

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
Georgetown University
Washington, DC

*The Class of 2016:
Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood*

**A Report to the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life & Vocations
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**



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Executive Summary

This report presents findings from a national survey of ordinands to the priesthood in 2016. To obtain the names and contact information for these ordinands, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) contacted all theologates and houses of formation in fall 2015 to request names and contact information for every seminarian who was scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in 2016. CARA also requested names from the vocation director at all dioceses and archdioceses in the United States as well as the major superior of all U.S. based institutes of men religious and asked for their support in encouraging their potential ordinands to complete the survey.

CARA then contacted the ordinands by e-mail to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey. At the same time, CARA also e-mailed a similar request to the vocation director at all U.S. dioceses and archdioceses as well as all major superiors of clerical and mixed religious institutes, asking them to encourage their ordinands to participate in the online survey.

After repeated follow-up with the ordinands, a total of 440 ordinands responded to the survey by March 18, 2016. This represents a response rate of approximately 80 percent of the 548 potential ordinands reported to CARA by theologates, houses of formation, arch/dioceses, and religious institutes. These 440 ordinands include 352 ordinands to the diocesan priesthood, from 140 different dioceses and archdioceses, and 88 ordinands to the religious priesthood.

Major Findings

- The average age of ordinands for the Class of 2016 is 35. The median age (midpoint of the distribution) is 32. Eight in ten responding ordinands are between 25 and 39. This distribution is slightly older than in 2015, but follows the pattern in recent years of average age at ordination in the mid-thirties.
- On average, diocesan ordinands lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for 15 years before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands knew the members of their religious institute an average of five years before they entered the seminary.

Background and Country of Origin

- Two-thirds of responding ordinands (66 percent) report their primary race or ethnicity as Caucasian/European American/white. Compared to the adult Catholic population of the United States, ordinands are more likely to be of Asian or Pacific Islander background (15 percent of responding ordinands), but less likely to be Hispanic/Latino (14 percent of responding ordinands). Compared to diocesan ordinands, religious ordinands are *less* likely to report their race or ethnicity as Caucasian/European American/white.
- Three in ten of the ordinands (30 percent) were born outside the United States, with the largest numbers coming from Mexico, Colombia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Poland. On average, responding ordinands who were born in another country have lived in the United States for 13 years. Between 20 and 30 percent of ordinands to diocesan priesthood for each of the last ten years were born outside of the United States, as were 30 percent of this year's diocesan ordinands.
- Most ordinands have been Catholic since birth, although 8 percent became Catholic later in life. Eighty-two percent report that both of their parents are Catholic and more than a third (35 percent) have a relative who is a priest or a religious.
- Almost all ordinands in the Class of 2016 (96 percent) have at least one sibling. One-half (51 percent) have more than two siblings, while one in five (19 percent) have five or more siblings. Ordinands are most likely to be a middle child in their family (38 percent).

Education, Ministry, and Work Experience

- More than half of ordinands completed college (59 percent) before entering the seminary. One in six (18 percent) entered the seminary with a graduate degree. Among those who completed college before entering the seminary, two-thirds (68 percent) entered the seminary at the pre-theology level and 22 percent entered at the theology level.
- The most common fields of study for ordinands before entering the seminary are theology or philosophy (20 percent), liberal arts (20 percent), and business (13 percent).

- Just under one-half of responding ordinands (45 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school, which is a rate slightly higher than that of all Catholic adults in the United States. In addition, ordinands are somewhat more likely than other U.S. Catholic adults to have attended a Catholic high school and they are much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (41 percent, compared to 7 percent among U.S. Catholic adults).
- One-quarter (25 percent) carried educational debt at the time they entered the seminary, averaging a little over \$24,000 in educational debt at entrance to the seminary.
- One-half of ordinands (52 percent) report some type of full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary, most often in education. Five percent of responding ordinands report prior service in the U.S. Armed Forces. About one in seven ordinands (14 percent) report that either parent had a military career in the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Ordinands of the Class of 2016 have been active in parish ministries, with seven in ten (70 percent) indicating they served as an altar server and about half (53 percent) reporting service as a lector. One in six (17 percent) participated in a World Youth Day before entering the seminary.
- About seven in ten ordinands report regularly praying the rosary (73 percent) and participating in Eucharistic adoration (73 percent) before entering the seminary.

Vocational Discernment

- On average, responding ordinands report that they were about 17 when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood. They were encouraged to consider a vocation by an average of four people. Seven in ten (70 percent) say they were encouraged by a parish priest. Other frequent encouragers include friends (48 percent), parishioners (46 percent), and mothers (42 percent).
- One-half of responding ordinands (51 percent) indicated that they were *discouraged* from considering the priesthood by one or more persons. Among those who reported discouragement, 20 percent indicate that one person discouraged them from considering the priesthood and 14 percent indicate that two people discouraged them.

