What is Religious Life/Consecrated Life?

By Fr. Chris Gibson, C.P.

Religious or Consecrated Life is way of living out our baptismal promises in a radical way following the call of Jesus who lived this way himself. This consecration is expressed through the vows of Chastity, Obedience and Poverty which basically means that one accepts God as our only Love, Will and Possession. Usually religious live in community. Their lifestyle is in essence what everyone will live in heaven when Christ will be all in all: united with and in Him, immersed in the Holy Trinity for all eternity. Each order expresses a particular angle of the mystery of Christ. This is known as a charism which expresses itself as a service to others. Some religious communities express especially Jesus the Teacher, others the missionary, others the Healer, others the one who prays, others the lover of the poor, others the one who reaches out to children, others the one that loved us unto death, or who rose from the dead, others the merciful or sacred heart, others centered on the infant Jesus or the Holy Family, etc, etc. There are thousands of religious orders, each with something special to offer like different languages of the Holy Spirit.  
Personal prayer and talking these things over with a vocation director are ways to clarify your special vocation in life.