



# The CARA Report

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## WHO ARE “INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES”?

*Forming Intentional Disciples*, by Sherry A. Weddell, is based on the author’s ministry experience and grounded in relevant studies by the Pew Research Center, CARA, and other authoritative sources.

Weddell says that “there is a chasm the size of the Grand Canyon between the Churches’s sophisticated theology of the lay apostolate and the lived spiritual experience of the majority of our people. And this chasm has a name: discipleship. We learned that the majority of even ‘active’ American Catholics are still at an early, essentially passive stage of spiritual development. We learned that our first need at the parish level isn’t catechetical. Rather, our fundamental problem is that most of our people are not yet disciples. They will never be apostles until they have begun to follow Jesus Christ in the midst of his Church.”

She adds that, “We learned that at the parochial level, we have accepted this chasm between the Church’s teaching and Catholics’ lived relationship with God as normative, and this has shaped our community culture, our pastoral assumptions, and our pastoral practices with devastating results. We discovered, to our surprise and dismay, that many pastoral leaders do not even possess a conceptual category for discipleship. As long as this holds true, the theology of the laity and the Church’s teachings on social justice and evangelization will remain beautiful ideals that are, practically speaking, dead letters for the vast majority of Catholics.”

See “Who Are Intentional Disciples”?, page 10

## Lay Ecclesial Ministry— A Backbone of Today’s U.S. Church

The importance of lay ecclesial ministers to the life and work of the Church in the United States is illustrated by CARA studies which report that nearly 40,000 are currently ministering in parishes nationwide. Thus it is of paramount importance that these parish ministers have the best possible academic preparation and personal formation.

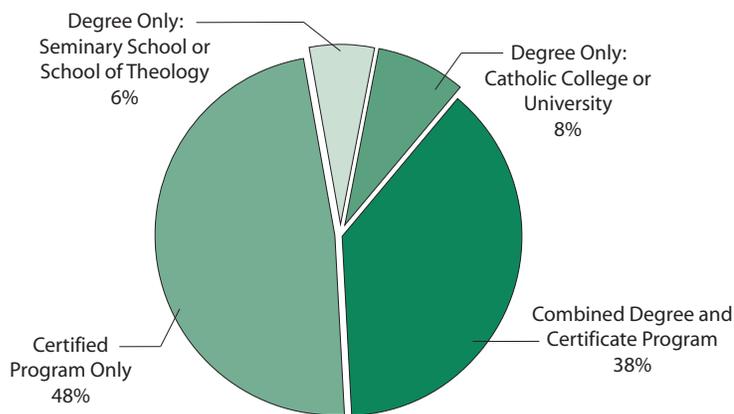
In 2016-2017, CARA identified 202 active lay ecclesial ministry formation programs and received program information from 191, for a response of 95 percent. The number enrolled in degree and certificate programs in 2016–2017 is 19,969, of whom 15,010 (75 percent) are working toward a certificate in ministry and 4,959 (25 percent) are working toward a graduate degree. The total number of enrollees represents a decrease of 16 percent from the 23,681 candidates reported in 2015–2016.

### FORMATION PROGRAM PROFILE

**Program Size:** Fourteen programs report more than 100 degree candidates in 2016-2017. The 2,622 students enrolled in these programs are more than half (56 percent) of all degree candidates enrolled in reporting programs. These 14 programs also report 247 students working toward a certificate (2 percent of all certificate candidates reported).

**Programs for Particular Needs:** Some programs meet particular needs in lay ecclesial ministry formation, including several specifically for ministry to the Hispanic community (such as the Escuela de Ministerios Pastorales of the Diocese of Oakland), one designed

TYPE OF LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY PROGRAM



See *Lay Ecclesial Ministry—A Backbone of Today’s U.S. Church*, page 11



## The CARA Report

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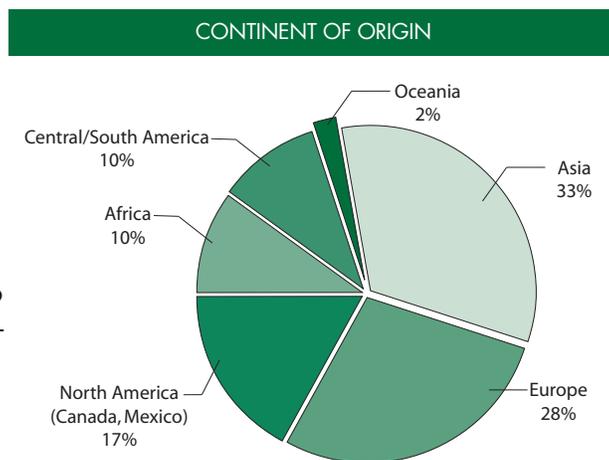
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## International Sisters in the United States

A team of researchers from Trinity Washington University and CARA studied more than 4,000 religious sisters from other countries who are now in the United States. For the purpose of the study, "international sister" refers a woman religious born outside the United States who is now living here in ministry, study, or residence.

