



Bishop Myron Joseph Cotta

**Priest of the Diocese of Fresno
Auxiliary Bishop of Sacramento
Bishop of the Diocese of Stockton**

Myron Joseph Cotta was born on March 21, 1953 in Dos Palos California, son of Daniel Edward Cotta and Mary Barbara Martin. His paternal grandparents, José Inácio Cota and Mariana Martins, and maternal grandparents, José Martins and Maria Mercedes Xavier, were natives of the Island of Terceira in the Azores. Both families took the courageous step to leave their home in Terceira and sail to America, bringing with them their language, their Portuguese culture and their Catholic faith. Myron's parents were born in California and were first generation citizens of the United States.

After Myron's grandparents arrived in California, they began the arduous task of integrating into American life, learned to speak English, and began operating a dairy business in Dos Palos, Merced County, in the great San Joaquin Valley of California.



Paternal Grandparents Mariana Martins and José Inácio Cota, 1960s



Maternal Grandparents Maria Mercedes Xavier and José Gonçalves Martins, 1960s



Myron's Parents, Daniel Edward Cotta and Mary Barbara Martin, marry on October 1, 1952

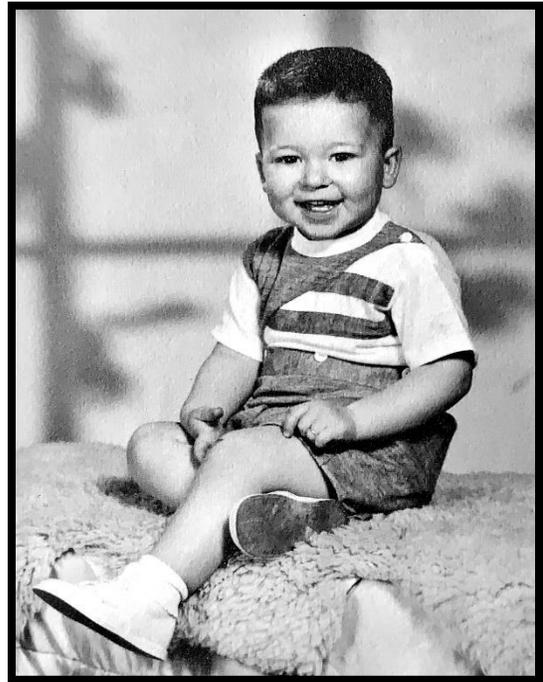
STRONG CATHOLIC FAMILY

Myron says his family was very Catholic and his grandparents played a significant role in his developing Catholic faith. His parents were supportive of him and his brother Benny and two sisters Marilyn and Annette. They made sure their children received their sacraments of initiation, attended Catholic schools, participated in Sunday Mass and supported their parish. As a child, Myron always had an attraction to the Catholic Church. In elementary school one of the sisters told him, "One day you're going to be a priest." He responded: "Yeah, right, sister."

