



The USA Council of Serra International

Single Adult Discernment Program

"Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest " (Mt 9:38)

THE SINGLE ADULT DISCERNMENT PROGRAM

Brief History

The “Life Awareness Weekend” for single adults aged 18 to 50 was conceived in 1983 by the Vocation Committee of the Serra Club of Northwest Houston to provide single adults an opportunity to learn more about religious vocations and to begin the discernment process, if necessary. The weekend offers teaching, information and counseling provided by a select staff of both diocesan and religious order priests, brothers, sisters, seminarians and novices. No one who attends a weekend program is asked to make any kind of commitment and there is no charge for those attending the weekend.

Research has shown that young adults in the United States today are waiting longer to make a permanent lifestyle commitment. Many single young men and women presently involved in various secular professions believe that they have been called by God to a vocation in the ordained priesthood or vowed religious life but don’t know where to turn or how to go about looking more deeply into this call.

The Houston “Life Awareness Weekend,” or, more specifically, the “Single Adult Discernment Program,” has proven to be very successful and is hosted by many dioceses across the country under many different names. Even modest-sized Serra clubs can conduct an annual Single Adult Discernment Program.

Unlike traditional retreats, these weekends have a singular purpose — to present to the participant information about God’s call to a vocation to the ordained priesthood or vowed religious life. The program contains many prayer opportunities, but these are focused on the discernment process.

Planning the Weekend

1. Contact the Vocation Directors in Your Area

Like any special event, the road to success begins with adequate advance planning. Before making any specific arrangements, the program coordinators must contact the diocesan Vocation Office, the religious order vocation directors or the diocesan vocation organization, if one exists. The diocesan vocation director and staff have vital roles in the planning of the Single Adult Discernment Program, such as the evaluation of candidates and providing assistance in the selection of the staff of priests, brothers, sisters, seminarians and novices.

2. Create a Planning or Steering Committee

The Planning or Steering Committee should consist of representatives of each of the organizations that will have some part in planning and implementation of the discernment weekend. This committee will:

1. Develop the agenda
2. Prepare timetables
3. Select weekend staff (presenters, facilitators and Serrans)
4. Select weekend facility
5. Promote of the weekend in parishes and media
6. Interview candidates
7. Research and gather resource materials
8. Find sponsors or make other arrangements for coverage of weekend expenses
9. Assign tasks to weekend staff
10. Develop evaluation documents

If the Single Adult Discernment Program will be a district effort, one club should be chosen as the host club who will administer and conduct the program. Duties and responsibilities include all facets of overall planning, advertising and promotion, fund raising, scheduling, screening of applicants, arranging for religious staff of presenters and counselors (with assistance from the diocesan vocation office), preparing and serving food, securing the bishop's participation, scheduling club members for various duties during the weekend, and, finally, paying the bills following the annual retreat.

Task Descriptions

1. Develop the Agenda

The form the agenda takes may depend on the site selected for the discernment weekend. Because the participants will be single adults, adult catechesis techniques should be used — that is, equal time on the agenda should be provided for input, group discussion or private reflection, and feedback. The process used can be intense, so time should be allotted for socializing, rest and private prayer.

Among other things, the agenda includes a social hour on Friday and Saturday evening after all of the day's activities are concluded (usually about 9.30 p.m.). Several Serrans and their spouses should be available to act as hosts for this informal gathering. Snacks and soft drinks are served and usually all participants and staff members attend these socials. These affairs provide relaxed opportunity for attendees to get better acquainted, exchange ideas, visit with the staff, unwind, etc. Some participants may use this opportunity to ask questions that they do not feel comfortable asking in a larger gathering. This activity provides a welcome respite to the end of a long, busy day.

Serrans are generally not involved during the actual presentation sessions. They may, however, sit quietly in the back of a meeting room to listen to a particular presentation.

A sample agenda is included in Attachment 1.

2. Create a Task Timetable

The Serra club Vocations Vice President and the club Vocation Committee has the overall responsibility for planning and conducting the Single Adult Discernment Program. This significant responsibility requires considerable effort and attention, from the initial planning sessions, through the program itself, to the post-weekend evaluation. The Vocations Vice President should provide periodic progress reports at club meetings to keep the membership aware of the program progress.

