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# This is my Vocation Story

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*My name is Fatima Partida. I am called to serve the poorest of the poor as a sister with the Missionaries of Charity. This is my story.*

## In the Beginning

I grew up in a Mexican Catholic family. Our faith was very cultural; it was woven into our traditions, family life, and community identity—yet it was not deeply personal to me. For much of my life, my faith was something I “grew up with,” rather than something I chose for myself. I believed in God and went to Mass, but my relationship with Him was distant.

Just prior to college, I attended a retreat which drew me closer to the Lord. Throughout college, my faith waxed and waned. I studied architecture, and for my thesis, designed a facility for people experiencing homelessness. Through that project, I began volunteering at a local shelter. I became more involved in church and began to encounter the Lord in a more mature way, though I still did not understand where He was leading.

## My Vocation

I had first felt drawn to religious life on the retreat prior to entering college—but I had pushed such thoughts away. Everything changed on a Sunday during Lent as I was about to graduate university. After receiving Holy Communion, I felt a deep stirring in my heart. Tears came as I realized I had never let God speak to the direction of my life. Though I feared giving up all to follow Christ, in the months that followed, in quiet moments before the Eucharist, a gentle phrase returned to me again and again: “I Thirst.” It felt like an invitation to let Jesus into my heart. He was thirsting for me to trust Him and for a childlike dependency on Him.

As I slowly opened my heart to discerning a religious vocation, I attended a silent retreat. During Eucharistic adoration, as religious sisters sat in front of me, I looked at them and something deep in my heart recognized the call. I thought, “I’m not crazy. All these women said yes, and by the grace of God, they are here.”

When I turned toward the altar, a gentle and unmistakable invitation rose in the silence: Jesus asking for my whole life.

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—Fatima Partida*



I whispered my “yes,” and in that instant, a weight I had carried for years finally lifted. The peace that followed was overwhelming.

## Called to Serve

Eventually, I learned that “I Thirst” was at the heart of the vocational charism of St. Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity. At first, I feared that I did not have what it takes to follow the Lord in such a radical way. The Missionaries of Charity serve Jesus through simple and concrete works of mercy. Their apostolates include caring for the sick and dying, feeding the hungry, visiting the lonely, teaching children, sheltering the abandoned, and being present to those who have no one.

Last year, I finally had the courage to go experience the life of the Missionaries of Charity during a two-week visit. I felt at home in a way I cannot explain. There was a peace and familiarity, a sense of belonging, that settled in my heart. Their life of radical simplicity, deep prayer, and joyful service to Jesus in the poor resonates with what I had been hearing in prayer for so long. The phrase “I Thirst” now makes sense. The Lord’s thirst is not only for my heart, but also for souls, especially those who feel forgotten and unloved. I hope to live a simple life rooted in prayer and poured out in love, God willing as a Missionary of Charity. I want to go wherever God sends me, and to offer my life for the poorest of the poor.