MYRON BEGINS HIS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



Myron at six months



The Terrible Twos



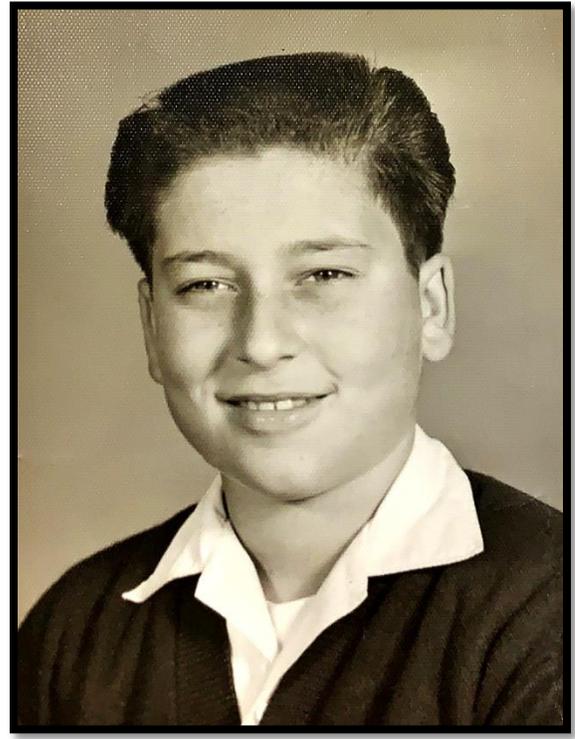
Five Years of Age



First Grade



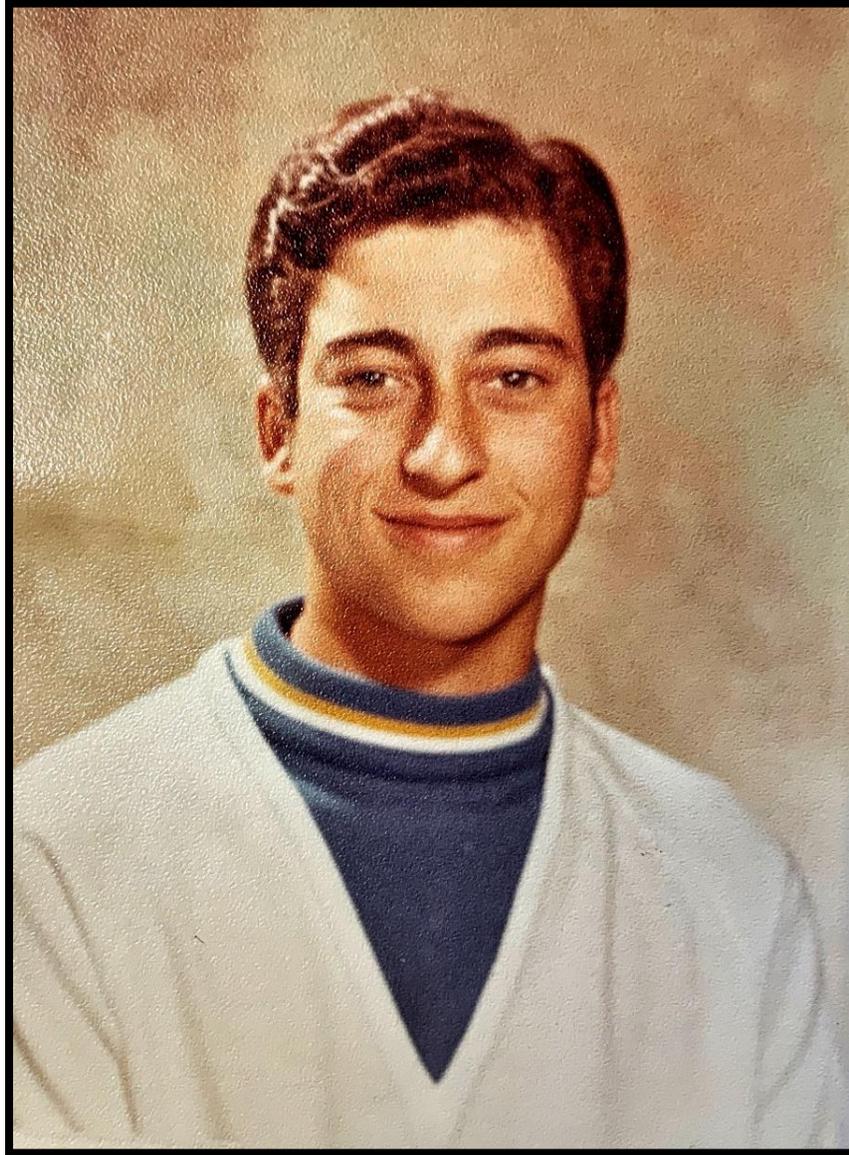
Eight Years of Age



Myron at Twelve



Myron attends Sacred Heart School in Dos Palos, CA



Courtesy of Bishop Cotta

Myron as a junior in High School

RECONNECTS TO HIS CATHOLIC FAITH

Some of the lessons of his early years got buried during Myron's high school and college years but resurfaced during his mid-20s. He reconnected with the church after a personal faith conversion in his life. Little by little, things unfolded for him. He became involved in his parish again and parishioners began to ask him if he had considered becoming a priest.