Usually the two or three club meetings immediately preceding the weekend are used to ensure that everything is in order for the event. At that time, specific weekend duties are assigned to club members. All Serrans should be involved in some phase of the program's preparation and activity, particularly at the weekend itself.

Practically, the date for the Single Adult Discernment Program is established by the availability of a suitable venue, ideally at a time when exclusive use of the facility is possible (including a chapel, kitchen and dining room). Some clubs have found that a weekend in July is most convenient for this purpose. July is also more appealing to high school graduates and college students during their summer vacations. Other single adults have similarly reported that midsummer would be their most convenient time.

For an event taking place in July, the Vocations Committee should begin planning in February.

Tasks for completion, not necessarily in this order, include the following.

1. Compose, format and print brochures which provide information and include a registration form
2. With the help of the diocesan Vocation Office, evaluate the proposed weekend agenda
3. Arrange for publicity and advertising in the diocesan newspaper
4. Print the weekend agenda
5. Work with the other clubs in the district to prepare them for contacting their pastors to discuss the Single Adult Discernment Program and to deliver the promotional materials
6. Make contacts with the Newman Clubs at colleges and universities in the area and encourage their support for the program
7. Work with the diocesan Vocation Office to select and secure the religious staff who will conduct the retreat sessions and presentations
8. Encourage club members to seek sources for fund raising such as parishes, Knights of Columbus, various charitable funding agencies, individual benefactors, etc.
9. Arrange with the event site for the purchase of food and supplies required for the weekend
10. Invite the bishop to celebrate the closing Mass
11. Seek volunteers from the host club to perform certain functions during the weekend such as. welcoming and registering the participants on Friday evening, showing them to their individual rooms; setting tables and serving food at mealtimes, clearing off the dining tables; dish washing, acting as hosts and hostesses, and arranging for the soft drinks and snacks for the Friday and Saturday night socials
12. Work with the food and cooking committee to establish the weekend menu and ensure that all of the food preparation arrangements are complete
13. Prepare participant packets that include a map of the facility, a copy of the weekend agenda, a name tag, a list of staff names and any pertinent information about housekeeping

Once the weekend is underway, the Vocations V.P. and the Vocation Committee members oversee all activities to insure that the agenda is followed on a timely basis, unanticipated needs that develop are provided for, and to generally assist the Serrans working during the weekend to insure a pleasant, informative, memorable time for all

A sample month-by-month planning guide is included on Attachment 2.

3 **Staff (Presenters)**

Presenters for the weekend will generally be recommended by the diocesan Vocation Office based on their ability as a presenter on a particular subject and their desire to participate in the retreat program.

An adequate number of staff members should be provided for one-on-one counseling with retreat attendees. This is very beneficial, especially during the one-on-one "Emmaus Walk" activity, where a participant spends discussion/counseling time alone with the religious counselor of his or her choice. These sessions normally take place on Saturday afternoon in some comfortable setting, be it in a conference room, while walking around the grounds, or in an out-of-the-way corner of the event site

Serran support staff is required for registration, meal preparation, room setup and other tasks as determined by the Planning Committee. These tasks are described in other sections of this booklet

4. Site Selection

Desirable facilities for a weekend retreat such as the Single Adult Discernment Program include a conveniently located site that provides comfortable overnight housing (preferably with individual rooms with bath accommodations), a chapel, adequate meeting rooms with visual aid facilities, a dining room with adjacent kitchen facilities, and adequate on-site parking. Attractive surrounding grounds tend to enhance the overall quality of the weekend for those seeking peaceful, quiet contemplative time and space.

Seminaries and retreat centers usually have the kind of facilities described above.

5. Publicity and Promotion

The key to promoting the Single Adult Discernment Program is a well-designed promotional and advertising campaign augmented by capable, enthusiastic Serrans. Surveys of participants have shown that a majority learned of the program in their parish. Some examples of helpful promotional materials are listed below.

