

## Vocation Talk: Elementary School (Grades K-5)

**PLEASE NOTE: the presenter does not have to memorize or read from this script; they should feel free to put it in their own words, and, if desired, to add their own personal examples and stories.**

**PLEASE ALSO NOTE: to go along with this talk, the following videos from the chapter, 'Video Resources on Religious Vocations for Different Ages,' may be used: Do You Wanna Be a Sister? and Why Become a Priest?**

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: YOU WILL NEED A TELEPHONE (A CELL WILL WORK) AND A BIBLE FOR THIS TALK]

[AS YOU BEGIN, HOLD UP THE PHONE AND ASK THE STUDENTS:] Can anyone tell me what this is?

[WAIT FOR THE STUDENTS TO ANSWER; WHEN SOMEONE GETS IT RIGHT, PROCEED:] Good! It's a phone. Now, let me ask you this: what does a person do with a phone? What do you do with it?

[WAIT FOR STUDENTS TO ANSWER; WHEN SOMEONE ANSWERS CORRECTLY WITH 'CALL,' THEN PROCEED FURTHER:] Right! People use phones to call other people. Now, think about this. Who might call you on the phone? And—what would they say to you?

[LISTEN FOR ANSWERS AGAIN FOR A MINUTE OR SO – THEN PROCEED:] Good. Now—do you ever call anyone? And if you do call them, what do you say?

[AGAIN INTERACT WITH THE STUDENTS AS THEY ANSWER; AFTER A MINUTE OR TWO OF THIS, PROCEED TO THE NEXT PART OF THE TALK:] Excellent answers, everyone. Thank you!

Now, you might not have thought of this before...but you know what? God calls us, too. He calls each of us, actually.

How does he get through to us, though? Does God call us on the phone?

[AGAIN INTERACT WITH STUDENTS AS THEY PROVIDE ANSWERS; THEN:] Okay...well, if God doesn't call us on the phone, then how can we hear Him when he calls?

[FIELD THEIR ANSWERS FOR A MINUTE, AND THEN:] You know, God calls us in a lot of ways. He calls us through the sacraments—like Holy Communion and Reconciliation, which you guys all have all experienced—or will experience very soon.

He also calls us through other things. When we pray, sometimes God calls to us. He can truly 'talk' to us when we pray!

[HOLD UP THE BIBLE NOW]

God calls us through the Bible, too. He calls us through the scriptures—the things we read inside the Bible when we are at Mass...or in the classroom...or at home...or other places.

But that's not all the ways He can call us. God can call to us through other people. Think of the Bible again, and the stories about the prophets. Think of how the prophets deliver God's message to other people. Prophets speak God's message. Sometimes, it's a warning. Sometimes, it's advice. Sometimes, it's encouragement. But no matter what it is, it's an example of God calling to someone.

Think of this, though. [HOLD UP THE PHONE AGAIN] God calls us to live certain kinds of lives. He calls us to live good lives. Holy lives. What does that mean—to live a good, holy life? [FIELD ANSWERS]

OK! You gave different answers to that question. That's all right. We are all called to live our holiness in different ways. What does that mean?

I'm going to read from the Bible now. Please listen to this. It is from the first letter of Peter:

But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, 'You must be holy because I am holy.'

God calls everyone to be holy. But He calls them to live their holiness in different ways.

He calls some people to be holy by being married. A woman and a man who love each other very, very much—they become wife and husband. Maybe they'll have a family. They help one another and their whole family to grow closer to God.

But that's not the only way He calls people to be holy.

He calls other people to be holy by living a single life. They are not married, but they still help others to grow closer to God. Some of them do that by volunteering or other work.

There are a few more ways, too. Can you think of one of the ways I haven't talked about yet? [FIELD THEIR QUESTIONS FOR A MINUTE; THEN:]

Great! Yes. God calls other people to be holy by becoming a priest. Priests serve and love all of God's people. They say Mass, they visit people in hospitals, they help families...they do a lot of good things for the world. We call them "father."

Now, still other people may be called by God to be holy by becoming what we call religious. That's a noun—it refers to a person. Religious also is an adjective, as you're learning in class.