Myron says an element of his vocation to the priesthood came from the parish community that planted in him the seed of the priesthood and urged him to consider the possibility. During this time, he worked in a grocery store in Dos Palos. As time passed, the development of his vocation to the priesthood began to unfold.

ENTERS SAINT JOHN SEMINARY IN CAMARILLO

Myron applied to Saint John Seminary in Camarillo in 1980. He thought to himself: "If this is not for me, I will find out soon enough." Seminary life agreed with Myron and he stayed and earned his bachelor's degree and a master's degree in theology at Saint John Seminary in Camarillo.

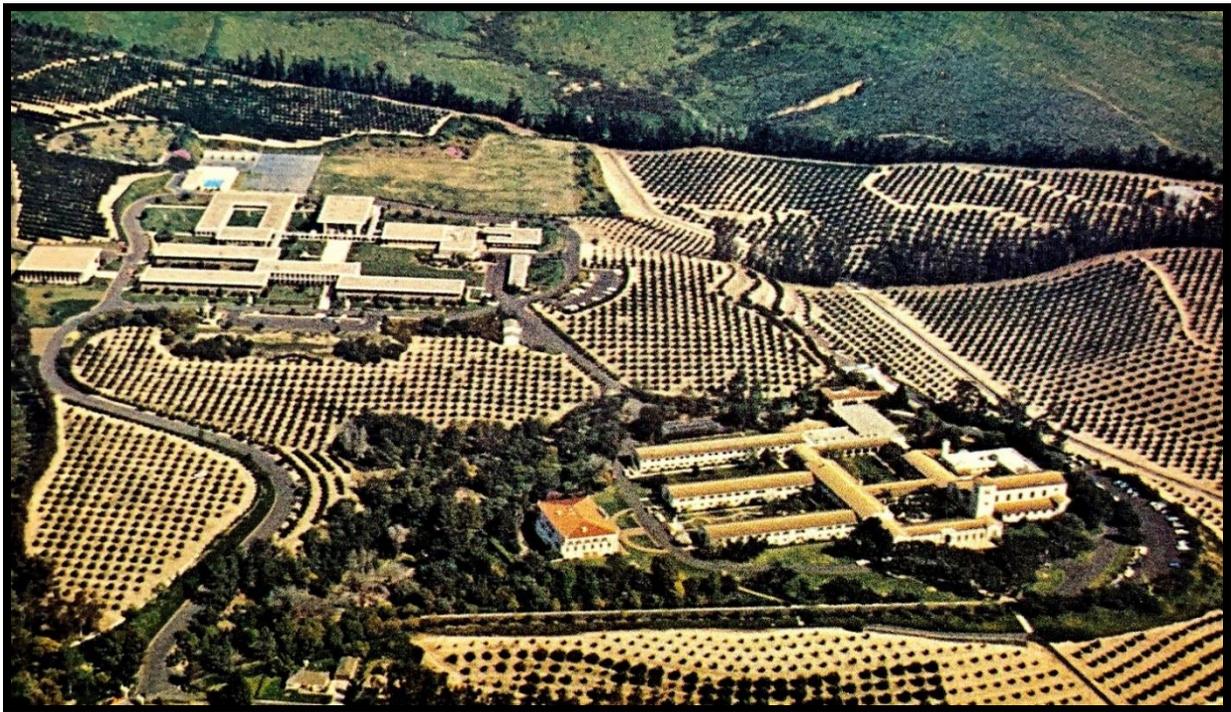


Photo courtesy of Bishop Cotta

Saint John College and Seminary, Camarillo, CA

ORDAINED A PRIEST FOR THE DIOCESE OF FRESNO

Myron was ordained a priest on September 12, 1987 by Bishop Joseph Madera for the Diocese of Fresno.



