

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

*The Profession Class of 2010:  
Survey of Women Religious  
Professing Perpetual Vows*

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



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***The Profession Class of 2010:  
Survey of Women Religious  
Professing Perpetual Vows***

**Executive Summary**

This report presents findings from a national survey of women religious who professed perpetual vows in 2010 in a religious congregation, province, or monastery based in the United States. To obtain the names and contact information for these women, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) contacted all major superiors of all religious institutes that belong to either the Leadership Conference of Women Religious or the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, the two leadership conferences of women religious in the United States. CARA also contacted the major superiors of 152 contemplative communities of nuns in the United States that were identified by the USCCB Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. Each major superior was asked to provide contact information for every sister or nun in her institute who was scheduled to profess perpetual vows in 2010. CARA then contacted these sisters or nuns by e-mail or mail to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey.

After repeated follow-ups to the major superiors and to the women religious who had been identified by them, a total of 68 sisters and nuns responded to the survey by December 15, 2010. This represents a response rate of 86 percent of the 79 potential members of the Profession Class of 2010 that were reported to CARA by major superiors. The response rate from the 583 major superiors was 63 percent (79 percent of LCWR superiors, 58 percent of CMSWR superiors, and 31 percent of superiors of contemplative communities).

**Major Findings**

- A total of 311 major superiors (84 percent of those responding) reported that they had no one professing perpetual vows in 2010, 46 major superiors (13 percent) reported one woman professing perpetual vows, and 12 major superiors (3 percent) reported two or more. The sisters and nuns who responded to the survey represent 52 religious congregations, provinces, or monasteries.

- The average age of responding women religious of the Profession Class of 2010 is 43. Four in ten (44 percent) are under age 40.
- In general, women religious of the Class of 2010 are more diverse than other perpetually professed women religious in terms of their racial and ethnic identity. Six in ten identify as white, one in five identifies as Asian, and one in ten identifies as Hispanic/Latina.
- Most responding women religious (71 percent) were born in the United States. Of those born outside the United States, the most common countries of origin are Mexico, the Philippines, or Nigeria. On average, the women religious who were born outside the United States were 27 years old when they first came to the United States and they have lived here for 17 years before profession.

### *Family Background*

- Nearly nine in ten sisters and nuns were born Catholic and eight in ten come from families in which both parents are Catholic. Among the 13 percent who became Catholic, the average age at which they converted was 19.
- Almost all of the responding women religious have at least one sibling and the most common number of siblings is four. Two-thirds of these sisters and nuns have four or more siblings. A quarter of these women religious are the oldest child in the family and a fifth are the youngest; more than half are somewhere in between.

### *Education, Work, and Ministry Experience*

- Half of responding women religious (51 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school, which is a rate slightly higher than that for all Catholic adults in the United States (42 percent). Women religious are about as likely as other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic high school (25 percent of women religious, compared to 22 percent of U.S. adult Catholics) and much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (26 percent of women religious, compared to just 7 percent of U.S. adult Catholics).
- The responding women religious are highly educated. A quarter earned a graduate degree before entering their religious institute. Six in ten entered their religious institute with at least a bachelor's degree or more. One in six (16 percent) participated in a Catholic ministry formation program before they entered their religious institute.
- More than nine in ten responding sisters and nuns (94 percent) report some type of work experience prior to entering the religious institute. Of those who were employed, one in five (20 percent) was employed part-time and four in five (80 percent) were employed full-time before entering the institute.

- Many women religious were active in parish life before entering their religious institute. Four in ten participated in a youth group and three in ten participated in a young adult group. One in five was active in campus ministry or a Newman Club on campus.
- Eighty-five percent had ministry experience before entering their religious institute, most commonly in liturgical ministry, faith formation, or social service ministry.
- In addition to years of Catholic schooling and parish-based religious education, many of these responding women religious report participation in several other types of formative experiences. One in five participated in a World Youth Day before entering.
- Three-quarters of responding sisters and nuns regularly participated in retreats before they entered their religious institute. Two-thirds regularly prayed the Rosary and/or participated in Eucharistic Adoration before entering. Six in ten regularly participated in a faith sharing or Bible study group and/or in regular spiritual direction.

