CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

Office of the Bishop

Edict

Thomas Stephen Vander Woude was born on April 24, 1942, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, into a devout Catholic family. After graduating from Creighton University, he married Mary Ellen Earley on December 26, 1964. Their marriage was blessed with seven sons, one of whom became a priest of the Diocese of Arlington. He served as a United States Naval Aviator during the Vietnam War and subsequently worked as a commercial airline pilot. Throughout his life, he was deeply devoted to the Holy Eucharist, the Blessed Virgin Mary, prayer, family life, Catholic education, and service to the Church and those in need.

On September 8, 2008, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Thomas died in Nokesville, Virginia, while saving the life of his youngest son, who had fallen into a septic tank on the family property. His final act of self-sacrificial love was widely regarded as the culmination of a Christian life marked by faith, charity, humility, fortitude, and generous service to others.

As his reputation for holiness, for the offering of his life, and for signs has grown and spread over the years, and having received the formal petition of the Postulator, Dr. Waldery Hilgeman, for the initiation of his Cause of Beatification and Canonization, we hereby bring this matter to the attention of the ecclesial community.

We therefore invite all the faithful to communicate directly or to submit to the Reverend Monsignor Paul deLadurantaye, Chancellor of the Diocese of Arlington, all information from which elements favorable or contrary to the reputation for holiness, the offering of life, or the reputation for signs of Thomas Stephen Vander Woude may be inferred.

Furthermore, in accordance with the applicable canonical provisions, all writings attributed to Thomas Stephen Vander Woude, including diaries, letters, correspondence, manuscripts, notes, and any other private writings, as well as documents in any way relevant to the Cause, must be collected.

Therefore, by means of this Edict, we direct anyone possessing such writings or documents who has not already delivered them to the Postulator to submit them with due diligence to the Reverend Monsignor Paul deLadurantaye, Chancellor, at the offices of the Diocese of Arlington.

We further decree that this Edict shall remain posted for a period of three months at the offices of the Diocesan Curia, at the Cathedral of Saint Thomas More and at the parish church of Holy Trinity in Gainesville, and shall be published on the official website of the Diocese of Arlington and in the *Arlington Catholic Herald*.

Given at Arlington, Virginia, on the eighth day of September, in the Year of Our Lord 2026.

✠ Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Arlington

Rev. Msgr. Paul deLadurantaye
Chancellor