

## My Vocation Story

Thomas WITNE

Hello, Readers. A human being as person was brought into this world on the 02nd of February 1992. A few days later they decided to give him the name Thomas Kua,Iri which is my name as I came to realise it later as I grew up. Thomas Kua is my name and Witne is my Father's name, therefore I use Thomas Witne as my name. I am from the Diocese of Kundiawa and am doing Theology Year Two. I was born on the date stated above, and in one of the most remote and fighting zones in Shout Simbu in Papua New Guanine. My father is a Catechist and my mother is a substance famer and the leader in the Legion of Mary in the Parish, named St. Mary's Parish Yombar. I have five sisters and a brother, and I am the fifth born in the family of seven children.

Most of my childhood life was spent in the parish because my father resided in the parish as parish Catechist, and this is where I developed my desire of becoming a priest. One interesting thing that drives my attraction of become a priest is to hear confession,. As a little boy sitting and watching, I saw people moving to and fro from the little room and saying some words to the priest and coming back to their bench and saying a short prayer and going out. I used to wonder: what did they say to the priest and what did priest say to them. This is where my interest of becoming a priest started to grow; it was to hear what the people say to the priest.

Oftentimes, I went around with the parish priest, and at one time an Old SVD Priest named Fr. Peter and he was from Poland, and he asked me, "Do you like to become a priest?" I replied yes, but I did not know how and what the priesthood is all about. All I can still remember was, when I did grade two my teacher asked us. "Who wants to become a priest may raise your hand up?" Among the group, two of us were raising our hands up, and all of over sudden all our classmates were giggling and laughing at us. At that point I was ashamed to walk around with my peers, when my colleagues saw, us they used to make fun of us by calling us Pater or Father. But the desire of becoming a priest was still growing in my heart.

As I can still remember, at one time I had an argument with my class teacher and at that time I was doing grade seven. Our argument was brought before to the school governing board. The board chairman of the school went into the classroom and beat me up and said, your father is a catechist but seems that you did not listen his words. At that spot I quickly told myself that I will prove to you that one day I will become a priest. At that time you will see that Thomas is one who follows his father footsteps.

When I did grade nine to twelve my interest in priesthood faded away bit by bit, and I was interested to become a Civil Engineer. So I was studying very hard and produced good results in my academic work. But my prayer life, especially reading the Bible and praying the rosary both in the chapel and in private, was going well. A nun was noticing what I was doing, and then she told me, "Thomas you need to go to the seminary and become a priest because I saw that you have a good prayer life," but I did not mind her words. Even our school chaplain loved me much but he did not ask me to write an interest letter to the seminary nor did he ask me to go to the seminary.

At that time I was a faithful alter sever, so I asked the Chaplain to sit for the entry test for the seminary next week because the notice was put outside on the school notice board. The chaplain told me I did not write any interest letter, and then I told him that he did not inform me, and then he was laughing away and said yes. At that time I was very happy and informed my best friend. My best friend told me, Thomas I see that you have a potential for becoming a priest. At that point I felt so amazed at my best friend for such encouraging words. I sat for the test and was accepted to study in the seminary and here am I in the eighth year of my formation in the seminary studies to priesthood.

People saw the potential of being a priest is in me, and I am interested in becoming a priest, but to become a priest or not is in the plan and in the mighty hands of God, who is the cause of my being in this world. So I am doing my part is to pray and study.

Thank you all and May the Good Lord Bless you.