

VOCATION AWARENESS LESSON

GRADE ONE

SAINT JEANNE JUGAN

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY: THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

Objective: Through the life of Jeanne Jugan, students will gain an understanding of vocation to the consecrated life.

Materials: Story and pictures of Saint Jeanne Jugan (provided), art supplies

Instructional Focus:

- I. Students will be introduced to age appropriate adaptations of the following vocabulary/definitions which are taken from the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults.
 - a. Vocation- the call each person receives from God; everyone has been called to holiness and eternal life, especially in Baptism. Each person can also be called more specifically to the priesthood or religious life; to the married life; and to the single life.
 - b. Priest- a baptized man ordained through Holy Orders who with the bishop exercise the pastoral mission of the Church. They serve God's people in the work of sanctification by their preaching, teaching and offering the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the forgiving of sins. (A priest may be ordained as a diocesan priest or as a member of a religious community.)
 - c. Holy Orders- the sacrament in which a bishop ordains a man to be conformed to Jesus Christ by grace, to service and leadership in the Church. A man can be ordained as a deacon, priest or bishop.
 - d. Religious or Consecrated Life- a permanent state in life into which certain men or women freely commit themselves to a life of special service to Christ, marked by the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Students will listen to a short biography of Jeanne Jugan and her commitment to God. Students will then retell and act out her call from God and response to the consecrated life.

Students will:

- discuss how they can imitate Jeanne Jugan's commitment to service in God's name.
- brainstorm ideas for a service activity for the poor and elderly. (for example, make spiritual bouquets or cards for shut-ins or those in nursing facilities)
- develop a plan and timeline for the service activity that can be done in class. If time permits, students will begin the service activity.

II. Students will complete their service activity.

III. Students will sequentially order pictures* of Jeanne Jugan's vocation and then narrate her story. They will then silently reflect on a life of dedication to the poor and service to God. Students will then write three or four sentences which explain the need for religious men and women in the Church.

Resources for lesson and story of Saint Jeanne Jugan:

Little Sisters of the Poor website at: littlesistersofthepoor.org

Drawings of Saint Jeanne Jugan created by Kristen Costello, a student of Saint Richard Elementary School Philadelphia.

Saint Jeanne Jugan

Jeanne Jugan, known by her religious order as Sister Mary of the Cross, worked very hard to take care of God's poor and elderly people.

Jeanne was born October 25, 1792 into a simple fisherman's family in Cancale in France. She was the sixth child of Marie and Joseph Joucan. Jeanne grew up laughing and playing with the other children, yet still knew struggles and suffering. Four of her brothers and sisters died in infancy and her father went away to sea and never returned. Her mother worked hard but had time to teach Jeanne her prayers. When she was fifteen years old, Jeanne became a kitchen-maid. She became involved in helping the poor and visiting the lonely.

When Jeanne was twenty-four, a young sailor wanted to marry her. Jeanne turned him down as she heard a call from God to do His work but was not sure what to do.

In 1817 she left her family home and went to live alone and figure out God's plan for her life. She entered the hospital as a nurse and helped the poor and sick for six years. In 1835 she and a friend, Françoise, rented a house. Soon another young woman who was seventeen came to live with them. One cold windy evening Jeanne discovered an aged woman, blind, infirm and abandoned. She took the woman into their home. God opened Jeanne's heart to his desire for her. Soon these three women opened their home to others. Some more women joined to help them and a small community formed.

On May 29, 1842 gathered around their spiritual advisor, Father LePailleur, the small community clarified its rule of life inspired by the rule of the Brothers of St. John of God. Jeanne became the first superior. In 1849 the Congregation officially became known as the Little Sisters of the Poor. By 1850 there were more than 100 sisters in 11 homes. These homes continued to grow along with the woman entering the order.

At the age of 87 Jeanne died quietly and peacefully. She spent her life helping the poor, lonely and unwanted of the world. Her legacy lives on today in the many homes staffed by the Little Sisters of the Poor.

SEANNE



JUGAN





