

Family Background

He was born on the 28th of January 1990 in Bulolo, the oldest gold-mining town in the history of Papua New Guinea. He is the first of the five children in the family (3 boys and 3 girls). He grew up in a society mostly dominated by Protestants and with a small number of Catholic communities around.

Education Backgrounds

At the age of 4, he started his Kindergarten school at his home town. He went to St. Peter's Primary school and completed his eight years of studies (from 1997 to 2004). After that, he went to Wau High School, one of the nearby towns in the Bulolo district and completed another two years of his studies - grade nine and ten (in 2005 to 2006). He continued his Matriculation (DODL) studies at Bulolo Forestry College in 2011 and finally he finished all his courses in 2012.

Personal Backgrounds

He left school went and joined the Morobe Provincial Aids Council (MOPAC) in 2007. He worked as a member of the council doing Aids awareness to some of the remote areas in the district. In 2008, he became a member of the ANGAR REGION THEATRE. He worked as a Set-designer of the Theatre Association and started combining Aids awareness and Theatre into one association - dramatizing Aids awareness with short speeches and plays in schools and the communities.

In 2009, he was invited by the Holy Family Catholic Parish in Bulolo to run a short training for the Sunday School Teachers about Motivation and Dramatizing. In that same year, he started working in-partnership with the Church, the Government and the NGO's.

In 2010, his small town was in flames during the big eviction which caused many people to flee out from the town; he stayed home with his family and got employed by the PNG Forest Plywood Company. He helped his parish priest Fr Anthony Cordero, working in the parish until he received his offer to attend one of the Teaching Colleges, but since, he saw that there is a big need in the Church here in PNG; he decided to become a priest instead.

Vocation Background

He was struck by the wonderful homily of Fr Anthony Mulderink, CMM, during the 50th Golden Jubilee of the Marianhill Missionaries in Lae, Morobe Province. Fr Anthony is the only one left out of the first four missionaries who came to Lae in 1966. He was a film maker and an actor, but decided to give his life for the mission of Christ in Papua New Guinea.

Among the thousands in the crowds gathering on that day, he (Martin) was at the far end of the stadium listen to the words of Fr Anthony. Fr Anthony gave his short reflection saying,

Celebrating the 50th Golden Jubilee can be seen as worthy to any of the married couples who lived their promise of marriage. I saw it and had experienced myself as same as that, but little less. Since four of us we came here in Lae, we have never talked about something behind our minds, never shared it to anyone, never at all. My three conferrers have left me, not going back to their homeland, but buried to this soil of Morobe. Therefore, before I leave you too, I feel that I should say something that has been lay buried in our minds and hearts, which we have been holding back. After we left this place, who will continue this mission? (This is where he feels the call to this mission - discovering his vocation)

He had understood well this homily, as it was Christ speaking to him through the words of Fr Anthony to continue His (Christ's) mission. He was inspired by this wonderful homily and believed that the homily was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and most importantly, he was convinced to say that God speaks to him through His creation. God calls him through other person's way of life - in words and actions. In this regard, he had no doubt but to trust in the Lord, for he knew that God had something to do in his life.

He passed the Seminary Entry Test in 2012, and received his acceptance letter to attend the studies at St. Fidelis Minor Seminary in Madang. In his home parish, Holy Family in Bulolo, he will be the first candidate to take up this opportunity. From the Catholic Diocese of Lae, two of them, his brother Nigel Yapai, from the Mary Queen of Peace Parish and himself have

attended the studies together in 2013. Unfortunately, his brother could not make it through due to his health problems; he left in the beginning of 2014.

He (Martin) finished two years of his propaedeutic studies and another year of spiritual year studies at St. Fidelis Seminary in Madang from 2013 to 2015.

He completed three years of Philosophical studies (from 2016 to 2018) at Good Shepherd Seminary and received his Advanced Diploma Certificate. He completed another year (2019) of his Research and graduated with the Certificate of Bachelor in Pastoral Research under the Recommendation of the Research Faculty of Divine Word University.

Currently, this year 2020, he is now studying Theology at the Catholic Theological Institute (CTI) in Bomana, Port Moresby. He resides at the Holy Spirit Seminary College Campus as a Diocesan Candidate for the Diocese of Lae, Papua New Guinea.