

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
Georgetown University
Washington, DC

*The Class of 2011:
Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood*

**A Report to the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life & Vocations
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**



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Executive Summary

This report presents findings from a national survey of ordinands to the priesthood in 2011. To obtain the names and contact information for these ordinands, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) contacted all theologates and houses of formation in fall 2010 and requested each site to provide names and contact information for every seminarian who was scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in 2011. CARA also contacted the vocation director at all dioceses and archdioceses in the United States and received contact information on potential ordinands from 107 dioceses and archdioceses. CARA then contacted the ordinands by e-mail, phone, or fax to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey. At the same time, CARA also e-mailed or faxed a similar request to the seminary rector or president at all theologates in its Catholic ministry formation database as well as all major superiors of clerical and mixed religious institutes, asking them to contact their ordinands for CARA and invite them to participate in the online survey.

After repeated follow-ups by telephone, fax, and e-mail, a total of 333 ordinands responded to the survey by February 26, 2011. Four respondents who indicated that they are being ordained for a diocese outside the United States were removed from the analysis, resulting in a sample of 329 ordinands. This represents a response rate of approximately 69 percent of the 480 potential ordinands reported to CARA by theologates, houses of formation, arch/dioceses, and religious institutes. These 329 ordinands include 275 ordinands to the diocesan priesthood, from 128 different dioceses and archdioceses, and 54 ordinands to the religious priesthood.

Major Findings

- The average age of ordinands for the Class of 2011 is 34. The median age (midpoint of the distribution) is 31. More than half (56 percent) are between the ages of 25 and 34. This is slightly younger than in 2010, but follows the pattern in recent years of average age at ordination in the mid-thirties.

- On average, diocesan ordinands lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for 15 years before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands knew the members of their religious institute an average of six years before they entered the seminary.

Background and Country of Origin

- Seven in ten responding ordinands (69 percent) report their primary race or ethnicity as Caucasian/European American/white. Compared to the adult Catholic population of the United States, ordinands are more likely to be of Asian or Pacific Islander background (10 percent of responding ordinands), but less likely to be Hispanic/Latino (15 percent of responding ordinands). Compared to diocesan ordinands, religious ordinands are *less* likely to report their race or ethnicity as Caucasian/European American/white.
- Almost one-third of ordinands were born outside the United States, with the largest numbers coming from Columbia, Mexico, the Philippines, Poland, and Vietnam. On average, responding ordinands who were born in another country have lived in the United States for 13 years. Between 20 and 30 percent of ordinands to diocesan priesthood for each of the last ten years were born outside of the United States.
- Most ordinands have been Catholic since birth, although one in ten (8 percent) became Catholic later in life. Four in five (82 percent) report that both of their parents are Catholic and a third (34 percent) have a relative who is a priest or a religious.
- More than half of ordinands of the Class of 2011 (53 percent) report having more than two siblings, while one-quarter (24 percent) report having five or more siblings. One in three (33 percent) is the oldest child or the youngest child (29 percent) in their family.

Education, Ministry, and Work Experience

- Before entering the seminary, three in five ordinands completed college (60 percent), among them one in five who also received a graduate degree (17 percent). Among those who completed college before entering the seminary, seven in ten entered the seminary at the pre-theology level and 19 percent entered at the theology level. One in three (34 percent) report entering the seminary while in college.
- Almost half of responding ordinands (47 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school, which is a rate slightly higher than that for all Catholic adults in the United States (42 percent). In addition, ordinands are somewhat more likely than other U.S. Catholic adults to have attended a Catholic high school and they are much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (39 percent, compared to 7 percent among U.S. Catholic adults).
- Ordinands of the Class of 2011 have been active in parish ministries, with about half to three-quarters indicating they served as an altar server or lector in their parish. One-fifth (21 percent) participated in a World Youth Day before entering the seminary.

- More than nine in ten ordinands (94 percent) report some type of full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary, most often in education. Fewer than one in ten has served in the U.S. Armed Forces. One in five (19 percent) report that either one or both parents were career military.
- About seven in ten ordinands report regularly praying the Rosary (70 percent) and participating in Eucharistic Adoration (65 percent) before entering the seminary.

Vocational Discernment

- On average, responding ordinands report that they were about 16 when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood. Two in three (66 percent) were encouraged to consider the priesthood by a priest. Seven in ten (71 percent) received encouragement from a friend, a parent, grandparent, or other relative, or a parishioner.
- Almost half of responding ordinands report that someone discouraged them from considering the priesthood. Respondents are more likely to cite a friend or classmate, or a parent or family member as discouraging them.
- Relatively few ordinands say that TV, radio, billboards, or other vocational advertising were instrumental in their discernment. About one in four reports that a website influenced their discernment. Two in five (42 percent) participated in a “Come and See” weekend before entering the seminary. Eight in ten (83 percent) report that they have seen the “Fishers of Men” DVD published by the USCCB.

Introduction

In December 2005, the Secretariat for Vocations and Priestly Formation (now the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations) of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to conduct an annual survey of ordinands to the priesthood. The survey was initially developed by the Secretariat in 1998 and has been administered online since 2005. CARA assumed responsibility for the project in 2006, using the online survey developed by the Secretariat. CARA worked with the Secretariat to upgrade the online survey and to incorporate it into the data collection process for CARA's annual survey of priestly formation programs. This report presents results of the survey of ordinands of the Class of 2011.

