

# DONATE

rescuevocations.org/aspirant/Justin-Hollingshead



# This is my Vocation Story



Justin Hollingshead

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Diocese of Albany

Alma Mater:  
Champlain College

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*My name is Justin Hollingshead. I am called to serve Christ and His Church as a priest with the Diocese of Albany. This is my story.*

## In the Beginning

I grew up in a rough neighborhood in upstate New York, in a non-churchgoing family. Recognizing the impact my environment was having on me, my grandmother enrolled me in a Catholic middle school in a better neighborhood. There, I encountered the Faith and some wonderful, holy men and women. This stirred in me a desire to be baptized, but I was not until much later.

Growing up, I enjoyed science fiction and multi-player video games, which resulted in me forming most of my friendships online. In college, I majored in game programming. However, I was surrounded by introverted, anti-social students. I felt empty inside, aching for community, wishing for someone to extend a comforting word of wisdom to a twenty-something filled with excruciating questions. What was I made for? Why was I here? My grandmother had told me, "Everything happens for a reason." Yet what was the reason? Who could tell me?

*"What was I made for?  
Why was I here?"*

*—Justin Hollingshead*

Dissatisfied, I got involved in stand-up comedy, and switched my major to filmmaking. I wrote a short comedy sketch that I needed to film, which included a scene with a couple whose baby was being baptized. I called local Catholic churches, asking if I could film the scene in their church. Most said no, but the Catholic Center at the University of Vermont allowed me film in their chapel. The night I traveled up for the filming, I felt as if I was doing something that I was really supposed to do.

## My Vocation

At the Center, I encountered a group of Catholic students. I cracked a joke, and they laughed. Everyone there was so friendly to me! Their friendliness touched me in a special way, and opened the door to an accepting community that helped draw me into the Faith. This was the first time I'd connected with students my age. They



*"I want to be the holy man that 'college Justin' needed – a guide for young people confounded by the world...."*

—Justin Hollingshead

cared and met me where I was at. It was the most important day of my life. By the end of that week, I had enrolled in RCIA (the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults – classes in the Catholic Faith). At the 2021 Easter Vigil, I received the sacraments and entered the Catholic Church.

After graduation, I worked at the Archdiocese of New York creating social media aimed at teens and young adults, using humor to draw them to the Faith. I also worked in communications for parishes in the Diocese of Albany.

I met several priests who encouraged me to consider the priesthood. When my pastor invited me to attend a retreat for seminarians, I felt in my heart that I was being asked to give discernment a shot. While wrestling with this, I told Jesus that I'd trust him to help me out, and immediately, I felt at peace.

