

## STORY OF MY PRIESTHOOD VOCATION

I, Eugene Sakat (Murphy), am a seminarian of the Archdiocese of Madang. I was born in the year (1989) in Lae, Morobe Province. I was brought up in a very faithful Catholic family, from the mixed parentage of East Sepik and Madang (Bogia). In the family of six children, three boys and three girls, I am the beloved of my parents. Because of my parent's favoritism, I gained opportunity to do whatever I wished for my own benefit. I am very fortunate that both of my parents are still living today. It was a surprise when I had a call to pursue my studies at the seminary. I was very grateful that my childhood dreams of becoming a priest could be realized.

My intention of becoming priest developed when I was at the age of seven. I was always captivated by how the priest celebrated the sacrament of Holy Eucharist during the Mass. It really inspired me at this early age. Perhaps I discussed my desire of becoming a holy priest in the future with my elder once. In the family, we always devoted ourselves to praying the Holy Rosary, Divine Mercy and other prayers of the Catholic Church. And of course, we were always active in every church organized activity. My mom was a faithful Legion; she always devoted most of her life for prayer and charity work. She often prays that one of us three boys will be study at the seminary to become a priest. All of a sudden the call to the priesthood was revealed in me. She was a very proud mother and always supporting my priesthood vocation.

When I grew up and went to school, I was still faithful and focused on my ambition of becoming a priest. After I completed my primary education and went into secondary school, my life was utterly changed. And from there, my childhood dream of becoming priest perished through the influences of peer groups and worldly materials. Thus, these things became obstacles in my life. And several times I was pushed out of my studies because of my unworthy behaviours. It happened when I did my grade twelve in two thousand- nine at Bugandi Secondary School in Lae, Morobe Province. As a result, I was unable to further my studies. Therefore I was very embarrassed and thought that it was the end of the world for me. Perhaps, it became wounds in my life and led me into unlawful activities in and around Lae city for almost three years.

Nevertheless, the year two thousand-fourteen became a turning point in my life, when my cousin, a Dominican brother, inspired me by sharing of his pastoral experiences in Perth Australia. I was convinced by the stories of his experience; therefore without hesitation I informed him about my childhood intention of becoming a priest. He was very impressed; therefore, he made arrangement with our parish priest for my studies at the seminary. I was feeling excited about my decision. While waiting for my acceptance, I participated fully in the parish organized activities and even got involved with the parish youth in Sunday Liturgy, charitable work, Bible sharing and sports. I enjoyed my life with the youth almost for a year. Then eventually, I was accepted to do my studies at Saint Fidelis Minor Seminary, Madang in two thousand- fifteen.

In addition, I was also motivated when I witnessed the ordinations to the priesthood. And other times I felt inspired when I heard people saying that priests are the men of God and the most intelligent people in the world. When I heard these positive impressions, it really made my motivation to become a Catholic priest stronger.

Nevertheless, I have encountered many challenges in life towards my "Divine Call" for the last four years in the seminary formation. Here are some of these challenges: family pressure especially the death of the loved ones, struggling with the four pillars of formation, study pressure, and especially the ownership of my cultural wealth. However these challenges strengthened me to become a mature seminarian. Therefore, the challenges are sometimes helpful because they bring prosperity in life. The positive aspects: my life was completely changed from what I used to be in the past. From the most aggressive and short tempered person to a humble and generous hearted person. Therefore I kindly thank our Omnipotent and Omni-benevolent Father for creating a new chapter in my life.

All in all, I am grateful and tender hearted, that the Almighty Father has done marvelous things in my journey toward the priesthood from the beginning of my studies until now. On the other hand, I have been very impressed with the seminary formation which really formed my life into manhood and holiness compared to my past life. Therefore, I am confidently assured that I will make it through to become a holy priest in the coming future regardless of any personal problems or challenges that arise in my life. In fact, I have faith and trust in our Omnibenevolent Father that He will do whatever he wishes for my life. Finally, I humbly invite you all to pray for me. Amen.