

VOCATION AWARENESS LESSON

GRADE TWO

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY: ORDER OF SAINT FRANCIS

Objective: Through the life of Saint Francis of Assisi, students will gain an understanding of a vocation to the consecrated life.

Materials: Story and picture of Saint Francis of Assisi (provided), art supplies

Instructional Focus:

- I. Students will listen 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 the story of Saint Francis of Assisi as a model of religious life.

II. Students will brainstorm and list the gospel values that Saint Francis exemplified. Students will individually choose a gospel value that they most admire about Saint Francis. Students will color the picture of Saint Francis and write the gospel value on the picture. Students will also write two or three sentences about Saint Francis and how he inspires them to live this gospel value in their own life. Students will share their picture and sentences with the class.

III. Students will be grouped. Each group will demonstrate their understanding of the life of Saint Francis by creating and then presenting one of the following to the class:

- a power point presentation
- a sequential story board
- a common craft video\*

\*A common craft video captures sequential pictures drawn by the students which are placed on a white board. As the student speaks, he or she or another student films the picture with a flip camera. Pictures are continuously slid across the white board to match the dialogue while being filmed.

Resource used for story of St. Francis of Assisi:

Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio, [Saints and Feast Days: A Resource and Activity Book](#), Loyola Press, 2004. Those who have purchased this book may reproduce its contents for use in educational settings.

## Story of Saint Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)

Saint Francis of Assisi was the son of a wealthy cloth merchant and a devout, loving mother. Francis enjoyed a comfortable life. His fun-loving way and sunny personality made him very popular. As a child, Francis dreamed of becoming a brave and noble knight. When Assisi and Perugia were at war, Francis had his chance to be a soldier. Francis experienced fierce fighting, was captured and put into prison for a year. As a prisoner of war, Francis felt deep humiliation and a vicious hatred towards him. Francis let go of his dream to become a knight and began to look for a meaningful purpose in life.

One day while he was praying in an old church, Francis heard a voice say, "Francis, go repair my house which, as you see, is falling into ruin." Impulsively Francis rushed home, grabbed bolts of cloth to sell, and took the money to the priest of the church. The priest, however, refused the money. Francis's father was very angry with him, too. Francis returned the money, gave up his own expensive clothes, and decided that he would rely on his heavenly Father for all that he needed.

For the next few years, Francis worked by hand to repair the little church. Then one day at Mass he heard a reading from the Gospel that helped him understand that he was called to do three things: to be one with his heavenly Father, to work for the Church, and to become as much like Jesus as possible.

He also realized that he was not to rebuild churches, but the Church. All alone he started traveling from place to place, sleeping on the ground and begging for food. He enthusiastically preached about the Father's loving care for all people and creation. He spoke about the need for everyone to repent and to turn back to God. He tried to convince the rich to live a simpler lifestyle and to create better conditions for the poor. He offered a sense of dignity and respect to the poor themselves. Francis's gentleness and good humor were contagious. Soon many men joined him and they formed a community. Francis wrote guidelines or rules for his followers based on a life of poverty and preaching of the Good News. He received approval from the Pope for his community of brothers. His followers later became known as Franciscans.

Every day, Francis tried to become more and more like Jesus. He received Jesus daily in the Eucharist. He found Jesus in people and nature. He continued to live poorly and travel place to place to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ. He was humble and compassionate towards others, especially the dying and those who suffered from illness. He taught people to take care of God's creation. The Church celebrates his feast day on October 4.

