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This is my Vocation Story



Latonja Taylor

Community: Poor Clares of Clarisse Monastero
S. Maria Del Paradiso in S. Leonardo

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My name is Latonja Taylor. I am called to rebuild the Church through prayer and penance as a nun with the Poor Clares of Clarisse Monastero S. Maria Del Paradiso in S. Leonardo. This is my story.

In the Beginning

I grew up in Chicago as a Baptist, with devout gospel singers in my family. However, we did not actively practice the Baptist faith. My mom had a beautiful voice and was often requested to sing at churches. Although I did not inherit my mother's gift of song, I did inherit her artistic skills, so during school, I participated in art programs and ran track.

*"My deepest desire is
to serve the Lord in His
Divine Will."*

—Latonja Taylor

My Vocation

Gradually, throughout my life, the Lord brought me closer to Himself through the influence of various friends. It wasn't until after college, while touring Europe, that I was exposed to the Catholic Church. I was impressed when I saw the beauty of many churches and heard about the history behind the Church, priests, and saints. Filled with hope, charity, and love, their stories made me think, "God really does take care of His people." I was in awe as I saw some religious sisters for the first time, and I remember thinking, "How does a person become a Catholic nun?" I never asked, and at the time, I was not sure what their life was like. However, I started kneeling and praying in the churches out of respect for Christ, and thanking God for allowing me to travel and see all the beautiful churches that I had never experienced before.

Years later, God caught me at a pivotal moment in my life. I attended a women's conference where a speaker testified to what God had done for her during her trials. I was moved by her story and drawn by how Jesus impacted her life. I knew that I wanted to know more about Jesus. That night at home, I lit a candle, turned off the light, and meditated. I asked Jesus which religion I should follow. After a time of prayer and research, the question was resolved: Catholicism!



“In His great love, God led me to the Poor Clare Monastero S. Maria Del Paradiso.”

—Latonja Taylor

In 2016, I took Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults classes at the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis, and on Easter of 2017, I entered into the Church. Christ continued to help me grow. Within two years of becoming Catholic, God had me taking baby steps into consecrated life. For five years I searched, visiting many convents and monasteries. After all of the searching, I boldly asked the Lord to help me find the monastery where He wants me to serve Him.

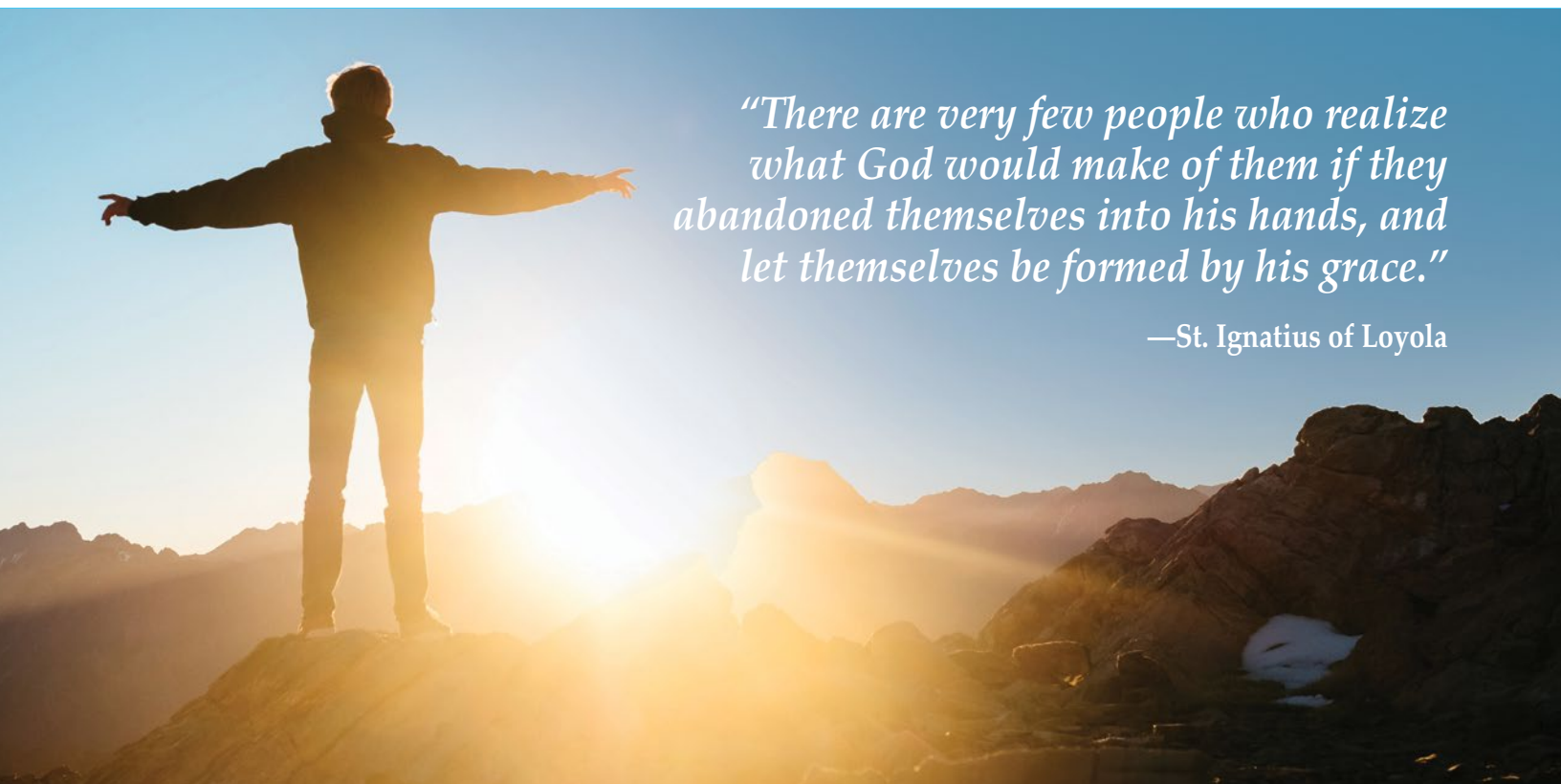
Called to Serve

In His great love, God led me to the Poor Clare Monastero St. Maria Del Paradiso in St. Leonardo. It is the monastery known to pray for souls globally by praying for the needs of the Church, souls in purgatory, and people around the world. Focused on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, I hope to please God through that mission, as my deepest desire is to serve the Lord in His Divine Will.

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: Latonja@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 Yurcin
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 30th 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. **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?

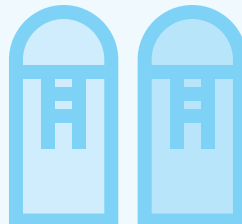
400+



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



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

Labouré Staff raise separate funding for overhead and general operation expenses

\$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.