

QUAN D. TRAN



AUTOBIOGRAPHY of QUAN D. TRAN

1. Relationship with family members and others:

I am the oldest of four children. I have two sisters and then a brother who is the youngest in the family. I was born in Vietnam, from which my family fled by boat in 1975 to escape communism. We came to United States when I was six years old and this is where I grew up. I generally get along well with my parents, even though we do not agree on everything. I am close to them and we talk to them almost every week. I also get along well with my siblings, all of whom are all spread out geographically. One lives in Denver, the other in California, and one in New York. We keep in touch by emails, telephone, and cards. My family is supportive of me pursuing the priesthood. My brother and sisters, especially, say that they could see me being a priest.

I also have some good friends with whom I keep in touch and see when there is opportunity. One of them is my best friend from high school. He has a family now and I was his best man at his wedding, and the godfather to his first child.

2. Education:

I grew up in the Denver metropolitan area and went to public schools for elementary, junior high, and high school. I did well in school, where I made good friends and got along well with the teachers. I was also an honor student and excelled in athletics.

After high school, I attended the University of California at Irvine. My initial major was psychology. However, while in school, I developed an interest in the arts and wanted to study film. On the other hand, my family wanted me to be a doctor. Therefore, we compromised, and I decided to study business instead. I did some research and found that Baruch College in New York City was ranked in the top 15 in the nation with their undergraduate business program. Therefore, I applied to Baruch College and was accepted and enrolled there. I moved to New York City to live, go to school and worked part time for three years. In 1991, I graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in finance from Baruch College. While in college, I was a disc jockey for the school radio station and a writer for the school paper. As an undergraduate, I did well in my classes and was an honor student. In addition, I had many friends and led a balance life.

After graduating college, I wanted to go to graduate school and was considering between law and business school. I thought that law was more diverse and exciting so I applied to law school. I was accepted to Pepperdine University School of Law, in Malibu, California. I enrolled there and earned my Juris Doctor degree in June of 1994. Thereafter, I studied for the California bar exam, which I took and passed in my first time.

3. Work Experience:

After passing the California bar, I started working for my uncle at his small law practice. However, I wanted to be a trial attorney and to be in the courtroom. In October of 1995, I was offered a position with the Kern County Public Defender's Office in Bakersfield. I accepted the position and moved to Bakersfield where I lived and worked as a Deputy Public Defender until April of 1997. Thereafter, I was offered a position with the District Attorney's office of Orange County, which I accepted. I moved to Orange County and from April of 1997 to June of 2006, I worked as a Deputy District Attorney in Orange County.

4. Social Life:

I have always been blessed with several good, close friends. We would spend time together on trips, or dinner and a movie. I have also dated and have had girlfriends in the past. My longest relationship was four years. We met in California when I was in law school and she was an undergraduate at UCLA. Then she went to medical school in New York and the distance made it difficult to maintain the relationship. Currently, I enjoy spending time with relatives and friends during my free time. We would get together for dinner or a party, or go out to see a movie.

5. How my personal faith has affected the lives of others:

I had a friend who had a severe heart attack two summers ago and was bed-ridden for several weeks. I would bring him Holy Communion everyday and then we would pray the rosary together. He was going through a very difficult time in his life and my presence and personal faith helped him to endure the difficult times with patience and trust in God's love and wisdom.

I also did ministry and volunteer work at my parish. I was a Eucharistic Minister and Lector. I also volunteered with a group to go to Mexico and helped build a house for a poor family. The family was very grateful for us giving them a new house to live that the wife cooked us a meal to enjoy. In addition, I was with a group called Corpus Christi Fellowship, where we would get together for events and retreats to share and grow in our faith and be of service to the community.

6. Spiritual Life

I think I have a good relationship with God. Nevertheless, I am always striving to grow closer to God and to have a constant and deeper communion with Him. Every day, I spend a holy hour in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. During this time, I pray in a variety of ways: I contemplate God, examine my conscience, meditate on passages from the Bible, pray the rosary, or the Divine Office. I attend Holy Mass and receive communion daily, I go to confession every two weeks, and meet with my spiritual director monthly. I am still learning of different ways to pray and to grow in my spirituality. I constantly strive to be closer to God through prayers, the Sacraments, Sacred Scriptures, and spiritual readings.