The research involved two surveys. The first polled all 560 U.S.-based institutes of women religious to learn about the international sisters associated with those institutes, which had a response rate of 60 percent. This survey identified 1,678 international sisters living in or near these congregations. Vicars for religious in all U.S. dioceses were also asked to identify international sisters from non-U.S. based institutes, which provided another 1,866 names. The second part of the study involved a mailed survey offered in English, French, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The report presents a number of interesting findings, including:

- *The experience of arrival.* Many of the sisters arriving here for the first time were worried about adapting to the North American climate and food. Although they uniformly praised the welcome given them by American sisters, those who were living as the only international sister experienced more difficulties adjusting than did those with a number of sisters from the same country living together here.
- *Challenges of living and working.* All mentioned language difficulties—even those who had studied English since childhood. Another difficulty was finding suitable employment since credentials from the home country often did not transfer and years of study in the U.S. was sometimes required to serve here in their specialty.
- *Contributions of international sisters.* Several focus groups mentioned the presence of international sisters as beneficial to their host American communities. This occurred through the introduction of diversity in praying and liturgical contributions, as well as serving as a bridge of intercultural understanding in their ministries. In turn, some international sisters looked forward to sharing aspects of the valuable charism of their U.S. institutes once they returned home.



Both the U.S. institutes receiving international sisters, and the sisters themselves in focus groups and interviews, offered suggestions for improvement in the process of hosting women religious from other countries. Cataloging these to the benefit of both sides is an important outcome of the final study. One preliminary insight is that "adaptation cuts both ways," such that the U.S. sisters in host communities could not simply expect the international sisters to adapt to American culture but should be willing to change themselves as well.

A summary of *International Sisters in the United States: Trinity Washington University/CARA Study*, by Mary Johnson, SNDdeN, Mary L. Gautier, Patricia Wittberg, SC, and Thu T. Do, LHC, published in March 2017 by GHR Foundation, is available on the GHR website at [www.ghrfoundation.org/news/report-international-sisters-in-the-united-states](http://www.ghrfoundation.org/news/report-international-sisters-in-the-united-states)

# Number of Newly-Ordained Priests Continues to Hold Steady

The overall ordination rate—particularly for the diocesan priesthood—has continued comparatively steady at between 450 and 550 ordinations in recent years, although not sufficient to replace the significant losses through retirement and death of the aging population of American priests.

In collaboration with the USCCB Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations, CARA recently completed its annual national survey of seminarians scheduled for ordination to the priesthood in the United States in 2017. CARA used lists provided by all theologates, houses of formation, diocesan vocation directors, and institutes of men religious. The survey was mailed in March 2017 to 590 ordinands, of whom 444 or 75 percent returned the questionnaires—343 ordinands to the diocesan priesthood and 101 to the religious priesthood. Over three-quarters (77 percent) of respondents are preparing for ordination to the diocesan priesthood, and 23 percent for religious institutes.

## GENERAL BACKGROUND OF ORDINANDS

*Age of consideration and ordination:* On average, they first considered priesthood when they were 16 years old and were scheduled for ordination 18 years later—at age 34. Since 1999, the average age of ordinands has decreased by about two months each year, from an average of 36 in 1999 to the current age of 34.

*Race and Ethnicity:* Seventy percent are white, 14 percent Hispanic, 10 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 4 percent black or African American, and 2 percent Other.

*Nationality:* One in four is foreign-born. By comparison, since 1999 an average of 29 percent were foreign-born. The five most common countries of birth among the foreign-born are Mexico, Vietnam, the Philippines, Colombia, and Poland. Foreign-born ordinands came to live in this country an average of 12 years ago at age 25.

## EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

- Between 40 and 50 percent attended a Catholic school for at least some part of their education. Eight percent were home schooled, for an average of seven years. Three in five (59 percent) participated in a religious education program in their parish for an average of seven years.
- Two in five (43 percent) completed an undergraduate degree before entering the seminary. Those from religious institutes had completed a higher level of education, on average, than their diocesan counterparts.
- Almost half (46 percent) entered at the pre-theology level, having completed a college degree before entering seminary. Less than one-third (29 percent) carried educational debt, which averaged \$28,318. Those from religious institutes were more likely than diocesan ordinands to carry educational debt.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

- More than half (57 percent) reported full-time work experience before entering the seminary. One in six worked in education. Those studying for religious institutes are more likely than diocesan ordinands to have work experience (64 percent compared to 55 percent).
- One in twenty had served in the U.S. Armed Forces. About one in eight (12 percent) had one or both parents with military careers.

“The overall ordination rate—particularly for the diocesan priesthood—has continued comparatively steady at between 450 and 550 ordinations in recent years.”

## VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

- Almost all responding ordinands were baptized Catholic as infants (93 percent). Among those who became Catholic later, the average age was 21. Four in five (80 percent) said both parents were Catholic. One in three (35 percent) has a relative who is a priest or religious.
- Before entering the seminary, four in five participated regularly in Eucharistic Adoration (77 percent), 69 percent prayed the rosary, almost half attended prayer group/Bible study, two in five attended high school retreats, and about three in ten attended college retreats (34 percent) or participated in Lectio Divina (29 percent).
- Regarding parish ministries, four in five were altar servers and half served as lectors. Two in five served as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. One third served in campus ministry/youth ministry (35 percent) or as catechists (34 percent) or confirmation sponsors/godfathers (32 percent). One in four served as cantors or in music ministry.
- Four in five were encouraged to consider the priesthood by someone, most often a parish priest, a friend, or another parishioner. On average, four individuals encouraged their vocation. One-half were discouraged from the priesthood by one or more persons. Most often, this was a friend, classmate, or a family member other than a parent.

