

Archdiocese of Philadelphia - Vocation Awareness Week Unit Plan

Title of unit: God gave us gifts and talents to share with others.

Grade level: First Grade

Approximate time needed for unit completion: 1 week

Proposed Start Date: Monday of Vocation Awareness Week

Contributor: Mrs. Sheila Gavin, Mary, Mother of the Redeemer, North Wales

DESIRED RESULTS

Established Goals/Content Standards: Religion Guidelines mandated by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Enduring Understandings:

- Students are invited to participate in Mission of the Church which is the Mission of Jesus Christ.
- The faith believed is the faith celebrated in one's full, conscious.
- When we do what Jesus told us, we are living as children of God.
- Saints are holy people the Church honors.
- God created people in his image. God created us because he loves us. Life is a gift from God. God gives each of us special gifts.
- In the Sacrament of Matrimony a man and a woman become husband and wife. A husband and a wife share married love. God blesses the married couple and their love.
- Children are a wonderful gift from God. Children and their parents become a family. Members of a family care for one another, show respect, help each other, and pray together. Each person in the family is important. Learning about the Holy Family helps us to learn how to live in our families.
- Prayer is listening and talking to God. God listens when we pray. God answers our prayers in a way that is best for us and for others.

Overarching: As children of God and members of His Church, we all have a special calling to do and God's plan to follow.

Topical: We are asked to use our special gifts and talents to serve the Lord and one another.

Essential Questions:

- What role does God play in our lives?
- When do we become children of God?
- What does God call us to do?
- How can we recognize a calling from God?
- What can we do to respond to our special calling?

Unit Questions:

- What are my gifts and talents? How can my gifts and talents help me to know God's plan?
- Are we called to live our Holiness in different ways? What ways?

- How can we listen to God? Who can help us?
- How will I know God's plan for me?
- What does a priest do?
- How can my family help me to live out God's plan?

Student Objectives/Learning Activity Outcomes/I can...

1. I can determine that God made me with unique abilities.
2. I can know that God has a special plan for me and calls me to serve Him in different ways.
3. I can name at least one gift that God gave me that's makes me special.
4. I can use my gifts and talents to follow God's plan for me.
5. I can learn about the Holy Family and how they can be a model for me and my family.
6. I can talk to God through prayer.
7. I can identify that the Sacrament of Matrimony is when a baptized man and woman who love each other become husband and wife and that they promise to help each other and their family grow closer to God and get to heaven.
8. I know that clergy are bishops, priests, and deacons that have received the Sacrament of Holy Orders and they serve the whole Church.
9. I can identify that a priest has a calling to serve God's people in a special way.
10. I can realize that prayer, my family, priests, teachers and other special adults can help me discover God's plan for my life.
11. I can be thankful for the blessings in my life.
12. I can trust in God's plan for me.

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

*Assessment evidence should correlate with **Student Objectives/Learning Activity Outcome/I can...** above.*

Performance Tasks:

1. **Draw** with pencils and crayons the tools, items, talents that God gave you. When completed, have students share and show their Life's Luggage pictures with a friend.
2. God's Gifts to Us/Our Gift to God. Can you imagine getting a gift and never opening it? God gave us gifts He wants us to use. Can you think of something that you are good at? Draw it on the right side of the "present". On the left side, draw how you use that gift or talent to help at home, school, church, world??
3. Have students choose one member of the Holy family and write about how they are a good example for our own family. Example: Mary is a good mother. She shows us how to take care of our children when they are sick, hurt or lost. St. Joseph is a great dad. He kept Jesus safe and teaches us to look after and protect the ones we love. Jesus listened to his parents. He teaches me to obey my mom and dad when they ask me to do something.

4. Make a card for a priest and/or a priest puppet to take home. Have students make a card for your parish priests or for seminarian thanking them for following God's plan and teaching us to follow Jesus too.

Final Assessment: Ask students to write a letter to God. Teach the proper way to write a friendly letter. Have the students write to God about what they've learned this week. Assess writing piece for understanding of their gifts, vocation and trust in God's plan for them. Give each an envelope to keep their special letter in.

Other Evidence: 1. Students ability to gradually incorporate faith knowledge in class discussions. 2. Answering of comprehension questions. 3. Participation in prayer service.

MATERIALS and RESOURCES

- Books: The Legend of the Three Trees by Catherine McCafferty, Jacob's Gift by Max Lucado
- Plastic bucket for Bucket of Blessings
- **Video: A Week in the Life of a Priest** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbhZ9J0NxzU>

LEARNING PLAN

*Learning activities should correlate with **Student Objectives/Learning Activity Outcome/I can...** above.*

Lesson 1- (LAO # 1, 2)

Monday

1. Ask students to imagine they are going on a vacation. Brainstorm ideas of what you need to do before you go. Lead discussion to packing a suitcase. Bring students to the awareness that if have a plan for where you are going it is easier to pack for the trip.
2. Ask students who made you? (God) Did God make everyone the same? (No - He made each of us an original and unique person).
3. Tell the students that not only did God wonderfully make all of us, He made us with a purpose and plan in mind. He gave each of us exactly what we need in our suitcase to help us with the plan!
4. God skillfully made you with the skills for your life but not for someone else. Can you imagine getting the wrong suitcase at an airport? The items wouldn't fit you!
5. Now let's think of some things that God might have given us for our journey. What would be in your Life's Luggage? Did God give you the ability to fix things? Complete puzzles with ease? Know what to say when someone is hurt or sad? Be good at making a young child smile or laugh? Draw beautiful pictures of Creation? Be the star of a show? Be helpful and kind to others? What talents do you have? What are you so good at that it makes you think or say....I was made to do this!
6. After letting the students share their ideas, begin Performance Task #1. Draw with pencils and crayons the tools, items, talents that God gave you. When completed, have students share and show their Life's Luggage pictures with a friend. Conclude that the talents and gifts God gave us will help us to decide which way God is calling us to serve Him. The way we serve Him is our vocation.
7. Option- read The Legend of the Three Trees by Catherine McCafferty or watch video of the story to further illustrate God's plan and let the students see how sometimes the dreams we have for ourselves

are much smaller than the dreams God has for us. Discuss afterwards how sometimes God doesn't fulfill our dreams but has a much different better plan in store for us.

Lesson 2 – (LAO # 3, 4)

Tuesday

1. **Play game:** First Graders Got Talent. Have students take turns acting out without talking something that they are really good at. Other students have to try and guess what their classmates' talents happen to be. If they guess correctly, they get to act out next.
2. Tell your students that when you do a good deed with your gifts and talents that God gave you then you put a smile on His face! How can we use the talents we have to please God? Ask the students if you are good with working with younger children, you could watch your little brother or sister while your mom does housework. If you are good at drawing pictures, you can paint a picture for the elderly in nursing home. If you are good at cooking, you could make some food for the local food bank. Ask the students to think of some ways that people can do good things with their Gifts from God.
3. Performance Task #2- God's Gifts to Us/Our Gift to God. Can you imagine getting a gift and never opening it? God gave us gifts He wants us to use. Can you think of something that you are good at? Draw it on the right side of the "present". On the left side, draw how you use that gift or talent to help at home, school, church, world??
4. End with prayer: Hold my hand God, Lead the way. Help me be good every day. Let me know what's wrong and right. Keep me safe through the day and night. Let me know what you have planned. Lead the way God, hold my hand.
5. Option: Read Jacob's Gift by Max Lucado.

Lesson 3 – (LAO # 5, 6, 7)

Wednesday

1. Talk with the students about their families as people that our gifts from God. Our families help us to live as Children of God. Ask them to share the size of their families and their favorite family activities.
2. Teach students that in the sacrament of Matrimony a man and a woman become husband and wife. A husband and a wife share a married love. God blesses the married couple and their love. Marriage is a vocation. Children are a wonderful gift from God within this vocation. Children and their parents become a family. Members of a family care for one another, show respect, help each other, and pray together. Our family helps us to grow in faith and give ourselves to God with all our hearts.
3. Then ask the students "Who is the Holy Family?" Write the names Joseph, Mary and Jesus. Learn about Jesus as a young boy from a story in Children's Bible or read the following: *Jesus was twelve years old. The Holy Family went to the city of Jerusalem to celebrate an important holy feast. When everyone was ready to go home, Mary and Joseph could not find Jesus. They finally found him in the Temple. He was listening to the teachers and asking them questions. When Jesus saw Mary and Joseph, he went with them. They began their trip home together.* Students can act out the story and or retell it after you've read it. Ask questions to check for understanding.
4. Afterward, ask the students how they think Mary and Joseph took care of Jesus. (In the Holy Family, Mary and Joseph shared God's love with Jesus, gave him food, and clothes, kept him safe.) Remind students that Jesus was once a child- just like them! Ask the students what are the ways that your parents and family show their love for you?