A. Single Adult Discernment Brochure

Develop a brochure that provides essential information about the Single Adult Discernment Program and includes a self-addressed registration form for mailing to the host Serra club. Serrans distribute these brochures to parishes, college Newman clubs, Knights of Columbus councils, Knights of Peter Claver, Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, other retreat centers, local religious orders, and any other vocation collaborators that have been identified.

A supply should be made available to each pastor in the diocese when Serrans visit to discuss the Single Adult Discernment Program and other diocesan/district/club vocation programs. If the program is a district effort, then all of the Serra clubs in the district assist in advertising and promoting the weekend by contacting the parish pastors. These visits usually take place two months prior to the Single Adult Discernment Program. The pastor is urged to support and encourage attendance at the weekend and to arrange for distribution of the brochures within his parish.

B. Inserts for Parish Bulletins

Prepare parish bulletin notices which provide key information on the weekend, including a contact phone number and registration details. These are also given to each pastor at the time of the Serran contact and he is asked to insert the notice in each bulletin for four Sundays prior to the Single Adult Discernment Program. Provide the pastor or bulletin editor with both hard copies and a disk containing the suggested parish inserts in Word or RTF.

C. Church Poster

Design an eye-catching poster, approximately 18" x 24", that provides information on religious vocations and directs attention to a holding pouch at the bottom which contains brochures for more information. These posters are distributed to the pastors to be displayed in a conspicuous location in the church vestibule.

D. Diocesan Newspaper

Solicit the assistance of the diocesan newspaper editor. In addition to providing technical assistance in preparing news releases for the secular press, he or she may also provide an editorial or commentary about the Single Adult Discernment Program and encourage attendance. Buy several ads placed at different weekly intervals prior to the retreat weekend in the diocesan newspaper. These ads usually convey a message about finding a more satisfying lifestyle and encourage attendance at the Single Adult Discernment Program. They also include details on how to obtain more information or to register to attend.

E. Talks at Sunday Mass

When Serrans meet with their pastors to discuss the Single Adult Discernment Program, they should ask for permission to speak for a few minutes after Mass on a Sunday three or four weeks prior to the actual weekend to provide information to the congregation and encourage attendance. In a number of dioceses, the pastors now allow this. In some instances, the pastor himself will discuss the program. In the Galveston-Houston diocese the parish-pastor meetings with District 10 Serrans and the ensuing publicity given to the Single Adult Discernment Program within each parish is the single, most effective producer of attendance at each year's retreat program.

You will find two sample parish mass presentations in Attachment 3.

5. Candidate Interviews

Interview all candidates for the Single Adult Discernment Program after the applications are received. The Planning Committee should establish formal criteria for those wishing to attend the weekend. This evaluation is directed at removing candidates who should not be involved (e.g., married, separated and divorced but not annulled), those with dependents, significant health problems, misunderstanding of what the program is about, alcohol or drug problems, those only seeking a good time or a free weekend, and various other reasons which make candidacy inappropriate or unfeasible.

One patient, pleasant, articulate and discreet member of the Planning Committee should perform a telephone interview with every applicant to ensure that they understand what the program is about, are genuinely interested in learning more about a religious vocation, definitely plan to attend, and that they meet the established criteria for all participants. These evaluations are essential to ensuring, to the extent possible, that those who are not qualified for whatever reason do not attend.

6. Resource Materials

Prior to the weekend, give one committee member the specific task to accumulate vocation materials to be included in the participants' registration packets. During the agenda setting and presentation development process, select materials that would provide interesting reading. Because many of the participants are unaware of the requirements for the ordained priesthood or vowed religious life, basic information should be provided. These materials are available from the NCCV (National Coalition for Church Vocations) or from the USA Council's Chicago office.

A literature rack is useful and can be filled with literature from the diocese and religious orders. "Vision" magazine from NRVC is a very good publication to have available, as is "A Guide to Religious Ministries for Catholic Men and Women" from the Catholic News Publishing Company.

7. Costs and Funding

Do not charge any participant for attending the Single Adult Discernment weekend. During the introductory talks on Friday evening, emphasize that there is no charge for the weekend (also stated in the various pieces of advertising). You may point out in a low-key manner that if, at the end of the program, anyone would care to make a contribution, they may do so at the closing Mass on Sunday. In the weekends conducted in the Galveston-Houston diocese, these contributions have ranged from \$450 to \$1,060 per weekend.

