



Vocations to Religious Life 2015 Fact Sheet

FALSE MYTH #1 *Religious life is dying, matter of fact, it will soon be extinct.*

TRUE FACTS

- ❖ According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, there are almost one million religious brothers, sisters, and priests in the world from over 2,000 religious institutes (<http://cara.georgetown.edu/CARAServices/requestedchurchstats.html>)
- ❖ In reality, the total global number in 2014 is 895,595:
 - 55,314 religious brothers
 - 134,752 religious priests
 - 705,529 religious sisters and nuns
- ❖ Additionally, there are 279,561 diocesan priests worldwide.
- ❖ According to CARA Statistics for 2014, there are more than 66,000 religious sisters, brothers, and priests in the United States in over 800 religious institutes (over 600 for women and 200 for men).
- ❖ Of the 190 who professed final vows in 2014, 76% were born in the United States.

FALSE MYTH #2 *NO ONE is entering religious life in the US, and if they do, they leave.*

TRUE FACTS

- ❖ According to the NRVC/CARA 2009 Study, the retention rate for those in initial formation is 50% (<https://nrvc.net/247/publication/vocations-study-overview-913>).
- ❖ **The USSCB Profession Class of 2014 Report**
 - In 2014, at least 190 women and men religious professed perpetual vows.
 - In 2014, 112 (14%) religious institutes celebrated a perpetual profession.
 - Newer members enter religious life highly educated. While 18% have earned a graduate degree before entering, 68% entered with at least a bachelor's degree.
 - The average age of the newly professed is 37. The youngest is 26 and the oldest is 62.
 - On average, newly professed members were 19 years old when they first considered a vocation to religious life, but half were 18 or younger when they first did so.
 - The entire survey can be found at www.usccb.org/consecratedlife
- ❖ **The USSCB Ordination Class of 2014 Report**
 - In 2014, it is estimated there were 477 ordinands from 114 dioceses and archdioceses and 31 religious orders.
 - Among religious orders, the largest number of respondents came from the Jesuits (18), Dominicans (10), and Benedictines (8).
 - The median age of the new priests is 32, with the youngest 25 and the oldest 70.
 - The full report can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/ordination-class/index.cfm>

FALSE MYTH #3

NO ONE is seriously considering religious life today.

TRUE FACTS**❖ *The 2007 Young Adult Catholics and their Future in Ministry Study* by Dean R. Hoge and Marti Jewell**

- Revealed 48% of male college students involved in Catholic Campus Ministry and 54% of males involved in Diocesan young adult ministry reported they have *seriously considered* becoming a priest.
- Additionally, 18% of males involved in Catholic Campus Ministry and 30% of males involved in Diocesan young adult ministry have *seriously considered* becoming a religious brother.
- For the females, 39% of college students involved in Catholic Campus Ministry and 30% of females involved in Diocesan young adult ministry have *seriously considered* becoming a religious sister.

❖ *The 2012 CARA/USCCB Study on the Consideration of Priesthood and Religious Life among Never-Married U.S. Catholics* by Mark M. Gray and Mary L. Gautier

- CARA found that 3% of male never-married Catholics have very seriously considered becoming a priest or religious brother, while 2% of female never-married Catholics have very seriously considered becoming a religious sister.
- CARA equates these percentages to 350,000 men and 250,000 women in the United States who have seriously considered a religious vocation.

❖ *The 2013 CARA/National Survey of Former Full-time Volunteers of the Catholic Volunteer Network* by Caroline Saunders, Thomas Gaunt, SJ, and Eva Coll

- 37% of former full-time volunteers have considered religious life or the priesthood, 27% of them "very seriously."
- 6% have a religious vocation as a priest, deacon, sister, brother or are studying as a seminarian.

❖ **According to VISION vocation match, every year new inquirers complete online vocation match profiles (<http://www.vocationnetwork.org/match>).**

- In 2014, there were 2,083 women (59%) and 1,448 men (41%) who completed Vocation Match profiles (3,531 total).
- The majority of respondents (36%) are 20-29 years old.
- The majority of respondents (89%) are Roman Catholic.
- The majority of respondents (83%) are single, never married.
- The majority of respondents (48%) have at least a two year college degree.
- The majority of respondents (78%) are not participating in a formal discernment process.
- The majority of respondents (36%) have been considering religious life for five or more years.

For more info: http://vocationnetwork.org/statistics/response_statistics?year=2014