

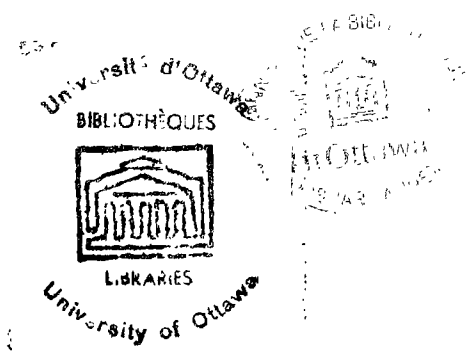
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HOW USEFUL CAN A VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE BE?

by Floyd J. Brown

Thesis presented to the School of  
Psychology and Education of the  
University of Ottawa in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in Education



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## INTRODUCTION

The Diocese of Ogdensburg showed much interest in fostering and favoring vocations to the priesthood and the religious life in 1955. Official and public prayer for vocations was urged by the Bishop. Earnest private prayer on the part of all was encouraged through various means. The Diocesan newspaper was used extensively in the campaign to encourage more vocations. Vocation forums were conducted for the parents, and vocation talks were scheduled for the students.

The effects of the vocation program were not immediately evident; but through the years from 1955-1960 there has been a steady increase in candidates for the priesthood, sisterhood, and religious orders. Greater numbers from the diocese also applied to outside dioceses and religious orders. Naturally, this increase of vocations could be brought about by many factors such as the previous and subsequent vocations programs which were carried out.

## INTRODUCTION

A minor event in the total program was the administering of a questionnaire concerning vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. This Religious Vocation Questionnaire, as it is called in 1955, was based on the assumption that it could be beneficial both to the children who answered it, and to the diocesan authorities who planned its application. It might inform the latter, to a considerable extent, on the beliefs and attitudes of their children about vocations, and, on the other hand, it might lead the testees into thinking seriously about a vocation, it might even "crystallize their thinking" on the issue.

Although the administration of this Religious Vocation Questionnaire, and its subsequent analysis, was not planned with all the elaborate controls and precise designs that sophisticated technicians would have at their disposal, it is felt that the experience was nonetheless useful and informative. An attempt to appraise this two-fold usefulness was made by this investigator and it will be reported here.

There will be three parts to this report: in the first, the questionnaire, the procedure, the population will be presented; in the second, an analysis of the answers will be attempted; and, in the third, a report on the follow-up study will be presented and discussed.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is but a modest attempt to report what has been learned about one tool which might be used in the development and encouragement of those who have been called to the "higher life". In this era of population explosion and vocation erosion few will deny the importance and timeliness of any subject matter dealing with religious vocations.

## CHAPTER I

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

At the very outset considerable thought was given to the choice of the proper instrument; subsequently, a procedure for its administration to the Catholic school population of the Diocese was planned and implemented. Describing the tool, the population, and the procedure will be attempted in this chapter; the first of these sections being much the longer of the three.

## 1. The Tool

Efforts to discover a proper instrument led to some findings about the manner in which similar tools have been used by others. These findings indicated that most of the questionnaires first drawn up in the field of religious vocational guidance were post factum surveys of those who had already entered the religious life. They were attempts to gather information which would be helpful in understanding and recruiting future candidates. Such a survey is reported in the Homiletic and Pastoral Review<sup>1</sup> describing a questionnaire which sought information relative to background, age of decision, and relations with the parish priest, from boys who were already studying for the priesthood.

---

1. Albert J. Nevins, "A Questionnaire on Vocations" in Homiletic and Pastoral Review, April 1946, Vol. 46, No.7, p. 502-511.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Several studies of genetic and socio-economic background factors in religious vocations have been made by Sisters at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., and have been reported in unpublished Master's theses.<sup>2</sup> A comparative study was made by Sister Mary Rosilda,<sup>3</sup> of those schools and places from which some religious vocations among women had come. Data regarding the attitudes of high school girls toward the religious life was analyzed by Barrett<sup>4</sup> in her published dissertation. Some of the population sample used in her study were not religious, and the questionnaire was designed to solicit opinions relative to factors influencing vocational decisions. The information sought here was of a poll-type collecting of attitudes towards and opinions on religious vocation, with no reference to the underlying psychological reasons for the opinions and attitudes.

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<sup>2</sup> Abstracts of these theses are published in the Catholic Educational Review.

<sup>3</sup> Sister Mary Rosilda, "Religious Vocations Among Women; Comparative Study of Schools and Places They Come From", in Catholic Educational Review, Vol. 53, May 1955, p. 296-305.

<sup>4</sup> Sister Mary Mark Barrett, A Study of the Influences of Catholic High School Experiences on Vocational Decisions to the Sisterhoods, Washington, C. U. Press, 1960, p. 119.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Published materials in the field of vocational psychology have relied almost exclusively on the theories of differential psychology to develop specific norms for divergent groups, based on personality, interest, and aptitude variables. Most refined of these are the trait and factor theories of Guilford.<sup>5</sup> In the religious vocational field, Seward<sup>6</sup> compared eighty seminarians with college students, faculty members, and business men. Studies on characteristic traits of Successful seminarians have been published by McCarthy,<sup>7</sup> Burke,<sup>8</sup> and Bier.<sup>9</sup> Clerical scales based on the Strong Vocational Interest Blank<sup>10</sup> were constructed by Lhota<sup>11</sup> for successful diocesan priests

---

5 J. P. Guilford, "Factor Analysis in a Test Developing Program", in Psychological Review, 1948, No. 55, p. 79-94.

6 K. Seward, "Temperament and Religious Experience", in Journal of Social Psychology, 1931, Vol. 2, p. 374-396.

7 T. J. McCarthy, "Personality Traits of Seminarians", in Studies in Psychology and Psychiatry, Vol. 7, No. 1, Washington, D. C., Catholic Univ. Press, 1942.

8 H. R. Burke, Personality Traits of Successful Minor Seminarians, pub. dissertation, Washington, D. C., Catholic Univ. Press, 1947.

9 W. C. Bier, A Comparative Study of a Seminary Group and Four Other Groups on the MMPI, Washington, D. C. Catholic Univ. Press, 1947.

10 E. K. Strong, "Strong Vocational Interest Blank for Men", in Buros' Fifth Mental Measurements Yearbook, Hyland Park, N.J., Gryphon, 1959, p. 365.

11 B. G. Lhota, "Vocational Interest of Catholic Priests", in Studies in Psychology and Psychiatry, Vol. 7 No. 1, Washington, D. C., Catholic Univ. Press, 1948.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

12

and by D'Arcy<sup>12</sup> for missionary priests. These examples indicate that the psychological study of religious vocations has so far followed the initial trend in general vocational psychology, i.e. a heavy dependence on differential psychology.

13

In the field of developmental psychology, Carter was one of the first to suggest the possibility that there is a process of vocational development per se; but no research has been done on this matter until Ginzberg,<sup>14</sup> et al. began to explore the question. No attempt has been made to carry through the concepts of a developmental nature into the specific area of religious vocations. Investigation in this area has lagged.

Some recent efforts have been made to construct vocational theories based on the truly self conscious nature. To the literature of the field concerned with the

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12 P. F. D'Arcy, Constancy of Interest Factor Patterns Within the Specific Vocation of Foreign Missioner, Washington, D. C., Catholic Univ. Press, 1954.

13 H.D. Carter, "The Development of Interest in Vocations", in Forty-third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, (N.B. Henry, editor) Chicago Department of Education, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1944, p. 255-276.

14 E. Ginzberg et al., Occupational Choice, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1951.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

formulation of theories of vocational development now  
 15  
 epitomized by Super, a notable contribution has been made  
 16  
 by Tageson in developing and testing a theory of self  
 perception relative to religious vocational choice. The  
 study made by Tageson parallels in the religious vocational  
 field similar scientific research done in other areas.

17

A Religious Vocation Survey was published in the  
 March 1949 issue of the now defunct, The Faculty Adviser.  
 In its original form it consisted of twenty eight questions  
 fitted on to three 8½ x 11 sheets mimeographed in pica type.  
 It was constructed for administration to 800 high school  
 girls in the Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior Classes  
 19  
 at St. Mary's High School, Chicago, Ill. Burke worked out  
 a questionnaire on similar lines for boys which he en-  
 20  
 titled, Religious Vocation Questionnaire.

15 D. E. Super, "A Theory of Vocational Development",  
 in American Psychologist, 1953, Vol. 8, p. 185-190.

16 Carroll F. Tageson, The Relationship of Self  
 perceptions to Realism of Vocational Choice, published  
 dissertation, Washington, D. C., Catholic Univ. Press, 1960,  
 38 p.

17 Sister Mary Alician, "A Religious Vocation  
 Survey", in The Faculty Adviser, March 1949, p. 4-5.

18 The Faculty Adviser was published by The Queens  
 Work, St. Louis, Missouri (315 South Grand Boulevard)

19 Burke, Thomas A., S.J., Religious Vocation  
 Questionnaire. (No publication data)

20 Burke, Thomas A., S.J., Op. cit.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Nearly 50% of the original questions were omitted by Burke;<sup>21</sup> a number of the questions were changed in the hope of more precise answers, while attempts were made to probe some areas more deeply.

The questionnaire studied in this report is substantially the same as the one designed by Burke. One question (14b) was added and the format was changed to facilitate the computation of replies.<sup>22</sup> In spite of its limitations -- especially as to reliability of information provided, and accuracy of respondents -- the questionnaire can be an important and valuable tool for gathering information from widely scattered sources. This researcher is inclined to agree with Smith<sup>23</sup> that this kind of instrument "brings about a crystallization of thought on the part of the investigator and also of those answering the questionnaire (...)"<sup>23</sup>. It is a generally accepted practice among researchers to elicit information that enables one to draw certain conclusions about the beliefs of the subjects.

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21 Burke, Thomas A., S.J., Op. Cit.

22 A copy of the Religious Vocation Questionnaire is found in Appendix 1.

23 Henry Lester Smith, Educational Research Principles and Practices, Bloomington, Indiana, Educational Publications, 1944, p. 183.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

24

This author further agrees with Barzun and Graff that both the questionnaire and the interview "permit the individual's 'state of consciousness' to be recorded". In view of these considerations, the questionnaire technique was employed by the author as an effective and justifiable means of accomplishing his task.

The Administration of the questionnaire and the subsequent analysis of the data provided were planned in the light of well defined objectives. It was hoped that this study would fulfill the following purposes: 1) discover the beliefs of the testees in regard to the religious life; 2) uncover any fears about the possibility of having a religious vocation; 3) test the knowledge of the respondents concerning the essentials of the religious life and ferret out any misconceptions which might exist; 4) ascertain how the students regarded the religious life relative to interest and difficulty; 5) find out if any changes of attitude towards the religious life could be noted from eight to 18 and if so, to single out the ages during which the greatest changes occurred; 6) learn how many would like to join a vocation club.

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24 Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, The Modern Researcher, New York, Harcourt Brace, 1957, p. 213.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

7) obtain information about the persons with whom the students discussed the subject of religious vocation; 8) bring about a crystallization of thought concerning religious vocations on the part of those conducting the survey as well as on the part of those making the responses to it; 9) gather materials from the data which might be used to construct a theory regarding religious vocational choices.

