

# DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### THREE NEW PRIESTS FOR THE DIOCESE OF ORANGE

*New priests have diverse backgrounds but share a common calling*

**Orange, Calif., (June 5, 2006)** - The Most Rev. Tod D. Brown, Bishop of Orange, will ordain three men as Catholic priests on Saturday, June 10, 10:00 a.m., at St. Columban Church in Garden Grove. “These new priests are a blessing from God and a gift to our Diocese. Their ministry will be vital to our Church because of the gifts and talents they bring to the ministry, as well as their ability to assist in serving the growing number of Catholics in Orange County,” said Bishop Brown.

The ordination class is comprised of **Brendan Manson, Benjamin Tran and Bich Vu**. Brendan Manson is from San Francisco Solano Parish in Rancho Santa Margarita; most recently he has been serving as a deacon at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Santa Ana. Benjamin Tran is from Holy Spirit Parish in Fountain Valley; most recently he has been serving as a deacon at Christ Our Savior Cathedral Parish in Santa Ana. Bich Vu is from Saint Bonaventure Parish in Huntington Beach; most recently he has been serving as a deacon at Holy Family Cathedral in Orange.

This class represents the cultural diversity and the multicultural ministry that are the hallmarks of the Diocese of Orange. The Diocese of Orange has enjoyed sustained growth since its founding in 1976. More than one million people in Orange County consider themselves to be Catholic. Today there are 186,147 registered households within 58 parishes.

The two Vietnamese-American seminarians who will be ordained reflect the changing face of the priesthood in the United States. Within the United States, more Asian-Americans are attending seminary schools at a time when fewer Anglo-American Catholics are expressing interest in the priesthood. Asian-American priests continue to fill the ranks of the priesthood at a higher rate than that of any other ethnic groups within the Diocese of Orange and the nation. Orange County has the

highest concentration of Vietnamese outside of Vietnam, as well as the first and only Vietnamese-American Bishop, the Most Rev. Dominic Luong, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange.

Asians make up just one percent of the Catholic Church within the United States, but they account for 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. The bulk of these individuals are Vietnamese, and many are first or second generation immigrants. Within the Vietnamese immigrant family, Catholicism plays an essential role and families are strongly unified. Large communities of Vietnamese immigrants are also located in Houston, New Orleans and San Jose.

Hispanics are the largest minority group in U.S. seminaries, though they account for a much larger proportion of the general population than Vietnamese. Asians currently represent the second largest ethnic minority group in seminaries. In recent years, Vietnamese Catholic priests in the United States have been dubbed “the new Irish.” “In the immigrant Vietnamese community, religion is the very definition of being human and is central to daily life. The vocation of a priest is more highly respected and praised than that of a doctor or lawyer in our community,” said Bishop Luong.

“This is a very positive and hopeful time for our Diocese. We celebrate the faith and commitment of these new priests as they begin their ministry to the people of Orange County. We are blessed to have such a diverse and dynamic group of dedicated seminarians in service to God’s people,” said Bishop Brown.

For additional information about the ordination ceremony or the individuals to be ordained contact:  
Lesa Truxaw, Director of Worship (714) 282-3042.

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