

Simakus Tei - Year III, 2016

Brief Life History in Priesthood Formation

"God's Plan in a Person's Life is not Human"

On the 29th November, 1982, I was born in a place called Kup in Kerowagi District, Simbu Province (Papua New Guinea). At present I am thirty-four and the fourth of four brothers. Both of my parents namely, Peter Tei and Veronica Kama, are living. And Simbu is located in the heart of Papua New Guinea where Mount Wilhelm, the third highest mountain in the world, is found.

In 1991 I did Gr. One at Kup Holy Cross primary school (Agency). My class teacher was a lady. Unluckily she passed on in 2005; may her soul be at rest in God. Her name was Cathy Bomai. She was such a terrific courageous woman with a down-to-earth motherly character who truly tracked my educational life. Imagine such a little boy coming straight from the village where I knew not even a single letter like "a", "b," "y," etc. Or to spell "cat." While it is easy to say 'simple,' now, there were a thousand problems for me to solve that time. Thanks be to God, I salute and acknowledge her magnanimous investment in my education.

As every year went by I advanced in grades. In 1999 I was selected for grade nine (9) at Kondiu Secondary School, a first agency school in the province. On the fourth week of the first term of the academic year as usual every year the vocation director of the diocese (Kundiawa) would come around for vocation awareness and distribution of religious posters and to address those interested ones who wished to study for the priesthood and to urge us write to the vocation office.

I had an interest in my early age to become priest through the motivation of the parish priest who would every time give chocolate and lollies whenever he met my father and me going to the church for work or Sunday service. So I wrote to the vocation office expressing my interest. After a month I received my reply from the vocation office and I was so excited. Regrettably, I could not complete my year due to the ethnic clash of my tribe, Kumga, against Kumai (the neighbouring tribe).

Again in 2000 I had to repeat Gr. Eight since fiscally I was constrained to continue where I left. Then in 2003 I successfully completed my Gr. Ten and got two offers: one for the minor seminary, Kap-Madang, and the other one to continue grade eleven in Kerowagi Secondary School. Of the two choices I decided for minor seminary. There I completed my two years of priesthood formation and proceeded to the major seminary, Good Shepherd in Jiwaka Province (previously it was under Western Highlands Province). There, after three years of priesthood formation, specifically studying philosophy, I had to do a year pastoral and immediately the year following I did a spiritual year at Madang. Then in 2012 I was sent to do three years theological studies in Bomana where I am currently now.

However, I wasn't able to finish my final year in 2014 since the rector (Fr. Peter Artiken who was a rector that time) terminated me for unjust reasons when I interrogated him on his mismanagement of fund raising money raised by the seminarians themselves for the renovation of a dormitory in the seminary.

So I had to sacrifice another two years for pastoral without much expectation of returning to the seminary after such short years for the continuation of the program because of the termination. Nevertheless, "God's plan in person's life is not human." To my surprise Fr. Jacek Tendej CM (current rector) finally accepted my bishop's request for my return, and here I'm now anticipating for the successful completion of my final year, 2016. God is everything. May His will be done.