To obtain the names and contact information for these ordinands, CARA contacted all theologates and houses of formation in fall 2010 as part of the annual data collection for its Catholic ministry formation database and requested each site to provide names and contact information for every seminarian who was scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in 2011. CARA also contacted the vocation director at all dioceses and archdioceses in the United States and received contact information on potential ordinands from 107 dioceses and archdioceses. CARA then contacted all identified ordinands by e-mail, phone, or fax to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey. At the same time, CARA also e-mailed or faxed a similar request to the seminary rector or president at all theologates in its Catholic ministry formation database as well as all major superiors of clerical and mixed religious institutes, asking them also to contact their ordinands and invite them to participate in the online survey.

After repeated follow-ups by telephone, fax, and e-mail, a total of 333 ordinands responded to the survey by February 26, 2011. Four respondents who indicated that they are being ordained for a diocese outside the United States were removed from the analysis, resulting in a sample of 329 ordinands. This represents a response rate of approximately 69 percent of the 480 potential ordinands reported to CARA by theologates, houses of formation, arch/dioceses, and religious institutes. These 329 ordinands include 275 ordinands to the diocesan priesthood, from 128 different dioceses and archdioceses, and 54 ordinands to the religious priesthood.

The questionnaire asked ordinands about their demographic and religious background, education, previous ministry and work experience, encouragement and discouragement to consider the priesthood, and experience with vocation programs. This report presents analyses of each question from all ordinands combined as well as separately for diocesan and religious ordinands. The report also contains trend data on selected items since 1999, the first year for which comparable data on both diocesan and religious ordinands are available.

Ordination to Diocesan or Religious Priesthood

Responding ordinands represent 128 dioceses and eparchies and 36 distinct religious congregations, provinces, or monasteries. The Archdiocese of Newark had the largest number of respondents (13 ordinands), followed by the Archdiocese of Chicago (nine ordinands) and the Archdiocese of Boston (seven ordinands). The Archdiocese of Denver and the Diocese of Rockford each had six ordinands. The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis had five respondents, as did the Dioceses of Cleveland and Trenton.

The largest numbers of responses from ordinands to the religious priesthood were from the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) and the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), both of whom had nine responding ordinands. The Benedictines had five responding ordinands and the Society of the Divine Word and the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal each had four.¹

On average, responding diocesan ordinands report they lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for 15 years before they entered the seminary.

<i>How long did you live in this diocese or eparchy before entering the seminary?</i>	
	Years
Mean	15
Median	18
Range	0-50

About one in ten diocesan ordinands (12 percent) report that they lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained less than a year before they entered the seminary. Another 36 ordinands (13 percent) did not answer the question about how long they lived in the diocese or eparchy before entering the seminary.

¹ These numbers refer only to ordinands who responded to the survey and do not necessarily mean that these dioceses or religious institutes will ordain the largest number of priests in 2011.

On average, ordinands from religious institutes report that they knew the members of their religious institute six years before they entered the seminary.

<i>How long did you know the members of this religious institute before entering the seminary?</i>	
	Years
Mean	6
Median	3
Range	0-33

One in eight ordinands from religious institutes (12 percent) report that they knew the members of their religious institute only a year or less before they entered the seminary.

Age of Ordinands

The average age of responding ordinands of the Class of 2010 is 34. More than half (56 percent) are between 25 and 34.

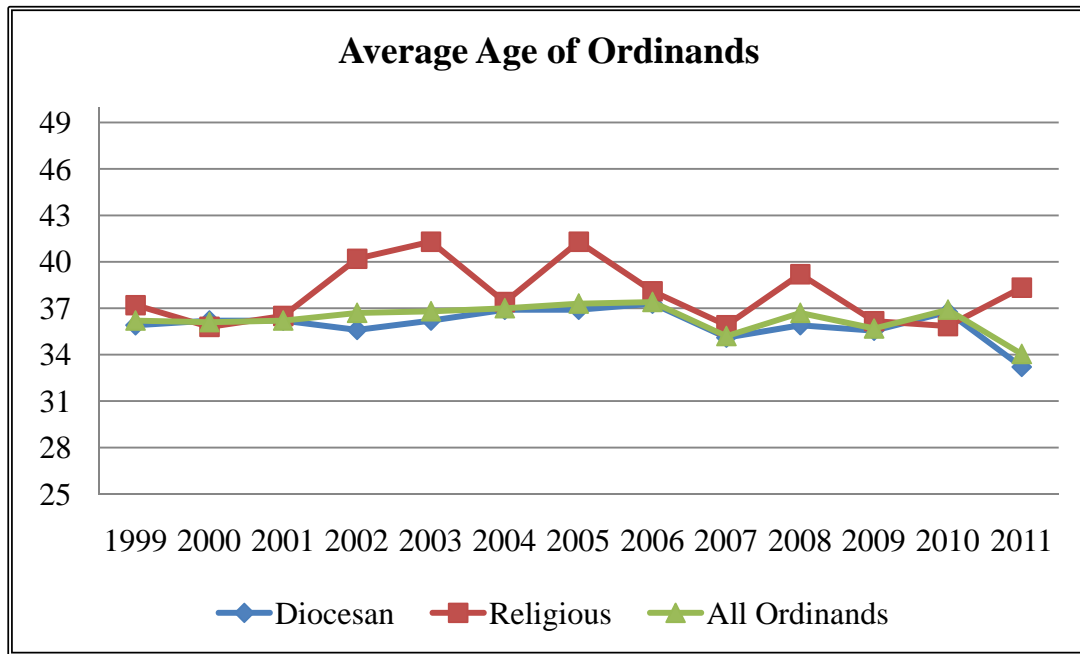
Age of Ordinands			
Percentage of all responding ordinands in each age category			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Age 25-29	39%	45%	12%
Age 30-34	27	27	25
Age 35-39	14	11	27
Age 40-49	12	10	24
Age 50-59	7	6	10
Age 60 and older	1	1	2
Average age	34	33	38
Median age	31	30	36
Range in years	25-63	25-63	28-62