Photo Courtesy of Bishop Cotta

Myron Cotta is ordained a Priest by Bishop José Madera in Saint Anthony Church, Fresno

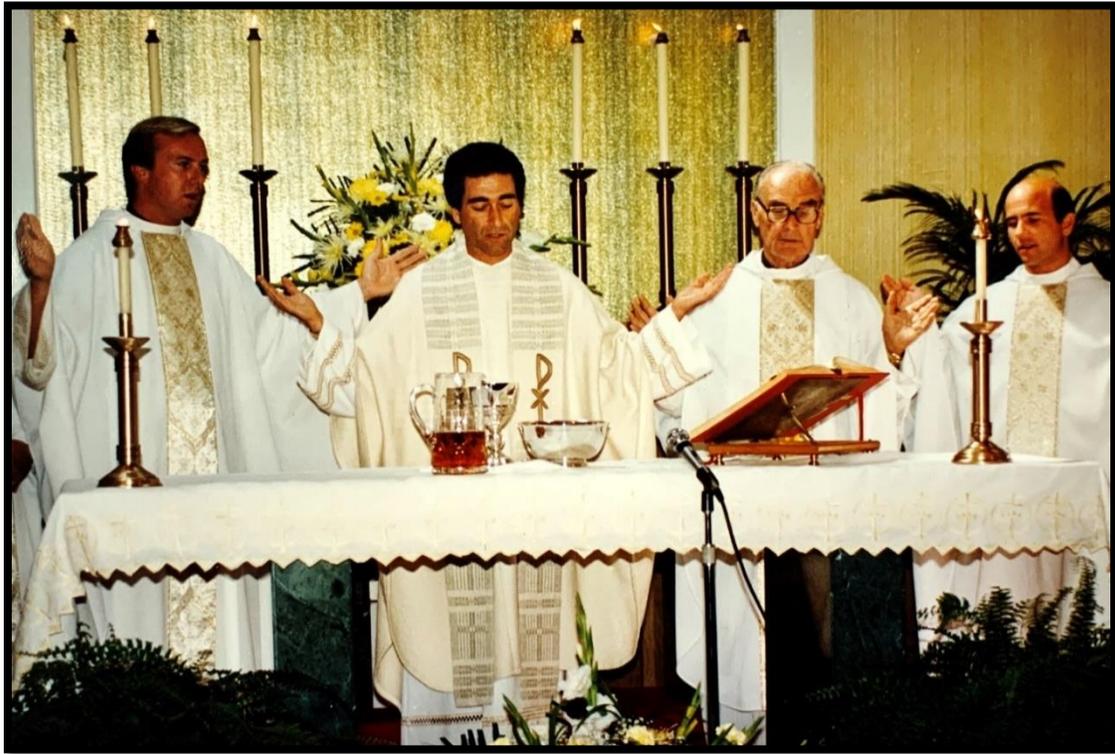


Photo courtesy of Bishop Cotta

Father Cotta Celebrates his First Mass in Sacred Heart Church, Dos Palos, CA

FIRST ASSIGNMENTS

Father Cotta's first assignment as a priest was to Saint Anthony Parish in Atwater. He had spent his pastoral year as a deacon at that parish and during the summer he attended the University of Santa Barbara for studies in Portuguese. Growing up in a Portuguese family, Myron spoke some Portuguese but it was not fluent. His studies at the university improved his ability to communicate in Portuguese. He returned to Saint Anthony Parish after his priestly ordination and continued his ministry there for the next two years, 1987 to 1989.



Photo from Google website

Saint Anthony Church, Atwater

ASSIGNED TO THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA IN LATON

Father Myron was then assigned as administrator to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in the town of Laton which is 10 miles north of Hanford. Masses were celebrated in English, Spanish and Portuguese. He served this parish community for three years, from 1989 to 1992.

