



Intermediate Grades (4-6) Lesson Plan

"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

Purpose:

1. Students will understand the origins of the ministerial priesthood.
2. Students will show an understanding of the hierarchy of the Church through the use of role playing.
3. Students will explain their appreciation for the priesthood and its relationship to the other sacraments.

Supplies:

1. Bibles (at least two)
2. **Sacrament of Holy Orders Word Search**
3. **Sacrament of Holy Orders Crossword**
4. **Fishers of Men DVD**
5. Copies of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
6. Catholic Dictionary or other Catholic Reference materials

Activity #1: Origins of the Priesthood

- Split the classroom into two teams.
- At the front of the classroom, have the following Bible references written on slips of paper in a hat, the referenced verses typed out (you can find the verses easily at www.usccb.org/nab/bible) and laid on a desk or table face up, and two Bibles (one for each team – make sure the Bibles have the same translation as the verses you type).
 - o Ephesians 1: 4-6
 - o Exodus 19: 6
 - o Exodus 32-25-29
 - o Hebrews 4: 12-16
 - o Hebrews 5: 1-10
 - o Hebrews 7: 17
 - o Hebrews 10: 10-17
 - o Isaiah 43: 20-21
 - o John 1: 35-49
 - o John 13: 1-14
 - o John 17: 17-18
 - o John 20: 21-23
 - o Luke 18: 28-30
 - o Luke 22: 25-26
 - o Luke 22: 28-30
 - o Luke 24: 44-51
 - o Mark 1: 16-20
 - o Mark 3: 13-19
 - o Mark 14: 22-24
 - o Mark 16: 20
 - o Matthew 28: 18-20
 - o 1 Peter 1: 12
 - o 1 Peter 2: 2-10
 - o Psalm 110: 4
 - o 1 Timothy 4: 14
 - o 1 Timothy 5: 22
 - o 2 Timothy 1: 6

- Once you have the game set up, explain the rules of the game:
 - o Each member of the team will go individually.
 - o Each person will come to the front and get a Bible verse from the hat.
 - o Look up the verse in the Bible and then find the corresponding words out of the ones laid on the desk.
 - o Once you have found the correct verse, close the Bible, take that verse back with you and tag the next person on your team.
 - o The team with the most number of verses at the end of the game wins.
- To make the game a little more challenging, you can type up additional Bible verses so that the last person can't just pick up the verse without looking it up.
- After the game, have all the students read out loud the verse that they looked up.
- Explain the meaning of these verses and point out that the priesthood has its roots in the Bible and was prefigured already in the Old Testament. Christ instituted the Priesthood of today and it has been passed on in constant apostolic succession beginning with Peter and the rest of the apostles.

Activity #2: Holy Orders: Thinking about football?

- Hierarchy of the Church
 - o Bishop – Fullness of orders – both the pope and cardinals have no more than the fullness of orders found in the office of bishop, the Pope is known also as the Bishop of Rome; the bishop has the ability to ordain and while being in charge of a local diocese, is also connected to the universal Church in so far as he now takes part in the line of apostolic succession and is responsible for the apostolic mission of the universal Church.
 - o Priest – Teaches, sanctifies, and governs the laity.
 - o Deacon – Acts as liaison between laity and priest – Doesn't have full authority of the ministerial priesthood but fully participates in the common priesthood while sharing the teaching aspect of the ministerial priesthood.
 - o Laity – Share in the common priesthood upon their baptism into the body of Christ; they are charged with evangelization.
- Hierarchy of a football team- This is meant to be used as an example and an easy way to understand the hierarchy of orders in the Catholic Church. For a more complete analysis of these roles, please refer to CCC 1555-1571. Utilize these paragraphs to impart a deeper understanding of the following roles on your students.
 - o Head Coach = Bishop – In addition to directing the entire group, he has authority over those who directly work with the individual groups; he teaches the team and directs them in the plays they should run to succeed.
 - o Assistant Coach (Offensive/Defensive Coordinator, Special Teams Coach, etc.) = Priest – Works with individual groups of people (parishes), working with them and teaching them the ways in which to best execute the wishes of the coach.
 - o Team captain = Deacon – Takes the knowledge and direction from his coordinators and provides an example of how to execute the work. He is part coach and part player.
 - o Players = Laity – Take on the teachings, directions and examples of their coach, coordinators, and captains and put them into regular practice, forming a team; they do the work to win the game.
 - o “Create your own Diocese” Game:
 - Introduce and quickly teach the word discernment as it relates to the religious life (See **Intermediate Grades Lesson Plan from Vocation Awareness Week 2008**).
 - Divide students into two groups: discerners and distracters.
 - Allow the students to come up with a name for their team.