The youngest responding ordinand of the Class of 2011 is 25 and the oldest is 63 years of age. Four respondents are being ordained to the priesthood after age 60.

Diocesan ordinands are significantly younger than religious ordinands in the Class of 2011. The median age of diocesan ordinands is 30, which means that half of the diocesan

ordinands responding to the survey this year are 30 years old or younger. By contrast, the median age of religious ordinands is 36.

Ordinands of the Class of 2011 average 34 years of age, slightly younger than the average age of 36.2 years among ordinands of the Class of 1999. On average, ordinands from religious institutes are somewhat older than diocesan ordinands.²



The Class of 2011 follows the pattern in recent years of average age at ordination in the mid-thirties.

² Because the total number of religious ordinands is relatively small each year, the line representing the average age of religious ordinands varies widely across years.

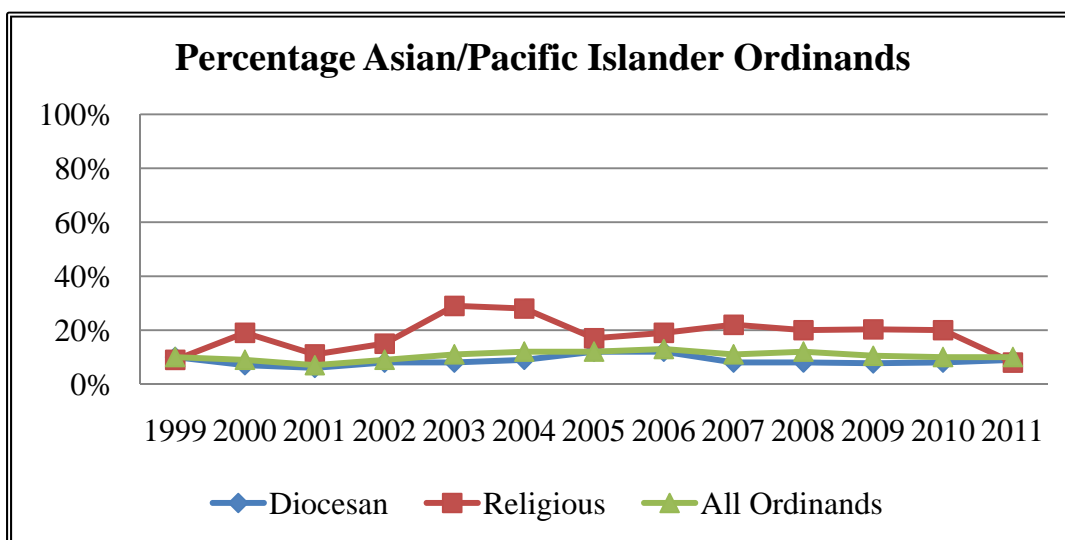
Race and Ethnic Background

Seven in ten responding ordinands report their primary race or ethnicity as Caucasian, European American, or white.

Race and Ethnic Background of Ordinands and Adult Catholics				
	All	Diocesan	Religious	Adult Catholics Nationally
Caucasian/European American/white	69%	72%	51%	58%
Hispanic/Latino	15	13	13	34
Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	10	9	8	4
African/African American/black	5	4	4	3
Native American	0	0	0	1
Other	1	2	2	----*

*Data unavailable.

Compared to data from a recent CARA telephone poll, Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian ordinands are over-represented among responding ordinands, relative to their proportion of the U.S. adult Catholic population, while Hispanics/Latinos are somewhat under-represented. Asians/Pacific Islanders constitute 4 percent of U.S. Catholics overall but are 10 percent of responding ordinands. By contrast, Hispanics/Latinos constitute approximately 34 percent of U.S. adult Catholics but only 15 percent of responding ordinands.



Country of Birth and Age at Entry to United States

Two in three responding ordinands were born in the United States.

Country of Birth of Ordinands			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
United States	67%	70%	48%
Colombia	5	4	7
Mexico	4	4	4
Poland	4	5	2
Vietnam	4	3	9
Philippines	2	2	2
Other countries	14	12	28

Ordinands from religious institutes are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have been born outside the United States. Seven in ten (70 percent) diocesan ordinands were born in the United States, compared to just under half (48 percent) of ordinands from religious institutes.

Colombia is the most frequently mentioned country of birth among responding ordinands who were born outside the United States. The responding ordinands identified a total of 31 different countries of origin.