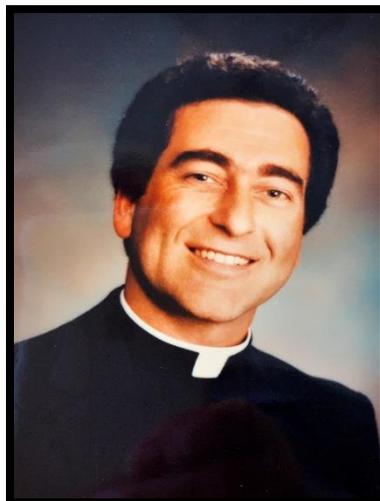


Photo from parish website

Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, Laton

OUR LADY OF MIRACLES PARISH, GUSTINE

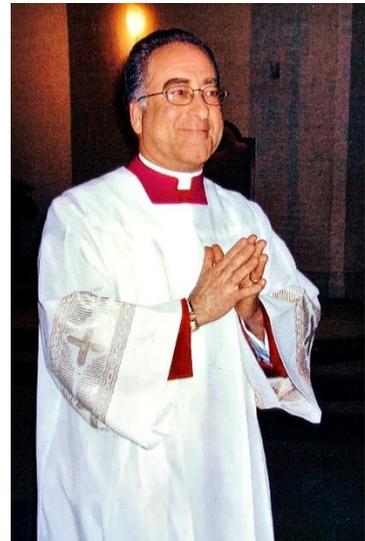
Father Myron's next assignment was as pastor of Our Lady of Miracles Parish in Gustine for the next seven years, from 1992 to 1999.



APPOINTED VICAR GENERAL OF THE DIOCESE

Several years after the arrival of Bishop John T Steinbock as bishop of the Diocese of Fresno, he appointed Father Cotta as Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia for the Diocese of Fresno, serving in that capacity for twelve years. He also served Fresno as Vicar for Priests for several years.

Pope John Paul II named Father Cotta a Chaplain of His Holiness with the title of monsignor in 2002. Pope Benedict XVI named him a Prelate of Honor in 2009. Bishop John T Steinbock installed Father Cotta as a monsignor in the Diocese of Fresno.



Father Cotta Installed as a Monsignor by Bishop Steinbock



Photo courtesy of Bishop Cotta

Bishop John T Steinbock with Monsignor Myron J Cotta

NAMED DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATOR

Bishop Steinbock's health began to decline and he was diagnosed with cancer. He died on December 5, 2010. After his death, the Diocesan Consultors elected Monsignor Cotta to serve as Administrator of the Diocese of Fresno until a new bishop was appointed. Upon the appointment of Bishop Armando Xavier Ochoa as bishop of Fresno, Monsignor Cotta continued serving as Vicar General for the Diocese of Fresno for the next two years.