### ***Consideration of Religious Life and Choice of Community***

- On average, responding women religious report that they were 20 years old when they first considered a vocation to religious life, but half were under the age of 18 when they first considered a vocation.
- Nine in ten women religious (87 percent) say they were encouraged to consider religious life by someone in their life. Of those who reported that they were encouraged to consider a vocation, more than half (52 percent) say they were encouraged by a religious sister.
- Two-thirds of responding women religious (66 percent) reported that they were *discouraged* from considering a vocation by one or more persons. These women are most likely to report that they were discouraged by a parent or other family member (51 percent) or by friends or classmates (26 percent).
- On average, women religious report that they knew the members of their religious institute for six years before they entered, but half knew them for two years or less before they entered. A third were introduced to their institute through the recommendation of a priest or advisor.
- Most women religious of the Profession Class of 2010 (84 percent) participated in some type of vocation program or experience prior to entering their religious institute. Most commonly, this was a “Come and See” experience or a vocation retreat.

## **Introduction**

In April 2010, 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 a survey of women religious who professed perpetual vows in 2010 in a religious congregation, province, or monastery based in the United States. For this project, CARA was asked to gather information about the characteristics and experiences of these women religious and report the findings to the Secretariat for use with the World Day of Consecrated Life in February. CARA worked with the Secretariat to design a questionnaire for women religious that was patterned after the questionnaire used for the annual “Class of...” study of prospective ordinands to the priesthood. CARA then programmed the questionnaire into an online survey and the women religious had the option of completing the survey either online or on paper. This report presents results of this survey of women religious of the Profession Class of 2010.

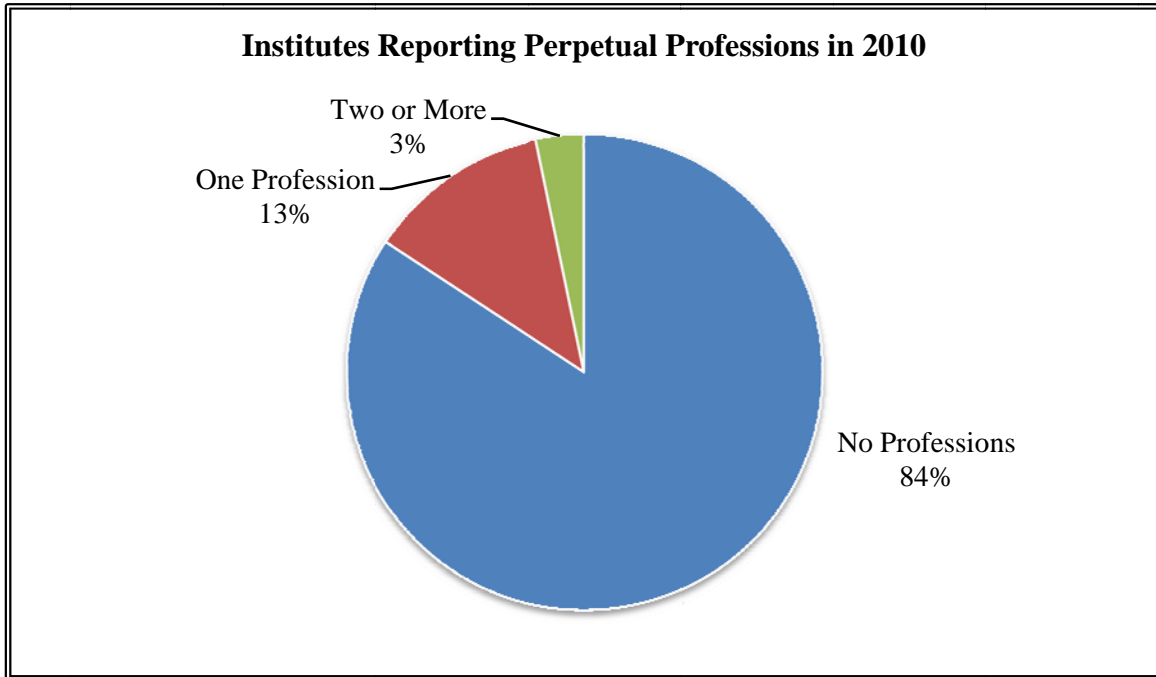
To obtain the names and contact information for these sisters and nuns, CARA contacted all major superiors of all religious institutes that belong to either the Leadership Conference of Women Religious or the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, the two leadership conferences of women religious in the United States. CARA also contacted the major superiors of 152 contemplative communities of nuns in the United States that were identified by the USCCB Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. Each major superior was asked to provide contact information for every sister or nun in her institute who was scheduled to profess perpetual vows in 2010. CARA then contacted these sisters or nuns by e-mail or mail to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey.

