

You Will Definitely Know When God Calls You

Blessing Nina Emmanuel narrates her journey to the faith while in the university.

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You will definitely know when He calls you. Those were the words that kept ringing in my ears after I met with the university chaplain. Just after I got admitted to university, my father told me he wanted me to be baptized before I graduated. I had never

thought about that. I only wanted to spend four stress-free years in Pan-Atlantic University, bag my degree and continue my academic *hustle*. I never knew what God had in stock for me.

I was raised in a loving family that instilled values of kindness and compassion. However, I was not a practicing Catholic like my parents. I went for Mass about twice a month or whenever I felt like. So, after that fateful meeting with the chaplain, I got so disturbed and really wanted to know what it felt like to be called by God. I started going more often to the chapel to pray and also spoke with the priest more often. Each meeting had me longing for more.

That longing to know Christ on a deeper level compelled me further to explore the Catholic faith. I was also encouraged by the sense of belonging and warmth of the chapel

community and my journey to embrace the faith began with tons of Catechism classes. A Maths lecturer, Ms Akudo, offered to give me catechism classes. At first, the classes were no different from my Theology lectures (all first year students take a course titled “Introduction to Christian Theology”), but as time passed, I realized that these classes touched other fundamental teachings and gave me practical guidance. They fostered a personal understanding and integration of faith into my daily life. I got to challenge, discuss and understand certain teachings of the church.

On Divine Mercy Sunday this year, which was a week before my birthday, I got the best present ever – I got baptized. It felt weird, but in a way, solemn and peaceful. As the waters of baptism touched my forehead, I felt a special kind of peace – one I have never felt before.

The words spoken during the ceremony also resonated deeply within me. I also received the body of Christ for the first time in the same ceremony.

Prior to my baptism, I had always longed for when I would partake in that indescribable intimacy with Christ in the Eucharist, but I could only sit and pray along. So, when I finally got to receive the Eucharist for the first time, it was in the most memorable way ever. There were four of us baptized on this day, all students. We received the Holy Eucharist in the two species of bread and wine. I joined my family to partake in the sacred mystery of Christ's love and sacrifice!

Since my baptism and First Holy Eucharist, my life has been transformed. The sacraments have become the foundation of my spiritual life, guiding me through

challenges and joys. I find solace in prayer, and the teachings of Jesus inspire me to love unconditionally and serve others with kindness.

My journey of faith has been a testament to the transformative power of God's love and grace. Embracing the faith has brought profound joy, a sense of purpose, and an unwavering trust in God's plan for me. I hope to receive the sacrament of Confirmation from the archbishop in November this year. I am excited to continue growing in my relationship with God and to share the love and compassion that I have found on this sacred journey.

I am eternally grateful to my family, my friends, the school chaplain, my godparents, and the school Catholic community for supporting me wholeheartedly on this journey. I hope my testimony will inspire others to explore and embrace their

faith journey with openness and sincerity, knowing that God's love is ever-present, guiding us home.

My baptism name is Nina – the one whom God has been gracious to, and has granted countless favours.

"You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you." – St. Augustine
