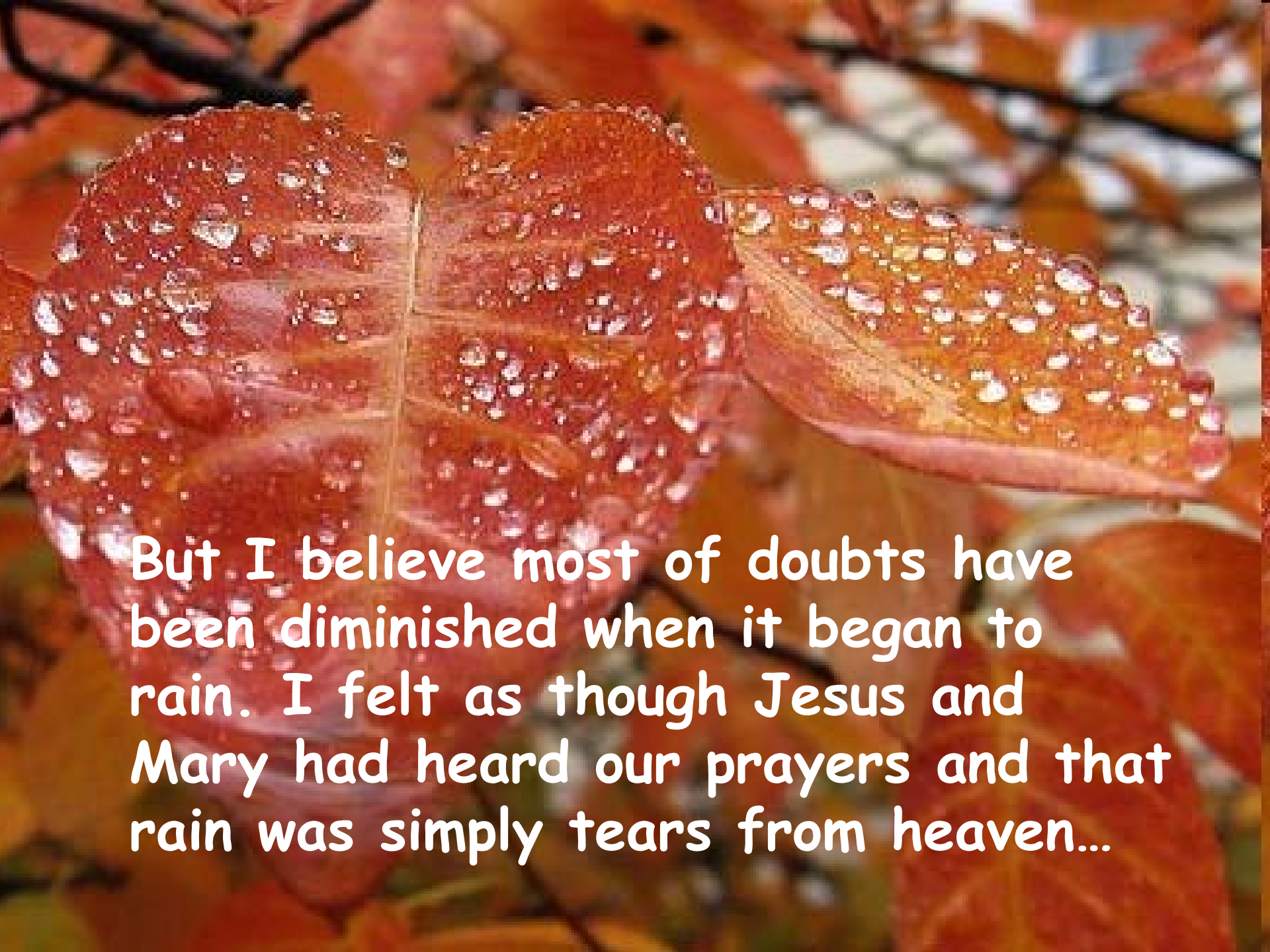
So instead I took off my shoes so that I could share my suffering in some way with the group.



