

My name is Charlie Balap from Napapar Parish of the Archdiocese of Rabaul. I was born on the 17th of November 1989 at Napapar Health Centre. I am the 3rd born in the family, in which I have three brothers and five sisters. After completing my grade eight at Napapar Primary School I was selected to continue my grade nine and ten at St. Mary's Vuvu Secondary School. Because of that desire deep inside me of becoming a priest, I decided to continue my grade eleven and twelve at St Peter Chanel Minor Seminary, Ulapia in 2007 and 2008.

Then in 2009, I went to the formation house at Lannuzele St Paul's. In 2010 and 2011 I did my philosophy, and then went for my spiritual formation at Putput Formation House in 2012. In 2013 and 2014 I continued my first and second year theology at Rapolo Major Seminary, and then went for pastoral in 2015 at Sacred Heart Parish Sunam. Now, in 2016 I am currently doing my third year theology at the Catholic Theological Institute, Bomana. The following below is my vocation story or how I was inspired to come to the seminary to study for the priesthood.

When I was five years old my elder brother and I used to play or sometime we followed our mother to the garden to collect food. One day after cooking the breakfast and lunch for our elder brother to go to school, our mother told the two of us, "Charlie and Augustine, after this you prepare the knives and spade and we will go to the garden".

After eating we went to the garden. When we arrived at the garden my mother told us not to work because the sun was very hot when we arrived. So we went to a shade place and sat there. When we saw that our mother was very busy, my brother got up and told me to play hide and seek, and I agreed with his idea. We begin our play, and at the middle of our game I told my brother, "Brother wait let's pray, and then we will continue with our game." This time it was his turn to agree with me. I told him; let us pray as we normally do every Sunday when we go to church. Then I told him that I would act as a priest and he would be a Sunday school student bringing the offering up to the priest in front as we normally did every Sunday. He cut some ripe bananas taken from my mother's basket into a coconut shell as host and the shell as a ciborium, while I cut a banana leaf, made hole in the middle, and wore it as the vestment for the priest.

After wearing the banana leaf I stood there with reverence, waiting for the offering which my brother was bringing up. I got the shell with those bananas cut into pieces and told him to kneel, and then I put my hand over the shell with my eyes closed and also his eyes too. I told him to stand up and receive the banana as the host. Then we exchanged; now it was his turn to act as a priest. When we were doing this, we did not bother to see that our mother was watching us. After all when we arrived home he told my father what had happen in the garden during that day. They kept it as a secret until I did my first year philosophy at Rapolo Major Seminary.