

# DONATE

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# This is my Vocation Story



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*My name is Isaiah Rodriguez. I am called to serve Christ and His Church as a priest with the Saint John Society. This is my story.*

## In the Beginning

I was raised in a tight-knit Catholic family, shaped by generations of faith. Family is everything to me—not just something I belong to, but something I carry with me. The values passed down to me through generations still guide my life today.

During my teen years, though, I began to slowly drift away from God, until life became numb and dark. One moment that changed my life forever started out as a carefree Friday night in college. During a party, one of my friends quietly stepped onto the fire escape. Something told me to run and grab him. Forty feet above the ground, I held on with everything I had. In that instant, the music, the laughter, the party all disappeared. As others rushed to help, one thought kept repeating: *life is precious, yet there is so much darkness*. That night was supposed to be fun. Instead, it became a night of deep reflection...and the moment I decided to take my life in a new direction: a life lived in the light.

*“I became aware that what drew me was not simply ministry, but the priesthood itself. I was attracted to the sacramental identity of the priest.”*

**—Isaiah Rodriguez**

## My Vocation

Spurred by my experience, I sought out the Newman Center at my college. There, I encountered people who showed me the joy of a life rooted in Christ. As my faith deepened, so did my desire to share it.

Recognizing the profound hunger for Christ among college students, I felt called to a two-year volunteer missionary experience that significantly changed my life. Over time, I became aware that what drew me was not simply ministry, but the priesthood itself. I was attracted to the sacramental identity of the priest, to being configured to Christ the Good Shepherd in a lifelong, public way through service, sacrifice, and spiritual fatherhood. In the months that followed, I



noticed a new steadiness in my prayer, a greater desire for silence and discipline, and an increasing desire to place my entire life at the service of others.

## Called to Serve

Reflecting on how God has shaped me, I see how inseparable my story is from the life of the Church. Being formed within missionary communities and surrounded by diverse expressions of faith taught me humility, listening, and presence. The Church is where I encountered Christ, and it is where I desire to give my life.

I want to be a priest with a missionary heart, one who seeks out the lost sheep, walks with those on the margins, and builds bridges that lead people back to Christ. I desire to help create spaces where individuals can encounter the love, mercy, and joy of Jesus Christ... the truest and most fulfilling joy any person can receive. This is the life I feel called to live: not one of comfort, but one poured out in love.

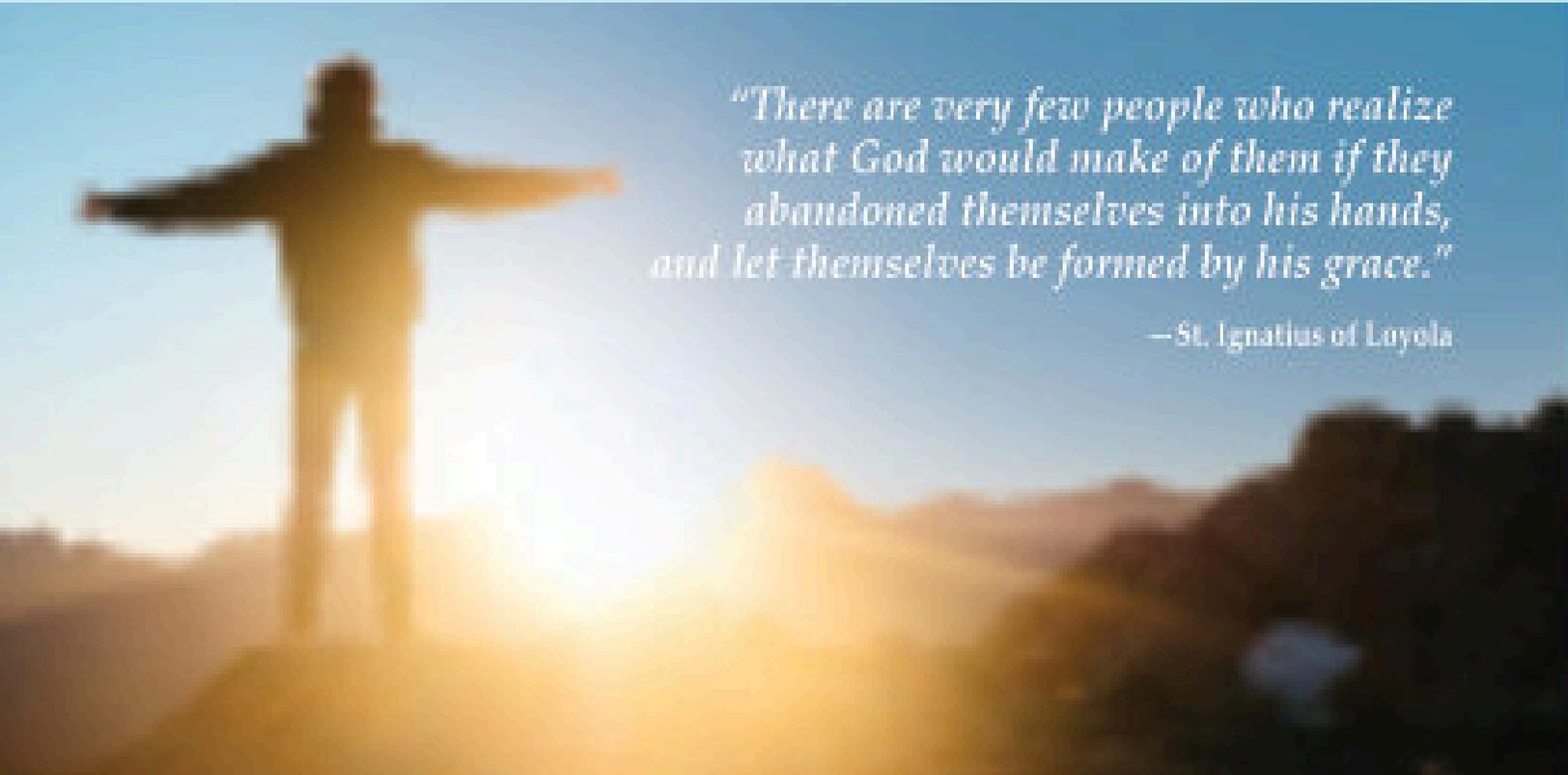
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—Isaiah Rodriguez

