

# Lesson Plans for National Vocation Awareness Week (Grades K-8)

## **Grades K - 3**

### **Vocation Lesson One: You Belong to Me!**

Objective: To reinforce the reality that we are special in God's eyes and that we belong to Him through the gift of our baptism.

Materials: Copies of "You Belong to Me" Worksheet (provided below)

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#### *Procedure:*

Begin with a short prayer and a song like "I am special." Sitting in a circle, ask the children to tell what they know about baptism from their experiences, as well as facts about the sacrament. Teach them about the sacrament, especially that we become God's children and belong to him through this sacrament. Ask "Do you know anything about Jesus' baptism? How old was he? Where was he? Who was there with him?" Read/tell the story of Jesus' baptism from Luke 3:15-16, 21-22. Talk about how God the Father called him his beloved son. Discuss that they are beloved children too and especially blessed through baptism too. Remind them that God calls each of us to belong to him in a special way and to live the vocation he gives us. Follow with the "You Belong to Me" worksheet.

#### *Activity:*

Distribute "You Belong to Me" Worksheet. Ask students to draw their first name and color it. Make a yarn hanger. Invite them to hang it where it is a reminder that they are loved by God and that he has called them by name. Ask them to find out the date of their baptism and write it under their name so that they can remember the day they became his child.

### **Vocation Lesson Two: By Our Actions We Bring Peace**

Objective: To teach that, like Jesus, our actions can bring peace to others.

Materials: Copies of "By Our Actions We Bring Peace" Worksheet (provided below)

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#### *Procedure:*

Ask students to sit quietly and tell them you are going to darken the room, light a candle and play peaceful instrumental music. Invite them to find the quiet place in their hearts and listen to the music. After a few minutes, fade the music out and give them a chance to say how they felt and what they were thinking about during that time. Remind them that at Jesus' baptism, his Father told him that he was

especially loved. Jesus remembered those words and he went out into the villages, telling others about God's love for them too. Jesus treated people in a kind way. Ask students to tell what Jesus did to show kindness to others. Ask "How do you think this made the people feel after Jesus did these things?" After they share, tell the children that his actions brought peace to the people who believed in him. It was a little like the quiet peace they knew when they listened to the music. Ask "In what ways can you bring peace to others?" Let them give some suggestions. Remind them that when we sit quietly we can listen to God in our hearts and he helps us know how to share his peace with others. End with a prayer of your own or use these words: Dear Jesus, help me to bring peace to my world by my actions. Help me to be kind to others. Help me to play fairly. Help me to share your gifts with others. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.

*Activity:*

Distribute "By Our Actions We Bring Peace" Worksheet. Ask students to complete the sentence and illustrate their idea.

## **Grades 4 - 6:**

### **Vocation Lesson One: The Gifts God Gave Me**

Objective: Students will identify gifts and talents in others and in themselves. They will apply their gifts and talents to be followers of Jesus by generating a plan that uses their gifts and talents as tools of service to others.

Materials:

- Holy cards of saints or pictures of famous people
  - Copies of Gift Worksheet (provided below)
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*Procedure:*

This lesson may be introduced by presenting students with pictures of saints or famous people with whom they might be familiar. Ask them to name talents and gifts which they see and respect in others. As students name gifts and talents, list them on the board.

After a considerable list has been made, ask the students to take a few moments to consider which talents they see in themselves.

Ask the students to complete the first three boxes in the Gift Worksheet. ("Some of my gifts are...", "The gift I like best is...", "One gift I want to develop is...")

After the worksheet has been completed, discuss the following concepts with the students:

-We are all uniquely different from each other. God has given us different gifts and talents. Many of us may have the same talents, but because of other talents and the combination of these, we are different.

-Through our Baptism, we are given the gift of being a child of God and called to be a disciple of Jesus. Each of us is also called to follow Him in a special way through our personal vocation. Our gifts and talents will be used by the Lord as we live out that vocation. By using our talents we come to know and love Jesus more and more and we also make the world we live in a better place.

Ask the students to reflect on the Gift Worksheet and on what has been presented. Invite them to consider how God might use each gift they listed in the possible vocation He may call them to. Add these to Box 4 of the Gift Worksheet.

