

Mrs. Nguyễn Linh's Biography

*Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name!
... and forget not all his benefits.*

Psalm 103:1-2

Our beloved mother, Mary Phan Nguyễn, the widow of Reverend Lĩnh Nguyễn, was born to the late Reverend Hiệu văn Phan and Mrs. Trương thị Chạm on July 10, 1928, in Thủ Dầu Một, Bình Dương, Viet nam, as our grandparents were getting ready to go back to their second year at the seminary in Đà-Nẵng. Mom was the eldest sister of six siblings. She was baptized in 1941 by Rev. Thìn Văn Nguyễn. Her parents were serving the Lord at the church in Đà-Nẵng at the time. In her memoir, she mentioned how thankful she was to be raised in a family modeling modest living.

She was a very responsible eldest daughter, and very close to her parents. She helped them in their ministry, from evangelism to children ministry. She mentioned how delighted she was every time someone received the Lord, as if she had received a very precious gift. – *“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 16:26a).*

One day, our mother felt the call to serve the Lord after listening to a song by Dr. Tống Thượng Tiết, titled “Vanity” – *“East is vanity, West is vanity, South is vanity, North is vanity, All is vanity except what is done for the Lord that will last forever.”* Soon, she enrolled herself in the Đà-Nẵng Bible seminary.

In April of 1952, with the approval of her parents, she was engaged to our father, the late Reverend Lĩnh Nguyễn. The wedding ceremony took place on August 17th, 1952, officiated by Missionary Carlson at the Đà-Nẵng church. She thanked the Lord for His perfect will in their lives.

Isaiah 55:8-9.

47 years in Vietnam, 23 years in ministry with Dad (1928-1975)

*** In 1952, Mom followed Dad to Huế, the Capitol City of South Vietnam at the time, to start a church in Bến Ngự. Dad was a 24-year-old, newly graduate, newly married, was commissioned by the late Rev. Long văn Lê, Superintendent of the Northern-Central Vietnamese District. Bến-Ngự was close to the Thượng-Tứ gate, leading to the Imperial Palace. There was not a single Protestant there yet. There were many Buddhist temples and Catholic churches instead. There was only one Protestant church located on Ngự Viên Street, near Gia Hội and Đông-Ba Market.

*** After two years in Bến Ngự, she followed Dad to Trạm Hành, 27 kilometers from Dalat. Mom and Dad served the Lord there, also taking care of the believers in Cầu Đất to the north, Lạc Lâm to the south, and further south to Đơn Dương or Dran. Trạm-Hành church was built on a hill; it took 20-stone steps to reach the entrance. The church and parsonage originally had thatched roofs, wooden floors and walls. Trạm-Hành had a cool climate year-round and the roads were very slippery when it rained.

*** After six years in the highland, Mom again followed Dad to a warmer region of Quảng Ngãi in August of 1960, replacing Pastor Châu Lê. They often accompanied Missionary and Mrs. Livingston to many evangelical events in Nghĩa Hưng, Bình Sơn, Châu Ô, An Cường, Phước Thiện, and Lệ Thủy... Many people became believers and still are faithful until today. They served the Lord in Quảng Ngãi from 1960 till mid 1964.

*** In the second half of 1964, Mom again followed Dad to Đà-Nẵng as Dad had joined the South Vietnamese Army to be a Captain Chaplain. While waiting to be an official chaplain, Mom supported Dad pastoring the church in Đà-Nẵng. She was also supporting Dad from 1964 to 1968, as Dad worked in areas belonging to Corps II, which ran from Đà-nẵng to Nha Trang. They later moved to Dad's new post in Sài-gòn. By the grace of God, they started the Tô Hiến Thành church, which just had their 55th anniversary celebration on September 23, 2023. Again, only by the grace of God and in His amazing plan, Mom was physically strong enough to make a video clip congratulating the Tô Hiến Thành church. That was only nine weeks ago. Praise the Lord. To Him be all the glory!

*** Dad eventually left his chaplaincy in 1968. Again, Mom followed him to serve the Lord for two years in the beautiful city of Banmethuot.

*** In 1970, she followed Dad to serve the Lord in another beautiful city in the highland. That was Dalat. They stayed there four years, until the summer of 1974.

*** Later in 1974, she followed Dad to Nhatrang where he was assigned to be a Pastoral and Administrative Director of the Christian Medical Clinic in Hòn Chông, Nha Trang.

*** And as you well know, the event of April 1975 took place, our family headed south to Vũng Tàu, then Saigon.

48 years in the United states (1975-2023) also 23 years with Dad in ministry until 1998 when Dad went to heaven

We eventually left Saigon on the evening of April 22, 1975. A week after that, early in May, we arrived in Los Angeles, California.

Our parents began pastoring churches for the Vietnamese in the United States.

*** Mom followed Dad to serve the Lord in Boise, Idaho. We all stayed there 3 years.

*** From there, Mom followed Dad to serve the Lord in Salem, Oregon, the “Green State” for two years.

*** In 1980, Mom again followed Dad to his new post in San Francisco. Together, they served the Lord there for four years. Dad started new churches in Oakland, Newark, San Pablo. Mom was always behind and supporting Dad wholeheartedly.

*** On March 6, 1998 Dad went to be with the Lord. Mom continued to be an active member of San Pablo church for many years after.

*** In 2004, Mom started serving the Lord as a Christian Worker at Silicon Valley church. There she helped teach the Sunday School adult class and was involved with visitation and prayer meetings.

*** Starting November 2012, Mom served the Lord at Berryessa church. In healthier days, she was active in many church activities -- visiting, praying, reminding others, over the phone, to go to church. She enjoyed attending the Sunday School class on Zoom, and rarely missed a

weekly Wednesday night Bible study on Zoom, from 7:30-9pm. In fact, her last time on Zoom for Bible study was Wednesday evening of 11/1/2023. The following day, Thursday 11/2, she felt ill and was admitted to the ER.

Our mother was always conscientious of God's call and purpose for her life. She fulfilled every role, at every stage of her life, simultaneously, beautifully, and godly. Serving God, supporting our father, and raising us up with God's words. She touched the heart of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was the kind of glue that Susan Gale said in her quote, *"Mothers are like glue. Even when you can't see them, they're still holding the family together."*

*** In the early evening of Sunday, November 12, 2023, at 7:22, God took our Mom home to be with Him. It was a peaceful departure for her, surrounded by the love and presence of her children. She is now with the Lord, her Savior, and forever fully enjoys His glory and goodness.

Our Mom is survived by an aunt, the widow of the late Reverend Xuân duy Nguyễn, two younger brothers Nghiệm ự́ng Phan and Thời ự́ng Phan, and two younger sisters Thái Bình Phan and Thu Hương Phan, by her ten children, seven daughters and three sons, their spouses, 22 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. All of them are living in the United States. Mitch Albom said, *'When you look into your mother's eyes, you know that is the purest love you can find on this earth.'* Yes, thank you, Mom, for that purest love that closely followed each one of us until your last breath.

We thank God for His grace and mercy that had called you Mom, to be His child and servant for over 95 years. Mom, you truly had a blessed life here on earth. We can only imagine the joy you have right now as you're immersing yourself in the presence of God, beholding His beauty and glory forever! Goodbye Mom. Thanks be to God!