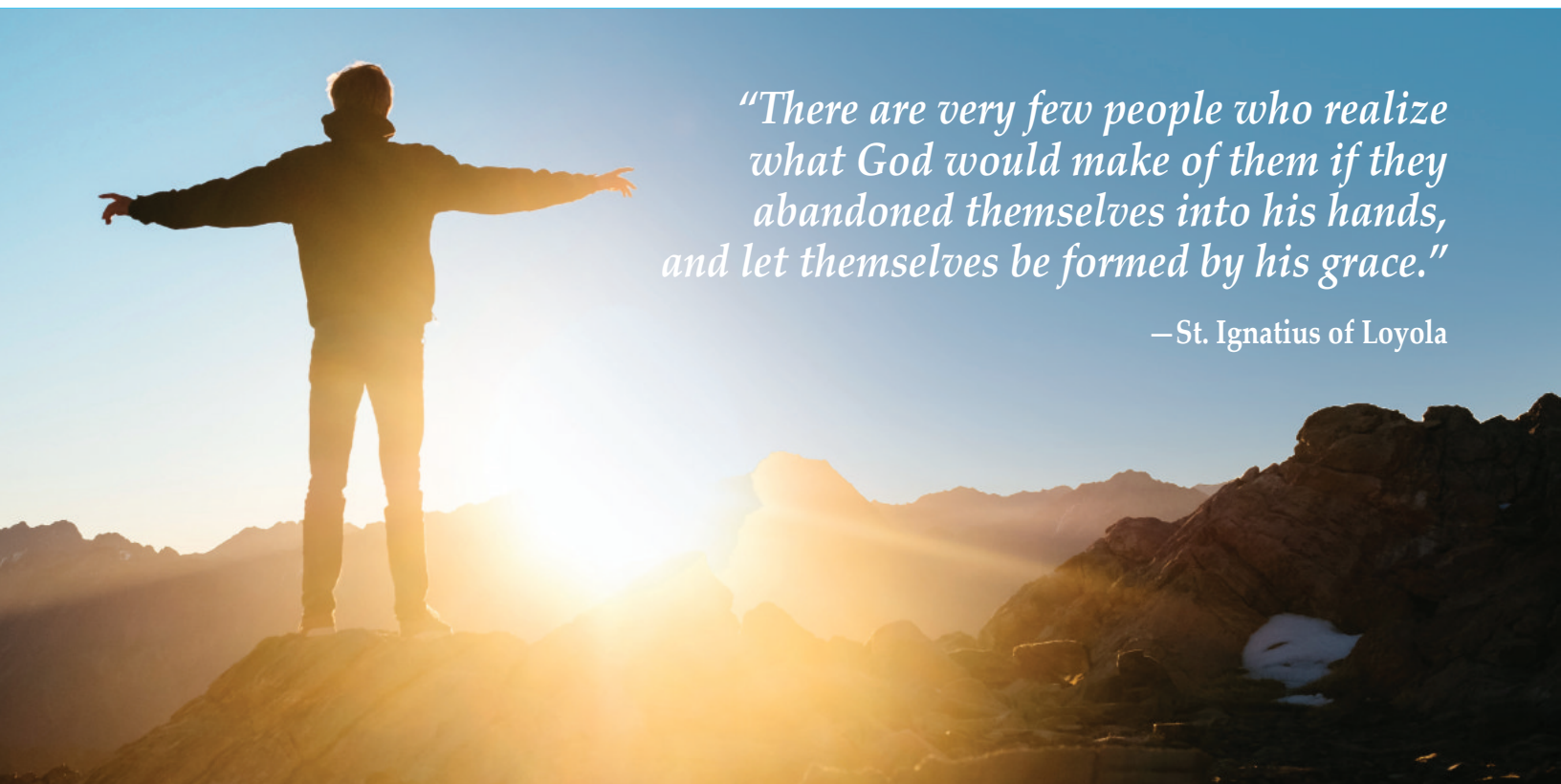
*“The Lord’s thirst is not only for my heart, but also for souls, especially those who feel forgotten and unloved. I hope to live a simple life rooted in prayer and poured out in love, God willing as a Missionary of Charity.”*

— Fatima Partida

## 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: [FatimaPartida@rescuevocations.org](mailto:FatimaPartida@rescuevocations.org).

