Lessons and Activities
For Vocational Awareness

- ***Let the Children Come*, Vocations Lessons and Activities for Grades K-8**
- ***Be Not Afraid*, Vocations Lessons and Activities for High School or Youth Groups**

Office of Priestly Vocations

2701 Chicago Blvd.

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Archdiocese of Detroit

www.detroitpriest.com

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Introduction:

Fostering vocations is essential for a strong and vibrant Church. Vocations are nurtured and encouraged primarily in the home but with the encouragement and support from the entire parish community.

By our Baptism each one of us became a child of God and was given a unique and wonderful gift of faith and a "vocation", a calling from God to follow Him in holiness in a special way. Most will marry, some will remain single but several are being called to live out their lives of holiness as a priest, deacon, or as a religious sister or brother.

God has not stopped calling, but the noise of the secular world has made it difficult for our children to hear and answer Jesus' invitation "come to me." You are in a unique position as a catechist to introduce and reinforce in our children the possibilities that God holds for them as they grow in their faith.

"Let the Children Come" provides basic vocation lessons and activities for grades Pre-K-8. These resources are intended to supplement the religious education already in place and may be adapted and used at any time throughout the year.

Contents:

Pre-School - Kindergarten:

"God made me special and has a plan for me"

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25 Ways to Encourage Vocations

"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities
for Vocational Awareness

GRADE: PRE-K to Kindergarten

God Made Me Special

and has a Plan for Me

Pre-School – Kindergarten Vocation Activities

God made me special and has a plan for me

Teacher's Note: God made each of us. He made us all different. He gave us all different gifts and talents, but we all are called to be with Christ, to follow Him in holiness and eventually be with Him in heaven.

Objectives: Students will have a basic understanding that:

All of us are created by God.
We are all very special in God's eyes.
We are all very different.
It is important to understand that God loves every one of us no matter what we look like or how different we are.
God will always be watching over us and protecting us.
God continues to ask us to use our gifts and talents to serve the Lord and one another.

Materials:

Construction paper (card stock if available)
Crayons
Scissors
Colored Yarn/String

Activity 1:

Divide the students into two groups. Have them form an inner circle and an outer circle. Have the inner group face outward and the outer group face inward towards the center. Ask the children to take a look at their own hands and remember what they see. Have them hold their hands up as if they were trying to reach the stars with both hands.

Now have them turn and face another student in the other circle. (If not even numbered students, teacher participates). Have them put their hand up against the student's hand and compare size, shape, fingernails, color, etc. Now have the outside circle move one person to the right (inner circle does not move) and compare hands again. Keep moving until everyone from the inner circle has compared hands with everyone in the outer circle.

Ask them if all the students have the same size hands; the same length of fingernails; the same color; the same finger length, etc. Remind them that God created all of us and that each one of us is unique – no two people are alike.

Have them return to their seats. On a piece of construction paper, have them draw the outline of their hand. Taking their time; have them draw a picture of their face in the palm of the hand. While they are doing that, with the help of room aides or other helpers, ask them what they like to do or why they think that they are special and write that on each finger.

Talk to the children about each child's hand, their gifts and talents. Be sure to emphasize how some may know their gifts now but God has many surprises in store for them and they may find many more gifts and talents as they grow older.

Cut out the hands (depending on level, either do it for them or they can do it) and put them around the room, hanging them on a colorful piece of yarn, to remind the students how together they make a beautiful design in this world.

Pre-School – Kindergarten Vocation Activities (continued)

Activity 1

Discussion:

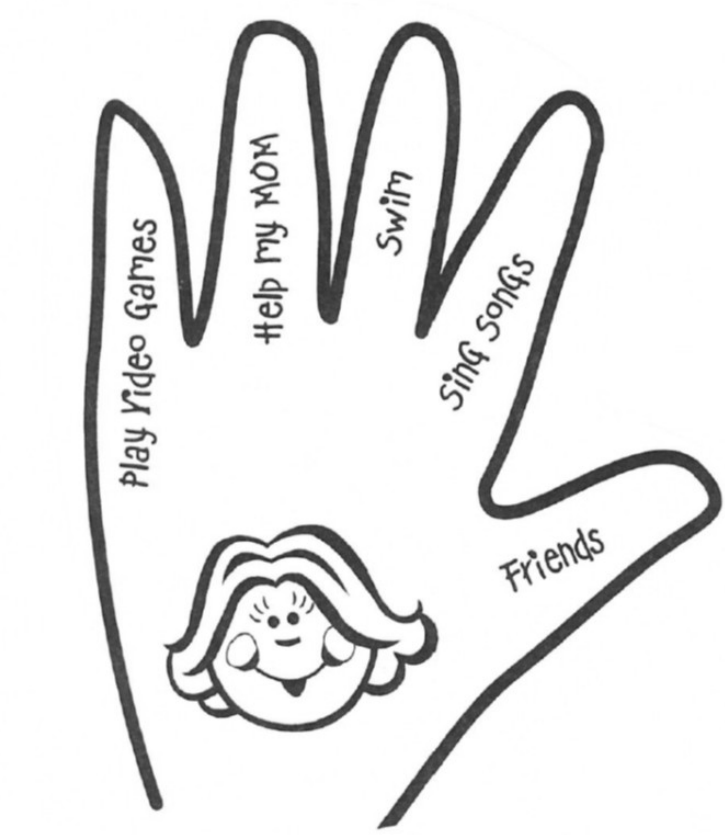
Each person is unique and special

No two hands are the same

Each of us has special gifts that God has given to us.

"Many hands make for light work"; have students talk about times at home or in school where this is true. When we all share our gifts and talents, everyone has what they need and the work gets done.

Think about ways you can use your hands to help other people and spread the love of Jesus.



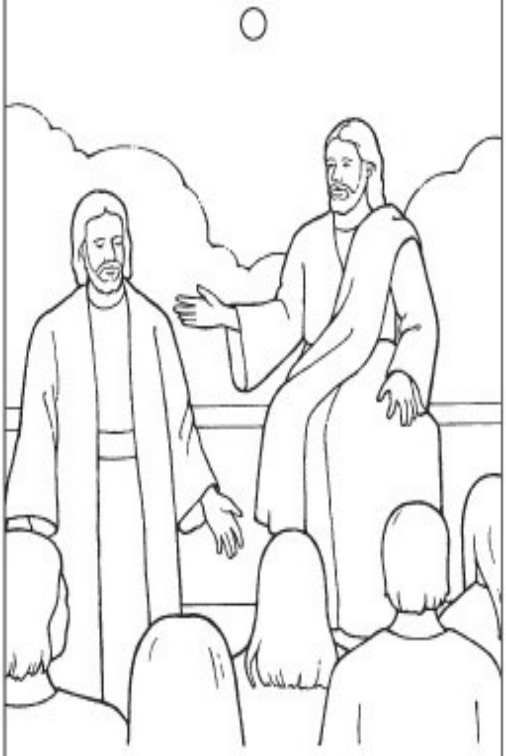
Sample of what the hand may look like

Activity 2: Hand-out the coloring page "The Heavenly Father has a Plan for Me"; let the children color it in. Talk about how special God has made each one of us by giving us our parents and loving us so much he brought us into the world. Talk about how at Baptism they became even more special when they became a Child of God. Close by singing the I AM SPECIAL song with them.

Activity 2

God, our Father,

Has a Plan for Me



I am a child of God, and he has sent me here.

Has given me an earthly home, with parents kind and dear.

Teach me all that I must do to live with him someday.

I AM SPECIAL (sing to the tune of *Frère Jacques*)

I am special (point to yourself)

I am special

Don't you see? (make binoculars with your fingers)

Don't you see?

Someone very special (hands out to the side, palms up)

Someone very special

'Cause God (point to heaven) made me (point to yourself)

God made me!

I am special (point to yourself)

I am special

I can pray (fold hands in prayer)

I can pray

To do what Jesus asks me (both hands reaching up to the sky)

To do what Jesus asks me

Every day (left hand down to side)

Every day (right hand down to side)

Closing Prayer:

Form a circle. The teacher and each child takes turns saying:

"Thank You, God, for making me *(name),* special. After everyone has a turn, the teacher shares with the class what God said about them in Isaiah 43:4:

"You are precious in My eyes and glorious...because I have made you."

"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities

for Vocational Awareness

GRADE: ONE

God Loves Me and I Love God

Grade One Lesson

GOD LOVES ME, I LOVE GOD

Objectives:

To know that God's love for me is constant and eternal

To respond to God with love

Teacher Notes:

Nothing can separate us from God's love. We can relate to love on a human level, that is why God sent His son, Jesus, to be like us, that He might teach us about God's eternal love for us how to love God in return.

Jesus said if we love Him, we will obey Him; loving God is the first step in being open to God's call in our lives. (Depending on time allotted, activities can be done in one or two lessons)

Materials:

Bible

Coloring crayons, pencils or markers, scissors, tape

Activity Sheet 1a (printed on pink paper)

Activity Sheet 1b

Lessons:

Ask the students: "What is a common symbol for love? (heart)

Hand out **Activity Sheet 1a**.

Who do you know that loves you? (Write sample names on board)

Let's write the names of all the people who love us between the lines and inside the heart.

Who loves **everyone** the greatest? (God)

Let's write "God loves" on the top line of our heart.

We need to remember that God loves everyone and especially each on of us; so let's write our name below the bottom line

If God loves us the greatest what should we do? (Love God)

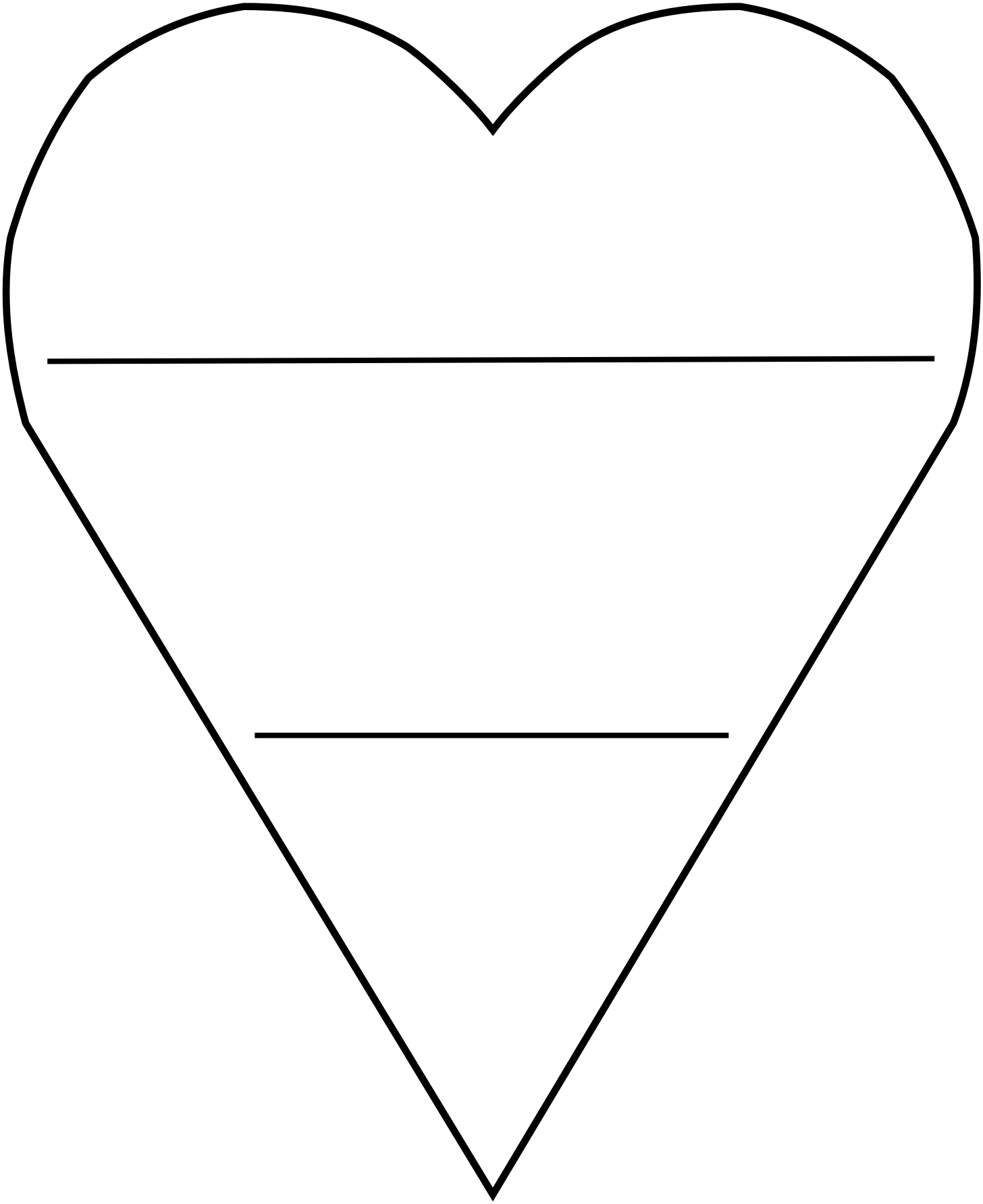
Let's cut out our hearts and place them around the room