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*The Class of 2017: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood*, a CARA report to the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, April 2017, by Michal J. Kramarek and Mary L. Gautier, is available on the USCCB website at <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/ordination-class/index.cfm>

## U.S. College Graduates' Religious Behavior

A Pew Research Center report finds that “among U.S. adults, overall higher levels of education are linked with lower levels of religious commitment by some measures, such as belief in God, how often people pray and how important they say religion is to them. On the other hand, Americans with college degrees report attending religious services as often as Americans with less education.”

“... among U.S. adults, overall higher levels of education are linked with lower levels of religious commitment, such as belief in God, how often people pray and how important they say religion is to them.”

The report says, “Among all U.S. adults, college graduates are considerably less likely than those who have less education to say religion is ‘very important’ in their lives. Fewer than half of college graduates (46 percent) say this, compared with nearly six-in-ten of those with no more than a high school education (58 percent).”

“Highly educated Americans are also less inclined than others to say they believe in God with absolute certainty and to pray on a daily basis. And when asked about their religious identity, college graduates are more likely than others to describe themselves as atheists or agnostics (11 percent of college graduates compared to 4 percent of U.S. adults with a high school education or less).”

Still, “Americans with college degrees are no less likely than others to report attending religious services on a weekly basis. About a third of college graduates (36 percent) say they attend at least weekly compared to about the same proportion of those with high school or less education (37 percent).”

“In America, Does More Education Equal Less Religion? Overall, U.S. adults with college degrees are less religious than others, but this pattern does not hold among Christians,” April 26, 2017, appears on the website of the Pew Research Center ([www.pewforum.org](http://www.pewforum.org)).

## Trends In Marriage, Singleness, and Cohabitation

The Barna Group is a polling firm that focuses on evangelical and

born-again Christians. They drew upon a number of past studies and demographic data to look at the changing dynamics of marriage and singleness and the trends toward premarital cohabitation.

- Six in ten (59 percent) practicing U.S. Christians are married, a number that has remained steady since 2000, compared to just over half (52 percent) of the general population. Among all adults, the proportion that is single has increased from 17 percent in 2000 to 30 percent in 2016.
- The majority of adults (65 percent) agree that it’s a good idea to live with one’s significant other before marriage. Among all American adults, almost six in ten (57 percent) either currently live with their boyfriend/girlfriend or have previously done so.
- Among those who believe living with one’s significant other before getting married is not a good idea, the biggest factor is religious (34 percent). Of lesser importance are issues of practicality (16 percent), valuing family and tradition (12 percent), and other reasons (10 percent).

“The Trends Redefining Romance Today,” February 9, 2017, appears on the website of the Barna Group ([barna.com](http://barna.com)).

## U.S. Catholic Participation in Mass and Confession

According to CARA research on religious attitudes and beliefs of U.S. Catholics today:

- There are 74.2 million self-identified U.S. Catholics, which is about 23 percent of the overall American population
- Twenty-two percent say they go to Mass at least once a week, another 21 percent more say they go at least once a month, but 57 percent say they go a few times or less per year.
- When they first became Catholic: 77 percent as infants, 13 percent as children, 3 percent as teenagers, and 7 percent as adults
- Frequency of confession: 3 percent once a month or more, 12 percent several times a year, 14 percent once a year, 28 percent less than once a year, 43 percent never

“What Does It Mean to Belong to the Church? While the Church outlines rules for the faithful to follow, simple adherence is not enough for Catholics, who are called to be motivated by love,” by David Werning, appeared in a special section on “Foundations of the Faith” in *Our Sunday Visitor* for May 21-27, 2017.

### One-Year and 15-Year Changes in Worldwide Church Statistics

The latest edition of the Vatican's *Statistical Yearbook of the Church* reports demographic information on various categories of clergy, religious, and laity worldwide as of December 31, 2015. The number of Catholics in the world increased over the previous year, as did the numbers of bishops, deacons, and graduate-level seminarians, but there was a decline in the numbers of priests, religious brothers, and religious sisters.

“For a broader view of the regional comparisons for the period 2000 to 2015, a 15-year span, the overall global Catholic population increased by 22.9 percent during this period. The growth was greatest in Africa at 70.9 percent, followed by Asia at 31.8 percent.”

Specifically, the worldwide Catholic population was reported as 1,284,810,000, a one-year increase of over 12.5 million or almost 1 percent. Catholics as a proportion of the global population remained about 17.7 percent, only an approximately 0.1 percent decrease.

During 2015, the number of bishops increased from 5,237 to 5,304, the number of diocesan and religious priests decreased from 415,792 to 415,656, and the number of permanent deacons grew from 44,566 to 45,255. The number of religious brothers decreased from 54,559 to 54,229, the number of women religious went from 682,729 to 670,330, and the number of graduate-level seminarians grew from 55,830 to 55,988.

