

Diocese of Shreveport



“I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD WHO LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP.” ~JOHN 10:11

## EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS TO FOCUS ON VOCATIONS

In just three months, tens of thousands of Catholics will gather in Indianapolis for the nation’s first Eucharistic Congress in more than eight decades. While the main focus is clear—to adore Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament—participants will also notice a heavy emphasis on vocations.

Religious communities from across the country will be attending, many underwritten by Serra International, which is organizing a large area in the convention hall that will be teeming with sisters and brothers. The Knights of Columbus are sponsoring an entire section to showcase diocesan priesthood, with a small army of priests on hand to talk with young men.

Also in attendance will be hundreds of seminarians, many of whom will have just completed the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, an ambitious project that will see thousands marching toward Indiana along different routes totalling 6,500 miles.

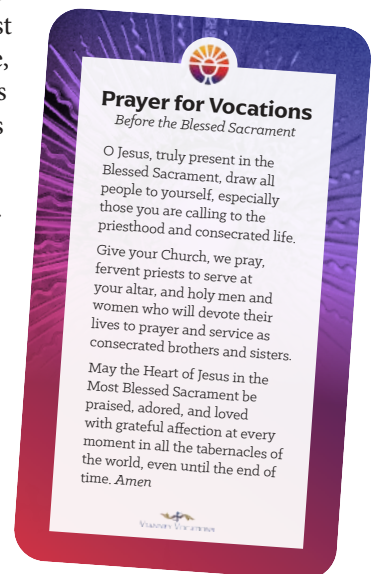
The connection between the Eucharist and vocations is clear: Three-quarters of recently ordained priests regularly participated in Eucharistic Adoration before entering seminary. And at Catholic youth events, even those offering sports and high-energy activities, teen participants still rank one “activity” as their favorite: Adoration.

As the Church prepares for this historic event, let’s ask our Eucharistic Lord for an outpouring of vocations!



**Above:** Last year, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City led more than a thousand faithful Catholics in a two-mile Eucharistic Procession—one of the longest in the country.

**Masthead photo:** Fr. Peter Mangum of the Diocese of Shreveport celebrates atop a climbing wall during a vocations summer camp. Beside him is Fr. Kelby Tingle, who attended the diocese’s “Mission Possible” camp as a teen and is about to celebrate a much bigger achievement—his first year of priesthood.





## IDEAS FOR ACTION

# HOLY FATHER: DO THESE FOUR THINGS

In a papal message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Pope Francis used the term “*con-vocation*” to explain that a vocation is not an isolated “me-and-God” experience. Instead, young people hear God’s call within a *real Church community*. He offered four concrete ways to help youth discover their vocations, emphasizing these things should be done *together*:

1. Co-teach with a catechist
2. Visit a convent or monastery
3. Assist missionaries
4. Spend time with parish priests

Note that none of these involve phones or social media. How can you organize real-life activities for youth in your parish?



Salesian Sisters of Saint Joseph



## SERRA CELEBRATES 100 MONTHS THE GLOBAL ROSARY FOR VOCATIONS

For 100 months, Catholics from around the world have joined a massive video/phone call during which they pray the rosary to intercede for vocations. Created by Tim O’Neill in 2015, the Global Rosary brings together Serra Clubs comprised of lay people dedicated to promoting priesthood and consecrated life. “In its simplicity it becomes quite a feat,” said Tim. “It gives a chance for people worldwide to visit beforehand and after... The most powerful way we Serrans connect is through prayer.”



Join the last Saturday of every month at 8:00 AM CST/CDT. Phone number and links are at [serrainternational.org](http://serrainternational.org)

## THE VOCATION OF MARRIAGE SOLVING DATING DILEMMAS

The stats on Catholic marriages are alarming: for every ten weddings in 1970, today there are only two. Percentage-wise, that’s a steeper decline than priestly ordinations.

For young Catholics looking for love, the Catholic dating scene is not just frustrating, it’s downright discouraging. That was certainly the experience of Rachel Hoover Canto, whose new book on dating, *Pretty Good Catholic*, offers counter-cultural advice for how to date well, stay chaste, and find a good Catholic spouse.



[prettygoodcatholic.com](http://prettygoodcatholic.com)

After Rachel graduated from college, she watched her friends get married while she suffered through some tough breakups. That got her thinking deeply about the whole Catholic dating situation, which has its own set of quirks and challenges. Trying to be proactive, she started a Catholic singles group, interviewed people from CatholicMatch, and consulted dating experts. The result is *Pretty Good Catholic*, which serves as a how-to guide for even the most discouraged single man or woman.

Cristina Pineda, an LA-based celebrity matchmaker who also happens to be a faithful Catholic, offered high praise: “I wish I had this book when I was single,” she said,



### STORYBOOK ENDING

While writing *Pretty Good Catholic*, Rachel Canto took her own advice and found the love of her life. She and her new husband live in Nashville.



## One Hail Mary

Sometimes it’s the simple things! A traditional practice that’s making a comeback is helping kids pray for their future vocations by saying one Hail Mary each night: “Mother Mary, as you said yes to the angel Gabriel, help me say yes to God’s call. Hail Mary, full of grace...”