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Mother Olga, founder of the Daughters of Mary of Nazareth, receives the vows of a new sister.
Photo by George Martell



NATIONAL VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

November 4-10, 2018

Needed: Men of Heroic Virtue

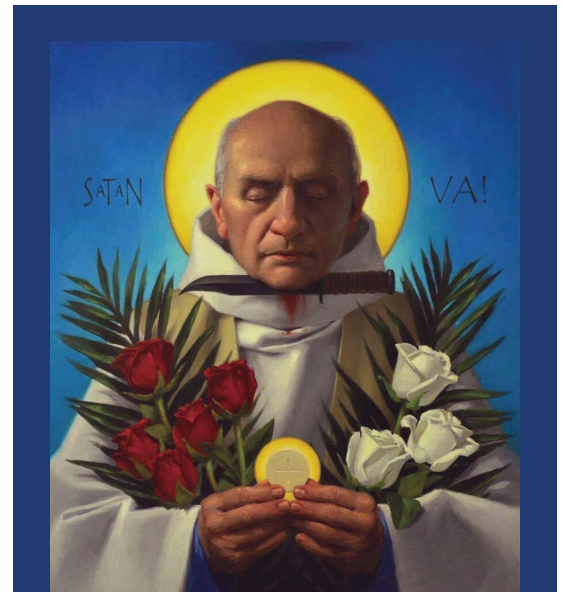
An Irish priest in America once told the story of how he was recruited from his native land. A bishop from Western Europe came to his seminary, which trained men for the missions, and painted a picture of comfortable rectories in a beautiful, peaceful country dotted with grand basilicas. Another bishop, from the American South, promised something different: remote, rural parishes, barely adequate rectories, few Catholics, and an oppressively hot climate. The Irish priest said that he and nearly every other classmate chose the latter.

Real men rise to challenges. And the Church needs brave men to answer the call to the priesthood. Being a priest should never be a vocation of last resort for men who could not marry or “make it” in the world. It is a vocation for strong men who love Jesus, who are striving for virtue and purity, and who are willing to lay down their lives for His Bride, the Church.

Thankfully, despite the very grave failings of too many clergy, the Church in America has some 40,000 priests, the vast majority of whom serve their people faithfully. During Vocation Awareness Week, let’s pray for our faithful priests—and encourage promising young men in our parishes to seriously consider the priesthood.



Photos by George Martell



Modern-Day Martyr

Europe’s First 21st-Century martyr, Fr. Jacques Hamel, was murdered by Islamic militants on July 26, 2016 while celebrating Mass in France. His last words before being murdered were, “Begone, Satan!” which are inscribed in Latin in this painting by Philadelphia artist Neilson Carlin.





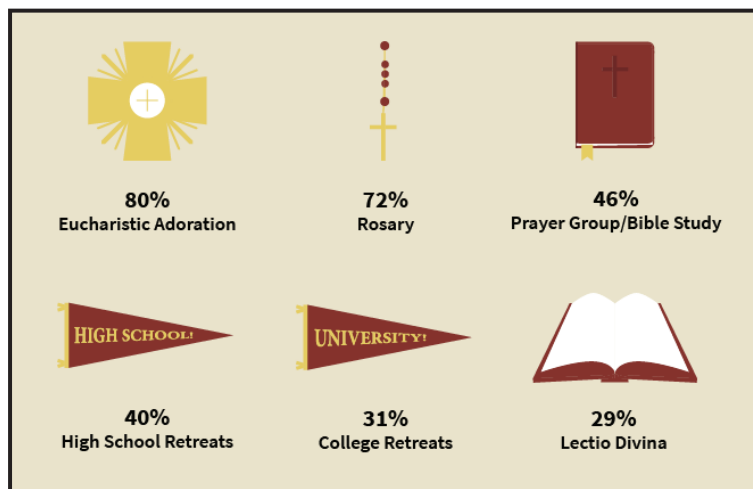
"WHERE SIN ABOUND
GRACE
 ABOUND ALL THE MORE"

"Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock... I know that after my departure savage wolves will come among you, and they will not spare the flock. And from your own group, men will come forward perverting the truth to draw the disciples away after them. So be vigilant. Remember that for three years, night and day, I unceasingly admonished each of you with tears." ~Acts 20:28-32

Prayer Practices of Future Priests

Figuring out one's vocation is rarely easy. The most essential element of discernment is forming a loving relationship with God through *prayer*. Thus it's no surprise that a 2017 CARA survey of recently ordained priests revealed a rich and diverse prayer life before they entered seminary, as the chart below shows.

This prayer life intensifies when men enter the seminary. They attend daily Mass and pray together the Liturgy of the Hours, and many seminarians now have community Holy Hours as well. All seminarians have a spiritual director who "coaches" them in their prayer life and spiritual formation.



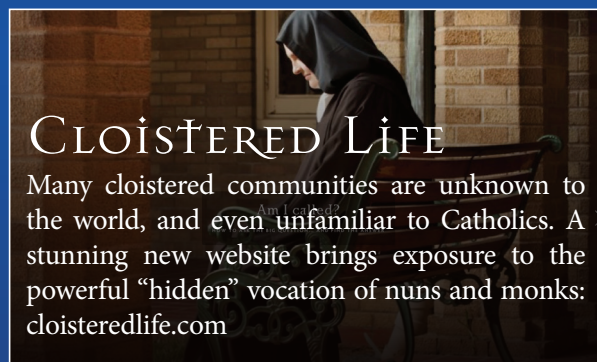
Graphic from St. Joseph Seminary, Charlotte

FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

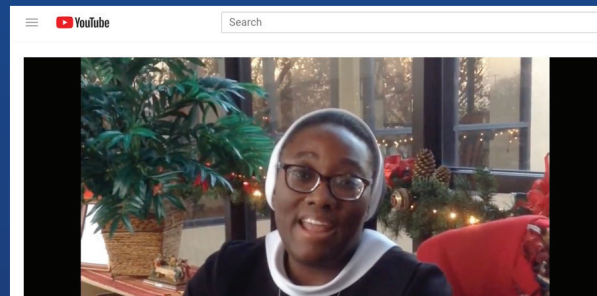


Discernment Group on Facebook

The phenomenon of "discernment groups" has become widespread in recent years because of their effectiveness in supporting young people. For those who can't join in person, there are two new Facebook groups: "The Collar" for men and "The Veil" for women. Just message to join, where you'll find Facebook live videos, group chat, and more. All to help men and women figure out God's call!



Many cloistered communities are unknown to the world, and even unfamiliar to Catholics. A stunning new website brings exposure to the powerful "hidden" vocation of nuns and monks: cloisteredlife.com



YouTube: Christmas at the Convent

"My most memorable Christmas was during my novitiate in Chicago," shared Sr. Josephine Garrett in a YouTube video. "As a native Texas girl, I had never been that cold before! Plus it was hard to be away from family. But one night I was walking back from Holy Hour, and I saw the snow glistening and glittering, and it was so beautiful... it seemed like a Christmas miracle. It made me realize that God really is *Emmanuel*, 'God with us.' He's a part of everything in our lives." *Sister Josephine is one of the newest members of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth.*