



Billy Hardiman Photography







NATIONAL VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

November 5-11, 2017

Photo by Paige Christensen at St. Therese's Camp, Alaska

Imagine Sisters

Did you hear about the Olympic speed skater who became a nun? Or the high-profile British journalist who joined a convent? Thousands of women have incredible stories about falling in love—not with Mr. Right, but with Jesus Himself. Their lives are marked by sacrifice, prayer, hard work, and joy. (And a few pranks, as Sr. Pia Jude above can attest!) Read their stories at imagesisters.org, a movement to spread the good news about religious life.

BY THE NUMBERS

Ordinations Rising—and You Can Help

The number of priests being ordained has risen slightly in recent years, and while ordinations still aren't keeping pace with priests' retirements, there *is* good news to report. According to CARA's annual survey of soon-to-be-ordained priests, men are being ordained younger and are receiving more encouragement than in past years.¹

What can *you* do to help more young men discern the priesthood?

- **Encourage teens.** Boys first consider priesthood, on average, at 16.
- **Invite, invite, invite!** 82% of men ordained in 2017 were encouraged to consider priesthood by an average of four people.
- **Promote prayer in the parish.** Before entering seminary, three-quarters of new priests regularly attended Eucharistic Adoration and 69% regularly prayed the rosary.

Do you have someone in mind who may make a good priest? Mention it to **him**. Even if he's not called, it's a compliment to his faith—one he'll never forget!



¹ www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/ordination/class_index.cfm

DISCERNMENT 101

THE FIRST STEP IS BEING TRULY OPEN TO GOD'S CALL



Discerning Religious Life, a new book by Sr. Clare Matthiass, CFR, helps women discern their vocations with clarity, confidence, and joy. 200 pp, vianneyvocations.com

The phrase “holy indifference,” when used by the saints, doesn’t refer to teens spacing out at Mass. Rather, it’s the interior disposition of preferring God’s will above all else. As in, “I want only what God wants for me.” This radical openness is precisely where discerning a vocation starts. Here are three more tips for figuring out your call:

- **Find good information.** Dig into the books, websites, and videos that present a clear Catholic view.
- **Seek Guidance.** Get help from a priest, deacon, or sister you trust. Don’t discern alone!
- **Pray Consistently:** Seek the sacraments and pray daily to know God’s plan for you. Be patient and give it time. In His will is your peace!



Photo: Mundelein Seminary

My Friend the Seminarian

Pope Francis wants us to be on a first-name basis with future priests

In a highly-anticipated audience with the Holy Father this summer, 600 members of Serra International (the lay organization that promotes vocations) heard a surprising message: befriend the clergy! “I encourage you to be true friends to seminarians and priests,” said the pope. “Show your love for them by promoting vocations and through prayer and pastoral cooperation. Please, keep pressing forward, forward in hope!”

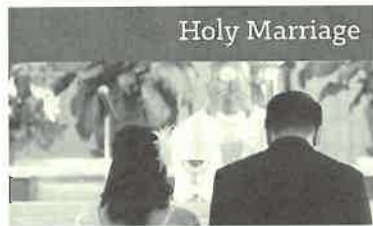


How It's Made: Catholic Vocations

Did you know when a sister makes her vows, it’s often celebrated like a wedding? And that a priest’s ordination is planned months in advance?

These are not just celebrations of events, but of *new lives!* That’s because every vocation involves a serious, life-long commitment for the good of the individual and the growth of the Church.

A vocation “roots” a person into a specific life: a way to grow in holiness and help others do the same.



Holy Marriage

How it’s made: The free consent of a man and woman through exchange of vows, and the consummation of the marriage.

Purpose: A lifelong partnership for the good of the spouses and the raising up of children in the Faith.



Holy Orders

How it’s made: The bishop’s prayer of consecration as he lays his hands on the man being ordained.

Purpose: To preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and bring the sacraments to the faithful.



Religious Life

How it’s made: The public vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in a stable state of life recognized by the Church.

Purpose: Total dedication to God in order to serve the Church, be examples of holiness, and pray for the salvation of the world.