



This is my Vocation Story

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My name is Matt Gibson. I am called to serve Christ and His Church as a priest with the Archdiocese of Chicago. This is my story.

In the Beginning

Though I was raised Catholic, it was not until my senior year of high school that my faith life began to grow. Moved by the idea that God loved me no matter what, I began to attend Mass every Sunday.

Once I started college, I got involved with our Newman Center, went on my first-ever retreat, and had my first personal encounter with God. I developed a prayer life and began to frequent Mass, adoration, and confession. Additionally, I helped start a Bible Study. Despite all these good things, I was not yet fully committed to Christ and was lured into the sins of college culture. As I finished my undergraduate degree, I felt faced with a decision. Would I keep living a double life, or fully commit to Christ? By the grace of God, I chose Christ.

*“Jesus became the center
of my life...”*

—Matt Gibson

My Vocation

I started praying a holy hour and going to Mass every day. The graces that flowed from daily Mass, regular confession, and regular adoration completely changed my life. Jesus became the center of my life, with the desire to have all of my thoughts, prayers, desires, words, and actions be in conformity with the will of God and His Catholic Church.

A little over a month before the end of graduate school, I went on a mission trip to Guyana with the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS). That mission trip served as a springboard into my total surrender to God, and planted the seed for my discerning the priesthood. While in Guyana, the mother superior of the order of religious sisters with whom we were working sat down with me at dinner one night and told me that I should consider the priesthood. This conversation stuck with me. While, intellectually, I was not interested in the priesthood, this genuine invitation from Mother Superior took root in my heart.



*"I want to be that priest
consecrated by God
to bring Jesus to the
people."*

—Matt Gibson

Four weeks later, with this conversation still lingering in my heart, I went to Holy Thursday Mass. A year and a half later, I can still recall the burning sensation in my heart during the consecration that night; the pew I was sitting in; the angle I was looking at the altar. I wanted to be at that altar. I wanted to be that priest who, despite his meager hands and meager sacrifice, was consecrated by God to bring us into the sacrifice at Calvary, to bring Jesus to the people. In that moment, the seeds planted in Guyana began to sprout. This marked the beginning of my active consideration of the priesthood.