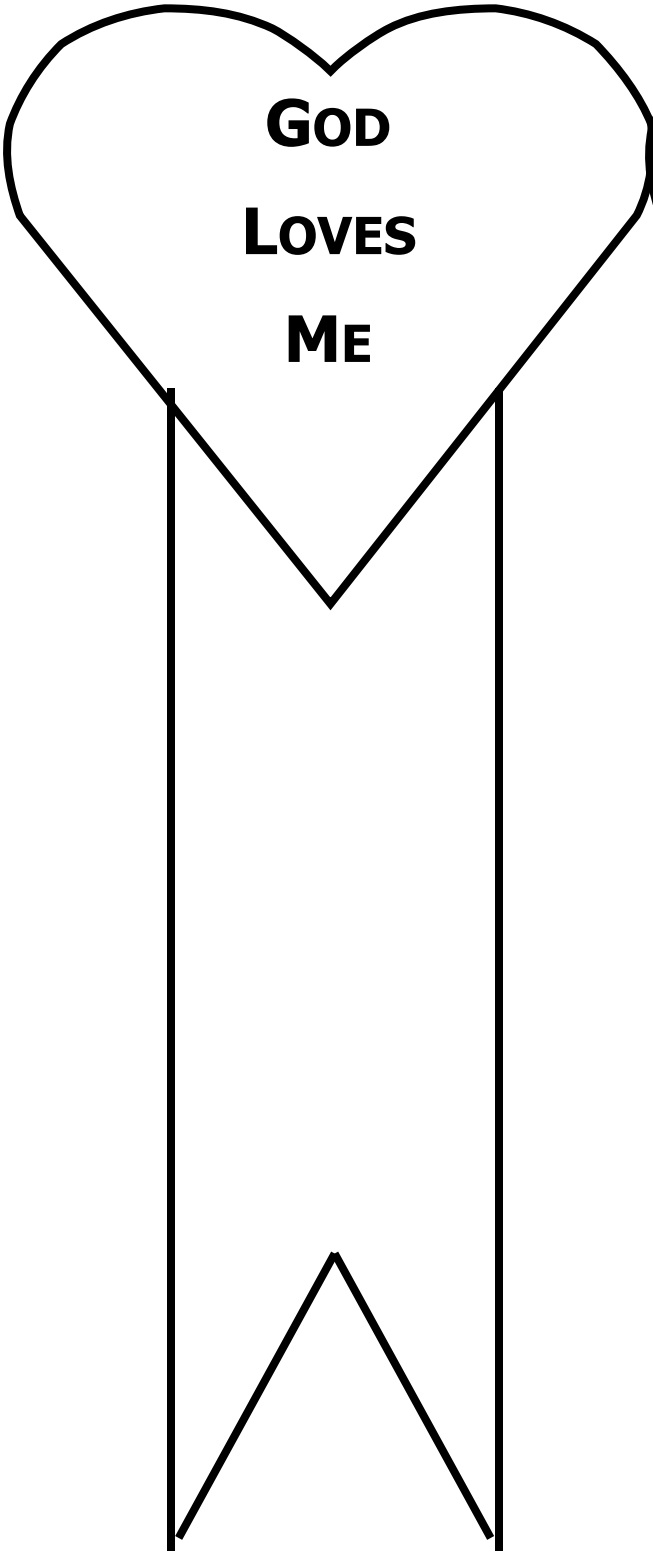
Hand out **Activity Sheet 1b.**

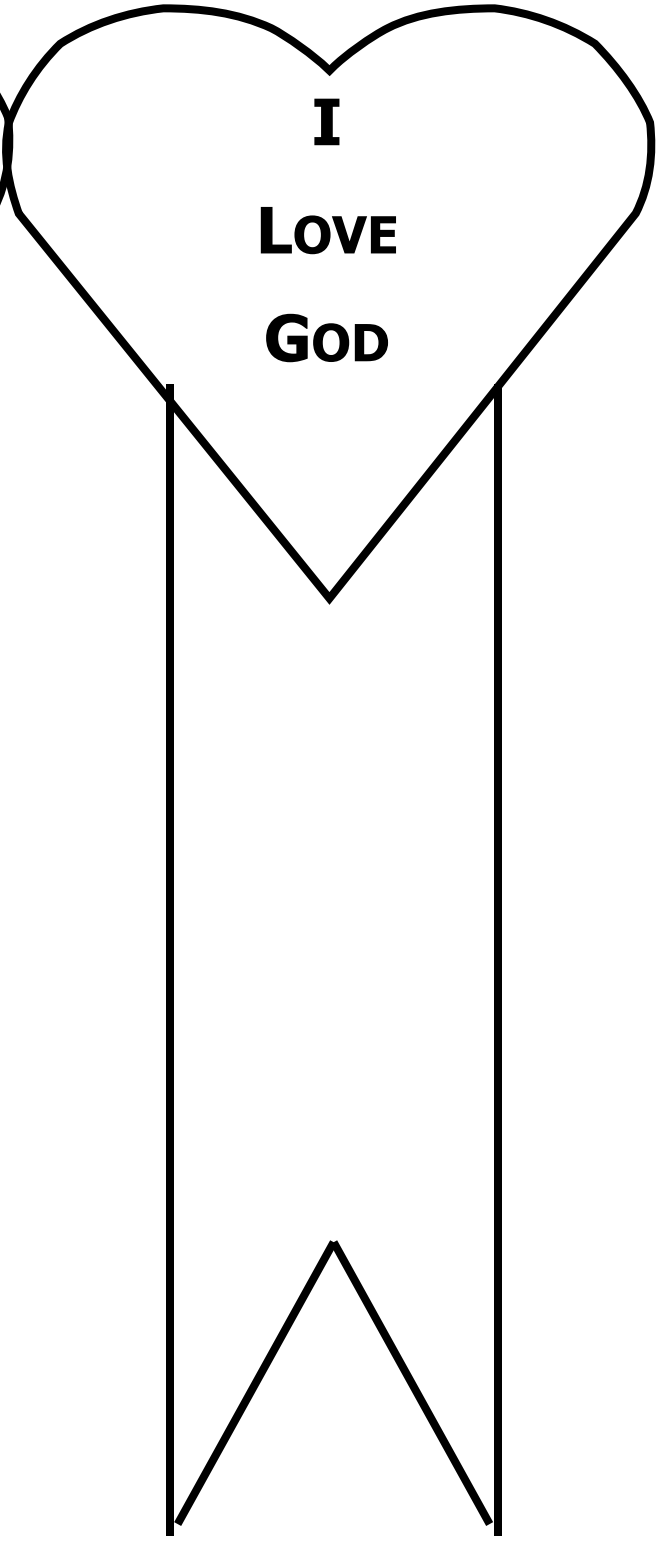
We are going to make a bookmark to remind us of God's love.

On the ribbon write the word (top to bottom): "Always" then color your bookmark

Cut it out and glue it together, this will be a reminder that God's love for us is constant




GOD
LOVES
ME


I
LOVE
GOD

Grade One Lesson, cont.

GOD LOVES ME, I LOVE GOD

Now we are going to hear God's Word and learn how much God loves us: First letter of John:

- 1 John 4:8: Whoever does not LOVE does not know GOD, because GOD is LOVE.
- 1 John 4:9: This is how GOD showed his LOVE among us: He sent his one and only SON into the world that we might live through him.
- 1 John 4:10: This is LOVE: not that we loved GOD, but that he loved us and sent his SON as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.
- 1 John 4:12: No one has ever seen GOD; but if we LOVE one another, GOD lives in us and his LOVE is made complete in us.
- 1 John 4:16b: GOD is LOVE. Whoever lives in LOVE lives in GOD and GOD in him.
- 1 John 4:19: We LOVE because he [God] first loved us
- 1 John 5:2: This is how we know that we are children of GOD: by LOVING GOD and carrying out his commands.
- 1 John 5:3: This is LOVE for GOD: to obey his commands.

Closing Prayer:

Write on the board: **God Loves Us** and **We Love God**

Have the children respond:

When we are sad, lonely or hurting; we know**…(God loves us)**
When we do the wrong thing and ask for forgiveness; we know…
When we see how Jesus suffered and died for us on the cross; we know…
When we look at all the beauty of creation; we know…

When we take time to pray; we are saying**…(We Love God)**
When we help others; we are saying…
When we take good care of everything that God made; we are saying…
When we try to be good and do our best; we are saying…

Thank you Jesus for always loving us and wanting the very best for us. We will try to do our best for you and show our love for you by taking good care of ourselves, others and the world you created. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities

for Vocational Awareness

GRADE: TWO

Belonging to God's Family

GRADE TWO LESSON

BELONGING TO GOD'S FAMILY

Objectives:

To recognize that through Baptism I am a child of God and belong to His family, the Church.

To reinforce the reality that we are special in God's eyes and that through Baptism we are called to follow Him as a member of His family.

To recognize that all people have a special call from God that they received at Baptism.

Teacher Notes:

We are insecure when we lack a sense of belonging. This affects our sense of self worth and limits us from being all God wants us to be. For most of us, our family will give us that first sense of belonging. It is important to have a sense of belonging. We need to fit in, to be a part of a group where love is shared. At our Baptism we became a child of God; knowing that we are part of God's family will give us the confidence to follow God, who loves us unconditionally.

Materials:

2-foot piece of string or yarn for each child and the teacher.

Bible

Procedure:

Here's a piece of string for each of us. What could you do with your string? What would happen if we tied our strings together? (Teacher, hang on to your string). Tie your piece of string to another person's. Let's keep tying the strings together until we have one long string. Now what could we do with this long string? This piece (the teacher's) is good and we can do certain things with a small string, but we can do so much more with a long piece. We are like the little pieces of string and can do great things by ourselves, but when we join our gifts together (like we did with the strings), we can do so much more. We belong to a group, our family. We use our gifts to help each other. That, too, is what the family of God, the Church, is like. We join our gifts together to serve God and share Jesus' love. All of us belong to God's family - when did that happen *(at Baptism - we became a child of God and became part of God's family).*

Activity 1:

Hand out the sheet of Jesus' Baptism. Have the students color in the picture of John Baptizing Jesus.

Scripture:

After they are done coloring their picture. Read Matthew 3:13-17; Jesus shows us that Baptism is an important part of pleasing God. He began His ministry after He let John baptize Him. Point out how God was pleased with Jesus being obedient.

Tell the students that when they were baptized, God gave to each of them a special mission, a calling to live as holy people with a vocation, and He wants them to find out what that is as they grow in their faith. As a member of God's family we are called to live as holy people in one of the following ways: Married, Single, Religious Sisters or Brothers or as Priests or Deacons.

JESUS' BAPTISM

Teacher Notes: The word vocation comes from the Latin word *vocare* - 'to call'. The Second Vatican Council make it clear that there is a "Universal call to holiness in the Church (*Lumen Gentium, 39*). God calls each person to Himself whether that be through the married, single, priestly or religious life. He calls us at Baptism, when we became a child of God, to respond to His Will, so that by being faithful to our vocation we will help others on their way to the Father.