After repeated follow-up contact with the major superiors and to the women religious who had been identified by them, a total of 68 sisters and nuns responded to the survey by December 15, 2010. This represents a response rate of 86 percent of the 79 potential members of the Profession Class of 2010 that were reported to CARA by major superiors. The response rate from the 583 major superiors was 63 percent (79 percent of LCWR superiors, 58 percent of CMSWR superiors, and 31 percent of superiors of contemplative communities).

The questionnaire asked women religious about their demographic and religious background, education and work experience, previous ministry or service and other formative experiences, encouragement and discouragement to consider religious life, initial acquaintance with the institute, and vocation/discernment programs and experiences. This report presents analyses of each question from all responding women religious.

## Institutes Reporting Perpetual Professions

Among the 583 religious congregations, provinces, or monasteries in the United States that were identified by the two leadership conferences of women religious or the USCCB Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations and asked to provide the names of women religious who professed or were planning to profess perpetual vows in 2010, a total of 368 major superiors responded (63 percent) with 79 names of women religious.



A total of 311 major superiors (84 percent of those responding) reported that they had no one professing perpetual vows in 2010, 46 major superiors (13 percent) reported one woman professing perpetual vows, and 12 major superiors (3 percent) reported from two to nine.

The sisters and nuns who responded to the survey represent 52 religious congregations, provinces, or monasteries.

## Age of Professed Women

*The average age of responding women religious of the Profession Class of 2010 is 43. More than half (56 percent) are over age 44.*

| <b>Age of Professed Women</b>                               |                          |                                 |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Percentage in each age category                             |                          |                                 |
|   | <b>Class of<br/>2010</b> | <b>All Women<br/>Religious*</b> |
| Age 25-29   | 18%                      | } 1%                            |
| Age 30-39   | 26                       |                                 |
| Age 40-49   | 21                       | 2                               |
| Age 50-59   | 26                       | 6                               |
| Age 60 and older  | 9                        | 91                              |
| Average age   | 43                       |                                 |
| Median age  | 44                       |                                 |
| Range in years  | 25-62                    |                                 |
| *CARA/NRVC 2009 Study of Recent Vocations to Religious Life |                          |                                 |

The youngest responding sister or nun of the Profession Class of 2010 is 25 and the oldest is 62 years of age. Six respondents are making final profession at age 60 or older.

Compared to other perpetually professed women religious that were reported in a 2009 study that CARA completed for the National Religious Vocation Conference, the sisters and nuns of the Class of 2010 are significantly younger.



## Race and Ethnic Background

*Six in ten responding women religious report their primary race or ethnicity as Caucasian, European American, or white.*

| <b>Race and Ethnic Background of Professed Women</b> |                      |                             |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Percentage in each category                          |                      |                             |
|  | <b>Class of 2010</b> | <b>All Women Religious*</b> |
| Caucasian/European American/white                    | 62%                  | 94%                         |
| Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian               | 19                   | 2                           |
| Hispanic/Latina                                      | 10                   | 3                           |
| African/African American/black                       | 6                    | <1                          |
| Native American                                      | 0                    | <1                          |
| Other  | 3                    | <1                          |

\* CARA/NRVC 2009 Study of Recent Vocations to Religious Life

Compared to all perpetually professed women religious from the 2009 CARA study of religious institutes, women religious of the Class of 2010 are more diverse. In particular, one in five women of the Class of 2010 identify as Asian, and one in ten identifies as Hispanic or Latina. In general, women religious of the Class of 2010 are more similar in terms of their racial and ethnic identity to other adult Catholics nationally, but they are more likely than other adult Catholics nationally to be Asian and less likely to be Hispanic/Latino(a).

## Country of Birth and Age at Entry to United States

*Seven in ten responding women religious were born in the United States.*

| <b>Country of Birth of Professed Women</b> |     |
|--|-----|
| Percentage in each category                |     |
| United States                              | 71% |
| Mexico                                     | 7   |
| Philippines                                | 4   |
| Nigeria                                    | 3   |
| Other countries                            | 15  |

Mexico is the most frequently mentioned country of birth among responding women religious who were born outside the United States. These women identified a total of ten different countries of origin.

*Responding women religious who were born outside the United States have lived in the United States for an average of 17 years. Half first came to live in the United States in 1994 or earlier.*

| <b>Entrance to the United States<br/>of Professed Women</b> |             |                     |
|---|-------------|---------------------|
|   | <b>Year</b> | <b>Age at Entry</b> |
| Mean  | 1993        | 27                  |
| Median  | 1994        | 26                  |
| Range   | 1975-2007   | 8-59                |

On average, responding foreign-born women religious came to live in the United States at age 27. Half were age 26 or younger when they came to live in the United States; the youngest was eight and the oldest was 59 at the time she entered the United States.