The cost for sponsoring a Single Adult Discernment weekend can range from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per weekend. The major costs are room and board, printing and advertising.

Appoint one member of the Planning Committee as treasurer. This Serran's responsibility includes the development of a comprehensive budget. Some of the costs to be considered are included in Attachment 5. The costs budgeted should not include travel and other related costs incurred by individual Serrans in visiting pastors or travel expenses of the staff members. Taken collectively, these substantial costs are borne by the individuals and are viewed as personal contributions to the program.

The Treasurer also determines how income will be obtained. Some clubs and districts may wish to fund the program out of assessments and voluntary contributions from individual Serra clubs or Serrans. Other sources of funding may be obtained from individuals (non-Serrans) or private foundations.

8. Assign Tasks to Presenters, Facilitators, Serrans

The Planning Committee should develop specific assignments for presenters, facilitators and Serrans for each agenda item. Formal position descriptions are not required but the duties should be clearly defined. Like many programs, the success of the Single Adult Discernment Program is in the planning and details. These assignments may require the creation of sub-committees and should include specific task deadlines. For instance, a liturgy committee may be needed to develop the prayer services and the worship aids and select prayer service leaders and musicians. Progress on all of the assignments must be monitored in order to insure success.

9 Develop Evaluation Documents

In order to continually improve the Single Adult Discernment Program, a critique of the entire planning and implementation of the weekend must be conducted as soon as possible following the event. Two different inputs are necessary: one from the participants and one from the staff, support staff and coordinators. Therefore, two separate evaluation documents need to be developed.

1. Include an evaluation questionnaire in the participants' registration packets. Toward the close of the weekend session, on Sunday morning, give the participants time to fill it out. This questionnaire seeks the retreatants' opinion of the value of the overall program, the value of the individual subjects and presentations, the desirability of the location, the desirability of the rooms and services rendered, the quality of the meals and service, whether any part of the weekend program should be changed, and finally, what the retreatants personally derived from the weekend. Attachment 4 is a sample evaluation questionnaire.

These evaluations are essential to determining how well the program has been received and whether some aspects should be revised. Historically, these evaluations have been overwhelmingly favorable. The objective of the evaluation is to determine where improvements can be made. We want to know what went right, what went wrong, where can we improve.

A summary of the participants' evaluations should be shared with members of the host club. The Northwest Houston Serra Club has reported that their members gain a deep sense of satisfaction and pride in reading through the individual evaluations. These represent the proof positive to your club members that they are truly working effectively to bring about more vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

2. Prepare an evaluation document for those involved with the planning and execution of the weekend. Again, we are interested in what went right, what went wrong, where can we improve. Study these evaluations carefully at a meeting held several weeks after the event. Document and save proposed changes for the following year's planning session. If possible, each committee member should maintain a notebook containing such information as what the committee member did, who his/her contacts were (with name, address, telephone and email numbers) in order to help next year's committee member.

Post-Retreat Discernment

Following the weekend, a formal follow-up with interested attendees only is essential. This is needed to provide those participants who identified an interest in pursuing a religious vocation with more organized information on how to continue the discernment process in a more serious manner.

The diocesan Vocation Office probably already has an established "Discernment Group" meeting for all those interested in learning more about religious vocations and discerning their own situation in this regard.

The diocese of Galveston-Houston has learned that practically all former program participants who have entered a religious vocation did so by moving from the Single Adult Discernment Program to the monthly Discernment Group meetings and then into the seminary or the convent.

It is highly desirable and very important for the diocesan Vocation Office to establish a "Single Adult Discernment Results" follow-up procedure, to the extent possible, of those attendees who enter the seminary, convent or other religious vocation. This information becomes a permanent record that is maintained over the years and with the fact that it often takes years for a positive decision to take effect. As such it provides proof of the effectiveness of the program and continuing strong encouragement to the Serrans, the diocesan Vocation Office and all involved in these vocation efforts.

