



Interviewer – **Would you share a bit about your background: family, childhood, early education etc.?**

Fr. Benard – I was born in 1977 into a very strong Catholic family in Kenya and was the third of six boys. There were four other boys who died at a very young age. Immediately after my First Holy Communion, I became an altar boy and during this time I was influenced by the sisters who were residing and working in the parish. From a young age, I had been interested in the priesthood. I was also fortunate enough to attend a Catholic high school.

**- Where/how did your Assumptionist roots begin? Did anyone in particular have a significant impact on your life?**

- Initially, it was my family, parish and the Franciscan Sisters of St. Anna who influenced my faith and encouraged a devotion to Mary and the Rosary. They wholeheartedly supported my interest in priesthood. At 19 years of age, I obtained a booklet on all congregations and attended an 'Come and See' weekend in Nairobi where I met Fr. Richard Brunelle, A.A. Twelve of us attended but only two of us were invited to begin the discernment process. Up until that time I did not know the difference between diocesan priesthood and those belonging to religious congregations.

**- Would you share some of your later education and formation memories?**

– I entered the community in 1998 and began my philosophy studies in Nairobi with five others but eventually four of them left and I was alone. Because of the need to separate the philosophy house from theology, I moved to our house in Tanzania with Fr. Richard and Fr. Oliver Blanchette, A.A. to establish the first community of philosophy and where I finished my last year of philosophy. I was then sent of Democratic Republic of Congo at Katendere – Kyondo parish of the immaculate Conception for my eight months as a postulant. My novitiate was in Butembo at St. Charles Lwanga form 2002-2003. What was most challenging for me in the Congo was learning French, as I was most familiar with English coming from Kenya. After novitiate I went back to Nairobi to do theology and finished in 2006. After theology, I went to St. Monica’s Parish in Nairobi. From there, I moved to Kinshasa in the Congo for three months and was finally professed in 2007. My next assignment was to attend the Catholic University in Nairobi to study education which I finished in 2009 and was ordained a deacon the same year. I was then assigned to Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Arusha, Tanzania for one and a half years of teaching. Ordained in 2011, I moved to our theology house, in Nairobi as treasurer until 2016 and St. Monica’s until 2018. Now I am living at Pavel House in Brighton and studying at the Lynch School of Education at Boston College with a focus on leadership.

**- What other interests or hobbies do you have?**

– I enjoy reading and have an interest in diversity of cultures and the marginalized. While I enjoy community life, I am a shy person and appreciate quiet and solitude.

**- What is your vision or hope for the future of the congregation and/or the Church?**

– I pray that we all continue to grow in our faith that we may become a stronger witness to Christ and His gospel, as a congregation and Church. This is a life – long discernment process.