Introduction

In December 2005, the Secretariat for Vocations and Priestly Formation (now the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations) of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to conduct an annual survey of ordinands to the priesthood. The survey was initially developed by the Secretariat in 1998 and has been administered online since 2005. CARA assumed responsibility for the project in 2006, using the online survey developed by the Secretariat. CARA worked with the Secretariat to upgrade the online survey and to incorporate it into the data collection process for CARA's annual survey of priestly formation programs. This report presents results of the survey of ordinands of the Class of 2016.

To obtain the names and contact information for these ordinands, CARA contacted all theologates and houses of formation in fall 2015 and requested each site to provide names and contact information for every seminarian who was scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in 2016. CARA also requested names from the vocation director at all dioceses and archdioceses in the United States as well as the major superior of all U.S. based institutes of men religious and asked for their support in encouraging their potential ordinands to complete the survey.

CARA then contacted the ordinands by e-mail to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey. At the same time, CARA also e-mailed a similar request to the vocation director at all U.S. dioceses and archdioceses as well as all major superiors of clerical and mixed religious institutes, asking them to encourage their ordinands to participate in the online survey.

After repeated follow-ups with the ordinands, a total of 440 ordinands responded to the survey by March 18, 2016. This represents a response rate of approximately 80 percent of the 548 potential ordinands reported to CARA by theologates, houses of formation, arch/dioceses, and religious institutes. These 440 ordinands include 352 ordinands to the diocesan priesthood, from 140 different dioceses and archdioceses, and 88 ordinands to the religious priesthood.

The questionnaire asked ordinands about their demographic and religious background, education, previous ministry and work experience, encouragement and discouragement to consider the priesthood, and experience with vocation programs. This report presents analyses of each question from all ordinands combined as well as separately for diocesan and religious ordinands. The report also contains trend data on selected items since 1999, the first year for which comparable data on both diocesan and religious ordinands are available.

Ordination to Diocesan or Religious Priesthood

Responding ordinands represent 140 dioceses and eparchies and 32 distinct religious congregations.

The largest number of responses from diocesan ordinands were from the Archdiocese of Newark with 12 respondents. Eleven of the responding ordinands are from the Diocese of Brooklyn and eight each are from the Archdioceses of Washington and Los Angeles.

The largest number of responses from ordinands to the religious priesthood were from the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) with 13 respondents. Eleven of the responding ordinands are from the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) and eight are from the Legionaries of Christ.¹

On average, responding diocesan ordinands report they lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for more than 15 years before they entered the seminary.

How long did you live in this diocese or eparchy before entering the seminary?

	Years
Mean	15
Median	18
Range	0-60

One in ten diocesan ordinands (10 percent) report that they lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained less than a year before they entered the seminary.

¹ These numbers refer only to ordinands who responded to the survey and do not necessarily mean that these dioceses or religious institutes will ordain the largest number of priests in 2016.

On average, ordinands from religious institutes report that they knew the members of their religious institute for five years before they entered the seminary.

<i>How long did you know the members of this religious institute before entering the seminary?</i>	
	Years
Mean	5
Median	4
Range	0-25

One in nine ordinands from religious institutes (11 percent) report that they knew the members of their religious institute for less than a year before they entered the seminary.

Age of Ordinands

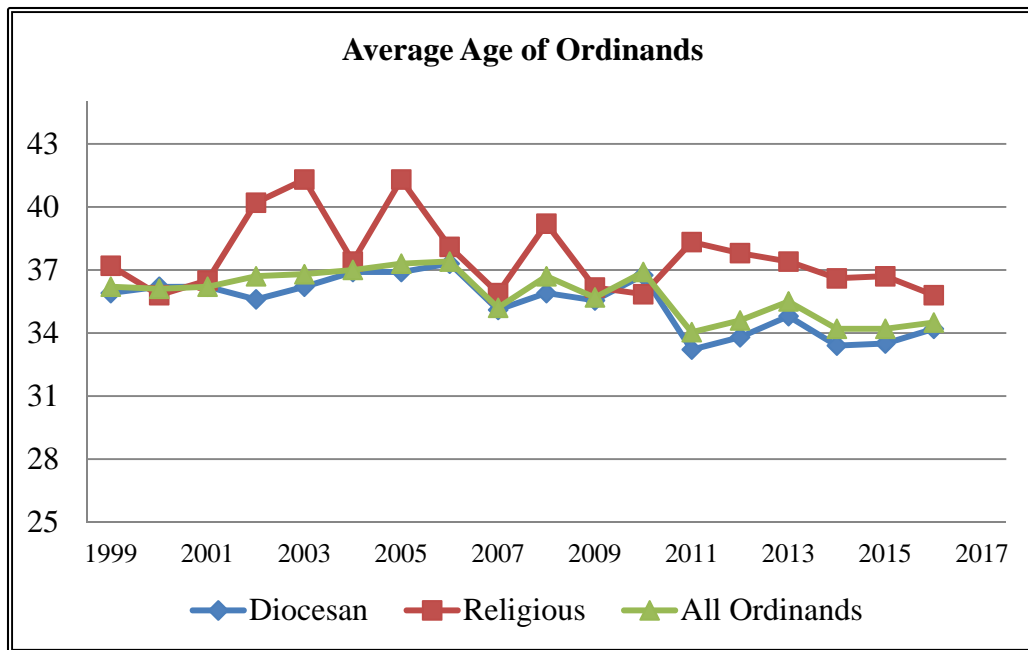
The average age of responding ordinands of the Class of 2016 is 35. Eight in ten (83 percent) are between 25 and 39.

