



# Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Melinda Haag  
Northern District of California**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **SAN JOSE PRIEST CHARGED WITH BANK FRAUD AND TAX EVASION Income Alleged To Have Been Underreported By \$1.1 Million**

SAN FRANCISCO – A federal grand jury in San Francisco indicted Hien Minh Nguyen on bank fraud and tax evasion charges, announced United States Attorney Melinda Haag and Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, Special Agent in Charge José M. Martinez. The indictment filed in the federal district court was unsealed today.

From 1994 to present, Nguyen, 55, was employed as a priest by the Diocese of San Jose. As an employee with the Diocese, Nguyen held various positions including Director of the Vietnamese Catholic Center (VCC), also known as Trung Tam Cong Giao (TTCG), and Vicar for Vietnamese Ministry. According to the indictment, from 2005 through 2011, Nguyen also had sole signature authority on the VCC bank account maintained at Bank of America.

During church services from 2005 through 2008, Nguyen requested that parishioners make donations to the VCC. Parishioners wrote checks payable to the VCC or TTCG and gave those checks to Nguyen. As part of the bank fraud scheme, Nguyen caused the checks to be deposited into his personal bank account at Wells Fargo Bank. The indictment alleges Nguyen endorsed the checks with his signature under the false pretense or misrepresentation that his employer authorized him to make such endorsements and deposits.

The indictment further alleges that Nguyen also willfully attempted to evade income taxes for the years 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 by underreporting his taxable income by \$337,516, \$376,500, \$335,456, and \$93,012, respectively. This resulted in additional tax due of \$349,952.00. In the indictment, Nguyen is charged with fourteen counts of bank fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1344(2); and four counts of tax evasion, in violation of 26 U.S.C. § 7201.

Nguyen was arrested in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida on Saturday morning, April 18, 2015. He made his initial appearance this morning in federal court in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. His next court appearance is scheduled for April 21, 2015, at 3:00 p.m. before the U.S. Magistrate Judge Lurana S. Snow in federal court in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

An indictment merely alleges that crimes have been committed, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum statutory sentence of thirty years in prison and a fine of \$1,000,000 for each count of bank fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1344; and five years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 for each count of tax evasion, in violation of 26 U.S.C. § 7201. However, any sentence following conviction would be imposed by the court only after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statute governing the imposition of a sentence, 18 U.S.C. § 3553.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas Moore is prosecuting the case. The prosecution is the result of an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation.

**Further Information:**

Case #: CR 15-203 BLF

A copy of this press release may be found on the U.S. Attorney's Office's website at [www.usdoj.gov/usao/can](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/can).

Electronic court filings and further procedural and docket information are available at <https://ecf.cand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>.

Judges' calendars with schedules for upcoming court hearings can be viewed on the court's website at [www.cand.uscourts.gov](http://www.cand.uscourts.gov).

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