

This is my Vocation Story

Conor Maher

Community:
Dominican Friars Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

Alma Mater:
Saint Mary's College

Phone:
(916) 914-3889

Email:
conor@laboureaspirant.org

My name is Conor Maher. I am called to serve Christ and humanity as a member of the Dominican Friars. This is my story.

In the Beginning

I am one of three children and grew up in a Catholic household in California. My mom and dad made church a number one priority while I was growing up, and I must acknowledge their faithfulness as a part of my vocation story.

My Faith

If I had to pick a moment where my faith began to really take hold, it would be when I served my first Mass. One day, our family and some others visited a retired Slovenian priest at his house. He'd built and consecrated his own outdoor chapel and was going to say Mass for everyone gathered. He needed an additional altar server and, even though I was technically not supposed to serve Mass until after my First Holy Communion, he lovingly allowed me to serve for him. After Mass he gave us a tour of his backyard, which was like a Catholic Disneyland filled with shrines and statues. I was so inspired by the holiness and happiness of this elderly priest I'd made up my mind to stay there forever, but my parents soon told me it was time to leave and I cried all the way home.

Many years later I visited that priest to ask him how to discern God's will (I was suffering a crisis of faith at the time). He told me only a few people had ever asked him that question, and all of them ended up becoming priests. After that meeting my faith was re-invigorated and I began discerning a priestly vocation.

My Vocation

During my sophomore year at college I attended a discernment retreat at a diocesan seminary. At that retreat I remember being very much at peace with the idea of being a priest. Thinking about the life of a priest - praying the office, hearing confessions, fostering a community, and confecting the Eucharist - was all very attractive to me. It was then that I realized I had to pursue a vocation more seriously.

After graduation I began to attend come-and-see retreats with a variety of orders, as well as with the local diocese. Each event was an adventure - I was looking for where I could do the most good with the gifts or talents I'd been given.



*“I desire to preach,
minister to the sick
and suffering, offer
the Mass, and hear
confessions.”*

—Conor Maher

Since I have an affinity for public speaking (I love talking to large groups about anything theological), a family friend recommended I check out the Dominican Order (also known as the Order of Preachers). Right away I felt at home.

Dominican spirituality is centered on sharing the fruits of contemplation, which implies a balance of contemplative and active lifestyles. It was seeing these tenets in action that attracted me to the Dominican Order. In my vocation I desire to preach, minister to the sick and suffering, offer the Mass, and hear confessions, but that spiritual battery easily runs dry without study, prayer, and community. God willing, I have found the balance I need with the Dominicans. I’m very excited (and nervous), but I know with any vocation where there is sacrifice there is also abundant grace!

Called to Serve

I’m overjoyed to say that I’m now an aspirant with the Dominican Order, but I have a very difficult obstacle to overcome. Due to education debt, at current rates and ability it will be more than ten years before I can actually become a member of the order. Fortunately, my vocation director put me in contact with the Labouré Society. With their help, and the generous prayers and support of people like you, I may be able to answer God’s call in months rather than years.

Prayer & Invitation

I ask that you please continue to pray for vocations. I’ve witnessed first-hand that those prayers are working! To learn more about my vocation story, I encourage you to reach out to me directly at conor@laboureaspirant.org. I love personal interaction and would enjoy getting to know you better as I embark on this journey of faith.

Pictured below: The Winter, 2020 Class of Labouré Aspirants



I am an aspirant of Labouré

I am also a fundraiser for a class of aspiring priests, sisters and brothers. A recent study confirmed that nearly 1 of every 2 aspirants is blocked from entering seminaries and religious communities due to student loan debt. It is the only thing that prevents many – including me – from entering formation to become a priest, sister or brother. My classmates are discerning all over the country.