Age of Ordinands			
Percentage of all responding ordinands in each age category			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Less than 25	<1%	<1%	0%
Age 25-29	37	42	16
Age 30-34	30	28	37
Age 35-39	16	13	26
Age 40-44	5	4	9
Age 45-49	4	4	5
Age 50-54	3	3	6
Age 55-59	3	3	1
Age 60 and older	3	3	0
Average age	35	34	36
Median age	32	31	34
Range in years	24-69	24-69	28-57

The youngest responding ordinand of the Class of 2016 is 24 and the oldest is 69 years of age. Eleven respondents are being ordained to the diocesan priesthood after age 60.

Diocesan ordinands tend to be a little younger than religious ordinands in the Class of 2016. The median age of diocesan ordinands is 31, which means that half of the diocesan ordinands responding to the survey this year are 31 years old or younger. By contrast, the median age of religious ordinands is 34.

Ordinands of last year's Class of 2015 averaged 34 years of age, a year younger than the ordinands of the Class of 2016. On average, ordinands from religious institutes are somewhat older than diocesan ordinands.²



The Class of 2016 follows the pattern in recent years of average age at ordination in the mid-thirties.

² Because the total number of religious ordinands is relatively small each year, the line representing the average age of religious ordinands varies widely across years.

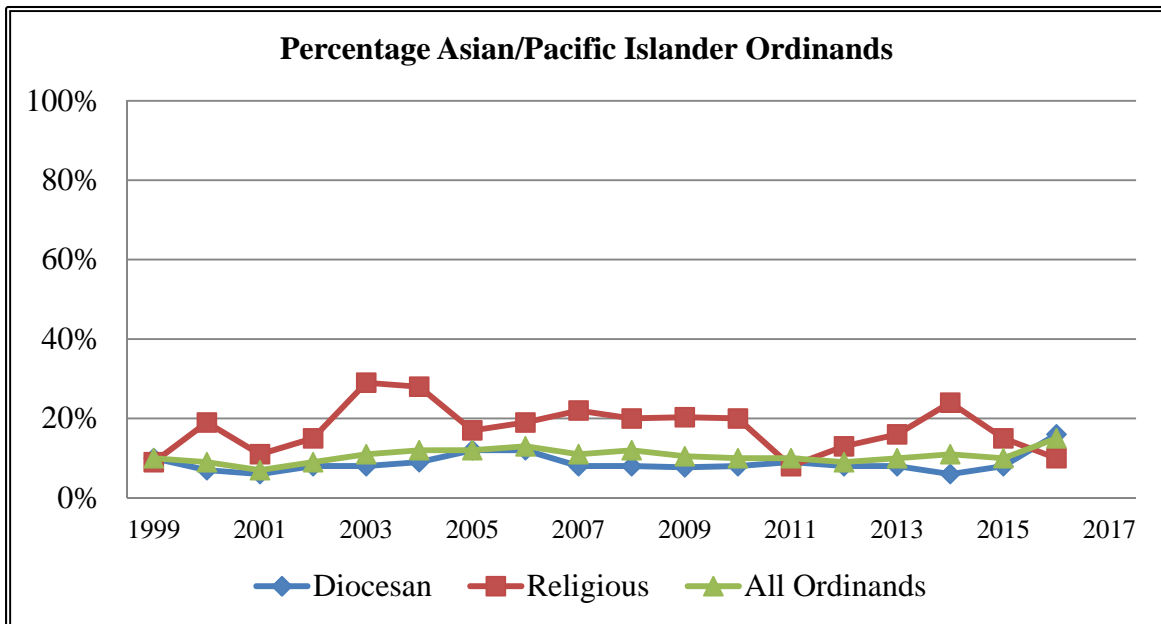
Race and Ethnic Background

Nearly two-thirds of responding ordinands (66 percent) report their primary race or ethnicity as Caucasian, European American, or white.