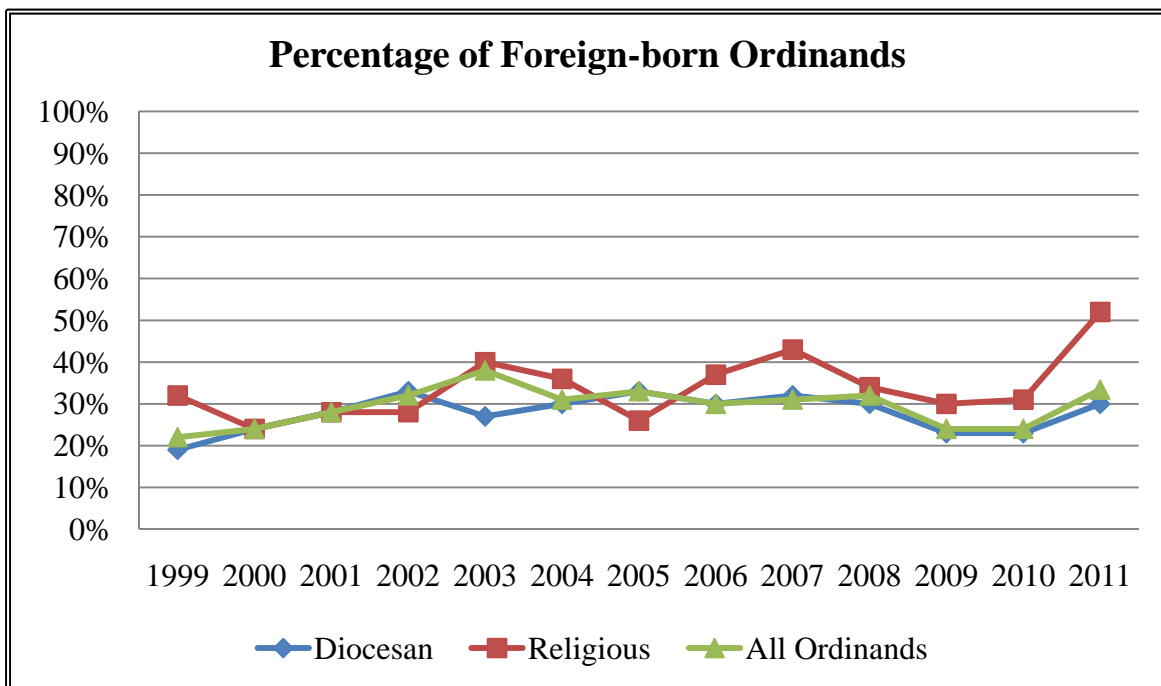
On average, responding ordinands who were born outside the United States have lived in the United States for 13 years. Half first came to live in the United States in 2002 or earlier.

Year of Entry to the U.S. of Foreign-born Ordinands			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	1998	1999	1995
Median	2002	2005	1997
Range	1949-2010	1949-2010	1968-2009

On average, responding foreign-born ordinands came to live in the United States at age 25. There is no difference between diocesan or religious ordinands in their average age at which they came to live in the United States.

Age at Entry to the United States of Foreign-born Ordinands			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	25	25	25
Median	26	26	24
Range	3-46	3-45	9-46

The percentage of ordinands who are foreign-born increased from 22 percent in 1999 to 38 percent in 2003, but has declined since that point and is now at 33 percent in 2010.



While the percentage of foreign-born ordinands from religious institutes has fluctuated somewhat since 1999 due to the relatively smaller number of religious ordinands, the diocesan percentage has remained relatively steady at approximately 20 to 30 percent of all diocesan ordinands.

Catholic Background

Nine in ten responding ordinands have been Catholic since birth. Among those who became Catholic later in life, the average age of their conversion was 25.

Catholic Background			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Catholic since birth	92%	92%	92%
Converted	8	8	8
Average age at conversion	25	25	19

Ordinands who converted from another denomination or faith tradition are about evenly divided between those who came from a mainline Protestant tradition (Episcopalian, Lutheran, Anglican, United Church of Christ) and those who came from an evangelical or conservative Protestant tradition (Church of Christ, Baptist, non-denominational Christian). One ordinand converted from a non-Christian religious background (Buddhist), one ordinand changed rites from Ukrainian-Byzantine to Roman Catholic, and one ordinand is a former Episcopal priest. Five responding ordinands were raised without a faith tradition.