Materials:

Telephone

Bible

Procedure:

Hold up the phone and ask "What is this" *(telephone)*

What do people do with a phone?

Who might call you and what might they say?

Do you ever call anyone, and what do you say to them?

God calls us too. Does He call us on the telephone?

Can you dial God in heaven and talk to Him on the phone?

If God doesn't call us on the phone, how can we hear Him?

List ways: Jesus, creation, sacraments, prayer, Sacred Scripture, Church, other people, events.

God calls all of us to live good and holy lives. What does that mean?

Scripture:

We are called to live our holiness in different ways.

Read 1 John 3:7 or 1 Peter 1:15-16

God calls some people to be holy by being married. A man and woman who love each other very much become a husband and wife. They might have a family. The help each other and their family to grow closer to God. Some married men become Deacons, serving the Church and their family.

God calls other people to be holy by living a single life. They are not married, nor are they priests or religious. These people often give help to others.

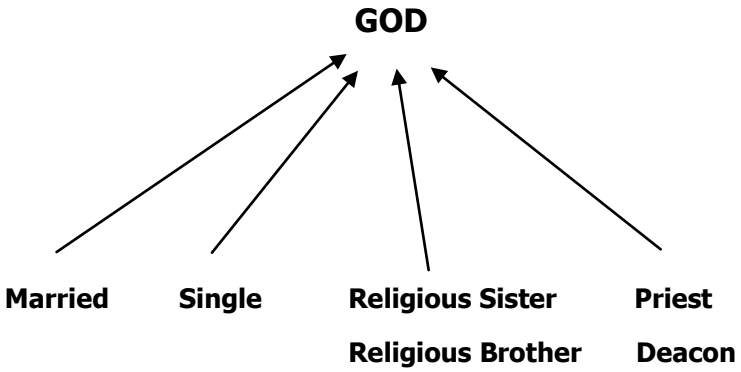
God calls still other people to be religious sisters or brothers. They love God and try to share His love with others. We call these people Sister or Brother.

Still others may be called to live out their holiness as a priest. We call them Father. They serve and love all God's people.

Scripture cont.

All of these ways of life - married, single, religious sister or brother, priest are ways for people to grow in holiness and help one another on their way to God.

Draw on the Chalkboard or overhead:



No matter to which life God calls us, it is important to listen very carefully to what God is saying and find out which life He wants us to live. We can do that by: praying to God, listening to what we hear at Mass, learn more about our gifts and by receiving the Sacraments.

Scripture:

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10 *(The Call of Samuel)*

Talk to the children about Samuel just being a young boy, but that deep in his heart he wanted to follow God. Invite them to talk to God in prayer about hearing and answering God's call in their lives.

Closing Prayer: (have the students repeat each line after you)

God, our Father

You call us to be holy,

Help us to know Your will.

Help us to listen to Your call.

Help us to say "yes" to You.

Amen

"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities

for Vocational Awareness

GRADE: THREE

Using Our Gifts and Talents

To Give Glory to God and to Help Others

GRADE THREE LESSON

USING OUR GIFTS AND TALENTS TO GIVE GLORY TO GOD AND TO HELP OTHERS

Objective: To understand that all have been given gifts and talents by God to share with others. To have a thankful heart for the gifts given us and for the gifts given to others.

Teacher's Notes: Each person is a gift from God and God has given to every person gifts and talents to build up His Church and to make this world a better place. God wants us to share our gifts and talents with others. We are not to compare ourselves with others or think that we are better than or less important than anyone else. We are to thank God and give God the glory for the gifts we have. It is also important to recognize the gifts God has given to others and to praise God and give Him thanks for them.

Materials:
Small Lamp (extension cord)
Box (bigger than the lamp)
Activity Sheet 3a My Gifts and Talents (on the back is the second Activity Sheet)
Activity Sheet 3b "I Share My Light…"
Bible

Procedure:

Have students sit in a circle; place the lamp in the middle of the circle. Have the box next to the lamp. Ask the students what they could do with the lamp and the box.

Scripture: Share with the students the following

- Let's listen to what Jesus says about a lamp in the Gospel of Matthew.

  Read Matthew 5:14-16.

  ⇒ After reading the passage; have one student turn on the lamp; have another student turn off the room lights; have a third student place the box over the lamp.

  ⇒ Q. Is it any good to have a lamp on when it's covered up. What is the wiser thing to do with it.

  ⇒ Have a fourth student uncover the lamp and place it on top of the box.
- Now I'm going to reread the Scripture passage and I'd like you to listen carefully and think about how <u>we</u> are like a lamp. (Reread Matthew 5:14-16 slowly)

  ⇒ How are <u>we</u> like that lamp.
- Who can name good works that each one of us can do?
- Why should we let others see our good works? (*To give praise to God!)*
- How are our good works like the light in the Bible?
- When we let our light shine, are we supposed to show off?
- How can we let others see our good works, yet not show off?

Have the students return to their seats and hand out **Activity Sheet 3a *My Gifts and Talents***

⇒ Have them write down all the ways that God has given them gifts (what they can do naturally) and talents (what they have learned to do) to give God glory and help others.

- When students have finished filling out the Gifts and Talents portion; have them select one gift or talent that they have listed, turn the sheet over and fill it in the "I Share My Light by…."
    - ⇒ When they finish, have them get with 1 or 2 other students and have each one share one thing they've written on the I Share My Light Worksheet.
- Collect the worksheets to post around the classroom at a later time.
- When the sharing time is over; place the lamp on the box turn it on. Turn off the room light.

Closing Thought:

God has given each one of us special gifts and talents to use for others and for God. We should be thankful to God for all the many different gifts and talents that we have been given and for all the gifts that God has given to others. Together, if we use our gifts for the good of all, we will be pleasing to God and make the world a better place.

Closing Prayer and Reflection:

Let's ask Jesus to help us let our light shine in the right way. By using our gifts and talents to help others we give praise to God. Jesus tells us that He is the light of the world. (Read John 8:12)

Thank you Jesus for being the light of the world and showing us how to use our gifts and talents to make this world that You created a better place for everyone. Help me to be a light for someone else today and help me to see your light as You show me how to live my life for You and to follow You in faith. In Jesus name we pray: AMEN!

ACTIVITY SHEET 3A

MY GIFTS AND TALENTS

What things are you good at doing? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What do you like to do with your time? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Make a list of the ways you use your gifts or talents to help others:

_____

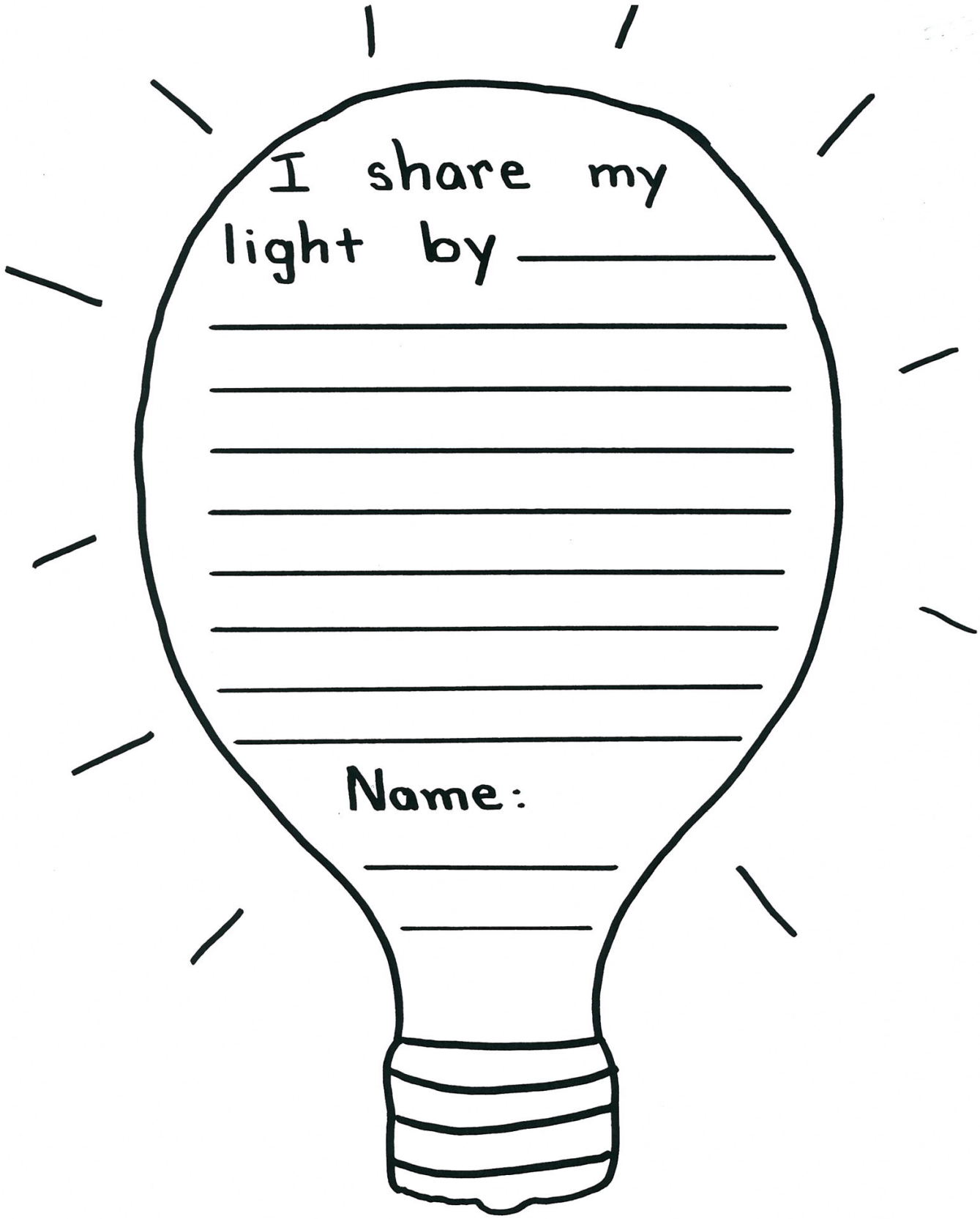
_____

_____

_____

ACTIVITY SHEET 3B

SELECT ONE GIFT AND TALENT FROM WORKSHEET 3A TO SHARE WITH EVERYONE



"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities

for Vocational Awareness

GRADE: FOUR

Signs of a Vocation – Following Jesus

GRADE FOUR LESSON

SIGNS OF A VOCATION - FOLLOWING JESUS

Objective:

To establish an awareness of the fact that God calls each of us to serve Him and others and that He calls us to a specific vocation given to us at Baptism.

To learn the signs of a religious vocation - a real desire, the right motivation and fitness for life.

Teacher's Notes:

Signs are all around us. In the Spring, flowers and trees begin budding and blooming; flashing lights warn us of an approaching train; a threatening sky warns of the coming of a storm. Some signs, such as traffic signs, are meant to guide us in safe travel. Other signs inform us of upcoming events.

We also have signs to guide our spiritual lives. The Gospels are a guide; and God has given us parents and friends whom we trust to help us along the way; the Sacraments have been given to us to give us the grace to be open to God's will in our lives; and we learn to pray as a special way to talk to God. As we become more attentive to these spiritual signs, we will learn to trust in God more, understand ourselves better, and come to know the path of life laid out for us by God.

As Christians, we are all called to walk with Jesus, to consider the needs of the people of God and to serve the Church in a particular way. Finding our true vocation in life will ultimately lead us to true happiness.

Materials:

Construction paper, straws (one for each student), yarn or string, markers, scissors, and a Bible (one for each student if possible).

Instructions:

Invite the students to get up and move around the room in whatever direction they wish. After a couple of minutes, have them return to their seats. Ask them what they observed while moving about: did they bump into one another; could they always go where they wanted to go; did they feel frustrated; or did they fall into a pattern and everyone began to move in the same direction? What could they have done to make their movement easier? Discuss how establishing some rules and signs might have helped them move around better. Ask them what it would be like if there were no signs or rules for driving - what would be the result? Help them to see that order and direction are an important part of our society so that we live in peace and can accomplish things - like going from one place to another. Signs and rules are necessary in our lives.