Race and Ethnic Background of Ordinands and Adult Catholics				
Percentage of all responding ordinands in each category				
	All	Diocesan	Religious	Adult Catholics Nationally
Caucasian/European American/white	66%	67%	63%	58%
Hispanic/Latino	14	11	23	34
Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	15	16	10	4
African/African American/black	4	4	2	3
Native American	0	0	0	1
Other	2	2	2	----*

* Data unavailable.

Compared to data from a recent CARA telephone poll of self-identified adult Catholics in the United States, Caucasian/European American/white ordinands are over-represented among responding ordinands, relative to their proportion of the U.S. adult Catholic population, while Hispanics/Latinos are under-represented. Caucasian/European American/white constitutes 58 percent of U.S. Catholics overall but are 66 percent of responding ordinands. By contrast, Hispanics/Latinos constitute approximately 34 percent of U.S. adult Catholics but make up 14 percent of responding ordinands.



Country of Birth and Age at Entry to United States

Seven in ten responding ordinands (70 percent) were born in the United States.

Country of Birth of Ordinands			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
United States	70%	71%	67%
Mexico	6	6	5
Colombia	5	5	2
Philippines	4	4	6
Vietnam	3	3	6
Poland	2	3	0
India	1	<1	3
Nigeria	<1	1	0
Other countries	7	7	12

Ordinands from religious institutes are slightly more likely than diocesan ordinands to have been born outside the United States. Seven in ten diocesan ordinands (71 percent) and two-thirds of the religious institute ordinands (67 percent) were born in the United States.

Mexico, Colombia, the Philippines, and Vietnam are the most frequently mentioned countries of birth among responding ordinands who were born outside the United States. The responding ordinands identified a total of 34 different countries of origin.

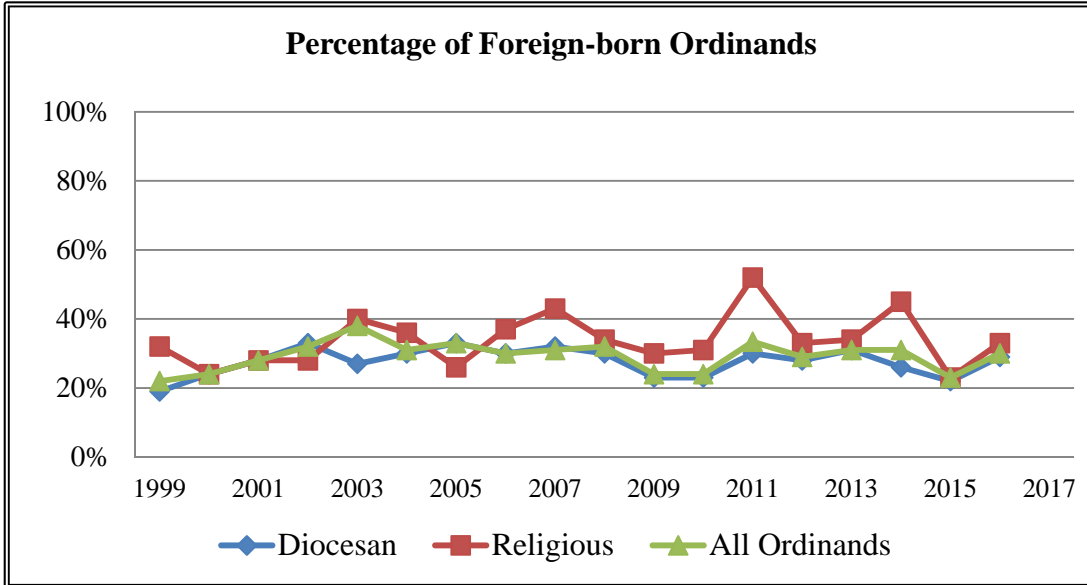
On average, responding ordinands who were born outside the United States have lived in the United States for 13 years. Half first came to live in the United States in 2007 or earlier.

Year of Entry to the U.S. of Foreign-born Ordinands			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	2003	2004	1998
Median	2007	2008	2000
Range	1962-2014	1962-2014	1976-2013

On average, responding foreign-born ordinands came to live in the United States at age 23. Religious ordinands were, on average, slightly younger than diocesan ordinands when they came to live in the United States.

Age at Entry to the United States of Foreign-born Ordinands			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	23	24	20
Median	24	24	22
Range	0-49	0-49	0-47

The percentage of ordinands who are foreign-born increased from 22 percent in 1999 to 38 percent in 2003, but has declined since that point and is now at 30 percent in 2016.



While the percentage of foreign-born ordinands from religious institutes has fluctuated somewhat since 1999 due to the relatively smaller number of religious ordinands, the diocesan percentage has remained relatively steady at approximately 20 to 30 percent of all diocesan ordinands.

Catholic Background

Nine in ten responding ordinands (92 percent) have been Catholic since birth. Among those who became Catholic later in life, their average age of conversion was about 23.