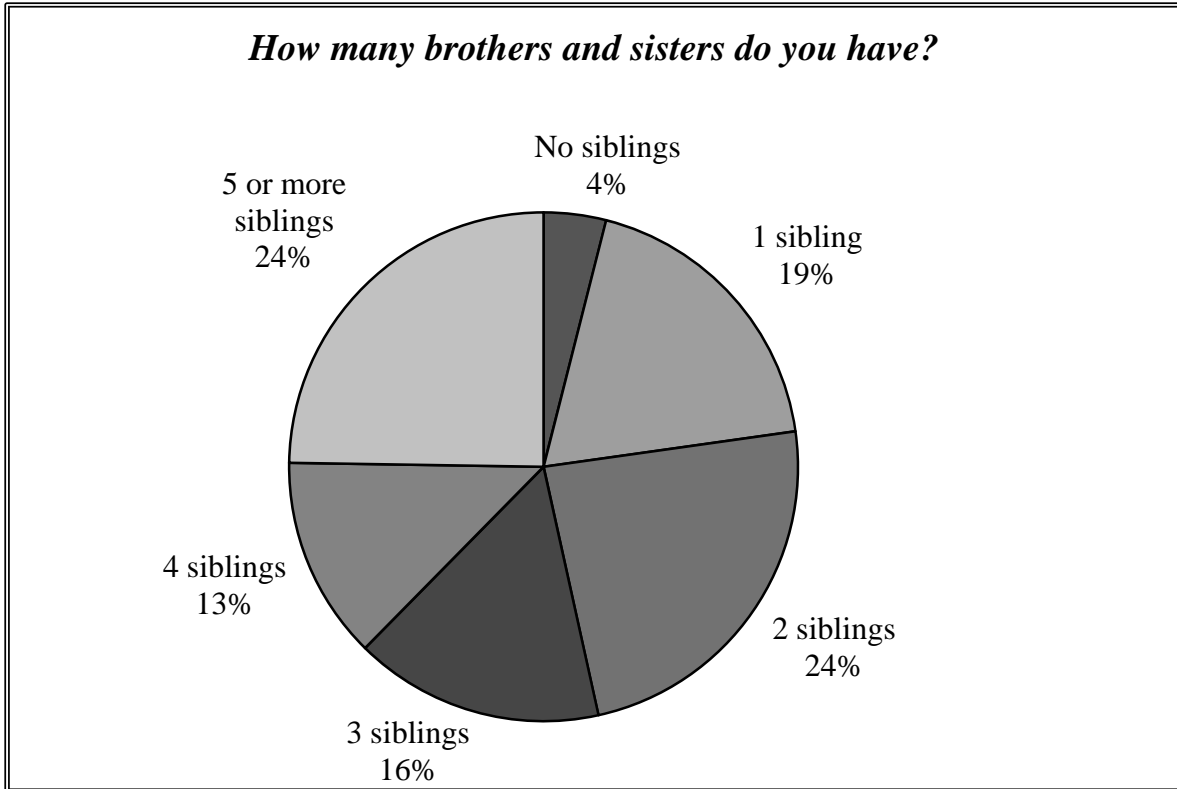
Nearly all ordinands report that when they were children they had at least one parent who was Catholic; eight in ten report that both parents were Catholic.

<i>What was the religious background of your parents when you were a child?</i>			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Both parents Catholic	82%	81%	86%
Mother Catholic, father not	3	3	6
Father Catholic, mother not	3	3	2
Neither parent was Catholic	12	13	6

In addition to the predominantly Catholic background of their parents, many ordinands also report that they have a relative who is a priest or a religious. In the Class of 2011, 34 percent of responding ordinands report that they have a relative who is a priest or a religious (not shown in the table above).

Siblings

Almost all ordinands in the Class of 2011 (96 percent) have at least one sibling. More than half (53 percent) report having more than two siblings, while a quarter (24 percent) have five or more siblings.



On average, ordinands have three siblings. Ordinands from religious orders have, on average, slightly more siblings (four siblings) than diocesan ordinands (three siblings). Likewise, none of the ordinands from religious orders are only children, while 5 percent of diocesan ordinands are only children.

What is your birth order?

	All	Diocesan	Religious
Youngest	29%	29%	32%
Middle	37	38	32
Oldest	33	33	36

Overall, ordinands are slightly more likely to be the middle child in their family. Religious order ordinands are slightly more likely than diocesan ordinands to be the oldest child in their family, with 36 percent of religious ordinands being the oldest, compared to 33 percent of diocesan ordinands.

Education

The responding ordinands are highly educated. Six in ten completed college before entering the seminary.³

Highest Education Completed Before the Seminary			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Elementary	2%	2%	0%
High school	21	23	14
Trade or technical school	3	2	6
Some college, no degree	14	15	12
Undergraduate degree	43	44	38
Graduate degree	17	15	30

A very small number of ordinands (2 percent) report that they only completed elementary school before entering the seminary. All ordinands of this group (100 percent) entered the seminary in high school. About one in five ordinands of the Class of 2011 completed only high school before entering the seminary and most of the responding ordinands (60 percent) completed college before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have a graduate degree before entering the seminary but they are not more likely than diocesan ordinands to have completed an undergraduate degree.

The education level prior to entering the seminary for responding ordinands of the Class of 2011 is somewhat lower than the education level reported a decade ago. In 1999, 25 percent of responding ordinands had less than a college degree before entering seminary, compared to 40 percent of ordinands in 2011. This could be due in part to a larger number of ordinands entering the seminary at the college level, rather than after completing undergraduate studies.

<i>At what level did you first enter the seminary?</i>			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
High school	5%	5%	6%
College	33	35	20
Pre-theology	45	45	47
Theology	16	15	27

³ Some respondents may have entered the seminary at the high school or college level.

Three in four ordinands (73 percent) who report their highest level of education before seminary is high school entered the seminary while in college. Of those who have completed their undergraduate education, seven in ten (72 percent) entered the seminary at the pre-theology level and 19 percent entered at the theology level. Half of those with graduate degrees entered the seminary at the pre-theology level, while more than two in five (44 percent) entered at the theology level.

