



Fact Sheet: Women Religious

- Number of Catholics in the United States totals **81.6 million**, equivalent to **25 percent** of the population (as of 2015)
- Catholic population globally totals nearly **1.3 billion**, equivalent to 18 percent of the world population (as of 2016)
- Number of Catholic sisters today in comparison to 1970:
 - in the United States: **47,170** (2016) vs. 705,529 (1970)
 - worldwide: **705,529** (2014) vs. 1,004,304 (1970)
- Of the number of Catholic sisters across the globe, **7 percent** are American.
- Members of the millennial generation (those born after 1982) say they are more likely to consider a religious vocation than members of Gen X.
- Women who know a sister or have been invited by a sister to consider religious life are more likely to seriously consider a vocation.
- The age of 20 is the average age newly professed sisters say they first considered religious life.
- Portion of never-married Catholic women who seriously considered a religious vocation: **2 percent**
- Of female college students involved in Catholic campus ministry, **39 percent** have seriously considered becoming a religious sister.
- Portion of newly professed sisters who say a relative **discouraged** them from pursuing religious life: **41 percent**
- Of newly professed sisters, **28 percent** say their **mother discouraged** them from pursuing religious life.
- Average age of entrance into religious life, through final vows: **41**
- Annually, approximately **100 U.S. women** entering religious life, through final vows.
- Currently, nearly **1,000 U.S. women** are in formation preparing to become sisters.
- **16 percent** of U.S. population is not affiliated with a religion.

Sources: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, National Religious Vocation Conference, Pew Research Center