- The discerners will be in charge of coming up with a game plan for discerning God's will (what can we do to know and follow God's will for our lives?). The distracters will be in charge of coming up with a game plan for distracting from God's will (what things can get in the way of our discernment and of following what God wants us to do with our lives?).
- Give both groups a few minutes to think up their game plans.
 - For the discerners, here are some ideas:
 - Receive the sacraments; practice virtues; pray daily and listen for God's guidance; hang out with people who help us to be better; give encouragement to those who practice virtue, etc.
 - For the distracters, here are some ideas:
 - Play inappropriate music and watch inappropriate movies; hang out with a crowd that influences you negatively; make fun of people who make mistakes; don't go to Mass or confession, etc.
- Once they have come up with some ideas, have the group sit and face one another and have them go back and forth presenting their "plays" in debate format (each side gets a set amount of time to give their play) giving reasons for their "play choice."
 - An example of how this might play out is this:
 - The discerners would choose to receive the sacraments because it is in the sacraments that we come into physical contact with Jesus.
 - The distracters would counter that by choosing not to go to Mass because "we already know that Jesus loves us and died for our sins."
- After a few minutes, bring the entire class back together and discuss the following points:
 - Discernment is important because it leads us to the life that God wants for us.
 - Discernment is not easy and it is easy to get distracted.
 - The roles of the Church hierarchy are very important – they give us guidance and help us to know whether or not we make the right play choice.
 - It is not easy to do discernment on your own and that is why we need support from teachers, leaders and guides.

Activity #3: Holy Orders as a Sacrament

- Have the students work in pairs to find the definition of *Sacrament* (CCC 1084, 1131) and *Holy Orders* (CCC 1536). You may use the *Catechism* or other sources such as the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* or the *Modern Catholic Dictionary* by Fr. John Hardon, S.J.
 - Discuss these definitions and make sure that all your students have an understanding of them.
- From here, discuss the effects of all sacraments on those who receive them:
 - Baptism – mark of the adopted sons and daughters of God that wipes away the effects of original sin and enables the individual to enter into heaven. This is a permanent mark that cannot be erased (CCC 1272).
 - Confirmation – a permanent mark of the soldiers of Christ. Those who choose to be confirmed in Christ, become forever soldiers and evangelizers for Christ. This cannot be undone (CCC 1304-1305).

