

This is my Vocation Story



Fran Masawi

Community:
Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery

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My name is Fran Masawi. I am called to serve Christ and humanity as a religious sister with the Benedictine Sisters of Saint Walburg Monastery. This is my story.

In the Beginning

I was born in Zimbabwe. My five siblings and I were baptized Catholic and raised in the faith. Our family attended church regularly, and participated in parish activities. Other childhood interests included singing, gardening with my family, art, and spending time with friends.

My Faith

From a very early age I can remember being interested in religion. Growing up in a multi-generational, faith-filled family that prayed together made a big impression on me. As a teenager I began to feel God was calling me to religious life, and I felt compelled to respond.

Shortly after high school I entered a religious community, but eventually came to believe that God had different plans for me. I immigrated to the U.S. and pursued studies in the fields of chemistry and public health, eventually earning my doctorate. After teaching high school chemistry for a few years, I embarked on a career in research chemistry.

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—Fran Masawi

My Vocation

As much as I enjoyed my profession, I knew something was missing. I continued to feel God had a higher purpose for my life. I longed to explore my vocation in a deeper way, but work responsibilities always seemed to take precedence.

The turning point came after reading the life of Saint Jane Frances DeChantel. Like me, she had postponed her vocation until the Lord finally spoke to her, simply asking “Why?” Like Saint DeChantel, I could find no earthly answer to that question. After that, my vocation became a priority.



I began participating in parish outreach programs and silent retreats. I expressed to my confessor that I felt called to religious life, but was concerned I was too old for acceptance into a community. He allayed my fears and directed me to the Vision Network, an online resource for U.S.-based individuals discerning a vocation. Through Vision, I was able to explore many different religious communities, but was particularly drawn to the Benedictine Sisters of Saint Walburg.

Called to Serve

After reaching out to the Benedictine Sisters, their vocation director responded almost immediately. We had a very nice conversation over the phone, and she invited me to visit the monastery for a weekend. The sisters were warm and welcoming, and went out of their way to make me feel at home. We prayed together, enjoyed meals together, and even played some indoor games together. What touched me most was their ability to listen. Regardless of whom I was speaking to, they gave me their undivided attention and seemed genuinely interested in my vocation.

“I look forward to taking the vow of monastic life, living the gospel with my Benedictine sisters, fervent prayer, and working together as a community.”

