

March 2010

***The Class of 2010:
Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood***

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

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Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood*

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



March 2010

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Executive Summary

This report presents findings from a national survey of ordinands to the priesthood in 2010. 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 2009 and requested each site to provide names and contact information for every seminarian who was scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in 2010. CARA also contacted the vocation director at all dioceses and archdioceses in the United States and received contact information on potential ordinands from 68 dioceses and archdioceses. CARA then contacted the ordinands by e-mail, phone, or fax to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey. At the same time, CARA also e-mailed or faxed a similar request to the seminary rector or president at all theologates in its Catholic ministry formation database as well as all major superiors of clerical and mixed religious institutes, asking them to contact their ordinands for CARA and invite them to participate in the online survey.

After repeated follow-ups by telephone, fax, and e-mail, a total of 339 ordinands responded to the survey by February 25, 2010. This represents a response rate of approximately 77 percent of the 440 potential ordinands reported to CARA by theologates, houses of formation, arch/dioceses, and religious institutes. These 339 ordinands include 291 ordinands to the diocesan priesthood and 48 ordinands to the religious priesthood.

Major Findings

- The average age of ordinands for the Class of 2010 is 37. More than half (56 percent) are between the ages of 25 and 34. This is approximately the same as it was in 2009 and consistent with the average age of ordination classes for the last five years. Eleven are being ordained to the priesthood at age 65 or older.
- On average, diocesan ordinands lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for 16 years before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands knew the members of their religious institute an average of six years before they entered the seminary.

Background and Country of Origin

- Seven in ten responding ordinands (70 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 (10 percent of responding ordinands), but less likely to be Hispanic/Latino (13 percent of responding ordinands). Compared to diocesan ordinands, religious ordinands are *less* likely to report their race or ethnicity as Caucasian/European American/white.
- Almost one-third (31 percent) of ordinands were born outside the United States, with the largest numbers coming from Mexico, Columbia, the Philippines, Poland, and Vietnam. On average, responding ordinands who were born in another country have lived in the United States for 11 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.
- Most ordinands have been Catholic since birth, although one in ten (10 percent) became Catholic later in life. Four in five (83 percent) report that both of their parents are Catholic and close to two in five (37 percent) have a relative who is a priest or a religious.
- More than half of ordinands of the Class of 2010 (55 percent) report having more than two siblings, while one-quarter (24 percent) report having five or more siblings. Two in five (38 percent) are the oldest child in their family.

Education, Ministry, and Work Experience

- Before entering the seminary, three in five ordinands completed college (60 percent), and one in five received a graduate degree (20 percent). Among those who completed college before entering the seminary, seven in ten entered the seminary at the pre-theology level and 19 percent entered at the theology level. One in three (34 percent) report entering the seminary while in college.
- Half of responding ordinands (49 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school, which is a rate slightly higher than that for all Catholic adults in the United States (42 percent). 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 (39 percent, compared to 7 percent among U.S. Catholic adults).
- Ordinands of the Class of 2010 have been active in parish ministries, with about half to three-quarters indicating they served as an altar server, lector, and/or Eucharistic minister in their parish. One-fifth (19 percent) participated in a World Youth Day before entering the seminary.
- More than nine in ten ordinands (92 percent) report some type of full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary, most often in education. Less than one in ten

has served in the U.S. Armed Forces. One in six (16 percent) report that either one or both parents were career military.

- Two-thirds of ordinands report regularly praying the Rosary (67 percent) and participating in Eucharistic Adoration (65 percent) before entering the seminary.

Vocational Discernment

- On average, responding ordinands report that they were about 18 when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood. About eight in ten (78 percent) were encouraged to consider the priesthood by a priest. Between 40 and 50 percent report that friends, parishioners, or parents encouraged them to consider priesthood.
- Half of responding ordinands report that someone discouraged them from considering the priesthood. Respondents are more likely to cite a friend or classmate, or a parent or family member as discouraging them.
- Relatively few ordinands say that TV, radio, billboards, or other vocational advertising were instrumental in their discernment. Two in five (42 percent) participated in a “Come and See” weekend before entering the seminary. Eight in ten (85 percent) report that they have seen the “Fishers of Men” DVD published by the USCCB.

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 for the past six years. 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 2010.

To obtain the names and contact information for these ordinands, CARA contacted all theologates and houses of formation in fall 2009 as part of the annual data collection for its Catholic ministry formation database and requested each site to provide names and contact information for every seminarian who was scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in 2010. CARA also contacted the vocation director at all dioceses and archdioceses in the United States and received contact information on potential ordinands from 68 dioceses and archdioceses. CARA then contacted ordinands by e-mail, phone, or fax to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey. At the same time, CARA also e-mailed or faxed a similar request to the seminary rector or president at all theologates in its Catholic ministry formation database as well as all major superiors of clerical and mixed religious institutes, asking them to contact the ordinands for CARA and invite them to participate in the online survey.

