



Franciscan Friars of the Renewal



NATIONAL VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK BULLETIN FOR NOVEMBER 6-12, 2022

YOUTH ON FIRE EUCHARISTIC ENCOUNTERS SPARK VOCATIONS

Ever since the 1992 World Youth Day in Denver, where a crowd of 100,000 chanted “JPII, we love you!” Catholic youth events have been growing stronger, as evidenced by the thousands who attended Steubenville Conferences this past summer at 16 locations nationwide.

One of the most memorable moments of the conferences comes at the final Mass, when celebrants ask teens to come forward if they’re open to a call to the priesthood or religious life. “Every year it’s a shock to see hundreds of teens stand up,” said Bryan Wells, one of the conference coordinators. “Our mission is to help kids encounter Christ, and one of the fruits is

that they’re willing to consider a radical way of life and admit in public.” Typically the response to their generosity is overwhelming. “When the teens come forward, the applause literally lasts for minutes,” said Bryan. “It’s an amazing testament to what the Lord is doing in the Church today.”



Priests pray for young men who responded to the “vocation call” at a Steubenville Conference. © Franciscan University of Steubenville 2022



SISTERS IN SCHOOLS

“Most Catholic kids have never even *seen* a sister, and while we can’t visit every classroom in person, we definitely want students to know this vocation is alive and well!” said Mother Clare Matthiass, CFR. She’s the author of *The Unsolvable Problem*, a delightful new children’s book about religious life. You can join Mother Clare’s mission by sponsoring books for a second-grade class at littleconvent.com.



Meet Sr. Mary Andy in the new book series “Little Convent in the Big City”



U.S. CHURCH STATS

CRISIS IN MARRIAGE

We often think of the “vocations crisis” as referring to the decreasing numbers of priests and religious, but the vocation of marriage is faring far worse. In the last fifty years, the number of annual priestly ordinations dropped 54%, from 805 ordinations in 1970 to 441 in 2021. In that same time period, the annual number of Catholic weddings dropped by more than three-quarters: there were 77% fewer newlyweds last year than there were in 1970. And this while the Catholic population grew by 20 million people. Thus while we teach Catholic youth to listen for God’s call, we need to be sure to emphasize that Christian marriage, while at times difficult, is a beautiful and worthwhile vocation.



EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL

HOLY HOUR NOVENA

Is Jesus calling you to be a priest? Thousands of men have answered that question in the chapel, praying before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. A new “discernment challenge” will lead you through nine Holy Hours of contemplative prayer as you imagine various scenes from the Gospels, ponder the big questions of life, and ask the Lord about your vocation. Free at gopriest.com

“In the consecrated life the proclamation of the Gospel to the whole world finds fresh enthusiasm and power.”

Saint John Paul II
Vita Consecrata



THE BEST FORMATION THE CHURCH OFFERS

Visit a college seminary these days, and you’re likely to be impressed. There is a goodness and vitality at seminaries that leads many visitors to say, “Gosh, I wouldn’t mind living here!” Here’s what young men can expect as they journey toward priesthood:

- A structured schedule
- Plenty of prayer, including daily Mass, personal prayer, Holy Hour, and Divine Office
- Lots of exercise, sports, and other activities
- Regular spiritual direction
- Spiritual accountability from seminarian brothers
- Challenging and interesting academics
- Service in local parishes, and much more!

