



**Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
and the National Religious Vocations Conference**
Survey of New Members



*This survey is part of a study to assist NRVC and CARA in understanding religious life and religious vocations in the United States today. "Religious institute" refers to the congregation, province, or abbey/monastery to which you belong. **Your responses are very important.** Please respond by marking an "X" in the appropriate boxes. If you do not know how to respond to a question, or if it does not apply, please leave it blank.*

Please use the responses below for questions 1-17.
1=Not at All 3=Somewhat
2=Only a Little 4=Very Much

How much did the following attract you to religious life?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. A sense of call to religious life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Desire for prayer and spiritual growth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Desire for a deeper relationship with God |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Desire to be of service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Desire to profess and live vows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Desire to be part of a community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Desire to be more committed to the Church |

How much did the following attract you to your religious institute?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. The life and works of your founder/ress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. The charism of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. The mission of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. The spirituality of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. The prayer life of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. The community life of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. The ministries of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. The example of members of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. The cultural diversity of institute members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. Welcome and encouragement by members |

How did you first become acquainted with your religious institute? Check all that apply.

- 18. In an institution where members served, e.g., school
- 19. Through working with a member of the institute
- 20. Through a relative or friend in the institute
- 21. Through a presentation at a school/parish/youth ministry event
- 22. Through a vocation fair or exhibit at an event or conference
- 23. Through a vocation match or placement service (e.g., VISION Vocation Match)
- 24. Through your own internet search of websites
- 25. Through on-line content (e.g., podcasts, videos, blogs, vlogs, webinars)
- 26. Through printed materials (e.g., prayer cards, bookmarks, brochures, books, booklets)
- 27. Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

Did you participate in any of the following before you entered your religious institute? *Check all that apply.*

- 28. Diocesan vocation programs (e.g., Quo Vadis, Fiat Days, dinner with the Bishop)
- 29. Busy Persons Retreat, Nun Run, Open House, Theology on Tap, Cursillo, etc.
- 30. On-line discernment forums, chats, etc.
- 31. In-person meetings with a discernment group
- 32. Discernment retreat(s)
- 33. "Come and See" experience(s)
- 34. Living at a Discernment House
- 35. Live in experience with the institute
- 36. Volunteer service immersion experience(s) with members of the institute

Was religious life formally presented, in class or in campus ministry, as an option for you to consider seriously while you were in these settings? *Check all that apply.*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 37. Elementary school | <input type="checkbox"/> 39. High school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 38. Middle school | <input type="checkbox"/> 40. College |

Please use the responses below for questions 41-51.
1=Not at All 3=Somewhat
2=Only a Little 4=Very Much

How helpful were the following when you were discerning your call to religious life?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 41. Websites of religious institutes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 42. Talking with my pastor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 43. Printed materials (e.g., prayer cards, books, bookmarks, brochures, booklets, posters) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 44. Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 45. On-line content (e.g., podcasts, videos, blogs, vlogs, webinars) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 46. VISION Vocation Guide, online VISION Vocation Network, VocationMatch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 47. Other media (e.g., OYE, A Guide to Religious Ministries, EWTN, Salt and Light Media) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 48. Invitations to Receptions, Final professions, and Jubilees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 49. Discernment with a vocation director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 50. Meeting with a member(s) of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 51. Communal prayer and meals with a member(s) of the institute |

Please use the responses below for questions 52-79.

1=Not at All

3=Somewhat

2=Only a Little

4=Very Much

How much did these influence your decision to enter your religious institute?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 52. The size of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 53. Its geographic location(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 54. The charism of the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 55. Prayer life or prayer styles in the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 56. Community life in the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 57. The way the vows are lived in the institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 58. The living of the Gospel values |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 59. The cultural diversity of the members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 60. The ages of members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 61. Other members also in initial formation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 62. The types of ministry of its members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 63. The diversity of languages among members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 64. The preferential option and commitment for the poor among its members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 65. The vitality of members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 66. The focus on possibilities for the future of the religious institute |

How much encouragement did you receive from the following when you first considered entering your religious institute?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 67. Members of your institute |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 68. Vocation director/team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 69. Spiritual director, if applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 70. Religious sisters, brothers, and/or priests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 71. Diocesan priests, deacons, and/or bishop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 72. Your parents, if applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 73. Your grandparents, if applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 74. Your siblings, if applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 75. Other family members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 76. People in your parish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 77. Teachers, mentors, or others in your school or workplace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 78. Youth minister or college campus minister |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 79. Friends outside the institute |

80. After entering religious life, did familial support and encouragement for your vocation: *Check only one.*

1. Increase 2. Stay the same 3. Decrease

Yes No

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 81. Do you have a relative who is a priest, deacon, or religious sister or brother? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 82. Outside of family members, were there any priests, brothers, or sisters you knew before discerning your vocation? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 83. Were you an associate of your institute before entering? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 84. Were you ever married? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 85. Do you have any children? |

Please use the responses below for questions 86-121.