After repeated follow-ups by telephone, fax, and e-mail, a total of 339 ordinands responded to the survey by February 25, 2010. This represents a response rate of approximately 77 percent of the 440 potential ordinands reported to CARA by theologates, houses of formation, arch/dioceses, and religious institutes. These 339 ordinands include 291 ordinands to the diocesan priesthood and 48 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 128 dioceses and eparchies and 36 religious congregations, provinces, or monasteries. The Archdiocese of Chicago had the largest number of respondents (13 ordinands), followed by the Archdioceses of Washington and St. Louis (eight ordinands each), the Archdiocese of Newark and the Diocese of Austin (seven ordinands each), the Archdiocese of Atlanta (six ordinands), and the Archdioceses of Philadelphia and St. Paul and Minneapolis as well as the Dioceses of Paterson, Little Rock, and Erie (five ordinands each). The largest number of responses from ordinands to the religious priesthood were from the Order of Preachers, popularly known as the Dominicans (nine ordinands), and from the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart, popularly known as the Josephites (six ordinands).¹

On average, responding diocesan ordinands report they lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for 16 years before they entered the seminary.

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

	Years
Mean	16
Median	17
Range	0-71

About 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. Another 100 ordinands (30 percent) did not answer the question about how long they lived in the diocese or eparchy before entering the seminary.

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

How long did you know the members of this religious institute before entering the seminary?

	Years
Mean	6
Median	4
Range	0-30

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 2010.

One in seven ordinands from religious institutes (15 percent) report that they knew the members of their religious institute only a year or less before they entered the seminary.

Age of Ordinands

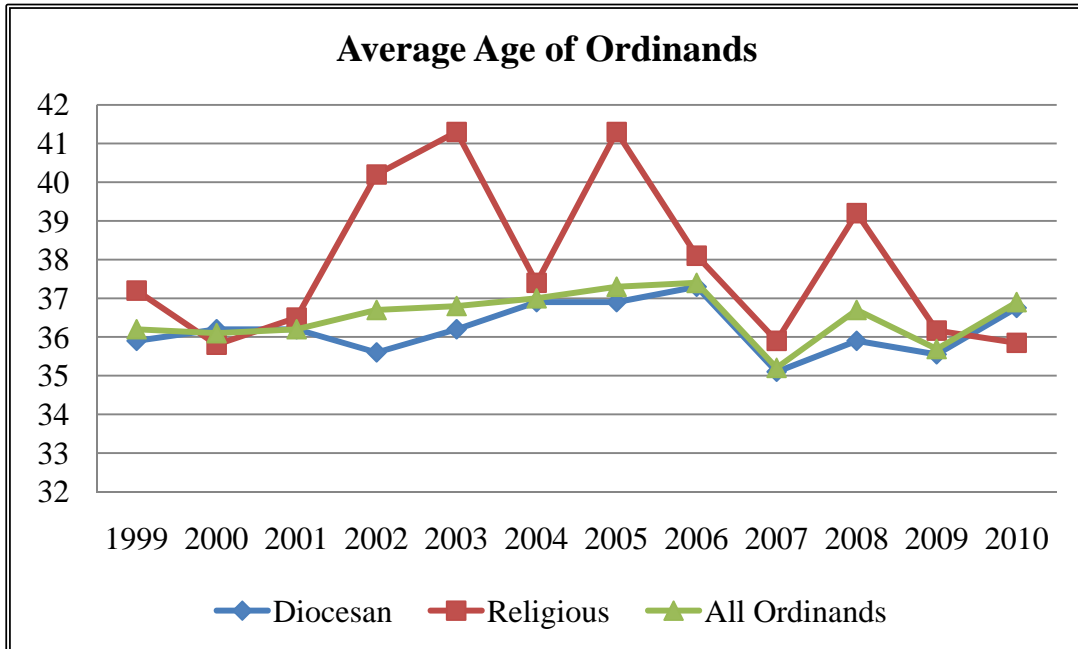
The average age of responding ordinands of the Class of 2010 is 37. More than half (56 percent) are between 25 and 34.

Age of Ordinands			
Percentage of all responding ordinands in each age category			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Age 25-29	34%	33%	39%
Age 30-34	22	22	22
Age 35-39	17	18	15
Age 40-49	15	15	12
Age 50-59	6	6	2
Age 60 and older	6	6	10
Average age	37	37	36
Median age	33	33	31
Range in years	25-74	25-74	26-68

The youngest responding ordinand of the Class of 2010 is 25 and the oldest is 74 years of age. Eleven respondents are being ordained to the priesthood at age 65 or older.