Although these purposes were not enumerated, as such, prior to the administration of the questionnaire, they were hopefully anticipated among the beneficial effects which might accrue to those who administered it and to those who responded to it.

The questionnaire in the present study is a Religious Vocation Questionnaire. The two key words, "religious" and "vocation" have different frames of reference and never appear together in Sacred Scripture, in the commentaries of the Fathers, or in the laws of the Church. The phrase appears only in modern manuals and involves a juxtaposition of different ideas and a use of terms that are analoguous. The term, "religious" refers to a state of life. The word "vocation" comes directly from the classical Latin and it originally had a purely active meaning, signifying a call or a summons before a court or an invitation to dinner.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE<sup>25</sup>

Without entering the field of theological discussion regarding the term, "vocation", it is sufficient to understand that the term "religious vocation" contains two essential notes: a divine invitation and a human acceptance or response. In this study when the term "religious vocation" is used it will be used in the sense of a human response to a divine invitation. The Religious Vocation Questionnaire,<sup>25</sup> therefore, is a form prepared to inquire into the opinions and attitudes of a group regarding their acceptance or response to that state of life which is known as the religious state.

A perusal of the complete copy of the Religious Vocation Questionnaire<sup>26</sup> found in Appendix 1 will acquaint the reader with the fact that it contains a wide variety of questions covering a variety of aspects of the religious vocation. It is structured to yield information (1) which would be useful to the investigator, (2) helpful to the respondent, (3) and useful or helpful to both.

(1) Useful to Investigator Questions 1, 2, 3, were designed to discover the attitudes of the testees in regard to the religious life. Question 1 offers a rating scale for the respondent to decide if the subject of religious vocation has been discussed far too much, a bit too much, about right, or too little.

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25 Op. Cit.

26 Op. Cit.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Question 2 seeks to find out on a rating scale the attitude of the respondents regarding a brother or sister entering the religious life. While Question 3 asks for the reasons for the choices made to Question 2. Information gained from these responses could be very useful to those planning vocation programs both in regard to the amount of time which should be devoted to such programs and in regard to possible insights into the minds of those who are the objects of such programs.

Certain questions were designed to uncover any fears about the possibility of having a religious vocation. For example Question 4 asks this question directly. "Does the possibility of yourself having a vocation frighten you?" While Questions 10d, 11, 12, and 13 afford an opportunity to gauge this fear factor from an indirect approach. Since it is impossible to combat the unknown, information regarding this aspect of religious vocation could provide clues for the successful approach to such problems.

Questions 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10d, 11 and 13 test the knowledge of the respondents concerning the essentials of the religious life. They would also bring to light any misconceptions about the religious life which might exist in the minds of the respondents.

### THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Question 3 asks the reasons for the choices made on the rating scale in Question 2. This is a good check on the essentials of the religious vocation and would provide an opportunity to spot any mistaken notions concerning the religious life. Question 5 is a searching question: "How can you be sure of having a vocation?" Question 6 checks interest and difficulty. Questions 7 and 8 ask them to compare religious vocation to married life. Question 9 digs deeper into an exploration of why the religious life is called the "higher life". Fundamental knowledge is tested here and erroneous ideas are easily detected. Question 10d asks for the reasons why they stopped thinking of having a vocation. Questions 11 and 12 try to bring to the surface questions that need to be answered or at least reach some understanding of the reasons why these questions have not been asked before. Question 13 attempts to find out what they consider to be the greatest obstacle or difficulty in living up to the religious life. All of these questions test the knowledge of the respondents and provide opportunities for discovering any misconceptions which may exist. The information provided by these questions could provide useful information for those whose responsibility it is to educate properly in these areas of instruction.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

An investigation of changes in attitudes towards the religious life is attempted in Questions 10a, b, c, and d. The reader will notice an effort to find out at what age and class level the greatest changes occur. If certain ages should emerge as particularly critical, suitable measures might be conceived to cope with these changes.

Question 15a makes an effort to gauge interest in a vocation club. The responses would have to be considered from many angles and weighed carefully before any real value could be attached to them. But the raw data for further consideration could be amassed from the answers to such a question.

(2) Helpful to the Respondent -- It is possible that a test or problem solving experience might add to the respondents' personal awareness and consciousness of a religious vocation. Besides that possibility certain questions were included to force them to face up to some problems. For example Question 4 regarding fear, Question 10d asking for reasons, Question 11 requiring them to put their questions down in writing, as well as Question 12 and 13 could be very helpful to those who actually answered the questionnaire.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Other Questions such as 6, 7, 8, and 9 require that they think about religious vocation in relation to: difficulty and interest (No. 6); in relation to the married state (No. 7 & 8); and in relation to all other states of life (No. 9).

The mere fact that Question 15b lists several persons with whom the religious vocation might be discussed could provide the incentive for some of the respondents to talk to some of those included in the list.

The open-end thought questions, such as 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14 present an opportunity for crystallization of thinking regarding religious vocation. Such thinking could prove helpful to the respondents in their present and long-range planning for the future.

(3) Value to Investigator and Respondent - - In planning to use a questionnaire for research purposes it is important to consider those who are going to be asked to respond to the questions. They must be properly disposed if the investigator expects to get significant answers or any answers at all. The questionnaire now being studied was not deliberately chosen with this in mind, however, it does have the qualities which recommend it from that point of view. The fact that the students are asked to perform a task which will be helpful and useful in

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

arriving at a most important decision tends to dispose them favorably towards the proper answering of the questionnaire. At the same time the investigator may gather materials and bits of information which might lead to a theory or theories regarding religious vocational choices. These reasons seem sufficient to justify the time spent on the questionnaire by both the investigator and by the respondents to it.

### 2. The Population

Vocation programs have traditionally been conducted in many dioceses throughout the United States during the month of March. Consequently it was decided to make use of the Religious Vocation Questionnaire during the vocation program which was being planned in the Diocese of Ogdensburg for the month of March, 1955. Preparations were made to administer it to the 3194 pupils enrolled in Grades 7-12 of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. The distribution of this population is covered in Table I.

THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

TABLE I.

Distribution of Pupils in Grades 7-12 of Catholic Schools in  
the Diocese of Ogdensburg, 1955

Type of School	Number of Schools	Grades	Median age	Boys	Girls	Totals
Elementary	31	7	13	360	436	796
Elementary	31	8	14	324	409	733
Par. & p'te H.S.	14	9	15	253	250	503
" " "	14	10	16	206	225	431
" " "	14	11	17	173	198	371
" " "	14	12	18	172	188	360
Totals	45	6		1486	1706	3194

Compiled from registration figures on file in the Office of Education, Diocese of Ogdensburg, Chancery Office, 622 Washington St., Ogdensburg, N.Y.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

In the population 53% were girls and 47% were boys. They ranged in ages from 11 to 19 years, and had a median age of 13.5 figured according to the average age in a grade.

The schools asked to participate in the survey are all in the Diocese of Ogdensburg which is located in the Northeastern part of New York State and is bounded on the North by the St. Lawrence river and on the East by Lake Champlain. It comprises that part of Herkimer and Hamilton counties North of the northern line of the township of Ohio and Russia as existing in 1872 with the entire counties of Lewis, Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton and Essex, in New York State.

The Catholic ethnic groups living in the diocese are mostly of French and Irish descent, although many other nationalities are represented. The Catholic population makes up about forty percent of the inhabitants of the diocese. The remaining sixty percent is principally of early American and English ancestry.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

### 3. The Procedure

The questionnaire survey was carried out by this reporter in the Office of Education, working through the respective principals of the various elementary and high schools. Notification of the questionnaire was sent to the principals through a bulletin entitled, Vocation Month<sup>27</sup> Program, mailed to the schools in February, 1955. This bulletin contained the following instructions concerning the questionnaire:

A vocation questionnaire will be sent to you under separate cover. This questionnaire is to be given by the religion teacher to all the students in High School and to the pupils in the 7th and 8th grades. Students are not to sign their names. Religion teachers are to summarize results of the questionnaire by filling in the forms provided for this. These completed forms are to be returned to the Office of Education by the 15th of March.<sup>27</sup>

Two weeks after the notice of the Vocation Month<sup>27</sup> Program a letter was sent to the principals announcing the shipment of the questionnaire to the various schools. The importance of the March Vocation Program was stressed in the letter and it was pointed out that the Religious<sup>28</sup> Vocation Questionnaire was an integral part of this program.

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<sup>27</sup> Office of Education, Vocation Month Program, Diocese of Ogdensburg, Bulletin to The Schools, February, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> Op. Cit.

## THE VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

It was the principal's responsibility to distribute the questionnaires to the religion teachers, to see that the questionnaires were administered within the dates scheduled, and to return the report forms. The religion teacher was the responsible agent for the administration of the questionnaire. They were instructed to administer the questionnaire during a regularly scheduled class period in religion. No undue stress was to be placed on the questionnaire. A normal classroom situation was indicated as the ideal atmosphere in which the students were to make their responses. Teachers were asked to urge the students to answer the questions as frankly and sincerely as possible. They were to assure the students of complete anonymity. It was the responsibility of the individual religion teacher to summarize the answers to the questionnaire on the Report Form<sup>29</sup> provided and to submit this report form to the principal who in turn was directed to mail it to the Office of Education by the 15th of March.

Summarized reports were returned to the Office of Education concerning 2,549 pupils, which represent a return on 80% of the total school population in grades 7 through 12. These reports in turn were summarized under the direction of the researcher and made up the raw material from which he drew statistics for this study.

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29 Copy in Appendix 2.

## CHAPTER II

### BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

What information did the administrator gather from this blanketing of the Catholic population in our schools? What do our children know or believe, about vocations? How do they feel about becoming a priest, or a nun? What are their attitudes about the matter?

Responses culled from the thousands of copies, and distributed by frequencies, will be given here in the same sequence that was used in presenting the questions to the reader in the preceeding chapter. An attempt will be made to present the information according to: 1.-- its usefulness to the investigator, 2.-- its helpfulness to the respondent, 3.- its value both to the investigator and to the respondent.

#### 1. Useful to the Investigator

Five areas of information were considered as being useful to the investigator. This information will be reported here according to the following catagories:

a) attitudes of testeas regarding religious life, b) fears regarding the possibility of having a religious vocation, c) knowledge of the respondents concerning the essentials of the religious life, d) changes in attitudes towards the religious life, e) interest in a vocation club and persons

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

with whom they had discussed their vocations.

A.--Attitudes of testees regarding religious life were investigated in questions 1, 2, and 3. The information gleaned from the responses to these questions is presented in sequence.

Question 1 elicits an attitude towards the discussion in school of the subject - - religious vocation. "Has the subject of religious vocation been discussed at your school: far too much \_\_\_\_\_ a bit too much \_\_\_\_\_ about right \_\_\_\_\_ too little \_\_\_\_\_?"

Four choices were provided for the respondent. Any answers showing more than 25% agreement could have significance. Figure 1 shows the replies graphically.

