

NOT EASY, JUST SATISFYING...

A friend sent me an article from the University of Chicago News Office web-site which discusses the results of a survey about people's careers, and about the levels of 'job satisfaction' and 'happiness' found there. I put those terms in quotation marks because it's so hard to measure the terms: what makes one person satisfied or happy may be a source of misery for another. See the article in full

[<http://wwwnews.uchicago.edu/releases/07/070417.jobs.shtml>] for the complete story. Nevertheless, some numbers in the recent survey of careers and contentment really stand out.

Only 47% of people surveyed said they were 'very satisfied' with their jobs, and only 33% said they were 'very happy.' But within that category, 87% of clergy said they were 'very satisfied,' and 67% said they were 'very happy.' While there is no doubt that 'clergy' means Protestant and Catholic, Jewish and Muslim, still we can see an important trend here: happiness and satisfaction have a great deal to do with responding to the call to serve that we hear within us (and which is what in Catholic circles is associated with the sense of 'vocation'). I might also note that these statistics were compiled after all the heartbreak and sorrow of the sex abuse scandal (which, FYI, touches every denomination, even though the Catholic Church has been singled out—not inappropriately, but unfairly—for special condemnation in this area).

So the next question for us, especially for young folks, is "Are you listening to the call within you?" If not, the likelihood of happiness and satisfaction is less; if so, and if you are willing to serve and sacrifice (two terms not exactly high on the 'status list' of those who watch and buy into the premises of shows like "The Apprentice" or "Desperate Housewives"), you can have a wonderful ride. Are you listening? Are you dreaming? Are you hoping?

Vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life are desperately needed; it's a path of happiness and satisfaction as well as that of holiness and ministry. What do you say?!