There are very few differences in age by type of ordinand. Diocesan ordinands are slightly older than religious ordinands. The median age of diocesan ordinands is 33, while the median age of religious ordinands is 31.

Ordinands of the Class of 2010 average 36.8 years of age, just slightly higher than the average age of 36.2 years among ordinands of the Class of 1999. On average, ordinands from religious institutes are somewhat older than diocesan ordinands.²



The Class of 2010 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.

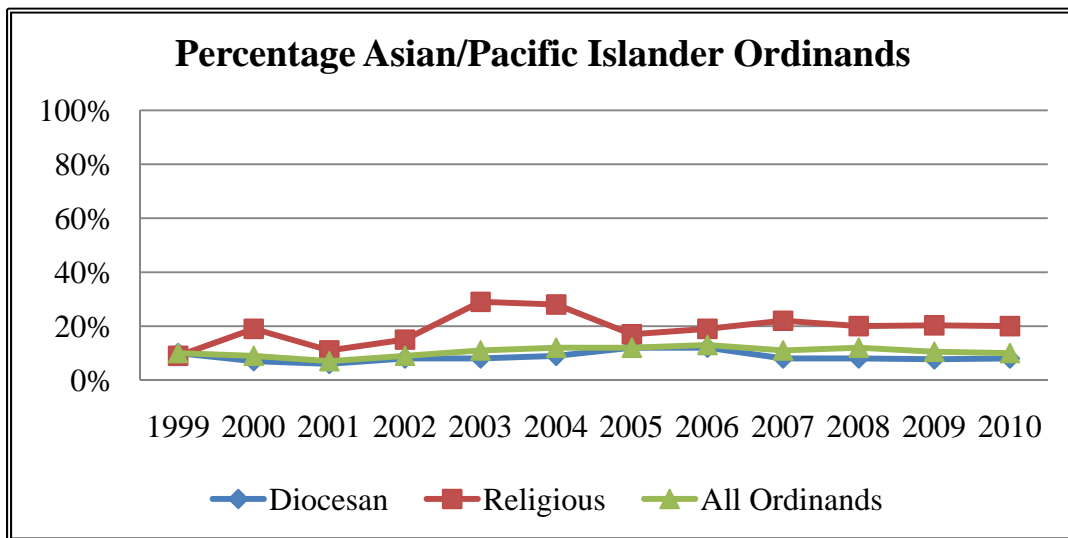
Race and Ethnic Background

Seven in ten responding ordinands report their primary race or ethnicity as Caucasian, European American, or white.

Race and Ethnic Background of Ordinands and Adult Catholics				
	All	Diocesan	Religious	Adult Catholics Nationally
Caucasian/European American/white	70%	73%	50%	58%
Hispanic/Latino	13	14	12	34
Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	10	8	20	4
African/African American/black	5	4	12	3
Native American	1	0	4	1
Other	1	1	2	----*

*Data unavailable.

Compared to data from a recent CARA telephone poll, Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian ordinands are over-represented among responding ordinands, relative to their proportion of the U.S. adult Catholic population, while Hispanics/Latinos are somewhat under-represented. Asians/Pacific Islanders constitute 4 percent of U.S. Catholics overall but are 10 percent of responding ordinands. By contrast, Hispanics/Latinos constitute approximately 34 percent of U.S. adult Catholics but only 13 percent of responding ordinands.



Country of Birth and Age at Entry to United States

Seven in ten responding ordinands were born in the United States.

Country of Birth of Ordinands			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
United States	69%	71%	56%
Mexico	5	5	4
Colombia	3	3	2
Philippines	3	3	2
Poland	3	3	0
Vietnam	3	2	8
Other countries	14	13	28

Ordinands from religious institutes are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have been born outside the United States. Seven in ten (71 percent) diocesan ordinands were born in the United States, compared to just over half (56 percent) of ordinands from religious institutes.

Mexico is the most frequently mentioned country of birth among responding ordinands who were born outside the United States. The responding ordinands identified a total of 32 different countries of origin.

