

# DONATE



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# This is my Vocation Story



Madeleine McIlheran

Community: Discalced Carmelite Nuns,  
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*My name is Madeleine McIlheran. I am called to offer my life in prayer and sacrifice to Jesus for the salvation of the world as a nun with the Discalced Carmelite Nuns, Monastery of the Holy Cross. This is my story.*

## In the Beginning

I was born and raised Catholic, with my family attending Mass each Sunday. Yet it wasn't until I was twelve years old that I really began to understand and appreciate the Faith. It was then that my parents transferred me and my siblings to a small, independent Catholic school where I began rigorously learning the teachings of the Church. I had always been inquisitive, and now, God was revealing to me the truth of Catholicism. This truth resonated with me deeply; I knew it to be true and was granted the grace to accept it as such.

As a teen, I experienced a low point in my life. Amidst my suffering, I knew that I must seek God and follow His will. In His Divine Providence, God granted me the grace to renounce my own desires and choose His law.

I eventually perceived God directing me towards teaching, and earned a degree from the Franciscan University of Steubenville. I began work as an educator, but God had yet to reveal the long-term plan.

*“A joy comes from the Eucharist that is so far beyond any earthly happiness....”*

—Madeleine McIlheran

## My Vocation

A joy comes from the Eucharist that is so far beyond any earthly happiness that it cannot be reasonably compared. Being with Jesus in the Eucharist is like having a weight lifted off of me that I didn't even know was there until it was lifted.

It was in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament when I first heard God calling me to be a nun. I had been asking God to show me my vocational call, having decided that I would do whatever He asked. However, I had thought that call would be marriage so I was surprised. I objected at first, but when He reminded me of my commitment to follow Him, I said yes.



*“I desire to join the Carmelite nuns in living a life of prayer, service, and obedience to God”*

—Madeleine McIlheran

Even after sensing God’s vocational call for my life, I wasn’t at all sure to which religious community He might be calling me. I asked Him in prayer and waited for clarification. This clarification came in phases over time: first the specific call to be a cloistered, Carmelite nun, then hearing guidance to look at Michigan communities, and finally a specific nudge toward the nuns at the Monastery of the Holy Cross.

In visiting a Carmelite community, I was drawn to their rhythm of life. The slower pace is in direct contrast to that of the secular world. The contemplative lifestyle of the Carmelites is lovely and peaceful; it seems healthier than the rhythm of life in the world and more to be the way of life for which we are made...or at the very least for which I am made.

