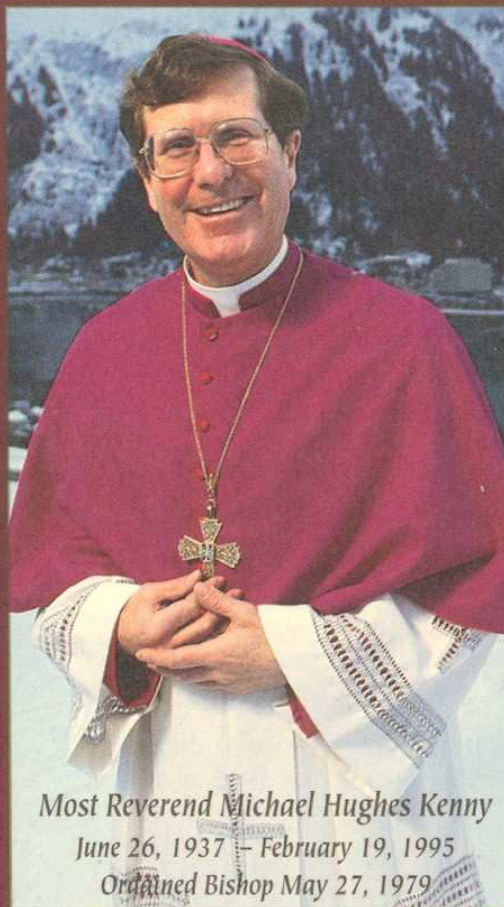


I Danced with Joy

Bishop Michael H. Kenny Remembered

edited by

**KATHY VANDERJACK
&
KARLA DONAGHEY**



Most Reverend Michael Hughes Kenny
June 26, 1937 – February 19, 1995
Ordained Bishop May 27, 1979

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This book, compiled by Kathy VanderJack is 159 pages of sheer joy! Bishop Mike was in the Rhet'57 class at Saint Joseph's College Seminary. I am placing the Forward & Introduction of this book on our school's website in honor of his upcoming 75th birthday on June 26, 2012.

**Forward by
Walter J. Hickel
Former Governor of Alaska**

BISHOP KENNY WAS AN UNUSUAL MAN. He spoke with clarity and eloquence, in the naked truth. His words were never offensive, because they were understandable and simple. He was a man who spoke not only from his heart but from his soul. I have always said that you can read a man's face to tell what kind of a man he is, because the eye reflects the mind and the face reflects the heart. Bishop Kenny spoke with a very clear eye, which indicates an open mind. He spoke from the heart, which indicates an open face "nothing hidden", all truth. He was filled with the spirit of God which is tireless, so he was a man of tremendous energy. He was innovative without fear. He could make decisions without hesitancy. I remember one sunny morning in Juneau as I walked up to the Cathedral for the 6:45 a.m. service, he said, "O it's such a beautiful day, let's hold Mass outside." Without hesitancy he moved the altar outdoors. There were about eight or ten of us, and he said Mass in the beautiful warmth, under that blue summer sky. His homilies would impress us. On weekday mornings when I was in Juneau I never missed them. They always told a story, leaving us happy, with an inner voice saying "we can." Bishop Kenny was open to thinking about new ideas. I once mentioned to him that I truly believe the speed of light is not the ultimate speed : the speed of thought is. He said "Governor, tell me more." I replied, "You know the speed of light and how long it takes to reach earth from a star, which is a billion years, well if light was the fastest means of travel then even Christ would never reach heaven. He would be only 2000 light years away." He smiled and said "I'm going to have to think about that." Well, he left on his trip to the Holy Land and never returned to Juneau. Bishop Kenny is gone in person, but not in spirit, nor in our minds. While the body dies, the mind lives on, and the thoughts that he produced while he was alive are forever out there for someone to pick up on. God knows they were good thoughts, and I know we pick up on them all the time. So, "Bishop Kenny, we will see you down the road"

Walter J. Hickel, former Governor of Alaska

**Introduction by
Kathy VanderJack**

THE READER MAY WONDER HOW THIS collection of anecdotes and memories came to life.

After Bishop Kenny's death, "Bishop stories" were circulating throughout Juneau. I mentioned to my mother that it was too bad all these stories would be soon forgotten and that someone should collect them. She suggested that I should take on the project, and with the encouragement and assistance of my good friend, Nancy Krehlik, this book was conceived. "Bishop stories" were solicited through our local newspaper and our Diocesan newspaper. The Bishop's Christmas card list was used to reach those outside of the Diocese. In addition to the letters we received, we also reprinted newspaper articles and letters to the editors of the Juneau Empire and the Inside Passage. Many of the stories were collected and transcribed before the project was put on hold while publishing options were considered. After Karla Donaghey agreed to help me complete the book, the project took on new life. We made every effort to produce a book of inspirational, joyful stories which would reflect the life of a truly wonderful man. When deemed necessary, we edited the stories for clarity, brevity and repetition. I thank my mother, Amy Martin for her inspiration and insight, my husband Coyne, and our children three, Andrew, Michael, and Mary for loaning me to the book for extended periods. A special thanks to proof readers, Coyne VanderJack, Peggy Corazza, and Joan Gianotti. We appreciate very much the proof reading and technical assistance of Louise Miller and the support of the Diocese of Juneau.

Finally, a very special "thank you" to Karla who proved to be an exceptional partner and friend on this wonderful journey.

Kathy VanderJack, Juneau, 1998