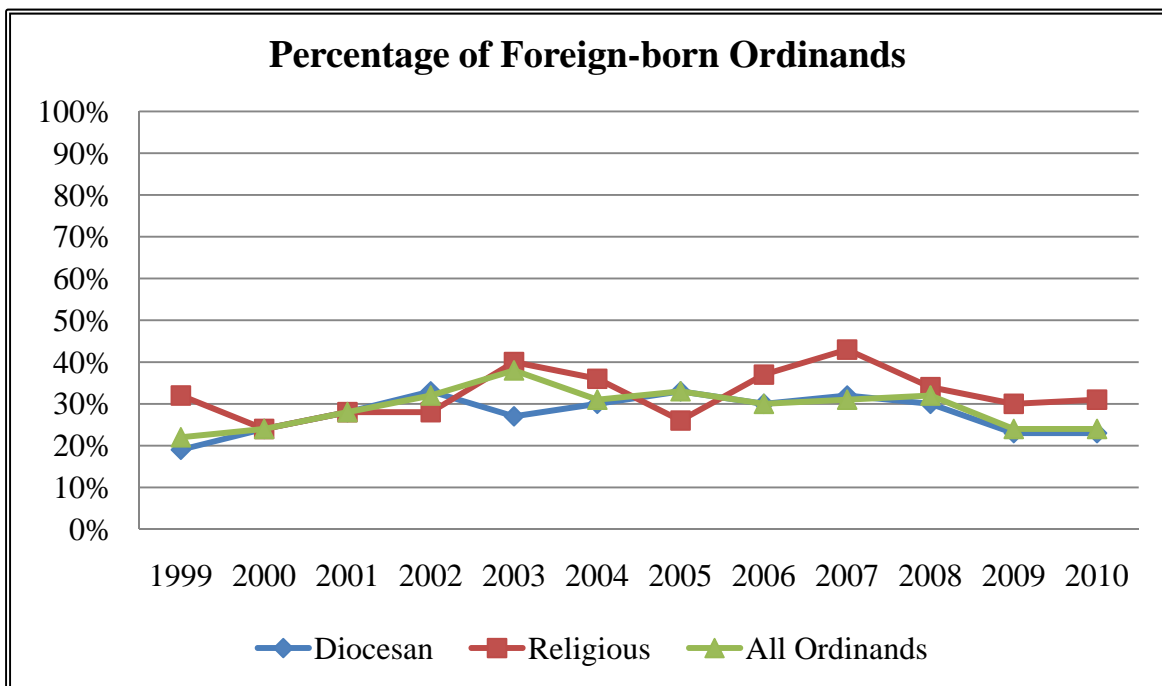
On average, responding ordinands who were born outside the United States have lived in the United States for 11 years. Half first came to live in the United States in 2002 or earlier.

Year of Entry to the U.S. of Foreign-born Ordinands			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	1999	1999	1997
Median	2002	2003	2001
Range	1962-2008	1962-2008	1975-2007

On average, responding foreign-born ordinands came to live in the United States at age 27. There is little difference between diocesan or religious ordinands in their average age at which they came to live in the United States.

	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	27	27	28
Median	26	26	26
Range	3-61	3-57	5-61

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 24 percent in 2010.



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 have been Catholic since birth. Among those who became Catholic later in life, the average age of their conversion was 22.

Catholic Background			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Catholic since birth	90%	91%	88%
Converted	10	9	12
Average age at conversion	22	22	19

Ordinands who converted from another denomination or faith tradition are about evenly divided between those who came from a mainline Protestant tradition (Episcopalian, Lutheran, Anglican, United Church of Christ) and those who came from an evangelical or conservative Protestant tradition (Church of Christ, Baptist, non-denominational Christian). Four responding ordinands were raised without a faith tradition.