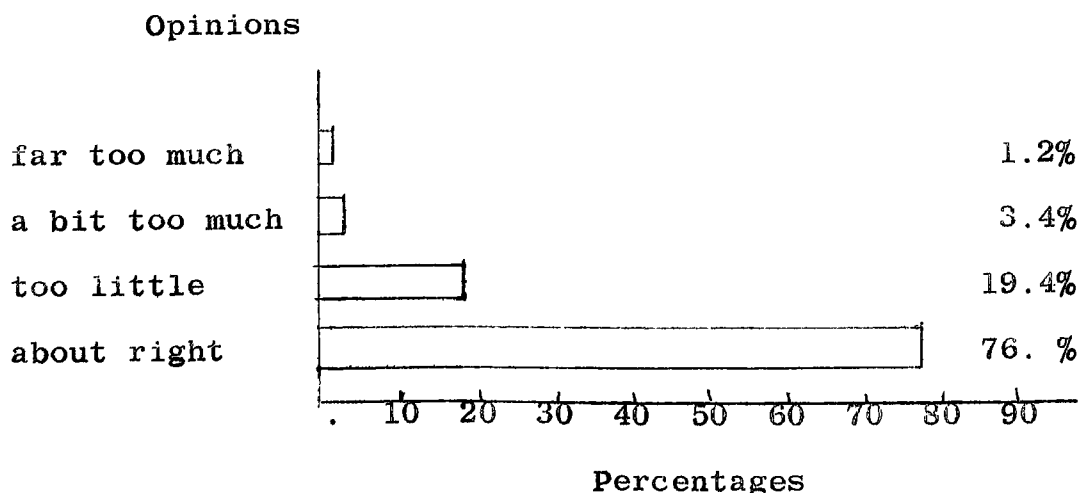


Figure 1. Responses Made by 2110 Students to Question 1 Concerning the Discussion in Schools of Religious Vocations

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

The respondents' attitude towards the discussion of religious vocation was highly favorable since 76% felt that the subject was discussed "about right" and 19.4% felt that it had been discussed "too little". More than 95% of the population, therefore, could be considered favorably inclined at least to having the topic of the religious life discussed. The reasons for the attitude manifest by the responses could range from a deep seated reverence for the religious life and all that pertained to it, to a mere desire to get out of class work in school while some subject was discussed which required little effort on the part of the pupil. Since the percentage was so highly favorable, and since this favorable attitude is confirmed by the subsequent responses made, there can be little doubt that a truly favorable attitude towards religious life is represented by the responses, with at least, concurrent validity. No attempt has been made, in this or subsequent analysis of questions to test the reliability of the responses by repeating the test. A certain reliability can be argued from the disparate ages of the respondents (ranging as they do from 11 to 19 years). However, the reliability of responses made to this and other questions in the questionnaire is not substantiated by specific research. Reliability of responses is therefore based upon a considered judgment and is only as

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

strong as the judgment and the reasons upon which the judgment is based.

Question 2 asks: "a) If your brother decided to become a religious, would you be: happy \_\_\_\_\_ mildly pleased \_\_\_\_\_ indifferent \_\_\_\_\_ disappointed \_\_\_\_\_ opposed \_\_\_\_\_?" "b) If your sister decided to become a religious, would you be: happy \_\_\_\_\_ mildly pleased \_\_\_\_\_ indifferent \_\_\_\_\_ disappointed \_\_\_\_\_ opposed \_\_\_\_\_?" Five choices of attitude are offered relative to having a member of the family enter the religious life. Any deviation from 20% could be significant. Figure 2 shows the percentage of each attitude as manifested by the respondents.

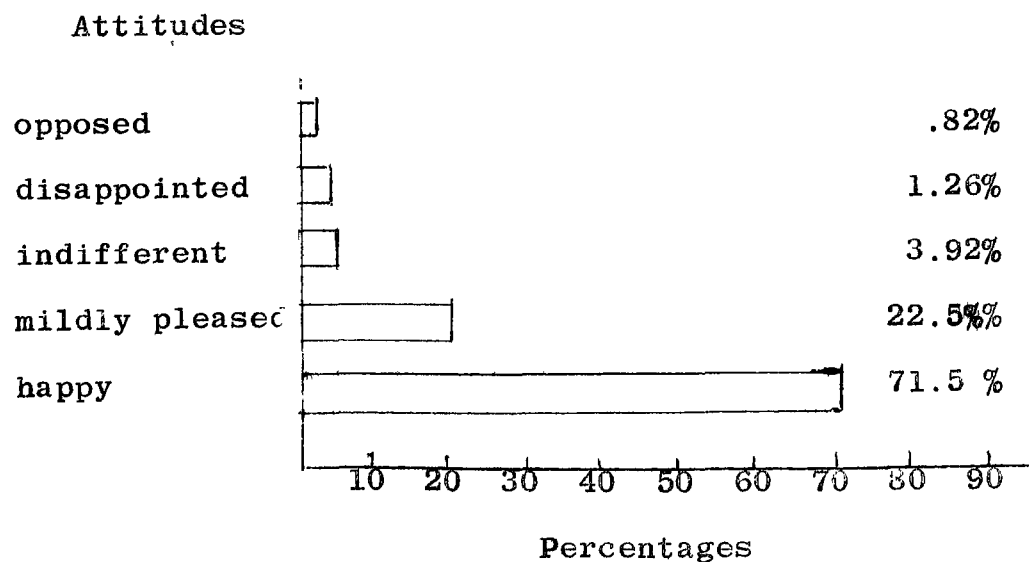


Figure 2. Responses Made by 2549 Students to Question 2 Concerning Attitudes Towards a Brother or Sister Becoming a Religious.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Again a favorable attitude towards a religious vocation is disclosed by the responses. Rounded percentages indicate that 72% would be "happy" and 23% "mildly pleased" if a brother or sister entered the religious life. It is possible that an individual respondent might be "mildly pleased" or "happy" to have a brother or sister decide to become a religious because of some personal or selfish reason. But from the context and concurrent responses there are sound reasons for accepting these percentages as indicative of the esteem in which the religious vocation was held by the respondents and the families from which they came.

Question 3 looks for more information: "Indicate the reasons for your answer to Question 2a and 2b. The reasons given were variously phrased; but for the most part they were substantially the same. No percentages were figured of these answers. The responses could be placed into two general categories - i.e. objective and subjective reasons. An objective reason given was that much can be done for people by a religious. Subjective reasons included the idea that it would be nice to have a brother or sister in religion to pray for you. A number of misconceptions were found to exist in each category of answers; but in general they indicated a high regard and respect for the religious life and all that it entails.

### BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

The responses to this open-end question confirmed the favorable attitude indicated by the high percentage of "happy" and "mildly pleased" responses given in answer to Question 2a and 2b.

B.--Fears regarding the possibility of having a religious vocation are investigated directly in Question 4, and indirectly in Questions 10d, 11, 12, and 13.

In Question 4 the testee is presented with a situation stimulus in which the possibility of having a vocation to the religious life is presented. "Does the possibility of yourself having a vocation frighten you?" The percentage of responses to this stimulus are shown in Figure 3.

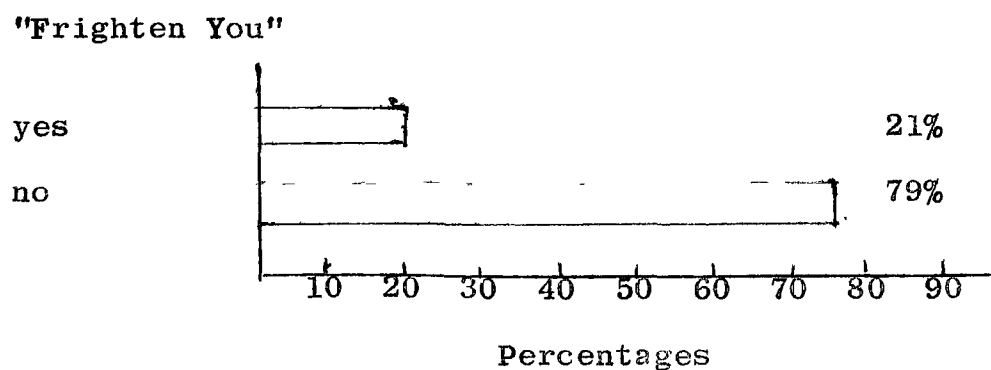


Figure 3. Responses Made by 2155 Students to Question 4 Asking if the Possibility of Having a Vocation Would Frighten Them

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

There could be many reasons why a young person might be frightened by the possibility of having a religious vocation. These reasons could be a straightforward fear of failing in the studies involved or of not being able to acquire the spiritual perfection expected of those in religious life, or a fear of not being able to live the life of a religious Sister or preach from the pulpit as a priest. Despite all the possible things that could cause fright in anyone who sought for such a lofty goal, only 21% of the respondents admitted fright about the possibility of having a religious vocation. The remaining 79%, living in an age when "There is an unacknowledged tendency to regard all things with fear",<sup>30</sup> replied that they would not be frightened with the possibility of having a religious vocation.

31

When Sister M. Alician administered her questionnaire to 800 high school girls in Chicago she discovered that 33% of them had a fear of having a religious vocation. A 12% disparity was found in this study since only 21% admitted fear.

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<sup>30</sup> Julian Marias, "Reflection Poverty" in The Commonweal, August 11, 1961, Vol. 74, No. 13, p. 439.

<sup>31</sup> Sister M. Alician, in The Faculty Adviser Op. Cit. p. 5.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

The difference might be attributed to the fact that the population in her study consisted of girls only, while in this study 47% of the population tested were boys. Further research on this point would have to be made before one could conclude that girls are more fearful of entering the religious life than are boys.

Since all of the pupils questioned in this survey were enrolled in Catholic schools taught almost exclusively by religious, the relatively high percentage of those who claimed a fearless attitude towards the religious vocation is understandable. Naturally they would reflect the attitude of their parents and teachers regarding this question. Their attitude also reflected the conditioning about religious vocations which would be a normal part of Catholic school life.

In the judgment of the author, the small percentage of those who conceded they were frightened by the possibility of a religious vocation indicated that an ideal perception of the religious vocation existed in the minds of 7-12 grade pupils as a desirable goal - a goal that was attractive, not because it would satisfy hunger, or because it would guarantee approval, recognition or security, but because it was a goal judged by them, at the time of their response, to be valuable in itself.

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That this judgment could stem from the author's own attitude towards religious life was considered. This consideration was rejected in view of the evidence contained in the information obtained from other questions. For example...The fact that 12% indicated, in a subsequent response to Question 6a, that they felt that religious life might be "dull" may account for some percentage of the 21% in whom fears were revealed. Some fears also would be found among the 16% who looked upon the religious life as being "extremely difficult". However, the fact that 88% were found on the scale to be classified among those who regarded the religious life as being either "stimulating" (57.5%) or "interesting" (30.6%) is an indication of the attractiveness with which the religious life is viewed by the respondents. That the religious life was attractive to them in spite of the fact that 77% were of the opinion that it is "difficult" or "extremely difficult" lends strength to the writer's judgment regarding their ideal perception of the religious life as being attractive and valuable in itself rather than something to be feared.

