

## “THOSE YOU TRUST, SEE YOUR CALLING.”

I was brought up in an environment where all my families are devoted Catholics. My father (just recently passed away) was a senior and pioneer catechist in my parish where he influenced many young men to become priests. Unfortunately, only five became priests in my diocese, but a few left and two are still priests.

Just as other children do, I did not have an intention of becoming a priest or joining the seminary when I was in primary school to high school. My goal was to become someone who could go to a higher institution and become somebody to get job and look after my family. That is why I did not attend the church often. At the same time, I did not respect my father's ministry as a catechist who tirelessly wanted us to become someone in the future. But my father tried his very best to bring me this far. He trusted me because he saw my vocation and he used to say that “One day I will witness my son's ordination.” I did not know that he was referring to me, because I did not have an intention of becoming a priest.

However, things changed along the way. After completing my grade ten in one of the high schools in Western Province, it was Christmas Holiday which I normally spend with my family at my village. During one of the Sundays, one of the local priests announced that there is a vocation home in Kiunga that is asking young boys who are interested to become priests, and they can join the formation program. Without hesitation, my father just asked me after the Mass to join the formation home for the come and see program. At first, I rejected my father's wish for me, because to become a priest was not in my mind at that time. I told my dad not to say that because I felt that to become priest might ruin my life, but my father said “Think about it.”

In the evening, the word of my Dad came over and over deeply in my heart: “think about it, think about, and think about it.” Finally, I made up mind to join the formation program in Kiunga St. John Marie Vianney in 2012 when I was accepted to do my grade \_\_ in St. Gabriel's Technical secondary School. I spent two years in St. John Marie Vianney formation house while attending secondary school. After completing my secondary studies, I was accepted to go to St. Fidelis Minor Seminary to continue discerning my vocation. After three years in St. Fidelis Minor Seminary, I continued to Good Shepherd Seminary for four years studying Religious studies. One year I was on pastoral exposure back in my diocese, and currently I am doing my Second Year Theology in Catholic Theological Institute.

All throughout my seminary life, I have faced many trials, temptation, and challenges that sometimes made me want to leave the formation program. One of the biggest challenges that I have encountered in my seminary life is losing my family members. In Good Shepherd Seminary, my big sister passed away from a short illness, and I wanted to leave seminary, but somehow God helped me to survive in the seminary. Another challenge is when I was doing my pastoral year and my father passed away. This made me want to leave the seminary formation again, but I survived it.

Out of all my families, my big sister and my father were the ones who played the major role to bring me this far. I regretted it because they are ones who were supposed to witness my ordination, but they will not. I cried when I was alone, I felt pain in my heart when I was hurt, and I got frustrated when I was angry. There are the emotions that come out when I feel I do not have my father behind my back to support me.

Finally, I come to understand that losing someone special in life is one way of moving forward towards achieving our goal. At the first place, I did not know that “those I trust see my calling,” whom the one that I trust is my father who already saw my vocation and continuously guided me until he breathed his last. This vocation story is dedicated to my father and my big sister who are now living peacefully with God in Heaven. I pray that they are always with me everyday encouraging me to become a good priest in the near future. I hope my father and my sister will take my hand and brings me forward to the altar and present me to the Bishop. “Those you trust see your calling.”