## Family Background

*Nearly nine in ten responding sisters and nuns (87 percent) have been Catholic since birth. Among those who became Catholic later in life, their average age at the time of their conversion was 19.*

| <b>Catholic Background of Professed Women</b> |     |
|---|-----|
| Catholic since birth                          | 87% |
| Converted                                     | 13  |
| Average age at conversion                     | 19  |

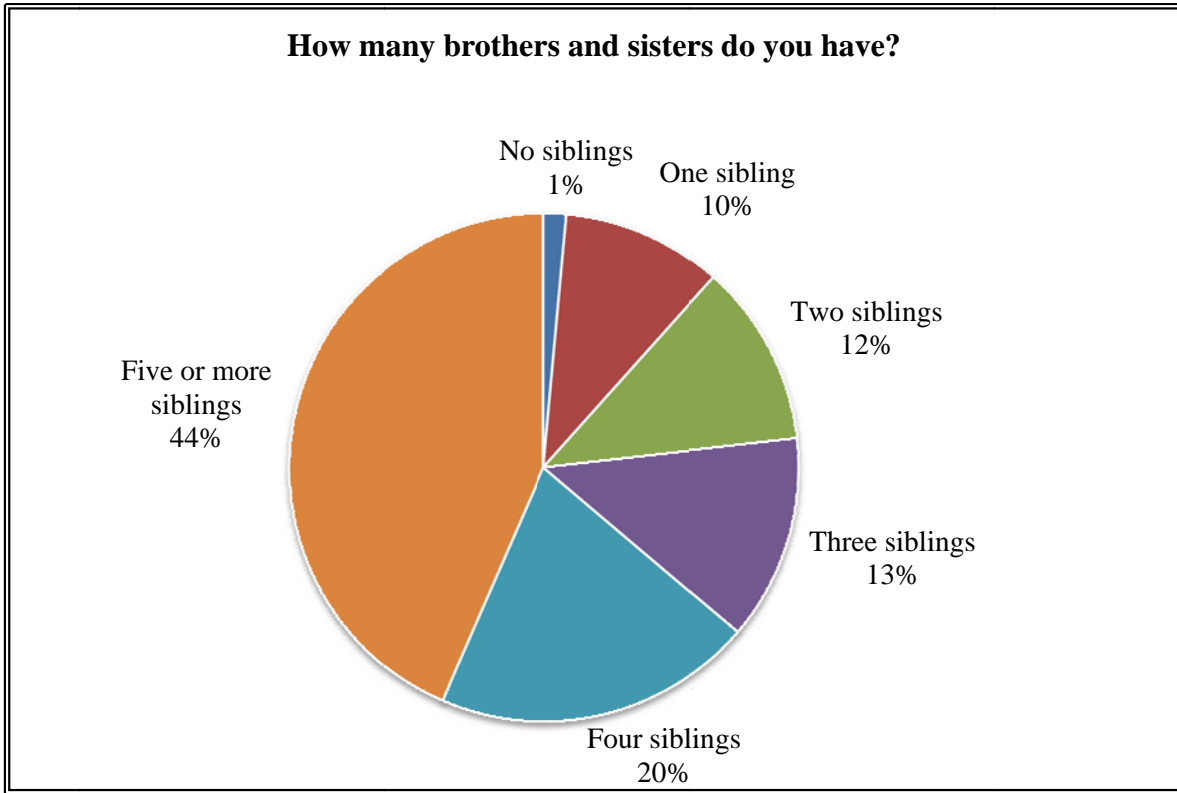
Women religious who converted from another denomination or faith tradition are most likely to have converted from a mainline Protestant tradition (e.g., Episcopalian, Anglican, Methodist), although a few came from an evangelical or conservative Protestant tradition (e.g., Baptist, non-denominational Christian). Two responding women religious were raised without a faith tradition.

*Nearly all responding sisters and nuns report that when they were children they had at least one parent who was Catholic; eight in ten report that both parents were Catholic.*

| <b><i>What was the religious background of your parents<br/>when you were a child?</i></b> |     |
|--|-----|
| Percentage responding  |     |
| Both parents Catholic  | 81% |
| Mother Catholic, father not  | 9   |
| Father Catholic, mother not  | 4   |
| Neither parent was Catholic  | 6   |

In addition to the predominantly Catholic background of their parents, many women religious also report that they have a relative who is a priest or a religious. In the Profession Class of 2010, 55 percent of responding sisters and nuns report that they have or had a relative who is a priest or a religious (not shown in the table above).

