



VOCATION VIBES

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Sometimes, Sisters and Associates wonder what Congregational Vocation Representatives do. Our official job description says: “The major responsibility of the CVM will be to respond to calls for assistance from the Promoter of New Members for Dominican Life and Mission. The CVM will be part of a team/board to assist in planning and designing retreats, workshops, programs and other events for women interested in Dominican Life.(We work together to plan these with the Promoter.) The CVM will facilitate the transition to candidacy and formation after the application process has been completed through the Promoter.” But that doesn’t give you the “nitty gritty” of assisting the Promoter of Dominican Life.

We are all part of various regions and dioceses. Our participation occurs when the Promoter of New Members cannot be present or is involved in other projects. Each of the CVM’s assist when they are able in the region that is nearest to them. Presently, I am participating in an activity which involves Region 2, which is the Archdiocese of New York. I am in the process of being a spiritual director for a young woman from Vancouver, British Columbia. You ask yourself, “How can this be?” This young woman heard about the online retreat via *VISION* Magazine’s ad (this magazine is published yearly with articles, stories and Congregational advertisements for our young adults interested in religious life and priesthood) on the internet.

The idea initially surfaced at the autumn Archdiocese of New York meeting to which I was in attendance. Also in attendance were other Vocation Directors who minister within the tri-state area. When the possibility of an online Vocation Discernment Retreat was raised, Sr. Deanna Sabetta, C.N.D., NY Archdiocesan Vocation Director, did not raise an objection. “Let’s try it. Let’s go where they are. They’re not going to come knocking on our door.” The “they”, women and men ages 18 and up—might be eager to participate! The retreat was entitled **STOP** for two reasons. One being to stop and ponder on God’s Word and the other, to stop and **Seek The Other Possibilities**.

The materials for the Retreat were composed by a number of members of the committee. Other committee members shared their technical abilities by making sure each retreatant received their material, downloaded from the internet. Advertising which included parish bulletins, websites, various publications and flyers was also completed by committee members.

The retreat began on Tuesday, Feb. 20, the day before Ash Wednesday, and ran through to Sunday, Feb. 25. We had 21 persons participate and a number of them were included in our personal follow up interviews. Retreatants were offered the option to continue for the remainder of the Lenten Sundays or not, there were 10 who remained.

During the retreat, retreatants were assigned to spiritual directors with whom they would communicate daily via e-mail at an appointed time. Each day, retreatants would pray an opening prayer, read from Scripture and answer questions that would help them reflect on their readings and the discernment retreat process that they are undergoing.

There are a variety of ways to reach out to young adults and prospective new members and what I have just shared with you, is just one way. This has been a blessed experience for me, and hopefully, for all involved. There **are** young people interested in the vowed life! If you have any other ideas let your CVM know about them. It is up to us to go out and meet our young adults.

Mary Carol Burke, OP - Sparkill CVM