Report

A formal report should be prepared by the Planning Committee as soon as possible following the conclusion of the post-weekend evaluation meeting. This formal report should be sent to the host club, or, if it was a district event, to all clubs in the district. If contributions were received from individuals (non-Serrans) or private foundations, a copy of the report should be sent with a cover letter from the bishop and committee chairman. This report should include a complete financial accounting.

Single Adult Discernment Program
Sample Agenda

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Person Responsible</u>
<u>Friday Evening:</u>			
5.00 to 7.00	Registration		
7.00	Buffet Dinner		
5.30	Staff Meeting		
7.00	Welcome		
7.10	Introduction of Staff		
7.30	Community Building		
8.15	Keynote Address: "Invitation, Call, Response"		
8.45	Small Group Discussion On expectations for the weekend		
9.15	Feedback to Full Group		
9.30	Night Prayer		
10.00	Social		
<u>Saturday Morning:</u>			
7.30	Mass		
8.00	Breakfast		
8.45	Staff Meeting		
9.15	Presentation: "Discernment"		
9.45	Individual Private Reflection		
10.00	Small Group Discussion		
10.30	Feedback to Full Group		
11.00	Break		
11.15	Presentation. "Religious Life - What's it Like?"		
12.00	Lunch		
<u>Saturday Afternoon:</u>			
1.00	Free Time		
2.00	Presentation. "Formation Process"		
2.30	Small Group Discussion		
3.00	Emmaus Walk		
6.00	Dinner		
<u>Saturday Evening:</u>			
7.30	Religious-in-Formation Panel		
8.30	Question/Answer Period Men w/priests & brothers Women w/sisters		
9.30	Review of Expectations		
10.00	Night Prayer - Confession available		
10.30	Social		

Single Adult Discernment Program
Sample Agenda

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Person Responsible</u>
<u>Sunday Morning:</u>			
7.45	Breakfast		
8.45	Presentation. "Is it Really For Me"		
9.45	Break		
10.00	Evaluation and Follow-up for attendees - need evaluation form		
10.45	Liturgy of the Eucharist		
12.00	Lunch		
Departure			
1.00	Staff Evaluation		

Single Adult Discernment Program

Planning and Activity Schedule (Example for a program to be conducted in July)

October/November

1. The V P. of Vocations meets with the Planning Committee for early decisions on policy matters, i.e. whether to host one or two weekend retreats, and determining dates for the Single Adult Discernment Program weekend.
2. Appoint committee chairmen and begin planning financial arrangements, advertising and promotional programs, number of newspaper ads, other media advertising, reserving club meeting time for Single Adult Discernment Program discussions
3. Meet with the director/representative of the facility to set the charge for the weekend and discuss all aspects of the program.
4. Create or revise the Single Adult Discernment Program brochure to meet the current year's needs. Have these printed as early as possible so they can receive early, widespread distribution.
5. Plan advertising and publicity efforts in conjunction with the Planning Committee's decisions
6. Contact all other Serra clubs who will be involved and review all pertinent details with their Vocations Committees.
7. Contact those priests, brothers, and sisters you want to serve on the religious staff and invite them to participate. Decide who will be the moderator and contact him/her first. Follow up with a confirmation letter. Recruit the liturgy team and ask the leader to prepare the liturgies and prayer services. This entire process could take several months before the staff is complete and confirmed.

February

1. Prepare the proposed budget and submit to Planning Committee for approval.
2. Create letters to pastors, prepare church bulletin notices, sample talks at Mass, instructions to Serrans for parish contacts and any other materials needed for parish contact packets.

March

1. Mail letters and brochures about the Single Adult Discernment Program to pastors 10-14 days before you contact them in person.
3. Create parish contact packets for distribution to area Serrans.
4. Coordinate with district governors to allocate parishes to each Serra club that will be involved.
5. Determine the number of brochures, bulletin inserts, and sample packets to be given to each of the

clubs involved. Package them for subsequent delivery.

