



## WEEKLY LETTER FROM MONSIGNOR KEN

August 17, 2025

Last year, I shared the moving story of Father Vincent Capodanno captured in the EWTN movie, *Called and Chosen*. He was born in Staten Island and served as a chaplain during the Vietnam War, affectionately known as a “grunt padre.” He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Captivated by his story, one of those who also saw the movie during our pilgrimage to the Divine Mercy Shrine started following the website of the Father Capodanno Guild. Recently, this beautiful story that was sent in by one of the supporters of the Guild appeared on the website. The story celebrates the life of this incredible chaplain, but also reminds us of our hope in the resurrection and the Communion of Saints...

“Our supporter was a daughter in a family of four children. Her parents had consecrated their children to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as babies and practiced the Nine First Friday’s Devotion given to St. Margaret Mary. In 1967, her brother, A U. S. Marine, landed in Vietnam on 21 August—two weeks before Father Vincent was killed. On the night of 21 September, only a month after her brother arrived in Vietnam and over two weeks after Father Vincent had been killed, she had a terrible dream that her brother was horribly wounded and all alone on a battlefield. In her dream, she saw a Catholic chaplain run to help and comfort her brother. The chaplain said, ‘Don’t worry, son, God is with us this good day.’ [An expression that Father Capodanno would use.]

As she woke from this awful nightmare, she called her father for comfort and found that he had experienced the same nightmare. One week later, Marines came to the family home to tell them that her brother’s entire unit had been killed. Her brother was the lone survivor but had subsequently died of his wounds. Marines who arrived and gave aid to her brother reported that before he died, he asked them to, ‘please thank the Padre for helping me to die well.’

These Marines promised to honor his request but there were no Chaplains assigned to the unit nor in the area—they did not know who the priest could be. Years passed, and a friend sent our supporter a picture of a Navy Chaplain who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor—you guessed it—she recognized our Servant of God (Father Capodanno), as the priest from her dream. May our Lord and His Servant, Father Vincent Capodanno be with you and yours. God bless, Steve Stanley”

It would be wonderful for one day this extraordinary priest to be canonized as a Saint of the Church. In the meantime, may we find comfort in our Faith, and the beautiful Communion of Saints who watch over us and pray for us.

***“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us, while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.” (Hebrews 12:1-2a)***