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

1. **Endless Call:** Men and women continue to respond to the call to religious life

2. **Appeal:** Drawn by prayer, spirituality, charism, community life, and mission

3. **Attributes:** Culturally diverse; embrace intercultural, intergenerational living

4. **Lifestyle:** Committed to living simply and in solidarity with the poor

5. **Outlook:** Filled with abundant hope for religious life amid changing demographics

**Characteristics of New Members**

- **3,500+ New Members:** Past 15 years; 200+ professed members per year
- **28 Average Age at Entrance**
- **81% Were Employed Before Entrance**
- **73% Attended a Catholic School for at least part of their education**
- **73% Grew up in “middle-class” households**
- **71% Obtained a Bachelor’s Degree or more before entering religious life**
- **35% Discerned for more than 2 years**
- **34% Have a relative in religious life**
- **33% Have a parent born outside the U.S.**

**Vocation Awareness**

70% of new entrants considered religious life before age 21. Most:
- Accessed a wide array of print and online resources as they discerned;
- Talked to their pastors; attended vocation-related events; and
- Received encouragement from religious institutes, family, friends, parish members, and campus ministers.

**First Language**

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

**Racial/Ethnic Background**

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

**CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES**

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<th><strong>U.S. INSTITUTES</strong></th>
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**ADMISSION AGE REQUIREMENT**

20 years min - 43 years max

**AVERAGE VOCATION DIRECTOR TERM**

7 years

**$34,039 AVERAGE BUDGET**

**$14,600 MEDIAN BUDGET**

47% HAVE OFFICE/ADMIN SUPPORT

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

88% ACCEPT NEW MEMBERS

84% HAVE AT LEAST ONE SERIOUS DISCERNER SINCE 2003

78% PROMOTE VOCATIONS ONLINE

75% HAVE A VOCATION DIRECTOR/VOCATION TEAM

60% HAVE AT LEAST ONE PERSON IN INITIAL FORMATION

60% SPONSOR “COME AND SEE” EXPERIENCES

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

Go to NRVC.net for the complete NRVC/CARA 2020 Study on Recent Vocations to Religious Life. This study was made possible in part through a grant from the GHR Foundation.

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