6. Each club should allocate their assigned parishes to their respective members who, in turn, will make contact with the pastor, discuss the program and leave the packaged materials with him.
7. Write letters to area bishops asking them to drop in on the sessions. Ask one of them to commit to celebrate Mass on Sunday and preach the homily.
8. Deliver the various parish contact materials to each of the participating Serra clubs for subsequent distribution by their respective membership.
9. Talk with each of the other Serra club Vocations V P s about the importance of the parish contacts to the success of the discernment weekend.

April

1. Write an article on the Single Adult Discernment weekend for publication in the local Catholic newspaper.
10. Pay any bills for the weekend as money becomes available.
11. Follow up at April Serra club meetings and with various Vocations V P s to determine the progress of the parish contacts.

May

1. Visit with the editor of the local Catholic newspaper in early May and arrange for the publication of the article and ads on the Single Adult Discernment Program. (Usually the article is free, but there is a charge for the ads.) These should be published in June for a July discernment weekend.
12. Prepare materials to be included in the retreatants' packets.
13. Develop a questionnaire and profile form to be used to qualify applicants for the weekend.
14. Within five days of the receipt of applicants' registration forms, call each applicant about the program and determine whether he or she is eligible. Complete the profile form developed in Step 3 above.
15. Maintain a list of approved applicants.
16. Verify that each sub-committee has the personnel needed for the weekend. Obtain names for subsequent thank-you letters and post-retreat evaluation meeting.
17. Have all copies of material required for the weekend printed (packets, booklets, prayer sheets, etc.).
18. Appoint a sub-committee to handle Friday and Saturday evening social activities.
19. Appoint a sub-committee to serve and wait tables in the dining room.

20. Appoint a sub-committee to register and meet the attendees and escort them to their rooms.
21. Prepare rosters of all sub-committees and each person's assignment.
22. Arrange for a Serran to give the introduction/welcome talk on Friday evening (district governor or club president)

July

1. Assemble participants' packets
23. Prepare registration desk information, a map showing room assignments, name tags for attendees, name tags for workers, etc
24. During the week before the session, call each registrant to confirm attendance
25. Either call the event site or kitchen sub-committee and give them the final count for meals
26. Conduct the Single Adult Discernment Program
27. The Planning Committee chairman should arrange to stay overnight and generally oversee activities
28. Attend the staff meeting at 4.00 pm on Friday of the retreat weekend. This is a "dry run" talk through the weekend program to acquaint the staff with the program and activities and provide an opportunity for questions
29. Review meeting room seating arrangements.
30. Review the arrangements for the Friday and Saturday evening socials.
31. As soon as possible, meet with the moderator and schedule the Emmaus Walk. Advise staff of the schedule and post for attendees.
32. Have an extra supply of towels, bed linens, toilet tissue, spare toothbrushes, and combs on hand
33. Set up the offertory basket in the chapel by 10:00 a m on Sunday
34. At the end of Mass, collect the money from the basket. Count it, record it, and give it to the treasurer.
35. Collect the attendee evaluation sheets on Sunday morning following the evaluation session by the attendees. Keep them for review and future guidance.
35. Collect the staff evaluation forms for later review and guidance.
36. Send a letter of thanks to the staff members at the meeting location and to all of the volunteers

- 37 Send a letter to each pastor who had a parishioner attend the weekend providing the name of that attendee for his follow-up.

After the weekend

1. As soon as all financial information is available pertaining to the weekend retreat, pay all outstanding bills and prepare a final financial statement
2. Prepare a final report on the weekend and mail to all participating parishes, foundations and individual donors
3. Conduct post weekend critique.

Parish Mass Presentation

The following are two samples of presentations that describe the Single Adult Discernment Weekend and encourage attendance. This presentation is normally given following the Sunday Mass

SAMPLE 1:

Good morning (evening) My name is _____ I'm a member of the Serra Club of _____ Thank you Father for letting me tell about the great opportunity which will soon be available to all single Catholics between the ages of 18 and 50 I know that many of you, particularly those attending school, are thinking about and planning for your futures, and rightfully you should. That's why I know my message today will be important to some of you – not all, but some.

If you are a person who is.

- Looking for an opportunity to provide service to others,
- Wondering if the religious life as a priest, brother, or sister might be what you're looking for,
- Or, even if you haven't reached that point, but you have that quiet, subtle, nagging feeling that it's something you should know more about, then you should think about participating in a program called Single Adult Discernment. It's sponsored by the _____-area Serra Clubs and is entering its tenth year.