For a somewhat broader view, this issue of *The CARA Report* presents regional comparisons for the period 2000 to 2015, a 15-year span. As summarized in the accompanying table on The Church Worldwide, the overall global Catholic population increased by 22.9 percent during this period. The growth was greatest in Africa at 70.9 percent, followed by Asia at 31.8 percent.

During 2000-2015, the number of priests increased overall by 2.6 percent, again led by Africa (62.1 percent) and Asia (48.5 percent), with gains also in Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean (23.0 percent) and South America (20.2 percent). However, the priest population fell in North America (-19.0 percent), Europe (-14.1 percent), and Oceania (-4.6 percent).

Of future significance, the worldwide number of graduate-level seminarians stayed about the same during the 15-year period, but their distribution shifted dramatically. The numbers increased in Africa (+25.3 percent), Asia (+29.0 percent), and Oceania (+19.4 percent). They dropped in North America (-4.0 percent), Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean (-5.1 percent), South America (-4.1 percent), and Europe (-32.1 percent).

*Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae/Statistical Yearbook of the Church, 2015*, copyright 2017, is available from Libreria Editrice Vaticana—00120 Citta del Vaticano (phone 06.698.81032/ Fax 06.698.84716/www.liberiaeditricevaticana.va).

#### NUMBER OF ACTIVE PERMANENT DEACONS CONTINUES TO INCREASE

The number of permanent deacons in the United States has grown steadily since the restoration of this ministry in the years following the Second Vatican Council, to the total of 18,792 reported in *The Official Catholic Directory* in 2016. The number has increased by about 3 percent per year over each of the last ten years.

##### Profile of Diaconate Candidates

- Age Distribution: Three in four candidates (75 percent) for the permanent diaconate are in their forties and fifties. Just 4 percent are under age 40, and about one in five (21 percent) is 60 or older.
- Marital Status: The vast majority of candidates, 95 percent, are married men. Three percent are single, never married, and 2 percent are widowed or divorced.
- Racial and Ethnic Background: Seven in ten deacon candidates (71 percent) are white/Anglo/Caucasian. Just over one in five (22 percent) are Hispanic/Latino. 4 percent are Asians/Pacific Islanders, and blacks/African Americans comprise 2 percent. Native Americans, multi-racial, and other ethnicities make up another 1 percent.
- Education: Eight in ten deacon candidates (82 percent) have at least some college education. Two in five (38 percent) have a bachelor's degree and almost three in ten (28 percent) have a graduate degree. One in six (18 percent) has a high school education or less.

“Diaconate Formation” is included in “Catholic Ministry Formation Enrollment: Statistical Overview for 2016-2017,” which is published by CARA in the *2017 Catholic Ministry Formation Directory*. See page 12 for ordering details.

## Special Section on U.S. and Worldwide Statistics

### WORKFORCE FOR THE APOSTOLATE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2015

CATEGORY	WORLDWIDE	UNITED STATES	U.S. PROPORTION
Bishops	5,304	456	8.6%
Priests (diocesan and religious)	415,656	39,997	9.6%
Permanent deacons	45,255	18,116	40.0%
Religious brothers	54,229	4,395	8.1%
Religious sisters	670,330	47,056	7.0%
Catechists	3,264,768	378,671	11.6%
<b>TOTAL CATHOLICS</b>	<b>1,284,810,000</b>	<b>72,321,000</b>	<b>5.6%</b>

### THE CHURCH WORLDWIDE (15-YEAR CHANGES FROM 2000 TO 2015)

REGION		2000	2015	DIFFERENCE
Africa	Catholic population	130,018,000	222,170,000	+70.9%
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	27,165	44,048	+62.1%
	Priest per Catholic	1:4,786	1:5,044	—
	Graduate-level seminarians	9,876	12,375	+25.3%
North America (excluding Mexico)	Catholic population	76,815,000	88,166,000	+14.8%
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	58,129	47,067	-19.0%
	Priest per Catholic	1:1,321	1:1,873	—
	Graduate-level seminarians	3,492	3,351	-4.0%
Central America (including Mexico and Caribbean)	Catholic population	145,121,000	177,603,000	+22.4%
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	20,707	25,462	+23.0%
	Priest per Catholic	1:7,008	1:6,975	—
	Graduate-level seminarians	4,504	4,276	-5.1%
South America	Catholic population	297,455,000	359,499,000	+20.9%
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	42,005	50,507	+20.2%
	Priest per Catholic	1:7,081	1:7,118	—
	Graduate-level seminarians	8,838	8,477	-4.1%
Asia	Catholic population	107,302,000	141,412,000	+31.8%
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	43,566	64,714	+48.5%
	Priest per Catholic	1:2,463	1:2,185	—
	Graduate-level seminarians	12,095	15,606	+29.0%
Europe	Catholic population	280,144,000	285,752,000	+2.0%
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	208,659	179,140	-14.1%
	Priest per Catholic	1:1,343	1:1,595	—
	Graduate-level seminarians	16,683	11,330	-32.1%
Oceania	Catholic population	8,202,000	10,208,000	+24.5%
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	4,947	4,718	-4.6%
	Priest per Catholic	1:1,658	1:2,164	—
	Graduate-level seminarians	480	573	+19.4%
<b>WORLDWIDE</b>	Catholic population	<b>1,045,057,000</b>	<b>1,284,810,000</b>	<b>+22.9%</b>
	Priests (diocesan and religious)	<b>405,178</b>	<b>415,656</b>	<b>+2.6%</b>
	Priest per Catholic	<b>1:2,579</b>	<b>1:3,091</b>	<b>—</b>
	Graduate-level seminarians	<b>55,968</b>	<b>55,988</b>	<b>+0.04%</b>

