

MEET OUR NEW SEMINARIAN

Vincent Otieno



BIRTHDAY November 4, 1987

PLACE OF BIRTH Siaya, Kenya

GRADUATE Bachelor's Degree in Theology, Saint Joseph's Theological Institute NPC Cedara South Africa

UNDERGRADUATE Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy, Consolata Institute of Philosophy Nairobi, Kenya

LANGUAGES English, Swahili, and Luo (Nilotic Kenyan language)

FAVORITE BIBLE VERSE Proverbs 3:5 -trust in the Lord with all your hearts and do not lean on your own understanding.

FAVORITE QUOTE FROM JESUS John 14:1 - Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me

FAVORITE OLD TESTAMENT FIGURE Abraham

FAVORITE SAINT St. Teresa of Calcutta

FAVORITE MARIAN DEVOTION Rosary

PERSON THAT HELPED YOU

DISCOVER YOUR VOCATION My Grandmother and also Sr. Constance, a Franciscan sister in Kenya

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO FOR FUN Watching wrestling, volleyball and listening to music

IF YOU COULD GO ANYWHERE,

WHERE WOULD IT BE United States of America

FAVORITE FOOD Pizza

ARE YOU INSPIRED BY ANY AUTHOR,

ACTOR, SINGER OR ATHLETE Eliud Kipchoge, a long distance runner from Kenya

FAVORITE BAND OR SONG The Magnificat of Mary

WERE YOU AN ALTAR SERVER Yes I was

PRIEST ASPIRATION Rev. Fr. Clive Otieno

HOW CAN OUR LADY OF MERCY

PARISHIONERS PRAY FOR YOU That God help me in my vocation discernment, to become a good priest and to serve God's people faithfully.

WHAT MADE YOU SAY "YES" TO THE CALLING OF BECOMING A PRIEST

I am the sixth born in a Catholic family of nine. My now-deceased parents played a great role in my faith formation as a Catholic. The importance of commitment to God through active participation in the Church was instilled in my siblings and me. Sunday school and youth services were compulsory at home and I picked up strong Catholic values that helped shape me from a very young age and these became part of my life. I joined various youth groups within the church such as Altar Servers, and Parish youths among others.

I had an elderly grandmother, who received her baptism as an adult on her deathbed and who had lost her vision due to her advanced age. I loved my grandma and was sympathetic to her blindness. I decided to go and live with her and help my parents take care of her. Even though young, I took the responsibility seriously becoming her guide and companion for the next two years till she passed. This whole experience taught me how to be gentle and considerate to those in need especially the destitute, the sick, the elderly, and the disabled. My closeness to a dying and blind grandmother influenced my vocation as a servant to become a priest.

After high school, I joined Oblates Missionaries and began my religious formation in March 2008 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Religious Studies in 2012. I also took an introductory course in African Studies at the Maryknoll Institute of African Studies (MIASM). I completed my Novitiate year in Germiston, South Africa, and took my first temporary Vows as an Oblate Missionary in 2014. I was assigned in a parish for pastoral work experience for one year. In 2018, I completed my Theological studies and graduated with a B.A in Theology (BTH). After graduation, I discerned out of formation with the Oblates Missionaries.

Even though I discerned out from my religious community, I never gave up on my desire to pursue a religious vocation as a priest. I met Father Clive (a priest of the Diocese of Joliet who was on vacation in Kenya) and I shared with him my story and desire to become a priest. He encouraged me to keep on pursuing my vocation and invited me to consider applying to the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois. After a rigorous application process through the Diocesan vocation office, I was accepted, and I am grateful to God that I am here today to journey on with my discernment.