The Single Adult Discernment Program is a weekend for single adults from ages 18 to 50 to explore and learn what it's like to serve God and the Church as a priest, sister, or brother. Typically, 50 or so men and women spend the weekend in group discussions, consultation, and prayer conducted by a professional staff of priests, sisters, and brothers.

The Single Adult Discernment Program does several things. It.

- Provides a means of discerning if you are called to the priesthood or vowed religious life and how to respond to this vocation
- Explores the rewards and obligations that go along with religious life
- Gives you the tools to ultimately make an intelligent decision whether a religious vocation should be considered as you plan your future.

At no point during the weekend will you be asked to make a decision. It's strictly a time to ask questions and learn.

This year the Program will take place the weekend of _____ at the _____ (retreat center) _____ in _____

There is no charge - you will be provided a private room, bath, and plenty of good food prepared by the Serrans and their spouses

This program is used in many of the dioceses across the country. Feedback from them has been fantastic, and if you choose to attend, chances are you'll have a very rewarding weekend of fellowship and sharing.

I have brochures that describe the Single Adult Discernment Program and contain a registration form. I'll be in front of the church following Mass, and I will be pleased to give you a brochure and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

SAMPLE 2:

Good morning (evening). My name is _____. I'm a member of the Serra Club of _____. Thank you, Father, for letting me tell about the great opportunity which will soon be available to all single Catholics between the ages of 18 and 50. If you have not yet decided on what to commit your life to, then listen to me. The rest can spend this time praying that what I'm saying will bear fruit.

You are on the verge of making, and must soon make, the most important decision you will ever make. *How to spend the rest of your life.* The whole world is open to you, but if you are going to be happy and productive in life, you'd better make the right choice of a vocation.

To be sure of doing this, you ought to look at all the options. Whether you've thought of it or not, one of your options is to serve the people of God in religious life. Now, maybe that's not for you, but unless you seriously consider it, you'll never know.

To help you learn something about this option, about what it's like to be a priest, sister, or brother, our Serra club is sponsoring a weekend educational opportunity called the Single Adult Discernment Program. This program will be held at (retreat center) in _____ on (date)

The purpose of this weekend is not to sell you on undertaking a religious vocation. There will be no sales pitch and no follow-up. It is simply a weekend where you can learn about it, what it involves, the difference between life as a diocesan priest and life in a religious order, a place where you can get questions answered. Sessions will be conducted by a staff of top-notch religious from all over the country. Time for one-on-one consultation will be available, if you want it.

Normally, about 50 or more people like you attend; half of these are men and half are women. You'll get a private room and a bath and all the food you can eat. There is no charge. The weekend starts at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and ends at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday.

The bottom line is that no one there is going to care if you finally decide not to enter religious life – in fact, 80% of people who attend the weekend don't. But, whatever your decision, you'll be making it more intelligently because you'll know about one more option. So if you are interested, pick up a registration form in the back of the church after Mass and mail it in. I'll be there if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Single Adult Discernment Program

Evaluation

Please give your personal reaction or evaluation.

	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
1. Friday Night Introductions	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Morning and Night Prayers	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Eucharistic Liturgies	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Presentations.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Keynote Address	_____	_____	_____	_____
Discernment	_____	_____	_____	_____
People in Formation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Emmaus Walk	_____	_____	_____	_____
Religious Commitment Today	_____	_____	_____	_____
Questions/Answers	_____	_____	_____	_____
Is it Really for Me	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Friday and Saturday Social	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Meals	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Accommodations, service, and physical surroundings	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Availability of Religious personnel for personal conversations and questions	_____	_____	_____	_____

Please answer briefly.

What was the most beneficial part of the weekend for you?

What was the weakest part of the weekend for you?

How can we improve future Single Adult Discernment Programs?

How did you find out about this Single Adult Discernment Program?

Additional Comments:

Age: _____ Sex: _____

Check one.

Full time student _____ Part-time student _____ Working full-time _____

Name (voluntary): _____