5. Remind the students that Mary also had loving parents. They were Jesus' grandparents. Teach the students about Saint Anne and Saint Joachim and how they helped Mary to love and trust God. Teach that our grandparents care about us and pass on the faith of the Catholic Church to us. Remind the students that Mary was also a child like them. She listened and prayed to God. She was so close to God that when He asked her to be the mother of Jesus, she said "Yes" without even knowing what this would mean for her life. She followed the path that God had chosen for her. St. Joseph was a good man. God chose him to be the foster-father of Jesus. St. Joseph followed the plan God had for him.
6. Say this prayer:

Leader: Lord God, show your wonderful love to all our families.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Bless our parents.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Bless our brothers and our sisters.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Bless our Grandparents.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Bless our Aunts and Uncles and cousins.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Dear God, Thank you for the gift of a family. Bless our families with lots of love. Help our family to be more and more like the Holy Family. Amen.
7. Performance Task #3- Have students choose one member of the Holy family and write about how they are a good example for our own family. Example: Mary is a good mother. She shows us how to take care of our children when they are sick, hurt or lost. St. Joseph is a great dad. He kept Jesus safe and teaches us to look after and protect the ones we love. Jesus listened to his parents. He teaches me to obey my mom and dad when they ask me to do something.

Lesson 4 – (LAO # 8,9,10)

Thursday

1. Ask the students to name people they enjoy listening to. Explain that some people have a special way of talking with the people they love. Remind them that God speaks to us in the words of the Bible.
2. Teach- Jesus calls all of us to be his followers. Some members of the Church are called to follow Jesus in a unique way as priests. Priests help their bishops provide for the spiritual, educational, and social needs of Catholics. Make a list of some ways priests help in your school, Church and community.
3. Explain that a Priest or a deacon helps us to understand God's word during Mass. Priests lead us in the celebration of the Mass. They teach us what Jesus taught. They help us to live as followers of Jesus.
4. God wants us to be happy. God wants all of us to be Holy. God has a plan for some people to serve Him by getting married and raising children. God has a plan for some people to serve him in a special way as a Brother/Sister, deacon or Priest.
5. A priest has a calling to serve God's people in a special way. Only a deacon or a priest proclaims the Gospel and they help us to understand what we hear in the Bible. Listening to God's word helps us to learn how to follow Jesus. Who else can help us understand God's Word? (parents, teachers, etc.)
6. Discuss the importance of priests in our lives. Say this prayer: Dear God, please bless our priests who represent you on earth. Please strengthen them who shepherd your flock.

7. Performance task #4- Make a priest puppet to take home. Discuss the colors of the vestments before coloring.
8. Optional- watch video- a life in a week of a priest. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbhZ9J0NxzU>
Or Rosie Goes to Church by World Priest Day:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rEzegfhrWQ> (part 1)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB_xE2uZV_8 (part 2)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hx33E1Vu1OY> (part 3)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fV_qIPcVeHY (part 4)
Or invite a parish priest to come and talk to the class about their calling. Make thank you cards for him.

Lesson 5 – (LAO # 11,12)

Friday

1. Remind them that when we sit quietly we can listen to God in our hearts. God helps us know how to share his love with others and how to be. When we listen to God in our hearts, it will help us to know the plan He has for us. Dim the lights and ask the students to participate in the following prayer service.
2. Begin by reading the Bible story of Jesus Blessing the Children.
3. Leader: Let the children come to me!
All: Let the children come to me! Let them sit here on my knee. I'll bless the children while they play. Let them come to me and stay.
Leader: We are all children of God. God calls everyone to be a sign that he calls for all people. This calling is called our vocation. Let us pray together.
All: God, I know you will call us for special work in our lives. Help us to follow Jesus each day and be ready to answer your call. Amen.
Leader: Let us sing, "Jesus Loves Me". Watch video with song on lyrics:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epQQAwBd-vQ>
4. Make a Blessing Bucket. Student can make one individually by thinking of blessings God has given them and their family. Fill the Blessing Bucket with words and images that tell of blessing they have received. Show that they are thankful. Pray: Blessed Be God Forever.
5. If possible, bring a plastic bucket to the class and label it as Our Bucket of Blessings. Place it in the prayer center and invite the class to write their blessings on strips of paper and place them in the bucket at prayer time throughout the school year.