




## KEY FINDINGS ABOUT NEW MEMBERS (ENTERING FROM 2003-2018)

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- 1 **ENDLESS CALL:** Men and women continue to respond to the call to religious life
  - 2 **APPEAL:** Drawn by prayer, spirituality, charism, community life, and mission
  - 3 **ATTRIBUTES:** Culturally diverse; embrace intercultural, intergenerational living
  - 4 **LIFESTYLE:** Committed to living simply and in solidarity with the poor
  - 5 **OUTLOOK:** Filled with abundant hope for religious life amid changing demographics

## CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW MEMBERS

**3,500+** NEW MEMBERS  
PAST 15 YEARS; 200+ PROFESSED MEMBERS PER YEAR

**28** AVERAGE AGE AT ENTRANCE

**81%** WERE EMPLOYED BEFORE ENTRANCE

**73%** ATTENDED A CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
FOR AT LEAST PART OF THEIR EDUCATION

**73%** GREW UP IN "MIDDLE-CLASS"  
HOUSEHOLDS

**71%** OBTAINED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE  
OR MORE BEFORE ENTERING RELIGIOUS LIFE

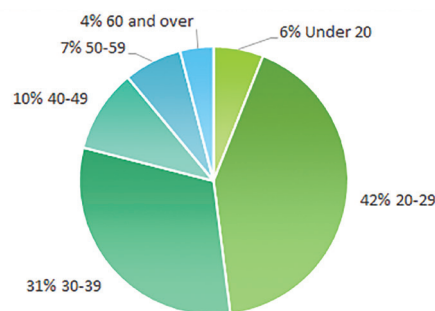
**35%** DISCERNED FOR MORE THAN 2 YEARS

**34%** HAVE A RELATIVE IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

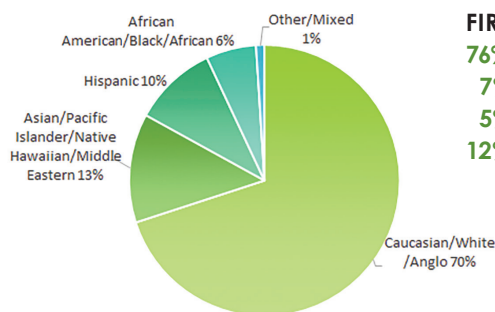
**33%** HAVE A PARENT BORN OUTSIDE THE U.S.



### AGE OF THOSE IN INITIAL FORMATION



### RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND\*



### FIRST LANGUAGE

- 76%** English
- 7%** Spanish
- 5%** Vietnamese
- 12%** Other (59 different languages)

\*New members as reported by Major Superiors of Religious Institutes.

## VOCATION AWARENESS

**70% of new entrants considered religious life before age 21. Most:**

- Accessed a wide array of print and online resources as they discerned;
- Talked to their pastors; attended vocation-related events; and
- Received encouragement from religious institutes, family, friends, parish members, and campus ministers.

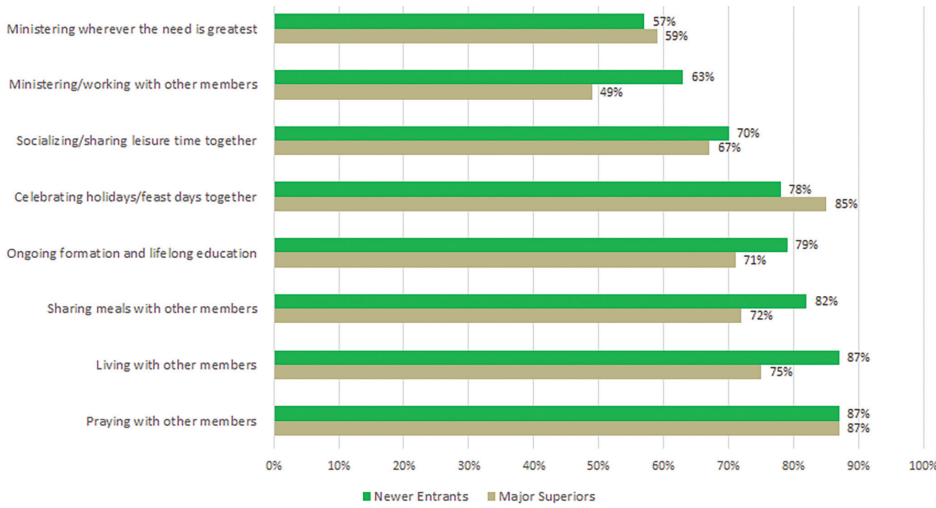
**95%** Found meeting with a member of the institute most helpful

