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This is my Vocation Story

Jake Smith

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My name is Jake Smith. I am called to serve Christ and His Church as a priest with the Archdiocese of Denver. This is my story.

In the Beginning

I was blessed to be born into a Catholic family. We lived a good but humble life, as my parents made many sacrifices to make a Catholic education possible for me and my 11 siblings. Throughout those formative years, I cultivated an interest in math and science and set my sights on becoming a medical doctor. I wanted to help people in need, and medicine seemed a wonderful career opportunity to do just that.

In my early teens, I felt a force deep within drawing me towards the priesthood. I kept these thoughts to myself, but started to experience moments of my soul “catching fire” during the Mass at the words of consecration. These moments continued for a few years, and as graduation from high school was looming, God seemed to be asking me to make a choice: pursue the Catholic priesthood, or continue advancing towards my goal of becoming a doctor.

I attended a Catholic university and throughout my undergraduate studies, I regularly received the sacraments and made lifelong friends through the Catholic Student Organization. God continued to call, and the priesthood was an inescapable theme. In four short years, a graduation was once more approaching and again, I felt God asking me to make a choice.

“By pursuing the spiritual fatherhood of the priesthood, I hope to guide souls to Heaven through a life of service and administration of the Sacraments.”

—Jake Smith

My Vocation

I began to keep God at “arm’s length,” and year by year, my academic achievements and honors grew as my personal faith life weakened. My spiritual life received a huge blow when the coronavirus pandemic began to spread throughout the U.S. and the Archdiocese gave a dispensation that lifted the obligation to attend Mass.

One night, while in my third year of medical school, I was trying to fall asleep when suddenly the thought came that maybe I should really think about being a priest. I almost laughed aloud. It had been nearly six years since



I had defiantly plugged my ears to God's voice. The Holy Spirit led me to make a good confession, and I decided to renew my relationship with God.

A few months later, I was praying in Adoration and asked the Lord for a nudge to let me know that I was on the right path. Just then, a young family walked into the chapel to pray, and the Lord spoke to my heart in a powerful and piercing way: "Be my priest and a minister of the sacraments for that family and for others."

I reflected on the comparison of being a doctor of the body and a doctor of the soul. Even in helping hundreds of people with their physical health, the years impacted are finite. In leading even one soul to God, the results are eternal. Through the Sacraments, in particular Confession and Last Rites, the soul gets prepared for eternity. I responded to this invitation by placing everything I had into God's hands.

Called to Serve

I am blessed to say that God has led me to discern the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Denver. The Archdiocese is my home, and the priests there inspire me to emulate them in administering the sacraments. I look forward to my vocation, and to seeing the lives God will touch through it.

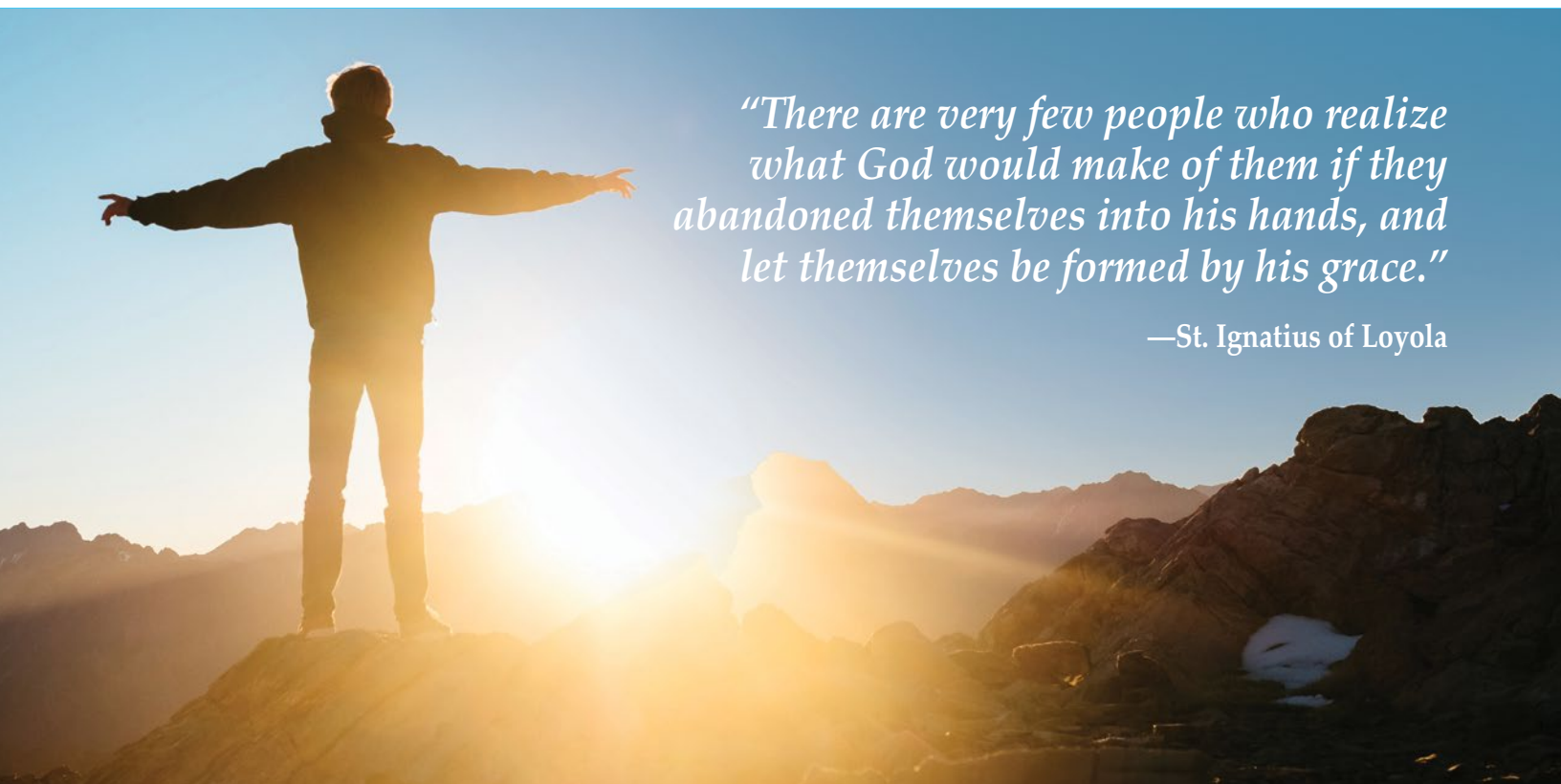
Prayer & Invitation

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: Jake@rescue vocations.org.

"The Lord spoke to my heart: 'Be my priest and a minister of the sacraments for that family and for all my people'....it was time for me to trade physical medicine for the perfect medicine of the Eucharist, to leave the trauma bay of the E.R. for the spiritual trauma bay of the confessional."

—Jake Smith



"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

Antonio La Barbera
Diocese of Lubbock

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

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?

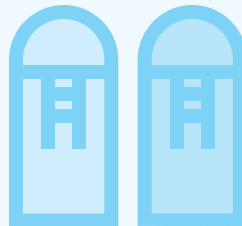
400+



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.