



*“I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, and in His word do I hope.” (Psalm 130:5).*

This particular verse from the Book of Psalms is one of Father Benjie Calangi’s favorite verses from the Bible because he always believes that all the good things happen in God’s perfect time. Even his vocation story is a testament on how God’s perfect time works in his life.

Father Benjie’s journey has started in a poor fishing village in Batangas (Philippines). He was born to loving parents of four children. His father was a fisherman, and his mother was a housekeeper. Times were tough when he was young. Father Benjie was able to go to school (from elementary to college) because of some scholarship grants and financial aid. Poverty did not stop him from pursuing education and really persevered despite his family’s economic situation. He graduated Valedictorian (Top of the Class 1990) in High School and then he took up Bachelor of Science in Commerce major in Accounting from the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. While he was studying in the university, he felt for the first time his “calling from God” and then he started doing his discernment process. He graduated from the university and started working immediately. He had to postpone the discernment process because of his great desire to help his family financially back home in his town.

Soon he started working abroad. His first stop was in Dubai (UAE) where he worked for Chili’s Bar and Grill. Then he went to the United States of America and worked for several hotels in the US like the Four Season’s Hotel, the Setai Hotel in South Beach, Miami, etc. After working in the United States for quite some time, he went to Italy and has worked for the luxurious Armani Hotel Milan. He worked also in Venice for the Aman Canal Grande Venice.

While in Italy, he has decided to pursue his priestly vocation. In 2013, he started his spiritual journey and joined the Oblates of Saint Joseph in Rome as a seminarian. He took up his Bachelor’s degree in Philosophy and Theology from the University inside the Vatican (Urban Pontifical University). While he was studying at the university, he was elected by students as President of the Student Council of the Faculty of Theology for three consecutive years. As president of the Student Council, he became the voice of all the students and he became one of the members of the Academic Senate of the University. The Academic Senate is the governing body of the University. He graduated from the Faculty of Theology with Latin honors (*Magna Cum Laude*). After his graduation, he was assigned in Saint Joseph all’Aurelio Parish in Rome. Then he started his Licentiate (Faculty of Missiology) from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome but because he needed to devote most of his time to parish work, he had to postpone his studies.

Father Benjie was ordained priest in Italy in 2021. Father Benjie is truly delighted to have this opportunity to work as an Associate Pastor of the Church of our Saviour. He is excited to meet all the parishioners of the parish!