

# Will you join my Vocation Journey?



| Community: Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph | Alma Mater: Cornell University  
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*My name is Ezra Mwaura. I am discerning a call to serve Christ and His Church as a priest with the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. This is my story.*

## In the Beginning

I was born in Kinangop, Kenya to a devout Catholic family and into a tight-knit community. Though I was a rambunctious and mischievous child, those years were filled with joy.

When I was seven years old, my family and I received our Green Cards and immigrated to Kansas City, Missouri. We began to attend a local non-denominational church where my parents enjoyed worshipping in their mother tongue alongside fellow Kenyans. Eventually, we returned to the Catholic Church. Through the youth group there, I discovered a community of Catholics with vibrant, joyful, real relationships with Jesus. Following Confirmation, I attended a youth conference at which I encountered the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist on a deep, personal level for the first time.

## The Call

Following the youth conference, my Catholic friends and I formed a group focused on spiritual support and discernment. This group laid the foundation for me to begin understanding the importance of spiritual brotherhood.

At college, though, I strayed from the Faith. Despite efforts to fill the emptiness within, I was left feeling broken and alone. Eventually, my soul broke under the weight of my sins. I went back to Confession, began attending daily Mass, and deepened my prayer life. I prayed that God would do whatever He willed with my life.

When He responded with a call to the priesthood, I resisted. Yet God's calling didn't go away, and though I pursued a career and even considered marriage, I felt restless and lost. My heart was torn between worldly success and this deeper calling from God. I realized that I needed to commit to following God's calling wherever it led.

*“I prayed that  
God would do  
whatever He  
willed with my  
life.”*

— Ezra

## An Invitation

As I follow God's calling to the priesthood, I seek others to accompany me on this journey. May we meet so that I can share more? Until then, please keep me and my classmates in prayer, and feel free to reach out to me at [Ezra.Mwaura@rescuevocations.org](mailto:Ezra.Mwaura@rescuevocations.org).

# Why is Labouré Needed?



Escalating education costs block many aspiring priests and religious 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?

### OUR ASPIRANTS

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 benefactors, 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 LABOURÉ 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?

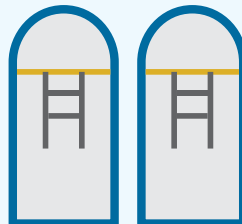
### 350+ INSTITUTIONS



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.

### \$15+ MILLION



Raised by 480 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 Aspirant needs.