- Marriage – the two shall become one; what God has joined, no man can separate – even in civil divorce, this bond is not undone. Once a valid marriage has occurred, it cannot be undone (CCC 1638-1640).
- Reconciliation – once the priest offers the absolution of sins, they are wiped away permanently (though we may sin anew, the effects of our past sins no longer exist).
- Eucharist – once received, the Eucharist conforms us into the Body of Christ. Each time we receive the Eucharist we strengthen and renew the promises of our baptism (CCC 1391-1392).
- Anointing of the Sick – once received in a gravely ill state, the person’s sins are wiped away and the person is drawn closer into the body of Christ and farther from the temptations of evil (CCC 1520-1523).
- Follow this brief discussion with a focus on the sacrament of Holy Orders:
 - Why is this considered a sacrament?
 - When a man is ordained, he is transformed into a priest forever. From that moment on, he becomes a living icon of Christ in the world with the authority to bring Christ truly present into the world in the Eucharist. He takes on the teaching and governing authority of Christ in his parish and in the world as head of the Church just as Christ is Head of His Body. (CCC 1548, 1581)
 - The priest does not become a perfect human being upon his ordination. On the contrary, Christ now works through the priest when he performs the sacraments (consecrates the Eucharist or absolves sins in Confession) despite the priest being a flawed human person. (CCC 1584)
 - The mark of the priesthood can never be taken from the priest whose life becomes a sacrifice of service to the people of God.
 - What is the outward sign of the priesthood?
 - In the sacrament of Holy Orders, the outward sign is the laying on of hands.(CCC 1538)
- Finish the lesson by handing out the **Sacrament of Holy Orders Crossword** and **Sacrament of Holy Orders Word Search**. You may want them to work in partners and look up each of the answers for the word search using the referenced paragraphs in the *Catechism*.

Activity #4: An appreciation for the Priesthood

- Discuss with your students the various ways in which priests help throughout the world and especially in our Archdiocese:
 - Consecrate the Eucharist (Celebrate Mass).
 - Bless Marriages.
 - Baptize people.
 - Administer Confirmation.
 - Give last rights and anointing of the sick.
 - Hear confessions and forgive sins.
 - Raise money for the poor.
 - Run homeless shelters, food pantries and soup kitchens.
 - Help immigrants find homes and file paperwork.
 - Pray for people.
 - Teach us in homilies.
 - Teach classes at high schools and colleges.
 - Counsel people who need help (married couples, pregnant women, struggling teenagers, people who have recently lost their jobs, alcoholics, drug addicts, etc.).
 - Visit the sick, etc.
- Have the students watch the **Fishers of Men** video.

- After the video have each student write a short essay describing how their lives would be different without the priesthood.

Additional ideas/Homework Assignments:

1. YouTube videos – What do they really mean?
 - a. Have students view the following YouTube™ videos at home (remind students to search for exact video title in quotes):
 - “The Christ Side of Life”
 - “Ego – Lego Parody”
 - “Catholic Fiat 500 Commercial Parody”
 - “Real Flower Power” (This video contains images of drug use)
 - “Has “Lost” gotten boring? Try Found”
 - “iConfess – Dancing priest iPod spoof”
 - “iPray + HisTunes: A Catholic iPod style ad”
 - “Holy Fellowship of the Rings”
 - “Sprite or Spirit”
 - “Thirst – Catholic Church”
 - “Matrix – Catholic”
 - “I’m Loving Her – a Catholic McDonald’s rip off”
 - “Star Wars alternative – In hoc signo vinces”
 - “The apple incident – original sin” (uses strong images including drug use, violence, and mass destruction)
 - “iLove – what really counts”
 - “Men in Black – Catholic Priests”
 - “Catholic nun commercial”
 - “Praystation – Playstation”
 - “James Bond intro – catholic priest”
 - b. Each student will then choose one of the videos to report on.
 - c. The report will include the name of the video, a brief description of what actually happens in the video and their initial reaction to the video and why they chose to report on that particular video.
 - d. Ask the students to look deeper into the topic of the video and include in their report what Catholic teaching the video is portraying and why the Church believes that teaching. The report should include references to sources such as the Bible or the Catechism.
2. The Curé of Ars: The Story of St. John Vianney, Patron of Saint of Parish Priests - <http://www.familylifecenter.net/shop/Store/Children-The-Cure-of-Ars.cfm?ID=1343#>.
 - a. At the beginning of the winter term, assign this book for your students to read. Have the students read the book and do a book report on it.
3. Together as a class, compose a prayer for priests and begin each week with that prayer along with a Hail Mary.
4. Utilize materials from 2007-2009 Vocation Awareness Weeks throughout the year.