

## 2nd Grade: Religious Life

### OVERVIEW

**OBJECTIVE:** To associate the evangelical counsels with the vocation to the religious life.

#### MAIN CONCEPTS:

- People in the religious life make vows to follow the evangelical counsels.
- A vow is a special kind of promise.
- The evangelical counsels are poverty, chastity and obedience.
- The evangelical counsels are words of advice from the Gospel about how to follow Jesus in a challenging way.

#### PLANNING DIRECTIONS:

Teach the core components. Select and teach other components given the time you have and the needs of your children.

### INTRODUCTION

2 min

Summarize today's theme.

*Through these units we hope to become familiar with the vocations to which God calls people so that you will be able to follow his call always. Right now, you are in the single state of life, but someday God may call you to a particular vocation—married life, priesthood, or religious life. Today we will focus on religious life.*

### SIMPLE PRAYER

3 min

Let's draw near to God during today's lesson. Read Deuteronomy 15:7-8.

*"If one of your relatives or neighbors is in need in the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor close your hand against your people who are in need. Instead, you shall freely open your hand and generously lend what helps to meet that need." – DEUTERONOMY 15:7-8*

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

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### READING AND DISCUSSION

#### JESUS' CHALLENGE TO A RICH YOUNG MAN

One day a young man came up to Jesus and asked, "Good teacher, what do I have to do in order to have eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Keep the commandments." "Which ones?" asked the young man. Jesus replied, "Don't kill or steal or lie. Honor your parents. Love your neighbor as yourself."

The man said, "I have done that for my whole life. What else can I do?"

The Jesus looked at him and said, "If you want to be perfect, there is still one more thing for you to do: sell everything you have, and give it to the poor. Then you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

But when the young man heard this he became quite sad and went away, because he was very rich...

Then Peter said to Jesus, "We have given up everything we have and followed you."

Jesus said to them, "Everyone who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will receive back an overabundant return here and now and in heaven."

(See Luke 18:18-30)



VOCATION LESSONS | 2nd Grade: Religious Life



#### POSSIBLE PRAYER:

*Thank you, Lord, for people who are able to share with others so generously, especially those in the religious life who have given up all their belongings. Please help us to look into the faces of those in need and see them as part of our family, whom we will help. AMEN.*



## MAIN CONCEPTS

5 min

Teach the main concepts of the vows of religious life.

*People in the religious life make vows to follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience.*

*A vow is a special kind of promise.*

*Religious people promise to be poor, chaste and obedient. Poverty means letting go of the desire for riches. Chastity means having God for my closest companion, rather than a person (like in marriage). Obedience means letting go of having things my own way and instead saying yes to the good things I am asked to do. If someone asks, "what are the evangelical counsels?" the quick and common answer is: poverty, chastity and obedience.*

*The evangelical counsels are words from the Gospel about how to follow Jesus in a challenging way.*

## READING & DISCUSSION

10 min

1. Introduce "Jesus' Challenge to a Rich Young Man"
2. Read the story aloud to students as they follow along quietly.
3. Use the discussion questions to reflect with the class about Jesus' challenge to the rich young man and all of us.

## INTRODUCTION

*Some people really like to be challenged. The Wright brothers did. They took the challenge of inventing an airplane themselves and trying until they figured out something that worked. What about you? If someone shows you how high they can jump, do you like to try to jump even higher? Then you like a challenge! When you draw a picture, do you like to do it really well—so that it is not just finished but so that it looks great? Then you like to be challenged too. Listen to the story of a challenge that Jesus gave to a young man!*

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

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VOCATION LESSONS | 2nd Grade: Religious Life



#### JESUS' CHALLENGE TO A RICH YOUNG MAN

*Refer to image of the Rich Young Man.*

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## READING & DISCUSSION *cont.*

Then Peter said to Jesus, “We have given up everything we have and followed you.”

Jesus said to them, “Everyone who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will receive back an overabundant return here and now and in heaven.”

