

# FINDING FULFILLMENT IN FAITH



Growing up in Vietnam, Khoa Bui was inspired by the generous spirit of his grandmother, who was a Buddhist nun. She raised money from local benefactors to purchase essential supplies for the needy and let Khoa join her as she distributed them. Together they provided food, warm clothing and blankets to people living in communities that did not have electricity or modern amenities. It made him realize that he wanted to follow her example of generosity and service.

“The poor in Vietnam are really poor; they don’t even have the next meal to eat,” he said. “I saw that as an inspiration to help the poor, bring them joy and provide fulfillment to the needy. I find joy in doing that.”

Some people suggested that he might be suited for religious life but Khoa felt the concept was too remote at that time. He excelled

in math, so he set his sights on becoming a scientist, physicist or accountant. When he was 14, his family moved to the United States and after high school, he earned a bachelor’s degree in business management and finance at California State University, Long Beach. In his early 20s, Khoa started a journey of personal discernment.

“I was very curious and eager to learn about religions and philosophies, so I was able to discern between different religions,” he said. “From that I felt that Christianity was the one true religion that I wanted to follow.”

Khoa entered the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program at a Catholic church in Costa Mesa, California. The priest there, Fr. Andrew Tran, gave inspiring homilies. Sometimes Khoa felt like the message connected directly to

what has happening in his personal life. In 2012, Khoa was baptized.

After college, he worked briefly in e-commerce before deciding to answer the call to religious life. Khoa enrolled at Divine Word College where he is studying and furthering his discernment. With a natural curiosity about cultures and philosophies, he feels that Divine Word Missionaries as a worldwide missionary religious order is a good fit for him.

Today, the 32-year-old is working toward a Certificate in Pre-Theology. He hopes someday he will have the opportunity as a priest to inspire others with his own homilies the way he was moved by Fr. Andrew’s words. He’s also looking forward to helping the poor and needy around the world in the same spirit of service he learned alongside his grandmother as a young boy.