

DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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DIOCESE OF ORANGE BISHOP TO SERVE AS EPISCOPAL MODERATOR OF FIRST NATIONAL ASIAN & PACIFIC CATHOLIC CONVOCATION

*Leaders will discuss justice for immigrants and the increasing role of
Asian & Pacific Americans in the Church*

Orange, Calif., (June 22, 2006) - The Most Rev. Dominic Luong, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange and a founding member of the National Asian and Pacific Catholic Organization (NAPCO) will moderate the first meeting of over 1,000 Asian and Pacific American leaders at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Virginia, June 30 – July 3. This meeting marks the culmination of 18 years of diligent bridge-building by Bishop Luong and other leaders, and the growing influence of Asian American clergy in the church.

“This historic gathering of Asian and Pacific leaders from throughout the US seeks to celebrate the presence and the many gifts Asian and Pacific Americans have made to our country and to begin planning their crucial role in the future of the US Catholic Church,” said Bishop Luong.

This meeting is representative of the growth of the Asian population in the US and the swell of their influence within the US Catholic Church, stemming primarily from the increasing number of Asian clergy. Over the past decade, the US has seen an explosion of Asian immigrants. The US Census Bureau in 2000 counted almost 12.8 million Asians – an increase of 50% over the previous decade. There are currently an estimated 2.4 million Asian and Pacific Catholics within the US Catholic population of about 65 million. Asian Americans currently represent the second largest ethnic minority group in seminaries. They account for just one percent of the Catholic Church within the United States, but they make up 12 percent of all Catholic seminary students nationwide, or about 397 of 3,308 men, according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University.

“As the number and influence of the Asian and Pacific population grows, it is important that we act in solidarity, community and collaboration with the entire church. We must act in harmony with Christ to address social justice issues that affect our community, such as immigration reform and the scourge of human trafficking,” said Bishop Luong.

Delegates to the convocation will attend plenary sessions and workshops. The program will also feature a spiritual pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington and a Eucharistic liturgy presided over by Bishop Luong. There will be ethnic workshops in Indonesian, Japanese, Tongan, Korean, Filipino, Chinese, Pakistani, South Asian, (India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh), Vietnamese and Cambodian.

Presenters at the convocation will include Bishop Gerald Barnes of San Bernardino, Chairman, USCCB Committee on Migration; Ms. Cecile Motus, Director, Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees, USCCB; Ms. Eunice Park, Board of Directors, Young Adult Catholic Ministry Association; Rev. Peter C. Phan, Chair of Catholic Social Thought, Georgetown University; Sister Shalini D'Souza, Superior General, Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, KY; Mr. Symeon Rendall Yee, Director of Faith Formation, St. Kevin Church, Los Angeles.

NAPCO was established in 2004 as a response to the USCCB statement: *Asian and Pacific Presence, Harmony in Faith* issued in 2001. NAPCO seeks to bring to the Church's attention the issues affecting Asians and Pacific Islanders, to dialogue and advocate for Asian and Pacific Catholics with bishops, dioceses, and other national Catholic organizations, to strengthen the connection to the local church, and to advocate for social justice issues in Asian and Pacific communities.

For more information regarding the National Asian & Pacific Convocation please contact the NAPCC Secretariat at 909-986-5146 or visit www.apcc-us.org.

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