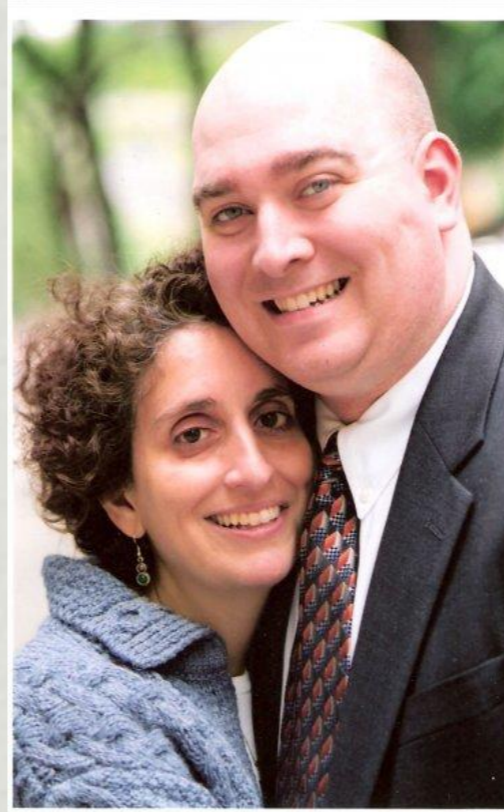


# Discernment and Young Adults

by Mike Hayes, author, *Googling God*

# Discerning What?

- ✱ Paths in Life
- ✱ Religious Vocations
- ✱ Spiritual Seeking



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# Paths in Life

- \* Direct Personal Invitation - break anonymity
- \* Discernment - [CharisRetreats.org](http://CharisRetreats.org), What Works?
- \* Tools: Inventory - PNCEA, Dominicans - Called & Chosen
- \* Marriage Prep - Foccus, Pre-Engagement Retreats
- \* We need to teach discernment- this is where young adults are.

# Turn It Off

- ✱ What happens beyond the internet?
- ✱ Some “real” community is formed there
- ✱ But also limited
- ✱ Once they are interested we need to engage them in relationship and in discernment
- ✱ Direct Personal Invitation

# Wield Symbolism Well

- \* How is this different?
- \* Eucharist- centered
- \* Vibrancy & Relevance
- \* Identifiable Priests, Bishops, Nuns, parish leaders

# Continued..

- \* Take an interest in where they are...
- \* Marriage, Dating - “How to deal with my husband?”  
Should I marry this woman?
- \* Now what? - Those who are seeking more
- \* What should I do with my life?
- \* Where is God present in my life? -Tell your story
- \* What does the church teach?

# Topics of Interest

- ✱ Relationships and Sex
- ✱ Politics and Justice
- ✱ Culture and Religion
- ✱ Spirituality
- ✱ Pop Culture

# Religious Vocations

- \* 80% encouraged by priest
- \* More than 50% encouraged by a friend or mom
- \* Almost none mentioned:
  - vocation directors
  - the internet or other media (TV, billboards, radio)
- \* A good deal of teachers become priests, sisters
- \* Nearly HALF - report being discouraged by people

# INITIAL INSPIRATION

- \* DOES NOT HAPPEN ONLINE (MAJORITY)
- \* Direct personal invitation
- \* Supportive communities lead to vocations
- \* Why should we STILL advertise vocations online?

# Vocation Advertising

- \* Spiritual seeking happens online
- \* Searching for religious life happens anonymously  
ONLINE
- \* Diocese and religious communities need to have all the information online.
- \* For God's sake (literally) LOOK INTERESTING!
- \* Who are we? What are we about? What is our charism? What will you be doing if you join us?

# Continued

- \* Vocations ads do not inspire people to the priesthood or religious life (generally)
- \* That has already happened
- \* Vocation ads should be designed to take the next step--to WHICH community are you called?
- \* Stories of present day seminarians will be key.
- \* How will you best express your community?

# Niche marketing

- \* Where are vocations coming from?
- \* Saying Campus Ministry is the wrong answer
- \* Paulists - Social Service, Communications, engineering/science
- \* Jesuits - higher education
- \* Go after YOUR niche market(s)

# Spiritual Seeking

- \* This is where the hard work comes in
- \* Awakening faith - Pre-Evangelization
- \* Where is God working in our lives?
- \* BustedHalo.com® - move from disinterest to interest
- \* Next step - move from non-affiliate to affiliate

# Parish and diocese

- \* Come in at the “interest” but non-affiliate part
- \* But CAN come in earlier--but that would be in a “sponsoring” or “contributing” way or in an “off-site” but “connected” way.
- \* OR: Build something yourself. Inspirational Blog, podcast, answers site, etc.