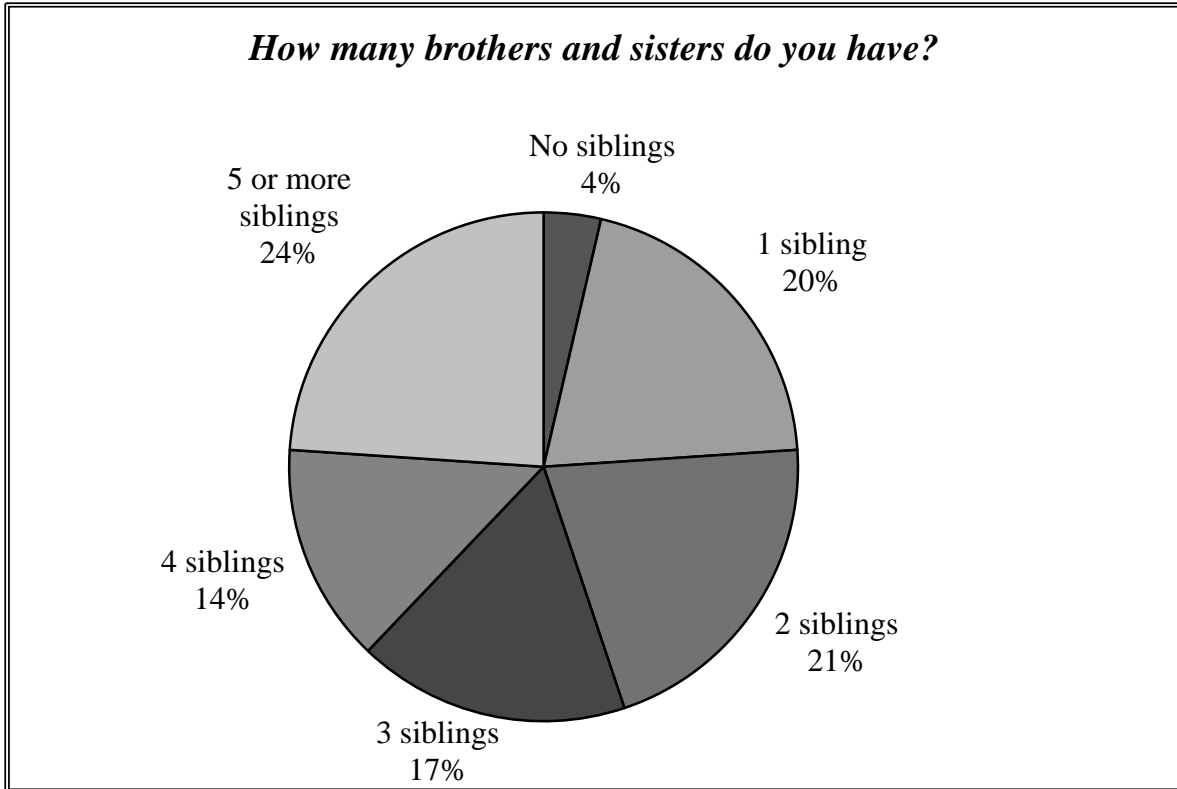
Nearly all ordinands report that when they were children they had at least one parent who was Catholic; eight in ten report that both parents were Catholic.

<i>What was the religious background of your parents when you were a child?</i>			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Both parents Catholic	83%	83%	85%
Mother Catholic, father not	5	5	2
Father Catholic, mother not	4	3	11
Neither parent was Catholic	8	9	2

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 2010, 37 percent of responding ordinands report that they have a relative who is a priest or a religious (not shown in the table above).

Siblings

Almost all ordinands in the Class of 2010 (96 percent) have at least one sibling. More than half (55 percent) report having more than two siblings, while a quarter (24 percent) have five or more siblings.



On average, ordinands have three siblings. Ordinands from religious orders have, on average, slightly more siblings (four siblings) than diocesan ordinands (three siblings). Likewise, diocesan ordinands are a little more likely than ordinands from religious orders to be an only child (4 percent compared to 2 percent, respectively).

What is your birth order?

	All	Diocesan	Religious
Youngest	28%	30%	20%
Middle	34	34	33
Oldest	38	36	47

Overall, ordinands are more likely to be the oldest child in their family and less likely to be the youngest child. Religious order ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to be the oldest child in their family, with 47 percent of religious ordinands being the oldest, compared to 36 percent of diocesan ordinands.

Education

The responding ordinands are highly educated. Six in ten completed college before entering the seminary.³

Highest Education Completed Before the Seminary			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Elementary	4%	4%	2%
High school	21	22	19
Trade or technical school	1	1	2
Some college, no degree	14	15	9
Undergraduate degree	40	38	51
Graduate degree	20	20	17

A very small number of ordinands (4 percent) report that they only completed elementary school before entering the seminary. Almost all of this group (85 percent) entered the seminary in high school. About one in five ordinands of the Class of 2010 completed only high school before entering the seminary and most of the responding ordinands (60 percent) completed college before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have an undergraduate degree before entering the seminary but they are not more likely than diocesan ordinands to have completed a graduate degree.

The education level prior to entering the seminary for responding ordinands of the Class of 2010 is somewhat lower than the education level reported a decade ago. In 1999, 25 percent of responding ordinands had less than a college degree before entering seminary, compared to 40 percent of ordinands in 2010. This could be due in part to a larger number of ordinands entering the seminary at the college level, rather than after completing undergraduate studies.

<i>At what level did you first enter the seminary?</i>			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
High school	7%	7%	6%
College	34	34	35
Pre-theology	43	43	39
Theology	16	15	20

³ Some respondents may have entered the seminary at the high school or college level.

More than eight in ten ordinands (82 percent) who report their highest level of education before seminary is high school entered the seminary in college. Of those who have completed their undergraduate education, seven in ten (72 percent) entered the seminary at the pre-theology level and 19 percent entered at the theology level. Half of those with graduate degrees entered the seminary at the pre-theology level, while almost two in five (38 percent) entered at the theology level.

One in five ordinands studied philosophy or theology before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have done so (32 percent compared to 17 percent).