## Special Section on U.S. and Worldwide Statistics

### Changes in Worldwide Catholic Numbers Over Three Decades

CARA examined Vatican data on Catholic population, Catholic parishes, and Catholic priests by world region, and how these have changed between 1980 and 2012, as indicated in the following summary:

WORLD REGION		1980	2012	% increase/decrease
AFRICA	Catholic Population	58,676,000	198,575,000	238%
	Catholic Parishes	7,162	15,217	112%
	Catholic Priests	17,346	40,133	131%
AMERICAS	Catholic Population	384,817,000	598,820,000	56%
	Catholic Parishes	46,351	57,769	25%
	Catholic Priests	120,132	122,607	2%
ASIA	Catholic Population	62,713,000	134,642,000	115%
	Catholic Parishes	11,854	24,169	104%
	Catholic Priests	27,136	60,042	121%
EUROPE	Catholic Population	271,649,000	286,868,000	6%
	Catholic Parishes	138,828	122,159	-12%
	Catholic Priests	243,319	165,229	-32%
OCEANIA	Catholic Population	5,806,000	9,706,000	67%
	Catholic Parishes	2,308	2,426	5%
	Catholic Priests	5,667	4,725	-17%
WORLD	Catholic Population	786,662,000	1,228,612,000	56%
	Catholic Parishes	208,483	223,752	7%
	Catholic Priests	413,600	393,053	-5%

For the United States, by comparison:

UNITED STATES	Catholic Population	50,376,000	71,180,000	41%
	Catholic Parishes	19,594	17,746	-9%
	Catholic Priests	58,473	41,555	-29%

For further information on “By the Numbers: Catholic Demographics in Global Perspective,” by Mary L. Gautier of CARA, a report presented at the annual meeting of the Religious Research Association/Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in Atlanta during October 28-30, 2016, email [CARA@georgetown.edu](mailto:CARA@georgetown.edu).

## Special Section on U.S. and Worldwide Statistics

### COUNTRIES WITH CATHOLIC POPULATIONS OVER 10 MILLION

COUNTRY	CATHOLICS	% CATHOLIC	PRIESTS	PARISHES
Brazil	172,222,000	84.2%	21,790	11,593
Mexico	110,916,000	91.7	17,071	7,295
Philippines	83,615,000	82.3	9,545	3,354
United States	72,321,000	22.5	39,997	17,413
Italy	58,040,000	95.5	46,008	25,678
France	48,256,000	74.9	16,302	15,217
Colombia	45,257,000	93.9	9,560	4,397
Spain	43,285,000	93.2	22,984	22,891
Congo (Dem. Republic)	43,202,000	52.9	5,957	1,445
Argentina	40,835,000	94.7	5,848	2,824
Poland	37,094,000	97.6	30,371	10,379
Peru	27,911,000	89.5	3,361	1,645
Nigeria	27,140,000	15.9	7,830	3,716
Venezuela	26,887,000	87.8	2,857	1,419
Germany	23,960,000	29.5	16,277	10,533
India	21,365,000	1.7	30,314	10,625
Tanzania	17,835,000	36.5	2,868	1,059
Uganda	17,687,000	46.7	2,191	547
Canada	15,830,000	44.2	7,062	4,117
Angola	15,404,000	57.8	1,039	363
Kenya	14,269,000	31.3	2,849	955
Ecuador	14,162,000	87.0	2,162	1,283
Chile	13,329,000	74.0	2,283	960
Guatemala	12,942,000	79.8	1,235	502

## World's Muslim Population to Equal Christians by 2060

“More babies were born to Christian mothers than to members of any other religion in recent years, reflecting Christianity’s continued status as the world’s largest religious group,” says a report on the global religious landscape from the Pew Research Center. However, “this is unlikely to be the case for much longer: Less than 20 years from now, the number of babies born to Muslims is expected to modestly exceed births to Christians.”

Further, “In the period between 2010 and 2015, births to Muslims made up an estimated 31 percent of all babies born around the world—far exceeding the Muslim share of people of all ages in 2015 (24 percent).” During this time, “The world’s Christian population also has continued to grow, but more modestly. In recent years, 33 percent of the world’s babies were born to Christians, which is slightly greater than the Christian share of the world’s population in 2015 (31 percent).

Christians were the world’s largest religious group in 2015, with the percentages of major religious groups broken down as: Christians

2.3 billion, Muslims 1.8 billion, Unaffiliated 1.2 billion, Hindus 1.1 billion, Buddhists 0.5 billion, Folk religion 0.4 billion, Other religions 0.1 billion, and Jews 0.01 billion.

“Between 2015 and 2060, the world’s population is expected to increase by 32 percent, to 9.6 billion. Over the same period, the number of Muslims—the major religious group with the highest fertility—is projected to increase by 70 percent. The number of Christians is projected to rise by 34 percent, slightly faster than the global population overall, yet far more slowly than Muslims.” As a result, “by 2060 the count of Muslims (3.0 billion), or 31 percent of the population) will near the Christian count (3.1 billion, or 32 percent).”