7. Success and strengths:

Although I have many successes in my life, one of the most meaningful is my relationship with my family. Although we have had problems and tough times, I have managed to be pretty close to my family. I think that family is important in our love and support for one another. My faith and spirituality is arguably stronger than that of the members of my family. As a result, I have encouraged members of my family to attend Holy Mass more often, pray and participate in the Sacraments more regularly, and read the Bible more often. For the most part, they have responded favorably. By being close to my family, we can share our love and help one another.

Three strengths that I bring to the priesthood are the following: One, my love and dedication to God and His Church. This is the foundation of my being. I try to live for God and to experience His love so that I can share that with others. Furthermore, I love the Church, the bride of Christ, and want to do all I can to protect, defend, and build her up. Second, I am sensitivity to others and have the ability to relate and connect with them. I can empathize with others, and at the same time, inspire them to grow in their love for God and neighbor. Third, I have the intellectual ability to grasp difficult theological or philosophical concepts and express them in such a way that others can understand them.

8. Failure and weaknesses:

I consider the ending of my four-year relationship with my girlfriend, as a failure. However, I learned from the experience the possible obstacles and pitfalls in a relationship. I also learned about the areas of my personality and behavior that needed improvement. Specifically, I learned that it is important to appreciate a person, for who they are, and to be less selfish and be more giving. In addition, I have learned to be more patient and kind; and to show more compassion and love.

Three possible weaknesses that I may bring to the priesthood are the following: One, I am very passionate about my faith. Therefore, I need to be more patient and charitable when dealing with those who attack the Catholic faith. Second, I have high expectations of myself and of others. Therefore, I could learn to be more accepting and forgiving when others or I do not meet our potential. Third, I could be more humble and remind myself the fact that every gift or talent that I have, and any good that I do, comes from God's grace.

9. Development of vocation to diocesan priesthood:

When I first felt a call to the priesthood, I was not sure if it was to the diocesan or religious life. I joined the religious community of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary because I was drawn to their deep spirituality, orthodoxy, and devotion to the Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin Mary. However, after being with them as a postulant for one year, I discerned with the help of my spiritual director, that I was probably not called to the religious life but to the diocesan priesthood. Therefore, I began studying for my diocese last year at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, California. Since then, I feel confirmed that I am called to the diocesan priesthood. I am much more at ease and feel a certain sense of peace when I think about becoming a priest for the diocese of Orange.

10. Seminary formation experience:

As I mentioned, I entered the seminary in the fall of 2006 as a postulant with the Oblates of the Virgin Mary, where I studied philosophy. It was a year of tremendous spiritual and personal growth; however, I realized later that I was being called to be a diocesan priest. Therefore, in the fall of 2007, I went to study at St. Patrick's Seminary for the diocese of Orange, as a first year theology student. My time at St. Patrick's Seminary has confirmed my vocation to be a diocesan priest. Now, my Bishop and vocation director are offering me the opportunity to go to the NAC to finish my theology and to get an advance degree.

11. Hopes and questions about diocesan priesthood:

I hope to continue to grow in my relationship with God and conform myself to Christ, whereby, I will fully discover my authentic self and become fully the person that I am called to be. I hope to grow and be formed in the areas of intellectual, spiritual, human, and pastoral, in order to be an effective and holy priest for the faithful. I hope that as I continue my formation, I will be further confirmed in my vocation to the diocesan priesthood. I look forward to living and studying in Rome at the NAC.

12. Reasons for optimism in celibacy, obedience and prayer:

I have been celibate for several years, and although sometimes it is a struggle, I feel it makes me a better person and allows me to love God, others, and myself more fully. Therefore, I believe that I do have the gift of celibacy. As for obedience, I trust that the Holy Spirit is alive and at work in the Church and her members, including my superiors. I believe that one way God works in my life is through other people, including my Bishop. Therefore, I have no reservations being obedient to my Bishop and his successors. As for prayer, I am committed to a life of prayer in order to develop an intimate relationship with the Holy Trinity. It is only through prayer that I come to really know God's love and will and become the person that I am called to be.