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Capuchin Vocation Update

Province of St. Joseph

Vocation inquiries increased 30 percent in 2007

(Source: TrueQuest Communications)

A new survey has revealed that Catholic religious communities in the United States have increased the number of individuals they have in initial formation by 30 percent. Furthermore, 62 percent of communities participating in the survey reported an increase in vocation inquiries last year.

The figures come from the VocationMatch.com Second Annual Survey on Trends in Religious Vocation. The survey was sponsored by VISION Vocation Guide and published by TrueQuest Communications of Chicago on behalf of the National Religious Vocation Conference.

The results come from surveys of 1096 discerners, of whom 320 responded, and 476 vocation directors, of whom 225 responded. Researchers also examined and compared, inquirer profiles, using 3,422 profiles from late 2007 to mid-2008 and 5,591 profiles from late 2006 to mid-2007.

The majority of individuals considering religious life are under thirty. One in five respondents plan to enter a religious community in the next year, while another 64 percent are "seriously considering it."

About 73 percent of respondents considered "essential" or "very important" both praying in community and devotional prayer. Living a life of faithfulness to the Church and her teachings was ranked as "very important" or "essential" by 90 percent of those in discernment.

Vocation directors for both women and men commented on an increased interest among inquirers in wearing a habit or traditional religious garb.



What do our newest members look for in Capuchin life?

Personal contact with a religious priest, sister, or brother was considered "essential" or "very important" in obtaining vocation information by 82 percent of respondents. Communities' websites were considered "important" or "very important" sources of vocation information by 70 percent of respondents. Using prayer as a

discernment tool was ranked as "essential" or "very important" by 97 percent of respondents.

Inquirers believed the "discipline of prayer" would be the most difficult part of religious life, followed by a vow of celibacy and a life of service. Discerners ranked "living with people who are not my age" their least important concern.

Respondents noted that they were most surprised by the "diversity of communities and spiritualities," and also found "great joy" among religious men and women. Some were most surprised that they were considering religious life at all. "A year ago I would have laughed if someone had suggested that I enter into religious life," one young man said.

Patrice Tuohy, executive editor of VISION Vocation Guide and VocationMatch.com, commented on the survey results, saying, "Religious vocation as a life choice has been off the radar screen for too long. What this crop of discerners is finding is that the option of life as a brother, sister, or priest may be the one that satisfies their heart's desire above all else."

Attend the Chicago Candidates' BBQ
Memorial Day, May 26

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