Procedure, cont.

Expand the concept of signs by asking the students what signs or directions already exist in their lives to help guide their choices in life. *(Possible responses may include: parents, teachers, their own talents and interests, the teachings of the Church, prayer, the commandments, the Bible, etc.)* Remind the students that God has a special plan for each of us which is our call or vocation. Explain that some of the signs helping us to know God's plan for us are external and others are internal. Write these two words on the board and explain what they mean: External: outside ourselves. Internal - inside ourselves. Discuss with the students examples of both:

External - parents, teachers, the Word of God, friends, priests, sisters, etc.
Internal - a feeling or a sense that this is the right way to go, properly for conscience

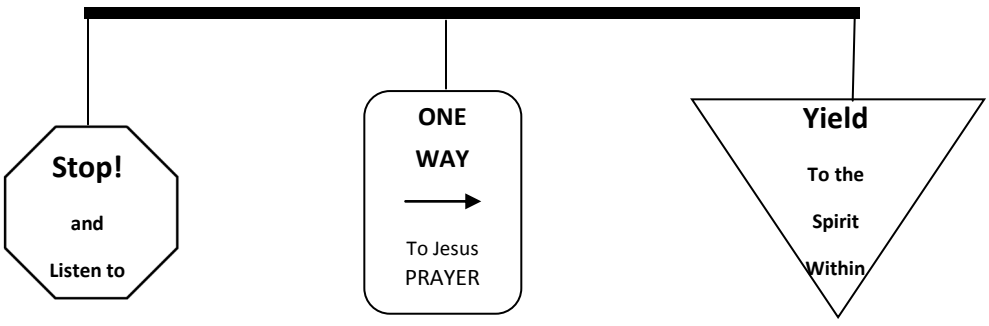
Tell the students that many of the things they do in life will help them to learn more about themselves. Knowing their likes and dislikes will help them to decide whether God is calling them to marry, be single, or to become a sister, brother, priest. Remind the students to pray for the knowledge of which vocation God has given to them.

Activity: Sign Mobiles

There are ways and signs that help us know what God wants us to do with our lives. Have the students recall the shapes of some road signs. Draw these on the board and put the road sign words and symbols on them (STOP, ONE WAY, YIELD). How can these signs be used to impact our spiritual lives and play a role in discerning one's vocation. Help them come up with phrases that flow from the road signs. After brainstorming - direct the students to make a "Sign Mobile".

1. Using construction paper, cut out "signs" and add the phrases to the words usually seen on the signs (Stop, One Way, Yield, Caution, Do not pass, passing allowed, etc.)
2. Punch a whole on the top of each sign.
3. Slide two pieces of string through the straw (length should be twice the length of the straw). One will be tied at the top for the mobile hanger, the other will be used for the two signs at the end of the straw.
4. Tie a longer string than the two ends near the middle of the straw.
5. Tie a sign to the end of each of three pieces of yarn hanging down from the straw.
6. Hand the Sign Mobiles throughout the classroom

(example below)



Scripture Reflection:

Have the students read Luke 6:12-16; Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 1:16-20 and Luke 5:2-11

Think about it:

What was the first thing Jesus did in preparing to choose the twelve apostles. *(Went to the mountain to pray)*.

What do we learn about the chosen men from this reading? (*One had their name changed Simon to Peter, some were brothers, came from various professions, one was a traitor, etc.).*

What do you think God looks for in calling people to be His followers today? *(God calls everyone to follow Him in some manner - it is our free will to follow Him).*

How is God calling us today to follow Him - how is God calling you? (*Have students share the many ways that God may be calling them - service, obedience, sacrifice, prayer, holiness, etc.)*

Closing Prayer:

Leader: Jesus, You want all of us to love God the Father as You did. Help us to follow Your example.

Response: Jesus, help us to trust in You.

Leader: Jesus, You were obedient to the will of the Father.

Response: Jesus, help us to trust in You.

Leader: Jesus, You know what is best for each one of us, help us to follow You.

Response: Jesus, help us to trust in You.

Leader: Jesus, you are calling us to a special vocation, help us to hear it in our hearts and minds.

Response: Jesus, help us to trust in You.

Amen

"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities

for Vocational Awareness

GRADE: FIVE

Service in the Church

GRADE FIVE LESSON

SERVICE IN THE CHURCH

Objectives:

To understand that we each receive a personal call from God called a vocation.
To understand that within our vocational call there are many different ways to serve the Church.
To understand the difference between a vocation and a career.

Teacher's Notes:

Each of us receives a personal call from God to a specific state of life in which we will grow in holiness. This state of life as a call can be to the single, married, religious or ordained (priesthood, diaconate) life and is our vocation. Within each vocation there are many ways to serve the Church. Our interests, our God-given talents and gifts help us to know the way that is best for each of us. Sometimes we need others to help us see the gifts and talents we have and we always have to look to God in prayer, Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church to learn the best way to serve God. God calls us to be a light for the world and be a light for others. Following Jesus in holiness is all about serving God and others.

Procedure:

Write the word "Vocation" on the board. Ask the students if they remember what a vocation is. Explain to the children that God calls each of us to serve Him in a particular way in life. That special call is our vocation. Review what the main vocations are: single, married, religious (sister or brother) or ordained (priest, deacon). All Christians, no matter what their particular vocation is, are called to give service to the Church and to be holy.

Ask the students to think of all the ways people are involved or give service within the parish community. List these on the board with the names of some of the persons (if known). (*Some examples might be lectors, musicians, choir, parish committees, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, fundraising, Christian Service, visiting the sick, youth ministry, catechists, etc.*)

Explain that each one of these people have a vocation and have been given various gifts and talents that they have put to the service of the Church and other people.

We all have been given gifts and talents to put to the service of the Church and one another. Learning what our gifts and talents are is one way of finding our true vocation and putting them to use for God.

Scripture: Listen to what St. Peter tells us about our gifts: 1 Peter 4:8-10

"Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."

Materials:

Worksheets: "*shares the gift…"* run off enough copies in two different colors and cut to size so that every student as one slip of each color. (e.g. yellow and orange).

Activity 1:

Have the students think about their friends and others in the classroom. Have them brainstorm and list the gifts and talents they see in each other. Remind them that gifts and talents are given by God and come from our parents to help build up the Church and to make the world a better place. Write them on the board. (*Examples might be: courage to do good, gentleness, positive attitude, friendliness, saying kind things, being strong, cooperation, playing fairly, helpfulness, generosity, working quietly, patience, being full of energy, being a good talker, being a good worker, being a good listener, being a good reader, musician, good at math, English, etc.).*

After brainstorming, pass out the orange slips and have every student write their name on the top. Collect all the slips and hand them out so that everyone has a different name. Students are to write a gift or talent they recognize in the person whose name they receive. Now pass out the yellow slips and have everyone write their name on the top. On the yellow slip have them write down a gift or talent they see in themselves. Have the students tape (or pin) their gifts and talents to a board. Invite them to think about how they can use their gifts and talents now to serve God and one another.

Activity 2:

Write the four different vocations on the board: *married, single, religious sister or brother, priest* to create four columns. Ask the students to think about and list what type of service in the Church each person called to a specific vocation might be able to do. Share with them the following:

Vocation to the Religious Life: Certain men and women in the Church are called to live as religious brothers or sisters. They choose to follow God in holiness in a special way by living in community with others, taking vows of poverty, celibate-chastity and obedience. Ask the children if they know of any religious sisters or brothers by name. If yes, ask them how that person gives service to God and to God's people. *(Also let them know that some are called to serve in hospitals, schools, working with the poor, at nursing homes, in the parish, etc.)* Think of modern day religious who exemplify some of these examples of service. A religious may hold a paid position in the secular world, but the money earned belongs to the community, they hold nothing of value in their own name. A religious spends time every day in prayer either alone or with the religious community. The Eucharist is the center of his or her prayer life. By devoting more time in prayer, the sisters and brothers grow in their love for God and to share God's love with those whom they have been called to serve.

Vocation to the Single Life: Not every one is called to follow God as a married person. Some live out their lives fully in the service of God and the Church as a single person. They have the freedom to give a great deal of their time to assisting others in the community, family and parish.

Vocation to the Ordained Ministry: Still others have been called to serve God and the Church by becoming priests and deacons. They are what we call ordained ministers. They are men, called by God, entering years of study and formation to prepare them for their special service to God and the Church. Both priests and deacons are ordained by a bishop who lays his hands upon and prays for God's special blessings to be upon them in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Priests and/or bishops bring us the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony and Confirmation. A priest is given the responsibility of being the pastor of a parish and providing spiritual and pastoral guidance to members of the parish. A deacon may baptize and perform the marriage ceremony. A priest is called to be another "Christ" and is allowed to consecrate the bread and wine to become the holy Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharist. A deacon may or may not be married. He usually has another job. He assists at the liturgy and may give a homily. A deacon may also serve in the Church in other ways, such as helping with the RCIA programs, marriage preparation or being involved in some of the other ministries.

Vocation to the Marriage: A man and a woman called by God to the vocation of marriage serve the Church in a special way. They profess a vow to one another to love, honor and to be faithful to one another throughout their lives. Married couples can be very involved in the Church. They are the first educators of the faith with their children at home and have the duty and responsibility to provide for their children's needs to grow physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually in holiness and grow closer to God in love. A married couple witness to their children what it means to follow God in holiness and to sacrifice in love and service. Ask the student to list some of the ways they see their parents serving God and others.

Help the children see that they already posses some of the gifts and talents that can be used in the service of the Church and others. Help them realize that they need to continue to develop and use these gifts and talents for God's glory and for the good of the Church and one another. (Optional exercise: have them write a paragraph and how they can serve God and one another right now)

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, You call each one of us to listen to Your voice and answer Your call to follow You in holiness. Help us to place our gifts and talents at the service of God and the Church all of our lives. Help us to be bold and brave to answer Your call to a particular vocation, especially if You are calling us to be priests, deacons or religious sisters and brothers. If you are calling us to the vocation of marriage or to be single, help us to always be considerate of others and to be generous and giving. Show us the ways to serve Your Church in whatever way is pleasing and helpful. May our words and actions always be a reflection of Your love in our lives that we give to others. Amen.

Shares the gift of

With our class

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Grade Five - 5

"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities

for Vocational Awareness

GRADE: SIX

God Made Us Unique

GRADE SIX LESSONS

GOD MADE US UNIQUE

Objectives:

To recognize that God made us unique, there is no one else like us in all creation.
God uses each one of us with our gifts and talents to build up the Body of Christ; only we can fulfill our piece of God's plan which adds to the fullness of a community.

Teacher's Notes:

Working a jig saw puzzle for the first time creates a sense of anticipation as we put the pieces together to create the whole. We can be amazed that each piece serves to hold a specific place, even though it may look like another one - yet, it only fits into its specific place. Without that one piece the whole puzzle lose its beauty and completeness. Every piece is necessary to create the whole beautiful picture.

We help form a human puzzle - each one of us uniquely made - in size, shape, personality, gifts and talents. Each one adding our individual beauty, and as a unique creation of God, made in the image and likeness of God, we help to complete the human puzzle of life. We each hold a unique place in all of creation as God intended. As we look at those around us, we see people who are married, single, religious or ordained, who seem to "fit" in their situations and have a sense of purpose and wholeness about them. These are the people who have listened to God's voice in their lives and answered His call to follow Him in holiness is a specific way. By relying on God's help, we too can find our vocation and fit perfectly into God's plan for His Church and the world.

Materials:

Bible
Copies of puzzle design page *(one for each student)*.
Puzzles (with 25 or 50 pieces); *(one for each group of 4 or 5 students)*
Large ball of yarn
Small piece of paper and pencils

Procedure:

Give each student a small piece of paper and tell them to number it one through eight. Tell them that you are going to ask them eight questions and they have to write down the first word that comes to their mind when hearing the question. They may not repeat any answer, regardless of the question. Q.1 Who are you? Q.2 Who are you? (remind them not to repeat); Q.3,4,5,6,7,8 Who are you? *(If they seem stumped, tell them they can use nouns or adjectives, descriptive words, like kind, friendly, generous, etc.)*

Procedure cont. Asking them several times to think of who they are may force them to see themselves with a little more depth and possibly in new ways. After all eight questions have been asked, they may share some of their answers with the class. Have them keep their answer sheet for later.