If fears existed in the minds of the respondents they should have been revealed in the responses to Question 10d, 11, 12, or 13. Question 10d asks: "And why did you stop? \_\_\_\_\_" i.e. thinking about having a vocation. Question 11 directs the testee to "List the

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Questions regarding religious vocations that you would like to have answered \_\_\_\_\_" Question 12 asks: "Why haven't you asked someone these questions in the past? \_\_\_\_\_"; and Question 13 seeks to find out: "What would be your greatest obstacle or difficulty in living up to the life of a religious? \_\_\_\_\_". The responses given in answer to these questions were not sufficiently reported to provide conclusions about their fears. Lack of data here points out a lack of clarity in the directions sent to the teachers regarding techniques of summarizing the answers which were made to open end questions such as these.

All that can be deducted therefore is that the investigator did not find among the reports any indications of fears disproportionate to the 21% who had admitted being fearful in their responses to Question 4. More careful planning here may have produced some valuable information.

C.--Knowledge of the respondents concerning the essentials of the religious life was tested in Questions 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10d, 11, 12, and 13.

An analysis of the responses obtained from Question 3 has already been given in section A.--of this chapter. The reader will recall that there were some misconceptions among the subjective and objective reasons that were given in answer to this question. Such answers would point to superficial knowledge regarding the essential nature of the religious life.

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Question 5 was a stiff test of knowledge: "How can you be sure of having a vocation? \_\_\_\_\_" This thought question required a forced thinking about the subject. The varied answers evoked by this stimulus can be summed up in five general classifications including; (1) prayer and grace, (2) desire and sacrifice, (3) self analysis, (4) consultation with others, and (5) trying it out:

(1) The responses in which prayer and grace were suggested as a sure way of knowing if one had a religious vocation indicated that the necessary graces could be obtained through prayer and through the frequent reception of the sacraments. Some were of the opinion that "God would let them know", while others suggested "listening to God". In general this group indicated a dependence on grace and prayer for sure signs of a vocation.

(2) Another group were of the opinion that the desire to serve God and willingness to give up everything and to make sacrifices were sure signs of a religious vocation.

(3) Still others felt that the way to be certain about religious vocation was through self-analysis. Introspection regarding qualifications, right convictions and ability to follow rules were offered as a means of arriving at certainty in this regard. The opinion of this group as to

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the means of being sure of having a vocation can be summed up in the expression, "by thinking about it" which a number of them used.

(4) Others felt that the way to arrive at this certainty was through consultation. Some suggested that a priest be consulted, others mentioned talking it over with a Sister, and some mentioned parents as the ones to be consulted. Finding out from others was the solution to this question in the opinion of this group.

(5) A few indicated that the only way to be sure about this question of a religious vocation was "to try it".

The responses given to this question reveal a sincere attempt to solve the problem posed. A number of the solutions offered were mere repetitions of answers they had learned from instructions they had received about vocations or from their readings. The respondents may not have been convinced within themselves that their answers would bring about certainty, but they may have felt that those who spoke or wrote about such things should know. There were also indications of reflection and original thought. While all of the answers were fragmentary and incomplete, taken as a whole, they added up to a reasonable and plausible solution to the problem presented. The stimulus contained in Question 5 evoked responses which in certain cases, were the result of a thought process required to make a vocational choice.

### BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Questions 6 and 7 test knowledge by asking them to compare religious life with other states of life. Question 6 "Do you think the religious life is: a) dull \_\_\_\_\_ b) easy \_\_\_\_\_ c) interesting \_\_\_\_\_ d) difficult \_\_\_\_\_ e) stimulating \_\_\_\_\_ f) extremely difficult \_\_\_\_\_". Question 7 "The religious life is more difficult than \_\_\_\_\_ as difficult as \_\_\_\_\_ less difficult than \_\_\_\_\_!"

The 7-12 grade pupils were asked to give their appraisal of the religious life as to the interest and difficulty. Figures 4 & 5 show the percentages of the responses.

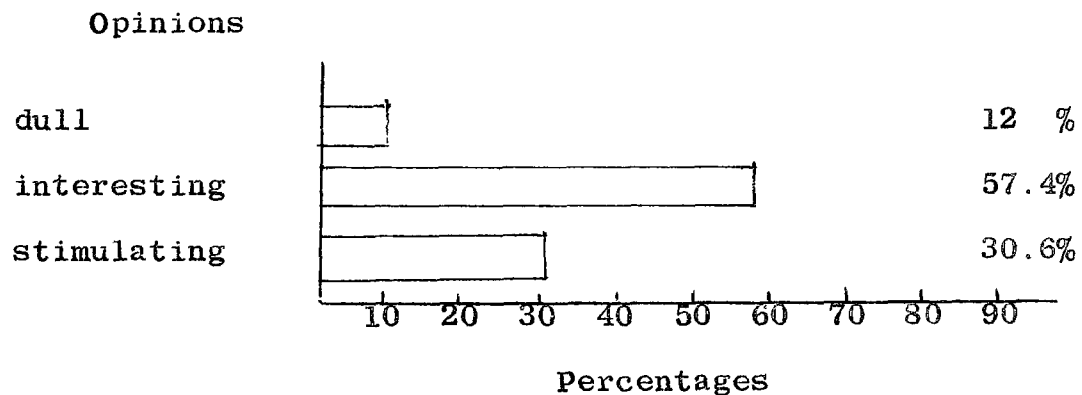


Figure 4. Responses Made by 2077 Students to Question 6a Asking for an Opinion About Religious Life

Since the scales provided only three choices, 33.3% would be the anticipated percentage of responses on each point of the scale according to the law of chance. Significant deviations from this percentage are observed. The

### BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

religious life was looked upon as being "interesting" by 57% of the respondents, whereas it was checked as being "stimulating" by 31%. From the interest angle, therefore, 88.4% were favorably impressed. When these percentages are viewed in the light of the 95% (analysis of Question 1) who would be "happy" or "mildly pleased" to have a brother or sister enter religious life, and in the light the 48% (analysis of Question 10b) who were still thinking of a religious vocation, they are judged to have significance and practical validity. These percentages signify that, in the opinion of the respondents, the religious life offers the type of challenge which would be interesting or stimulating to them. They enjoy practical validity in as much as any attitude towards such subjects can be efficiently and accurately measured.

An attempt was made to discover their opinion regarding the difficulty of the religious life. A threepoint scale offered the choices of evaluating the religious life as "easy", "difficult" or "extremely difficult". Their ratings are indicated in Figure 5.

### BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

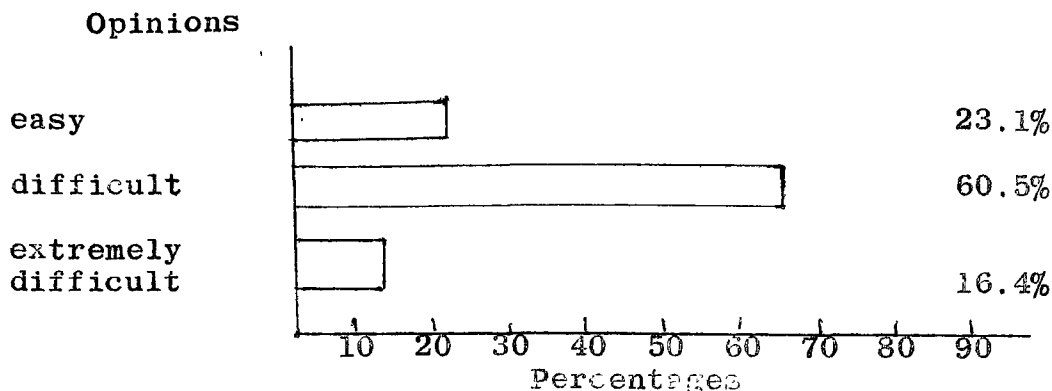


Figure 5. Responses Made by 1508 Students to Question 6b Asking for an Opinion About Religious Life

That the religious life was considered as "difficult" is clearly evidenced by the 60.5% of responses at this point of the scale. Since 27% more than would be expected by chance chose this evaluation, it is judged to be a valid measure of their opinions about the difficulty of the religious life. Since 10% less than would be expected by chance signified that the religious life was regarded as "easy" by them, there is found corroborating evidence that it is difficult. And since 17% less than would be expected by chance regarded it as "extremely difficult", there is further evidence to support the "difficult" evaluation.

It must be kept in mind that these are opinions sought from those for whom the religious life is as yet a "big mystery", yet they do reveal their opinions at this time in their lives.

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When these same students were asked to evaluate the difficulty of the religious life as compared to the life of a husband and father, wife and mother, many more (631) responses were made to the question. Their responses are shown in Figure 6.

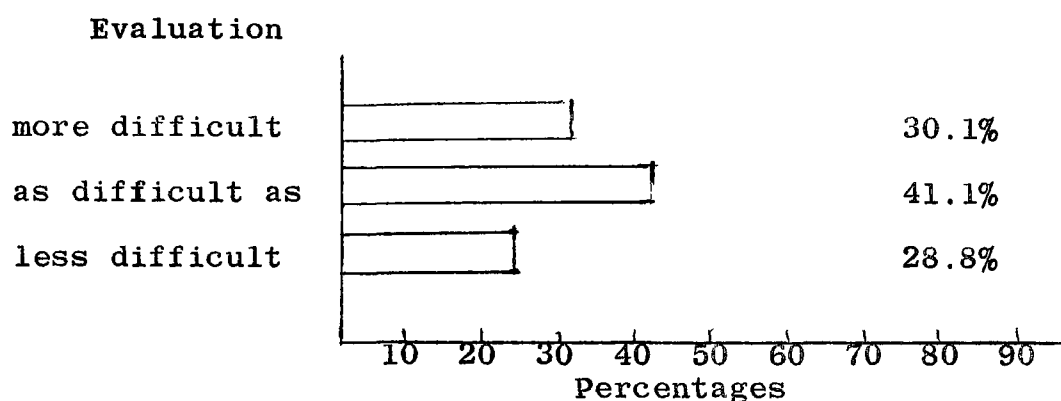


Figure 6. The Evaluation Made by 2139 Students as to the Difficulty of the Religious Life When Compared to the Life of Husband and Father; Wife and Mother

The significance of the responses shown in Figure 6 is not as great as that of the responses shown in Figures 4 and 5 because the total percentage range was only 8% above or 5% below that which could be expected by chance. Their answers seem to indicate that they actually did not know how difficult either the religious life or the life of a husband and father, wife and mother was. Their general impression was that both were difficult.

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Question 9 asked "Why is the religious life called the 'higher life'? \_\_\_\_\_" The respondents were presented with a question which implied that the religious life was a "higher life". They were given the problem of thinking up reasons why this was so.

The reader's attention is called to the agency which summarized the responses to this questionnaire as previously indicated. The religion teacher who administered the questionnaire was to summarize the report and send the results to the Office of Education. This method of collecting information was weak because some teachers made no summary at all for this type of question, while others were content to jot down typical responses. The selection of responses, therefore; depended upon the choice made by the religion teacher. In spite of this recognized weakness the following selections were chosen as being significant and typical.

