



## Seminarian Christopher Otieno

I was born on December 19, 1991, in the western part of Kenya, where I grew for most part of my life. I am from a family of six: my dad, Rasmus, my mom, Lilian, and 3 siblings – Cyprian, Cecilia and Celestine. We are all Catholics.

I was brought up in Catholic faith and I enjoyed going to church as a little boy. My parents played a great and foundational role in my faith. It is from the frequent attendance of Mass of Sundays that my vocation to priesthood started growing. The desire to be a priest developed from seeing priests celebrate Mass, I was attracted to this, and I really wanted to celebrate Mass like these priests, their vestments and the way they conducted themselves in a solemn and recollected demeanor just attracted me even more.

I joined Mass servers at the parish and then later I went to the Minor Seminary for my High School education. Being at the Minor Seminary kept the desire burning, especially being able to attend Mass everyday and being taught by priests and nuns. As I was in my second year in High School, my uncle was ordained a priest, I attended his ordination and I believe at this point I made up my mind to seriously discern to be a priest in the Catholic Church.

My uncle Fr. Daniel remains my role model to date. He inspired and encouraged me to start corresponding with the Vocations Director of Consolata Missionaries, a Religious Order he belonged to. I later joined the Consolata Missionaries in 2011 and went through the formation for 9 years. I discerned out of the Religious Order in 2020 because I felt that God was calling me to be a diocesan priest. Through my uncle, Fr. Daniel, I met Fr. Clive who is a Kenyan priest in the Diocese of Joliet. I shared with him my intention and desire to be a diocesan priest. Fr. Clive was kind enough to link me up with Fr. Borello, the Director of Vocation for the Diocese of Joliet. After corresponding with Fr. Borello for two years, I was accepted to join the Diocese as a seminarian. I came to USA from Kenya in December 2023.

I was received warmly in the diocese, and I lived at the rectory in Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Aurora, which is my home parish here in the US. I felt home away from home and enjoyed being involved in the different pastoral engagements at the parish, like serving at Masses, taking Holy Communion to the home-bound parishioners, training the Mass servers, journeying in faith with the Young Adults, taking food to Homeless Shelters, sharing faith with the Fit Shepherds, being involved with the Knight of Columbus, involvement in the Christ Renews His Parish program as well as the Bible Study group.

I am currently a student at Mundelein Seminary. I am in my Fourth Year of Theology (Configuration 4). I am enjoying my studies and I am grateful to God for the far He has brought me. I am also grateful to all people who have supported me in my journey of discernment so far, may God bless them abundantly.