Scripture: Have the students read Matthew 16:13-17. Why do you think Jesus was concerned with who people were saying He is? Why is Peter's response so important? *(only God can reveal to us the truth of who Jesus is).* Knowing who we are is also important, only God can reveal to us who we truly are and what we were made to be.

Read Psalm 139:13-16. From this Psalm what can we learn about God's plan for us. *(God made us to be unique; God already has a plan for us; no one else can accomplish what God intended for us to do).* As we grow in our knowledge of who we are we will learn to view ourselves more from God's perspective and will learn just how important we are in God's plan.

Whatever vocation we are called to live - it will provide opportunities for happiness, for by following the will of God, we can be assured that we will be happy, because God only wants what is best for us.

Remind the students that, even though they are not ready to completely know their true vocation at this time, they can begin the process of forming their lives to be open to God. How they live their life now will help them know later - if they live as good, caring, helpful, people, it will help keep them close to God. When we care for others in our own special way, it helps us to form our lives into the shape God intends for us to be.

Activity 1:

Have the students take out their paper with the answers to "Who are You". Hand out the worksheet with six puzzle pieces on it. Remind them that there are various qualities that make us unique. Have them write their name on one of the puzzle pieces. In each of the other five pieces, have them write five of the one-word answers from their "Who are You" paper. Remind them, that these are gifts that will help them as they allow God to shape their and find their true vocation. Have them decorate their puzzle page, but the words must remain visible.

Activity 2:

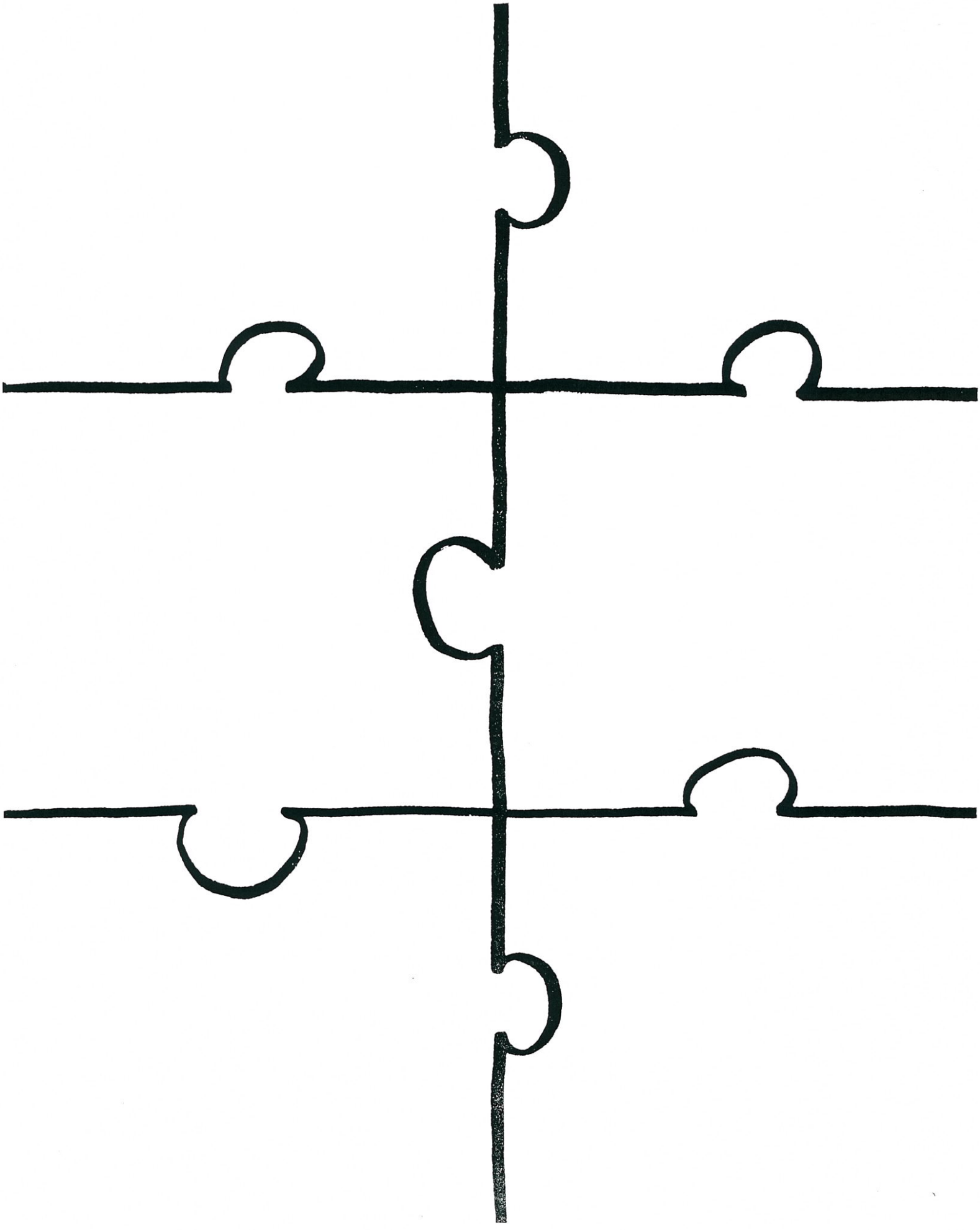
From each of the puzzle boxes, remove one piece, without telling the students. Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5. Explain that each group will be given a simple puzzle to put together in the next few minutes. Hand out the puzzles and allow them to put them together. Listen and watch their reactions as they learn they are missing a piece. If they complain that they can't complete it, ask them what difference it makes. Finally, when all are done - explain that each one of us is that missing piece of the puzzle in our communities. We are part of different communities: family, school, friends, neighborhood, and we are important to the wholeness of that community. If we do not generously answer the call from God to our true vocation, then the world will be missing the gifts that only we can bring to that community. When we respond to God's call - it all seems to fit *(give them the missing puzzle piece).*

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

Have the students go over their puzzle activity sheet with their name on it. Ask them to think about the words they used to tell about who they are. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. St. Paul uses the image of the body to speak of the Body of Christ, the Church. He tells us the body is made up of many members - just like the Body of Christ, the Church - each one of us. Have the students place their puzzle sheets on a board. This should form a quilt design. Help them understand that their many gifts make up the parts of the body, and the sheets together make up a community. Discuss with them how their gifts are in the developing stages and will continue to grow and develop in time. As they learn about what gifts and talents they possess, they will also learn more about who they are and how God will use these gifts and talents to build up His Church. They will also learn what their true vocation is - marriage, single life, religious life or as an ordained priest, but they must remain open to God's voice through prayer, learning more about their faith, Sacred Scripture, participating in the sacraments and talking about it with people they trust who can best give them direction.

Closing Prayer:

God our Father, we know You made each one of us according to Your design. You have blessed us with gifts and talents to be used for the good of all. Please help us to recognize the ways You have blessed us. May we always use all You have given us, so through us, others may see You and be drawn closer to You. Help us to know what our true vocation in this life is, so that we will find true happiness and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Your Son. Amen.



"Let the Children Come"

Lessons and Activities

for Vocational Awareness

GRADES: SEVEN AND EIGHT

Discipleship and

Discernment

Grades 7-8 Vocation Lessons and Activities

Learning about Christian Discipleship

Discerning My Vocation

Objective: Students will be invited to consider how God has called them to a particular life: single, married, priesthood or religious life. Each one of us has a responsibility to discover (discern), with the help of family, priests, religious sisters and brothers, catechists and others, the vocation to which vocation God may be calling us.

Teacher's Notes:

Included is information and lessons for students in the 7th and 8th grade. The six lessons that may be used independently or in conjunction with other lessons on vocations.

Overview:

Major Concepts:

1. What is Christian discipleship?
2. A vocation is a call from God.
3. God calls each person differently.
4. How will you recognize God's call?
5. The four Vocations: Single Life, Marriage, Religious Life, Priesthood.
6. Discerning my vocation
7. Prayer for Vocations

Prayer

Every activity, lesson, should begin with prayer! Prayer is communication with God. Without it, no one can grow spiritually and fully know the joy of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. Students should be encouraged to pray for God's guidance in discovering what is their true vocation in this life: marriage, single life, priesthood or religious life. A sample vocation prayer card is located at the end of this unit.

You are encouraged to begin and end class with a prayer for vocations.

LESSON I: What is Christian Discipleship?

Teacher Notes:

The term vocation is introduced for the first time as a personal call to a particular way of life that God invites each one of us to live. God created us with that purpose in mind. God gave us our vocation at Baptism. He will reveal our vocation as long as we have the desire and make a sincere effort to discover what it is.

Begin the lesson by asking the question "Why did God create us?" Write the answers for all to see.

Sacred Scripture: Share with the students *Genesis 1:27*; check any answers on the board that agree with our being made in the image and likeness of God (or add to the list).

Catholic Catechism of the Catholic Church: Read §§ 356-358. Ask the students to tell in their own words what that means to them. Add to the list on the board that we are called to know love and serve God and to share our lives with others.

Ask the students: "Do you think God cares about what we do with our life? Why do you think so?

Christian Discipleship: Points to consider with students:

- Everyone wants to do something great with their life. We want our lives to be meaningful, to make a difference, do something remarkable, maybe even heroic.
- Maybe you want to be great in sports, science, music, theater, writing, math, etc.
- The truth is, God also wants you to be great. He created you to be great and He gave you all the gifts and talents you need to become great.
- He not only created you to great, He also created you to be a saint and to be with Him in heaven.
- When we were baptized, God invited each one of us to become followers of Christ, we became a child of God.
- Someone who follows Christ is a disciple. Being a Christian disciples means forming a personal relationship with Jesus Christ by getting to know Him, becoming more like Him, and sharing Christ and our faith in Him with others.

LESSON II: A Vocation is a Call from God

Points to consider with students:

- God created each one of us for a specific purpose, and gave each one of us a mission to fulfill in our lives that no one else was created to fulfill.
- God wants us to be happy; by following His perfect will in our lives (our vocational call) we will experience true happiness. If we follow God's plan in this life it will lead us to be saints with Him in heaven.
- Our vocation is an invitation from God to follow the best path for our lives. We are free to choose to follow Christ, we belong to Christ and He, who began this good work in us, will help us to see it through to completion. (Philippians 1:6)

LESSON II: A Vocation is a Call from God (cont.)

- But how does God know what is best for us, what will make us happy, especially if we are not sure about it ourselves? Because God created us! Long before you were born, when He created the world, He knew you! (Psalm 139)
- When God created you, He knew you, He knew your name, what color your eyes would be, and what you would look like, He chose who your parents would be! He knows you better than any one ever could, including your parents, and He knows what will make you happy and holy.
- God does not choose our vocation randomly, but to accomplish His purpose.
- Only you can fulfill the vocation given to you by God.
- God will not force you to do anything. A vocation is not a set of orders; it is an invitation, a suggestion from a loving God; we respond because we love God.
- This invitation will include a specific way of life. It is God who invites, but it is up to us to learn what it is God is inviting us to do and to respond.
- If you ask God, He will help you discover what your true vocation is when you are ready.

Review:

A vocation is a calling from God given to us at our Baptism, that includes these three elements:

1. **It is a plan for our lives from God.**
2. **It is an invitation from God, who is all loving and knows what will truly make us happy.**
3. **Finding our true vocation will lead us to happiness in this life and ultimately with God in heaven.**

LESSON III: God Calls Each Person Differently

Invite the students to hold out their hands with palms up and look at them. Look at their shape and size. Look at their palms, fingers, fingertips. Explain the following:

God made our hands to be just the way they are for a reason. For example, not two people have the same fingerprints, which law enforcement uses in investigations. God gave some of you hands that are good for writing and studying, some of you have hands that are good at art or music, some of you have hands that are good for sports, some of you have hands that care for others, younger brothers and sisters, friends, or that help your family around the house. God designed your hands and your whole self to be the way you are for a reason.