Conor Maher
Dominican Friars,
Province of the
Most Holy Name
of Jesus

Gretchen Erlichman
Dominican Nuns of
the Monastery of
Our Lady of Grace

Mary Louise Kohser
Disciples of the Lord
Jesus Christ

Damyan Mendoza
Institute of Christ the
King Sovereign Priest

Michael Howard
Institute of Christ the
King Sovereign Priest

Sean Tobin
Dominican Friars of
the Province of Saint
Joseph (Eastern
Province)

Emmanuelle Del Castillo
Congregation of
the Sacred Hearts
of Jesus and Mary
(Sacred Hearts Community)

Buchi Akpati
Discalced Carmelites
Monastery of the Little
Flower of Jesus

Thomas Conroy
Dominican Friars of
the Province of Saint
Joseph (Eastern
Province)

Austin Roy
Order of Carthusians

**Allyssa Hebrado
Fernandez**
Marian Sisters of the
Diocese of Lincoln

Jean Clumson-Eklu
Congregation of
Saint John

Hector Ramirez
Archdiocese of
Philadelphia

Matthew Nordquist
Franciscan Friars of
the Holy Spirit

Cullen Hilliker
Dominicans, Province of
Saint Albert the Great
(Central Province)

Erin Lyons
Sisters of the
Holy Cross

Patrick Kelly
Dominican Friars of
the Province of Saint
Joseph (Eastern
Province)

Juan Pablo Chavez
Archdiocese of
Los Angeles

Elizabeth Luna
Missionaries
Guadalupanas of
the Holy Spirit

Phillip Baker
Dominican Friars of
the Province of Saint
Joseph (Eastern
Province)

Noemy Banuelos
Carmelite Sisters
of the Most Sacred
Heart of Los
Angeles

Tommy Gies
Priestly Fraternity
of Saint Peter

With your help, we will rebuild the Church!

My goal is to raise \$60,000 (the average student loan amount) before June 30th of this year for The Labouré Society, a Catholic non-profit that helps aspirants like me to answer God's call.

Every aspirant has been accepted by a diocese or community and is required to work to liquidate their assets in order to make their own maximum loan payments. Through Labouré, my fellow aspirants and I work together as a class, raising donations which will be divided amongst the class and ultimately applied to our remaining student loans.

We are blessed to have this opportunity to share our love for God, our vocation stories, and to invite hundreds of individuals to support vocations like ours by financially investing in our future and the future of the Church.

Will you join our vocational journeys?

Please partner with us and be part of our vocation team so we can answer God's call together!

Our vocations story videos are online at: www.RescueVocations.org

LABOURÉSM
HELP RESCUE VOCATIONSSM

Why is Labouré Needed?



Individuals discerning a priestly or religious vocation in the US annually*



Are blocked from pursuing this call due to education loans*



The average amount our vocational aspirants in Labouré owe in educational loans

How does the Mission Work?

OUR ASPIRANTS

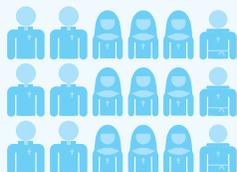
- Are discerning a vocation and have been accepted into a diocese or religious institute
- Are blocked from entering or continuing vocational formation due to student loans
- Are trained by Labouré in Catholic-based fundraising and are provided with practical tools, personal mentoring, and accountability
- Share their vocation stories with thousands of Catholic donors, thereby building a culture of vocations and evangelization
- As a class of 20-25 aspirants raise funds collectively and receive awards from those funds to be applied to their debt

THE LABOURE SOCIETY

- Works with aspirants to utilize all personal means to mitigate their loan amount prior to acceptance into the program
- Trains each aspirant in Catholic-based philanthropy
- Mentors each aspirant to build a unified team; each individual works toward the collective goal
- Provides ongoing accountability and personal guidance to ensure proper preparation and completion of the individual fundraising plans of each aspirant
- Equips each aspirant with an online fundraising platform and multi-media fundraising tools
- Facilitates ongoing aspirant/donor communication and updates after aspirant enters formation

What Has Labouré Accomplished?

320+



Assisted into formation to the priesthood or religious life

\$8.1 MILLION



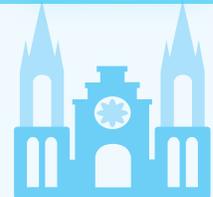
Raised by Labouré aspirants since 2003

PROVEN



In operation since 2003

TRUSTED



Listed in the Official Catholic Directory

* NRVC, Vision Study, 2010

The Labouré Society is a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and is listed in the Official Catholic Directory. All donations are tax deductible. Gifts solicited by our aspirants belong to Labouré and are dispersed upon board approved guidelines to ensure full compliance with IRS rulings. All gifts made to Labouré are non-refundable. Aspirants who leave Labouré are not required to repay any funds disbursed but are strongly encouraged to support Labouré however possible. Funds granted but not dispersed to a former aspirant are made available to other Labouré needs.