One in five ordinands studied philosophy or theology before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands are slightly more likely than diocesan ordinands to have done so (21 percent compared to 19 percent).

Field of Study before the Seminary			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Theology or Philosophy	20%	19%	21%
Liberal Arts	16	14	24
Business, business management	16	16	15
Social sciences	11	11	9
Education	10	11	6
Engineering	8	10	0
Science	6	6	3
Computers, computer programming	5	4	9
Medicine	3	3	3
Law	1	1	0
Other	5	4	12

Catholic Education

Half of responding ordinands attended a Catholic elementary school. Almost two in five attended a Catholic high school, while an equal proportion attended a Catholic college.

Attendance at Catholic School*			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Elementary	47%	45%	57%
High School	39	38	43
College	39	39	39
*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.			

Ordinands are slightly more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic elementary school. In a 2008 national poll conducted by CARA,⁴ 42 percent of U.S. adult Catholics report having attended a Catholic elementary school, compared to 47 percent of ordinands who have done so. Ordinands are also more likely than other U.S. Catholics to have attended a Catholic high school (39 percent of ordinands, compared to 22 percent of U.S. adult Catholics) and much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (39 percent of ordinands, compared to just 7 percent of U.S. adult Catholics). Compared to diocesan ordinands, religious ordinands are more likely to have attended an elementary or secondary Catholic school.

Whether or not they ever attended a Catholic elementary or high school, 64 percent of responding ordinands (66 percent of diocesan ordinands and 53 percent of religious ordinands) participated in a religious education program in their parish. On average, they completed seven years of parish religious education.

Only 4 percent of ordinands (5 percent of diocesan and no religious ordinands) report being home schooled at some time in their educational background. Among those who were home schooled, the average length of time they were home-schooled was six years.

Among those ordinands who reported at least some college before entering the seminary, 36 percent say they attended a Catholic college or university. This is significantly higher than the 7 percent of the U.S. Catholic population that attended a Catholic college or university.

⁴*Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics.* April 2008. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

Two-thirds of responding ordinands of the Class of 2011 participated in religious education programs at their parish.

Participation in Religious Education			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Did you participate in the religious education program in your parish? (percentage responding “yes”)	64%	66%	53%
<i>If yes</i> , total number of years in parish religious education program (mean)	7	7	6

Religious ordinands are slightly *less* likely than diocesan ordinands to have participated in religious education programs at their parish (66 percent to 53 percent). However, the average number of years of participation in parish religious education is about the same for both groups (7 years for diocesan and 6 years for religious ordinands).

Work Experience

More than nine in ten ordinands (94 percent) report some type of full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary.

Prior Full-time Work Experience			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Education	14%	14%	16%
Sales, customer service	13	14	8
Church ministry, parish life	8	9	5
Construction, labor, farming	8	9	5
Computers, IT	7	6	8
Accounting, finance, insurance	7	7	5
Management	5	4	8
Student	5	4	5
Medical, scientist	4	4	5
Military	4	3	5
Business	3	3	0
Social worker	3	3	3
Attorney	2	1	3
Engineer, architect	2	3	0
Government, law enforcement	2	3	0
Other	9	7	16
No prior work experience listed	6	6	5

Ordinands that mentioned prior work experience were most likely to report that they were educators. About one in twenty reported that they had no full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary. One in ten reported other prior full-time work experience that was not classifiable using this scheme.

Once ordinands who entered the seminary at the high school or college level are excluded, 5 percent of ordinands had no prior work listed (5 percent of diocesan ordinands and 3 percent religious of ordinands).

Military Experience

Fewer than one in ten responding ordinands reports having served in the U.S. Armed Forces (8 percent of diocesan ordinands and 8 percent of religious ordinands). Among those with military experience, two in five served in the Air Force.

Service in the U.S. Armed Forces*			
(Percentage checking each response)**			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Air Force	42%	35%	75%
Army	21	25	0
Navy	21	20	25
Marines	4	5	0
Reserve	17	20	0
National Guard	4	5	0
Coast Guard	4	5	0

*Includes only those reporting service in the U.S. Armed Forces.

**Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

The table above shows the branch of service among those who reported military service. Religious ordinands reported being in either the Air Force or the Navy, while diocesan ordinands are represented throughout all branches of military service.

Ordinands were also asked whether either of their parents was a career military person. About one in five ordinands (19 percent) report that either parent had a military career in the U.S. Armed Forces. Diocesan and religious ordinands are as likely to report having a parent with a military career (19 percent and 21 percent, respectively).

Consideration of Priesthood

On average, ordinands report that they were 16 years old when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood. There is little difference between diocesan and religious ordinands in the age at which they first considered a vocation to the priesthood.

Age When Ordinands First Considered Priesthood			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Mean	16	16	18
Median	16	15	18
Range	2-49	2-49	5-44

Encouragement to Consider Priesthood

Nine in ten ordinands (89 percent) report being encouraged to consider the priesthood by someone in their life. Of those responding ordinands who reported that they were encouraged to consider the priesthood, two in three (66 percent) say they were encouraged by a parish priest.

