

# Promoting vocations to the consecrated life

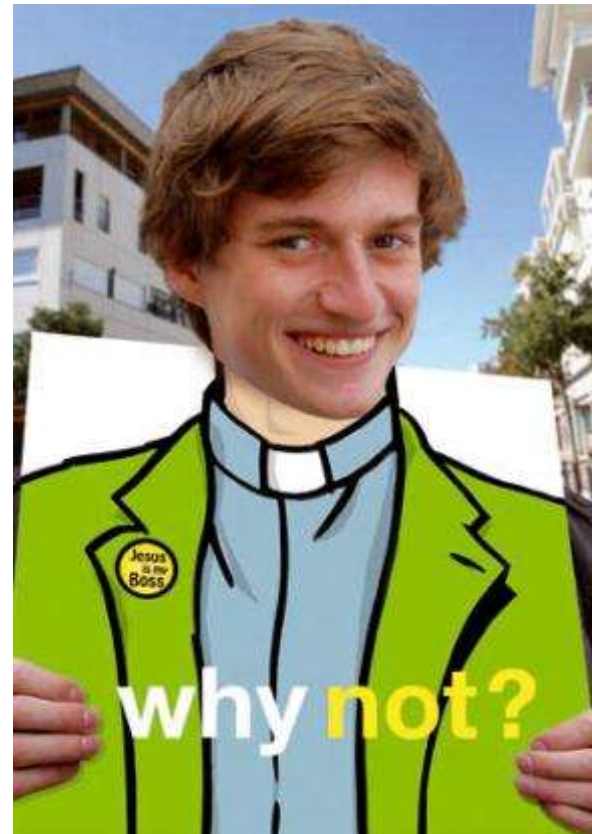
In Verbo Tuo. Vocations today in Europe - Congress of delegates for the pastoral care of vocations |  
Tirana, Albania, 28 February – 3 March



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# the pastoral care of vocations in France



# the European Vocations Service (EVS)

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- International committee “vocations and religious life” initiated by  **NRVC**  
National Religious  
Vocation Conference



# 3 keys

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## □ A vision for action

- Vocation pastoral care is a question of theology and of ecclesiology...
- and also a question of understanding a cultural and social context

## □ A good articulation between developing a culture of vocation and promoting specific vocations

- A good understanding of each vocation
- The image of the polyhedron for thinking the relationship between baptism and each vocation

## □ Promoting together all kind of vocations

- religious life is an ecclesial reality, mandated by the wider church and expressive of living gifts of the Spirit to and within its structures

# A context of shift

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« *this is not an age of change, but a change of age.* »

**Pope Francis,** *Address of Pope Francis to the bishops of Brazil, Rio July 27, 2013*





# The greatest challenge :

## Inculturation: becoming bilingual!

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- The need for a new pedagogy of vocation : the example of the video « God, the Call and I »



- At your disposal on Youtube “Dieu, l’Appel & Moi” and the USB key

# 1 - Understanding ...

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- The situation of the youth
- The situation of the Church
- The situation of religious life



# Understanding the new situation of the youth

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## □ The synod process





# Young people in today's world

## Lineamenta 1

### New generations, actors of transformation

- Belonging and participation
  - Passive and discouraged young people vs dynamic and active young people
- Need for persons of reference
  - Parents and adults, their peers, mistrust towards institutions, no God
- Towards a hyper-connected generation  
→ **Look at the young as being dynamic elements in society transformation**

# Young people in today's world

## Lineamenta 1

### Young people and choices

- « a conception of freedom as the possibility of having access to ever-new opportunities » ; options which can always be reversed.
- The challenge of commitment in a world marked by a culture of the temporary.