“The Changing Global Religious Landscape: Babies Born to Muslims Will Begin to Outnumber Christian Births by 2035; People with no Religion Face a Birth Dearth,” April 5, 2017, appears on the website of the Pew Research Center ([pewforum.org](http://pewforum.org)).

## Identifying Best Outreach Practices in U.S. Orthodox Christian Churches

The research coordinator for the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA, Alexei Krindatch, recently released *Go and Make Disciples*, the first national study on evangelization and outreach in Orthodox parishes in the United States. The report explores the strategies and practices successfully developed by Orthodox parishes that are considered to be “exemplary” in their missionary and outreach efforts, so these can be adopted by other “normal” parish communities. The report includes:

- The secrets of being a parish that attracts and welcomes new members
- Eight good practices of welcoming first-time visitors and inquirers about the Faith
- How to achieve a high degree of member involvement in parish life
- Four distinct features of religious education in the exemplary parishes
- Six lessons that Church leadership can learn from the exemplary parishes

The study found that few clergy in both exemplary and normal parishes place a strong emphasis on an active “search for and bringing in” of new members. Instead, most approach evangelism as a passive enterprise, expecting that people will be drawn into the Orthodox Church merely by discovering the power and truth of the

Church’s teaching and practices and the beauty of its liturgy.

While the richness of Orthodox liturgical life as lived out in a parish can attract new disciples, the exemplary parishes offer a more inclusive, engaging, and meaningful experience of Orthodox worship. The study describes in detail the distinct features of the exemplary parishes that make them stronger magnets for new members than are the normal parishes. The report provides both an overview and details of the salient features that distinguish exemplary from normal parishes. The study report and executive summary can be downloaded at [www.assemblyofbishops.org/news/research](http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/news/research)

The present study was based exclusively on the perceptions of the clergy. This is very important since they help shape their parish communities. But the voices of the laity—both parish leaders and ordinary people in the pews—must be heard as well. The next stage of study on Orthodox evangelism an outreach will approach lay church members—including both old and young, cradle Orthodox and converts, and those very involved in parish life as well as those who participate only occasionally.

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For further information on *Go and Make Disciples: Evangelization and Outreach in U.S. Orthodox Parishes*, a report for the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the United States of America, 2017, contact Alexei Krindatch at [akrindatch@aol.com](mailto:akrindatch@aol.com).

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## More on U.S. Catholics’ Understanding of Islam and Muslims

An update to a 2016 report on Catholic perceptions of Islam finds little difference in attitudes among a variety of age groups and ethnicities.

According to the data, three in ten Catholics admit to having unfavorable views about Muslims, Catholics are less likely than Americans generally to know a Muslim personally, and nearly half of Catholics can’t name any similarities between Catholicism and Islam.

Subsequent to the report’s original release in September 2016, CARA broke down the numbers by age and ethnicity. According to the updated findings, Catholics of all ages have similar impressions of Muslims that are more negative than positive.

- When it comes to knowing a Muslim personally, younger Catholics aren’t much different from older Catholics. One-third of younger Catholics know a Muslim personally, compared to one-fourth of Catholics over 60.
- However, younger Catholics participate in interfaith dialogues and community service with Muslims more than older Catholics and also are more likely than older Catholics to say Christians and Muslims worship the same God and share many values.
- When grouped by race and ethnic backgrounds, Catholics who know Muslims personally do not have more favorable views

of them, as might be expected, nor do they know more about Muslims’ faith than groups who are less familiar with them.

According to Jordan Denari Duffner who authored the original report for the Bridge Initiative, if the U.S. Catholic Church wants such views to change, “it will require an all-hands-on-deck approach. It can’t just be coming down from the bishops and it can’t just be at the grass roots. Catholic universities, media outlets, and other institutions will have to start discussing how to foster more interfaith connections and how to simultaneously increase literacy of other religions and of the church’s own teaching about other faiths.” She has been encouraged by the interfaith work of some dioceses, but she also pointed out that, “More can always be done.”

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“U.S. Catholics’ Views of Muslims” which cited *Dialogue & Danger: Report on American Catholic Public Opinion and Portrayals of Islam, September 12, 2016*, by Jordan Denari Duffner, appeared in *The CARA Report* for Winter 2017. The original report with the additional update is available on the website of the Bridge Initiative (<http://bridge.georgetown.edu/danger-dialogue-american-catholic-public-opinion-and-portrayals-of-islam/>).

## WHO ARE “INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES”?, from page 1

“So we live in a time of immense challenge and immense opportunity. Millions of American adults are seeking a religious identity and are at least potentially open to the Catholic faith. At the same time, huge numbers of self-identified Catholics are not certain that a personal relationship with God is even possible, and their actions reflect it. The majority of Catholics in the United States are sacramentalized but not evangelized. They do not know that an explicit, personal attachment to Christ—personal discipleship—is normative Catholicism as taught by the apostles and reiterated time and time again by the popes, councils, and saints of the Church.” As a result, it is no surprise that 72 percent of those who left Catholicism and became Protestant say the reason is, “My spiritual needs were not being met.”