Almost all women religious in the Profession Class of 2010 (99 percent) have at least one sibling. One in ten has one brother or sister and a quarter (25 percent) report having two or three. Another two-thirds (64 percent) have four or more siblings.



On average, responding sisters and nuns have five siblings. Only one woman from the Profession Class of 2010 reports that she is an only child and three report that they have ten or more brothers and sisters. The most common response to this question is four siblings.

**What is your birth order?**  
Percentage in each category

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Youngest | 19% |
| Middle   | 55  |
| Oldest   | 26  |

Overall, these sisters and nuns are more likely to be one of the middle children in their family. They are least likely to be the youngest child. About a quarter of responding women religious are the oldest children in their family.

## Education

*Half of responding women religious attended a Catholic elementary school. A quarter attended a Catholic high school, while an equal proportion attended a Catholic college before entering their religious institute.*

| <b>Attendance at Catholic School*</b> |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Percentage responding                 |     |
| Elementary                            | 51% |
| High School                           | 25  |
| College                               | 26  |

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

Sisters and nuns of the Profession Class of 2010 are more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic elementary school. In a 2008 national poll conducted by CARA,<sup>1</sup> 42 percent of U.S. adult Catholics report having attended a Catholic elementary school, compared to 51 percent of these women religious. Women religious are about as likely as other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic high school (25 percent of women religious, compared to 22 percent of U.S. adult Catholics) and much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (26 percent of women religious, compared to just 7 percent of U.S. adult Catholics). In addition, 16 percent of women religious report that they participated in a Catholic ministry formation program before they entered their religious institute.

Whether or not they ever attended a Catholic elementary or high school, 59 percent of responding sisters and nuns participated in a religious education program in their parish.

Seven percent of women religious 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 five years.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics*. April 2008. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

*The responding women religious are highly educated. A quarter earned a graduate degree before entering their religious institute.*

| <b>Highest Education Completed Before Entering</b> |     |
|--|-----|
| Percentage responding                              |     |
| High school  | 16% |
| Trade or technical school                          | 6   |
| Some college, no degree                            | 19  |
| Undergraduate degree                               | 33  |
| Graduate degree                                    | 26  |

About one in six women religious of the Profession Class of 2010 completed only high school before entering the religious institute and most (59 percent) completed college before entering their religious institute.

## Work Experience

*More than nine in ten responding sisters and nuns (94 percent) report some type of work experience prior to entering the religious institute. Of those who were employed, one in five (20 percent) was employed part-time and four in five (80 percent) had been employed full-time before entering the institute.*

| <b>Prior Work Experience</b>   |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Percentage in each category    |     |
| Educator, teacher, professor   | 16% |
| Health care                    | 16  |
| Clerk, bank teller, bookkeeper | 15  |
| Skilled labor                  | 13  |
| Accounting, finance            | 6   |
| Restaurant, hotel work         | 6   |
| Administration                 | 4   |
| Church ministry                | 4   |
| Government                     | 4   |
| Sales, marketing               | 4   |
| Student                        | 4   |
| Social worker                  | 3   |
| Attorney                       | 1   |
| Computers, IT                  | 1   |

Women religious were most likely to report that they were in education or in health care prior to entering their religious institute. They were about as likely to report that they had done clerical work or some other type of skilled labor before entering.

## Participation in Religious Programs, Activities, or Ministries

*Many women religious were active in parish life before entering their religious institute. Two in three participated in one or more of these programs or activities before entering.*

### Participation in Religious Programs or Activities\*

Percentage checking each response

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Youth ministry or youth group          | 38% |
| Young adult ministry or group          | 30  |
| Catholic campus ministry/Newman Center | 19  |
| Sodality                               | 4   |
| St. Vincent de Paul Society            | 4   |
| Catholic Daughters                     | 3   |

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

- Four in ten responding sisters and nuns participated in youth ministry or a youth group before entering.
- Three in ten participated in young adult ministry or a young adult group. One in five participated in Catholic campus ministry or in a Newman Center while in college.
- Among the activities or programs about which they were asked, women religious were *least* likely to have been involved in Sodality, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, or Catholic Daughters.