# Understanding youth culture in our post-modern digital society

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## EPIC culture

- Experience
- Participation
- Image
- Connection



# The network

## □ Relationship



# mosaic

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## □ Paradox and plurality





# The sea

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## □ Learning to sail



# A spiritual and religious resurgence among young people in France

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- One of two young people believes in God's existence (51% of 18-24 against 38% of French population – 25% of 18-24 assert being believers and practisers against 19% of French population)
- 15% have already thought of committing into religious life / 10% of French population (43% of 18-24, 46% of French population and 54% of Catholics have already met a religious or a monk)

# A new relationship to faith

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## **With less institutional and sacramental practices**

- More frequently attending catholic schools (47% of 18-24 /29% of French population)
- Higher participation to religious events (32% of 18-24/14% of French population), spiritual retreats (21%), youth confessional movements (16%) and particularly high visiting of religious websites (31% of 18-24/17% of French population)

# Towards a relationnal Church

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## a merciful and pilgrim Church

- ❑ Welcoming without judgment
- ❑ Authenticity, consistency
- ❑ Accessibility, proximity

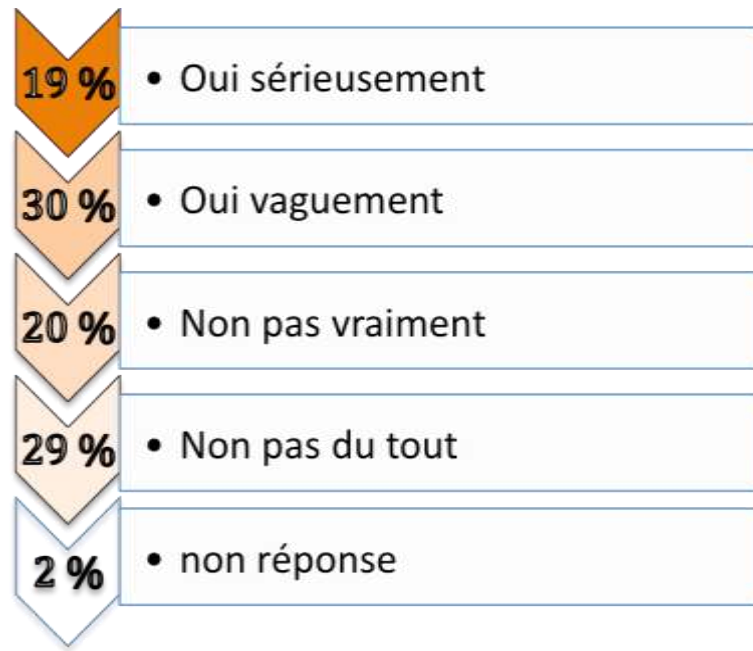
## Emmaüs walk



# WYD 2016 survey on french pilgrims

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- « Have you ever thought of becoming priest or religious? »





# WYD 2016 survey on french pilgrims

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- « Have you ever thought of becoming priest or religious? »

	y ont pensé sérieusement
Sur 100 garçons	27 %
Sur 100 filles	13 %
Rappel moyenne	19 %

# WYD 2016 survey on french pilgrims

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- ❑ « Have you ever thought of becoming priest or religious? »
- ❑ The importance of big gatherings and retreats

	sur 100 jeunes concernés	Rappel : moyenne sur 100 JMJistes
Ont déjà participé auparavant à des rassemblements...		
- autres JMJ	40 %	23 %
- rassemblements de Taizé	27 %	27 %
- rassemblements des communautés nouvelles	46 %	30 %
- pèlerinage à Lourdes	71 %	62 %
- retraites spirituelles	90 %	71 %
- autres rassemblements de jeunes (rassemblements et pèlerinages diocésains, rassemblements scouts, FRAT, pèlerinages, etc.)	96 %	89 %

# Understanding the situation of the Church

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## **The reform of the Church asked by Pope Francis *Evangelii Gaudium* as a GPS**



# A call to improve synodality

## The current step of the reception of Vatican II

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- « ***Journeying together*** — laity, pastors, the Bishop of Rome — is an easy concept to put into words, but not so easy to put into practice. ».
- A synodal Church is a ***listening Church***.



# Pope Francis's key-text

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« The world in which we live, and which we are called to serve with its contradictions, demands that the Church strengthen cooperation in all areas of her mission. **It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.** »

Ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the institution  
of the synod of bishops, *October 17, 2015*



# Synodality, a key for youth and vocations ministry

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# The Gospel of vocation

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- As an answer for identity research
  - Who am I?
  - How to make choices?
  - What is the right course for my life?

VOCATION :

**« The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.»**

Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*

# Proclaiming the joy of the gospel

## Lineamenta

### How can we fulfil this mission ?

- « lead young people to recognize and accept **the call to the fullness of life and love** »
- « guiding the formation of conscience and **an authentic freedom** »

### Choosing a wide approach of vocations...

- **the vocation to love...** a series of choices, which find expression in the states of life, professions, forms of social and civil commitment, lifestyle, the management of time and money, etc.
- The image of the beloved disciple.

# Understanding the situation of the consecrated life

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- Recomposition, transformation
- Migration and crossing «The consecrated life is crossing a ford, but it must not remain there permanently. We are invited to operate the passage »
- The year of the Consecrated life
- A time of « kairós » for a passage
- « New wine in new wineskins » The consecrated life and its ongoing challenges since Vatican II
  - Openness to new modalities of « sequela Christi »
  - New structures
  - Reframing the identity of Consacrated life :  
prophetism to wake up the world



# Where consecrated people are, there is always joy! Pope Francis

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- « But **the beauty of religious** life does not lie in any spurious claim to superiority but because it is a **stark expression of the extraordinary vocation of every human being, which is to respond to the call to share God's life, joy and freedom.** “

Timothy Radcliffe, op, in GEMMA Simonds CJ, A Future Full of Hope ? Liturgical Press 2013. p.8



# POPE FRANCIS

## TO ALL CONSECRATED PEOPLE

ON THE OCCASION OF THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE

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- ❑ **Consecrated men and women are also called to true synergy with all other vocations in the Church**, beginning with priests and the lay faithful, in order to “spread the spirituality of communion” (*cf Vita consecrate*)
- ❑ **“Consecrated life is a gift to the Church, it is born of the Church, it grows in the Church, and it is entirely directed to the Church”**. For this reason, precisely as a gift to the Church, it is not an isolated or marginal reality, but deeply a part of her. It is at the heart of the Church, a decisive element of her mission, inasmuch as it expresses the deepest nature of the Christian vocation and the yearning of the Church as the Bride for union with her sole Spouse. Thus, “it belongs... absolutely to the life and holiness” of the Church

# Presentation of the survey

## Opinion Way/CORREF

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**« Religious life, youth and vocations for consecrated life »**



# A positive but displaced vision of religious life

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## **Which is growing among the young people**

- ❑ A good image of religious life ( 65% of French population, 77% of Catholics /47% of non Catholics)
- ❑ A radical (reason : the will for a complete commitment for 50% of 18-24/ 26% of French population) choice in life (91%) which makes you happy (77%)
- ❑ Religious life seen as a mean to flee from the current world (for 63% of the French population and 77% of 18-24) and
- ❑ Religious seen as being outside society by 50% of French population and 40% of 18-24)

# A life style that remains an open and relevant choice

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**But a shift in perception, especially concerning freedom**

- A free choice for all consecrated people / not a free life for one in two French
- Religious life considered as a fulfilling choice for 30% of French population/41% of 18-24

# New vocations to consecrated life

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**A rich, strong and deep choice in life to answer to a spiritual hunger**

- Follow Christ (98%), answer to a desire of prayer and spiritual development (82%) and give one's life meaning (82%)
- **Criteria to choose an institute** : institute spirituality (83%), life of prayer (86%), community life (76%) and life style of members (76%)



# New vocations to consecrated life

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## Importance of relationship, experience, accompaniment

- A commitment that is not well understood and that frightens (a first restraint is the fear of not being able to stick to one's commitments 51%, slightly understood by family and friends 99%)
- Means that help (spiritual accompaniment 83%, visits to the institute 77%, a discernment retreat 61%)
- Profiles marked by former commitments : 53% had worked before joining an institute, 69% had a Church commitment, 67% had taken part in WYD, 50% were scouts, 45% had a parish liturgical commitment, and 43% a musical commitment, 39% had participated in youth gatherings such as Taizé, *le Frat...*, 37% had participated in activities with new communities or charismatic renewal, 39% in a movement or children activities, 34% to a group, movement, activities for young adults.

# The otherwise adventure

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- The mystic journey, the mystical adventure



# US CARA Study/NRVC

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## ▣ PARISH LIFE

- ▣ *The majority participated in parish ministry prior to entering formation; World Youth Day influence*
- ▣ Women and men are equally likely to have served in parish ministry. The most common ministry experience prior to entrance in order is: lector, catechetical ministry, altar server, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, and music ministry. Before entering, 53 percent participated in college campus ministry, 46 percent in high school ministry, and 40 percent in young adult ministry.
- ▣ Before entering religious life or the seminary, one in six participated in World Youth Day. Women were three times more likely than men to have participated in World Youth Day.

# US CARA Study/NRV

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## ■ FAMILY SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY INFLUENCE

- *Entrants significantly influenced by a sense of call, example, encouragement of family and others, internet searches*
- Only 24 percent of mothers and 17 percent of fathers encouraged their son or daughter to consider a vocation to religious life prior to entering. They are most likely encouraged by members of their religious institutes. Potential ordinands received slightly more encouragement with 40 percent of mothers and 32 percent of fathers encouraging ordinands to consider priesthood before entering the seminary.
- Although Catholics do not typically see it as their role to encourage vocations, **women and men are nearly twice as likely to consider a vocation when encouraged by another person.** The effect is additive. People who are encouraged by three persons are five times more likely to consider a vocation than someone who was not encouraged by anyone.

## 2- The experience of the National Service for the Evangelization of Youth and Vocations

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- In the dynamics of the 2018 Synod on “Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment”



# Pope Francis vision

Message of the Holy Father to participants in the International Conference “Vocational ministry and consecrated life: prospects and hopes” (Rome, 1-3 December 2017), 01.12.2017

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- “to speak of vocational ministry is to affirm that **all pastoral action of the Church is oriented, by its very nature, to vocational discernment**, inasmuch as its ultimate goal is to help the believer to discover the concrete way to carry out the project of life to which God calls him.”
- **Vocational service must be seen as the soul of all evangelization and of all the Church’s pastoral ministry.** (...) The vocational ministry, however, must be placed in close relation with evangelization, education in the faith



# Pope Francis vision

Message of the Holy Father to participants in the International Conference “Vocational ministry and consecrated life: prospects and hopes” (Rome, 1-3 December 2017), 01.12.2017

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- “vocational ministry finds its most appropriate “humus” in youth pastoral ministry. Youth ministry and pastoral ministry must go hand in hand”



# The pastoral care of vocations in France in a few dates

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- **1959** : Creation at bishops'request of the National Vocations Center (CNV) by a diocesan priest who straightaway asked religious women to take part in the project
- **1980** : CNV became the National Service of Vocations
- **2010** : Creation of the **National Service for the Evangelization of Youth and Vocations (SNEJV)** by merging the National Vocations Center and the National Service for the Evangelization of Youth and Vocations

# The National Service for the Evangelization of Youth and Vocations

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- ❑ One of the ten national services of the French Bishops' Conference
- ❑ Under the aegis of a Council of Bishops for youth and vocations ministry



# The National Service for the Evangelization of Youth and Vocations (SNEJV)

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- ❑ A plural team with diocesan priests, religious, lay and young people
- ❑ Serving adults involved in pastoral care for youth and vocations in dioceses, communities and movements
  - ❑ diocesan services for vocation and/or youth ministry
  - ❑ in charge of vocation in communities



# Objectives of the SNEJV

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- The Council for the Pastoral Care of Children and Youth (CPEJ) entrusts the SNEJV **to serve youth evangelization.**

That involves to allow all young people **to live a personal encounter with Christ, to find their own vocation and to be accompanied in their human and spiritual growth.**

# Objectives of the SNEJV

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- The SNEJV receives the specific task **to help adults involved in youth and vocation ministry to guide all young people in their personal answer to Christ's call** who says : *"Come and follow me"*. This task involves **developing a vocational culture that cares about diversity of calls and promoting specific vocations** (ministry of priest and consecrated life).



# Objectives of the SNEJV

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- 1. To lead networks and to encourage dialogue and sharing**
- 2. To encourage reflection, creativity and help for discernment**
- 3. To contribute to the training of adults involved in youth and vocation ministry**
- 4. To communicate and to invest new ways of communication with young people**

# Evangelization by daring to trust young people and calling them to our mission

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# Being jostled by young people in order to invent new paths

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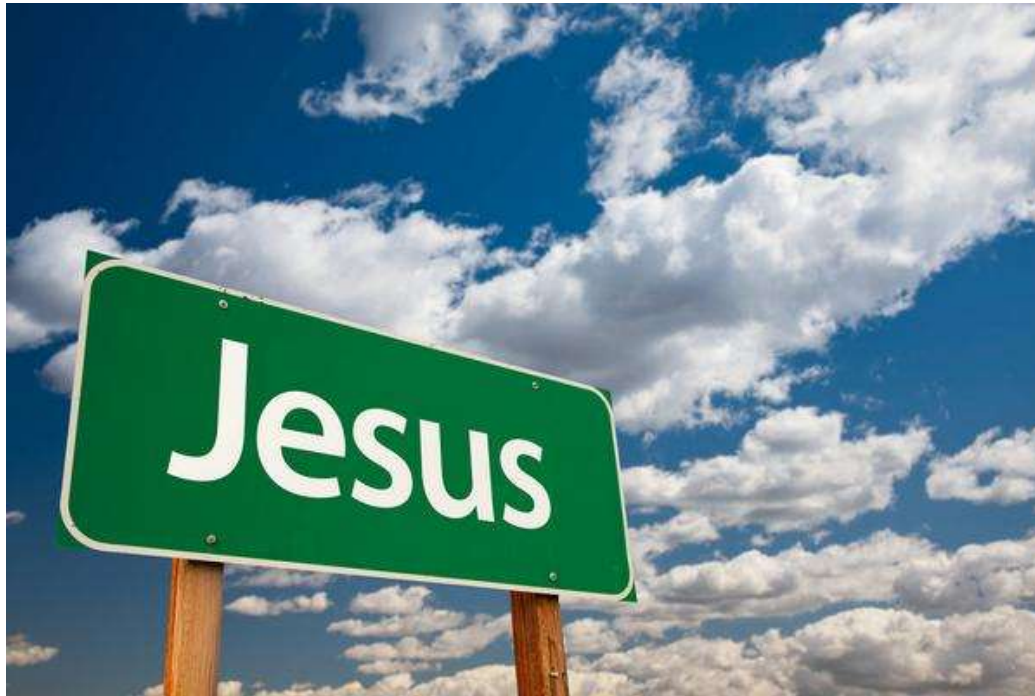




# The cape to be taken !

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- To propose the experience of a personal encounter with Christ



- The challenge of missionary communion

# Ecclesiology of communion

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- To serve the common good of the Church
- **To promote together all the vocations**
- To serve all young people and the universal Church



# Collaboration between dioceses/ priests/bishops and communities/CL

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- ❑ To learn to know each other, to meet each other to build relationships of trust
  - 2 pilars for the Church : Peter and Paul, Charisms and institutions
- ❑ To work on common projects
- ❑ To develop **a culture of partnership** in youth and vocations ministry





# Common trainings

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- Initial and permanent trainings for adults involved in youth and vocation ministry from dioceses, communities or movements



# A strong partnership with



- For the year of consecrated life, a steering committee composed of representatives of CEF, SNEJV, CORREF, national Conference of secular Institutes ...
- CORREF Survey about religious life, youth and vocations
- Production of a video about the Call
- A flash drive with videos about vocations and consecrated life
- Press conferences



# A culture of collaboration

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- ❑ To encourage Religious Institutes to collaborate and network with one another in creating a culture of vocation.
- ❑ To promote together what is consecrated life
- ❑ Between “old” communities and “new” community
- ❑ To announce the Gospel of vocation to serve all vocations through true collaborations

### 3. Vocation pastoral care...

## Allow young to listen to the call of Christ

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- ❑ Open new possibilities...
- ❑ Allow them to hear and discover witnesses



# To structure different scopes

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- **Vocational awakening** « *every human life is called to some task by God* » → the Church, a called community to call, develops a vocational culture
- **Pastoral care of call and proposals** « *Come and see* » → to help young people who ask themselves about sense of life and commitment
- **Pastoral care of discernment and accompaniment**  
« *Come and follow me* »
  - > Young people who clearly ask themselves the question of a choice of life

# Directions developed by the SNEJV

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- ❑ To pray for vocations
- ❑ To develop a vocational culture and to promote all together all the vocations
- ❑ Training, tools, resources
- ❑ Visibility and connection to the media : websites, social networks, media-training → communication, a key-element for youth evangelization and vocation ministry

# The vocation stand in WYD

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- A national stand with a team of diocesan priests and religious women
- To offer together a vocational awakening
- To pray for the vocation of each young person





# The House of vocations in Lourdes

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- ❑ A place hosted by a plural team
- ❑ An animation, listening and exchanges area
- ❑ Activities of vocational awakening



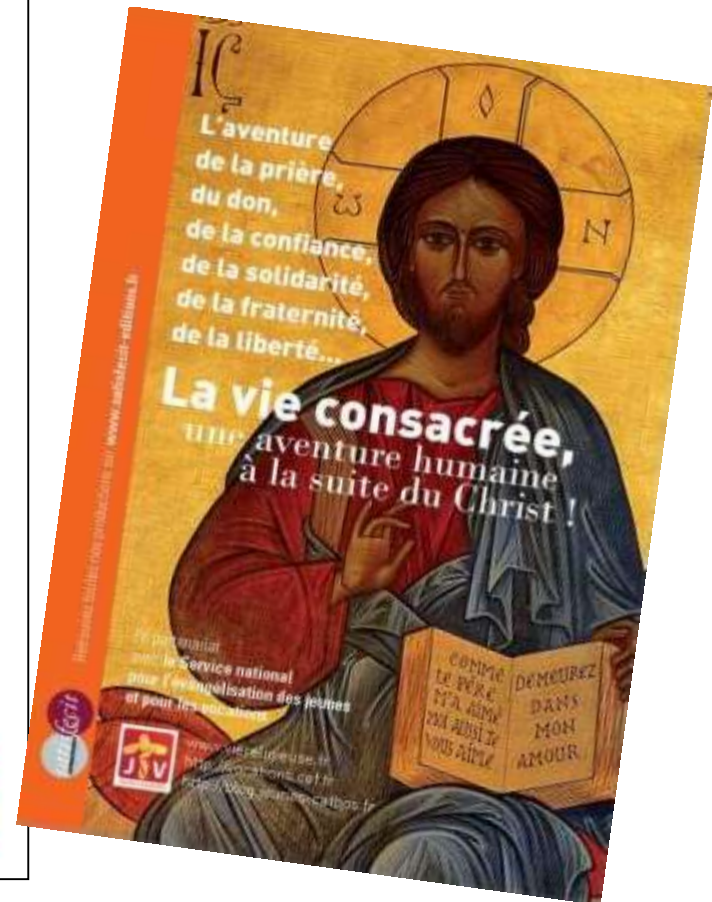




# Promotional materials



# Promotional materials



# Thoughts and publications





# Years for God

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- ❑ 21 propositions coming from dioceses or communities
- ❑ Concerning 200 young people a year
- ❑ Leaving for one year studies or a job
- ❑ To experience community life
- ❑ Vocational dimension: «Lord, what do You want me to do?»
- ❑ Key-step of discernment
- ❑ Receiving a training: biblical, human, philosophical formation ...





# Vocations media-training

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- To have a training about testimony and speaking in the media



# Presence on social networks

- Visuals and infographics about the different religious families



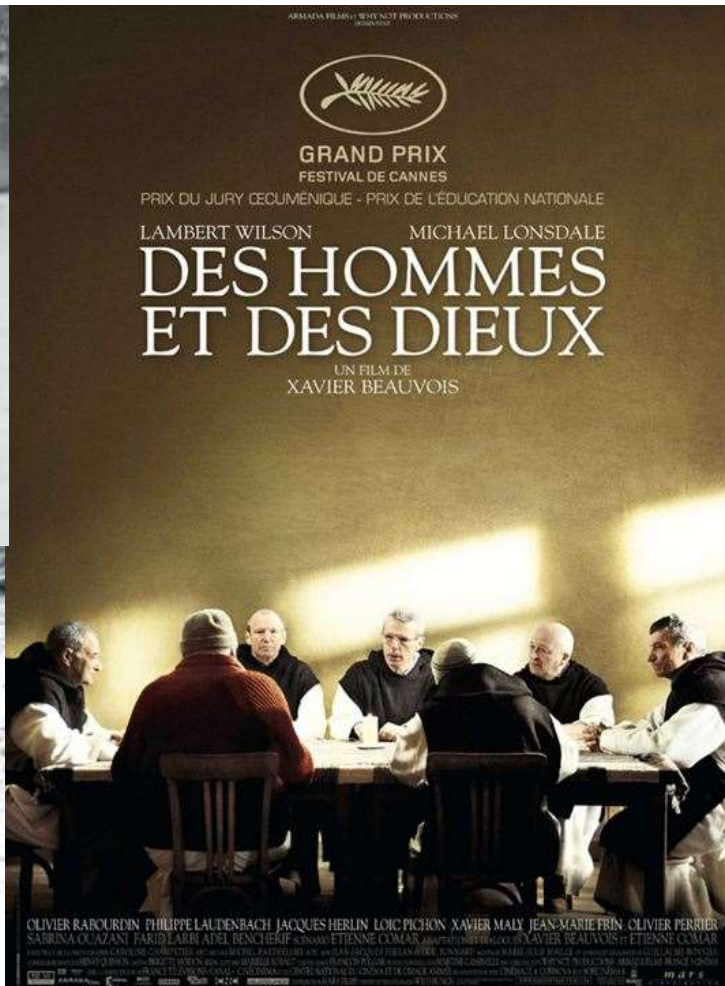
# Presence on the web

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- The website <http://www.jeunes-cathos.fr/>
  - **The Blog** <http://blog.jeunes-cathos.fr/>
  - <https://www.facebook.com/jeunes.cathos/>
  - [https://twitter.com/Jeunes\\_cathos](https://twitter.com/Jeunes_cathos)
- 
- The website <http://quelleestmavocation.com/>
  - Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/quelleestmavocation/>
  - Twitter account <https://twitter.com/mavocation>

# Cinema and vocations

- An opportunity to speak about religious life !



# Best practices for communities

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- Promotional materials
- Discovery and discernment programs, retreats
- A full time vocational promoter with a team
- Meetings with young religious
- The most important : the testimony, the experience and the encounter with members of the Institute
- The important role of diocesan priests
  - A welcome spirit
  - A strong formation program
  - A good leadership

# The question of women vocations

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- A question from many young women
- A questions from women religious involved in vocationnal ministry
- A question for more and more priests and bishops
- What do do?
  - Propedeutic?
  - New kind of communities?