Called to Serve

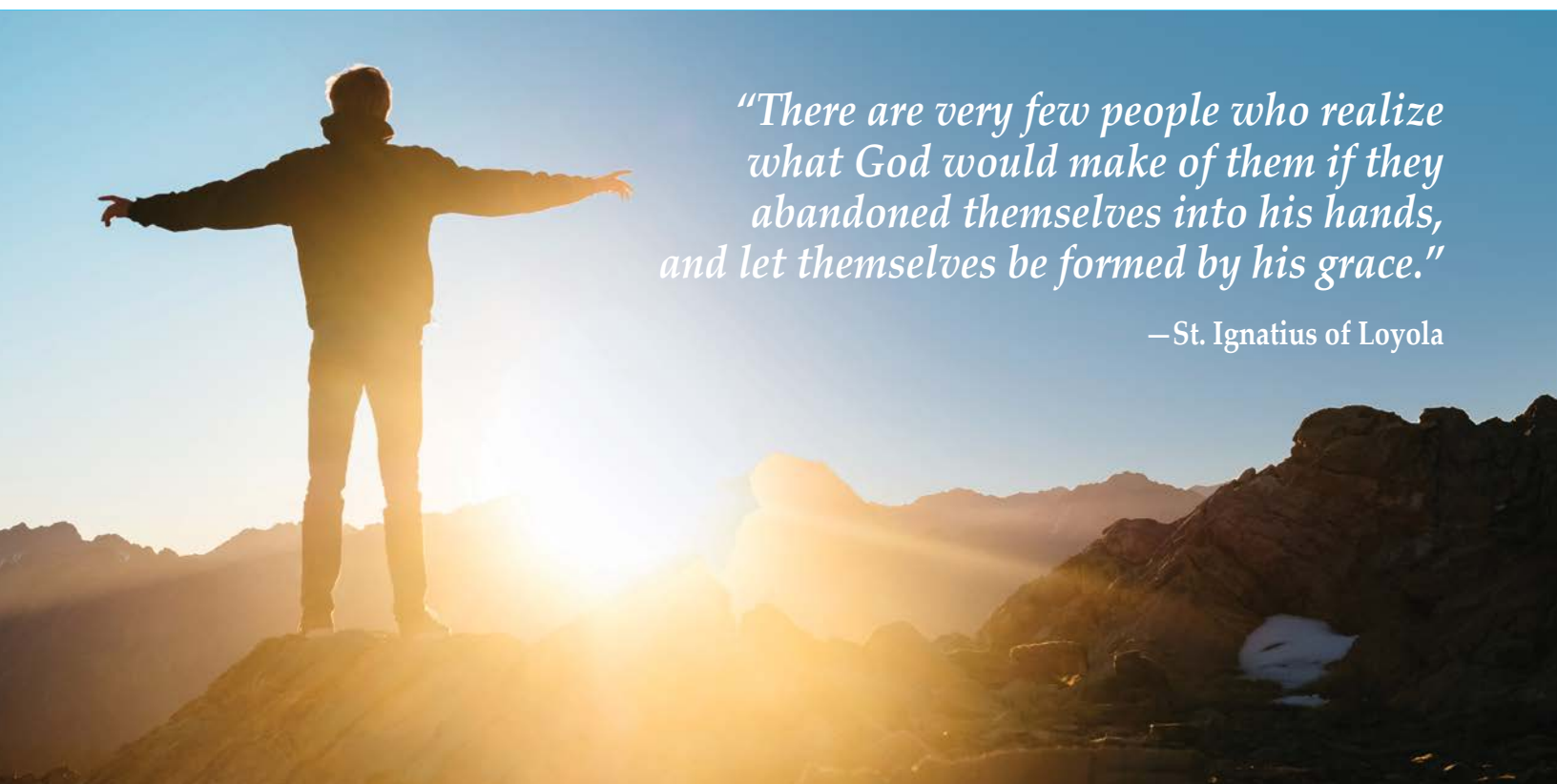
My discernment journey has continued to strengthen my call to the priesthood. The flame that began in my heart during that Holy Thursday Mass, when God granted me a glimpse of the veil between Heaven and Earth being lifted, remains burning within me.

Bringing Christ into the life of a parish community excites me. As a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago, I would enter into all of life's moments, big and small: the birth of a child into the family of God; a parent's concern for their child moving to college; the suffering of illness; the passing of a loved one; the daily choice of pursuing the Lord in everyday life. This is the mission I seek to serve: ministering to God's people in their day-to-day lives within a parish community.

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:
MattGibson@rescuevocations.org.

