Nearly half of seminary students say someone else suggested ministry before they ever seriously considered it.

**WHAT WE STUDIED**
Drawing from 36 in-depth interviews with first year Masters of Divinity students, we explored how other people facilitated a sense of calling for students prior to starting seminary.

**WHAT WE FOUND**
47% of students mentioned someone else suggested ministry before they considered it seriously for themselves.

Men were more likely to name an exemplar (75%) than women (50%). In nearly all cases the gender of the exemplars matched one's own.

While only a few students mentioned challengers, more women (20%) reported their presence than men (6%).

**WHAT IT MEANS**
The call to ministry, while deeply spiritual, is a social enterprise, too—which might prompt you to reflect on your own vocational path. Do you see any of these types of people at work in your story?


**SIX TYPES OF PEOPLE EMERGED AS PLAYING A FORMATIVE ROLE IN ONE'S CALL NARRATIVE:**

**THE INSTIGATOR**
Someone who prompts, initiates, or initially encourages one’s calling.

**THE EXEMPLAR**
Someone who models the way, making paths seem possible and/or appealing.

**THE INTERPRETER**
Someone who shapes how one makes meaning of experiences and feelings.

**THE AFFIRMER**
Someone who reinforces the reality and validity of being called.

**THE CO-DISCIERNER**
Someone who serves as a conversation partner in how to enact next steps.

**THE CHALLENGER**
Someone who rejects, dismisses, or denies one’s sense of call.