APPOINTED AUXILIARY BISHOP OF SACRAMENTO BY POPE FRANCIS

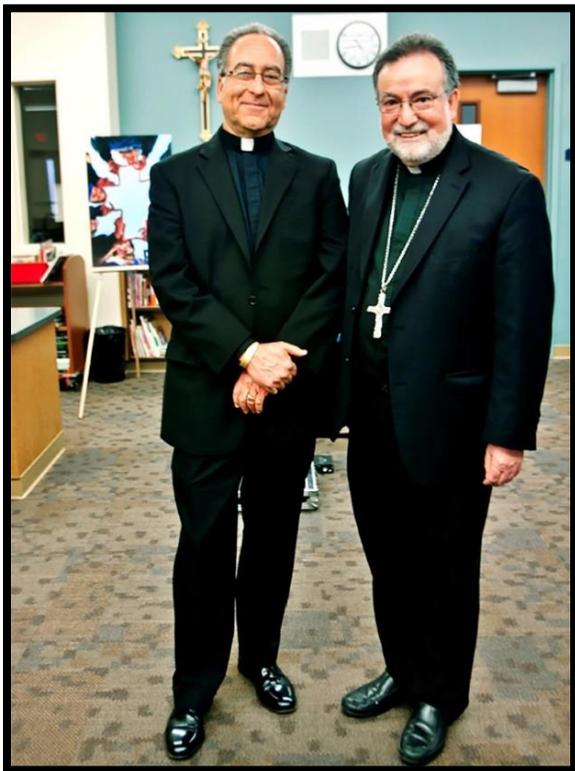


Photo by Cathy Joyce

Announcement of Episcopal Appointment

Monsignor Cotta received a telephone call on December 5, 2014 from the Apostolic Nuncio in Washington, DC, asking if he was willing to accept Pope Francis' call to become auxiliary bishop of Sacramento. This was an unexpected call for Monsignor Cotta, both humbling and affirming that Pope Francis would call him to this new role of ministry. Monsignor Cotta accepted the appointment.

The official announcement of his appointed as bishop was made in Washington, DC and Sacramento on January 24, 2014. He was named Titular Bishop of Muteci and Auxiliary Bishop of Sacramento. A news conference with Bishop-elect Cotta took place at Sacred Heart Parish School in Sacramento that same morning.

ARRIVAL IN SACRAMENTO

As Bishop-elect Cotta began his transition from Fresno to Sacramento, he made the decision to live at the Priests' Retirement Village in Citrus Heights temporarily until the diocese secured a residence for him. He resided at the Priests' Village for two years and moved to a house in Land Park when it was ready for him.

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF BISHOP-ELECT MYRON COTTA

The date of the episcopal ordination of Bishop-Elect Cotta was March 25, 2014 in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Sacramento. In the presence of a filled Cathedral with bishops, priests and the People of God, the three ordaining bishops were Jaime Soto, Bishop of Sacramento, Armando Xavier Ochoa, Bishop of Fresno, and retired Bishop José de Jesús Madera Uribe, M.Sp.S of the Archdiocese for the Military Services. With the solemn laying on of hands of these three bishops and the prayer of consecration, Monsignor Myron Cotta was ordained to the Order of Bishop.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE EPISCOPAL ORDINATION BY CATHY JOYCE



Chancellor Kathy Conner reads the Papal Appointment of Myron Cotta as Bishop



Monsignor Cotta lies prostrate during the Litany of Saints



With the Imposition of Hands, Bishop Soto Invokes the Holy Spirit to Consecrate Bishop Cotta



Laying on of Hands by Bishop Francis A Quinn, Seventh Bishop of Sacramento



Bishops during the Prayer of Consecration



Anointing the Head of Bishop Cotta with Sacred Chrism



Placement of the Miter



Bishop Cotta is presented to the Community



Bishop Cotta greets his mother Mary Barbara Cotta



The Bishops who concelebrated the Ordination Mass



Bishop Cotta with his Family after the Ordination



Bishop Cotta Begins his Work as Auxiliary Bishop of Sacramento

BISHOP COTTA BEGINS HIS WORK AS AUXILIARY BISHOP OF SACRAMENTO

Bishop Cotta began his work as auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Sacramento. Bishop Soto appointed him Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, the same position he held in the Diocese of Fresno.

Then began the annual celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the parishes of the diocese. Bishops Cotta and retired Bishop William Weigand helped Bishop Soto with the annual confirmations.



Photo by Cathy Joyce

Bishop Cotta celebrates Mass at Mercy Hospital Chapel, Sacramento

Bishop Cotta served as auxiliary bishop of Sacramento for four years until he received another telephone call from the Apostolic Nuncio in Washington, DC.

