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CORPUS CHRISTI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bishop Emeritus of Corpus Christi René Gracida Passes Away at 102

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX— It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Bishop Emeritus René Henry Gracida. He served as the fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi from 1983 until 1997.

Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on June 9, 1923, Bishop Gracida was the second child of Enrique J. Gracida Carrizosa, a Mexican architect and engineer, and Mathilde Derbes, a fifth-generation French American Cajun.

Bishop Gracida served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II. After the war, he entered the University of Houston, where he earned a Bachelor of Architecture degree. Following his graduation, Bishop Gracida worked as an architect for several years before answering God's call to the priesthood.

In 1951, Bishop Gracida entered the Order of Saint Benedict and became a monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. He was ordained a deacon in 1958 and ordained into the priesthood for the Order of Saint Benedict the following year.

On December 6, 1971, Bishop Gracida was appointed by Pope Paul VI as auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Miami. In 1975, Bishop Gracida was appointed by Pope Paul VI as the first bishop of the new Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee. On May 19, 1983, Pope John Paul II appointed Bishop Gracida as the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi. He was installed on July 11, 1983.

During his time as Bishop of Corpus Christi, he guided the establishment of a diocesan radio station, a youth camp, and developed retreat houses in Laredo and Corpus Christi.

Bishop Gracida retired on April 1, 1997. He passed away peacefully in the early morning hours of May 1, 2026. May God welcome his good and humble servant to his eternal home. Funeral arrangements are pending. We are thankful for his service and keep him and his family in our prayers.

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