

***STORY OF MY LIFE***  
***Millennial Edition***

**Goals:** 1) to help young people identify their talent for spiritual and church leadership, and  
2) to invite those with strong spiritual leadership potential to use their talent in making a difference.

**Method:** use the *Story of My Life* vocational guide with high school juniors and/or seniors in Catholic high school and parish youth ministry settings.

In a Catholic high school setting the typical *Story of My Life* Program would include:

1. One class period for presentation on vocation issues, discussion of how we come to answer the question “Who am I,” and to introduce the Story of My Life as a way of discovering themes in relationship, leadership, and spirituality.
2. Time for students to complete the online version of the Story of My Life at [www.vocations.com/story.html](http://www.vocations.com/story.html). This is usually done in the computer lab during another period on a second day. The students receive the results of their Story immediately when they enter their responses online. The results appear on the screen of their computer. Students who show strong potential for spiritual leadership or ministry may be invited to indicate any preferences for further follow-up, which could include written information, retreat invitations, or personal interviews.
3. Follow-up conversations for further feedback are scheduled with each student that requests one. Student must agree to this meeting. The conversation is done with a trained vocation minister, at the school, during a student’s study hall, free period, or religion period (when no free period). These follow up session are between 20 to 30 minutes in duration.

**Responsibilities:**

Vocation Office: The bulk of the responsibility for the program lies with the Diocesan Vocation Office. The office is responsible for all preparation of materials, scheduling presenters for the initial day, and coordinating follow-up with religion teachers.

Religion Department / Teachers: The religion teacher sets the date for the class presentation and the date and location for the computer writing of the Story. The teacher should also introduce the vocation personnel conducting the day.

**How does the *Story of My Life* work?**

(It is probably easier to understand the process by looking at the survey online or looking at one of the booklets previously used to see what students are asked to do.)

We simply ask the students to write a story of their lives, but in an easy way. They indicate the degree to which a number of statements would be included in their books if they were to write the story of their lives.

Using a computer program, the students' responses are matched with how people with strong spiritual leadership talent responded in the surveys they wrote about themselves.

The results look at the levels of eight dimensions of the student's life: Inter-personal, Inter-relational, Can, How, Will, Belief, Mission, and Lifestyle. Without going into great detail here, the kinds of things the report indicates are the presence of empathy, courage, mission, hope, focus, enabling ability, relator, community, God-presence, and a few others.

If a student requests a follow-up conversation, that begins with a brief interview with the student, in which the interviewer gets some information about the person that will help further interpret the results of the *Story*. The student's results are then explained in the context of their life experience.

The process is one of affirmation of the student's talent. No discussion is given to areas where talent was not indicated. The philosophy is that talent should be developed and nurtured early on. When people operate from and develop their talent, they will become excellent in those areas and more productive in life, and will ultimately find greater fulfillment.

For more information please contact Father John Regan, Diocese of Joliet Vocation Director, St. Charles Pastoral Center, 402 S. Independence Blvd., Romeoville, IL 60446; 815/834-4004.

# “Story of My Life – Millennial Edition” Presentation Outline

(based on 45-50 minute class period)

- I. Brief introduction by teacher or team and prayer
- II. “To Youth” from pastoral letter *Building a Vocation-Rich Catholic Community* by Bishop Joseph Imesch
- III. Three questions for everyone to consider ...
  - A. What am I going to do? (the career, job, occupation questions)
  - B. What’s important to me? (values)
  - C. How am I to love? (outreach to others)
  - D. First two questions are about self, the third is community oriented (beyond self)
  - E. Answering the three questions leads me to my “vocation”, to answer the question “Who am I?” Vocation question is the identity question.
- IV. Presenters’ stories
  - A. Focus on how we have discovered the answer to “Who am I?”
  - B. What it means to be a priest, sister, or brother today
  - C. Respond to any questions they might have

(With 15 minutes left ... continue ...)

- V. What are some of the ways we get to know ourselves?
  - A. Mirrors (how we view ourselves)
  - B. Experience and reflection on experience / Trying new things and seeing how they “fit”
  - C. Listening to others we trust ...
  - D. Instruments – career and personality inventories (ACT, SAT, Myers-Briggs, Presidential Fitness) - each gives just a glimpse of who we are
- VI. Introduction of the *Story of My Life*
  - A. Soon you will have an opportunity to use an instrument on the internet that will help identify gifts or themes you have in relationship, spirituality, and leadership
  - B. It’s called “Story of My Life,” an easy way to write a Story – the statements are there, just indicate which ones they would include in their story
  - C. When you complete the Story on the Internet, you will receive the results instantaneously on the computer screen for you to read.