*Most sisters and nuns (85 percent) served in one or more ministries before entering their religious institute. The most common ministry service reported by women religious was liturgical ministry.*

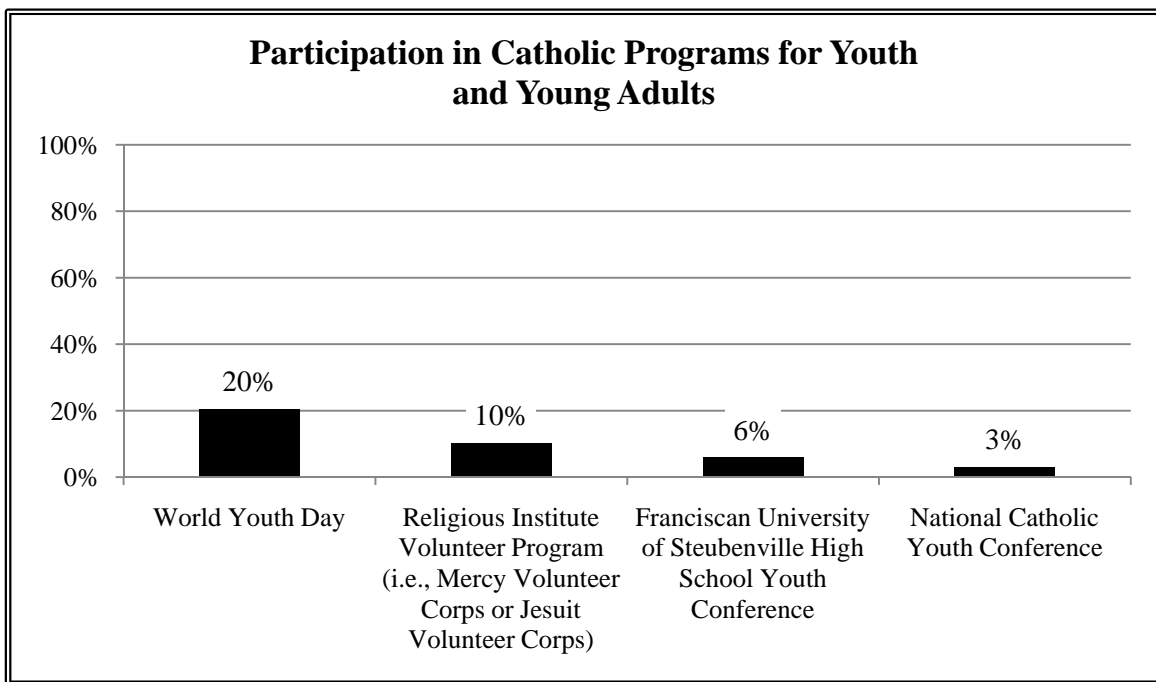
| <b>Ministry Experience*</b>  |     |
|--|-----|
| Percentage checking each response  |     |
| Liturgical ministry (e.g., lector, extraordinary minister, altar server)                   | 57% |
| Faith formation, catechetical ministry, RCIA   | 41  |
| Music ministry, cantor, or choir   | 41  |
| Social service ministry (e.g., Catholic Charities program, other community service)        | 41  |
| Hospital or prison ministry  | 15  |
| Teacher in a Catholic school   | 10  |
| *Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category. |     |

- Among the ministries listed on the survey, responding sisters and nuns were *most* likely to report that they served in liturgical ministries such as lector, extraordinary minister of Communion, or altar server before entering their religious institute. Four in ten were involved in music ministry, sang in a choir, or served as a cantor.
- Four in ten sisters and nuns served in catechetical ministry or faith formation, including RCIA. Just as many reported that they served in a social service ministry, such as a Catholic Charities program, or some other community service.
- Responding women religious were *least* likely to have served in a hospital or prison ministry or to have been a teacher in a Catholic school before they entered their religious institute.

## Other Formative Experiences

In addition to years of Catholic schooling and parish-based religious education, many of these responding women religious report participation in several other types of formative experiences.

