



March 1, 2016

Dear Friends in Christ,

As the shepherd of the people of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, I look forward with joy and hope to our achieving together our mutually shared vision to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. In recent years, we have been blessed by an increase in ordinations and by the arrival of vibrant new congregations of consecrated religious. Achieving our vision will require more vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life in the future.

I have come to know the work of the Labouré Society through meeting with two candidates for consecrated life in our Archdiocese who are currently raising funds to resolve their student loan debt. Labouré has developed a proven model to resolve student loan debt, which currently impedes forty-two percent of those discerning a vocation from entering formation. Religious institutes, orders and dioceses are often reluctant or unable to take away funds from their primary missions to pay off student loan debt for their candidates.

Labouré's model teaches biblically principled fundraising philanthropy for vocations, while also giving candidates an opportunity to evangelize with their own stories of how the Lord has called them to a life of service. The Labouré program empowers candidates to resolve their own student loan debt and to make their choice to enter formation in complete canonical freedom. I appreciate that future priests, religious brothers and sisters will enter their service to the People of God, stronger for having had real-world experience of philanthropy and fundraising through their Labouré training.

I strongly endorse the work of the Labouré Society in helping to foster a culture of vocations specifically by removing the barrier of student loan debt from candidates answering a call to religious life. When you hear about or meet Aspirants of the Labouré Society who are looking for financial support, I would ask that you prayerfully consider ways by which you might be able to help them, for all our benefit. As with everything, we continue to pray that Our Lord and Our Mother Mary will continue to provide workers for the harvest.

Sincerely yours in Jesus, the Lord of Life,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph F. Naumann".

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann