

DON'T CHEW JESUS! FACT SHEET

Creating *Don't Chew Jesus!*

- Nearly 400 anecdotes and recollections were gathered from more than 100 contributors.
- Stories were collected through dozens of speaking engagements, newspaper articles, radio and television news items, Internet message boards, friends, neighbors, and even strangers on the street.
- Many contributors remain anonymous and names have been changed to protect the “not-so-innocent.”
- Stories came in from throughout the United States, Canada, Ireland, England and Germany.
- Contributors include Catholic baby boomers; their parents and children; non-Catholics; and even nuns (and former nuns).

Touched By A Nun

- The era seeing the most rapid growth in vowed religious life in the United States was between 1945 and 1965 – baby boomer years.
- In 1965, a record 5.5 million children attended Catholic schools, staffed by nuns.
- One out of every 10 baby boomers was taught by a Catholic nun.
- More than 180,000 nuns served in the United States in 1965; by 2005, that number has dwindled to fewer than 70,000 yet Catholic population has increased to 65 million.

Don't Chew Jeus fact sheet, add 1

Reach Out To A Nun

- The median age of nuns in 2005 was 70 years.
- Many nuns (and other religious) are living on \$4,125 a month – less than \$12 per day. Traditionally, nuns worked for small stipends and were excluded from Social Security until 1973.
- Those in religious orders face a \$8.7 billion shortfall in retirement funding, with a projection of \$20 billion by 2023.
- S.O.A.R.! (Support Our Aging Religious), a national non-profit organization, raises funds, issues grants and provides support to elderly religious. Contact: www.soar-usa.org; 301.589.9811; 1400 Spring Street, Suite 320, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Sources

“*Center of Catholic Identity*” by Dean R. Hoge, Catholic News Reporter, Sept. 30, 2005.

“*Catholic USA*” by Ken Briggs [online]. Available on the World Wide Web: cara.georgetown.edu/bulletin/cathusa

“*Why Catholic nuns are disappearing*” [online]. Available on the World Wide Web: www.centredaily.com/mld/cnetredaily/news/opinion/14856845

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