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

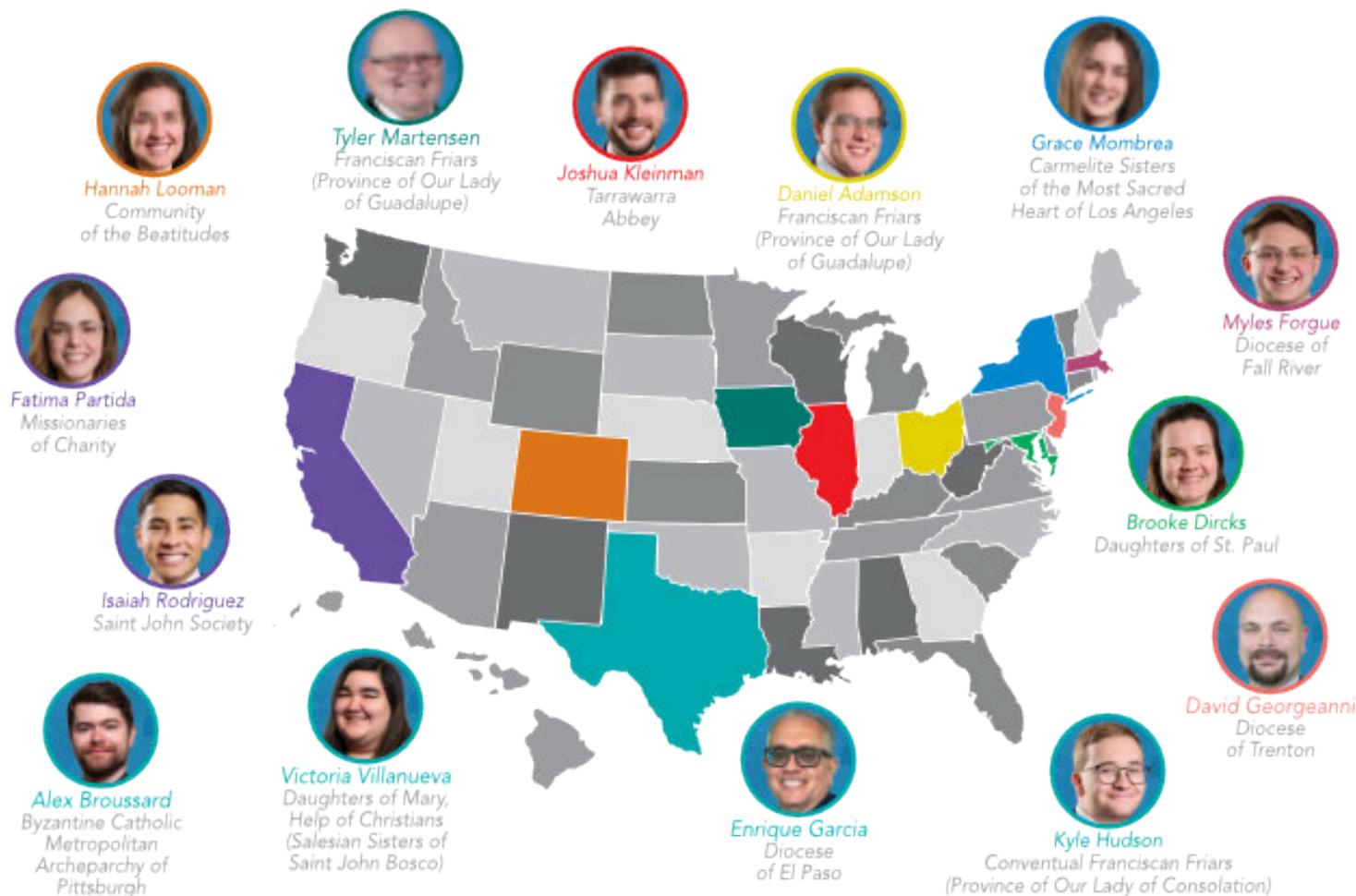


*"There are very few people who realize what God would make of them if they abandoned themselves into his hands, and let themselves be formed by his grace."*

— 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). **HELP RESCUE VOCATIONS**

**LABOURÉ**

# 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 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 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?

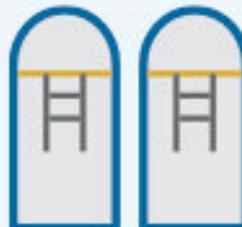
### 350+ INSTITUTIONS



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.



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.

### \$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.