Important to note:

    1. Confidentiality (The results are not shared with anyone but the respondent; The results come up on the screen, and you are the only one who sees that report. Addresses are not given to any mailing lists, etc...)
    2. There are no right or wrong answers – select the response that best fits you
    3. Not a perfect instrument – many other things you might want to include about yourself
    4. “You are more than 96 objective statements” – there is much more to who you are – this only looks at a few areas of who you are
- VII. Any further questions or comments

VIII. Concluding Statements / Thank You / Prayer Card from Sister Ita Ford

# STORY OF MY LIFE

## Internet Instructions for Teachers

The purpose of the Story of My Life is to help young people discover and name some good qualities about themselves. It looks specifically at the areas of relationship, leadership, and spirituality. The instrument is available on the internet at:

**[www.vocations.com/storyhs.html](http://www.vocations.com/storyhs.html)**

Please go to that site. The Story of My Life simply asks you to imagine that you are writing a story of who you are. As you think about the statements that are listed in this program, simply ask “Does that describe me or not?”. If it describes you, then ask “How well does it describe me?” There are five possible rankings for a statement going from a 1 which means “This statement should not be in my book,” to a 5 which means, “This statement must be in my book.”

After you complete the Story on the Internet, you will receive the results instantaneously on the computer screen for you to read. This is a confidential survey. The results are not shared with anyone but the respondent. The results will come up on your screen, and you are the only one who sees that report. Addresses are not given to any mailing lists, etc...)

A couple of other points about the story ...

1. There are no right or wrong answers – select the response that best fits you
2. It is not a perfect instrument – there are probably many other things you would want to include about yourself if you were to write a story about yourself.
3. You are more than 96 objective statements – there is much more to who you are – this only looks at a few areas of who you are

As you get results and read through them, some of you might be asked more specifically about possible ways to learn more about options for considering a career in service or some ministry in the Church. If that follow-up form should be sent to you, simply read through and respond to that form as you see fit.

You may get started now.

# STORY OF MY LIFE – Millennial Edition - Feedback

revision date: 4/2/02

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

The *Story of My Life* guide that you wrote helped us understand some life themes that stand out as being important in your life. The *Story* only gives us some preliminary information and is not intended to be a complete report of your life. There will always be much more to us than any one guide can uncover. I will share with you some of the observations made through the *Story* and try to tie them in with some of the things we have just talked about. This information may or may not be completely correct. That is for you to decide.

## RELATIONSHIP

**Inter-personal** .... the tendency to develop trusting one-to-one relationships. ( )

*This theme describes the person's tendency for developing trusting, one-to-one relationships. Those who are strong in this theme are perceived as friendly and approachable. They can instinctively recognize the uniqueness of each relationship, and they affirm the goodness they see in others.*

- \_\_\_ You respect and appreciate each person as an individual.
- \_\_\_ You like to get to know people (and want to know about others in order to be helpful to them).
- \_\_\_ You are non-judgmental in relationships
- \_\_\_ You help people see the choices they can make and support them to make the right choice for them.
- \_\_\_ You know how to support others on an emotional level.

**Inter-relational** ... the ability to foster good relationships within groups ( )

*This theme describes the person's ability to initiate and maintain good relationships with others within a group. Those high on this theme are liked by their peers and have the ability to recognize the needs of those around them. They bring people together and make each member feel a part of the group or team. They always speak to others, and they have a positive attitude.*

- \_\_\_ You relate easily with people of different groups and ages
- \_\_\_ You are generous with your time and yourself.
- \_\_\_ You know how to reach compromises and build consensus.
- \_\_\_ You can put your own needs aside to help others with their needs.
- \_\_\_ You want people to work together as a team.