Catholic Background			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Catholic since birth	92%	91%	94%
Became Catholic later	8	9	6
Average age at conversion	23	23	25

Most ordinands who converted from another denomination or faith tradition are from a Protestant tradition (e.g., Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist, or Anglican). Two ordinands were formerly members of an Orthodox Church. Seven responding ordinands were raised without a faith tradition.

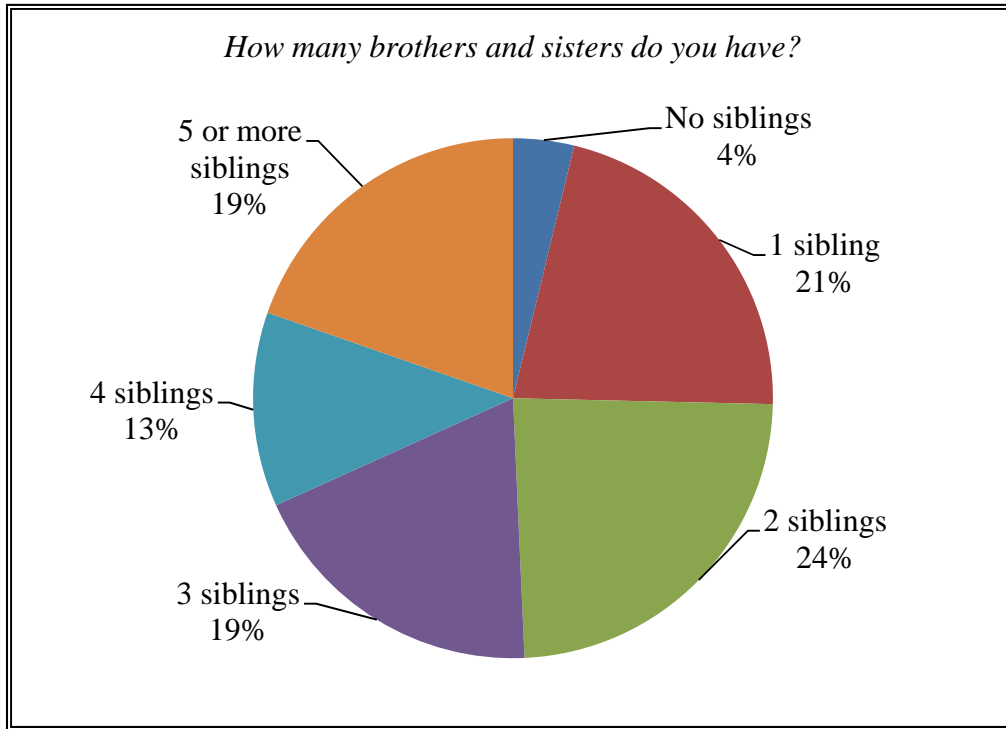
Nearly all ordinands report that when they were children they had at least one parent who was Catholic; more than eight in ten (82 percent) report that both parents were Catholic.

<i>What was the religious background of your parents when you were a child?</i>			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Both parents Catholic	82%	82%	84%
Mother Catholic, father not	8	8	7
Father Catholic, mother not	4	4	5
Neither parent was Catholic	6	6	5

In addition to the predominantly Catholic background of their parents, many ordinands also report that they have a relative who is a priest or a religious. In the Class of 2016, 35 percent of responding ordinands report that they have a relative who is a priest or a religious (not shown in the table above). Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to report this (42 percent compared to 33 percent).

Siblings

Almost all ordinands in the Class of 2016 (96 percent) have at least one sibling. About half (56 percent) have two to four siblings, while one in five (19 percent) have five or more siblings.



On average, ordinands have three to four siblings (overall average is three siblings). Ordinands from both religious orders and dioceses have on average the same number of siblings (mean=3.1).

What is your birth order?
Percentage responding

	All	Diocesan	Religious
Oldest	28%	29%	24%
Middle	38	40	36
Youngest	29	27	34
Only child	4	4	6

Overall, ordinands are slightly more likely to be somewhere in the middle in their family.

Education

The responding ordinands are highly educated. Three in five (59 percent) completed college before entering the seminary.³

Highest Education Completed Before the Seminary			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Elementary	3%	3%	1%
High school	18	17	24
Trade or technical school	1	1	0
Some college, no degree	20	22	11
Undergraduate degree	41	39	45
Graduate degree	18	17	18

A small number of ordinands (3 percent) report that they completed elementary school only before entering the seminary. All of these men then entered the seminary in high school. Eighteen percent of ordinands of the Class of 2016 completed only high school before entering the seminary. One in five (21 percent) attended some college or a technical school before entering the seminary. Most responding ordinands (59 percent) completed college before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands and diocesan ordinands are equally likely to have a graduate degree before entering the seminary (18 and 17 percent).

