

1892

Francis Xavier Ford (above) is born on Jan. 11, 1892. The Ford family lived at 12 Washington Park (Cumberland St.) in Sacred Heart parish near the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Two years later, the family moved to 432 Carlton Ave. in St. Joseph's parish, Prospect Heights.



1900

1902



The Ford family circa 1900 included his parents, Austin and Elizabeth. The future bishop (standing, left) was the sixth of eight children born to the deeply-religious couple.

1929-1939

1928



A formal portrait of Father Ford was taken in 1929 for his appointment as Prefect Apostolic of Kaying, China. The Prefecture was raised to the status of a Vicariate Apostolic in 1935, with Ford named Vicar Apostolic, for which he was appointed titular bishop of Etenna.

Scene from the episcopal consecration of Bishop Ford in September 1935 at the Maryknoll Sisters Motherhouse.



Bishop Ford's coat of arms bears the motto "Condolere" which means "to have compassion."

1948

Bishop Ford with a group of Chinese priests in 1948.



April 12, 1949: Bishop Ford with Bishop John F. Lesinski, O.P. and Bishop of Changting, China, at Bishop Ford's installation as the bishop of the newly-established Diocese of Kaying.

1949



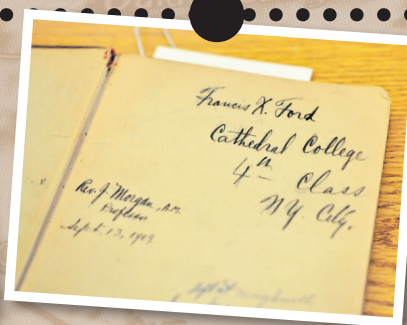
1950

The inscription on Bishop Ford's 1950 Christmas card.

May the shelter of Bethlehem cover us all.
+ F. X. Ford
Meishien, 1950

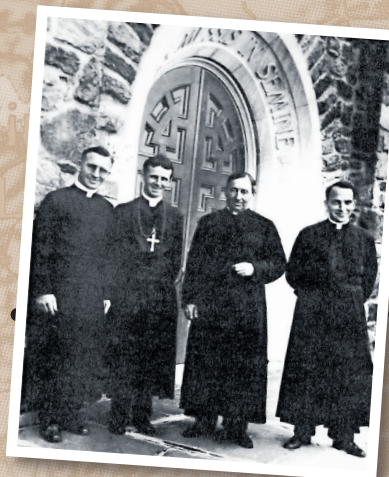
1909

The prayer book used by Ford in 1909 as a student at Cathedral College, Manhattan.



When Ford was 10 years old, he was a student at St. Joseph's Academy, Prospect Heights, conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

On a return visit to Maryknoll in Ossining, N.Y. in 1928 were (from left) Father Bernard Meyers, Bishop James E. Walsh, Father James A. Walsh, and Father Ford.



A map shows the march from Kaying to the prison camp in Waichow that Bishop Ford was forced to endure after being captured by Chinese Communist forces in April 1951.



1951

A Chinese newspaper reports on the imprisonment of Bishop Ford and includes the only known photo (bottom) of the bishop in prison.



FROM BROOKLYN TO CHINA

BISHOP FORD'S GLOBAL JOURNEY OF FAITH

The cause of canonization for Bishop Francis Xavier Ford has taken on special meaning in the Diocese of Brooklyn, where he was born and raised before beginning his journey of faith. • Brooklyn is where Bishop Ford first learned about the Catholic faith as a boy through his family's love and from the examples of his teachers at St. Joseph's School. • As this timeline shows, he attended the seminary to become a priest and, while there, decided to become a Maryknoll missionary in China. His decision to travel to the other side of the world to preach the Gospel was a bold one — one that made a difference in the lives of thousands of people in China.

Father Ford reads a newspaper on the Pakkai Language School's upper veranda in the early 1920s.



Father Ford with a Maryknoll nun and an unidentified woman in China during the 1920s.

Bishop Ford died on February 21, 1952, in a Guangzhou prison. The Chinese characters on his headstone read, "The grave of Ford." He was the first American Roman Catholic bishop and fourth American civilian known to have died in the prisons of Chinese Communists.

1952



1912

In 1912, when the current St. Joseph's Church was dedicated, Ford was among the altar servers at the parish. The group was known as the Sanctuary Boys. Today, St. Joseph's church serves as the Co-Cathedral of the Brooklyn Diocese.



Ford as a seminarian, circa 1915.

Father Ford was ordained a priest on Dec. 5, 1917 at Maryknoll in Ossining, N.Y. Bishop Thomas Cusack of Albany ordained Ford and two other Maryknoll seminarians in the Ossining farmhouse chapel.

1917

Father Ford (standing, left) with the first group of missionaries ready to set out for China on Sept. 7, 1918. Others included Father Thomas E. Price, M.M. (seated, left), Bishop James A. Walsh, M.M. (seated, center), Father James E. Walsh, M.M. (seated, right), and Father Bernard F. Meyer, M.M. (standing, right).

1918



1920s

Father Ford with young parishioners in China's Yeungkong parish in the early 1920s.



Father Ford was the escort for a Maryknoll cameraman who set out to film the early mission work in the 1920s.

In 1962, the Diocese of Brooklyn named one of its new diocesan high schools after Bishop Ford. Bishop Ford Diocesan High School, later named Bishop Ford Central Catholic H.S., was located in Park Slope. The school closed at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year after a decline in enrollment.

1962

A portrait of Bishop Francis X. Ford is carried into the sanctuary of St. Joseph's Co-Cathedral, Brooklyn, on Nov. 3, 2017, as the Diocese of Brooklyn kicked off its efforts to have Bishop Ford proclaimed a saint. Relatives of Bishop Ford and members of the Chinese Catholic community attended. After a preliminary study, the Vatican has named Bishop Ford as a Servant of God, worthy of consideration for sainthood.

2017