Read Psalm 139:1-15 to the class. Ask them what this says about the uniqueness of their creation?

Write their answers where they can be seen.

LESSON III: God Calls Each Person Differently (cont.)

Points to Consider with Students:

- God is always with us. He is always there to guide us even when we do not realize it. God call us in different ways - through prayer, through our experiences, or through other people like our parents, a priest, religious sister or brother, a teacher or a friend.
- Some people know what God is calling them to be and to do when they are very young. There are priests and religious who knew they were meant to follow God in that vocation from the time they were in the first or second grade.
- For other people, the understanding and knowledge of their calling may take time. It may come as they grow closer to Christ in a personal relationship; it may come at the suggestion of others who see in them a specific calling; or it may come as they grow in the knowledge of their faith and an awareness of God's plan for them.
- Married people may describe a realization that they wanted to get married some day, have a family from a very young age.
- Many young people may recognize the call to marriage and becoming parents when they take care of younger siblings or babysitting other children.
- Parents, teachers, priests, religious sisters and brothers and spiritually mature friends in your life who have followed their vocational call are good people to talk to about your vocation.

Discussion with students: If you were home and wanted to invite your friend over to your home to hang out, what are some of the ways you might contact your friend? List all the examples.

It's the same with a vocation. God wants to invite you to follow a particular path, so at some point He is going to tell you about it, only He does it in His way.

Q. What if your friend doesn't respond? What do you do?

R. You can either leave a message, or contact them later.

In a similar way, when God wants to invite you to a particular vocation, He will call you. The problem is that sometimes, we are not listening; other times we cannot hear Him because of all the distractions we allow in our lives; and sometimes we hear God calling, but we do not respond. In that case, what does God do?

He never stops calling, He never stops inviting; because He knows that His plan for us will bring us true and perfect happiness. He will leave us messages in different ways. The most important thing we can do, is when we hear God's call, we answer, because no one else can answer for us.

Just like when you hope your friend will answer you when you communicate with them, God desires a response from you. It is God's will for us to follow Him and it is our duty as disciples of Christ to answer and accept His invitation. Only then will we be truly happy.

LESSON IV: How Will You Recognize God's Call?

Points to consider with students:

- When the time comes, you will know that your vocation is the right one because it will fit who you are; it will complete your life, fill you with joy, match your gifts and abilities and bring you peace.
- That does not mean it will be the easiest path, or that it will be the one that you always thought you would take. God often surprises us and His plans are not necessarily the ones we had in mind.
- Take time to listen to what God has to say. Once you understand where God is calling you, you must act.
- Have faith, believe that God will guide you down the right path, open your heart to Him, and to not be afraid to say "yes" to God's invitation.
- Talking to someone else about what you believe God is showing you to be (a trusted person, your pastor, etc.) is important in discerning (figuring out what God wants you to do) your vocation.

Sacred Scripture: Read the story of Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1-18)

Samuel was called specifically by God in a very profound way.

Discussion: What are some of the different kinds of callings that a person could have in life? Think of someone you know who is doing something good with their life.

Q. Who has a vocation?

A. Everyone! (we received it at Baptism)

Q. What is the difference between a vocation and a career?

A. A vocation is a call from God to a specific way of life: either to the single life, to be married, to be religious sister or brother, or to be a priest. It is who we are and it comes from God. A career is how we use our gifts and talents within our vocation to provide a living for ourselves or our families. Most people will retire from their careers, we never retire from our vocation. There are many careers within our vocation. God has given us certain gifts and talents to use for His purpose within our vocations to serve the Church and one another. Even in the workplace we are called to bring Christ into the world, not just on Sunday.

Q. What is the difference between our gifts and talents?

A. Our gifts come from God and are spiritual in nature. When we baptized we receive the gift of faith. When we receive the Sacraments, God gives us special gifts of grace to strengthen us in our call to live holy lives. When we are Confirmed, in a special way, we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit to assist us in living as Disciples of Christ.
Our talents also come from God, but are developed by us through study, lessons, education, etc. Our talents support us in our vocation, but do not determine what our vocation is. We are called to place our gifts and talents at the service of the Lord and His people to build up God's Kingdom here on earth.

LESSON V: THE FOUR VOCATIONS

Teacher's Notes: There are four vocations: single life, married life, priestly life and religious life. The following lessons will explain each vocation and use the life of a saint to better explain how this vocation can be lived.

A. The Vocation to the Single Life

Points to Consider with Students:

- Single life may be either a state of life that a person will live until God calls them to another vocation, or a permanent vocation for those who are called to remain single their entire lives.
- Since everyone is single for at least some part of their lives, our time as a single person should be spent preparing ourselves for whatever God might ask of us in the future.
- Men and women who are called to the vocation of marriage, should focus their single lives on forming themselves to become a good spouse for another. Those who are called to the vocation of the priesthood or religious life should also look at forming their lives in response to their call.
- Married couples are committed primarily to taking care of family, priests are committed to taking care of the Sacramental life of the Church and the People of God, and religious brothers and sisters have responsibilities to their communities and to the service of the Church in the world.
- Single men and women live out their vocations in the world and have a unique opportunity to serve the Lord anytime, anywhere, and with their whole hearts.
- A single person may appear to be alone, "but no one is without family in this world; the Church is a home and a family to everyone." (Pope John Paul II)
- In the Church, a person can find many ways to serve the community.
- All Christians who are single are called to live chaste and modest lives as they strive to discern and live their vocation.

Q. What is meant by the terms *Chastity and Modesty?*

A. Chastity is a very important part of every vocation because it prepares a person for whatever God might be calling them to in the future. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines chastity as:

> "The successful integration of sexuality within the person leading to an inner unity of the bodily and spiritual being (§2337). It is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (§1832)"

Modesty is the virtue that moderates all the internal and external movements and appearance of a person according to his or her endowments, possessions, and station in life. Four virtues are commonly included under modesty: humility, studiousness, and two kinds of external modesty, namely in dress and general behavior. (from Fr. John Hardon's *Modern Catholic Dictionary*)

- Why should people practice modesty? We should do so because modesty protects the intimate center of a person. Your intimate center is your whole self, what you think, what you feel; it is your personhood and what makes you who you are.
- People can look at you as an object or thing and disrespect who you really are.
- By acting modestly you express that you are a unique, intelligent person who is beautiful on the inside as well as on the outside.

B. The Vocation of Marriage

Points to Consider with Students:

- The vocation of marriage is a special gift that God chooses to give to His people. Most people are called to this vocation. In marriage, a man and a woman promise (vow) before God to love and honor each other for the rest of their lives. It is one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church,
- Just as Christ gave Himself completely for His Church, a man and a woman give themselves completely to each other. The gift of self is pure, sincere, beautiful and complete for as long as they live.
- A married couple is like a team, that together, bears witness to God's love in the world by the way they live out their faith at home, at work, and in the Church.
- Since marriage is a God-given vocation and sacrament, God will be the guide to help us fulfill it.
- You must ask God for help in choosing a spouse. Jesus assures us that if we trust in Him, He will guide us in finding a good person to marry. Praying for the right spouse, if God is calling you to that vocation, should be offered on a regular basis.

C. The Vocation to the Religious Life

Points to Consider with Students:

- Religious sisters, brothers and priests are individuals who live out their Christian call to holiness as members of a larger group (also called a religious order or religious congregation).
- They make special promises, called vows, to love and serve God for the rest of their lives, dedicated to a life of prayer and service.
- There are many different kinds of religious communities.
    - Some serve God through meditation, prayer and solitude (these are known as contemplative communities).
    - The second type of religious community are known as active communities. These communities work both in the Church and in the world. They usually have a particular focus such as teaching in schools, caring for the sick, helping the poor, doing missionary work, etc. If there is a need in the world, there is an order that ministers to that need.
- Members of religious communities make vows to live like Jesus in poverty, chastity, and obedience. They promise Christ that they will live the rest of their lives dedicated exclusively to Him.
- By being members of religious communities, religious sisters and brothers develop an interior life of prayer and devotion to serving God that allows them to give of themselves selflessly to the good of the Church.

C. The Vocation to Religious Life cont.

The Vows, Poverty, Chastity and Obedience:

* The vow of poverty means a renunciation of worldly goods and a promise to hold all possessions in common with the community. If a religious holds a job and receives pay, that money goes right to the community. The community, in turn, provides for the needs of the religious sister, brother or priest.
* The vow of chastity is a promise to God not to live in a married state, but rather to remain free to love and serve God and neighbor with an undivided heart.
* The vow of obedience, means the members follow God's will, going wherever one is needed and giving oneself completely in service to God's people. They are called to be obedient to the superior (head) of their religious community.

Charisms:

Q. What is a Charism?

A. In a general sense, a charism is a spiritual gift given to the Church or an individual by the Holy Spirit to help build up and unify the Church; as it relates to the vocation of the religious life, it is the identifying trait of a religious community. Charisms are given for the good of the whole Church.

- Every religious order has a special charism which forms their identity and mission.
- The charism is the motivating spirit that is the heart of a religious community, which is usually derived from the vision of the founder of the religious order: For example: The Dominican charism (followers of St. Dominic) have the charism of preaching; The Franciscans (followers of St. Francis) charism is poverty; for Carmelites, solitude, silent prayer and meditation, etc.

D. The Vocation to the Priesthood

Points to Consider with the Students:

- All people are called to be disciples of Christ, but those who God chooses for the priesthood imitate Christ in a particular way. They live like Jesus did here on earth by completely dedicating themselves to serving the Church.
- A priest is a man chosen and called by Christ from among God's faithful people to serve them in the person of Christ (*in persona Christi*), the head of the Church, by forming, leading, teaching, and sanctifying them as a community.
- Priests promise to live a celibate lifestyle as part of their commitment to God. Celibacy means not being married.

D. The Vocation to the Priesthood, cont.

- Just as a married couple promise to give their whole self, body, and soul, to each other, priests promise to give themselves completely to God.
- A priest may be part of a religious order or a diocesan priest. In either situation, he must be formed by the order or diocese and continuously be discerning of God's call to this vocation. God chooses the man to become a priest; the Church helps him in his discernment and formation prior to being ordained a priest.
- Priesthood is one of the seven sacraments. Like Baptism and Confirmation, the sacrament, when properly conferred, provides an indelible mark on the man becoming a priest.
- Most diocesan priests live and minister in parishes within the diocese in which they were ordained.
- A priest must be a man whose faith rests firmly in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Through the Eucharist, the priest strives to increase holiness in the people of God so that they may in turn bring Christ to the world and sanctify the world.
- A priest brings Christ to us when he:
    - Celebrates the Mass, transforming the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.
    - Preaches and teaches about Jesus from the Word of God.
    - Anoints the sick and the dying.
    - Forgives sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
    - Baptizes new Christians.
    - Witnesses marriages.
    - Consoles the grieving, sad and depressed.
    - Performs funeral services.
    - Prays with and for his parish.
    - Cares for the poor and homebound.

Seminarians

- Seminarians are men whom God has called to actively consider the priesthood and have been formally accepted into a program of formation.
- They spend time in a college called a seminary in order to study and discover if God is calling them to become a priest. Some of them are 100% sure that is the vocation God has blessed them with, while other seminarians are still discerning their call. In the end, it's the bishop of the diocese who makes the final determination that a man is or is not called to ordination as a priest.

Materials used in these lessons for 7th and 8th grade vocations were in part adapted from

What is My Vocation?"

Mundelein College, Illinois

LESSON VI: DISCERNING MY VOCATION

Points to Consider with Students:

- Blessed Pope John Paul II provided some very good direction to young people discerning their vocation (from *The Meaning of Vocation, In the Words of John Paul II,* (Scepter Publishers, 1997)
    - A vocation is a total commitment to God.
    - God calls us in our earliest youth.
    - Finding our true vocation is a process.
    - The reply to a vocation is always a faith-filled yes.
    - Choosing a vocation involves difficulties.
    - To see the way clearly to your vocation: participate in daily prayer, the sacraments and spiritual direction.
    - A vocation is always apostolic - God calls with love, but he wants others to be part of the calling process (Andrew called Peter, Phillip called Nathaniel, etc.). Do not be afraid to suggest to a friend, another student, a family member that the Lord may be calling them.

