

## FRANCIS TINA, MY UPDATED VOCATION STORY

My desire to become a priest is not a life time dream. When I was attending both primary and secondary schools, my sole dream was to become a marine engineer. This was the only dream in my mind that which I was hoping profoundly to become in future. Unfortunately, after completing my grade twelve, I surprisingly came to realise that I had failed my physics course. So I did not proceed on to that university I had chosen.

In 2010 to 2011, I was staying with my parents at home, helping them with any work needed to be done. I was thinking of myself as a hopeless guy in a sense that I will be spending my whole life at home. At that time too my faith about God was so little and very weak. I did not have any deep understanding about God and of how He calls and how to respond to His call. I was confined to the small knowledge I had of God. However, I was fortunate to have my mother as the prayer leader who was always encouraging the attitude of praying everyday especially morning and evening. Through this practice, I came to know some various Catholic prayers and at the same time my knowledge about God deliberately began to expand with the catechism given to us by her. But yet the desire to become priest did not click in my mind.

Through different experiences I underwent, the desire to become priest took possession of me. This only happened when I engaged with our catechist David Hoimi in 2012 to 2013 in various church activities. He always appointed me to be the leader of the youth, of prayers, of the liturgy (preparing songs for Mass), rosary, etc. At the same time he taught me how to lead priestless services during Sundays so I was doing it when the priest went away celebrating the Mass in other places while our catechist went out to other places. On the other hand, I frequently accompanied our catechist to different places doing pastoral work, and through that encounter with the people I came to discover the concept of mission and evangelization. And I found out that there is a great hunger for truth in the lives of the believers in such a way that they need clarification regarding the faith they have. When I first noticed this major problem, instantly when praying I always telling God about the problem asking Him "who else will do it?, and if you are calling me to priesthood, let it be done to me according to your will." Though I continued to devote that perpetual faith issue and as I already had the desire to become priest, I was still waiting for an explicit sign which God will reveal to me to prove that surely I am called to priesthood. Sometime later I came to realize the ability of reading the Bible and trying to interpret the Word of God, and also I came to discover some beautiful virtuous attributions in my life such as humility, obedience, love, and piety. These signs were contributing to a burning desire to become priest.

Therefore, in 2014 in the month of August, I applied to our vocation director and without any delay he accepted me to be the new candidate of 2015. I entered Sacred Heart Inter-Diocesan Major Seminary Rapolo, so I did my two years propaedeutic formation, and last year I did my spirituality year, and now I am here in Holy Spirit Seminary, Bomana.