Field of Study before the Seminary			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Theology or Philosophy	19%	17%	32%
Liberal Arts	16	18	8
Business, business management	13	14	5
Social sciences	12	13	11
Engineering	10	8	18
Education	8	9	5
Science	8	8	8
Law	4	4	5
Computers, computer programming	5	6	5
Medicine	5	6	3

Catholic Education

Half of responding ordinands attended a Catholic elementary school. Almost two in five attended a Catholic high school, while an equal proportion attended a Catholic college.

Attendance at Catholic School*			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Elementary	49%	50%	44%
High School	38	38	31
College	39	40	33

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

Ordinands are slightly more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic elementary school. In a 2008 national poll conducted by CARA,⁴ 42 percent of U.S. adult Catholics report having attended a Catholic elementary school, compared to 49 percent of ordinands who have done so. Ordinands are also more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic high school (33 percent of ordinands, compared to 22 percent of U.S. adult Catholics) and much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (39 percent of ordinands, compared to just 7 percent of U.S. adult Catholics). Compared to diocesan ordinands, religious ordinands are less likely to have attended a Catholic school at any level.

Whether or not they ever attended a Catholic elementary or high school, 62 percent of responding ordinands (64 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 3 percent of ordinands (3 percent of diocesan and no religious ordinands) report being home schooled at some time in their educational background. Among those who were home schooled, the average length of time they were home-schooled was seven years.

Among those ordinands who reported at least some college before entering the seminary, 66 percent say they attended a Catholic college or university. This is significantly higher than the 7 percent of the U.S. Catholic population that attended a Catholic college or university.

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

Two-thirds of responding ordinands of the Class of 2010 participated in religious education programs at their parish.

Participation in Religious Education			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Did you participate in the religious education program in your parish? (percentage responding “yes”)	62%	64%	54%
<i>If yes</i> , total number of years in parish religious education program (mean)	7	7	7

Religious ordinands are slightly less likely than diocesan ordinands to have participated in religious education programs at their parish (64 percent to 54 percent). However, the average number of years of participation in parish religious education is the same for both groups, seven years.

Work Experience

More than nine in ten ordinands report some type of full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary.

Prior Full-time Work Experience			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Educator, teacher, professor	12%	8%	17%
Manager, supervisor	10	11	6
Sales, marketing	10	10	11
Computers, IT	7	7	8
Engineer	6	4	9
Physician, health care	6	7	3
Skilled labor, farming	6	7	0
Accounting, finance, insurance	5	5	6
Church ministry	4	4	6
Attorney	3	3	6
Military	3	4	0
Scientist	3	1	14
Social worker	3	4	0
Student	3	3	3
Restaurant, hotel work	3	3	0
Artist, musician, designer	2	2	3
Clerk, bank teller, bookkeeper	2	2	0
Government, police	<1	1	0
Unclassifiable	3	2	4
No prior work experience listed	8	8	8

Ordinands that mentioned prior work experience were most likely to report that they were educators. About one in ten reported that they had no full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary. Just 2% reported other prior full-time work experience that was not classifiable using this scheme.

Once ordinands who entered the seminary at the high school or college level are excluded, 6 percent of ordinands had no prior work listed (4 percent of diocesan ordinands and 8 percent religious of ordinands).

Military Experience

Fewer than one in ten responding ordinands reports having served in the U.S. Armed Forces (8 percent of diocesan ordinands and 4 percent of religious ordinands). Among those with military experience, more than a third served in the Air Force and a quarter served in the Army.

Service in the U.S. Armed Forces*			
(Percentage checking each response)**			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Air Force	37%	41%	0%
Army	25	27	0
Navy	21	18	50
Marines	8	9	0
Reserve	17	18	0
National Guard	12	9	50
Coast Guard	0	0	0

*Includes only those reporting service in the U.S. Armed Forces.
 **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. Diocesan ordinands were most likely to report having served in the Air Force, while religious ordinands report service in the Navy and the National Guard.

Ordinands were also asked whether either of their parents was a career military person. About one in six ordinands (16 percent) report that either parent had a military career in the U.S. Armed Forces. Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to report having a parent with a military career (17 percent and 9 percent, respectively).

Consideration of Priesthood

On average, ordinands report that they were 18 years old when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood. There are no differences between diocesan and religious ordinands in the age at which they first considered a vocation to the priesthood.

Age When Ordinands First Considered Priesthood			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	18	18	18
Median	16	16	17
Range	3-71	3-71	5-40

Encouragement to Consider Priesthood

Nine in ten ordinands report being encouraged to consider the priesthood by someone in their life. Of those responding ordinands who reported that they were encouraged to consider the priesthood, more than three in four (78 percent) say they were encouraged by a parish priest.