## **Vocation Lesson Plan Two: Saints and Vocations**

Objective: Students will understand how the saints were ready to be what the Lord called them to be. They will recognize the various vocations in the different Christian states of life.

Materials:

- Stories of saints who were married, who were priests, who were consecrated religious and who were consecrated lay persons living in the world. Some good examples are St. Joseph, St. Louis, St. Jane de Chantal, St. John Vianney, St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Martin de Porres, St. Catherine of Siena, & Blessed Pierre Giorgio Frassati.
  - Copies of Vocation Word Search Worksheet (provided below)
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*Procedure:*

Have ready short biographies of saints from different states in life. The children could be asked to do this for homework to share in class. Read aloud a sampling of the different saints. Consider how God called them each to become holy in their particular vocation. What special virtues did God help each of them grow in through their vocations? Use some of the words from the Vocation Word Search Worksheet.

*Activity:*

Distribute the Vocation Word Search Worksheet to complete.

## **Grades 7 - 8:**

### **Vocation Lesson One: Understanding Vocations in the Church**

Objective: Students will identify the vocations to married life, consecrated life, and the priesthood. Students will recognize the uniqueness of each person's call to follow Christ and will understand the difference between their Vocation and a professional career. Students will begin to understand the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Students will contrast the vows of a religious with the promises that a priest makes.

Materials:

- Flash cards of names of various service professions.
  - Flash cards of various men's and women's religious orders and of the diocesan priesthood.
  - Priests or religious who may visit class and discuss their vocations.
  - Writing and drawing supplies
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*Procedure:*

1. Review with students that our Baptism is a call to the fullness of life. Our vocation is the special way which God wants to give us that fullness of life through love. Identify the vocations to married life, to consecrated single life, to religious life and to the priesthood.

2. Ask the students to name some service professions and how each can be particularly Christian. For example, nursing and all health care professions reflect the caring and healing Christ; teaching and learning reflect Jesus the teacher (Rabbi); construction workers reflect Jesus the carpenter of Nazareth. Use the flash cards to help prompt student responses.

3. Now focus on the vocations to priesthood and religious life and how these same "jobs" can be a way of serving Christ and others. Discuss the different apostolates of religious congregations and how the priesthood shares in the healing, teaching and guiding work of Christ.

4. Emphasize that a vocation to priesthood or religious life is a call to love Christ in a special way and that the work is really secondary. Have students research the following topics using texts or by interviewing people. They may work in groups and come up with a presentation on the following topics. Encourage them to generate a visual that helps illustrate their main points.

- Religious sisters and brothers respond to their call by choosing to live in a community with others who are called to serve people through religious life. They publicly solemnize their response to God by making three vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience. Religious life is one special way of being Christian.
  
- Poverty: Through this vow to God, religious men and women want to have Jesus' attitude toward material things. They try to live a life of sharing. The deepest reason for making a vow of poverty is love. When Gospel poverty is accepted as a way of life it means a person lives simply and willingly shares who he is and what he has.
  
- Chastity: Through this vow to God, religious and priests promise not to marry and promise to love and help all people freely. They freely and joyfully give up the privilege of marrying and having children because they want to be free to love and help all who need them. The vow of chastity lets them be free to think and work only for the Kingdom of God. The vow of chastity also frees them to remind us that God and the Kingdom must always be first in the lives of all Christians.

- Obedience: Religious by their vow of obedience to God promise to seek and do His will, working together with others in their community to try to understand what God is asking of them in their lives. They promise to listen to God with and in their communities. They promise to find out and follow the will of God together and to obey their superiors, especially in the decision of where they will serve the people of God.
  
- Diocesan priests: Diocesan priests are called to serve God's people in celibate love through their ministry of the sacraments of the Church and by teaching and proclaiming the Gospel through their lives of generous service. Rather than serving the Church in distant lands, diocesan priests are generally called to live and work among the people of their home diocese.

5. After these presentations, invite students to share their thoughts and feelings about these vows. If a priest or religious is available, it would be an excellent follow-up for them to answer any questions.