**74%** Participated in a "Come and See" experience

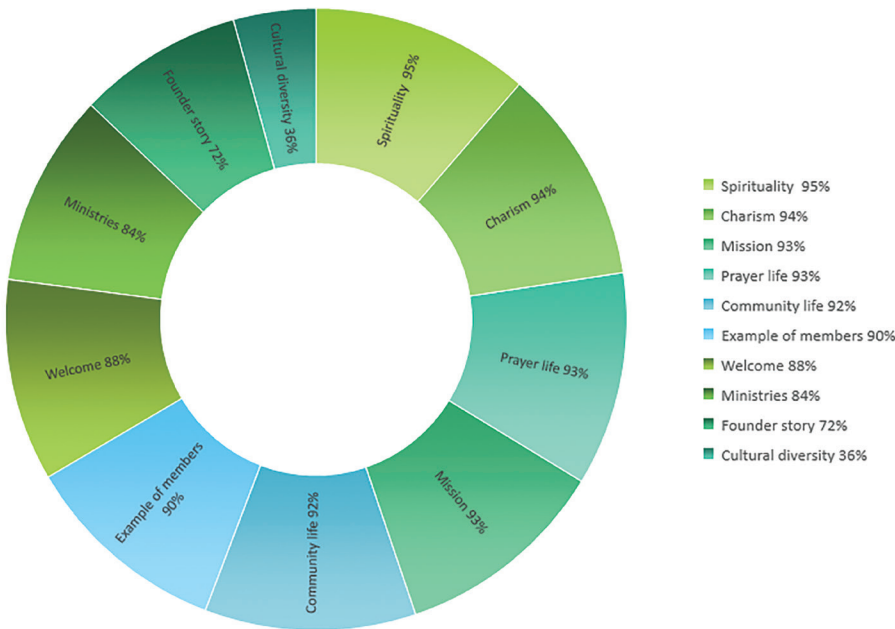
**66%** Were invited to consider a religious vocation

## COMMUNITY LIFE

Newer members see community life as what is distinctive and attractive about religious life. The majority of newer members desire to live in a community of four or more and find the following aspects of community "Very Important." (Their ratings correspond fairly closely to the ratings of Major Superiors of religious institutes.)



## ATTRACTION TO CHOSEN COMMUNITY



Note: Respondents of culturally diverse ethnicities are more likely than Anglos to be "very much" attracted to their institute by the life and works of the founder/ess, the ministries of the institute, the cultural diversity of members, and the welcome and encouragement by members.



Go to [NRVC.net](http://NRVC.net) for the complete **NRVC/CARA 2020 Study on Recent Vocations to Religious Life.**

This study was made possible in part through a grant from the GHR Foundation.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES

**752** U.S. INSTITUTES

### ADMISSION AGE REQUIREMENT

**20 YEARS MIN-43 YEARS MAX**

### AVERAGE VOCATION DIRECTOR TERM

**7 YEARS**

**\$34,039** AVERAGE BUDGET

**\$14,600** MEDIAN BUDGET



**47%** HAVE OFFICE/ADMIN SUPPORT

**94%** HAVE LEADERSHIP & VOCATION DIRECTORS/TEAMS MEET AT LEAST ONCE ANNUALLY

**88%** ACCEPT NEW MEMBERS



**84%** HAVE AT LEAST ONE SERIOUS DISCERNER SINCE 2003

**78%** PROMOTE VOCATIONS ONLINE

**75%** HAVE A VOCATION DIRECTOR/VOCATION TEAM

**60%** HAVE AT LEAST ONE PERSON IN INITIAL FORMATION



**60%** SPONSOR "COME AND SEE" EXPERIENCES

**50%+** PROMOTE TO COLLEGE AGE & YOUNG ADULTS (46% TO HIGH SCHOOLS; 26% TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)

Peer support and the need for mutual accompaniment is a common concern among institutes and new members.



NRVC offers many opportunities for supporting our mission including membership, sponsorship, subscriptions, and participation in our events. Learn more at [NRVC.net](http://NRVC.net).

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