

My Vocation Story

My name is Vungvung Jude. I came from the Archdiocese of Rabaul. My father's name is Vungvung Bernard from East New Britain Province, and mother is from West New Britain. Her name is Dominica Mangu. I was born on the 28th of October 1997 in Valoca Hospital [West New Britain]. However, I was the first born of the four children, of which I am the only male and have three sisters. My parents are subsistence farmers and they are both devoted Catholics. I am very grateful to grow up in such a family where we practice our Catholic faith daily. My parents taught us how to pray, practice the basic catechism, and follow the virtues. I am also very happy to share the love and joy within my family.

My school days I was one of the hard working students. That would include in and outside the classroom as well as the physical activities. I began my elementary education at Vunakabi in 2006 and continued to Vunadidiry primary in 2009. In 2014 I passed my grade eight exam and continued to St Mary's Vuvu secondary school. I completed my grade ten in 2016 and passed on to do my grade eleven in 2017 and twelve in 2018. I really enjoyed my studies and acquired good marks. Therefore, I do well in class and passed all my exams. In grade twelve I scored good marks, so I was selected to St. Peter Channel Ulapia. However I could not make it due to financial problems. In that case I stayed at home for two years. In those two years I took part in leading the youths in my community.

I reflect on my years of study, and I realize that through hard work I have come this far. And the source of my strength was my prayer, commitment, and faith in God. God really helped me in my struggle. I am always grateful for my work. One of my happiest moments was in grade twelve when I came third in biology. That really motivated me and, I believe that God has a purpose for me in life.

My parents were very devoted Catholics, faithfully living their faith. Observing as children we started to practice and follow their way of life. My parents encouraged my sisters and me to have respect for others, attend mass on Sundays, and pray every day. Also my mother was devoted in praying the rosary. In that case, she taught us to know Mother Mary and to pray the Holy Rosary. She also taught us the basic Catechism and reminded us to follow the virtuous life.

I receive the first Holy Communion in grade four. In that case I started to serve as an altar server in my parish. In the secondary years I helped out taking the Sunday's readings. The other work I did was helping out in leading the youths in my community. As a result, from the good teaching of my parents and my personal experiences about God, I started to grow with faith in God. I built my relationship with Jesus. However, my call to priesthood was not yet clear.

No wonder, on a Vocation Sunday the assistance parish priest, Fr. Charley, gave the homily about vocations. He said, "All vocations are a gift from God. We must enjoy these callings from God even though there many challenge in it. We Catholics have four vocations." He explained the different vocation. Above all, priesthood calling in which we need priests. The priests act in the person of Christ." Then Fr. explained more about the life of a priest. That really motivated me, and I felt like Jesus was calling me to follow him. After the mass I told Fr. Charley that I wanted to become a priest. So he told me to pray about it.

After many prayers and reflection I came to realize that God was calling me to become a priest. I attended the come and see programs. I did the entry tests during the come and see programs. In that case I passed all my tests, so I was accepted to enter Rapolo Seminary formation in 2021. But since I was at home, the rector called me to join the program on the last two months of 2020. I really enjoyed myself observing the programs. I even struggle with some parts of my formation, but I managed to finish the two months with the brothers. Therefore, I was easily fit into the programs of my propaedeutic years.

I began my propaedeutic in 2021 and completed it in 2022. Then in 2023, I did my spiritual year at Good shepherd Seminary in Fatima - Banz- Jiwaka Province. So now I am here in Bomana Holy Spirit Seminary continuing my formation to the priesthood and to take up the challenges in my studies of Philosophy and Theology.