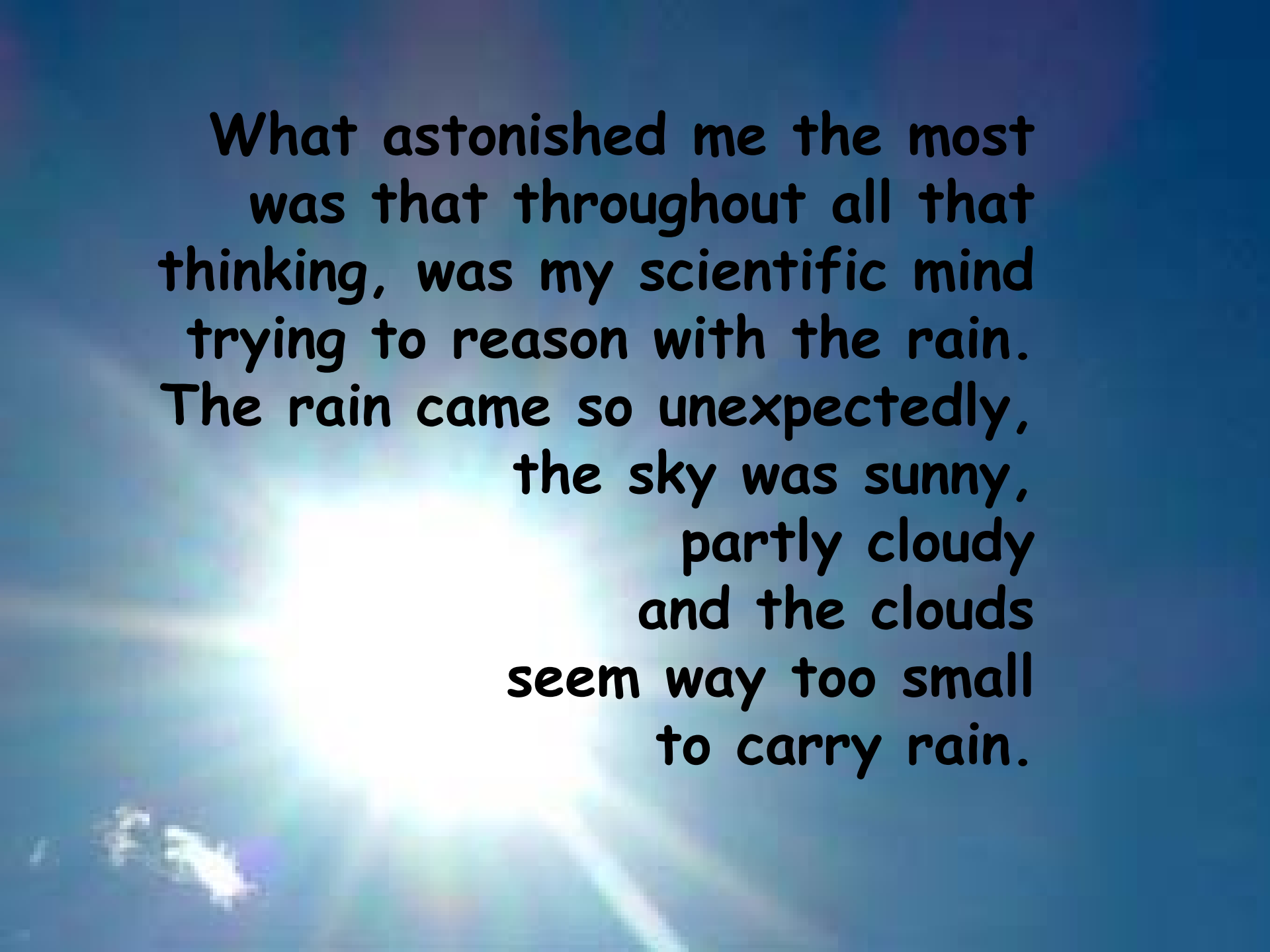
Then as we
were praying
in the hot
Vietnam
summer sun,
it began to
rain.

Right before, we, as a group, were eating lunch in silence, reflecting. I was reflecting on how weak my faith is. My reasoning and scientific mind often get in the way of my faith. I've been constantly questioning my faith and questioning God...



A close-up photograph of several autumn leaves in shades of red, orange, and brown. The leaves are covered in numerous small, clear raindrops, which are in sharp focus against the blurred background of more leaves. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the leaves and the glistening surface of the water droplets.

But I believe most of doubts have been diminished when it began to rain. I felt as though Jesus and Mary had heard our prayers and that rain was simply tears from heaven...



What astonished me the most
was that throughout all that
thinking, was my scientific mind
trying to reason with the rain.
The rain came so unexpectedly,
the sky was sunny,
partly cloudy
and the clouds
seem way too small
to carry rain.



A few drops
hit me
and I was
immediately
confused as my
cognitive
dissonance
kicked in and
told myself it
was probably
sweat and I'm
imagining
things.

But then it actually began to rain and Frère led us as we continued to recite the rosary



and came
closer to the
statue and
knelt
praying.

