

Gordon Matare - SHORT STORY OF MY VOCATION.

I am Gordon Matare of Mile parish studying under the Arch-diocese of Rabaul. I came from a family that consists of seven members; five boys and two girls and I am the first born. Both parents are subsistence farmers. My father also serves as the Eucharistic minister in our parish. I came from a very tough discipline family. Every Sunday, as I recalled, they didn't allow us to be absent from going to the church services.

I felt the desire of becoming a priest was when I was doing my grade three in our primary school. When seeing our parish priest celebrating the mass on one Sunday, the thought of becoming like him strongly came into my mind. After the mass, we went back home and were sitting under the house and I was sitting beside my father. At that moment I seriously told my father that I wanted to become a priest. My father responded to me and said, "Then you have to study hard and then go to high schools and secondary school in order for you to go to the seminary."

One day when our parents went to do gardening, I took one cucumber and then sliced it into small round pieces; I gathered all my small brothers and cousins, and I imitated a priest distributing the Holy Communion by distributing these pieces of cucumbers to them. And then I was reported to my father about what I did, and he warned me not to do it again.

However I continued on with my studies in primary school and then was selected to Palmalmal High School to do grades 9 and 10. After that I was again selected to do grades 11 and 12 at Malabunga Secondary School. Being in these two higher levels of education, I could not feel anymore the desire of becoming a priest. This was because of the peer groups that I was into and was influenced with many distracting things. I did not pray regularly like when I was still in primary school. Well, when I was still doing my grade 12 at Malasec, I was appointed to be the Catholic students' president. I did work well with our Catholic teachers, and arranged for the priests from Rapolo Seminary to come on Sundays to hear confessions and say masses for us.

Until then, there was a precious moment from my child desire that comes back to me: when Fr. Fabian Manukealona from the missionaries of Sacred Heart came and gave us Catholic boys the vocation talk. This moment made me recall my desire, and that desire became very strong in me until I felt convinced to go to the seminary straight after grade 12. So I wrote an interest letter to the vocation director, and they accepted me. I sat for the entry test and succeeded, so after the completion of grade 12, I went to Lannuzel formation house in 2012 and still continue till this year, when I am here in the Holy Spirit Seminary in Bomana doing Theology Year One.