

WHAT A PRIESTLY VOCATION MEANS TO ME

We must clarify the term Vocation. Vocation doesn't mean the same as profession or career. The career is for instance, teacher, doctor, lawyer etc... that the person can work in a certain period of time. This is done under the job requirement of each department. But vocation is very different. The vocation is the life time commitment that someone chooses to live and he or she freely loves to entertain the challenges until he or she dies. So how will I reflect on vocation, I will explain the definition when I had not yet entered the seminary, the meaning of vocation after entering the seminary and my encountering the term as a seminarian towards my vocation.

As once a student from primary school up to secondary level, I never knew the distinction between vocation and profession. I thought that both of them meant the same. As a baptised Catholic, I attended mass, received sacraments and yet I did not understand the priesthood vocation. As a result of that understanding, I was facing these challenges: when I did my grade 12, I was applying to other institution whereas I was following my understanding towards the priesthood instead. Though I am a native Catholic, I did not even respect the priests. I considered priests as someone like me and that leads me for having no respect for the priest. Sometimes, I would back bite about the priests' duties. I never attended the services when I reach the prime youth stage, not respecting the priestly duties. My character resumes got worse. With that, it is not my will to come to seminary but from nowhere I did and now I am. Thus, the knowledge of the vocation and career was going to be clear as stated below.

I was studying in the seminary because of my senior brother seminarian. He is a Norbertian, and he did all the seminary requirements possible for me. So for first months in the seminary, I was lost to follow the seminary schedule as if I did not know anything. I slowly learned what a vocation meant for me. This means I eventually adapted to the system with the assistance of my brother seminarians, formators, ancillary staffs and the supports from my family. On the other side, it was very challenging to me especially to live that life heartily. But as time elapsed, I began to enjoy the nature of that life. With that, I can now distinguish a vocation and a career. This also helps me to be exemplary in both physical and spiritual matters for the people to see and follow the right path.

Doing studies and pastoral duties as a seminarian, I have come to know that there are three vocations, the vocation of clergy, the vocation of marriage and the committed single. The profession or career is found in these vocations. As such, I am ordained as priest and the bishop appointed me as vocation director. That means that being a vocation director is my career in the priesthood because I might leave it to another priest at any time. Similarly, a married man is a teacher. That means the teacher is his profession and marriage is his vocation. Indeed, what you and I do in these categories of vocation are regarded as careers. So being the fifth year seminarian studying and forming myself to become a priest, I am very glad.

I will be as a mediator in the economy of God between the people and God. Jesus once came to this world as a fully human and divine person. In His human nature, He shows us by His words and deeds the way to eternal life. I am becoming a priest to live this life as an exemplary figure for the people to see and imitate. It is a very nice vocation that God shows to me by another person, and I am proud to be like that figure in Garden of Eden Garden, which means in the presence of God. Therefore, I must do it in my life so that the faithful ought to experience the presence of God while they are still living in this material world. Because the life we are living now is a temporary life.

By Alex MUARIGA (Idani)