Encouragement to Consider Priesthood*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Parish Priest	66%	68%	59%
Friend	44	43	47
Mother	42	42	43
Parishioner	38	39	35
Father	27	25	37
Teacher/Catechist	22	23	16
Other relative	20	20	22
Grandparent	18	19	18
Religious Sister	18	16	27
Campus Minister/School Chaplain	14	15	8
Bishop	13	15	4
Religious Brother	11	10	18
Youth Minister	10	10	8
Deacon	7	8	0
Military Chaplain	2	2	4

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Many responding ordinands were encouraged by a friend or family member. Seven in ten (71 percent) received encouragement from a friend, a parent, grandparent or other relative, or a parishioner (not shown in the table).

- Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to say they were encouraged by religious sisters or brothers, while diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to have been encouraged by a parish priest or a bishop.
- Although four in ten report that their mother encouraged them to consider the priesthood, ordinands are more likely to report that they received encouragement from friends or a parish priest than from other family members. About a quarter received encouragement from their father and one in four were encouraged to consider the priesthood by a grandparent or another relative.
- About two in ten ordinands received encouragement from a teacher. One in seven was encouraged by a campus minister, while fewer than 10 percent were encouraged by a deacon or a military chaplain.
- One in ten responding ordinands of the Class of 2011 (11 percent) report that no one encouraged their vocation to the priesthood (not shown in table). This figure is slightly higher for religious ordinands (15 percent) than for diocesan ordinands (10 percent).

Discouragement from Considering Priesthood

More than two in five responding ordinands (46 percent of diocesan and religious ordinands) responded that they were *discouraged* from considering the priesthood by one or more persons (not shown in the table below).

Discouragement from Considering Priesthood*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Friend or classmate	57%	57%	56%
Parent or family member	52	51	56
Priest or other clergy	20	20	20
Teacher	13	13	12
Religious sister or brother	8	6	16
Youth minister	4	3	8
Someone else	13	12	16

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Among those who reported being *discouraged* from considering a vocation to the priesthood, ordinands are most likely to report that they were discouraged by friends or classmates (57 percent) or by a parent or other family member (52 percent).

Very few responding ordinands said they had been discouraged from considering a priestly vocation by clergy, teachers, or religious sisters or brothers. Almost none reported being discouraged by a youth minister. A few mentioned someone else who had discouraged them from pursuing their vocation, including a girlfriend or former girlfriend, a co-worker, a more distant relative or stranger, or non-Catholic friends.

Participation in Parish Programs, Activities, or Ministries

Many ordinands were active in parish life before entering the seminary. Parish youth group, community service, and the Boy Scouts are among the most common parish programs or activities reported by ordinands.

Participation in Parish Programs or Activities*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Parish youth group	48%	48%	49%
Community service	38	40	27
Boy Scouts/Eagle Scouts	30	30	31
Knights of Columbus	23	25	10
Catholic campus ministry/Newman Center	20	20	18
Right to Life	17	18	10
Men's Club	5	6	2
St. Vincent de Paul Society	2	2	4
Serra Club	1	1	2

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Almost half of responding ordinands participated in parish youth groups (48 percent). Four in ten participated in community service (38 percent), with diocesan ordinands being more likely than religious ordinands to participate in community service (40 percent to 27 percent, respectively). Three in ten participated in the Boy Scouts or Eagle Scouts. One in four participated in the Knights of Columbus (23 percent). Among the activities or programs about which they were asked, ordinands were *least* likely to have been involved in the Serra Club, a Men's Club, or the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Participation in Other Youth Ministry Programs			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
World Youth Day	21%	22%	16%
Franciscan University of Steubenville			
High School Youth Conference	8	8	6
National Catholic Youth Conference	7	6	8

One in five ordinands reports having attended World Youth Day before entering the seminary. Diocesan ordinands (22 percent) are more likely than religious ordinands (16 percent)

to report having attended World Youth Day. There are no differences between diocesan and religious ordinands and attendance at the Franciscan University of Steubenville High School Youth Conference and at the National Catholic Youth Conference.

Most ordinands participated in one or more liturgical ministries in the parish before entering the seminary. Seven in ten were altar servers.

Participation in Parish Ministries*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Altar server	71%	73%	59%
Lector	55	55	55
Minister of Holy Communion	39	39	41
Catechist	38	37	45
Campus ministry/Youth ministry	30	32	20
Confirmation sponsor/godfather	30	30	25
Cantor or music minister	28	27	35
RCIA team member/sponsor	15	14	20
Usher/minister of hospitality	12	13	10
Parish pastoral council member	11	10	14
Liturgy committee member	7	7	6
Full-time parish/diocesan employee	5	5	6

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Among the parish ministries listed on the survey, responding ordinands were most likely to report that they served in liturgical ministries such as altar server, lector, or Minister of Holy Communion before entering the seminary. Some served in educational roles within the Church, with four in ten serving as catechist, three in ten serving as confirmation sponsor/godfather, and one in seven serving as a member of the RCIA team or RCIA sponsor. Three in ten served in campus ministry or youth ministry.

Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to have served as altar servers (73 percent to 59 percent). Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have served as catechists (45 percent to 37 percent).

Seven in ten (70 percent) responding ordinands regularly prayed the Rosary before entering the seminary. Another two-thirds (65 percent) regularly participated in Eucharistic Adoration before entering the seminary.

