

Paul MISIK

My name is Paul Misik, and I hail from Our Lady Fatima Parish, in the Archdiocese of Mount Hagen. I am currently doing my final year in theology at (Bomana) Catholic Theological Institute and residing at Holy Spirit Seminary.

Being deeply moved by the humble and simple life of a priest's partaking in life of Christ, the High Priest has motivated me to this life. My journey in this life has taken year of perseverance and endurance, a journey of faith in the Lord who is leading me through the great effort of life experience. My initial interest of wanting to become a priest started while I was still in primary school. I developed this interest when observing my parish priest, a devoted and saintly priest, Fr. Peter Van Andrichem, SVD; he was a pioneer missionary priest from The Netherlands (Holland), and with his outstanding priestly qualities has motivated me to enter the seminary.

Today the cultural view holds that young men can only esteemed if they bring prosperity, prestige, and a sense of belongingness in the tribe through marriage and handing down of family legacy. The vocation to the priesthood is become scarce because people are obsessed by materialism and secularism from the western society, which is prevailing practice in the society. So many are enslaved in it, and they perceive life in a superficial and narrow aspect of the whole. But there is more to whole, and obviously the priesthood is a higher and transcendental call to mediate between humans and God, a life broken for all to part take in the divine life of God

Just imagine if there are no priest around the world. Who would be mediator between God and man? How would be man's sin be remitted? How will morality be maintained in all spheres of the society? And the list of questions follows.

The life journey of the priest starts in the seminary. Being in the seminary is a fascinating and unforgettable experience, a life of discipline and a life of prayer which is the centrality of the formation. Remarkably, it also involves a life of sharing among brothers and formators by conforming myself to the life of Christ, who is the Good Shepherd. Our life's joy does not come from having material processions but from understanding, treasuring, and valuing human life through self-emptying and embracing the life of simplicity after the example of Jesus who set before us, who is God becoming man to save us all, through the incarnation.

The life in seminary is always centered in the Eucharist, always begins with the daily mass, and enables me to open myself to the will of God, and to discerning his plan for me. As I participated in this life of oneness with God, He enables me to serve my brothers and sisters in the spirituality of communion. Moreover I also come to realize that years passed since my childhood and my conception of priest gradually has unmasked before me. I have come to grasp the understanding of what the priesthood means. However, priesthood is still a life of mystery because Christ is mystery. I believe that a person who becomes a priest will never fully comprehend this life; it will remain mystery<sup>7</sup>, enabling him to dig deep into the mystery of the life of God—Trinitarian Life. As his faith grows in God he will be able to understand his life with the help of God.

I also had an opportunity to move from different places starting from St. Fidelis Seminary (Madang), to Good Shepherd (Banz), and now at Bomana, where I have become familiar with the environment and how to adapt to its social setting and different formation program that it has introduced. The formation program varies from different seminaries, and differs more significantly according to the spirituality of the congregation or religious orders who are in charge to form us. Undeniably, during the formation human weakness surfaces either from the formators part or the seminarian's lack of respect of what is offered to him. The weakness hinders the healthy growth of the seminarian to what is expected of him, and affects other seminarian in the course of time.

For me presently not yet being ordained as a priest, I can sense the foretaste of this life which is an awesome experience of peace, joy coming from daily prayer, and intimate relationship with Christ by always trying my best to tune my will to the divine will of Jesus. Humanly speaking it is often difficult because I have my own weakness that I have to die to. What gives me hope is the reception of sacraments and frequent spiritual direction. Finally the

meaning of the life of a priest comes from his union with God day to day. The priestly sanctity comes not from personal pursuit, success, and achievement, but from doing the will of God.

As St. Augustine states in his confession, our heart is restless until it rests in God. I treasure my life as a gift from God, and how I use my life is my gift to God. The life of the priesthood is the higher calling, since many are called but only few<sup>7</sup> are chosen. As Jesus said you did not choose me but I choose you. I truly believe in this word of Jesus as I ponder in my heart on the journey to the priesthood.