The key to resolving the problem is to realize that discipleship must be intentional. To accomplish the individual and parish-based changes she describes, Waddell proposes five “Thresholds of Conversion” for forming intentional disciples:

1. **Initial trust:** A person is able to trust or has a positive association with Jesus Christ, the Church, a Christian believer, or something identifiably Christian. Trust is not the same as active personal faith. Without some kind of bridge of trust in place, people will not move closer to God.

### “OUR VALUES” AS PRESENTED IN FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES

1. It is *normal* for lay Catholics to have a living, growing love relationship with God.
2. It is *normal* for lay Catholics to be excited Christian activists.
3. It is *normal* for lay Catholics to be knowledgeable about their faith, the Scriptures, the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Church, and the history of the Church.
4. It is *normal* for lay Catholics to know what their charisms of service are and to be using them effectively in the fulfillment of their vocation or call in life.
5. It is *normal* for lay Catholics to know that they have a vocation/mission in life (primarily in the secular world) given to them by God. It is *normal* for lay Catholics to be actively engaged in discerning and living this vocation.
6. It is *normal* for lay Catholics to have the fellowship of other committed lay Catholics available to them, to encourage, nurture, and discern as they attempt to follow Jesus.
7. It is *normal* for the local parish to function consciously as a house of formation for lay Catholics, which enables and empowers lay Catholics to do the six points above.

2. **Spiritual curiosity:** A person finds himself intrigued by or desiring to know more about Jesus, his life, and his teaching or some aspect of the Christian faith. This curiosity can range from mere awareness of a new possibility to something quite intense. Nevertheless, a person at the threshold of curiosity is not yet open to personal change. Curiosity is still essentially passive, but is more than trust.
3. **Spiritual openness:** A person acknowledges to himself or herself and to God that he or she is open to the possibility of personal and spiritual change. Openness is not a commitment to change. People who are open are simply admitting they are open to the possibility of change.
4. **Spiritual seeking:** The person moves from being essentially passive to actively seeking to know the God who is calling him or her. Seekers are asking, “Are you the one to whom I will give myself?” At this stage, the seeker is engaged in an urgent spiritual quest, seeking to know whether he or she can commit to Christ in his Church.
5. **Intentional discipleship:** This is the decision to “drop one’s nets,” to make a conscious commitment to follow Jesus in the midst of his Church as an obedient disciple and to reorder one’s life accordingly.

The author observes that “a parish-wide culture of intentional discipleship is built and reinforced by the love, charisms, prayer, sacrifices, energy, and discipleship of many people, not just pastors and staff and ‘officially’ recognized leaders. In order to evangelize our own within the Church, and those whose lives we touch outside, we need to deliberately form a wide range of Catholic disciples,” who can:

- Ask where people are in their relationship with God;
- Listen well, respectfully, and prayerfully;
- Recognize spiritual thresholds in one another;
- Respond helpfully to one another’s current spiritual needs;
- Articulate the basis of the Great Story in a way that invites intentional discipleship;
- Challenge one another to make the decision to follow Jesus as a disciple;
- Celebrate and support intentional discipleship.

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*Forming Intentional Disciples: The Path to Knowing and Following Jesus*, by Sherry A. Weddell, was published in 2012 by Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 200 Knoll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750 ([www.osv.com](http://www.osv.com)).

for ministry formation in the African American community (the Institute for Black Catholic Studies in New Orleans), and one by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians for certification as a Director of Music Ministries. The Master of Science in Church Management at Villanova University prepares those in church leadership and administrative roles to become better stewards of church resources by improving their business and management skills.

**Ministry Specialties:** The most commonly offered graduate degrees in are the M.A. in Pastoral Studies or Pastoral Ministry (53 programs); the M.A. in Theology, Theological Studies, or Pastoral Theology (47 programs); the M.A. in Religious Education (22 programs); the Masters in Divinity (18 programs); the M.A. in Religious Studies (13 programs); and the Doctor of Ministry (10 programs). Most lay ecclesial ministry programs grant certificates of completion in Pastoral Ministry (84 programs), Religious Education (60 programs), Catechetics (56 programs), and Youth Ministry (50 programs).

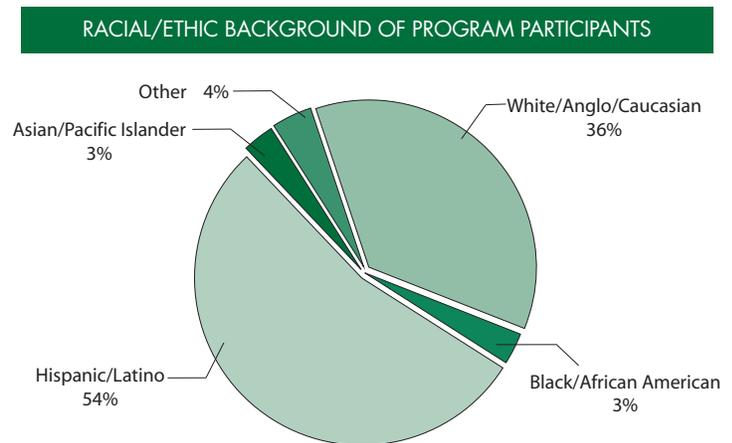
**Language of Instruction:** Lay ecclesial ministry formation programs are conducted in a variety of languages. Nearly all use English as the primary language, but 11 are taught only in Spanish, 49 use both English and Spanish, and two more make some accommodation for use of Spanish. In addition, one program uses English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole; another uses English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean; a third uses English, Spanish, and Portuguese; and a fourth uses English and Latin.