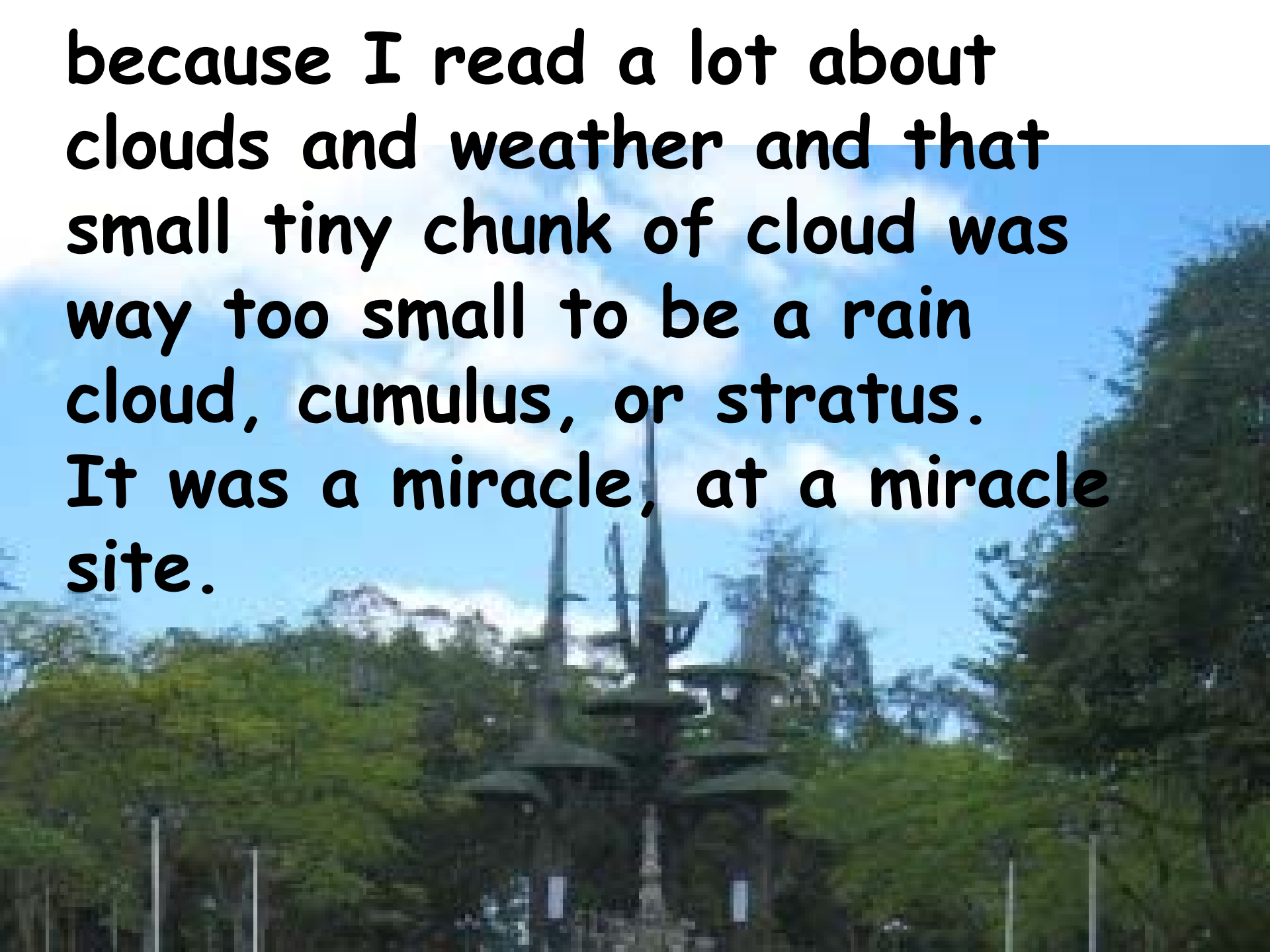
he a
cầu khẩn cùng
Mẹ ở chốn này
Mẹ sẽ nhậm lời
... theo ý
... n."





It was as if God wanted to bring us closer to him, so the rain made us find shelter under the trees where the statue of Mary was. But seeing how suddenly the rain came was certainly a miracle for me

because I read a lot about clouds and weather and that small tiny chunk of cloud was way too small to be a rain cloud, cumulus, or stratus. It was a miracle, at a miracle site.



This trip was truly a pilgrimage. I see my doubts have been washed away and rained down on, and I feel as my faith has been watered by God in order to continue growing and spreading the seeds of love to the world.



Like a sunflower that follows
every movement of the sun,
so I turn to you to follow you,
my God.



**Rain down,
rain down
your love
on us,
oh Lord.
Cleanse
my soul.**