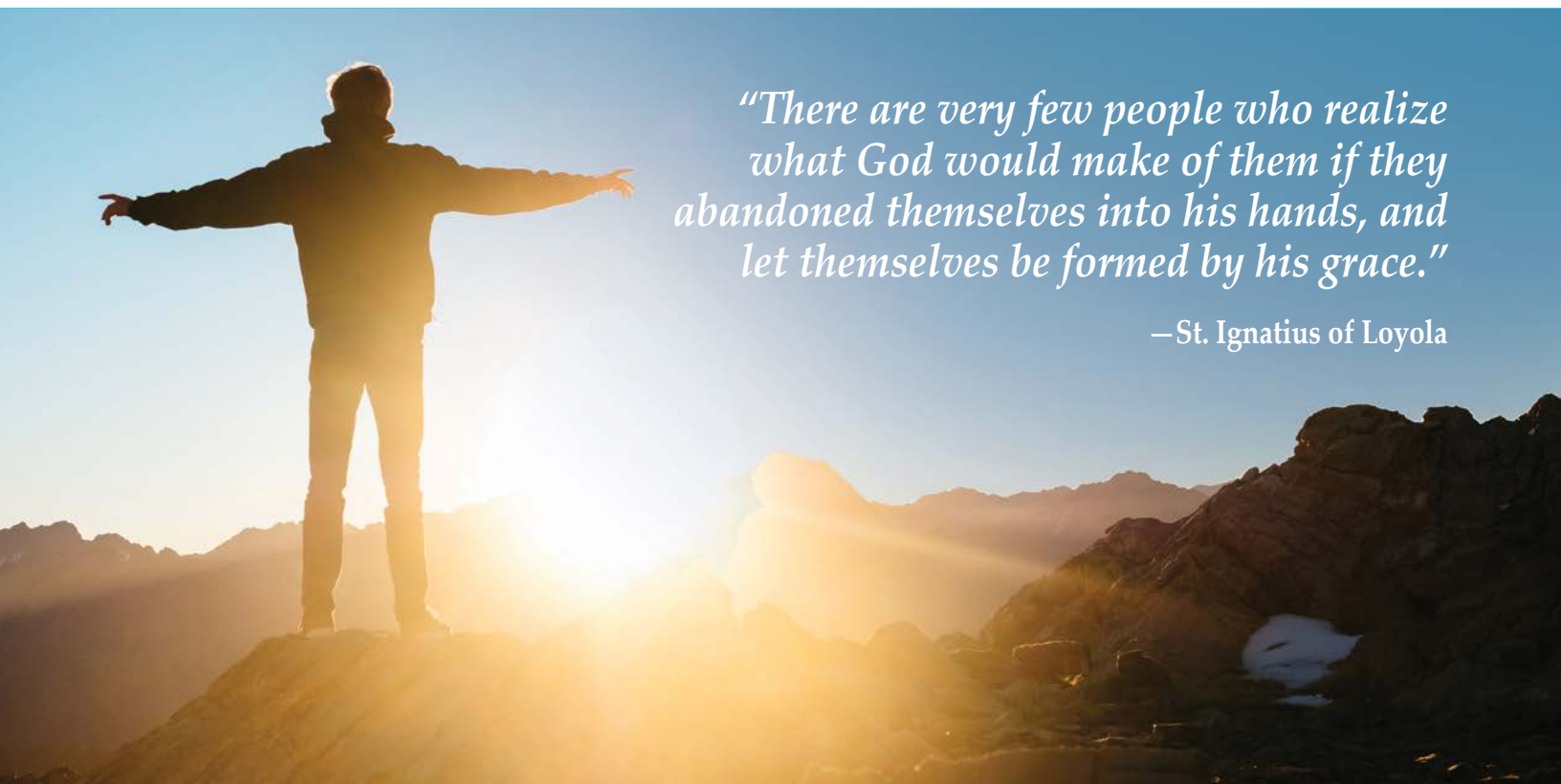
## Called to Serve

I believe God is calling me to life as a Carmelite nun. The Carmelites adore Jesus in the Eucharist; I love Jesus and want to make Him happy, and I seek to focus on Him all the time because He deserves it. The Carmelite nuns offer themselves to God through their hidden life of prayer and sacrifice so that souls may be saved. I desire to join them in this mission, living a life of prayer, service, and obedience to God.

## 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: [Madeleine@rescuevocations.org](mailto:Madeleine@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



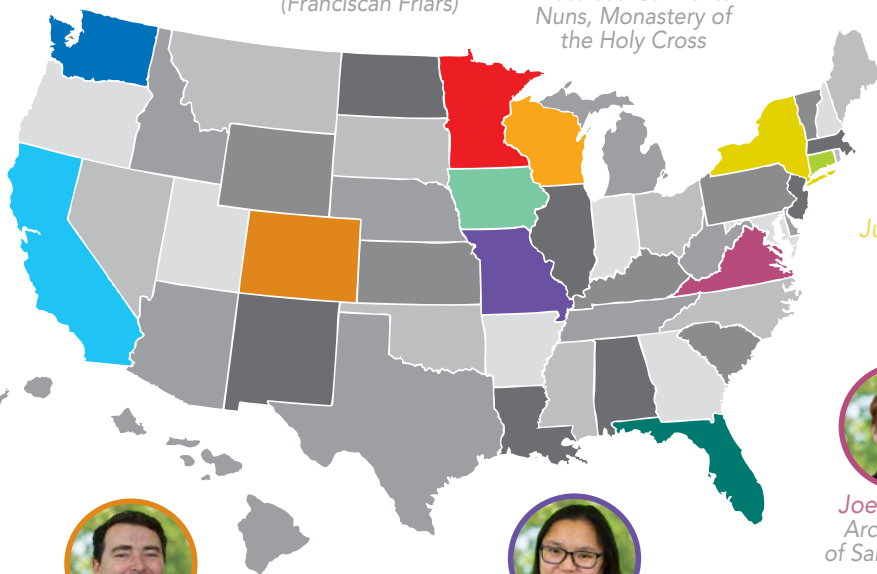
**Becky Hall**  
Sister Servants of the  
Most Sacred Heart  
of Jesus



**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.rescuevocations.org](http://www.rescuevocations.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?

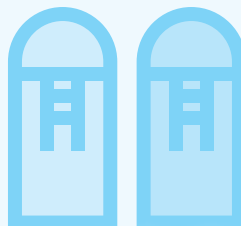
400+



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.