

## Basil SANGO

My name is Basil Sango. I come from a faithful Catholic family from Mabes village. There are seven of us in the family excluding my father and mother. I have three brothers and three sisters. I come from a parish called Haisi Parish in the southern part of Bougainville Island under the Diocese of Bougainville. In the family I am the first-born, and my desire to become a priest began in early childhood, as far as I can remember, from the age of five years and upwards.

The things that inspired me to become a priest firstly is from the story that my parents used to tell me when I am a small kid. They told me about my uncle who joined the Marist Fathers and who died while was doing his studies to become a priest. Secondly, they bought me small booklets that had the Old Testament Bible stories in them: the story of David and Goliath, the story of Samson, Abraham and his wife Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Noah, Jonah, Joseph and his brothers, and the story of Moses. The next thing that inspired me is that every morning when my mother woke me up from sleep, we used to pray the Rosary. All these things I had in mind as I started my schooling. During my schooling in the lower classes, when they asked me who I wanted to become, I answered them by saying, "I want to become a priest."

However, in 1989 the crisis broke out and all schools were shut down. But God had his own ways, and he used my aunt who lived in the government controlled area, and she sent a message that I had to go and continue my schooling. Then in 1994 we flew over to Nissan Island, and I restarted from grade one. At nearly the end of 1994 we flew over back to Bougainville to a newly established school called Momarego Community School.

At Momarego I did the proper schooling from grade one up to grade four. After completing grade four, I decided to transfer to Haisi Community school to do grade five and grade six. After I had completed my grade six class, they selected me to attend the United Church run school, which is Tonu High School. I did my studies at Tonu from 2001 to 2002. At the end of 2002 we did the final exam for grade eights and in 2003 I was selected to attend St. Joseph's High School, Mabiri, the school run by the Marist teaching brothers. I stayed there for another two years doing grade nine and ten. Then we did another exam for grade tens in order to get to grades eleven and twelve. I spent another two years at Bishop Wade Secondary School doing grades eleven and grade twelve. After completing grade twelve I spent one year out in the village.

During the year out I started over again to listen to the call, which I desired to become in my early years. Then in the mid-2007 I wrote an application letter the Bishop Henk Kronenberg (SM) expressing my desire to him. At the beginning of 2008 they sent me to a propaedeutic year at Mabiri formation house in central Bougainville. After spending a year of formation, I went to St. Peter Channel Collage in Rabaul to do the first philosophical studies. In 2010 the program changed, and I went to Sacred Heart Inter-Diocesan Major Seminary for my second year of philosophical studies. After completing the years of philosophical studies I went for a spiritual year at Lanuzel up in the Baining. When I finished the one-year spiritual year, I went back to the seminary to do Philosophy Three and Theology One studies. After completing Theology One in 2013, I went back to the diocese for a pastoral year. Last year I did my pastoral year at Tearouki Parish, and now I am in the Holy Spirit Seminary doing Theology two at Catholic Theological Institute in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.