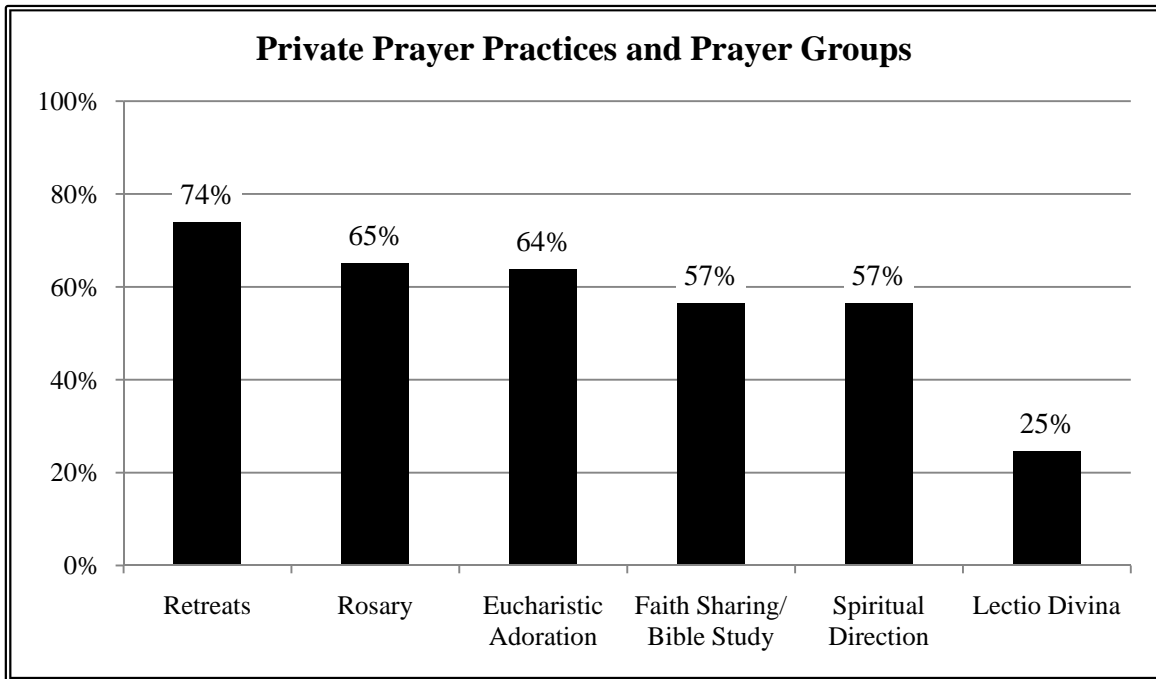
*Some young Catholics have the opportunity to participate in a variety of other formative experiences as youth or young adults, such as youth conferences, volunteer programs, or World Youth Day. One in five responding sisters and nuns of the Profession Class of 2010 participated in World Youth Day before entering her religious institute.*



- One in ten responding women religious participated in a volunteer program sponsored by a religious institute before entering the religious institute. Mercy Volunteer Corps and Jesuit Volunteer Corps are among the largest of these types of volunteer programs, but there are many others sponsored by other religious institutes.
- Six percent of responding sisters and nuns participated in the High School Youth Conference sponsored by the Franciscan University of Steubenville prior to entering their institute. This annual conference for high school youth has been held on the campus of Franciscan University of Steubenville for more than 30 years. In the 1990s, the conference expanded to include other regional locations.

- Three percent of women religious participated in the National Catholic Youth Conference before entering their institute. This biennial conference for high school youth and their adult chaperones is sponsored by the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.

*Private prayer and prayer groups are another type of formative experience that can help shape one's religious faith and openness to consider a vocation. More than nine in ten responding sisters and nuns of the Profession Class of 2010 participated in one or more of these prayer practices or groups on a regular basis prior to entering her religious institute.*



- Retreats are the most common type of formative prayer experience, reported by three in four women religious of the Profession Class of 2010.
- Two-thirds of responding sisters and nuns regularly prayed the Rosary or participated in Eucharistic Adoration prior to entering their religious institute.
- Nearly as many, about six in ten, report participating on a regular basis in a faith sharing or Bible study group or receiving spiritual direction before entering their religious institute.
- One in four regularly participated in lectio divina prayer prior to entering their religious institute. This is an ancient prayer practice from the Order of St. Benedict.

## Consideration of Religious Life

*On average, women religious report that they were 20 years old when they first considered a vocation to religious life, but half were under the age of 18 when they first considered a vocation.*

| <b>Age When Women Religious First Considered a Vocation to Religious Life</b> |      |
|---|------|
| Mean  | 20   |
| Median  | 18   |
| Range   | 3-50 |

### *Encouragement to Consider a Vocation*

Almost nine in ten women religious (87 percent) report that someone encouraged them to consider a vocation to religious life. Of those who reported that they were encouraged to consider a vocation, more than half (52 percent) say they were encouraged by a religious sister.

| <b>Encouragement to Consider a Vocation to Religious Life*</b> |     |
|--|-----|
| Percentage checking each response                              |     |
| Religious sister   | 52% |
| Friend   | 44  |
| Parish priest  | 39  |
| Mother   | 26  |
| Father   | 16  |
| Other relative   | 16  |
| Religious brother  | 12  |
| Teacher/Catechist  | 12  |
| Parishioner  | 10  |
| Campus minister/School chaplain                                | 9   |
| Grandparent(s)   | 9   |
| Deacon   | 4   |
| Bishop   | 3   |
| Youth minister   | 1   |
| Military chaplain  | 0   |

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

Many responding sisters and nuns were encouraged by a friend or family member.