I think the most important aspect is the closeness to God. It really is an honor to think that God would want you to be one of His leaders. To teach the rest of His children to love Him is something that sounds somehow heroic to me.<sup>32</sup>

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32 Typical responses to Question 9.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

The knowledge that you are directly associated with God, gaining grace by dedicating your life to others, and having a very good chance of going directly to heaven.<sup>33</sup>

It seems to me that it is easier for a Sister to become a saint than a person in the world.<sup>34</sup>

Because the priest spends his life dealing with holy things.<sup>35</sup>

These typical responses showed that those who responded thought about the religious life from the viewpoint of its being "higher" in certain respects than that of the single or married life in the world. But these responses do not permit any general conclusions regarding their knowledge of the essentials of the religious life.

The exact number of responses made to this question is not known. Nor can it be certain that the most typical responses were chosen as examples. However the number and type of responses were such as to substantiate the inclusion of this thought process as part of the pattern of thinking involved in arriving at a decision regarding a religious vocation. Analysis of Question 9 itself as well as the corresponding answers given in reply to it, show that the inclusion of this question in the questionnaire was justified.

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33 Typical response to Question 9.

34 Typical response to Question 9.

35 Typical response to Question 9.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

A report on the results of Questions 10d, 11, 12, and 13 has already been presented in Section B. of this chapter where the fears of the testees were being investigated. The reporting was too spotty to produce evidence of any particular strength or weakness in the students' knowledge of the essentials of a religious vocation.

While Question 13 was the same type of an open end question, it was possible from the reports to discover certain typical responses. A number of respondents felt that the greatest obstacle or difficulty in living up to the life of a religious was "they have to study"<sup>36</sup>. Some felt that leaving their families would be the greatest obstacle.<sup>37</sup> Others simply stated: "You can't get married".

When these responses were compared with the data reported by Sister Mary Mark<sup>38</sup> on 420 senior girls concerning the sacrifices encountered on entering religious life, it was found that 51% felt that the greatest sacrifice was giving up their family, and the next highest percentage (35%) felt that giving up married life was the greatest sacrifice involved.

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36 Typical response to Question 13.

37 Typical response to Question 13.

38 Barrett, Op. Cit., Table 43, p. 31.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Still further light may be shed on these responses by comparing them with the data from 6,304 students enrolled in the major seminaries in the United States during the years 1951-52. This data was collected by the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade at St. Charles' Major Seminary, <sup>39</sup> Carthagena, Ohio.

"The two principal hindering factors were lack of proper knowledge (three out of four seminarians so reporting) and lack of vocational talks (one out of every four so reporting). One in six mentioned the financial status of the family as a hinderance. Other hindering factors were mentioned much less frequently: discouragement from family and friends, examples of priests, 'pushing' by religious or relatives"<sup>39</sup>

The major seminarians who made up the sample of the study just cited would have completed at least two years of college. They had made a decision to enter the religious life and in looking back they see none of the obstacles reported in this or other surveys on an ante factum nature.

This places in clear focus the varying viewpoints of the three groups discussed in this analysis--different points of view resulting from their various ages, training, and maturity.

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<sup>39</sup> Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, Natural Factors Affecting Vocations to the Priesthood, (mimeographed book, 1953) obtainable from C.S.M.C., National Center, Shattuc Ave., Cincinnati 26, Ohio, p. 3 of summary.

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The opportunity given the respondents to write down any questions which occurred to them may not have helped them in making a vocational choice. But it did furnish each teacher with an opportunity to answer questions which otherwise might not have come up. In the event an individual teacher did not answer their questions in class, the fact that the students had taken the trouble to formulate certain questions may have encouraged them to ask someone else about them when the opportunity presented itself. No measurement of this possible outcome was attempted; but its possibility was not overlooked.

This would seem to indicate that much of the teaching about religious vocation had been of an inspirational nature. We would conclude from the results of the survey that more emphasis should be placed on instructional rather than inspirational material about religious vocations, since children in grades 7-12 are beginning to think.

D.--Changes in attitudes towards the religious life are investigated in Question 10: "It has been said that sometime during life every Catholic thinks of becoming a priest or Sister or Brother. a) Is this true in your case? \_\_\_\_\_; b) If it is so in your case, have you stopped thinking of it? \_\_\_\_\_; c) If you stopped at what age? \_\_\_\_\_"

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

And in what class did you stop? \_\_\_\_\_; d) And why did you stop? \_\_\_\_\_".

The question is asked in such a manner, and the population sample is such that a high percentage of affirmative answers could be expected from Question 10a "Is this true in your case? \_\_\_\_\_". This expectation is fulfilled in the percentages shown in Figure 7.

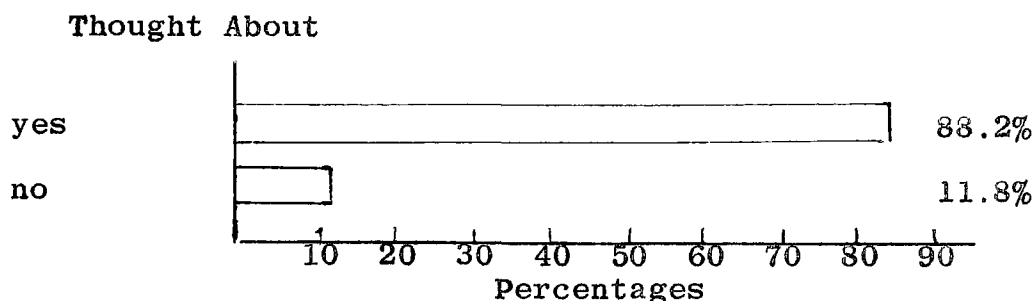


Figure 7. Responses Made by 2075 Students to Question 10a Concerning Whether or Not They Had Thought About a Religious Vocation

This 88.2% compares remarkably with the 86%  
40  
figure discovered by Sister M. Alician among the Chicago High School girls who had thought of becoming nuns at some time during their lives. In her group she found that 77% had already changed their minds. In the sample studied here 50.6% had already changed their minds.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Is that 26.4% difference due to the inclusion of the 7th and 8th grades in this sample or to the fact that 47% of the sample in this survey were boys? Can this be explained by the noticeable percentage gains in male vocations over female vocations found when the 1944 statistics published in The Official Catholic Directory<sup>41</sup> are compared with those of 1961? These figures show more than a 50% gain among boys who enter the religious life over girls who have become religious in the period from 1944 to 1961.

The percentage of affirmative answers to Question 10a (88.2%) is noticeably high in spite of the large number of respondents to the question. Table 12 of Sister Mary Mark's<sup>41</sup> dissertation shows that 82.20% of 420 senior girls have given serious thought to religious vocation, while 17.8% had not. Comparison of the percentages obtained in this study with those obtained by Sister Mary Mark<sup>43</sup> provided added significance to the responses being analyzed in this study. One would expect a lower percentage of affirmative responses from a greater number of replies. But this is not the case. This difference

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<sup>41</sup> P. J. Kenedy and Sons, The Official Catholic Directory, New York, 1944 and 1961 in "General Summary" p. 1 and 2.

<sup>42</sup> Barret, Op. Cit. p. 24.

<sup>43</sup> Barret, Op. Cit.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

may be explained by the manner in which the question was asked in each questionnaire as well as its placement in the Sister Mary Mark's <sup>44</sup> questionnaire. Her question is placed first in a list of 36 questions. It is asked in this manner: "Did you ever seriously think about a religious vocation?" <sup>44</sup> The fact that it is qualified by the adverb "seriously" together with the fact that it is presented first may provide some clue to the difference in the percentage of affirmative responses.

Not only is the respondent asked in Question 10 if the idea of a religious vocation has been in his thoughts; but in the next step each one is asked to indicate whether or not the idea is still being considered. "b) If this is so in your case, have you stopped thinking of it? \_\_\_\_\_".

There were 304 less responses to the b) part of this question than to the a) part. That would seem to indicate that this group either did not know or did not choose to state whether they were still thinking about this matter.

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44 Barret, Op. Cit. p. 108.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

The percentage of affirmative and negative responses can be seen in Figure 8.