“... it is of paramount importance that parish ministers have the best possible academic preparation and personal formation.”

**Human, Spiritual, and Pastoral Formation:** Although academic preparation is indispensable to lay ecclesial ministry formation, human, spiritual, and pastoral formation are also essential. About half (49 percent) of responding programs say that formal spiritual formation is required of program participants. Slightly less (47 percent) report that the program includes a field education/internship requirement. Fewer programs (35 percent) require both.

#### PROFILE OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

**Gender Distribution:** About two-thirds of program participants are women—64 percent lay women and 2 percent women religious. Lay men are 32 percent and religious brothers are 2 percent



of participants. Men religious are more likely to be enrolled in degree programs than to be enrolled in certificate programs, while women religious are enrolled equally in both degree and certificate programs. Lay women who are not members of a religious institute are four times as likely to be enrolled in a certificate program as in a degree program.

**Age Distribution:** Six in ten students in lay ecclesial ministry formation programs (61 percent) are in their forties and fifties. Three in ten are under the age of 40 and about one in ten (10 percent) is age 60 and older. Students enrolled in degree programs are typically somewhat younger than those in certificate programs. More than four in ten degree program enrollees (45 percent) are under age 40, compared to 20 percent of certificate students.

**Racial/Ethnic Backgrounds:** Hispanics/Latinos comprise slightly more than half (54 percent) of the total lay ecclesial ministry program participants but are disproportionately enrolled in certificate programs. Hispanics/Latinos make up 13 percent of students enrolled in degree programs and 70 percent of students enrolled in certificate programs. In contrast, whites/Anglos/Caucasians make up 36 percent of the lay ecclesial ministry program participants but comprise 66 percent of degree candidates and 25 percent of certificate candidates. Blacks/African Americans, Asians/Pacific Islanders and other racial/ethnic groups comprise less than 10 percent of students in degree and certificate programs.

“Lay Ecclesial Ministry Formation” is included in “Catholic Ministry Formation Enrollment: Statistical Overview for 2016-2017,” which is published by CARA in the *2017 Catholic Ministry Formation Directory*. See page 12 for ordering details.

# Ongoing Research

Studies Related to the Catholic Church in the United States



## The Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches . . .

The National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA entered into an agreement with the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (ASARB) to assume responsibility for the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*. Since 1916 the *Yearbook* has served the religious communities of North America and has a reputation as the most complete and accurate resource of its kind, but it has not been published since 2012. ASARB developed an online portal for updating the Yearbook data and is presently contacting all religious organizations listed in the 2012 directory for updated information. The *Yearbook* will eventually be available as an online directory; print options are under consideration. For further information on the project, contact [yearbook.asarb@gmail.com](mailto:yearbook.asarb@gmail.com) or visit <http://www.yearbookofchurches.org/>.

## Ministry to Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers . . .

The USCCB Subcommittee on the Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers has commissioned CARA to estimate the size and distribution of these populations and to document the Catholic parishes and other Catholic worship sites that serve these communities. CARA is using publicly available government and non-governmental resources to estimate the size and characteristics of each of these populations. The project also involves a brief survey of all Catholic parishes and other Catholic worship sites to identify the ones that provide ministry to any of these groups. The survey will be available in both online and paper format. For further information on the project, contact Mark Gray at CARA.

## New Members of Religious Institutes in Canada . . .

The National Association of Vocation/Formation Directors (NAVFD) has commissioned CARA to study religious life in Canada. Using a directory of religious institutes in Canada that was compiled by NAVFD, CARA is surveying the approximately 200 major superiors and provincial superiors of religious congregations operating in Canada, requesting information on the characteristics of the institute, its practices in vocation ministry, and contact information for members who have entered the institute in the last 15 years. These “new members” will also be surveyed by CARA to learn about who they are, what attracted them to religious life, and what sustains and challenges them in religious life. The study is based on a similar study that CARA completed in 2009 for the National Religious Vocation Conference. For further information on the project, contact Mary Gautier at CARA.

## CARA

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### CARA CATHOLIC MINISTRY FORMATION DIRECTORY 2017

The 2017 edition of the *CARA Catholic Ministry Formation Directory* is now available. Thoroughly revised and updated from the 2015 edition, this 400+ page book provides a complete listing of all seminaries and schools of theology, diaconate formation programs, and lay ecclesial ministry formation programs. In addition, the Directory contains the most up-to-date analysis available of participants in Catholic ministry formation programs. The Directory is available in two formats: book and online.

The cost of the *Directory* is \$80 per book, plus \$6.95 shipping and handling, or \$30 for a subscription to the online *Directory*. Order both for the discount price of \$100, plus shipping and handling. To order, use the order form on this page, visit [cara.georgetown.edu](http://cara.georgetown.edu), call 202-687-8080, or e-mail [CARA@georgetown.edu](mailto:CARA@georgetown.edu).