<i>At what level did you first enter the seminary?</i>			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
High school	8%	7%	9%
College	37	38	32
Pre-theology	42	43	38
Theology	14	12	21

Almost eight in ten ordinands (78 percent) who report their highest level of education before seminary is high school entered the seminary while in college. Among those who

³ Some respondents entered the seminary at the high school or college level and thus would not complete these levels of education before entering the seminary.

completed their undergraduate education before entering the seminary (including those who went on to graduate school), about two-thirds (68 percent) entered the seminary at the pre-theology level and 22 percent entered at the theology level.

One in five ordinands (20 percent) studied in the area of theology or philosophy before entering the seminary. Liberal arts and business are the second and third most common areas of study.

Field of Study before the Seminary			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Theology or Philosophy	20%	19%	26%
Liberal Arts	20	18	26
Business	13	13	11
Social Science	11	11	8
Science/Math	9	9	11
Engineering	8	8	11
Fine Arts	6	7	2
Computers or Information Technology	5	6	2
Education	4	4	6
Law	2	2	0
Agriculture	1	1	2
Other	4	5	2

Catholic Education

Fewer than half of responding ordinands (45 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school. About four in ten attended a Catholic high school (41 percent) and a similar proportion (41 percent) attended a Catholic college.

Attendance at Catholic School*			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Elementary	45%	41%	57%
High School	41	37	57
College	41	39	52

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Ordinands in 2016 are slightly more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic elementary school. In a 2008 national poll conducted by CARA⁴, 42 percent of U.S. adult Catholics report having attended a Catholic elementary school, compared to 45 percent of ordinands who have done so. Ordinands are also more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic high school (41 percent of ordinands, compared to 22 percent of U.S. adult Catholics), and much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (41 percent of ordinands, compared to just 7 percent of U.S. adult Catholics).

Whether or not they ever attended a Catholic elementary or high school, 59 percent of responding ordinands (61 percent of diocesan ordinands and 54 percent of religious ordinands) participated in a religious education program in their parish. On average, they completed seven years of parish religious education.

Only 5 percent of ordinands report being home schooled at some time in their educational background, with diocesan ordinands a little more likely to have been home schooled (6 percent) than religious ordinands (3 percent). Among those who were home schooled, the average length of time they were home-schooled was five years.

⁴*Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics.* April 2008. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

Educational Debt

One-quarter of responding ordinands (25 percent) of the Class of 2016 carried educational debt at the time they entered the seminary (or at the time they entered the religious institute, for those in religious orders).

Educational Debt			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Percentage with debt	25%	25%	25%
Amount of debt at entrance			
Mean	\$24,105	\$25,026	\$20,325
Median	\$18,000	\$20,000	\$16,500
Range	\$2,000- \$100,000	\$2,005- \$100,000	\$2,000- \$62,000
Current educational debt			
Mean	\$21,314	\$23,574	\$10,889
Median	\$16,000	\$18,000	\$5,000
Range	0-\$110,000	0-\$110,000	0-\$40,000

Religious ordinands are just as likely as men being ordained for dioceses to have educational debt and the amount of debt they carried at entrance is lower, on average, among these respondents.

- Diocesan ordinands who have educational debt averaged \$25,026 in educational debt at the time they entered the seminary, compared to \$20,325 among religious ordinands at the time they entered their institute. Several report that their educational debt is currently paid off, with the average current educational debt of \$23,574 among diocesan ordinands who entered with educational debt.
- Religious ordinands are a little more likely than diocesan ordinands to have paid off or substantially paid down their educational debt prior to ordination. Among the religious ordinands who still have educational debt at the time of this survey, the average amount of that debt is just under \$11,000.

Work Experience

One-half of the ordinands (52 percent) report some type of full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary. Diocesan and religious ordinands are equally likely to have work experience (52 percent of diocesan ordinands compared to 50 percent of religious ordinands).

Prior Full-time Work Experience			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Education	16%	16%	16%
Business	14	14	14
Construction, labor, farming	9	10	2
Restaurant/food services	8	6	2
Sales, customer service	7	7	5
Church ministry, parish life	7	6	11
Accounting, finance, insurance	7	7	7
Computers, IT	5	5	2
Medical, scientist	5	4	9
Military	4	4	5
Engineer, architect	4	3	5
Government, law enforcement	4	3	7
Legal professions	3	3	0
Other work	7	7	7

Ordinands who mentioned prior work experience were most likely to report that they were educators (16 percent) followed by working in business (14 percent). Only 7 percent of ordinands worked in church ministry or parish life prior to entering the seminary.

Military Experience

Five percent of responding ordinands reports having served in the U.S. Armed Forces (5 percent of diocesan ordinands and 5 percent of religious ordinands). Among those with military experience, nearly one-half (45 percent) served in the Navy.