Encouragement to Consider Priesthood*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Parish Priest	78%	80%	64%
Friend	47	46	54
Mother	42	39	56
Parishioner	41	42	29
Father	33	33	33
Teacher/Catechist	29	28	29
Other relative	26	27	24
Grandparent	24	23	31
Bishop	22	22	22
Religious Sister	18	17	22
Campus Minister/School Chaplain	17	17	18
Youth Minister	13	12	13
Religious Brother	12	11	18
Deacon	9	10	2
Military Chaplain	3	3	2

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

Many responding ordinands were encouraged by a friend or family member. Seven in ten (71 percent) received encouragement from a friend, a parent, grandparent, or other relative, or a parishioner (not shown in the table).

- Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to say they were encouraged by religious sisters or brothers, while diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to have been encouraged by a parish priest.
- Although four in ten report that their mother encouraged them to consider the priesthood, ordinands are more likely to report that they received encouragement from friends or a parish priest than from other family members. About one-third received encouragement from their father and one in four were encouraged to consider the priesthood by a grandparent or another relative.
- About three in ten ordinands received encouragement from a teacher. One in six was encouraged by a campus minister, while less than 10 percent were encouraged by a deacon or a military chaplain.
- Almost one in ten responding ordinands of the Class of 2010 (9 percent) report that no one encouraged their vocation to the priesthood (not shown in table). This figure is slightly higher for diocesan ordinands (9 percent) than for religious ordinands (6 percent).

Discouragement from Considering Priesthood

Half of responding ordinands (48 percent of diocesan ordinands and 58 percent of religious ordinands) responded that they were *discouraged* from considering the priesthood by one or more persons (not shown in the table below).

Discouragement from Considering Priesthood*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Friend or classmate	63%	64%	61%
Parent or family member	50	46	68
Priest or other clergy	15	15	14
Teacher	7	8	4
Religious sister or brother	4	3	7
Youth minister	1	0	4
Someone else	14	14	11

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

Among those who reported being *discouraged* from considering a vocation to the priesthood, ordinands are most likely to report that they were discouraged by friends or classmates (63 percent) or by a parent or other family member (50 percent).

Very few responding ordinands said they had been discouraged from considering a priestly vocation by clergy, teachers, or religious sisters or brothers. Almost none reported being discouraged by a youth minister. A few mentioned someone else who had discouraged them from pursuing their vocation, including a girlfriend or former girlfriend, a co-worker, a more distant relative or stranger, or non-Catholic friends.

Participation in Parish Programs, Activities, or Ministries

Many ordinands were active in parish life before entering the seminary. Parish youth group, community service, and the Boy Scouts are among the most common parish programs or activities reported by ordinands.

Participation in Parish Programs or Activities*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Parish youth group	47%	48%	44%
Community service	46	45	52
Boy Scouts/Eagle Scouts	32	31	33
Catholic campus ministry/Newman Center	25	24	31
Knights of Columbus	21	23	15
Right to Life	14	14	10
St. Vincent de Paul Society	5	4	10
Men's Club	4	5	2
Serra Club	2	2	0

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

Almost half of responding ordinands participated in parish youth groups (47 percent) and community service (46 percent). One in three participated in the Boy Scouts or Eagle Scouts. One in five participated in the Knights of Columbus (21 percent) with diocesan ordinands more likely than religious ordinands to participate in the Knights of Columbus (23 percent compared to 15 percent, respectively). Among the activities or programs about which they were asked, ordinands were *least* likely to have been involved in the Serra Club, a Men's Club, or the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Participation in Other Youth Ministry Programs			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
World Youth Day	19%	19%	15%
Franciscan University of Steubenville			
High School Youth Conference	8	9	2
National Catholic Youth Conference	7	6	8

One in five ordinands report having attended World Youth Day before entering the seminary. Diocesan ordinands (9 percent) are more likely than religious ordinands (2 percent) to

report having attended the Franciscan University of Steubenville High School Youth Conference, and religious ordinands (8 percent) are slightly more likely than diocesan ordinands (6 percent) to report having attended the National Catholic Youth Conference.

Most ordinands participated in one or more liturgical ministries in the parish before entering the seminary. Seven in ten were altar servers.

Participation in Parish Ministries*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Altar server	72%	74%	64%
Lector	60	59	66
Eucharistic minister	46	46	45
Catechist	40	40	40
Campus ministry/Youth ministry	31	29	40
Confirmation sponsor/godfather	30	32	21
Cantor or music minister	25	25	30
RCIA team member/sponsor	19	20	13
Usher/minister of hospitality	18	18	19
Liturgy committee member	15	16	13
Parish pastoral council member	12	12	8
Full-time parish/diocesan employee	4	4	4

*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 Eucharistic minister before entering the seminary. While about three in ten served in campus ministry or youth ministry, almost one in five ordinands (19 percent) ministered in their parish as an RCIA team member or sponsor and two in five served as a catechist.

