

## About The Labouré Society

### Why are we needed?

- There are an estimated 10,000 individuals discerning a priestly or religious vocation in the US annually
- 42% are blocked from pursuing this call due to educational loans\*
- The average vocational 'Aspirant' in Labouré owes \$40,000 in educational loans + interest
- Most religious communities cannot assume this debt
- Most dioceses will allow some debt but have a limited threshold for acceptance.

\* (NRVC, Vision Study, 2010)

### What have we accomplished?

- Operating since 2003
- Over 240 assisted into formation
- Over \$2.5 million in grants awarded, over 90% of funds received
- A Network of thousands of praying singles, families, religious, priests, & bishops
- Efficient service: A modest staff of 5 employees in a donated office

### How do we do it?

#### Our Aspirants:

- Discern a vocation & are accepted into a diocese or religious community
- Are blocked from entering or continuing vocational formation due to student loans
- Apply to Labouré & meet intake requirements
- Are trained in ethical fundraising - empowered with practical tools, personal mentoring, & accountability
- Share their vocation stories & participate in building a culture of vocations & evangelization
- Raise funds for Labouré to benefit many vocations
- Are granted quarterly loan payments covering their educational loans until vows or ordination
- Receive final loan payoff & enter freely into a lifetime of priestly or religious service

#### The Labouré Society

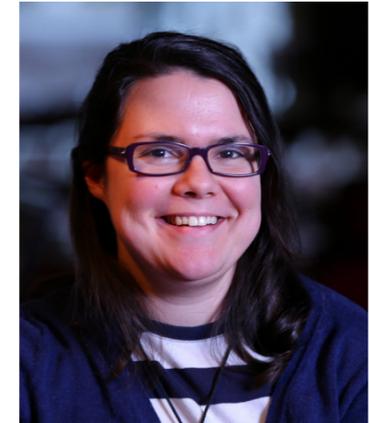
- Works with each Aspirant to ensure all personal means are utilized to mitigate the loan amount (loan consolidation, asset review, financial counseling, full time employment etc.) prior to acceptance into the program
- Trains each Aspirant in Biblically based philanthropy
- Forms a semi-annual 'Class' of Aspirants
- Mentors each Aspirant building a unified team; each individual works toward the collective goal
- Provides ongoing accountability to ensure proper preparation & completion of personal fundraising plans
- Equips each Aspirant with an online fundraising platform for real time donation processing, reporting, assessment of goals & class interaction, marketing & communications tools
- Facilitates ongoing communication & updates between Aspirants & donors after formation entrance
- Manages Aspirant quarterly loan payments while they are in formation
- Completes loan payoff at ordination or vows

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The Labouré Society is a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit and 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. 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 reallocated toward current or future Aspirants according to the aforementioned guidelines.

## This is my Vocation Story



GABRIELLE BIBEAU

**How it Began** My name is Gabrielle Bibeau, and I am 25 years old. I was raised in Indianapolis, Indiana along with my four sisters, of whom I am the second youngest. I vividly remember saying bedtime prayers with my parents and younger sister, saying grace before family dinner, and trying to fit the whole family into one pew at Mass, which wasn't always easy. My parents were and are strong role models of faith--they preached the Gospel of love in their words and deeds, and they always made sure to tell us that we must have Jesus in our hearts.

**My Faith** In a way, my vocation with the Daughters of Mary Immaculate, who are also known as the Marianist Sisters, is rooted in an experience I had as a child. For most of my life, I have felt a strong connection with the Blessed Mother. When I was in pre-kindergarten, I was chosen to crown Mary for May Crowning. Crowning Mary at six years old left a deep impact on my young faith--the sense of being chosen, of being called, awakened a responsibility in me to continue to nurture my relationship with Jesus. I took my faith very seriously for the rest of grade school, but once I entered high school, it became much more difficult to maintain my close relationship to Christ. The cynicism of the world caused my heart to harden, and suddenly, the beauty and wonder of God was not as easy to see as it was when I was a child. It wasn't until a retreat in high school that I realized how much I needed God in my life. This retreat was my wake up call to take ownership of my Catholic identity and to intentionally nurture my faith life, a task I continued when I went to college.

**My Vocation** When I was a freshman in college, one of my friends was discerning religious life and would be living with the Marianist Sisters near campus for a week. This "live-in," as they

*"being chosen, of being called, awakened a responsibility in me to continue to nurture my relationship with Jesus."*

*-Gabrielle*

call it, would help give her an idea of what it is like to be a sister in their community. I decided I would like to do it as well. Although I hadn't considered religious life before then, the week I spent living with the Marianist Sisters sparked something in me. I loved how they played together, how they lived together, how they ate meals and shared responsibilities together. Suddenly, I was thinking seriously about the prospect of religious life, and I began spending more time with their community.

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## Called to serve The Winter Class of 2014



**Called to Serve** Later, I helped lead a Family Retreat with the various religious Sisters and Brothers. I wondered if the experience would make me long for marriage and children instead of Religious Life. What I experienced, however, was the opposite. As I saw other religious sisters and brothers supporting and ministering to these families, I understood much better the role of religious in serving the Laity. Going forward, I see being a Marianist Sister as an opportunity to do exactly what we did on the Family

Retreat--serving the Body of Christ and devoting our entire lives to this mission. At the time, feeling so strongly about my calling was difficult for me because I felt really burdened by my student loans, a debt that the Marianist Sisters would not be able to pay upon entrance. However, I feel greatly blessed, and I trust God that enough people like you will hear my story and help.

**Invitation & Prayer** I am working with The Labouré Society to raise assistance for hundreds of vocations to religious life and priesthood like mine that are turned away because of student loans. Please consider helping us with a tax deductible gift to Labouré. Also, please pray for me and for others who are prevented from joining religious life due to student loans. As a Christian community, I believe that we can solve these problems together, for the good of the Church and the future of vocations. If you would like more information, have any questions or ideas, please contact me at [gabrielle@laboureaspirant.org](mailto:gabrielle@laboureaspirant.org)

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*"As I saw other religious sisters and brothers supporting and ministering to these families"*

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### Why I'm writing

**I am not only an Aspirant to religious life; I am also a fundraiser for these vocations.** A recent study confirmed that nearly 1 out of 2 Aspirants have student loans and thus most communities and dioceses cannot accept them. It is the only thing that prevents many -including me- from entering formation to become a priest, brother, or sister.

**I am seeking to raise the average student loan amount of \$45,000 before June 30 for a non-profit that helps Aspirants like me -The Labouré Society.** I will need donations from \$10 -\$10,000 to meet my goal for vocations. I am blessed to have this opportunity to share my love for God, my vocation story, and to ask hundreds of individuals to support vocations like mine by making a donation, sharing our stories, and remembering us in prayer.

**At the end of my class, Labouré will issue grants based on individual effort and the funds available to Labouré at large.** They will administer the grant while I am in formation and make a final payoff at vows or ordination (you can learn more about the program on the back of this letter). If I leave formation for any reason, I will resume my own payments. Plus, every Aspirant in Labouré has been accepted by their diocese or community and is required to work full-time and liquidate their assets to make their own maximum payments.

**At the beginning of our class, I met and participated in intensive weekend training with my classmates on the ethics and spirituality of fundraising.** We are learning practical skills that will help us now and in our future vocations. We have also developed as a team to learn from and support each other. You can see our picture below.

**Will you join our vocation journeys?** Please Partner with us and be part of my vocation team so we can answer God's call!

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## LABOURÉ

Summer 2014 Class of Aspirants to Priesthood and Religious life.