Did you participate in any of these prayer practices or groups on a regular basis before entering the seminary?*
(Percentage checking each response)

	All	Diocesan	Religious
Rosary	70%	70%	69%
Eucharistic Adoration	65	63	74
Retreats	58	58	57
Prayer group/Bible study	53	52	55
Lectio Divina	26	24	33

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

Religious ordinands are slightly more likely than diocesan ordinands to participate in Eucharistic Adoration and Lectio Divina before entering the seminary. Overall, two in three ordinands participated in Eucharistic Adoration before entering the seminary, and one in four participated in Lectio Divina before entering the seminary.

Vocation Programs and Vocational Advertising

Among the vocation programs identified, responding ordinands are most likely to have experienced a “Come and See” weekend. However, less than half participated in any of the listed vocation programs before entering the seminary.

Vocation Programs*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
“Come and See” weekend at the seminary or at the religious institute/society	42%	40%	51%
High school vocation programs	14	15	8
Quo Vadis retreat/Discernment retreat	11	12	6
Other parish vocation programs	10	11	6
Elementary school/CCD voc. programs	8	8	6
Operation Andrew	6	7	2
Traveling Chalice/Cup/Cross/Statue programs	3	4	0
*Respondents could select more than one category.			

- About one in ten responding ordinands participated in a parish or high school vocation program or a Quo Vadis or discernment retreat before entering the seminary.
- Fewer than one in ten participated in elementary school or CCD vocational programs, Operation Andrew, or the traveling chalice/cup/cross/statue programs.
- Religious ordinands were more likely than diocesan ordinands to report having attended a “Come and See” weekend. Half of religious ordinands attended such a program, compared to two-fifths of diocesan ordinands.

In addition to the vocation programs listed above, more than eight in ten responding ordinands (83 percent) have seen the vocational promotion DVD “Fishers of Men,” published by the USCCB. Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to have seen the DVD (89 percent compared to 48 percent).

Ordinands were also asked to indicate if various forms of vocational advertising may have influenced their discernment. Relatively few ordinands report that any of these influenced their discernment. Websites and DVDs and videos were the most influential, with about two in ten responding ordinands reporting these influenced their discernment.

<i>Did any of these influence your discernment?*</i>			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Websites	23%	20%	37%
DVDs or Videos	20	21	14
Pamphlets	14	13	20
Magazine advertisements	11	9	22
Posters	11	12	8
Newsletters	9	9	12
E-mails	8	8	10
TV advertisements	4	4	6
Billboards	2	2	0
Radio advertisements	2	3	0
Interactive CD-ROM	2	3	2
Other	22	20	31

*Respondents could select more than one category.

About a fifth of responding ordinands mentioned some “other” influence on their discernment. Examples include:

- Personal witness of priests, brothers, and other seminarians
- Holy men and women
- Books, magazines, Catholic radio, EWTN, and diocesan newspapers
- Prayer
- Vocation director
- Vocation talks, vocation nights, vocation retreats, and vocation programs
- John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Paul VI
- Diocesan discernment programs
- Encouragement from friends and family
- The example of good and happy priests and seminarians
- World Youth Day

Hobbies and Extra-curricular Activities

Listening to music and reading are the most frequently mentioned hobby or extra-curricular activity, mentioned by about seven in ten responding ordinands.

Hobbies and Extra-curricular Activities*			
(Percentage checking each response)			
	All	Diocesan	Religious
Listening to music	73%	74%	69%
Reading	67	68	57
Movies	62	63	57
Football/Soccer	41	43	29
Hiking	33	32	39
Cooking	33	32	39
Musical instruments	33	32	37
Running	31	30	37
Camping	29	30	23
Organized athletics/team sports	27	28	19
Basketball	25	24	25
Swimming	22	23	22
Biking	21	20	27
Fishing	21	22	14
Weight training	21	22	16
Opera/Theater	20	19	27
Photography	19	17	27
Video games	19	22	4
Golf	18	20	8
Writing/Blogging	18	19	18
Gardening	15	14	18
Tennis	15	14	16
Painting/drawing	11	10	18
Hunting	10	11	6
Woodworking	7	6	10
Video production	5	4	14
Sailing	3	4	2

*Percentages sum to more than 100 because respondents could select more than one category.

- Religious ordinands are more likely than diocesan ordinands to list the following as hobbies:
 - Hiking (39 percent to 32 percent)
 - Cooking (39 percent to 32 percent)
 - Musical instrument (37 percent to 32 percent)
 - Running (37 percent to 30 percent)
 - Biking (27 percent to 20 percent)
 - Opera/theater (27 percent to 19 percent)
 - Photography (27 percent to 17 percent)
 - Painting/drawing (18 percent to 10 percent)
 - Video production (14 percent to 4 percent)

- Diocesan ordinands are more likely than religious ordinands to list the following as hobbies:
 - Listening to music (74 percent to 69 percent)
 - Reading (68 percent to 57 percent)
 - Movies (63 percent to 57 percent)
 - Football/soccer (43 percent to 29 percent)
 - Camping (30 percent to 23 percent)
 - Organized team sports (28 percent to 19 percent)
 - Fishing (22 percent to 14 percent)
 - Weight training (22 percent to 16 percent)
 - Video games (22 percent to 4 percent)
 - Golf (20 percent to 8 percent)
 - Hunting (11 percent to 6 percent)