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Loving God,
Thank You for the gift of life.
You know when I sit and when I stand.
You have me always in Your heart.
For this, I thank you Lord.
You know the path for my life and
what will make me happy.
Help me to discover the vocation
that You have planted in my heart,
especially if it is a call to the
priesthood or consecrated life.
Bless me and guide me, Lord,
so that the road I choose
I will choose for Your glory.
Amen.

---

25 WAYS TO ENCOURAGE VOCATIONS

1. **Make sure vocations lessons are part of the curriculum at every grade/age level.**
2. **Coordinate an all school/parish Holy Hour/Benediction/Rosary or Way of the Cross for Vocations.**
3. **Create a bulletin board for vocations, rotating information about priesthood and religious life.**
4. **Communicate with (adopt) are retired, priest, deacon or religious.**
5. **Organize a group trip to a seminary or religious monastery or motherhouse.**
6. **Publicize discernment overnights or weekends for high school aged juniors or seniors.**
7. **Provide intercessory prayer for vocations as part of the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass.**
8. **Attend the ordination of a priest at the Cathedral.**
9. **Sponsor a vocation day at the school/parish invite priests, seminarians, religious sisters and brothers as speakers.**
10. **Celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week, World Day of Prayer for Consecrated life and World Day of Prayer for Vocations.**
11. **Pray for seminarians in formation for the priesthood and for men and women in formation for religious life during class time.**
12. **Encourage interviews of pastors, parish priests, religious sisters or brothers to be published in the parish bulletin or school newspaper.**
13. **Compile a resource book on a religious orders from publications and advertisements.**
14. **Pray the "Vocations Stations of the Cross", especially during Lent.**
15. **Encourage participation of Vocations Contests sponsored by the Archdiocese, Knights of Columbus or the Serra Club.**
16. **Instruct proper discernment and extend a personal invitation to young people to consider a vocation as a priest, deacon or consecrated religious.**
17. **Share links to vocation websites, encourage visiting the AOD Vocations website: www.detroitpriest.com.**
18. **Share the positive ways our lives have been affected by priests, deacons and consecrated religious.**
19. **Search for and discuss vocations themes in Sacred Scripture.**
20. **Exhibit love and respected for priests, deacons and religious sisters and brothers.**
21. **Encourage readings about the saints and provide young people a reading list of spiritual books.**
22. **Send a class/group thank you card to your parish/school priest(s) as part of Priesthood Sunday appreciation, the last Sunday in October.**
23. **Adopt a local seminarian, and/or a woman or man in formation for consecrated life; write to them; pray for them.**
24. **Acquaint youth with various ministries in the parish; encourage altar serving, becoming a lector, usher or an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion when old enough.**
25. **Help each youth recognize and follow their true vocation in life.**

Be Not Afraid!

Vocation Lessons/Activities

for High School Students or Youth Groups

This is the program that the Church sets before you, young people. May you also pray. And, if the fruit of this prayer of the Church should bloom in the depths of your heart, listen to the Teacher who tells you: "Follow me." Do not be afraid. Give him, if he asks it of you, your heart and your entire life. — Blessed John Paul II

Office of Priestly Vocations

2701 Chicago Blvd.

Detroit, MI 48206

Archdiocese of Detroit

www.detroitpriest.com

313-237-5875

Be Not Afraid!

Vocation Lessons/Activities

for High School Students or Youth Groups

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V. Discerning God's Will in My Life

VI. 25 Ways to Encourage Vocations

Lessons have been supplemented or adapted from materials provided by the Dioceses of Cleveland, OH, Greensburg, PA and Milwaukee, WI.

THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF EDUCATORS, CATECHISTS, YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTERS IN NURTURING VOCATIONS

Your role in the promotion of vocations as an educator, catechist, youth or campus minister is extremely important! The family is the seedbed of vocations, but without encouragement from those faithful working in the Church, the seeds planted may have difficulty taking root. Within the parish, classroom, or campus setting, you become an essential "vocation director" to those to whom you minister and instruct. You are in a unique position to see the potential in someone who may have a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life or who may be considering service in lay ministry. You may be the one to help this individual, so loved by God, discern and decide wisely and prudently the path they should follow in life.

What concrete steps can you take to accomplish responsibility?

- *Be clear about your own personal commitment to holiness; when others see Christ in you, they are drawn to a deeper relationship with the Lord.*
- *Recognize that this is God's work and that you are cooperating with God in assisting others to follow His will.*
- *Look for ways to discuss what a vocation is with your students, youth or young adults in a practical and realistic way.*
- *If your parish, school or campus is lacking in vocation materials don't hesitate to contact the Office of Priestly Vocations for information to assist your efforts.*
- *Develop a five point plan for helping those within your ministry discern their vocation through:*

  Prayer *– develop a personal prayer life and one with your classroom or ministry; pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, consecrated life and lay ministry and for good and holy marriages.*

  Evangelization *– affirm and encourage Gospel principles in leadership, community, respect for life, and excellence in personal growth toward holiness.*

  Experience *– ensure that activities promoted under your guidance reflect virtues and values that promote a Christian community of love, service and respect.*

  Mentoring *– witness to others your vocation and how you came to follow God's will in your life. Be a role model for others.*

  Invitation *– If you recognize in an individual the qualities and virtues that may indicate a vocation to the priesthood or religious life or to serve as a lay minister, do not hesitate to say: "Have you ever thought about being a priest, or …?" Invite our youth and young adults to consider options for service and ministry in the parish or community.*

Be Not Afraid!

Vocation Lessons/Activities

for High School Students or Youth Groups

The following pages are intended to assist catechists and youth ministers in instructing vocational awareness to high school aged young adults at any time throughout the year. The lessons may be taught to the same grade or youth group, or divided and taught at different grade levels over time. Each lesson/activity stands on its own and teaches some aspect of vocational awareness.

Catechists and Youth Ministers are encouraged to use additional materials and lessons found on the websites listed in the *Appendix.* A *Way of the Cross for Vocations* is also included in the *Appendix* and may be used at any time, especially during Lent.

Ideally, vocational awareness should be introduced and taught at every level as part of the curriculum or youth ministry experience. There are times during the Liturgical Calendar Year that the Church provides specific opportunities to teach vocational awareness:

National Vocation Awareness Week - as *determined* by the United States Catholic *Conference* of Bishops, this begins with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord and continues throughout the week, usually in January. Additional resources may be found at www.detroitpriest.com.

World Day of Prayer for Consecrate Life - designated by Pope John Paul II in 1977 to be celebrated on the Feast of the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple. (February)

World Day of Prayer for Vocations - designated by Pope Paul VI in 1964 for the entire world to pray for an increase in holy vocations; it is celebrated annually on Good Shepherd Sunday. (April - May)

May God continue bless you in your ministry
and bless our Church with good and holy vocations!

Be Not Afraid!

High School Vocation Lessons/Activities

I. Baptized for Service

Background: Through our baptism we become a child of God and are called to live a life of holiness in a relationship with Jesus. Once we meet Jesus we are never the same and our response to this encounter is a life of service.

Objective: The students will have an opportunity to "meet" Jesus through scripture as they examine how the lives of others have been changed by their encounter with Jesus.

Process:

1) Show scene 23 the DVD "Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring." Have the students focus on what this clip might say to them about finding one's mission in life. If possible, share an example from your own life on how you found your mission, connecting the example to your relationship with Jesus and how you met Jesus through prayer and through others.
2) Have the students individually complete the activity sheet *Meeting Jesus Makes a Difference*. After completing the exercise, have each student pair with another student to share his or her responses. Have a class or small group discussion on the last two questions of the activity sheet.
3) As a follow-up, invite the students to create a visual display, a poem, a prayer or a song that expresses how they have met Jesus through prayer or through others and how this encounter has affected their lives, and how this experience has can affect their future. Offer to have some of the responses published in the school paper or parish bulletin.

Activity: Meeting Jesus Makes a Difference

Since your baptism you probably have had many opportunities to meet Jesus through prayer and through others. You might have realized already that when you meet Jesus your is life is changed forever.

1) Below are several examples of people who were affected by their encounter with Jesus. Choose three of the following passages and read them carefully, paying attention to how the people in the story were affected by meeting Jesus. Summarize what happened as a result of the person's encounter with Jesus.

Acts 26:12-18	Luke 19:1-10	Luke 24:13-35
John 1:35-42	Matthew 4:18-21	Mark 10:46-52
Mark 2:13-17	John 1:43-51	John 4:7-19; 28-29
Luke 2:8-20	Luke 2:22; 36-38	Matthew 9:27-31

Passage: _____

Summary: _____

_____

_____

Passage: _____

Summary: _____

_____

_____

Passage: _____

Summary: _____

_____

_____

2) Think of one way you have met Jesus during your life. (Remember, sometimes we can meet Jesus through other people). Describe that encounter and how you were changed because of it.

_____

_____

3) What are some of the ways that you would like to get to know Jesus better? What change would you like to see take place in yourself as a result of your relationship with Jesus? How might this determine what you do in your future?

_____

_____

High School Vocation Lessons/Activities

II. Responding to Jesus through Service

Objective: The students will examine the service response of those who have met Jesus through prayer and others.

Process:

1) Have the students list the names of various Christian heroes, living or dead; who have responded to God's call after a personal experience with Jesus through others or through prayer. (Examples: Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, Dorothy Day, Blessed John Paul II, the founders of various religious orders, modern day saints). Assign small groups the names of individuals who have responded to their experience of Jesus with a life of service. Include some individuals who founded religious congregations as well as some married and single individuals. (Check *Vision* magazine and visit the websites of religious communities to help you to create a list of founders/foundresses of religious communities).
2) Using the worksheet *Responding to Jesus through Service* have the small groups select a Catholic hero to research on the internet and complete Part 1 of the worksheet.
3) Invite the students to create another small group and share their research with others where each student has researched a different hero. Have them respond to Part 2 of the worksheet.
4) Have students return to their first group, based on all the information they have received, invite them to create a service project that could be completed by high school students. Challenge them to use one of the semester breaks during the school year to participate in the service project. Optional extra credit: have them respond to Part 3 of the worksheet and give a report to the class/group.

Activity: Responding to Jesus through Service

Part 1: In a small group, research information about _____

Answer the following questions:

- In what ways did this individual meet Jesus in prayer or through other people?

_____

_____

- How did he or she respond to these experiences?

_____

_____

- How do the good works inspired by this person continue today?

_____

_____

Part 2: Create a new small group with those who have researched other individuals. Take some time to share your research with each other. Using the three questions above, summarize what you have learned from this new group.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part 3: With your first small group, design a service opportunity based upon the work of the person that you researched or one of that you learned about. Arrange to participate in that service opportunity. After being of service, and praying about the experience, answer the following questions:

- How did this service experience relate to the mission of the person I researched or learned about?
- How did I experience Jesus in others through this experience?
- How might I continue this mission or service?

Be Not Afraid!

High School Vocation Lessons/Activities

III. Responding to God's Invitation

Objective: To see that God wants all people, despite their human weakness, to respond in faith to His many invitations in life, and to enter into communion with Him. Scripture can reveal to us the nature of vocations in two ways: the first - the call to holiness, to believe and have faith in God, is common to everyone and is implied in God's very act of creation; and the second where God calls us to follow Him in a specific way. In Scripture we see God's people being called to special missions or tasks that take its meaning from within the universal call to holiness. Some are chosen by God to be special servants in helping all people hear God's call to faith and to respond to His invitation. Those who have played a unique role in salvation history are Abraham, Moses, Mary, Paul and most especially Jesus Himself. In the deepest theological sense, then, our vocation is to hear and respond in faith to God's call in our lives.

Process: Review the following statements:

1. God invites all people to listen in faith to His invitation.
2. All people are appreciated, needed, wanted and loved by God, even though they are weak (sinful) persons.
3. Through the example of the responses of various holy and saintly people to God's invitation in their lives, we can learn what responding in faith means.
4. There are people today who take God's invitations seriously.