# The place of young an women in the Church are connected

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- An inclusive Church
- Co-responsibility



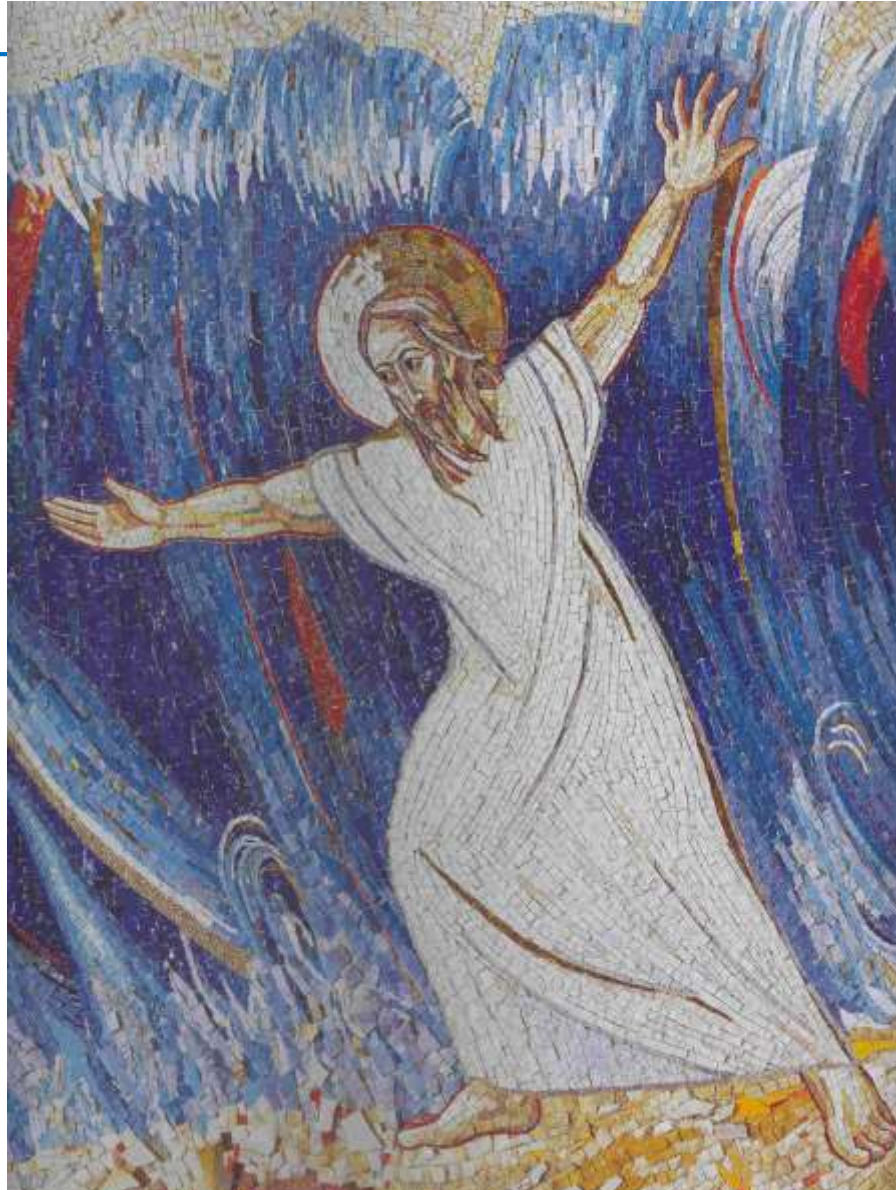
# Conclusion : a change of mindset

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- ❑ Move from a pastoral care of recruitment to a pastoral care of discernment and accompaniment
- ❑ Move from a pastoral care of expectation to a pastoral care of call, proposals and questioning
- ❑ Announce the Gospel of Vocation by working for all vocations
- ❑ Make pastoral care more vocational

# Discernment et accompagnement

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Creativity, innovation, pragmatism  
audacity, trust, communion

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# Thank you for your attention



Powerpoint at your disposal on

<http://www.jeunes-vocations.catholique.fr>

The website for youth ministers and vocation ministers

*Surveys, reflections, tools and resources about young people and vocations.*

Service national pour l'évangélisation des jeunes et pour les vocations (SNEJV)