Two-thirds (67 percent) of responding ordinands regularly prayed the Rosary before entering the seminary. Another two-thirds (65 percent) regularly participated in Eucharistic Adoration before entering the seminary.

Did you participate in any of these prayer practices or groups on a regular basis before entering the seminary?*
(Percentage checking each response)

	All	Diocesan	Religious
Rosary	67%	66%	73%
Eucharistic Adoration	65	65	69
Retreats	58	55	71
Prayer group/Bible study	53	54	46
Lectio Divina	26	26	27

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

Almost three in four religious ordinands (73 percent) report having prayed the Rosary regularly before entering seminary. Similarly, seven in ten religious ordinands (71 percent) report having attended retreats before seminary. Diocesan ordinands are slightly more likely than religious ordinands to report regularly attending a prayer group or Bible study before entering seminary (54 percent to 46 percent, respectively).

Vocation Programs and Vocational Advertising

Among the vocation programs identified, responding ordinands are most likely to have experienced a “Come and See” weekend. However, less than half participated in any 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%	39%	58%
Other parish vocation programs	12	12	17
Elementary school/CCD voc. programs	11	10	12
High school vocation programs	10	8	21
Quo Vadis retreat/Discernment retreat	7	8	6
Operation Andrew	5	5	6
Traveling Chalice/Cup/Cross/Statue programs	3	2	6
*Respondents could select more than one category.			

- One in ten responding ordinands participated in a parish or high school vocation program before entering the seminary.
- Less than one in ten participated in a Quo Vadis retreat or Discernment retreat, Operation Andrew, or the Traveling Chalice/Cup/Cross/Statue programs.
- Religious ordinands were much more likely than diocesan ordinands to report having attended a “Come and See” weekend. Almost six in ten religious ordinands attended such a program, compared to almost two-fifths of diocesan ordinands.

In addition to the vocation programs listed above, more than eight in ten responding ordinands (85 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 (89 percent compared to 62 percent).

Ordinands were also asked to indicate if various forms of vocational advertising may have influenced their discernment. Relatively few ordinands report that any of these influenced their discernment. Pamphlets, websites, and DVDs or videos were the most influential, with about one in seven responding ordinands reporting these influenced their discernment.

<i>Did any of these influence your discernment?*</i>			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Pamphlets	17%	14%	33%
Websites	17	17	15
DVDs or Videos	16	16	15
Posters	14	13	17
Magazine advertisements	10	9	17
Newsletters	9	8	17
E-mails	5	4	8
Billboards	4	3	8
TV advertisements	4	4	8
Radio advertisements	3	2	4
Interactive CD-ROM	1	1	0
Other	22	22	21

*Respondents could select more than one category.

About a fifth of responding ordinands mentioned some “other” influence on their discernment. Examples include:

- Personal witness of priests, brothers, and other seminarians
- Holy men and women
- Books, magazines, Catholic radio, and diocesan newspapers
- Prayer
- Vocation director
- Vocation talks, vocation nights, vocation retreats, and vocation programs
- John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Paul VI
- Diocesan discernment programs
- Encouragement from friends and family
- The example of good and happy priests and seminarians
- World Youth Day

Hobbies and Extra-curricular Activities

Listening to music and reading are the most frequently mentioned hobby or extra-curricular activity, mentioned by about seven in ten responding ordinands.

Hobbies and Extra-curricular Activities*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Listening to music	71%	70%	75%
Reading	68	67	75
Movies	59	59	62
Hiking	36	36	37
Cooking	32	31	42
Football/Soccer	32	31	40
Running	32	32	35
Biking	30	30	29
Camping	30	32	23
Musical instruments	30	28	37
Swimming	28	27	31
Basketball	27	28	21
Organized athletics/team sports	24	26	10
Fishing	21	20	25
Opera/Theater	20	22	12
Photography	20	20	25
Golf	19	20	12
Weight training	18	18	12
Gardening	15	15	17
Tennis	15	15	19
Video games	15	17	8
Painting/drawing	12	12	12
Writing/Blogging	11	10	19
Hunting	10	11	4
Woodworking	8	8	8
Sailing	4	4	2
Video production	4	3	8

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

- Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to cook (42 percent to 31 percent), play football or soccer (40 percent to 31 percent), play a musical instrument (37 percent to 28 percent), and write or keep a blog (19 percent to 10 percent).
- Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to play organized athletics or team sports (26 percent to 10 percent), to list opera or theater as a hobby (22 percent to 12 percent), to play video games (17 percent to 8 percent), and to hunt (11 percent to 4 percent).