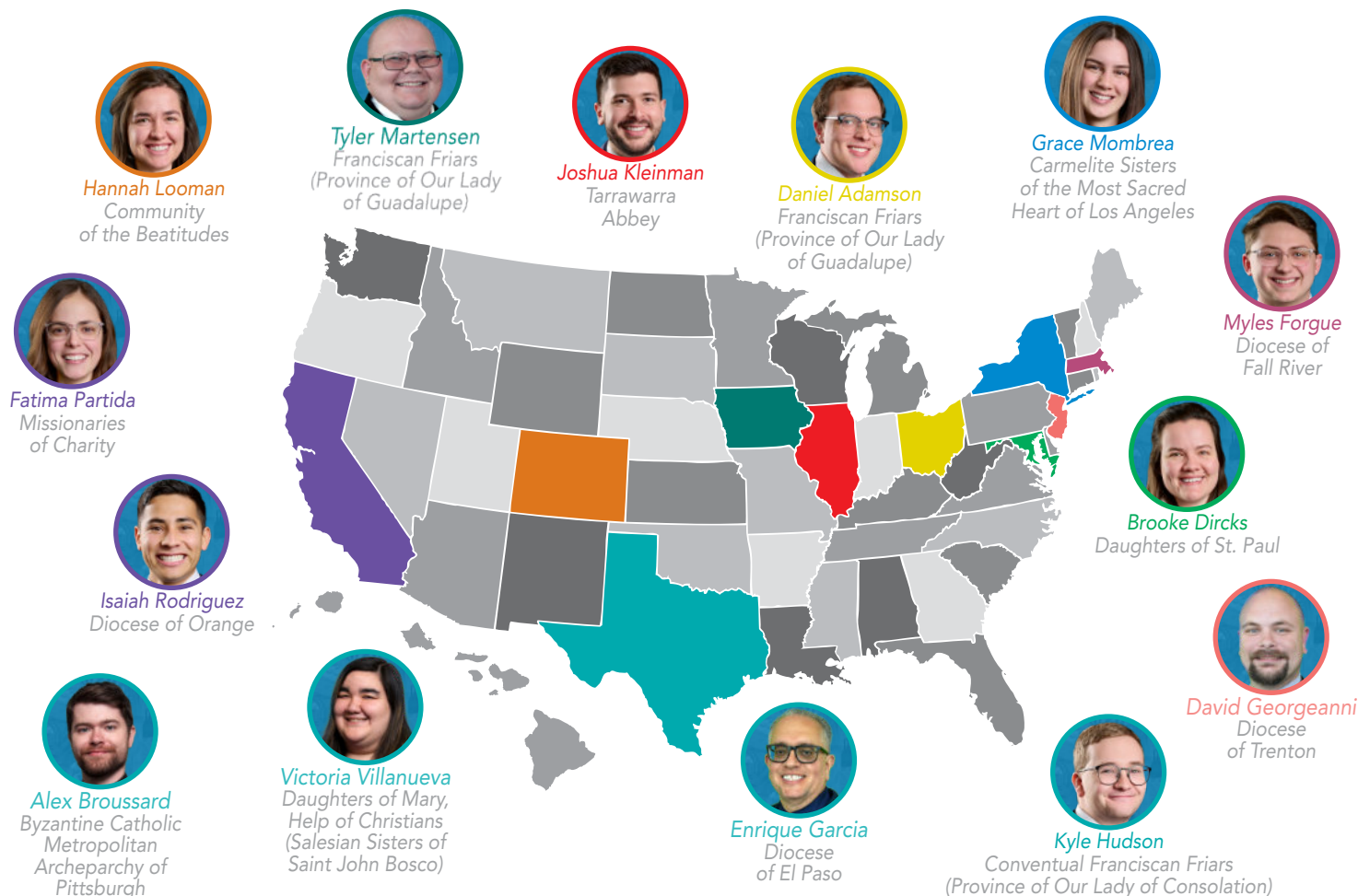


*“There are very few people who realize what God would make of them if they abandoned themselves into his hands, and let themselves be formed by his grace.”*

— 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 / religious formation. My classmates are discerning all over the nation.



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

*My goal is to raise \$50,000 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 education debt.

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?



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?



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

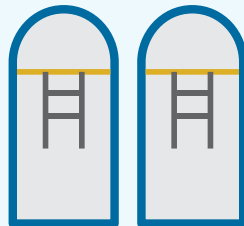
## What Has Labouré Accomplished?

### 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 450 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.