



*The missionary visiting your parish this summer
from the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament is
Father Lennen Ebrole Deciar SSS*



What is mission? Why is it necessary to work for the mission? From the very words of Pope Francis, we learn that *"Every Christian is a missionary."* I think he is speaking about the vocation of every Christian to discipleship. It means that we are called in order to be sent to work in the vineyard of Jesus Christ. I once received a piece of advice from another Blessed Sacrament priest, he said: *"Do not volunteer, and never refuse wherever you'll be sent."*

I am Father Lennen Ebrole Deciar of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament (SSS), from the Province of Our Lady of the Assumption in the Philippines. I was ordained a priest in April of 2012, just five years ago! Previously, I never even thought of religious life or becoming a priest. What was clear to me was that I loved to see a priest wearing his long vestments to celebrate the Holy Mass. Wherever I saw vocation posters, I paused because I was attracted by the vestments. *"One day I'm gonna wear that dress,"* I said to myself. With that simple impression, I became an altar server in my parish for many years. I consider that feeling as the beginning of my vocation. Therefore, I think that a vocation is a gift that one needs to appreciate its beauty.

My family practices the Catholic Faith, in fact, my mother is a very devout woman. Until now, she is still active in some church organizations. Possibly, I am a priest now as the fruit of her prayers. In my journey before I entered the seminary, I finished a degree in Commerce with a major in Accounting Management. I'm the youngest of my family and have three sisters and three brothers. Even though the youngest, I don't feel that I am a spoiled child or even a mama's boy.

Being the youngest member of the family, I found it hard to make decisions for myself and plan for my future. Right after college, the call to seminary life never let up. When I made the tough decision to enter the seminary, there was a big shift in my life. My friends wouldn't believe me because they only saw me as an athletic person (*I was a swimmer and a varsity basketball player during my high school and college years*). In fact, I received some negative comments, laughs, and discouragements from my friends, especially from those closest to me. Even my own family was surprised about my plans. But for me, the way I looked at my decision was that it was just a change in my life that only God understands. I felt that there was nothing to lose if I try it.

Sometimes, we think how God works in us. Even if we have the freedom to make our own life decisions, we cannot control God. The only thing we can do is to cooperate with His grace and then learn to appreciate how God works within us. Therefore, I feel that vocation is an invitation as well as an opportunity. Take it or leave it, because chances will only be offered once.

Within the ten years of my seminary formation, there were struggles, pains, and sacrifices. But these eventually turned into happiness and contentment. I thank God that I survived those moments. For five years in the priestly ministry, God has been so gracious to me in spite of my imperfections. I love to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and I love my Eucharistic ministry.

For this summer, the Mission Appeal Program here in the USA challenges me to share our Blessed Sacrament charism and our love for the Eucharist with others. I am grateful to the Province of Saint Ann in the USA as well as our SSS religious for the opportunity to discover a new perspective on life. Everything is new to me here, but this is very interesting. I have the opportunity to spread and to make Jesus in the Eucharist known and loved. I sincerely believe that God called me to this vocation, this is my mission. I am called to be sent. I would like to thank you for your support and making my stay a pleasant one, which I hope will not be my last. Thanks to you, your families, and my dear friends. I hope and pray that you continue to be a blessing for others. Please support the life and mission of the Church because you also are called to be sent. God is with you!

For more information, contact: The Mission Office, Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, 5384 Wilson Mills Road, Cleveland, OH 44143. Tel:(440) 442-6311