6. Explain to the students the difference between the above vows and the promises of obedience and celibacy that diocesan priests make at ordination.

*Activity:*

In closing, have students write one paragraph that completes the statement: "It is important that we have priests, brothers and sisters serving in the Church because...."

## Vocation Lesson Two: Listen!

Objective: To realize that prayer is essential for baptized Christians in discovering their call to serve.

Materials:

- Bible
  - Music
  - Copies of Listen! Worksheet (provided below)
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*Procedure:*

Refer to Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7. What was God asking his chosen servant to do? Name at least 5 types of service you can do and how they serve God's people. You may want to discuss a service project for the class to do. Invite students to become quieted for prayer.

*Activity:*

Introduce the prayer service with the following or something similar: Consider that before Jesus did anything important He went off by Himself and prayed. Before He began His public ministry after John baptized Him, He prayed for forty days. Before he gave the Sermon on the Mount, He prayed alone. Before He chose His apostles, He prayed for guidance. Before He entered into His passion and death, He

prayed with His disciples at the Last Supper and in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Reading the passages of Scripture for these may be helpful).

Praying before acting is a virtue of the disciples of Christ. Praying for guidance is sometimes called praying for discernment or for an understanding of God's will so it can be accomplished. Discerning requires listening.

Jesus taught us to pray. How did He do that? By giving us the Our Father

Together pray SLOWLY the Our Father and think about how He may be asking you to follow and serve Him.

Have you ever been to a museum? Maybe you saw and admired a dish that was 1000 years old. Someone created it to use on a table, to carry or hold something, to serve others in its own unique way. The potter never considered that the bowl might be admired by people hundreds of years later. Like the bowl, God created us to serve others in our own unique way.

*Activity:*

Distribute Activity Sheet: Listen!

*These lesson plans are provided by the Diocese of Arlington.*



**You Belong To Me!**

**Draw your name and color it.**

**“You,**

**are My beloved child. You are special in My eyes.”**



## **By Our Actions We Bring Peace**

**I can help Jesus bring peace to the world by**

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**This is a picture of me bringing peace to my world.**



The Gifts God Gave Me...



## Vocation Word Search Worksheet

D O C I L E C F A I T H B A S F K  
M B O E E P O H N Y D I S C E R N  
A E U M R R L E O S I S T E R E E  
R D R V A E T J I I E P N T V E E  
R I A L P S V I N N C Q E Z E A L  
I E G O I P S E T U Z E L O V E T  
A N E L P O V E R T Y U A N I M F  
G C B E L N C G L O R Y T I R U P  
E E E P I S T L E B Y C B C S E R  
N X J S O E H B O R I A M L A N O  
O E P O P Y E O N P L B I C E B M  
I V I G R A C E L U S I E D Y A I  
T M A T I A X W I Y N L M T A P S  
A B O S E L T S O P A E R D F T E  
C L W P S A L M B R O T H E R I L  
O O G Y T I T C N A S R V E H S G  
V K C H A S T I T Y R E T S Y M C

- 1) Baptism
- 2) Mystery
- 3) Pray
- 4) Grace
- 5) Celibacy
- 6) Purity
- 7) Promise
- 8) Talents
- 9) Discern
- 10) Apostle
- 11) Nun
- 12) Peace
- 13) Priest
- 14) Deacon
- 15) Brother
- 16) Sister
- 17) Serve
- 18) Gospel
- 19) Listen
- 20) Response
- 21) Anoint
- 22) Obedience
- 23) Poverty
- 24) Psalm
- 25) Chastity

- 26) Choice
- 27) Docile
- 28) Epistle
- 29) Vocation
- 30) Courage
- 31) Revere
- 32) Kneel
- 33) Pope
- 34) Gift
- 35) Bible
- 36) Love
- 37) Hope
- 38) Faith
- 39) Marriage
- 40) Vows
- 41) Zeal
- 42) Assent
- 43) Free
- 44) Joy
- 45) Act
- 46) Holy
- 47) Seed
- 48) Sanctity
- 49) Glory

**Listen!**

**DISCERNING REQUIRES LISTENING**