APPOINTED BISHOP OF STOCKTON

On December 9, 2017, Bishop Cotta received a second call from the Apostolic Nuncio in Washington, DC. This time, Pope Francis asked Bishop Cotta if he would accept the appointment to be bishop of the Diocese of Stockton some forty miles south of Sacramento. He accepted and his appointment as the sixth bishop of Stockton was announced on January 23, 2018. Accepting Pope Francis' request, he became the chief shepherd of the Church of Stockton.

PRIESTS AND DEACONS OF SACRAMENTO BID FAREWELL TO BISHOP COTTA



Photo by John E Boll

Clergy Farewell Luncheon for Bishop Cotta



Photo by Cathy Joyce

Sacramento Bishops William Weigand, Jaime Soto, Myron Cotta and Francis Quinn

On behalf of the Diocese of Sacramento, Bishop Jaime Soto hosted a luncheon for Bishop Cotta so the bishops, priests and deacons of the diocese could celebrate Bishop Cotta's election as Bishop of Stockton and bid him farewell. This event was held on Monday, February 19, 2018 at Saint Francis High School in Sacramento. The priests and deacons and Bishops Soto, Weigand and Quinn all attended this luncheon to thank Bishop Cotta for his four year ministry in Sacramento.

BISHOP COTTA INSTALLED AS BISHOP OF STOCKTON

Bishop Cotta chose March 15 as the date of his installation. The installation of a new bishop is a diocesan event and requires a location large enough to host the whole diocesan church. Because the Church of Saint Stanislaus in Modesto could hold well over 1000 people and there was ample parking space, it was chosen to be the church for Bishop Cotta's installation.

The weather prediction for March 15 was rain but it turned out to be a beautiful sunny day for the installation of Bishop Cotta. A large turnout of Sacramento priests attended the Installation Mass to show their support and affection for Bishop Cotta. It was a joyful day for the Church of Stockton as the People of God thanked Bishop Steven Blaire for his 19 years as bishop of Stockton and to welcome Bishop Cotta as their new shepherd.



Photo by John E Boll

Saint Stanislaus Church, Modesto, site of Bishop Cotta's installed as Bishop of Stockton



Photo by John E Boll

Installation Mass, Saint Stanislaus Church, Modesto



Bishop Cotta's Coat of Arms
Grace and Mercy
The Heart of the Gospel

FIRST YEAR AS BISHOP OF STOCKTON

Bishop Cotta is fast approaching his first year as Bishop of Stockton. He says his transition to the Diocese of Stockton has been a positive experience, a time for him to observe and become familiar with the Church of Stockton. There are 35 parishes in the diocese and he is getting to know the priests of the diocese, the pastoral staff, and the people and parishes. It has been a year of observation and getting a feel of the diocese.

Bishop Cotta believes evangelization is the overarching concern for the diocese. He believes that Vocations are a vital area that needs to be developed. Everyone has a share in the ministry of promoting vocations, not just the vocation director. Bishop Cotta realizes that he cannot do much without the help of the priests and the whole People of God. Ministry, evangelization, vocations and the work of sharing the Gospel is the work of the whole church and must be a team effort of all the people of God throughout the world.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Bishop Myron J Cotta is a gentleman, approachable, honest, caring and respectful. The priests of the Diocese of Stockton will grow in their respect for their new bishop and will love and appreciate his pastoral care to the whole people of God.

The Church of Sacramento was blessed to have Bishop Cotta for four years as auxiliary bishop. We are happy for the Church of Stockton to have a good leader and collaborator in ministry in Bishop Cotta, just as they had with retired Bishop Stephen E Blaire. We wish the Diocese of Stockton every blessing from God in the years to come.



