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# This is my Vocation Story

Lizzie Kenkel

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*My name is Lizzie Kenkel. I am called to do God's will joyfully in imitation of Mary and St. Francis as a religious sister with the Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln. This is my story.*

## In the Beginning

I grew up in small-town Iowa within a loving home. My mom was instrumental in shaping my faith – she was always the first member of my family in the pew on Sunday mornings, and sent me to a Catholic school.

I learned how to pray at a Catholic summer camp. I was a shy kid, so the counselors were big role models for me. I noticed how at peace they were in the silence of prayer. Their examples prompted me to approach silence as a conversation with God. I experienced God's love in a new way, and began to find my voice. With this newfound confidence, I became an avid youth conference attendee and retreat leader. I busied myself with theater and lots of singing. Yet in my rare moments of stillness, I felt a tug towards life within a religious community.

*"I am so excited to  
give my heart to  
God!"*

*—Lizzie Kenkel*

## My Vocation

While studying at Aquinas College, I began to discern my vocation. I found incredible joy in the invitation to know the One who shaped my heart. I was anxious to love and serve the Lord, and I set my sights on graduating from college as soon as possible to pursue His will.

After I graduated, my mother was diagnosed with cancer, and I spent most of the next two years supporting her through treatments. Around the same time, I began having severe heart problems. My doctors weren't able to pinpoint what was wrong, just that it was becoming unmanageable. I feared I would never be able to live out my vocation.

I was working at my old youth camp when I met several of the Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln. I went



*“I seek to share with others the beauty, freedom, grace and joy of God’s love.”*

—Lizzie Kenkel

on a “Come and See” retreat with them, and was immediately struck by the joy of their vibrant community! It became clear that these sisters welcome every person they encounter with the warmth of the Blessed Mother. The way the Marian Sisters delight in others made entering into this new place feel like coming home.

## Called to Serve

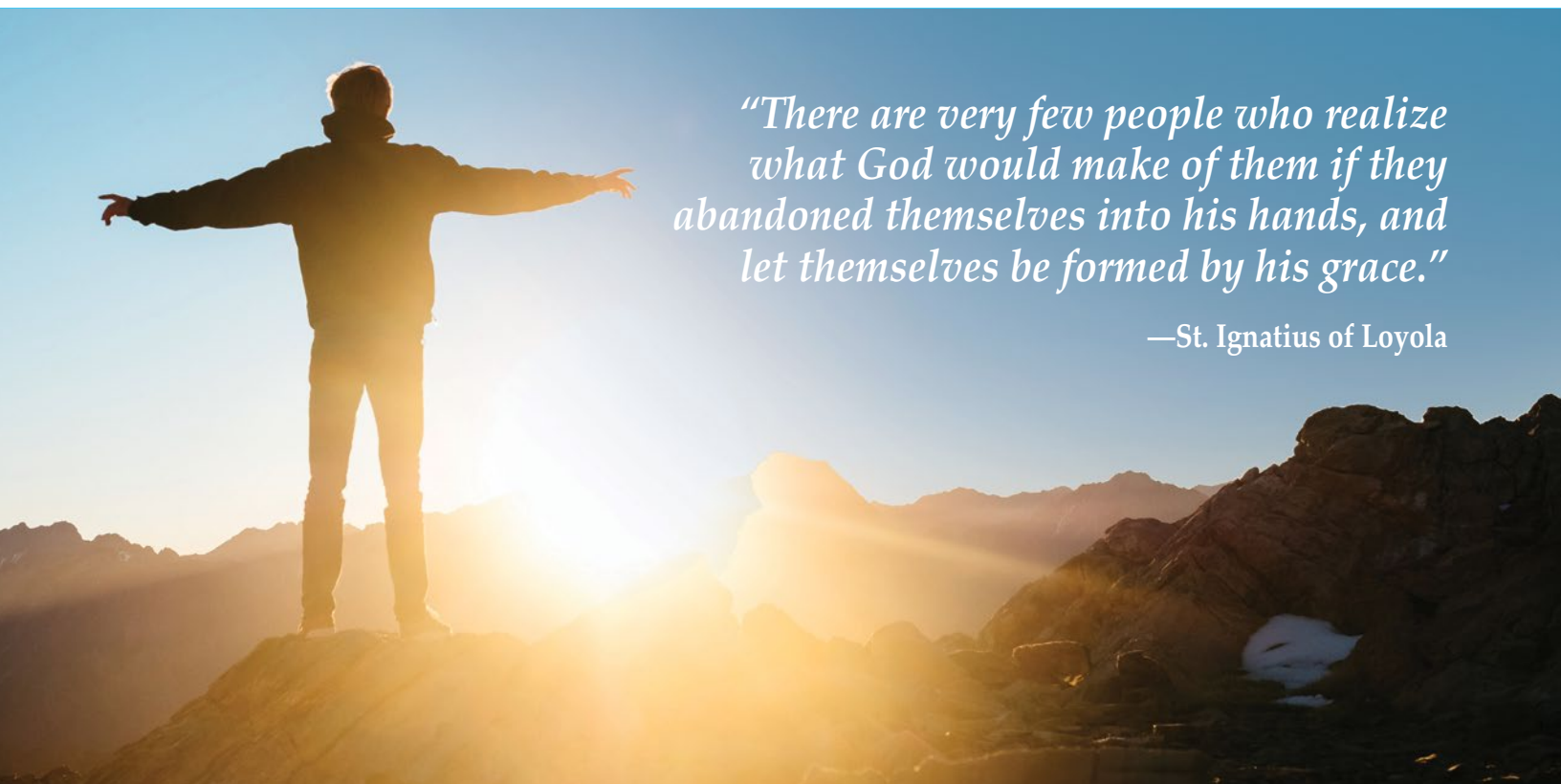
The “Come and See” weekend with the Marian Sisters concluded with Eucharistic Adoration. During that time, I prayed, “God, if this is your will for me, hold my heart.” Shortly thereafter, my doctor uncovered the root of my heart problems. With this renewed hope in my future, my mom told me, “You have to stop putting your life on hold waiting for everything to be okay.”