- Four in ten were encouraged to consider a vocation to religious life by their parish priest. About the same proportion says that a friend encouraged their vocation.
- Although women religious are more likely to report that they received encouragement from other women religious, friends, or a parish priest than from their family members, a quarter report that their mother encouraged them to consider religious life. One in six received encouragement from their father or from another relative and one in ten were encouraged to consider a vocation by a grandparent.
- About one in ten sisters and nuns received encouragement from a teacher, a campus minister, a religious brother, or a parishioner. Very few received encouragement from a deacon, a bishop, or a youth minister and none reported receiving encouragement from a military chaplain.
- More than one in ten responding sisters or nuns of the Profession Class of 2010 (13 percent) reports that no one encouraged their vocation (not shown in table).

### ***Discouragement from Considering a Vocation***

Two-thirds of responding women religious (66 percent) responded that they were *discouraged* from considering a vocation by one or more persons.

| <b>Discouragement from Considering a Vocation to Religious Life*</b> |     |
|--|-----|
| Percentage checking each response                                    |     |
| Parent or family member  | 51% |
| Friend or classmate  | 26  |
| Priest or other clergy   | 4   |
| Teacher  | 3   |
| Religious sister or brother  | 3   |
| Youth minister   | 0   |
| Someone else   | 13  |

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

Among those who reported being *discouraged* from considering a vocation, women religious are most likely to report that they were discouraged by a parent or other family member (51 percent) or by friends or classmates (26 percent).

- Very few sisters and nuns said they had been discouraged from considering a vocation by clergy, teachers, or religious sisters or brothers. No one reported being discouraged by a youth minister.
- A few mentioned someone else who had discouraged them from pursuing their vocation, including colleagues, co-workers, or family friends.

## Initial Acquaintance with the Religious Institute

*On average, women religious report that they knew the members of their religious institute six years before they entered.*

| <b><i>How many years did you know the members of your religious institute before entering?</i></b> |              |
|--|--------------|
|  | <b>Years</b> |
| Mean   | 6            |
| Median   | 2            |
| Range  | 0-38         |

Half of all responding women religious report that they knew the members of their religious institute two years or less before they entered. A quarter (24 percent) knew the members of their religious institute for one year before they entered and one in ten (12 percent) knew the members for less than a year.

*Women religious were asked to indicate how they first became acquainted with their religious institute. A third were introduced to their institute by a priest or advisor.*

| <b><i>How did you first become acquainted with your religious institute?*</i></b>          |     |
|--|-----|
| Percentage checking each response  |     |
| Through the recommendation of a priest or advisor  | 33% |
| Through print or online promotional material published by the institute                    | 19  |
| In/through a sponsored institution or work of the institute (e.g., school, hospital)       | 16  |
| Through a friend or relative in the institute  | 13  |
| Through working with a Sister from the institute   | 10  |
| At a vocation event (e.g., Vocation Fair)  | 7   |
| Through a vocation matching or placement service   | 1   |
| Other  | 35  |
| *Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category. |     |

About a third of responding sisters and nuns mentioned some other way they first became acquainted with the institute. Some of their responses include:

- At an evangelization conference
- Attended a “Come and See” event
- Through participating in Holy Hour for Life at the Motherhouse
- CMSWR website
- EWTN
- Inter-Novitiate workshop
- National Catholic Youth Conference
- Peace and justice work of the institute
- Right to Life March in Washington, D.C.
- Spiritual Director
- Through friends who knew the institute
- Through my parish
- Through sisters I met in their various ministries
- *Vision* magazine
- Vocation booth at World Youth Day in Denver



## Vocation/Discernment Programs and Experiences

*Among the vocation programs and experiences about which they were asked responding sisters and nuns are most likely to have participated in a “Come and See” experience. Most (84 percent) had participated in at least one of these programs or experiences prior to entering their religious institute.*

| <b>Vocation/Discernment Programs and Experiences*</b> |     |
|---|-----|
| Percentage checking each response                     |     |
| “Come and See” experience                             | 48% |
| Vocation retreat                                      | 44  |
| Live-in experience                                    | 28  |
| “Nun Run”   | 3   |

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

- Half of responding women religious participated in a “Come and See” experience before entering their religious institute.
- Vocation retreats are another popular vocation program, experienced by four in ten sisters and nuns before they entered their religious institute.
- About a quarter participated in some sort of live-in experience with their religious institute before entering.
- Very few report that they have participated in a “Nun Run” experience.