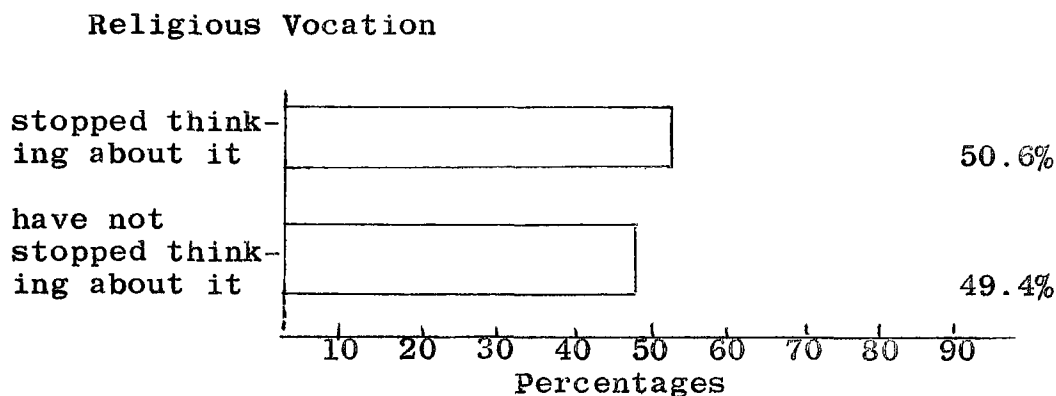


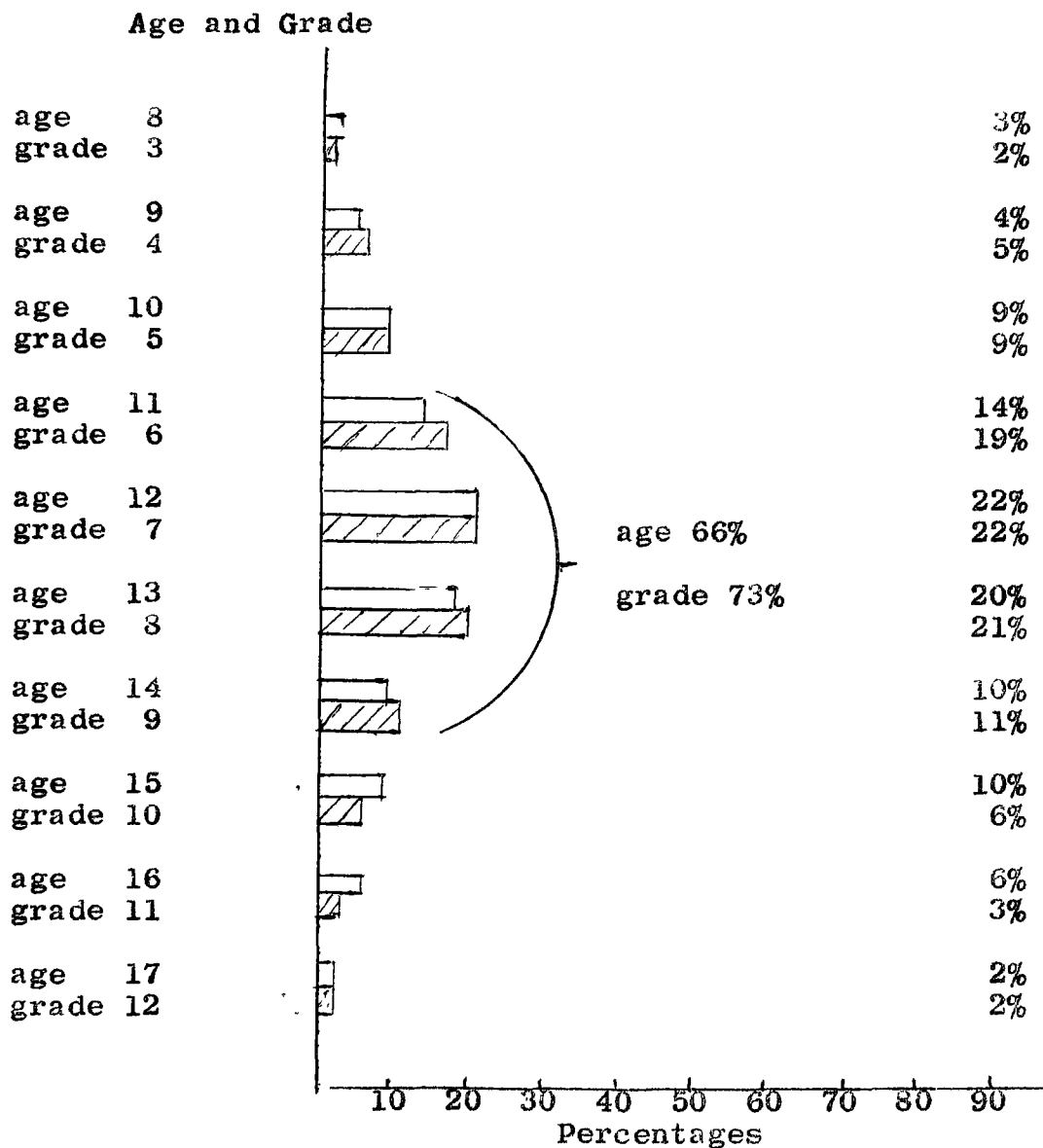
Figure 8. Responses Made by 1771 Students to Question 10b Indicating the Percentage Who Have or Have Not Stopped Thinking About a Religious Vocation

Nearly 50% of those who have had the idea of becoming a religious were still thinking about it at the time they answered the questionnaire. That the questionnaire itself brought back to the minds of some the ideas regarding vocation which had been there cannot be discounted. Neither can it be rejected that a great number from grades seven to twelve were still considering the possibility of entering the religious life.

Next came an attempt in Question 10c to find out at what age and grade level the students stopped thinking about having a vocation to the religious life; "c) If you have stopped, at what age? \_\_\_\_\_ and in what class did you stop? \_\_\_\_\_"

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

The responses obtained from Question 10c are summarized in Figure 9.



**Figure 9. Percentages According to the Age and Grade When 378 Respondents Indicated They Had Stopped Thinking of Having a Vocation to the Religious Life**

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Less than one half of those who stated they had stopped thinking of a religious vocation indicated at what age and at what grade they had stopped. From those who did respond, 56% indicated that they had stopped thinking of having a religious vocation at the age of 11, 12, or 13, while 62% designated grades 6, 7 or 8 as the grade level at which they ceased to think of themselves as possible candidates for the religious life.

The reliability and validity of these responses is based upon the internal consistency of the data gathered from this question. In replying to the a) part of Question 10, a total of 2075 answers were counted --- 245 being negative and 1830 being positive. To the b) part of Question 10, 1771 replies were made, with 397 stating that they had stopped thinking of the religious life while 874 stated they had not. When asked at what age and grade they had ceased to think of a religious vocation, less than one half (356) of those who affirmed they had stopped (397) gave a reply. This would indicate that the group was careful to answer only the questions they believed they could answer correctly. Some evidence, therefore, supports the attributing of a reasonable validity and reliability to the responses made to this question.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Although the 62% figure found in this study at the 6th, 7th and 8th grade level differs considerably from  
<sup>45</sup>  
 Sister Mary Mark's findings that 25.75% of 328 senior girls had decided not to enter the religious life in the 6th, 7th, 8th or sometime before the 9th grade, there are still sound reasons to accept this question and the responses given to it as valid.

Not only is the sample much different; but the questions too, although similar, ask for something differ-  
<sup>46</sup>  
 ent. Sister Mary Mark asks when the final decision was made not to enter the religious life; and the question in this study asks at what age and in what grade did the respondent stop thinking of becoming a priest, or sister or brother. Further research in this area might provide answers to these apparently contradictory findings. No attempt is made here to investigate this more fully. But there does appear to be sufficient evidence from the findings in this present study to indicate that ages 11, 12 and 13, and grades 6, 7 and 8 are critical periods as far as giving up the idea of a religious vocation is concerned. This information is most valuable to the investigator since it focuses the attention

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45 Barrett, Op. Cit., Table 18, p. 29.

46 Barrett, Op. Cit.,

### BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

of those engaged in vocation work on this age and grade level. To prevent the erosion of vocations it is necessary to know when that erosion occurs. It is believed that this information is supplied here.

E.--Question 15 asked the testees to indicate their interest in a vocation club and to check the persons with whom they had discussed their vocation: a) "Would you like to have a vocation club in your parish?\_\_\_\_\_, Why?\_\_\_\_\_, b) Did you discuss your vocation with: your mother\_\_\_\_\_, your father\_\_\_\_\_, your pastor\_\_\_\_\_, your confessor\_\_\_\_\_".

Question 15a received 1520 responses. Nearly 70% of these responses indicated that they were in favor of having a vocation club of some kind.

The b) part of the Question sought to find out with whom these students had discussed their vocation. The percentage figures of the ones with whom vocations had been discussed by the students is shown in Figure 9.

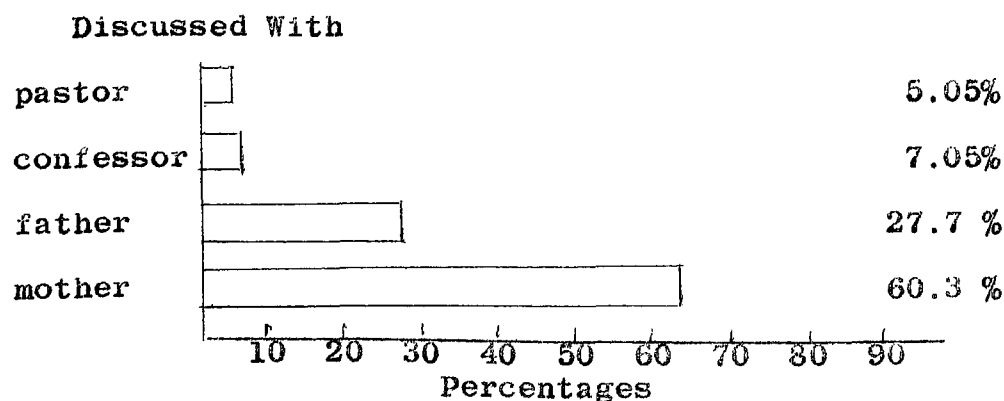


Figure 10. From a Total of 1897 Replies, the Percentage Who Discussed Religious Vocation With the Pastor, a Confessor, Their Father or Their Mother

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

As would be expected, almost 88% discussed religious vocation with their fathers or mothers. The fact that more than twice as many had discussed this subject with their mothers is very heavily a reflection of the social culture in which the sample lived.

The relatively small percentage who discussed religious vocation with either their confessor or their pastor could indicate that, for some reason, they did not wish to discuss it with priests; but this writer prefers to think that most of the students had not yet considered the subject of religious vocation seriously enough to discuss it with their confessor or with their parish priest. How<sup>47</sup> ever, in his summary of A Questionnaire on Vocations Nevins, reporting on seminarians (his article does not tell how many) finds that "31% only know their pastors by sight" and "36% said their pastors were difficult to approach and talk to".<sup>48</sup>

In Question 15 a serious omission was found in the scale of those with whom the student may have discussed the subject of religious vocation. There was no place given, in this question, to indicate that they had discussed their vocations with their teacher.

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47 Albert J. Nevins, Op. Cit., p. 503.

48 Albert J. Nevins, Op. Cit., p. 503.

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Since a large percentage of the students were being instructed by Sisters, there should have been provided in this question some possibility for the students to indicate if they had talked with a Sister or one of their teachers about their religious vocational aspirations. In her study,<sup>49</sup> Sister Mary Mark found that 74% of 255 senior girls had consulted their religious teacher in the matter of religious vocation. Had an opportunity been provided in the questionnaire which was used in this study, a large percentage would undoubtedly have been found in this classification.

### 2. Helpful to the Respondent

As the teenager moves toward the dominant goal of all adolescent striving---adulthood, it is important that his ideals and goals assume more definite form. Particular goals begin to crystallize and to influence his thinking and his decisions. The goal of the priesthood or the religious life for the adolescent girl are certainly deserving of consideration on the part of the students, and treatment on the part of the religious teacher or counselor.

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49 Barrett, Op. Cit., Table 26, p. 38.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

There is no need at this point in their vocational maturity for them to make a permanent vocational choice; but it does seem that tentative or provisional vocational choices must be made in the interests of a realistic planfulness for the future.

The experience of having answered the Religious Vocation Questionnaire was helpful to the respondent in a number of aspects. An attempt to measure this helpfulness as far as the decision to enter the religious life was concerned is reported in Chapter III entitled "Follow-up Study." <sup>50</sup> Evaluation is made here solely in the light of the responses which were included in our data.

That the testees grew in their personal consciousness and awareness of a religious vocation is evident from the total number of responses to the various questions of the questionnaire. Summarized reports were made on 80% of the total school population in grades 7-12 at the time the survey was made. Percentages such as 95% who were favorably inclined to discussion of the subject, religious vocation, 95% at least "mildly pleased" to have a brother or sister enter the religious life, 33% who found religious life at least "interesting", 38.2% who at one time thought about becoming a religious are all indicated in the personal consciousness and awareness of the testees concerning religious vocation.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

The responses given in answer to those questions which probed the respondents had therapeutic effects. When the truth is faced squarely, as it was in the case of the 21% who admitted fear, a realistic approach to the problem is usually the outcome. While the 79% who claimed they had no fears about the religious life had already, by that judgment, put at least one obstacle behind them. Even though fears, of which they were unaware at the time they gave their responses, should crop up later, they would be less liable to be a hindrance to those who were determined to reach a chosen goal.

Evidence from the responses to Questions 11, 12, and 13 was not conclusive enough for any generalizations about them. However, an examination of these Questions: Question 11: "List the questions regarding religious vocation that you would like to have answered", Question 12: "Why haven't you asked someone these questions before", and Question 13: "What would be your greatest obstacle or difficulty in living up to the life of a religious?", is sufficient for the reader to recognize their helpfulness to the respondent.

## BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE TESTEES

Even the necessity of giving an answer to Question 5: "How can you be sure of having a vocation?" did in many of the reported responses bring about a crystallization of thought on the part of the testees regarding religious life. Such answers as "desire", "self-analysis", "sacrifice", "right convictions" revealed a clarity of thought most helpful to anyone faced with the decision of choosing a state of life.

