

## The Six-Month Discernment Challenge

from *Discerning Religious Life* by Sr. Clare Matthiass, CFR

1. **Make a Commitment.** Commit to The Six-Month Discernment Challenge. It takes time to discern well. Consider setting aside six months or even a year to focus explicitly on your vocational discernment.
2. **Develop Your Prayer Life.** Discernment flows out of your relationship with God, so commit to Holy Mass, frequent Confession, adoration, and personal prayer time, including silence, praying with the Scriptures, and Marian Consecration.
3. **Seek Accompaniment.** Don't make the journey alone. Find a good spiritual director.
4. **Don't Date and Discern.** Discern marriage and religious life separately. Let the discernment of each vocation have its time and place.
5. **Start Visiting.** Narrow down the search. Pick a few communities that you are attracted to, make contact, and schedule a visit. Visit sooner rather than later.
6. **Look for Confirmations of the Call.** As you grow in clarity about your call, your heart will provide confirmations in the form of peace and joy. The community, your spiritual director, and those who know you best will also be sources of confirmation.
7. **Take a Leap of Faith!** Discernment should lead to decision. Some things you can only know for sure by doing. At a certain point, you've got to go for it.