## LEADERSHIP

**Can** ... the capacity to perform as a leader. (*Empathy, Courage*)

*This theme describes whether the person has a capacity for performing as a leader. Those who possess this theme can feel what other people feel, understand other people's situations, and have the courage to take action and ask people to be responsible. They can deal with life's imponderables, and they challenge others to move ahead.*

- \_\_\_ You are able to read the feelings of others and help them become more open.
- \_\_\_ You can listen with your heart.
- \_\_\_ You can understand life from other people's view.
- \_\_\_ You will stand up for what you know to be right (and take risks to help others change).
- \_\_\_ You are direct and straightforward with others.
- \_\_\_ You can take charge of a situation and give directions when necessary.
- \_\_\_ You can ask people to make commitments.

**How** .... the way a person will use his/her talents as a leader to make a difference.

(*Ego Awareness, Focus, Arranger, Omni, Conceptual*)

*This theme helps us understand the ways a person sets and achieves goals. When this theme is high, the leader will help people generate their goals and then focus the group's energies on the appropriate activities to accomplish those goals. People who are strong in this theme know that they can make a difference. They know how to take initiative and make things happen, and they spontaneously build community.*

- \_\_\_ You can name your feelings and own having them (which helps you deal with the feelings of others).
- \_\_\_ You are able to set your goals, maintain them, and follow through (and help others to do the same).
- \_\_\_ You are able to pick yourself up and start over again when you fall.
- \_\_\_ You are well organized and know how to get things done.
- \_\_\_ You are able to facilitate a group's work to accomplish what needs to get done.
- \_\_\_ You are able to help people deal with crises (by showing strength in times of doubt).
- \_\_\_ You enjoy discovering new things and asking the deeper questions about life; you are a ready learner).
- \_\_\_ Communication is important for you (and you are able to simplify and organize your ideas easily so that others can understand).

- Will** ... the motivation to grow and achieve and make a difference (*Mission, Hope*)  
*This theme describes the person's motivations to grow and achieve. The strength of internal motivations, including the person's sense of mission, and external motivations, including his/her sense of hope for the future, are good indicators of this theme. Those high on the will theme are steadfast in their faith and receive satisfaction from seeing other people's lives made better by their actions. They want to become highly respected leaders, and they enjoy being the best in what they do.*
- You are a person of principles, and you stick to them.
  - You often think about what's happening in other people's lives.
  - You are willing to go out of yourself for the growth of others.
  - You can help others build confidence for their future.
  - You have a positive, hopeful, optimistic attitude about life and the future.

## SPIRITUALITY

- Belief** ... attention to one's individual sense of spirituality (*Presence, Spirituality*)  
*This theme describes the person's sense of being in relationship with God and how that personal relationship affects their daily living. Those high in this theme readily recognize God's presence in a variety of settings, especially in relationships with other people. They find themselves strengthened by times of prayer and personal reflection. God and their faith are priorities for them.*
- You are attuned to the movements of God.
  - You are regularly and almost spontaneously aware of God's presence in your life and in others.
  - You have a sense of being connected to others through their spirituality (or in a spiritual sense).
  - Your prayer gives perspective to your life.
  - Your life is centered on Christ.
  - You understand that God is our strength.

- Mission** ... the motivation to participate in the mission of Christ and the Church  
*This theme describes the person's ability to minister and help others in a religious context. Those high in this theme have a sense of being a disciple of Jesus and carrying on his work. They put their faith into action in meaningful ways. They receive satisfaction and joy from seeing other people's lives touched by their service to them. They see themselves and allow themselves to be instruments of God's love and peace.*
- You enjoy making a difference in the world for God.
  - You show a commitment and dedication to the Church.
  - You help others identify their experiences of God.
  - You share a love with others that is beyond your own.
  - Discussing religious issues comes naturally for you.
  - You can see yourself enjoying ministry and service within the Church.
  - You sense Jesus is present when you show compassion to others.

## LIFESTYLE

- Lifestyle** ... attraction to religious values  
*This theme describes a person's attraction to religious values in their life. People high in this theme generally see importance in giving one's life for something larger than oneself to make a significant difference in the world. They enjoy the connections with others in a religious context. When this theme is high, the person has the potential for enhancing community and building strong loyalties. It may indicate how satisfying life as a religious might be for the person.*
- Belonging to a community (of friends) is important to you.
  - You want people to feel comfortable and welcomed around others.
  - You take strong stands, have clearly defined attitudes, and express your beliefs.
  - People are much more important to you than things.
  - Simplicity in life is something you strive for.
  - You can see yourself living a religious vocation.
  - You like being identified as a "good person" -- as honest, caring, and committed.