

## MY VOCATION STORY

Dear, my brothers and sisters in Christ, it is my pleasure to present my vocation stories to you all, my friends, families and benefactors. All people around the world have their own stories to tell, how they come to know God and discover God in their lives. The story which I am going to share with you is true and pure. It is not a kind of a fairy-tale or made up story. It is a story which comes through my heart: how I discovered God's calling and how I came to know and experience God in life.

I am seminarian Steven Pup from the highland of Papua New Guinea. I was born in a Catholic family in a small village called Rugist. My father's name is Mark Wuna and my mother's name is Rosa Yonk. Both of them are from the same village, and they are from different tribes, and both of my parents are subsistence farmers. My parents raised us eight children, which I have seven siblings: three brothers and four sisters, and I made it eight of us in a family. However, out of my family, I was adopted by my uncle when I was born. My adopted Father is Palues Pup and my adopted mother is Palua. And in that family, I have two sisters, Mariam Pup and Joy Pup. In fact, my adopted parents had no biological kids but for my adopted father before when he was young, he got married and he had two children: one boy and a girl. Anyway, back to my adopted parents, both of my sisters are single, one is four years old and another is fourteen years old; and all together we are three in that family. Both of my adopted parents are still living and they are subsistence farmers.

I was born in 1991, on the 08th of May. I grew up entirely with my adopted family from my birth until now. When I was three years old, my adopted parents brought me into the Church and I was baptised. During my childhood, my parents taught me various things in the Catholic Church. They raised me in Catholic faith, teaching me things like the sign of the cross, the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary prayer and other essential rites of the Catholic Church. By the time I was six, I received first Holy Communion, the first time I received Jesus in my life. By the time I received Jesus in the Communion, that makes me a different person, and more importantly, which I always believed, it was at that moment that my vocation of priesthood began. Because at that moment when I saw the priest at altar celebrating the Holy Mass, I was convinced and touched the way priest celebrated mass. So my aspiration to become a priest was started since I was a child, but it was not fully grown. When I was eighteen years old, the time I was in the high school, my desire of becoming priest was fully grown, and I started to write an interest letter to the congregation of St Michael the Archangel.

In the year 2001, I started my primary education: grade one to eight. And in the year 2009 I completed my primary education. From 2010 to 2013, I did my high school, grade nine to twelve and I graduated with high school certificate. After my high school, I was selected to attend Mt Hagen Technical College but I made up my mind not to continue in the colleges. When I made that choice, my adopted father asked me, "Steven you don't want to continue in the colleges, so what do you want to be?" By that moment, I got up and said, "Father I want to become a priest." Without farther notice, I wrote a letter to the congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel, and they accepted my letter of request. So in 2014 I did my postulancy program at the formation house at Rebaimul. I completed my one year postulancy program at 2014. In 2015 to 2016, the congregation sent me to the minor seminary at St. Fidelis, Madang province. After two years, they sent me to major seminary at Good Shepherd Seminary to study philosophy for three years (2017 - 2019). And at 2020, I did my novitiate programme at our formation house at Mt. Hagen. After my novitiate, I was sent to Bomana Holy Spirit Seminary to do my theology at Catholic Theological Institute at Port Moresby. It is quite a long time since I stayed in the congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel and now I am still continuing in the journey of the priesthood. Thank you for reading and this is all about me, seminarian Steven Pup.

Steven Pup CSMA