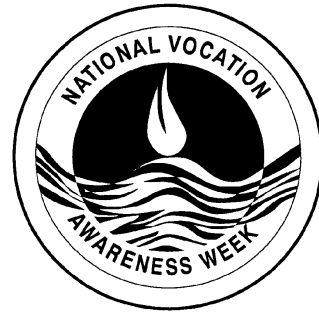


The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord marks Jesus' initiation into public ministry. At his baptism Jesus is named the Beloved Son of God. With this celebration we recommit ourselves to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Initiated through our baptism we too are commissioned to proclaim Good News with our lives.

The observance of *National Vocation Awareness Week (NVAW)* began in 1976 when the National Conference of Catholic Bishops designated the 28th Sunday of the year as the beginning of *NVAW*. In 1997 this celebration was moved to coincide with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

NCCV promotes all Catholic Church vocations. This NVAW kit is designed to assist preachers, teachers, catechists, and other ministers. By fostering a culture of vocations, the Church is strengthened in its universal call to holiness. May this resource meet your particular needs and enhance your local celebration.

Proclaim Good News



National Vocation Awareness Week
January 11-17, 2009

►► **Planning Kit**

Junior High (7-8)

Scripture for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

✚ **Cycle B**

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7 or Isaiah 55:1-11

Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4; 3:9-10

Acts 10:34-38 or 1John 5:1-9

Mark 1:7-11

►► **Contents**

- Lesson Plans
- Activities

Junior High Lesson Plans

Proclaim Good News

◀ Lesson One *Sharing Good News*

Objective: To raise awareness of the importance of sharing good news.

Preparation: Run off *Activity 1*. Have a bible or copy of Isaiah 42:1–7.

Process: Introduce the lesson by talking about how the news we hear on TV or radio or read in the paper and magazines is more often “bad news” rather than “good news.” Invite students to take a moment to reflect on some good news stories they have heard about or something in their own life. After a short time invite a few to share their good news. Discuss how you feel when you hear good news. Ask: “Why is it important to share good news?” (Sharing good news makes people feel good, we become more aware of good news and express our gratitude. Good news inspires others to share and do good things.) Talk about the concept of “random acts of kindness” and “pay it forward.” Read Isaiah 42:1–7. Ask: “What is the good news in this passage?” Invite several students to respond. Ask: “Who is the Lord addressing in this passage from Isaiah?” (Jesus) “Can you give some examples of how Jesus fulfilled this prophecy?” (At Jesus’ baptism a voice said: “you are my beloved son.” At Jesus’ passion and death he was silent and accepted his death. Jesus became God’s bond with us. Jesus taught and healed. He reached out to the poor and outcast.) Discuss the meaning of “covenant.” (an agreement or promise) Ask: “Does this good news affect your life today? How?” Distribute *Activity 1*. Review instructions. Allow time for students to begin to write a “good news” story and finish it for homework.

◀ Lesson Two *Proclaiming Good News with Our Lives*

Objective: To learn how priests, sisters, and brothers proclaim the Good News.

Preparation: Obtain free copies of *Vision Magazine* (www.VocationGuide.org or 800-942-2811), print information off the internet, or ask for materials from the diocesan vocation office. Run off *Activity 2* for each student.

Process: Invite 3–4 students to share their “good news” stories. Make a connection with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord and *National Vocation Awareness Week* (see cover). As baptized Christians we are called to witness to the Good News. The gospels show us the way. Read Matthew 25:31–40. These loving actions are called “Works of Mercy.” Distribute *Activity 2*. Talk about the works of mercy. Most religious groups and Church ministers use these as a guide for their service to the Church. Divide the class into groups of 4–6 students. Review the directions and invite students to explore the materials about various groups of priests, brothers, and sisters. Groups share the advertisements. Invite a priest, sister or brother to talk to the class about how they proclaim “Good News.” Contact parish priest or local vocation office.