—Fran Masawi

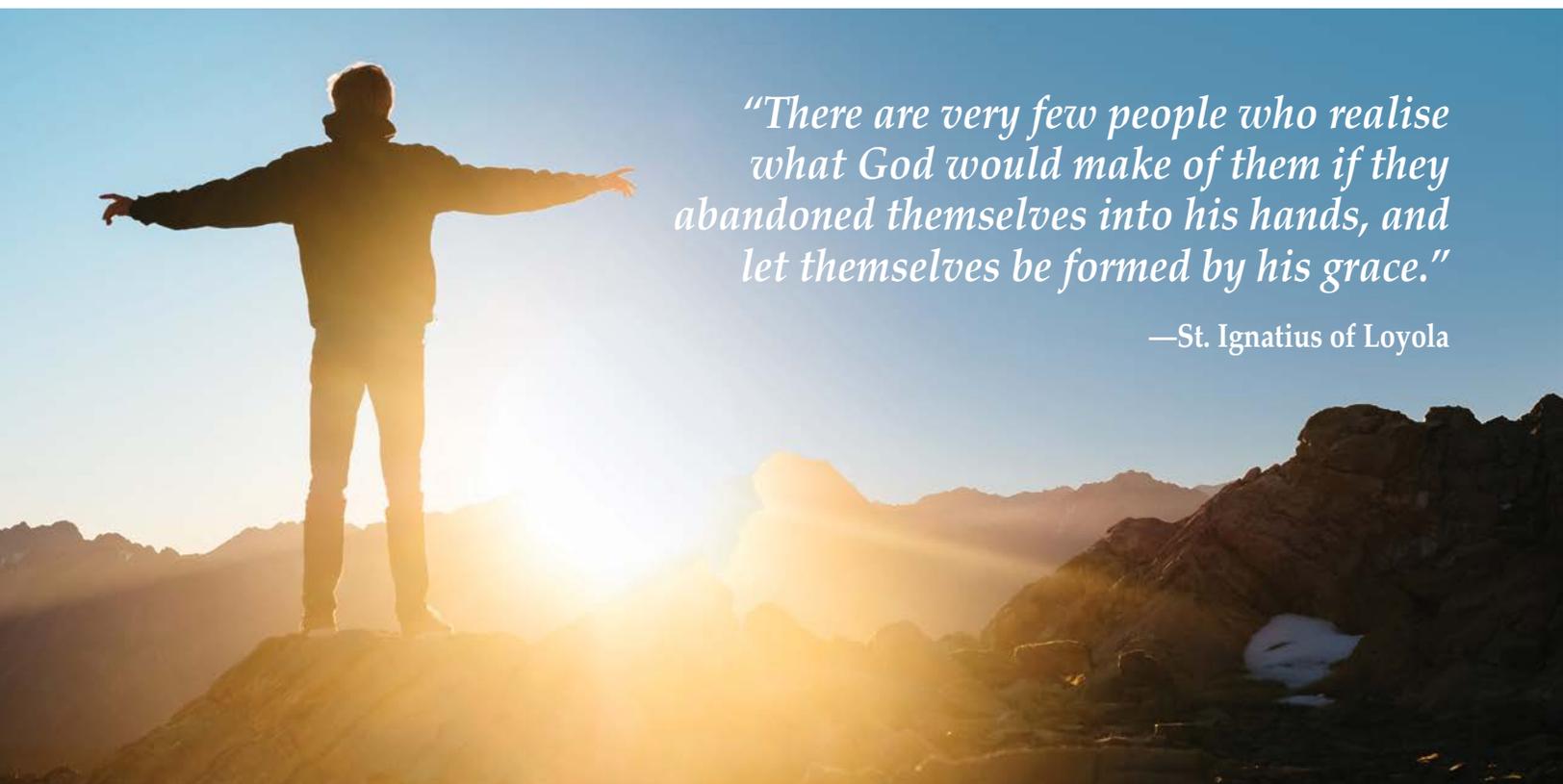
I was greatly impressed by their strong sense of community and the way they manifest Jesus in everything they do. When the weekend ended I knew I had finally discovered my calling. I have since been accepted by the Benedictine Sisters; I thank God for his patience with me and for leading me to this very special community.

I look forward to taking the vow of monastic life, living the gospel with my Benedictine sisters, fervent prayer, and working together as a community.

Prayer & Invitation

Please pray that my fellow classmates and I can resolve the student loan debt blocking our path to religious life. As you know, the Church desperately needs priests, sisters, and brothers. With your help, our class will soon reach its goal of serving Christ and humanity.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions you might have at: Francisca@rescuevocations.org.



“There are very few people who realise what God would make of them if they abandoned themselves into his hands, and let themselves be formed by his grace.”

—St. Ignatius of Loyola

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 from entering formation to become a priest, sister or brother. My classmates are discerning all over the country.

Ron Cuenco
Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land

Hannah Houser
Sisters of Saint Francis, Oldenburg

Jim Musgrave
Archdiocese of Detroit, Michigan

Peyton Kerkman
Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln, NE

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

Richard McAlister
Diocese of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

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

Brittany Behrens
Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods

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

Joseph Lynch
Franciscan Friars of the Renewal

Jean Clumson-Eklu
Congregation of Saint John

Erin Lyons
Sisters of the Holy Cross

Elizabeth Luna
Missionaries Guadalupanas of the Holy Spirit

Hector Ramirez
Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Fran Masawi
The Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg

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

Joseph Silver
Benedictine Monks of Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey

Sarah Huckins
Disalced Carmelite Nuns in San Diego

Victoria Clarizio
Passionist Nuns, Pittsburgh, PA

Tyler Wisniewski
Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

With your help, we will rebuild the Church!

My goal is to raise \$60,000 (the average student loan amount) before December 31st 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 VOCATIONS™

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

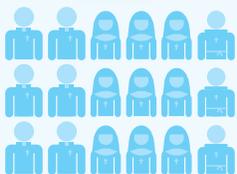
- Are discerning a vocation and have been accepted into a diocese or religious institute
- Are blocked from entering or continuing vocational formation due to student loans
- Are trained by Labouré in Catholic-based fundraising and are provided with practical tools, personal mentoring, and accountability
- 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?

325+



Assisted into formation to the priesthood or religious life

\$8.6 MILLION



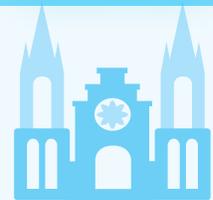
Raised by Labouré aspirants since 2003

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.