Service in the U.S. Armed Forces*			
(among respondents who indicated prior military service)			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Navy	45%	44%	50%
Army	35	31	50
Reserve	20	19	25
Air Force	15	19	0
Marines	0	0	50
National Guard	0	0	0
Coast Guard	0	0	0

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

The table above shows the branch of service among those who reported military service. Only four religious ordinands reported service, compared to sixteen diocesan ordinands. Diocesan ordinands are most likely to indicate service in the Navy or the Army (75 percent).

Ordinands were also asked whether either of their parents was a career military person. About one in seven ordinands (14 percent) report that one or both parents had a military career in the U.S. Armed Forces. Diocesan ordinands were slightly less likely as religious ordinands to report having a parent with a military career (14 percent compared to 16 percent).

Consideration of Priesthood

On average, ordinands report that they were about 17 years old when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood, with little variation between diocesan and religious ordinands.

Age When Ordinands First Considered Priesthood			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Preschool (5 or younger)	5%	5%	7%
Elementary (6 through 13)	31	34	19
High school (14 through 17)	23	22	26
College (18 through 21)	24	22	34
Adulthood (22 or older)	17	18	15
Mean	17	17	17
Median	16	15	17
Range	3-60	4-60	3-40

- Three in ten ordinands first considered a vocation to priesthood when they were in elementary school (ages six through 13). Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to report they first considered a vocation in elementary school.
- About a quarter first considered a vocation in high school (ages 14 through 17) and the same percentage first considered this in college. Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have first considered a vocation to priesthood during their college years.
- One in six first considered a vocation to priesthood as adults, ages 22 or older.

Encouragement to Consider Priesthood

Nine in ten ordinands (93 percent) report being encouraged to consider the priesthood by someone in their life. Ordinands indicate that, on average, four individuals encouraged their vocation. Seven in ten (70 percent) say they were encouraged by a parish priest. Other frequent encouragers include friends (48 percent), parishioners (46 percent), and mothers (42 percent).

Encouragement to Consider Priesthood*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Parish priest	70%	72%	64%
Friend	48	45	56
Parishioner	46	47	39
Mother	42	41	47
Father	31	29	38
Teacher/Catechist	27	29	22
Grandparent	25	27	21
Other relative	21	18	30
Youth minister	16	17	13
Campus minister/School chaplain	14	11	23
Religious sister	13	13	16
Bishop	13	15	5
Religious brother	12	7	32
Deacon	7	9	1
Military chaplain	3	3	2

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

- Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to have been encouraged by a parish priest (72 percent compared to 64 percent), a parishioner (47 percent compared to 39 percent), a grandparent (27 percent compared to 21 percent), or a bishop (15 percent compared to 5 percent).
- Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to report encouragement from friends (56 percent compared to 45 percent), other relatives (30 percent compared to 18 percent), a campus minister/school chaplain (23 percent compared to 11 percent), religious sister (16 percent compared to 13 percent), or a religious brother (32 percent compared to 7 percent).

Discouragement from Considering Priesthood

One-half of responding ordinands (51 percent) indicated that they were *discouraged* from considering the priesthood by one or more persons (not shown in the table below). Among those who reported discouragement, on average, one individual was said to have discouraged them. Twenty percent indicate that one person discouraged them from considering the priesthood and 14 percent indicate that two people discouraged them.

Discouragement from Considering Priesthood*			
Among ordinands reporting someone discouraged them			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Friend or classmate	29%	29%	31%
Other family member	22	21	29
Mother	13	12	17
Father	12	10	17
Colleague or co-worker	10	10	7
Priest or other clergy	5	5	3
Teacher	5	6	2
Religious sister or brother	1	1	1
Youth minister	1	1	1
Someone else	3	4	1

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Among those who report being *discouraged* from considering a vocation to the priesthood, three in ten ordinands report that they were discouraged by friends or classmates.

- One in five responding ordinands (22 percent) were discouraged from considering a priestly vocation by some other family member (but not a parent). About one in eight were discouraged from considering a vocation by their mother (13 percent) or father (12 percent).
- Another one in ten (10 percent) were discouraged from considering a vocation by a colleague or co-worker.
- Fewer than one in ten responding ordinands report being discouraged from considering a priestly vocation by clergy (5 percent), a teacher (5 percent), or a religious sister or brother (1 percent).
- Three percent of responding ordinands report being discouraged by someone else.

Participation in Programs, Activities, or Ministries

Many ordinands were active in Church-sponsored programs and activities before entering the seminary. Parish youth groups, Boy Scouts, and Catholic campus ministry/Newman Center are among the most common programs or activities reported by ordinands.

