Steven Puio. Diocese of Wabag.

Priest, seminarians, or religious brothers and sisters have their own vocation history to tell. Here I'm very happy to share with you my vocation history. One of the most influential priests that motivated me to grow an interest in the priesthood was my first parish priest of Kindeng Parish in Mt. Hagen Archdiocese, Fr. John Ryan SVD.

Fr. John Ryan was the one who gave me my first Holy Communion when I was in grade four. He was my parish priest. Every time I went to the parish, he usually played and made fun of me. Sometimes he gives me lollies and sweet biscuits to make me feel happy. So then I have deep relationship with him.

However, in 1990 Fr. John Ryan SVD left Kindeng Parish because his superior wanted him to go to Erima Parish in the nation's capital Port Moresby. Among the countless number of people weeping and wailing over Fr. John Ryan SVD, I wept bitterly since he was my best friend. While crying, I recalled all his heart-touching words and actions. One thing that I can still remember about him was his heart-touching homilies and his Christ-like personality. Some days later after he left, I went to attend the Sunday service in the parish. It was a communion service led by the parish catechist. The real taste of worshipping God during Sundays with Fr. John Ryan SVD used to be more outstanding, but the communion service turned out to be very weak worship. From there I realized and felt the ultimate importance of the Holy Mass when Fr. John Ryan SVD used to preside. With tears I thought to myself: "If a priest like Fr. John Ryan SVD can commit his life totally to God who is supreme above everything, then why not give myself to God in priesthood life?" From that moment onwards I started to pray to God that He may call me to the priestly life.

Lord Almighty God has his own ways and plans to call a man to be a priest, religious brother or a sister. Therefore I prayed with tears to God saying, "Lord show me the way to become a priest so that my life can be in the service of others for the glory of your Kingdom." I felt God's respond to my prayer within myself that I had burning desire to become a priest. My primary aim to become priest was to give myself totally to God. Secondly, Jesus suffered and died to serve the world. Thus, I want to give my life to God in the service of others for the Kingdom of God. However, I was too young by that time to get to know how to enter the seminary program and from whom to get information about vocation in priesthood.

After completing Wabag High School, I had a chance to talk to my parish priest, Fr. Tony Shormost SVD. I asked him about how to enter seminary to become priest. He provided me with the necessary information I could need. With his information I immediately wrote to the vocation director. His reply to my letter was very interesting and satisfying. I was told to come and sit for an entry exam.

In the middle of August 2004 I received a letter from the rector of St. Fidelis Minor Seminary that I was accepted to do my priesthood studies there. With tears of joy I thanked God at that very moment because I believed that He has answered my prayer. Under God's protection and care I successfully completed year two years in the minor seminary, three years of Religious Studies, and this is my last year to complete my three years of theological studies in Catholic Theological Institute (2016). I'm looking forward for my ordination the deaconate and my ordination the priesthood after completing my studies and my pastoral.

Finally, I thank those of you who contributed one way or the other towards my vocation. May the Lord God Almighty bless you all.