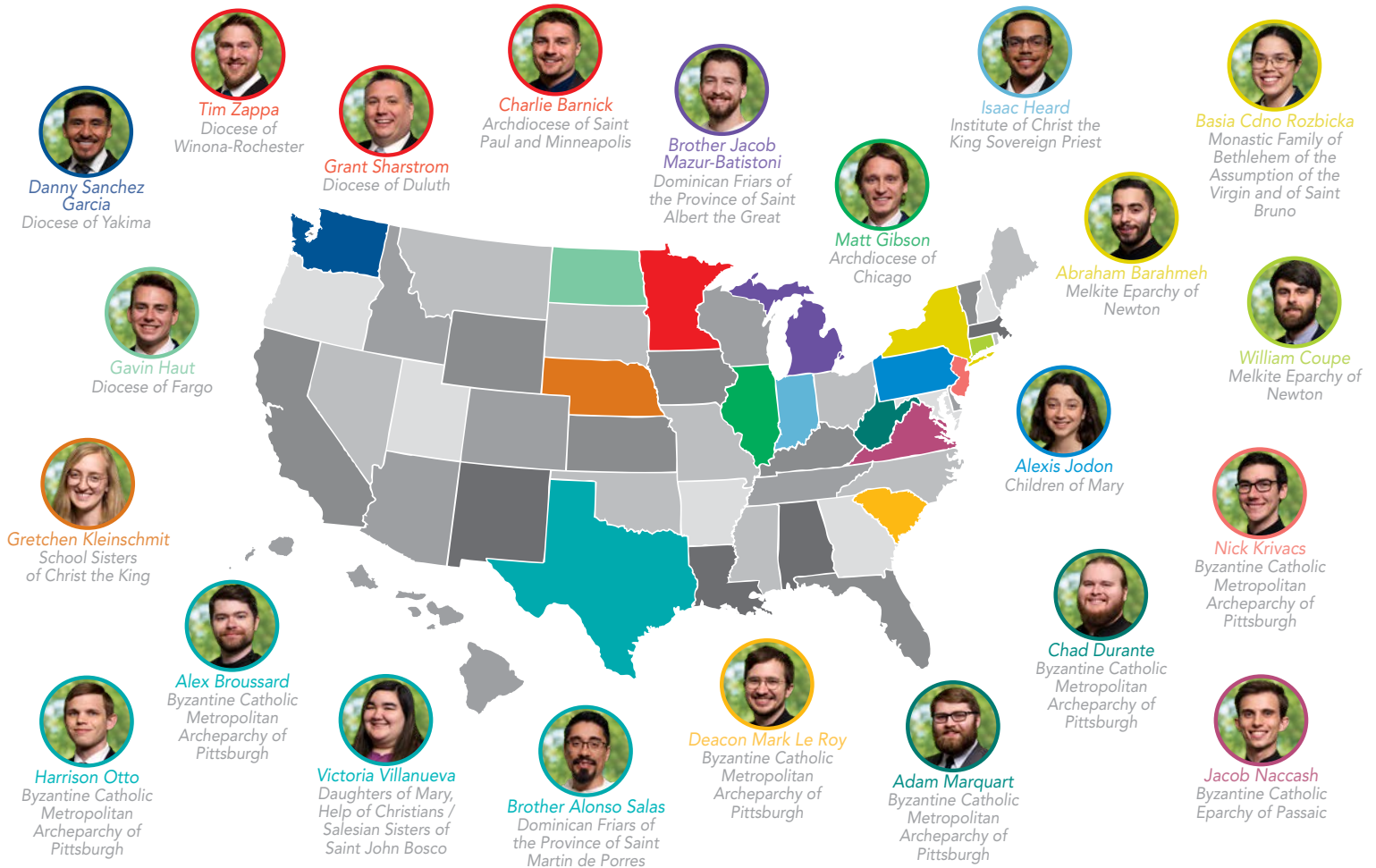


*"There are very few people who realize
what God would make of them if they
abandoned themselves into his hands,
and let themselves be formed by his grace."*

—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 pursuing seminary / religious formation due to student loan debt - and that's not the only obstacle. Many of our religious institutions struggle to pay for candidates' seminary / formation. My classmates are discerning all over the nation.



With your help, we will rebuild the Church!

My goal is to raise \$40,000 during this current 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 / eparchy 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 debt blocking aspirants in Labouré from answering God's call*



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



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



Rising formation costs often limit missionary activities and care of aging priests and religious.

How does the Mission Work?



Are discerning a vocation and have been selected into a diocese / eparchy 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



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?

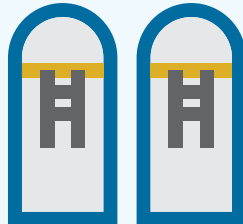
430+ INSTITUTIONS



Supported by 350+ religious institutions & 80+ bishops to help deliver their aspirants debt-free

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 425 Labouré aspirants assisted into formation for the priesthood or religious life 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 \$80k-100k. 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 program needs.