Participation in Programs or Activities*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Parish youth group	54%	55%	47%
Boy Scouts	29	27	36
Catholic campus ministry/Newman Center	26	24	31
Knights of Columbus	22	22	24
Parish young adult group	20	21	16
Right to Life	15	16	14
Charismatic Renewal	13	13	10
Cursillo	9	10	5
St. Vincent de Paul Society	3	3	1
Religious institute volunteer	3	2	7
Serra Club	1	1	1

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

- More than half of responding ordinands participated in parish youth groups (54 percent).
- Three in ten participated in the Boy Scouts (29 percent).
- About a quarter participated in Catholic campus ministry (26 percent), or in the Knights of Columbus (22 percent).
- One in five participated in parish young adult groups (20 percent).
- About one in seven have been active in Right to Life (15 percent) and slightly fewer participated in Charismatic Renewal groups (13 percent).
- Among the activities or programs about which they were asked, ordinands were *least* likely to have been involved in Cursillo, St. Vincent de Paul Society, as a volunteer in a religious institute, or in the Serra Club.

Participation in Other Youth Ministry Programs			
Percentage responding			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
World Youth Day	17%	16%	22%
Franciscan University of Steubenville High School Youth Conference	14	15	10
National Catholic Youth Conference	7	6	11
Marian Days	6	5	8

- One in six ordinands (17 percent) reports having attended World Youth Day before entering the seminary. Diocesan ordinands are slightly less likely than religious ordinands to have attended World Youth Day (16 percent compared to 22 percent).
- Diocesan ordinands are slightly more likely than religious ordinands to have attended the Franciscan University of Steubenville High School Youth Conference (15 percent compared to 10 percent).
- Seven percent of ordinands overall have attended the National Catholic Youth Conference.
- Religious ordinands are slightly more likely than diocesan ordinands to have attended Marian Days (8 percent compared to 5 percent).

Most ordinands participated in one or more liturgical ministries in the parish before entering the seminary. Seven in ten were altar servers and more than half served as a lector.

Participation in Parish Ministries*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Altar server	70%	71%	67%
Lector	53	54	51
Extraordinary minister of Holy Communion	42	43	36
Catechist	36	36	36
Confirmation sponsor/godfather	31	32	28
Campus ministry/Youth ministry	30	29	31
Cantor or music minister	22	24	15
Usher/minister of hospitality	16	16	16
RCIA team member/sponsor	11	11	11
Parish pastoral council member	11	12	5
Liturgy committee member	9	10	6
Full-time parish/diocesan employee	6	6	3

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Among the parish ministries listed on the survey, responding ordinands were most likely to report that they served in liturgical ministries such as altar server, lector, or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion before entering the seminary. Some served in educational roles within the Church, with almost four in ten serving as a catechist and a three in ten serving either as a confirmation sponsor/godfather or in campus ministry or youth ministry.

Prayer Practices

Seven in ten responding ordinands (73 percent) regularly prayed the rosary and participated in Eucharistic Adoration before entering the seminary.

<i>Did you participate in any of these prayer practices or groups on a regular basis before entering the seminary?*</i>			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Eucharistic Adoration	73%	75%	65%
Rosary	73	73	73
Prayer group/Bible study	44	44	42
High School Retreats	36	36	36
Lectio Divina	28	28	27
College Retreats	28	27	33

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Religious ordinands are similar to diocesan ordinands in their prayer practices prior to entering the seminary.

- Religious ordinands are a little less likely than diocesan ordinands to participate in Eucharistic Adoration (65 percent compared to 75 percent) before entering the seminary.
- More than four in ten of the responding ordinands (44 percent) regularly participated in a prayer group or Bible study before entering the seminary and nearly four in ten (36 percent) participated in high school retreats.

Vocation Programs and Vocational Advertising

Among the vocation programs identified, responding ordinands are most likely to have experienced a “Come and See” weekend. Almost two thirds (64 percent) participated in at least one of the listed vocation programs before entering the seminary.

Vocation Programs*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
“Come and See” weekend at the seminary or at the religious institute/society	42%	35%	67%
College vocation program	12	11	16
High school vocation programs	11	11	12
Quo Vadis retreat/Discernment retreat	10	11	6
Elementary school/CCD vocation programs	9	9	9
Other parish vocation programs	9	10	5
Operation Andrew	4	5	0
Traveling Chalice/Cup/Cross/Statue programs	2	3	0
* Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.			

- About one in nine responding ordinands participated in college (12 percent) or high school (11 percent) vocation programs, or a Quo Vadis or discernment retreat (10 percent) before entering the seminary.
- Religious ordinands were more likely than diocesan ordinands to report having attended a “Come and See” weekend. Two-thirds of the religious ordinands (67 percent) attended such a program, compared to about one-third of the diocesan ordinands (35 percent).

In addition to the vocation programs listed above, seven in ten responding ordinands (70 percent) have seen the vocational promotion DVD “Fishers of Men,” published by the USCCB. Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to have seen the DVD (73 percent compared to 56 percent).