Read the following Scriptures:

Genesis 12:1-4; Exodus 3:1-14; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 18:18-25

- Who is being called to follow God in each passage and what was their specific calling?
- Make a list of the common elements in the call of each person.
- What were some of the obstacles that could have stopped each one of these people from answering God's call in their life?
- At this stage in your life would it be so impossible to believe that God is asking you to do something special with your life? Why? Why not?
- Can you think of anyone today whose life has been changed by following Jesus?

Remember that God often uses the ordinary to accomplish the extraordinary!

IV. Finding our Gifts and Talents to Serve God and His Church

Objective: To discover the gifts and talents that God has given to us and how we might use them to serve Christ and His Church. Students will learn that it is the total sum of all our talents serving God that makes our faith community grow and thrive. Students will also realize that there are spiritual gifts sent by God and received by men and women who answer the call to follow Jesus as priests, deacons and vowed religious that are used to serve the Church.

Background for Activities: Have students read aloud *1 Corinthians 12:4-11* and 27-31. Explain that Paul wrote this letter to the Christians who lived in the city of Corinth, a busy seaport with many different types of people living there. The city's diversity caused some problems and divisions among the people whom Paul addressed in this letter. We too have diversity in the communities in which we live, worship, go to school and work.

Our faith community and our family community are made up of different kinds of people with different talents given by God. We are all called to serve God and one another and use our talents in different ways according to God's will.

Activity: Finding my gifts and talents

Hand out the worksheet "Finding My Gifts and Talents" have the students read then fill out the bottom of the page. When completed, hand out a slip of paper and ask them to write on the slip of paper one gift or talent with which they believe God has blessed them.

Activity 3) Finding My Gifts and Talents

What is the difference between a gift and a talent?

What are talents? We have all been given certain natural abilities that come from our from our parents, grandparents, etc. These may have to do with our **physical** abilities: athleticism, strength, flexibility, agility, or coordination; or **intellectual** abilities, used for reasoning, academics or language skills; there are **emotional** abilities, including social skills, the ability to listen and communicate, compassion and empathy, being a good friend; included in the above are artistic abilities, in music, writing, painting, etc. A talent can be possessed by anyone, it can be developed and learned and can be used for spiritual and non-spiritual purposes.

Our gifts are **spiritual** in nature and come from God, through the Holy Spirit and are given to us freely at Baptism and Confirmation for His service. Spiritual gifts are listed by Paul in the book of **Romans 12:6-8** as: *prophesy, ministry, teaching, encouraging, contributing, leadership and mercy;* and further listed in **1 Corinthians 12** to include: *wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophesy, discernment, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, assistance and administration.* All the gifts and talents we have been given are to be used to build up the Kingdom of God. Acknowledging what our God given gifts and talents are is a big step in discerning what God wants us to do with our lives.

In the first column below, list the talents and gifts that you possess and recognize in yourself; in the second column, list the talents and gifts that others have said you possess.

What I see in myself	What others see in me
Physical:	**Physical:**
Intellectual:	**Intellectual:**
Emotional:	**Emotional:**
Spiritual:	**Spiritual:**

On the slip of paper you have been given;

write down one gift or talent that God has given to you.

Activity 3) Finding My Gifts and Talents, Part 2

Materials:

- Markers, scissors, and glue
- Poster board or large sheets of paper
- Pencils, stamps, construction paper
- Assorted Magazines/Newspapers

Procedure:

Separate the students into small groups of 6-8 with a designated group leader. Have each member of the group share what gift or talent they wrote on their slip of paper. The leader should lead the discussion using the following questions, making sure everyone contributes.

- What does it mean to be a part of the family of God?
- How do you see this quality as part of the family of God at church? In school? In you family? With your friends?
- Are there times when your gift makes your life difficult? Has it ever divided you from a community of people?
- Was there a time that you recall using this gift to better serve God?

The instructor will now explain that each group is going to create a picture together of what their group might look like as the family of God. Pass out one piece of poster board, markers, glue, scissors, magazines, and newspapers to each group. Encourage them to find words, phrases, and pictures that depict the gifts and talents present in that group, and that might also represent the ways God uses those gifts in each of them.

When all groups are finished, allow time for each group to present to the large group their poster, explaining why they chose some of the pictures and words to depict their gift and talent.

Finding My Gifts and Talents: Conclusion

When the activities are done share with the students the following: It is the total sum of all our gifts and talents serving God that makes our faith community grow and thrive.

Priests and deacons have a special role as ordained ministers in serving God and the Church. You see them serve God's family at the table of the Lord by celebrating the Eucharist at mass and celebrating the sacraments with us in their own capacity. The priest brings comfort to those who are sick, in the Sacrament of the Anointing and is an instrument of God's forgiveness during the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He alone can bring Jesus, really and truly, to us in the Eucharist. Consider the spiritual gifts sent by God to priests and deacons that they use every day in serving God and His Church.

In your parish or school, you may see a **religious sister** or **brother** serving God's family in different ways. Vowed religious have a special role in leading us in prayer and teaching us to serve. In your parish, school or community you may see them serving as teachers, administrators, campus ministers, social workers, nurses, and using their gifts and talents in many other ways that serve God's family. They live in a religious community with others who share their same values and have a common mission in building up God's Kingdom here on earth.

Married people dedicate a life of service to God and one another and lovingly bring children into the world.

Whether ordained to the priesthood or diaconate or living a vowed life as a religious sister or brother, or married, each person has to learn what gifts and talents they had been given and ask God to direct their lives. We too have to seek God's will for our lives; what gifts and talents do we possess, and how can we best use them to give glory to God and build up His Kingdom now and forever.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Leader/Teacher: God chose us first and gave to each of us gifts and talents to use for His purpose and glory. From all eternity God has called us forth to be His chosen, faithful, holy people. Let us therefore ask God, the giver of all good gifts to show us the way:

Student Leader 1: Jesus said: "Be not afraid, I go before you always. Come, follow me, and I will give you rest."

Class: Lord teach me your ways to use the gifts and talents given to me for your glory.

Student Leader 2: Jesus said: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and have appointed that you should go and do good and your goodness shall prevail."

Class: Lord show me the way to follow you, that will bring true happiness in my life.

Student Reader: Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has bestowed on us every spiritual Blessing in the heavens! God chose us in Him before the world began to be holy and blameless in His sight, to be full of love; He likewise predestined us through Jesus Christ to be His adopted children - such was His will and pleasure - that all might praise Him.

Class: I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. Lord help me to use the gifts and talents you have given to me for Your purpose to build up Your Kingdom on earth and forever.

All together pray: "Our Father….." Amen.

Be Not Afraid!

High School Vocation Lessons/Activities

V. Discerning God's Will in My Life

Objective: To assist young people in discerning God's will in their lives.

Process: With the group as a whole, or divided into small discussion groups, go over each of the following points with the teens. Invite them to give concrete examples of each statement and why they think it is important to take this into consideration when trying to discern God's will in their life.

A Young Adult's Guide to Making Life Decisions (Discernment)

1. Remember that before you were born, God had a plan for you. Only in following God will you truly be happy. Pray for guidance from God.
2. Stay in touch with reality and what is going on in your life. Pay attention to what gifts and talents you have been given; look at even the small things.
3. Seek advice from people who are wise and who use good judgment. Don't be afraid to place your thoughts and plans before the critical eyes of your friends, and/or family, or trusted advisors or instructors. Examine your alternatives by testing them against experience.
4. Listen to what your mind, your heart, and your intuition tell you. Make sure all three of these "voices" from your soul are part of the final discernment.
5. Do not make a decision when you are in the middle of a crisis.
6. Know your limits but follow your gifts and talents. Find your passion in life.
7. Be willing to let go of missed opportunities and possibilities you ignored. Your life is a journey and not every path before you will be chosen; learn to accept the choices made in your life up until now; be willing to move forward from there.
8. Develop an appropriate sense of timing. Do not act in haste, but do not drag out the decisions either. Break down your decision-making process into steps that you can manage on a realistic timetable.
9. Once you have to make a decision, you must choose!!!!! Accept the risks of your choice and let go. Cannot be ambivalent (unable to decide), it will lead to an unfruitful life. Plus, if you don't make a decision, someone else will make it for you!
10. Look to Jesus as the model for all decision making. "Father...not my will but yours be done." Luke 22:42., By seeking God's perfect will in your life, you will experience life to the fullest.

Be Not Afraid!

High School Vocation Lessons/Activities

WEBSITES WITH ADDITIONAL VOCATION LESSON PLANS

www.detroitpriest.com (AOD Office of Priestly Vocations)

www.foryourvocation.org/educators/lesson-plans.cfm (USCCB Vocations)

www.arlingtondiocese.org/vocations/voc_teachers.php

http://vocationtree.com/vocationtree_map.php

http://www.thinkpriest.org/lesson_plans.html

http://cfcvocations.org/uploads/pdf/LessonPlan.pdf

http://vocationawareness.org/?page_id=1032

O Holy Family of Nazareth, community of love of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model and ideal of every Christian family, to you we entrust our families.

Open the heart of every family to the faith, to welcoming the word of God, to Christian witness, so that it become a source of new and holy vocations.

Touch the hearts of parents, so that with prompt charity, wise care, and loving devotion they be for their sons and daughters sure guides towards spiritual and eternal values.

Stir up in the hearts of young people a right conscience and a free will, so that growing in "wisdom, age and grace", they might welcome generously the gift of a divine vocation.

Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that all of us, contemplating and imitating the assiduous prayer, generous obedience, dignified poverty and virginal purity lived out in your midst, might set about fulfilling the will of God and accompanying with far-sighted sensitivity those among us who are called to follow more closely the Lord Jesus, who "has given himself for us" (cf. Gal 2:20).

Amen!

Blessed John Paul II

VI. 25 WAYS TO ENCOURAGE VOCATIONS

1. **Make sure vocations lessons are part of the curriculum at every grade/age level.**
2. **Coordinate an all school/parish Holy Hour/Benediction, Rosary or Way of the Cross for Vocations.**
3. **Create a bulletin board for vocations, rotating information about priesthood and religious life.**
4. **Communicate with (adopt) are retired, priest, deacon or religious.**
5. **Organize a group trip to a seminary or religious monastery or motherhouse.**
6. **Publicize discernment overnights or weekends for high school aged juniors or seniors.**
7. **Provide intercessory prayer for vocations as part of the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass.**
8. **Attend the ordination of a priest at the Cathedral.**
9. **Sponsor a vocation day at the school/parish invite priests, seminarians, religious sisters and brothers as speakers.**
10. **Celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week, World Day of Prayer for Consecrated life and World Day of Prayer for Vocations.**
11. **Pray for seminarians in formation for the priesthood and for men and women in formation for religious life during class time.**
12. **Encourage interviews of pastors, parish priests, religious sisters or brothers to be published in the parish bulletin or school newspaper.**
13. **Compile a resource book on a religious orders from publications and advertisements.**
14. **Pray the "Vocations Stations of the Cross", especially during Lent.**
15. **Encourage participation of Vocations Contests sponsored by the Archdiocese, Knights of Columbus or the Serra Club.**
16. **Instruct proper discernment and extend a personal invitation to young people to consider a vocation as a priest, deacon or consecrated religious.**
17. **Share links to vocation websites, encourage visiting the AOD Vocations website: www.detroitpriest.com.**
18. **Share the positive ways our lives have been affected by priests, deacons and consecrated religious.**
19. **Search for and discuss vocations themes in Sacred Scripture.**
20. **Exhibit love and respected for priests, deacons and religious sisters and brothers.**
21. **Encourage readings about the saints and provide young people a reading list of spiritual books.**
22. **Send a class/group thank you card to your parish/school priest(s) as part of Priesthood Sunday appreciation, the last Sunday in October.**
23. **Adopt a local seminarian, and/or a woman or man in formation for consecrated life; write to them; pray for them.**
24. **Acquaint youth with various ministries in the parish; encourage altar serving, becoming a lector, usher or an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist when old enough.**
25. **Help each youth recognize and follow their true vocation in life.**