

## PARTNER CONFERENCE 2013 WORKING GROUP RESULTS

**What practices can we offer young people that help them discern their calling?**

### EVENTS:

- Come & See Weekend - for new visitors and others who are familiar with our community
- discernment retreat by invitation only
- once a year, whole federation brings young people in
- combined men's and women's discernment retreat - positive to both genders
- immersion trips → follow up reflection for deepening Ignatian Spirituality
  - exercises → "Meeting Christ in Prayer" (Loyola Press)
  - Charis Ministries and retreat
- wine & cheese party for young adults - but struggle with getting them to commit
- ACTS retreats
- Come & See Weekend - charism & community
- Catholics on Call conference
- provide stage-appropriate discernment experiences
  - Nun Run, Come & See, service opportunities
- "Pie and Prayer"
  - ½ hour Scripture sharing, then pie
  - end with Franciscan Adoration (a simpler set-up)
- follow up event, like Catholics on Call retreat
- Spring Break 3 ½ day retreat for college students
- Discernment retreats for 5 full days for mature discerners
- Come and See weekend
- especially with Hispanic, young adults, "Culture of Vocation" afternoon talks
- small group gathering of peer discerners
- Come and See, Live-in Experience, Busy Person's Retreat
- discernment book study group for men
- Discernment retreats
- discernment groups



- Monthly Discernment Gatherings
- Vocation Day
- Nun Run or: CSI - Come, See, Investigate
- Vocation Summer Camp (college)
- Vocation Ministry Weekend
- Come and See Experience
- busy student/person retreats
- Caritas/Veritas (2-4 students + faculty)
  - monthly conversations from freshmen year to senior/4th year at Dominican University (College of St. Benedict prog. curriculum)

### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:**

- volunteer program
- sponsor mission trip to Jamaica - seeing mission in another country
- Internships/paid internships in ministry
- weekly reflection on service including vocation and discernment (post-college volunteer community)
- Life Planning Residential Internship at monastery
  - “Finding and Following Your Call” for college-aged/20-somethings
- Service as a way of discovery of ourselves, our strengths, and community (public)
- immersion experience to ministry
- Service & Formation
- invitation to service - e.g. flooding in Biloxi
- reflecting on need in the community and action
- service - part-time/full-time, domestic/abroad, social justice ministries, being with people, ecological awareness, expanded horizons

### **PRAYER:**

- structuring solitude/silence, time
- Holy Hour - for teens, young adults, families, praise worship
- prayer groups
- open invitation to prayer (all times)
- prayer partners

- Lord, Grant Me a Discerning Heart
- Prayer as foundational to discernment and process

### **SOCIAL MEDIA:**

- ministry of presence - in person or online to see potential candidates before they visit
  - develop relationship via Facebook
- daily reflection websites, blogging on charism or ministry-related topics
- monthly conversations via webex with members on vocation, discernment, etc.
- WebEx (Skype) conversations with discerners

### **SPIRITUAL DIRECTION/COMPANIONSHIP:**

- individualize the discernment journey
- meet with potential candidates at restaurants and visit our convent
- spiritual direction/companionship, group discernment
- offer relationship to journey with
  - give them the permission to take time to discern
  - when appropriate encourage to take steps
- Creating a space for conversation (20-40, 1x week, 1.5 hours)
  - convenient for young urban professionals
  - avoid calling it a “group”
  - they set the agenda
- link to spiritual director
- personal 1-to-1 accompaniment
- inductive method of accompanying discerners
  - discovery
  - asking questions together
- values clarification exercise
  - what person am I becoming?
  - who do I want to be?
  - money, time, relationships
- Are you serious? program for couples who are seriously dating
  - money
  - role expectations

- human, psychological development
  - help integrating mystical experiences with the truth of my human self
- Companions of the Holy Cross Formation Program – Based on Crosier Tradition, Spiritual Exercises
- Companion Sister – prayer partner, share with...
- Teach discernment skills on individual basis and suggest next steps
- Recommend finding a trained spiritual director
- Importance of having others enable us (beyond ourselves; spiritual direction) to listen and encourage us to go deeper or listen for options
- act as spiritual guides to students
- Spiritual Direction
- One on One Time
- sharing one's own vocation story
  - driver's ed instructor, tandem
- a sister companion and community companionship
- We have to continue becoming ourselves through ongoing-intentional-regular conversation so that we see God is still working in us now and not only the people we are ministering with.
- theological reflection

#### **LIVE-IN EXPERIENCE:**

- establish a house of discernment:
  - to live in for a year and give yourself a chance to contemplate how you can be a priest or brother or single or father or husband
  - be supported by others
- “live-in” discernment opportunity/experiential knowledge
- college women's discernment house

#### **OTHER TOOLS AND STRATEGIES:**

- writing notes
- correspondence with history of the congregation
- study Gospel with them
- family visits

- anti-racism committees
- Listening, listening, listening!
- understanding cultural diversity (what other cultures are about)
- dialogue
- trial and error
- surrender and trust
- engaging the mind and the heart
- have aspirant community identify their call within context of community need
- bring people in discernment from different communities together to support one another
- sisters present on visible campus regularly ~ “Mercy Care”
  - calls for embrace, give-and-take
- personal relationships focus on individual
- Who do you say that I am? How does this contribute to undoing our socialized racism (as white, North American sisters)?
- Invitation - to recognize God’s love for me and accept it fully
- Diocesan Pastoral Plan to develop and invite lay ministry for now and the future
  - empower youth to participate in discernment on a parish/diocesan level
- Intentional efforts/visible at presenting charism (whatever charism - Franciscan, Dominican, Augustinian, etc.)
- personal invitation to community events
- recommending good literature
- learning and valuing the wisdom of others
- our joyful witness
- use a discernment journal as a tool to discern and develop a relationship with God
- What do you friends identify as your gifts?
- new membership committee about what may work with each other and dioceses
- partnership in ministry = sharing leadership with members and laity together and better