

## MY VOCATION STORY

How my vocation started does not have a striking point but, I somehow responded to it to come this far as it is still a mystery to me. Since I started my educational life from primary to secondary level, I did not have any point of great admiration to become priest. Rather I came to realize it through my little desire of praying the Rosary, and sharing a little fun with two priests, and moreover due to my family being Catholic and their admiration for helping young men on their journey to the life of the priesthood. Above all it is a result from my inner desire to serve those students who were coming from poor families and struggling in their school fees and their studies and also with orphans and widows who are struggling for their basic needs. It is what I always faced in my communities and even meditation on it towards other people who are in such difficulties around the world.

More precisely, from my ninth grade to tenth grade at Kondiu Rosary Secondary School I was inspired to pray the Rosary, so I joined the Junior Legion of Mary that existed there. Then at the end of grade eleven the members chose me to be the secretary of the group, and I served this responsibility up to the twelfth grade. During these years there were two priests there as Chaplains and also the Sacred Heart Sisters were there and they helped our group to conduct the common spiritual activities in the school.

Through these spiritual activities and the close relationship with priests and nuns, they little by little pointed out my being a good role model and encouraged me to apply my skills more. At those times they informed me to write an interest letter to the Diocesan Vocation Director, and I did it two times. As a result my Vocation Director informed me to do the CAP Seminary entry test before my national exam. As time passed I completed my Entry Test with the National Exam and went home without any firm idea of how to decide my life's journey.

Some weeks later I did not receive the acceptance letter from the choice I made in my national exam. At that time I was still in doubt and did not know what to do next, and eventually on one Sunday a Catechist delivered to me a letter. When I looked at the cover address, it was sent to me from St. Fidelis Seminary, and surprisingly I was filled with tremendous joy - with tears of joy falling down my cheeks. From that time I thanked God for calling me to journey in that lifetime choice, but I did not fully understand what this life was all about in its deepest challenges, pain and sacrifice. Some days later I looked deep into my inner heart's desire, and I found out that I had this sorrowful heart to serve the children who were struggling to succeed in education, and people who were facing difficulties in affording their basic needs. After all this, I realized that I did not have enough resources to make my inner desire come through. Thus, I accepted this call to live my life to serve those people that I have heart for in the other way, not for a particular people but for all people in this world.

From that time until this very time I am still struggling to fulfill this calling in my life and to become holy priest. However this journey is not that easy, but from time to time I will try my very best to play my part, and God will do the rest for what he has planned for me in my life. Above all, my journey's motive is to live a simple life for the goodness of poor people, by delivering God's grace in the means of all sacraments to their lives. Further, with grateful heart I will thank God for giving me this precious gift.

Lord I don't know if I am worthy, but here is my life. Mould my body and soul according to your will for me to be your servant to carry out your work of your unceasing recreation in holiness of your Father's creation here on earth. Amen.

Joe Palme