### 3. Value to Investigator and Respondent

The survey enabled the investigator to find out what the beliefs of the testees were concerning the religious life. This information was valuable as a basis for realistic planning in the field of vocational guidance. Gaps in the knowledge of the testees were discovered and plans were made to remedy this situation. Critical age and grade levels were revealed. This led to the conclusion that vocational programs should be intensified at that level not with the intention of recruiting candidates; but with the objective of providing helpful information and guidance to these students in their efforts to do some fundamental planning for their futures. Such programs were not to involve commitment on the part of the students; but rather a quiet reasoned and intelligent seeking of their life's work.

**BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF THE STUDENTS**

When the respondents had gone through the process of answering one question after another contained in this questionnaire, they were led to the point where they would put the idea of a religious vocation out of their minds or they would continue to regard it as a possible choice. That this induced reflection was worthwhile for the students was evidenced by the responses obtained and by the comments made in answer to Question 14: "Have you any comments on this questionnaire, or any suggestions for giving a better understanding and appreciation of a religious vocation?". Their comments could be summed up in the answer which they gave so frequently: "It made you think!"

## CHAPTER III

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

An analysis of the responses given in answer to the Religious Vocation Questionnaire yielded information about the beliefs and attitudes of the sample studied. That the questionnaire in this study was used as part of a diocesan vocation program in 1955 in the hope that the students in grades 7 - 12 would be provided with a meaningful educational experience, has already been pointed out. It was anticipated that most of the students would regard the answering of the questionnaire as just another task to be performed during their class in religious instruction. For some of them it could be a passing experience, but an experience - one that they would talk about to their friends, to their parents and perhaps even to their pastor or confessor. For others it might mean much more - it could have provided them with a wonderfully meaningful and lasting educational experience - an experience which would be indelibly imprinted in their memories - an experience which would engender or change or stabilize a way of thinking which could lead eventually to the choice of the religious state as a way of life.

### FOLLOW-UP STUDY

In the present study an attempt is made, six years after the questionnaire was first administered; to trace any possible effects that the answering of the questionnaire may have had upon the respondents.

In this follow-up study there is a great dependence upon the memories of the selected sample. It is important, therefore, to keep in mind some general principles regarding memory such as those listed by Parten:<sup>51</sup>

1. The more recent the event the more easily and accurately it is recalled.
2. The vividness of an impression is an important factor in remembering.
3. Interesting experiences are more easily remembered.
4. It is easier to recall what is comprehensible than what is meaningless.
5. The set or readiness to remember a particular experience is important.
6. Ability to remember varies greatly with the mode of memory called for by the situation.

In evaluating the responses of the follow-up sample it must be kept in mind that these people were asked to recall an experience which they underwent six years previously, that considerable differences of impression were made by the original experience of answering the questionnaire, and that for some, even among the selected sample, it may have been an interesting and stimulating experience while for others it may have been dull and routine.

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<sup>51</sup> Parten, Mildred Bernice, *Surveys, Polls and Samples*, (Harper's Social Science Series) New York, Harper, 1950, p. 180

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

It must also be kept in mind that "we are capable of recalling psychic acts only if we have somehow stored them in our minds".<sup>52</sup> There is no need here to go into the various theories advanced by the psychologists to explain the nature of this storing process. It is important for us to realize that the experience must have been stored before it could be recalled. This study is limited to ferreting out and tracing habits of thought or certain dispositions which may have resulted from the original experience. It is in this framework that the population sample, procedure, data and analysis of the follow-up study are now presented.

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<sup>52</sup> Paul Siwek, Experimental Psychology, New York, Wagner, 1959, p. 219

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

### 1. The Sample

The sample population selected for the follow-up study was composed of 78% who had become candidates for the religious life, and 22% who had entered other states of life. The total number (113) contacted in this follow-up was 4/100% of the original sample (3194). In spite of the fact that this follow-up sample was relatively small compared to the original group surveyed, it could provide sufficient information to formulate conclusions which would not be appreciably changed even though larger groups were to be investigated. A high percentage of (78%) of the follow-up sample was chosen from among those who had entered the religious life, because it would be expected that any effects resulting from answering the questionnaire would primarily be located in this group. To guard against the possibility of overlooking effects where they would least likely be found, a certain portion (22%) of the follow-up sample was selected among those who did not enter the religious life.

Those who made up the sample population for this study were seminarians, postulants, sisters and laymen who had chosen other states rather than the religious life. Table II presents a breakdown of the sample group.

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Table II

Distribution of the Follow-up Sample According to Their State in Life in July 1961.

State of Life	Number	Percent
Seminarians	36	32%
Postulants	20	18%
Sisters	32	28%
Laymen	<u>25</u>	<u>22%</u>
Totals	113	100%

Compiled from statistics gathered for this study

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

This sample as shown in Table II was selected because it could furnish the information needed, and also because it readily fitted into the planned procedures which were to be employed in this follow-up study.

An investigation was made in each case to make certain that each one was in a class and school where the religious vocational questionnaire had been originally administered. There was no way of determining with certainty that each one was in school on the day that the questionnaire was answered in their school. But it can be safely presumed that at least 95% of the sample was in attendance at school and that at least this percentage participated in the project on the day that it was scheduled. This presumption is based on the normal percentage of absentees on any one given day. The fact that reports were returned on 93% of the original sample potential would add further corroboration to this presumption.

### 2. Procedures

Two pilot studies were undertaken. These pilot studies involved nearly 18% of the follow-up sample.

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

First a check was made to certify that each one had been a respondent to the original survey. Then eight seminarians were interviewed cautiously and individually. Care was taken not to indicate the kind of an answer that might be pleasing or helpful to the researcher. The subject of vocations was brought into the conversation and the individual was led to talk about the "story" of his own vocation. An effort was made to sound the individual regarding vocation promotion programs. Then each one was shown a copy of the Religious Vocation Questionnaire. When he had had time to look it over thoroughly, he was asked if he remembered filling it out. If the answer was "no" the interview was further directed along vocational lines and concluded. If the answer was "yes" an attempt was made to probe further to see if the answering of the questionnaire had been a meaningful experience which may have had some effect upon this individual's decision to study for the priesthood.

An attempt was made to keep these interviews similar, impersonal, and impartial. Each seminarian was asked not to discuss his interview with any of the other seminarians lest their answers be affected.

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

No evidence that such discussion had taken place was discovered. The answers given by those being interviewed were judged to be candid, objective, and free from any bias favorable or unfavorable to the study being conducted.

The same type of individual interviews were arranged for twelve young ladies who had presented themselves as postulants seeking to be admitted to the Sisters of St. Joseph. The same precautions were followed to make sure they had answered the original vocational questionnaire and to ensure as far as possible the validity of their answers in relation to this study. After the interview each one was requested not to discuss her interview with the other postulants or sisters lest their answers be affected by the discussion. Here, too, this researcher judged that he had received the information that he was looking for from cooperative but objective interviewees.

When these pilot studies had been completed, an attempt was made to gather similar information from, first, a group of 28 seminarians, later, from a group of 40 Sisters. After ascertaining that a group of seminarians or Sisters had been in the class and school where and when the Religious Vocational Questionnaire was administered, copies of the questionnaire were passed to each individual.

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Index cards (3" x 5") were then given to each one. They were asked to put down their initials on the left hand side of the top line. At the right hand side of the card on the same line, they were asked to indicate the year they had graduated from high school. They were then asked to respond to the following questions which had been formulated as a result of the pilot interviews:

1. Do you remember having seen this questionnaire and having filled it out?
2. Did it or did it not have any influence on your entering the religious life?
3. About what age and what grade did you first start thinking of the religious life?
4. Who, if anyone, influenced your decision?
5. What, if anything, influenced your decision?
6. Can you think of anything else that has influenced your decision to enter the religious life?

Here again an effort was made to keep the respondents from giving the answers they might think the researcher was looking for. From the answers that were given, this seems to have been accomplished, although there is no way of measuring to what degree.

When the respondents had answered the six questions the cards were collected to supply the data for this study.

The same procedure that was used in the interviews with the seminarians and postulants was employed with the 25 young people who had chosen to follow other vocations than the religious life.

### FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Most of these interviews were on an individual basis; but in cases where the young people selected for the interviews had married, the interview was with the married couple. The same care was taken with each interview. They were told that their interview was part of a study being conducted and that their answers would be important in drawing conclusions; but no indication was made which would be prejudicial to their responses. Their responses, therefore, were accepted as objective and valid for purposes of this study.

### 3. Analysis of Data

In analysing the data obtained from the procedures described in the follow-up study, the first matter to be investigated was what percentage of the selected sample would actually remember the questionnaire. In other words were the respondents so affected by the experience that they could recall it six years later? The recall of an event or experience can be no better than the original impression. The data gleaned from the follow-up survey could provide some insight into the original psychic experience and some measurement of the initial impression which was made upon those who responded to the questionnaire. It would have to be an unusual and outstanding

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

psychic experience if they could recall it after that length of time.

### A. Recall of Questionnaire

In answer to the first question: "Do you remember having seen this questionnaire and having filled it out?" the follow-up sample gave the responses shown in Table III.

## FOLLOW UP STUDY

Table III

Distribution of Responses Made by the Sample in Answer to the Question Asking if They Recalled Having Seen and Having Filled Out the Religious Vocation Questionnaire

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	21	18.59%
No	89	78.76%
No response	<u>3</u>	<u>2.65%</u>
Totals	113	100.00%

Compiled from statistics gathered for this study

### FOLLOW-UP STUDY

The fact that more than 18% of the selected sample stated that they could recall having seen and having filled out the questionnaire sheds some light on the vivid nature of the impression made and is some measure of the interest created by the experience. This 18% recall after such a long period of time seems also to point out that the set of these students disposed them to remember this particular experience. Evidence gained in this follow-up study seems to corroborate as well as be corroborated by the findings recorded on p. 21 relative to 95% of the original sample population who could be considered favorably inclined at least to having the topic of religious life discussed in school.

One respondent answered "yes" and then wrote in after it: "something similar". This led the researcher to do some checking to find if any similar survey had been made in which a questionnaire similar to this one was employed. No evidence was found that a similar questionnaire had been administered in the schools during the time covered by this study.

One Sister being interviewed responded that she remembers having seen the questionnaire; but she did not fill it out at the time it was administered because, even though enrolled in a Catholic school, she was not a Catholic at that time.

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Since the remaining affirmative answers were not qualified in any way, they were accepted at face value for consideration in this study.

### B. Influence of Answering Questionnaire

Since evidence was discovered which showed that more than 18% of the selected sample actually did recall having filled out the Religious Vocation Questionnaire, further attempts were made to discover what effect this experience may have had on a decision to enter the religious life. Percentages were figured from the raw scores given in answer to the question: "Did it or did it not have any influence upon your entering the religious life?" The question was designed to exclude any but a "yes" or "no" answer. But a number of the respondents qualified their answers and these responses have been converted to percentages and are shown with the other responses in Table IV.