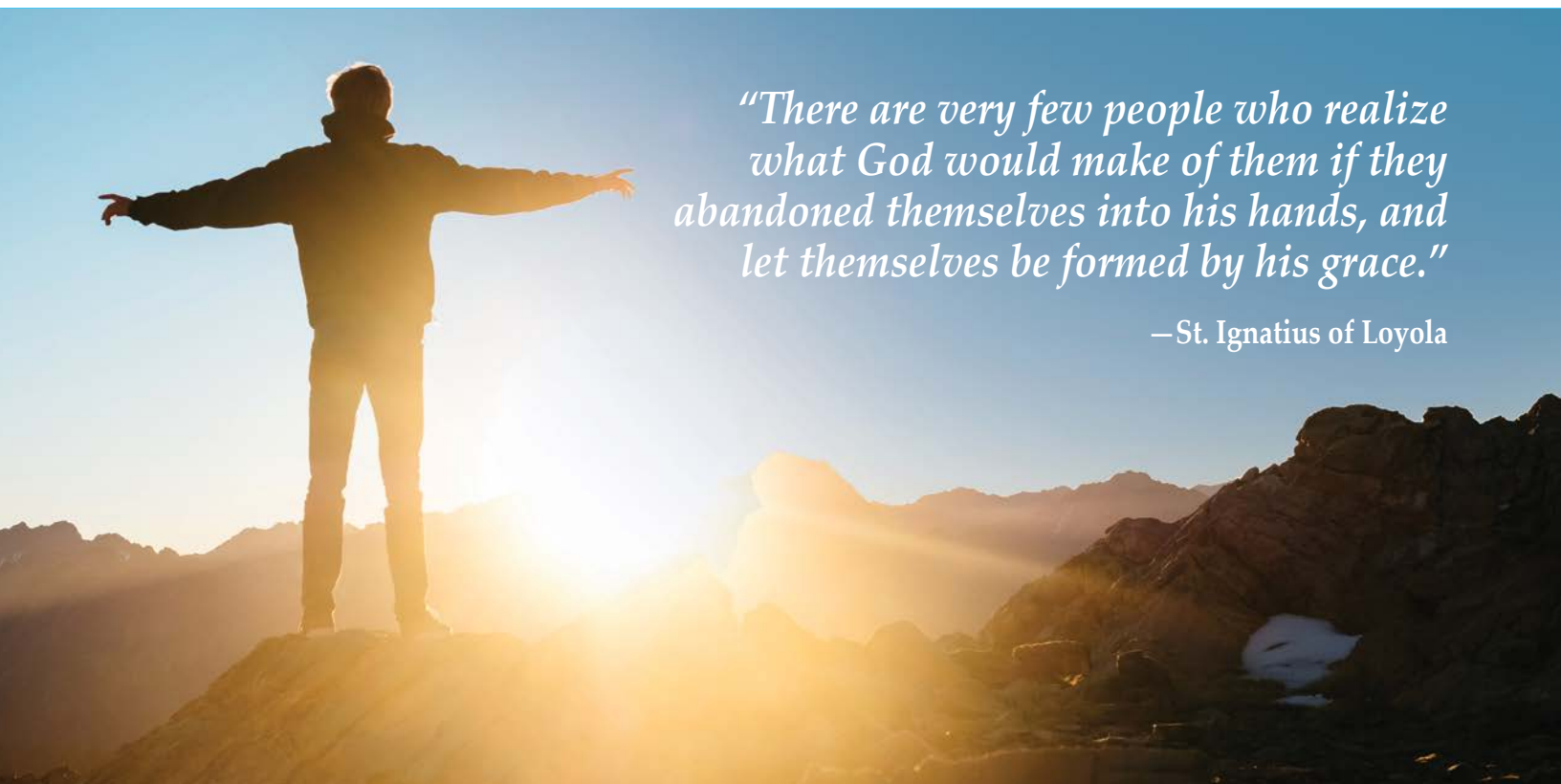
## Called to Serve

Albany is my home. I feel that, by being the best priest I can be, I can be a "little Christ," a conduit for God's grace and healing for God's people, and transform my little corner of Albany. Most of all, I want to be the holy man that "college Justin" needed – a guide for young people confounded by the world, and a rock to lean on for my parishioners and all those I encounter. I want to know that I have made people's lives better, and helped bring them to Christ.

## 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: [Justin@rescuevocations.org](mailto:Justin@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. Many discerners are blocked from entering seminary and religious communities due to student loan debt. It is the only thing that prevents them from formation to become a priest, sister or brother. My classmates are discerning all over the nation.



**Stephen Ferrazzano**  
Diocese  
of Winona-Rochester



**Tyler Martensen**  
Order of  
Friars Minor  
(Franciscan Friars)



**Madeleine McIlheran**  
Discalced Carmelite  
Nuns, Monastery of  
the Holy Cross



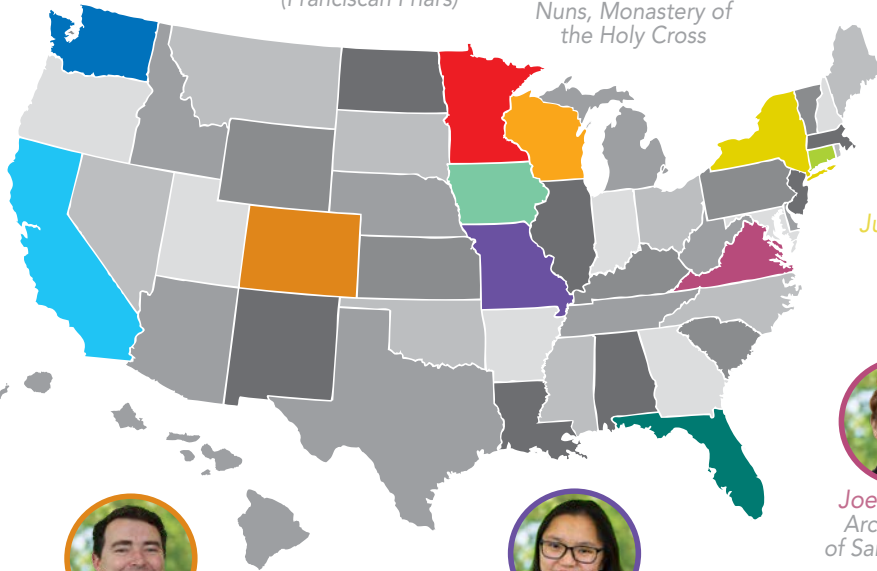
**Becky Hall**  
Sister Servants of the  
Most Sacred Heart  
of Jesus



**Tess Austin**  
Daughters of Mary  
Help of Christians -  
Salesian Sisters of  
St. John Bosco



**Clayton Wise**  
Archdiocese  
of Seattle



**Justin Hollingshead**  
Diocese  
of Albany



**Cristal Quinones**  
Dominican Sisters of  
Our Lady of the  
Rosary of Fatima



**Rosemary Bravo**  
Sister Servants of the  
Blessed Sacrament



**Aislinn Torrance**  
Sister Servants  
of the Most Sacred  
Heart of Jesus



**Joe McIntire**  
Archdiocese  
of San Francisco



**Steven Webster**  
Our Lady of the  
Holy Spirit Monastery  
(Trappists)



**Jake Smith**  
Archdiocese  
of Denver



**Hannah Lifka**  
Society of Our Lady of  
the Most Holy Trinity  
(SOLT)

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

*My goal is to raise \$60,000 (the average student loan amount) during this current six-month class of 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 & 300+ 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 and/or formation expenses

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 educational 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?

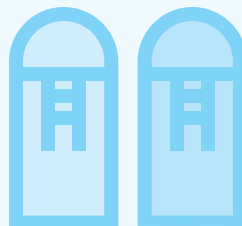
400+



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.

\$13 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.