



# The National Association of Vocation & Formation Directors (NAVFD)

June 2019

## CONFERENCE 2020



“**Calling to New Horizons**” NAVFD’s next conference will be held in beautiful St. John’s, Newfoundland from April 29-May 2, 2020.

The opening night speaker is **Dr. Richard Gaillardetz**, the Joseph Professor of Catholic Systematic Theology at Boston



College and currently the chair of the theology department whose presentation is, “**I Call You Friends’: Toward a New Theology of Vocation.**” Dr. Gaillardetz notes that, “traditional Catholic understandings of vocation often focus on four states of life: consecrated religious life, priesthood, Christian marriage and the single life. His presentation will propose a theology of vocation that focuses on the call to Christian friendship as the primary relational vocation of all the baptized. Within this framework consecrated religious life would be understood as a form of ‘evangelical friendship’ and marriage as a form of ‘sacramental friendship.’”

**Sr. Margo Ritchie, CSJ** is a Sister of St. Joseph whose life has taken her from teaching high school to being a co-director of a home for women in transition, to the work of spiritual direction at a retreat house in London. Her service now is the very interesting work of leadership within her Congregation. Borrowing a phrase from Irish poet Padraig O Tuama, Margo will begin to describe the landscape of this place called ‘here’ as a starting point for conversation among us. How we name this place called ‘here’ influences what we see...and what we don’t see. Through the lens of call she will explore with us the image of the “adjacent possible.” The title of her presentation naturally is, “**Where is This Place Called Here**”?



**Fr. Daniel P. Horan, OFM**, is a Franciscan friar of Holy Name Province (NY), assistant professor of systematic theology and spirituality at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, a columnist for the National Catholic Reporter and an author. His presentation is entitled: **Discernment, Vocation, and Formation in the Thought of Pope Francis**. This is how Fr. Daniel describes his presentation, “In keeping with the vision of a universal call to holiness expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Francis has frequently written and spoken about



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need to attend to discernment in the lives of all the baptized. Recognizing consecrated religious life and ministerial priesthood as subsets of a broader theology of vocation, this presentation explores what the pope's contributions to the themes of discernment and vocation have to offer to renewed consideration of religious formation and vocation ministries.

These presentations alone would be worth the trip to Newfoundland but wait, there is more!

A wide selection of workshops will provide further input

and opportunity for dialogue into matters close to our hearts. Topics include 'The Dawning Future of Religious Life: Germinating and Radiating' by Brenda Peddigrew, RSM; 'Formation that Nurtures Transformative Servant Leadership' by Miriam K. Martin, PBVM and 'Catechetical Formation of Candidates in Religious Life: Challenges and Opportunities' by Tony Bidgood, C.Ss.R. to mention just a few.

Registration is now open on our website [navfd.info](http://navfd.info). Contact Sister Nancy Sullivan at [navfdco@gmail.com](mailto:navfdco@gmail.com) for more information

### QUESTIONS FOR THOSE INVOLVED WITH POTENTIAL CANDIDATES:

Many NAVFD members were able to tune in to the Screening Candidates webinar presented by Dr. Eran Talitman, Clinical Team Leader at Southdown Institute. Eran outlined what constitutes yellow and red flags in the candidate assessment process for priesthood and religious life. He went on to describe personality disorders and how to recognize them. He suggested the following questions for those involved with potential candidates:

- ◆ Does this person demonstrate the capacity to initiate, develop, and sustain friendships?
- ◆ Does this person possess a balance self-perspective that includes gifts, strengths, limitations, weaknesses, and awareness of growing edges?
- ◆ Do I feel awkward, uncomfortable, inferior, cautious, or guarded in my interactions with this person?
- ◆ Do they demonstrate the capacity to be accepting of various individuals?
- ◆ Does this person possess an idealized image of religious life or priesthood?
- ◆ Is there mutuality and respect when they talk about others?
- ◆ What is this person's capacity to express emotions?
- ◆ What is this person's capacity for empathy?
- ◆ How do they deal with anger and conflict?
- ◆ Is this person open to new perspectives?
- ◆ Does this person demonstrate the capacity to be aware of the impact they have on others/
- ◆ In what way might this person be desiring to enter religious life as a way to avoid difficult personal issues? (financial debts, sexuality, needing support and structure, etc.)



**NAVFD's Research Project** "Landscape of Religious Vocations in Canada" continues to bear fruit as the next steps are taken. In late September or October, a group of Religious will be invited to gather in Edmonton, Toronto/Hamilton and Halifax to talk about the results of the study and ponder such questions as 'what is the study saying?' 'Where is the hope?' 'How can the results of this research be used in our ministry of vocation and formation?' among others.



The next newsletter will be published in September. All of us at the National Association of Vocation and Formation Directors wish our members and friends many blessings over the summer and hope that you will be able to secure some moments to rest and recharge.