The more I come to know the Sisters, the more I fall in love with their mission of doing God’s will joyfully, in imitation of Mary and St. Francis. The Marian Sisters live out this charism with such clear intentionality. There is a nurturing love in all that they do - from education and social work to healthcare. I am so excited to give my heart to God! May my life in Him allow all I encounter the opportunity to experience the beauty, freedom, grace and joy of Christ’s love.

## Prayer & Invitation

Please pray for me and for my fellow Labouré classmates on our vocation journeys.

Feel free to reach out with any questions you might have at: [Lizzie@rescuevocations.org](mailto:Lizzie@rescuevocations.org).



*“There are very few people who realize 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

This means that I am a fundraiser for a class of aspiring priests, sisters and brothers. A recent study confirmed that nearly one out of every two 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 nation.

**Lizzie Kenkel**  
Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln

**John Solheid**  
Congregation of St. Basil

**Alexandra Buchmayer**  
Passionist Nuns of St. Joseph Monastery

**Katie Power**  
Discalced Carmelites of St. Therese of Lisieux

**Michael Horka**  
Capuchin Franciscans of the Province of St. Joseph

**Amanda Tennyson**  
Discalced Carmelites of Our Mother of Mercy and St. Joseph

**Antonio La Barbera**  
Diocese of Lubbock

**Noah Marangoni**  
Diocese of Erie

**Kiana Nava**  
Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles

**David Georgeanni**  
Diocese of Trenton

**Brandon Yurcisin**  
Archdiocese of Philadelphia

**Jake Smith**  
Archdiocese of Denver

**Latonja Taylor**  
Poor Clares of Clarisse Monastero S. Maria Del Paradiso in S. Leonardo

**Tony Ramirez**  
Norbertine Fathers of Saint Michael's Abbey

**Dan Rochester**  
Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest

**Marie Arnold**  
Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará

## With your help, we will rebuild the Church!

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

Every aspirant is in serious discernment with a diocese or community and is required to work to liquidate his/her assets in order to make his/her 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 that we can answer God's call together!

Our class video, once available, may be viewed online at [www.rescue vocations.org](http://www.rescue vocations.org). **LABOURÉ®** HELP RESCUE VOCATIONS®

# Why is Labouré Needed?



The average amount of educational loans blocking aspirants in Labouré from answering God's call\*



Many religious communities cannot afford to assume their aspirants' loan debts



Most dioceses will allow some debt but have a limited threshold for acceptance



Supported by 80+ bishops & 250+ religious institutions to help deliver their aspirants debt-free

# How does the Mission Work?

## OUR ASPIRANTS

Are discerning a vocation and have been selected 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, 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 upon joining the program

Trains each aspirant in Catholic-based philanthropy

Mentors each aspirant to build a unified class; each individual works toward the collective goal

Accompanies each aspirant through ongoing accountability and guidance to ensure successful completion of individual and class fundraising plans

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?

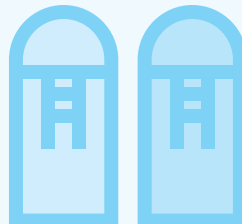
400+



Assisted into formation for the priesthood or religious life

## SEPARATE FUNDING SOURCES

100% of aspirant-raised funds go to the direct benefit of aspirants in the program



Labouré Staff raise separate funding for overhead and general operation expenses

One organization - two separate silos of funds. Labouré supports vocations at no cost to the aspirant or their institution.

\$12 MILLION



Raised by Labouré aspirants since 2003

\*According to 2022 Forbes Magazine, the national average education loan debt can be as high as \$40k. For aspirants in the Labouré program the average debt is \$60k-80k. 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.