(See Luke 18:18-30)

### DISCUSS

- *Did you notice what the challenge was? To sell everything he had and give it to the poor.*
- *What was the other part of the challenge? “Come follow me.”*
- *Jesus knew that the man was doing a very good job already, but that if he wanted to be very close to Jesus, he would have to give up things that blocked him from Jesus. The young man had to give up all the “things” in his life—books, toys, fancy clothes and money. How did the young man feel when he heard Jesus’ challenge?*
- *Do you think he later took the challenge or not?*
- *Why does being able to let go of riches make it easier to be a very close friend of Jesus and others?*
- *Simon Peter realized that he and the other apostles had already taken that challenge—they had given up everything for Jesus. Jesus said that anyone who gives up everything for him would receive a huge reward in this life and in heaven. What do you think that reward is?*

### CONCLUSION

*This challenge that Jesus gave the rich young man is called the evangelical counsels. The evangelical counsels are Jesus’ challenge to give everything to*

## RELIGIOUS LIFE

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VOCATION LESSONS | 2nd Grade: Religious Life

*him—in other words, to choose poverty, chastity and obedience. Who remembers what those words mean? Poverty means letting go of riches and our things. Chastity here means having God as one’s closest companion, rather than a person. Obedience means letting go of trying to have things my own way and instead saying yes to the good things I am asked to do.*

*Who listens to Jesus’ challenge today? Who follows the evangelical counsels? People in the consecrated religious life! Monks, nuns, consecrated priests, brothers and sisters! They take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. In this way, they meet Jesus’ challenge, and they receive the reward that Jesus promises.*



## ACTIVITY

10 min

### 1. Introduce the activity:

*People in the religious life give up their own belongings in order to follow Jesus more closely. They live very simply and care for each other in communities. Let's play a game in which each person works for the good of the group, rather than trying to get something for his or herself.*

### 2. Explain and lead students in the activity:

Have the students form a line across the room in order of their birthdates. If they are able to do it successfully, they've won. (The goal is for the students to work together to complete this task.)

Time permitting, challenge the students to stand or sit in a circle and pass an object (stuffed animal, book, or hat) around the circle without using their hands and without letting the object touch the floor. If they are able to do it successfully, they've won.

### 3. Conclude the activity:

Discuss giving up one's own desire to win for himself and instead striving for a common end.

*People in the religious life work toward a common goal by making vows of poverty and obedience. They give up trying to get things just for themselves. Instead, they work together toward God's goal for his church. Obedience and poverty are part of the evangelical counsels.*

### WORKING TOGETHER!

Complete these challenges by working together with your classmates:

- Form a line across the room with your classmates. Line up in the order of your birthdates.
- Sit in a circle, and pass the object your teacher gives you around the circle without using your hands or letting the object touch the floor.

*Refer to image of students lining up.*



## RELIGIOUS LIFE

### ACTIVITY



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### GAME

#### "HOT POTATO" CHALLENGE TO THE VOWS

Pretend you are a religious brother or sister. Now play Hot Potato. The person who has the "potato" when the music stops has to explain what he or she would do if something happened that challenged his or her vows of poverty, chastity or obedience. Each time the music stops, the teacher will read out one of the challenges, and the person holding the potato responds.



### VISUAL ART



*Carmelite Monks of Wyoming, chanting together in prayer*



*Dominican Nuns of Summit, NJ working on a puzzle together.*

Answer the following questions while looking at the photographs:

1. People who take religious vows live together in a community. How do these photos show that they are like a family?
2. Jesus says in the Gospel that when you are poor for God, you will become very rich in other ways. What rich spiritual blessings are shown here?
3. Can you imagine singing together (like Carmelite monks) and doing activities together (like the Dominican sisters). What would that be like?

VOCATION LESSONS | 2nd Grade: Religious Life 2

## VISUAL ART

5 min

1. Display the two images of religious brothers and sisters.
2. Have students study the painting in light of today's theme. Direct students to discuss or write answers to the reflection questions.

