

# DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **THREE NEW PRIESTS HAVE DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS BUT SHARE A COMMON CALLING**

*Vietnamese-Americans continue to join the priesthood at an increased rate*

**Orange, Calif., (June 10, 2006)** - When a young man dedicates his life to God and the Catholic Church in becoming an ordained priest, it is an awe inspiring and selfless act. This Saturday, the Bishop of Orange is pleased to gather with his presbyterate to ordain three new priests that have made this commitment. “These three men come from diverse backgrounds but share a common calling and mission to serve God and our community. They are a blessing from God and a gift to our Diocese,” said Bishop Brown. “This class represents our county’s cultural diversity and the multicultural ministry that are hallmarks of our Diocese.”

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.

**Bich Vu** is 38 years old. Before joining the seminary he attended Golden West College and studied Computer Science. But Bich Vu’s journey to the priesthood began when he and his family fled their native country of Vietnam after experiencing years of religious

persecution and economic depression under the Communist regime. After the fall of Saigon in April of 1975, the Vu family boarded a small freighter bound for the United States holding onto the promise of a life free from the many hardships found in their homeland. During the long voyage, their small boat was caught in a violent storm. Adrift in the Atlantic without food or water for nearly two weeks, Vu prayed to God to ask him to save his family. In return, he promised to dedicate his life to the priesthood. Shortly after immigrating to the United States, Vu honored his pledge and entered the Divine Word Missionary Seminary in 1993 and began a life of service to God's people. Most recently he has been serving as a deacon at Holy Family Cathedral in Orange.

**Benjamin Tran** is 30 years old. He began his seminary education when he was fourteen at Queen of Angels High School Seminary in San Fernando, Calif. After graduating, he enrolled in college seminary at St. John's College in Camarillo. Upon completing his first year, Tran left the seminary to study fine arts at Orange Coast College and California State Fullerton. After three years, he re-enrolled at St. John's Seminary College and subsequently graduated. Tran elected to continue his seminary education and entered St. John's Theology in 2001. He attained a graduate degree in 2005. Through both a profound conversion experience and a discerning mind, Tran discovered that only pursuing, knowing and surrendering to the plan of God could he find purpose in his life. Most recently he has been serving as a deacon at Christ Our Savior Cathedral Parish in Santa Ana.

Before entering the seminary, **Brendan Manson**, 35, had a successful six-year career working with his brother in commercial finance for a Fortune 500 company in Irvine, Westlake Village, New Jersey, and Chicago. Manson gradually sensed a desire and attraction to the priesthood, a desire that first began at Blessed Sacrament in Westminster, California, where he attended school with his three brothers. He eventually answered his calling and gave his life to God and to the service of the church. He entered Saint John's Seminary in Brighton, Massachusetts, in 1997 where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Masters of Divinity. In 2003, he returned to the Diocese of Orange to complete his seminary formation at St. John's in Camarillo. There he earned a Master's Degree in

theology. He served as an intern at Saint Hedwig's Parish in Los Alamitos. Most recently he has been serving as a deacon at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Santa Ana.

**Parochial Vicar Assignments:**

Beginning on 1 July 2006, Bich Vu will serve as a Parochial Vicar at St. Boniface in Anaheim. Benjamin Tran will serve as a Parochial Vicar at St. Callistus in Garden Grove. Brendan Manson will serve as a Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Habra.

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