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# Aboriginal to become priest

By ALAN GILL,  
Church Reporter

Australia's first Roman Catholic Aboriginal priest will be ordained in Broome, Western Australia — his home town — on May 17.

Deacon Patrick Dodson, 27, a member of the Yaro tribe, has three brothers and three sisters, all of whom will be at the ordination by the Bishop of the Northern Territory, the Most Rev John O'Loughlin.

Patrick's parents are dead but his grandfather, Mr Paddy Djadween, now in his nineties, will attend.

Although he was born in Broome, Patrick spent most of his childhood at Katherine, in the Northern Territory, and completed his secondary education at Monivae College, Hamilton, Victoria. The college is administered by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, the order into which he will be ordained.

As a boy, he wanted to be a mechanic working on the great development projects of the north. But he gradually became aware of a drive to help his people more directly.

He decided to become



Deacon Dodson

a doctor and work among his people, but at Monivae College he was gradually drawn to the priesthood.

After several years of seminary training he feared he might have lost touch with the Aboriginal community. Accordingly, he has spent the past year renewing contacts with Aboriginal groups in north-west Australia and the Northern Territory.

An Anglican Aboriginal, the Rev Patrick Brisbane, was ordained at Cowal Creek, in the diocese of Carpentaria, in October, 1970. He died on November 8, 1974. Since then two other Aborigines have been ordained into the Anglican Church.