

The Religious: A Life of Love

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a marked decline in new arrivals: it was a time of pain and struggle."

The picture for women religious was much the same, Sister Maura said. "There were some structures which were dismissed that we're now seeing of value." She commented that it was for a while forgotten that the "purpose of law is to free us."

Some religious communities have strongly held on to their founders' purposes. According to Sister Betty Rogers, a Religious of the Cenacle, "spiritual renewal is the main work we've dedicated our lives to." The community, which is described as semi-cloistered, maintains retreat houses and centers for spiritual renewal across the country. The sisters give retreats, days of recollection and other spiritual programs for visitors to their centers.

Other religious groups have expanded a great deal on their founders' apostolates, as witness the Redemptorists. Father Thomas Schmidt noted that their principal mission here was to the German immigrant community. The congregation now fulfills a wide variety of apostolic activity from parish administration to giving retreats.

On the other hand, such communities as the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart, the Daughters of Charity, the Religious Teachers Filippini are strongly identified with their first apostolates, as are the monastic communities and the teaching religious men.

According to Jesuit Directions, a booklet distributed to prospective members of the Jesuit community, "The desire to set aside everything in order to know, love and follow Jesus may be evidence of a religious vocation. It may also arise for other reasons.

"It makes a difference, of course, to the person experiencing this recurring inner drive whether it comes from God or elsewhere... Discernment of what God wills for an individual comes through prayer and reflection aided by investigation and some guidance."

Each religious community in the diocese will help a person determine whether or not he or she has a vocation to the religious life.

This process, Sister Maura said, begins with a "sense of a call, a feeling of wanting a place to serve, to serve Him and His people."

The exploring that follows this, Sister Magdalen said, is a "finding process in which identification (with the religious community) grows." And, she said, it occasionally happens that a person in that process discovers they are seeking "the right thing for the wrong reason."

Some communities have established innovative programs to test vocations. A number have either affiliate or associate programs. Affiliates maintain their regular daily lives but meet regularly to pray and to speak with a person assigned to them from the congregation, Sister Magdalen said. Associates are persons living right within the community, but who are not committed to it.



The Trappist monks at Our Lady of the Genesee Abbey gather for prayer, meditation and readings.

In some cases, persons who wish to learn about religious life are invited to visit the congregational headquarters for a time.

Common to all, however, are specified programs for entry into the full life of the congregations. These are spelled out by Canon Law, and may involve time spans anywhere from a year to four years.

An interesting observation, made several times by religious representatives, is that older persons are beginning to pursue religious life.

It was customary until about a generation ago that persons who wanted to enter religious life would start exploring it in high school and even earlier.

Today, college graduates seem to be more and more interested in religious vocations.

There are, in fact, some communities which will accept applications from such persons only, the Religious of the Cenacle to name one.

Any religious in the diocese will welcome inquiries into his or her congregation.

The addresses for the communities in the diocese are:

Basilian Fathers
402 Augustine St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14613

The Benedictine Monks
Mount Saviour Monastery
Pine City, N.Y. 14871

Capuchin Fathers
St. Fidelis Friary
Interlaken 14847

Carmelite Fathers
625 Colebrook Dr.
Rochester, N.Y. 14617

Discalced Carmelite Fathers and Brothers
Monastery of St. John of the Cross
P.O. Box 189
Waverly, N.Y. 14892

Holy Cross Brothers
4583 St. Paul Blvd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14617

Congregation of Christian Brothers
125 Kings Highway South
Rochester, N.Y. 14617

Redemptorist Fathers
P.O. Box 342
Foster Road
Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424

Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance
Abbey of the Genesee
Piffard, N.Y. 14533

Franciscan Friars
St. Anthony of Padua Friary
Watkins Glen, N.Y. 14891

Society of the Divine Word
Divine Word Seminary and Mission Center
P.O. Conesus, N.Y. 14453



Sister Kate Vaeth, RSM, greets a woman in need of assistance at the door of Bethany House, a Catholic Worker House of Hospitality for homeless women and children.

Adorers of the Blood of Christ
St. Joseph's Convent
Columbia, Pa. 17512

The Cenacle
693 East Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14607

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph
4095 East Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14610

Daughters of Charity
St. Mary's Hospital
89 Genesee St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14611

Discalced Carmelites
Monastery of Our Lady and St. Joseph
1931 W. Jefferson Rd.
Pittsford, N.Y. 14534

Dominican Nuns of the Perpetual Rosary
Monastery of Mary the Queen
1310 W. Church St.
Elmira, N.Y. 14905

Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph
St. Theresa's Convent
19 Watkins Terr.
Rochester, N.Y. 14605

Sisters of Mercy
1437 Blossom Rd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14610

School Sisters of Notre Dame
345 Belden Hill Rd.
Wilton, Conn. 06897

Sisters of Our Lady of Charity
1326 N. Winton Rd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14609

Sisters of St. Basil the Great
105 Cottage St.
Auburn, N.Y. 13021

Sisters of the Third Franciscan Order, Minor Conventuals
Mercy Health and Rehabilitation Center
Anthony St.
Auburn, N.Y. 13021

Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate
910 Ridge Rd. E.
Rochester, N.Y. 14621

Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart
10 Baumer Place
Fairport, N.Y. 14450

Missionary Sisters of Guadalupe
19 Watkins Terr.
Rochester, N.Y. 14605

Religious Teachers Filippini
909 N. Decatur St.
Watkins Glen, N.Y. 14891

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