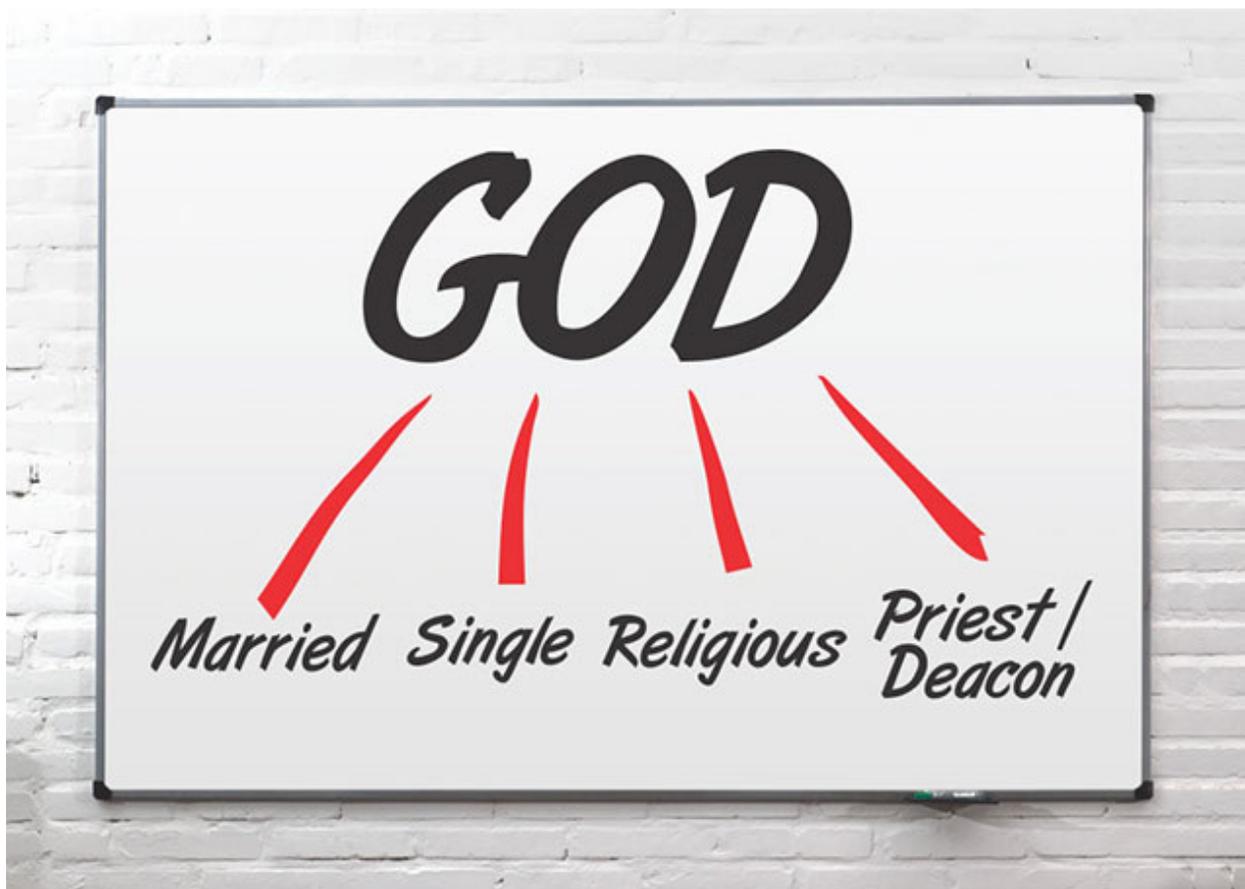
But this is another use of that word. So...God calls some people to be religious. That means they're a brother or a sister or a nun or a priest in a religious order. [GIVE EXAMPLES OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS OR ASK THE STUDENTS IF THEY KNOW OF ANY RELIGIOUS ORDERS] We call these people 'sister' or 'brother' or 'father.'

Now, there's one more way God calls people to live out their holiness. Does anyone know what that is? Here's a hint—these guys (they're men) work closely with priests during the Mass. They can proclaim the Gospel, for example. [WAIT FOR ANSWERS] They are called deacons. These men serve the Church and families. We will group this one together with priests. I'll show you this in a minute.

So...let's go over that again: God calls us to live our holiness in different ways: married life, single life, religious, priest or deacon.

All of those ways of life are ways for people to grow in holiness and help each other on their way to God. Let me show you on the chalkboard:

[GO TO THE WHITEBOARD AND DRAW THE FOLLOWING SKETCH ON IT:]



Now, no matter which life God calls you to, this part is really important: you have to listen very closely and carefully to what God is saying to you. That's how you find out which life he wants you to live.

There are a few ways you can do that. You can do that by praying. You can do that by listening to what you hear at Mass. You can do that by receiving the sacraments like Holy Communion and Reconciliation.

Let's hear one more story from the Bible. I think it will help show you what I mean.

This is a reading from the First Book of Samuel (1 Sam 3:1-10). [READ PASSAGE; THEN:]

OK. Think about Samuel for just a minute. He's a young boy. He hears a call. He thinks it's Eli that's talking to him. But it's not. It's actually the voice of God that's talking. So he goes to Eli two times. Each time, Eli says that he did not call him. Now, Samuel, we read in this passage, doesn't yet know God. But he will soon. The third time God calls, and Samuel goes to Eli, Eli understands what is happening. It's God calling to Samuel. So, he tells Samuel, 'If He calls you again, just say 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.' So, the next time God called Samuel, Samuel answered by saying, "Speak, for your servant is listening." You see, even though Samuel is just a boy—maybe not too much older than you guys are—he really wants to follow God. He wants to follow God.

So, I invite you to be like Samuel. God calls to all of us. Respond to Him. When you pray, talk to God about hearing and answering His call.

I'm going to show you one way you can do that in just a second. Before that, though—does anyone have any questions? [FIELD QUESTIONS AS THEY ARISE]

OK. Let's pray. Please repeat after me:

"God, our Father [STUDENTS REPEAT]

You call us to be holy [STUDENTS REPEAT]

Help us to know your will [STUDENTS REPEAT]

Help us to listen to your call [STUDENTS REPEAT]

Help us to say 'Yes' to you. Amen." [STUDENTS REPEAT]

*\*Materials used in this talk for early grade school vocations were adapted in part from 'Lessons and Activities for Vocational Awareness' by the Office of Priestly Vocations of the Archdiocese of Detroit.*