

First and foremost, I would like to thank the good Lord for being kind and merciful to me as the first to be called among the many from my own village and place.

I, Tobilsai Bernard of the Diocese of Kavieng in the Namatanai areas of New Ireland, am from a small village called SIAR. My place is one of the most isolated areas and parishes of the Diocese of Kavieng. This I meant that for so many months and years until today there still is no priest available in my parish to help the Catholic Christians out there. A priest comes once in a while to celebrate mass with the people and goes back to their respective parishes.

The people of my area as well as I go without the sacrament of the holy Eucharist most of the times of our lives. Therefore for me as a young growing man I knew nothing about what a priest is, what the primary duty of a priest is, and even I knew nothing about how a priest lives out his life in the church. Until then, I was selected to do my grade seven (7) at the age of fourteen (14) at St. Jude's Provincial High School, Mongop in 2001. That was the very first time I had the opportunity to live and celebrate daily mass/Eucharist with the chaplain of the school.

Now, it happens that the spiritual life of this diocesan priest was very outstanding to the eyes of the Catholic faithful's in and out of the campus of the school. And as a result I was really inspired by some of his ways of life and therefore his spiritual life helped me to decide for myself.

I began of thinking of becoming a diocesan priest. And therefore I lived with that thought and put it in my heart and mind until I completed my grade ten (10) at St. Jude's Provincial High School, Mongop in 2004. And in 2005 I stayed back in the village with my parents where I began to openly discuss this matter with them. and it happened that both agreed with what I personally had in mind and which I believe was my good Lord Jesus Christ calling me and that God had a very special vocation for me as a young man.

In 2006 I was selected to do my grade eleven at St. Peter Chanel Minor Seminary, Ulapia in the Archdiocese of RabauI, and I completed my studies in 2007. Then in 2008 and 2009 I was at St. John Mary Vianney Formation House in Kavieng. From there I went to Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Rapolo and began to do my religious studies in the years 2010 and 2011. Then after completing these two years of formation I decided to stay back home for the second time with my parents and family members. I stayed for three consecutive years. That was from 2012 to 2014. And in 2015 I was asked by my bishop (Bp. Ambrose Kiapseni, MSC) to come back to the seminary. So I came back and continued my religious studies (RS3).

Then in 2016 I was one of those seminarians who went to Putput Spiritual Formation Centre still in the Archdiocese of RabauI to do my Spirituality year of formation.

And this year, 2017, I am here to do my theology one at the Catholic Theological Institute (CT1) in Bomana, Port Moresby.

Just to add more on to it, I would like to say that I personally went through lots of challenges and difficulties in my life as a young man. Despite all these challenges and difficulties in life, I have now made up my heart and mind through the grace of my God to become a priest in the future for the church of the diocese of Kavieng, and not only that but also for the people of God who made up the universal church.