

Bernard Saka-Wabag

The Vocation Story

In this paper I would like to review my life, about how I ended up in the seminary. I will give a quick glimpse of my vocation in general. In truth, becoming priest was not my dream. But somehow I am convinced that I had a vocation to the priesthood when I was not yet in my mother's womb. Thus here is the story.

I did grade one (1) to six (6) in Wanepap Community School in my own soil (1992-1998). I continued grade seven (7) to ten (10) in Anditale High School (1999-2012). Then I completed grade eleven (11) and twelve (12) in Kopen Secondary School (2003-2005). Unfortunately, I was not accepted to any of the institutions in which I filled in the school leaver's form. As a result I was at home for three (3) years (2006-2008). Fortunately, I entered St: Fidelis Seminary, Madang in 2009 as a Michaelite candidate and was with them in order to become a priest for six years and half months (2009-2015).

Unluckily, due to the misunderstanding between the Superior in Australia and PNG I left the community in May, 2015. Since then I stayed home for two solid years. Towards the end of the second year I wrote to the Diocese of Wabag, and they accepted me in 2017. In the same year Bishop Arnol Arowae assigned me to do pastoral work in my own parish, and I successfully completed that year under the supervision of Fr. Thomas Waiakane, the vocation director. Last year (2018) I went to Madang, St. Fidelis Seminary for my spiritual year. Finally this year, here I am now in Holy Spirit Seminary doing my second year theology.

With conviction that God's calling in my life, I am feeling that God is truly calling me to become a priest. I am concretely convinced that there is no other profession for me. The only call is to become a simple priest. That simple priest is for the simple people of God in his Church, especially those that are living in the very remote areas of Wabag and PNG as a whole. Simple for those who do not have access to the regular sacraments. Why I am saying this? The answer is very practical. When I was a youth leader before coming to the seminary, I had visited some of the parishes and outstations in the remote areas within the Diocese of Wabag and saw people dying without receiving the sacraments, especially the sacrament of reconciliation. That's why the desire of becoming a simple priest for the simple people. so that I can be the servant of the sacraments is driving me crazy.

With this, I am persuaded that despite the weakness, hiccups, and the difficulties in studies I encounter in my life, I am feeling that I have the God-given strength and confidence that dwells within me, that encourages me to pursue the love of Christ. So I hope that one fine day God will walk straight into my crooked life to fulfill what He has started with me, the plan that is in his mind. That which is in his mind could be to be his servant, the servant of his servants and the servant of his Church, which is the Body of Christ, alive in Christ until he calls me to rest in eternity.