

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**

Primary (1-3)

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

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Primary Lesson Plans

Proclaim Good News

◀ Lesson One *Called to Serve*

Objective: To help children to know that when we reach out to others, we reach out to Jesus.

Preparation: Duplicate *Activity 1*. Students will need crayons and pencil.

Process: Invite students to sit in a circle/comfortable place. Say a simple prayer asking God to help students listen to his word. Read Matthew 25:31–40. Explain how God has called us to be part of his kingdom from the beginning of time. He loved us and invited us before we were even born. What great love! Invite students to share how God has gifted them. After sharing, talk about our call as God’s children to share the gifts God gave us. Talk about the people they heard about in Matthew. Invite them to share if they have ever met anyone like the poor – the homeless. Many of God’s people are suffering and need help. We can reach out by sharing our gifts with them. We do this by being kind and loving to others, sharing our time, food, clothing, and toys with those who have less. Remember, whenever we do loving things we are doing them for Jesus who also helped and shared with others. Distribute *Activity 1*. Review directions. Allow time to complete. As a closing, sing “This Little Light of Mine” or play “Walk with Jesus” from *Fingerprints* by Mary Rice Hopkins, or another appropriate song. Invite parish priest to class to talk about how he helps others.

◀ Lesson Two *Living the Good News*

Objective: To introduce St. Francis of Assisi as one who was called to help Jesus.

Preparation: Duplicate *Activity 2*. Provide magazines with pictures, scissors, and glue.

Process: Begin with a prayer or song. Explain to students that they will learn about a rich young man who God called to help build his Church. Jesus appeared to Francis and said: “Rebuild my Church.” Read a children’s version of the life of St. Francis of Assisi or share about Francis from what you have learned. When Jesus asked Francis to build up the Church, Jesus was talking about the people of God that needed Francis’ help—the poor, the hungry, the lepers, the homeless and those who did not know God. Francis left his family and friends and began to build a church. Francis recognized his need to change when he met a leper and reached out to him. It was then that Francis’ heart changed and he began to serve God by reaching out to God’s people. Francis did what Matthew said in the gospel. You may want to explain what a leper is. Many young men and women in Assisi heard Francis and saw how he lived and they wanted to follow Francis and spread God’s Word and love others. Today there are many followers. Ask the students to think about serving God like Francis – how would they do this? After sharing ask the students to pray for someone who needs help. All respond: *We hear your call, Jesus*. Pray aloud the “Peace Prayer of Francis.” Distribute *Activity 2*. Two students can work together. Find pictures and paste on *Activity 2* sheet.