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Table IV

Percentage Distribution of Those Who Remembered Answering the Religious Vocation Questionnaire Indicating How the Experience Influenced Their Decision to Enter the Religious Life

State of Life	% Remembered Answering Questionnaire	% Influenced decision to enter rel. life	% Some Influence	% No Influence
Seminarians	5.	.8	1.8	1.7
Postulants	2.5	1.7	.8	0
Sisters	8.	2.6	1.7	3.5
Laymen	<u>2.5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2.6</u>	<u>.3</u>
Totals	18 %	5.1%	6.9%	6.0%

Percentages figured from data gathered for this follow-up study

## FOLLOW UP STUDY

The fact that 5.1% of the selected sample stated that they had been influenced in their decision to enter the religious life by the experience of having answered the Religious Vocation Questionnaire is considered significant. It is significant because the students themselves, as revealed in their responses, judged it to be a memorable and meaningful experience. No attempt is made to exclude or minimize the many other influences which brought about their decisions. But the fact remains that they have found the experience to be of such a nature that six years later they could recall it and moreover make the judgment that it was a determining factor in their decision to become a religious.

The percentage of those who felt that the answering of the questionnaire played some part in their ultimate decision to become religious, was found to be a total of 6.9%. In adding these two percents (influenced decision - 5.1% plus some influence - 6.9%) together we find that a total of 12% of the selected sample have been influenced through the instrument which is being studied. This percentage may be misleading because of the highly selective nature of the sample. But there can be no question about the fact that, at least in the minds of those being studied in the follow-up survey, evidence has been found to show that the questionnaire has influenced

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

them. The experience of answering the Religious Vocation Questionnaire was much more than a routine class exercise, it was indeed a memorable school experience which they regarded as being influential in engendering or changing or stabilizing a way of thinking which led them eventually to choose the religious state as a way of life.

This evidence is further substantiated by the percentage of those who did not enter the religious life but who indicated that the answering of the questionnaire had some influence on them. Table IV shows that a total of 2.6% indicated "some influence". The fact that they remembered the experience so long afterwards reaffirms this influential nature of the event. Furthermore, those who did recall the event replied with such expressions as this made by a young man who was running a gas station: "It made you think".

No claim is made that 12% of the whole original sample (3194) were influenced in some way by the experience of answering the questionnaire; but it can be asserted from the evidence uncovered, that more than 2.6% of the original 3194 were in some way influenced at least in so far as they were made to think about the religious life in the light of their choice of a state in life.

### FOLLOW UP STUDY

This assertion claims no more than the minimum for the evidence which has been uncovered in the follow-up study. Yet it is sufficient to reveal a trend and to provide a basis for the judgment, that if the survey were carried on more extensively, similar results would be achieved in similar proportions to those found in the limited follow-up sample.

Our evidence shows that the answering of the questionnaire was a direct influence on 5.1% and had some influence on 6.9% of the sample population in their decision to enter the religious life. This immediately brings up another question. How were they influenced by this experience?

To answer this question we must keep in mind what Jacques Maritain once wrote: "Vocation is a supernatural mystery. Every natural explanation which may be offered relates only to accidents, trivial in comparison with the essential motive."<sup>53</sup> Admittedly then, we are concerned here with accidents; but only through such comparatively trivial accidents can we find those factors which tend to encourage or discourage the person who aspires to the religious life.

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<sup>53</sup> Jacques Maritain, The Angelic Doctor, New York, Sheed & Ward, 1931, p. 26.

### FOLLOW-UP STUDY

We are confronted with the difficulty that there is nothing we can do to acquire an understanding of the divine elements in vocation. Otherwise there would be no mystery. Yet we can and should examine the observable effects of this divine action on the human personality, so that we may act accordingly.

How then is the human personality affected when it goes through the experience of filling out a Religious Vocation Questionnaire? The obvious answer is that since personalities are greatly different, they will be affected in greatly different ways. Hence for those who stated that they were influenced by the questionnaire in their decision to enter the religious life, we can only propose the theory that there existed within those individuals certain innate psychic factors which predisposed them to be potential religious. The experience of responding to the Religious Vocation Questionnaire may have been a sufficient stimulus to trigger the release of these potentialities into the development of their vocations.

## FOLLOW-UP STUDY

St. Thomas says: ". . . God so prepares and endows those whom He chooses for some particular office, that they are rendered capable of fulfilling it . . ."<sup>54</sup>

Everything that happens is within God's providence. Natural circumstances, occasions, temperaments, talents, environment, example, instruction - - - all play a part in influencing the resolve to enter the religious life. Does the Religious Vocation Questionnaire fit into this category? Some little evidence has been found to show that it does for certain individuals; but the reader is left to make his own judgment. It would be not a little presumptuous to say more than that a vocation to the religious life is a mystery of God's love, a mystery of predilection.

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54 St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, London, Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1926. Part III, q. 27, a. 4, p. 12.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of the responses obtained from the questionnaire revealed: a favorable attitude towards religious life, some need for presenting more realistic motives in our instructions about the religious life, that the most critical age for dropping the idea of religious vocation is from the age of 11 through 14, and therefore at this period of their lives more effort at guidance and instruction should be directed to the students, that a notable crystallization of thinking regarding religious vocations was effected by the experience of answering the questionnaire.

Our primary objective was to investigate as far as possible the effectiveness of the Religious Vocation Questionnaire as an aid to the development or unfolding of religious vocations. We could probably say that there is not much evidence for the claim that it was influential in the individual lives of the respondents. It was not stimulus enough to enable a recall in the memories of 72% of the sample tested. What evidence we have been able to uncover (18% recall, 5.1% influence, 6.9% some influence) prevents us from concluding that there were no effects.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In a world where the splendid ideal of following Christ is often obscured, it is important that every possible means be used to encourage vocations to the religious life. In this age of population explosion, vocation erosion is being caused by a preeminence of technical and scientific factors. Press and entertainment media which are often empty and superficial are also contributing to this erosion. In an age when there is competition of interests throughout the world extending even into outer space, it is important that the high ideal of the religious life be presented on a competitive basis. History may have much to say about the present age in which we live. Let it not say that we have failed to point out the way to the "higher life".

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Uses Q sort to test seminarians' self concept and self ideal. Opened up some doors for this student.

## APPENDIX 1

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME

1. Has the subject of religious vocation been discussed at your school:  
 far too much \_\_\_\_\_ a bit too much \_\_\_\_\_  
 about right \_\_\_\_\_ too little \_\_\_\_\_
2. Note: Omit a if you do not have an unmarried brother.  
 Omit b if you do not have an unmarried sister.
  - a) If your brother decided to become a religious, would you be:  
 happy \_\_\_\_\_ mildly pleased \_\_\_\_\_ indifferent \_\_\_\_\_  
 disappointed \_\_\_\_\_ opposed \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) If your sister decided to become a religious, would you be:  
 happy \_\_\_\_\_ mildly pleased \_\_\_\_\_ indifferent \_\_\_\_\_  
 disappointed \_\_\_\_\_ opposed \_\_\_\_\_
3. Indicate the reasons for your answer to Question no. 2.
  - a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does the possibility of yourself having a vocation frighten you? \_\_\_\_\_. If so, why? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How can you be sure of having a vocation? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you think the religious life is:  
 (check one item in each part)  
 dull \_\_\_\_\_ interesting \_\_\_\_\_ stimulating \_\_\_\_\_  
 easy \_\_\_\_\_ difficult \_\_\_\_\_ extremely difficult \_\_\_\_\_
7. The religious life is :  
                                   more difficult than \_\_\_\_\_  
                                   as difficult as \_\_\_\_\_  
                                   less difficult than \_\_\_\_\_  
 the life of husband and father; wife and mother.
8. What virtues are common both to a successful religious life and to a successful married life? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Why is the religious life called the "higher life"?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 1

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

10. a) It has been said that sometime during life every Catholic thinks of becoming a priest or sister or brother. Is this true in your case? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) If this is so in your case, have you stopped thinking of it? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) If you have stopped, at what age? \_\_\_\_\_  
and in what class did you stop? \_\_\_\_\_
- d) And why did you stop? \_\_\_\_\_
11. List the questions regarding religious vocation that you would like to have answered.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Why haven't you asked someone these questions in the past? \_\_\_\_\_
13. What would be your greatest obstacle or difficulty in living up to the life of a religious? (Give one item only) \_\_\_\_\_
14. Have you any comments on this questionnaire, or any suggestions for giving a better understanding and appreciation of a religious vocation? (Use other side)
15. a) Would you like to have a vocation club in your parish or school? \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Did you discuss your vocation with:
- your mother \_\_\_\_\_ your father \_\_\_\_\_
- your pastor \_\_\_\_\_ your confessor \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2

REPORT FORM<sup>1</sup>

Directions: Summarize the answers to the questions on the Religious Vocation Questionnaire in the spaces provided. Summarize the answers to Questions 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14 on a separate sheet of paper.

- Q. 1. Discussion of Religious Vocation  
 far too much \_\_\_\_\_ a bit too much \_\_\_\_\_  
 about right \_\_\_\_\_ too little \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. 2. happy \_\_\_\_\_ mildly pleased \_\_\_\_\_ indifferent \_\_\_\_\_  
 disappointed \_\_\_\_\_ opposed \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. 4. Possibility of having a vocation frighten you:  
 yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. 6. dull \_\_\_\_\_ interesting \_\_\_\_\_ stimulating \_\_\_\_\_  
 easy \_\_\_\_\_ difficult \_\_\_\_\_ extremely difficult \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. 7. more difficult \_\_\_\_\_  
 as difficult as \_\_\_\_\_  
 less difficult \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. 10. a) yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 b) yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_  
 c) ages \_\_\_\_\_ grades \_\_\_\_\_  
 age 8 \_\_\_\_\_ grade 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 age 9 \_\_\_\_\_ grade 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 age 10 \_\_\_\_\_ grade 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. 15. Vocation Club \_\_\_\_\_
- Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Father \_\_\_\_\_ Confessor \_\_\_\_\_

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1 Report Form prepared from memory.

## APPENDIX 3

## ABSTRACT OF

How Useful Can a Vocation Questionnaire Be?<sup>1</sup>

An attempt was made to find out how useful a vocation questionnaire concerning the priesthood and the religious life could be to students who answered it and to those who planned its application.

The tool was the Religious Vocation Questionnaire administered to 3194 pupils in grades 7 - 12 in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Each Religion Teacher was the responsible agent for administering the questionnaires.

The beliefs and attitudes of the testees were culled from the responses, distributed by frequencies, and analyzed to determine their usefulness to the investigator, to the respondent, and to both the investigator and the respondent. Basic vocational guidance information was discovered or corroborated, especially regarding the critical ages from 12 - 14. A crystallization of thought regarding the religious life was perceived in the testees, and both the questioner and the questioned were considered wiser because of the experience.

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<sup>1</sup> Floyd J. Brown, M.A. thesis presented to the School of Psychology and Education of the University of Ottawa, September 1962, iii-83p.

## APPENDIX 3

The follow-up study of the sample produced evidence that 13% could recall the Religious Vocation Questionnaire six years after having answered it. Of this group, 5.1% claimed to be directly influenced in vocational choice, 6.9% claimed to be partially influenced, and 6.0% stated they were in no way influenced.