

## Brief Background of My Vocation (Freddy Sepik)

During my childhood, I just admired the cassock (a long white gown) worn by priests and religious. Every Sunday, my eyes would always fix at the cassock worn by the parish priest. I really wished to have just one for myself. Every time after Sunday Mass when I went home, I would always beg my mother to buy one cassock for me. She would say that it is a special garment only for the priests and religious; it is never sold in the stores and market. I would continue begging her for one until she bought me several other long white clothes similar to a cassock instead. I was quite satisfied. I used to wear those cassock-like clothes when I was alone at home, and I felt some kind of joy. However, the desire of becoming a priest was not there in me.

When I was in the primary school, the desire of becoming a missionary started emerging. Thus, I decided to join the Montfort Brothers, since I was influenced by some Montfort Brothers who were teaching there in a nearby Catholic Agency Secondary School. At that time, I was not really clear about the purpose of becoming a missionary. My principle intention was to join the congregation and tour as many countries as possible. I also had a desire of becoming priest. However, I was so introverted and not so flexible enough to express myself openly to the people, that I decided to join the Brothers instead. Thus, I had to write to the superior of Montfort. The Bishop of Lae, Bishop Rozario was the superior at that time, so I had written to him as many letters as possible, and he did reply some. When I was in grade twelve, I received the acceptance letter to join the Montfort Brothers. However, my plan was changed at the last minute.

At that time Fr. Lucas Kambao was the vocation director for the diocese, and he was my parish priest. He told me one time that some candidates for the diocesan seminarians would be sitting for the entry test, so I should join them. I did the entry test with them. I did it well, and I was accepted to the diocesan seminary. So I had two choices now. However, my primary intention was to join the Montfort Brothers. But then, I received a letter from the Montfort superior - saying that the accommodation for the new intakes was not yet ready since the congregation was new to the country. So I was told to wait for a while until they called me to come. But I did not want to stay back at home waiting. Instead I joined the diocesan seminary.

I went to St. Fidelis Seminary (Madang) in 2013 and spent three years there - two years propaedeutic and one year spirituality. From there I was recommended to Good Shepherd Seminary (Fatima - Jiwaka Province). I spent another three years there. After I had graduated there with an advanced diploma in philosophical studies, I went back to my diocese (Wabag) to do pastoral. I was recommended to do a bachelor program, which was introduced recently by the Divine Word University (Madang). I was doing pastoral in my own parish (Sari) and at the same time doing my bachelor program - majoring in social research, last year (2019). From there, I was recommended by the bishop to come here, so I am here - doing my second year theology.