1=Not at All

3=Somewhat

2=Only a Little

4=Very Much

How important to you are these types of prayer?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 86. Personal private prayer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 87. Journal writing, poetry, prayer blogs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 88. Daily Eucharist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 89. Liturgy of the Hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 90. Non-liturgical common prayer (i.e. rosary, devotions) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 91. Common meditation/centering prayer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 92. Faith sharing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 93. <i>Lectio Divina</i> /spiritual reading and reflection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 94. Ecumenical interfaith prayer (e.g. Taizé) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 95. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 96. Prayer using an app/on-line resources |

How important to you are these aspects of community life?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 97. Living with other members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 98. Praying with other members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 98. Praying with lay partners in ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 99. Ministering/working with other members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 100. Ministering wherever the need is greatest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 101. Sharing meals with other members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 102. Sharing meals with lay partners in ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 103. Socializing/sharing leisure time together |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 104. Celebrating holidays/feast days together |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 105. Participating in neighborhood outreach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 106. Discussing local/global news and events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 107. Corporate stances on social justice issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 108. Learning and implementing cultural competencies with other members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 109. Valuing cultural diversity beyond tolerance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 110. Ongoing formation and lifelong education |

How much do you prefer living in these settings?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 111. Singly (or with family members) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 112. In a community of 2-3 unit members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 113. In a community of 4-7 unit members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 114. In a community of 8 or more unit members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 115. With members close to you in age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 116. With members of different ages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 117. With members of different cultures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 118. With members in different ministries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 119. Living at or near your ministry site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 120. Living simply, in solidarity with the poor, marginalized, and neglected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 121. In community with non-vowed (e.g., volunteers, associates, refugees) |

Please use the responses below for questions 122-141.

1=Poor

3=Good

2=Fair

4=Excellent

How would you rate the following in your religious institute?

1 2 3 4

122. Efforts to promote vocations
 123. Welcome and support of newer members
 124. Initial formation/incorporation programs
 125. Ongoing formation and spiritual growth
 126. Lifelong educational opportunities
 127. Preparation for ministry
 128. Opportunities to lead/learn leadership skills
 129. Opportunities to voice opinions/be heard
 130. Diversity of cultures within the institute
 131. Sense of identity as institute members
 132. Fidelity to the Church and its teachings
 133. Vision for the future of religious life
 134. Focus on mission and its relevance today
 135. Care and support of the elderly members
 136. Response to the needs of our time
 137. Efforts to promote social justice
 138. Quality of community life
 139. Communal prayer experiences
 140. Relationships with one another
 141. Communal work around racism

Were you involved in any of the following before you entered? *Check all that apply.*

142. Youth ministry, parish youth group, or LifeTeen
 143. Young adult ministry or group
 144. College campus ministry/Newman Center
 145. Liturgical ministry (e.g., lector, extraordinary minister)
 146. Music ministry (e.g., cantor, choir, musician)
 147. Adult faith formation, catechist, RCIA team
 148. Other volunteer work in a parish or ministry setting
 149. Bible study group
 150. Military service/Armed Forces, active or reserve
 151. FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students)
 152. National Catholic Youth Conference
 153. Steubenville High School Youth Conference
 154. Right to Life March in Washington, D.C.
 155. World Youth Day
 156. From Service to Sisterhood volunteer program
 157. Volunteer service immersion experiences (e.g., Mercy Corps or Jesuit Volunteer Corps)

Yes No

158. Did someone invite you to consider vocation discernment?
159. How long were you in a formal discernment process?
 1. Less than 6 months 3. One to two years
 2. 6-11 months 4. More than two years

About You

160. What is your current status in your religious institute?
 1. Candidate/postulant
 2. Novice
 3. Temporary vows/commitment
 4. Final/perpetual vows/commitment

Yes No

161. Were either of your parents born outside the United States?
162. *If yes to #161*, country(ies) of birth: _____
 163. Were you born outside the United States?
164. *If yes to #163*, country of birth: _____
_____ 165. *If yes to #163*, age you first came to live in the United States
166. *If no to #163*, in what U.S. region did you grow up?
₁ Northeast (CT, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT)
₂ South Atlantic (DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV)
₃ South Central (AL, AR, KY, LA, MS, OK, TN, TX)
₄ Midwest (IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI)
₅ Mountain West (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY)
₆ Pacific West (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)
₇ Puerto Rico, Guam, or other U.S. Territory

167. What is your first language? _____
168. How many languages do you speak fluently?
 1. One 2. Two 1. Three 2. Four or more
169. Which socioeconomic category best describes your family when you were in elementary school?
 1. Poverty 3. Middle class
 2. Working poor 4. Wealthy

Yes No

170. Were you employed before you entered?
171. *If yes to #170*, were you employed
 1. Full-time 2. Part-time
 172. Were you in ministry before you entered?
173. *If yes to #172*, were you engaged in ministry
 1. Full-time 2. Part-time 3. Volunteer
174. Are you: 1. Male 2. Female
175. If male, are you (or do you expect to be) a
 1. Brother 2. Priest

176. What best describes your racial or ethnic background?
 1. African American/African/black
 2. Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian/Middle Eastern
 3. Caucasian/European American/Anglo/white
 4. Hispanic/Latino(a)
 5. Native American/Alaskan Native
 6. Other/Mixed races or ethnicities

- _____ 177. Year you were born
 _____ 178. Year you entered your religious institute
 _____ 179. Year you professed/expect to profess final vows/perpetual commitment
 _____ 180. Year you were ordained/expect to be ordained to the priesthood (if applicable)
 _____ 181. Age you first considered religious life

Yes No

182. Did you enter another religious institute before this one?
 _____ 183. *If yes*, number of years in that institute
 184. Were you raised Catholic?
 _____ 185. If you became Catholic as an adult, age you entered the Catholic Church
 186. Were you ever home-schooled?
 _____ 187. *If yes*, number of years home-schooled

Did you attend any of the following before you entered?

Check all that apply.

188. Parish-based religious education/CCD/RCIA
 189. Catholic elementary or middle school
 190. Catholic high school
 191. Catholic college or university
192. What was the highest level of education you completed before you entered your religious institute?
 1. High school diploma 4. Bachelor's degree
 2. Some college credits 5. Master's degree
 3. Technical college or Associate degree 6. Doctoral degree
193. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group?
 1. Yes 2. No

194. Looking ahead ten years, what are your hopes for the future in your religious institute?

195. What most concerns you about your future in religious life?

196. What are the greatest obstacles in vocation discernment for discerners and vocation directors?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.