### RELIGIOUS MEN AND WOMEN

Answer the following questions while looking at the photographs:

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## GAME

10 min

### “HOT POTATO” CHALLENGE TO THE VOWS

1. In groups or as a whole class play “Hot Potato.”
2. Students pretend that they are religious brothers and sisters. The person who has the “potato” when the music stops has to explain what he or she would do if something happened that challenged his vows of poverty, chastity or obedience. Teacher reads one challenge each time the music stops, and “potato” holder responds.

#### Challenges:

*What would you do if...*

- Someone donated to your community only one pair of warm fur gloves.
- Your superior told you your household job for the summer is to do laundry for the whole community, but you don't like to do that.
- A brother or sister from your monastery doesn't seem to like the job that he or she has.
- You started to feel lonely.
- Toast is served for breakfast everyday, and you do not like toast.
- A brother or sister in your monastery was sick and was having a hard time doing his or her jobs.
- You did not feel like doing your job, which was sweeping the floors.



## RELIGIOUS LIFE

### ACTIVITY



#### WORKING TOGETHER!

Complete these challenges by working together with your classmates:

- Form a line across the room with your classmates. Line up in the order of your birthdates.
- Sit in a circle, and pass the object your teacher gives you around the circle without using your hands or letting the object touch the floor.

### GAME

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VOCATION LESSONS | 2nd Grade: Religious Life 2

## MEDITATIVE PRAYER

5 min

1. Introduce the Petitions on the Vows:

*While we here in this classroom are not called to take vows of the evangelical counsels right now, we can still follow Jesus' advice in our own lives. Let's think and pray about being poor, chaste and obedient. I'll say a sentence prayer. Then, when I raise my hand, we'll all pray, "Lord, hear our prayer."*

2. Read each petition, and then motion for all to respond, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

PETITIONS ON THE VOWS

After your teacher reads each petition, you respond, "Lord, hear our prayer."

*Refer to image of young boy praying.*

For all the homeless children or orphans in our town, our country and in our world, we pray to the Lord...

For all the families in our town, our country and in our world who are having a hard time paying bills, we pray to the Lord...

That our own hearts will love the poor, we pray to the Lord...

That whether we are rich or poor, our own hearts will be attached to God and people before money and things, we pray to the Lord...

For all people who have chosen to take the vow of chastity and not get married so that they can serve others, we pray to the Lord...

For all who are single, that they may find good friendships as they follow God's call, we pray to the Lord...

That all of us may be single-hearted for God and, in doing so, serve others, we pray to the Lord...

For all the people in religious life who have taken the vow of obedience, that their superiors may give them good direction, we pray to the Lord...

For our own hearts to want what you want, we pray to the Lord...

For the grace to be truly joyful even when we are asked to do something that means work or sacrifice on our part, we pray to the Lord...

Amen.



MEDITATIVE PRAYER

PETITIONS ON THE VOWS

After your teacher reads each petition, you respond, "Lord, hear our prayer."

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*For all the families in our town, our country and in our world who are having a hard time paying bills, we pray to the Lord...*

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*That all of us may be single-hearted for God and, in doing so, serve others, we pray to the Lord...*

*For all the people in religious life who have taken the vow of obedience, that their superiors may give them good direction, we pray to the Lord...*

*For our own hearts to want what you want, we pray to the Lord...*

*For the grace to be truly joyful even when we are asked to do something that means work or sacrifice on our part, we pray to the Lord...*

AMEN.

PRAY TOGETHER

*Vocation Prayer*



I say yes like Mary,  
And give you my heart.  
To follow you Jesus,  
I will do my part.  
Help me follow your will  
No matter the call.  
Whatever vocation,  
I promise my all.  
AMEN.

VOCAL PRAYER

5 min

Introduce the Vocation Prayer:

*God will call you to a wonderful vocation, but only God knows what that is. Right now He is very happy with you as a child. Through this prayer, let us say "yes" to our vocation now and in the future.*

1. Direct the students to look over the *Vocation Prayer*.
2. If the students are not familiar with the prayer, read a line of the *Vocation Prayer*, and have the children repeat it. Continue with all the lines.
3. After practicing a few times, read the *Vocation Prayer* all together.