Photo by John E Boll

Cathedral of the Annunciation, Stockton

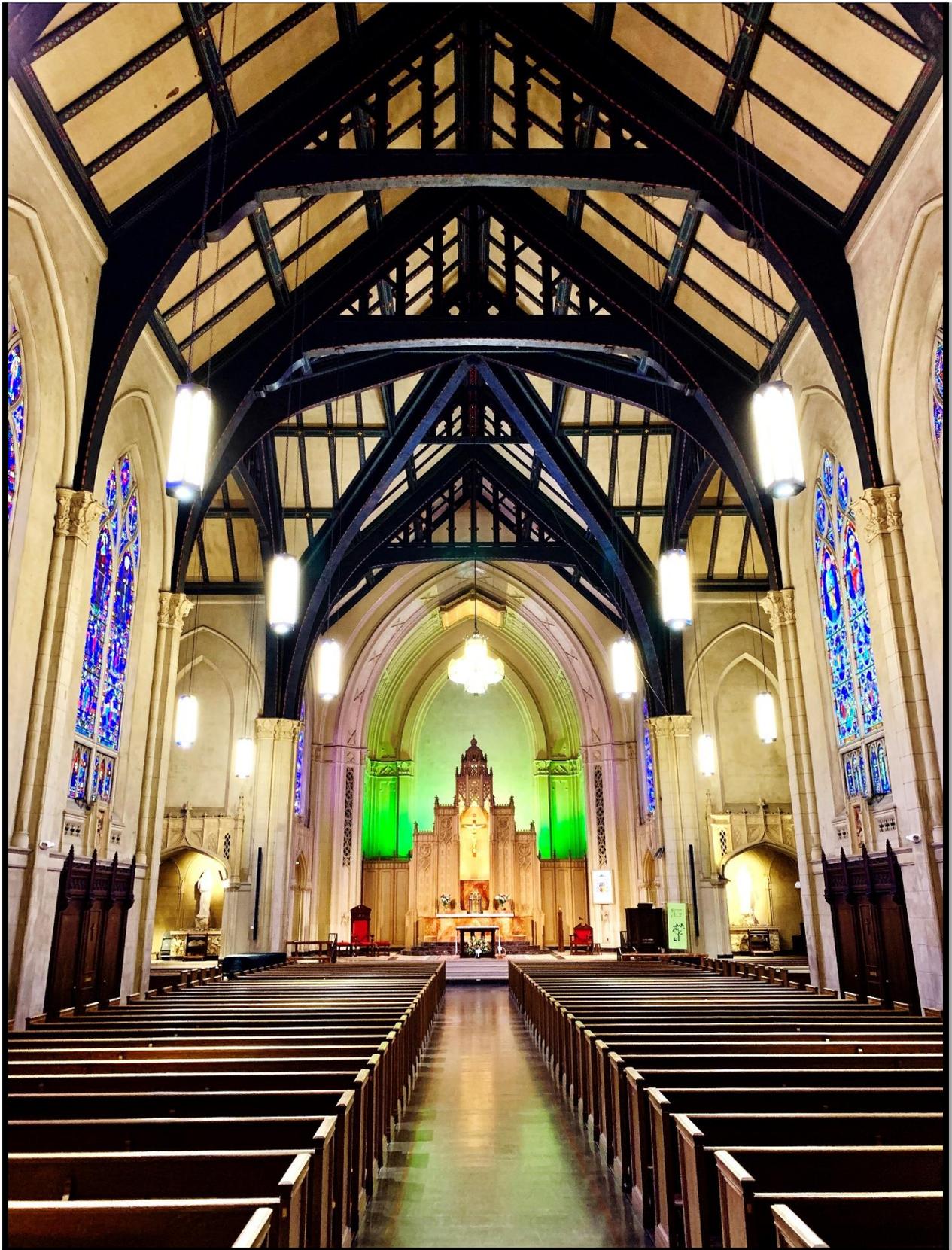


Photo by John E Boll

Interior of Stockton Cathedral of the Annunciation



Photo by John E Boll

Bishop's Chair, Cathedral of the Annunciation



Photo by John E Boll

Stockton Diocesan Pastoral Center



Photo by John E Boll

*Bishop Myron Joseph Cotta
Bishop of Stockton*



*Bishop Myron J Cotta
Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Stockton*



Decorative Gates at the Cathedral of the Annunciation