

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**

Young Adult

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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Young Adult Lesson Plans

Proclaim Good News

◀ Lesson One *The Road Less Traveled*

Objective: To explore the nature and attractiveness of a religious vocation.

Preparation: Provide a welcoming prayer space. Make copies of *Activity 1* and the prayer service/prayer card.

Process: Begin with simple ice-breaker. Ask participants to spontaneously share words that tell about someone who has responded to a call to be a priest, sister, or brother. Discuss some of the images these words project. Invite those who have an experience and/or relationship with a priest, brother, or sister to share their insights. Provide stories of real people who serve/d God as priests, brothers, and sisters. Include some who are well known as well as others (Thea Bowman, FSPA, Mother Teresa, John Paul II, the pastor, a sister or brother from the area). Consider inviting a priest, brother or sister to come and share their vocation story. Contact your local vocation office for possible speakers. Distribute *Activity 1*. Conclude with prayer service or prayer card from the National Vocation Awareness Week kit.

◀ Lesson Two *What on earth are you doing with your GIFT?*

Objective: To raise awareness of the gift that a religious vocation is and to prompt openness to such a gift.

Preparation: Read through the meditation for pace. Prepare/purchase small gift boxes for each participant. Make copies of *Activity 2*.

Process: Students receive small gift box and hold as meditation is led.

Guided Meditation

Visualize you are standing in a crowd when a young man, Harold, comes to Jesus and asks: "What must I do to be truly happy?"... You can't hear the end of the conversation but you see him go away sad... You now go up to Jesus and ask him why Harold walked away sad?... Instead of answering your question Jesus gives you a small gift... Imagine yourself holding this gift... What is the best thing you could imagine it to be?... What are you hoping this gift is NOT?... Open the gift... Inside is a small slip of paper with the words: "Sell your possessions, give to the poor, and come follow me"... What does this mean to you?... What are some of the pros and cons of the gift?... What are your desires/fears?... Sit down and share your thoughts with Jesus... Listen to his response... Do you walk away encouraged... or discouraged like Harold?... When ready, come back to this time and place.

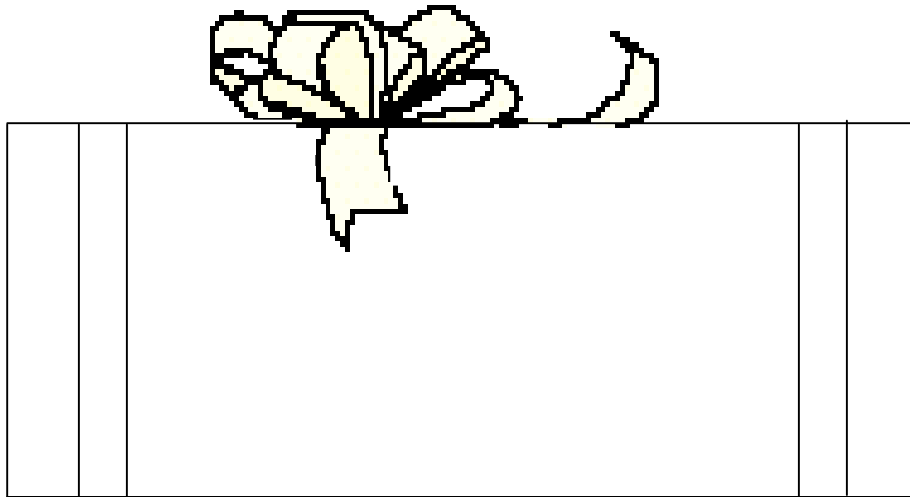
Distribute *Activity 2*. If group is small, discuss together. If group is large, invite participants to form smaller groups. Allow about 15 minutes for discussion. In large group talk about how a vocation is a gift from God and your response is your gift to God. Provide meditation music/song (e.g. *I'll Give* by Smalltown Poets, *The Summons* by John Bell, *Take Lord, Receive* by St. Louis Jesuits). Invite participants to name a gift they offer to God and what it means. Conclude with *Activity 2* prayer.

Activity 2

Vocation As Gift

- What did Jesus say to you?
- When you read the slip of paper in the gift box, how did you feel?
- Was the message in the gift box something you wanted to receive?
- Was the message in the gift box something you did not want to receive?
- Was the message in the gift box something you might be able to consider?

*Call to mind the gifts God has given you. In what ways are you willing to share your gifts as a gift to God?
Write a short prayer to God expressing your willingness to respond.*



My Lord God,

*I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that
I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that
if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always, though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.*

~ Thomas Merton