School Traveling Crucifix Program

Tools for Vocations

A program similar to the Traveling Chalice Program—but focused upon rallying classrooms full of students to pray for vocations for one week during the school year.
Promoting Vocations in Our School

To promote prayer for and awareness of religious vocations, our school is introducing the Traveling Crucifix Program. Each week, a class hosts the Traveling Crucifix, puts it in a prominent place, and prays daily for vocations. This is a wonderful way to unite our school community in perpetual prayer for priests and consecrated life. A schedule will be constructed and shared at a faculty meeting.

The United States Council of Serra International has provided this guide to help teachers implement the program. We have the approval and encouragement of our local bishop to promote this program.

Serra was formed in 1935 by a group of lay people to promote and foster vocations to religious life. We are named after Saint Junipero Serra, the great missionary who started many missions in California. Over the years, Serra has grown into an international movement and has been recognized by the Vatican as the lay vocation arm of the church. Please check us out at serraus.org
Dear Teachers,

Thank you for sharing in our efforts to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Your prayers are essential for raising up vocations in our Church. Remember the words of our Lord: “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest” (Matthew 9:37-38).

The purpose of the Traveling Crucifix Program is to encourage people to pray for and promote vocations. Your class was presented with the crucifix. This crucifix is offered to help serve as a visible reminder of your commitment to pray together as a class for vocations during this week and as a reminder that the Mass does not end with the closing prayer.

This crucifix represents the sacrifice Jesus made for us by dying on the cross. We suggest that you place it in some highly visible place in the classroom where it is safe. We ask that your whole classroom pray together once each day for vocations. You may distribute and use the enclosed Daily Vocation Prayers or substitute with the Rosary or a simple Lord's Prayer (Our Father), Hail Mary, or the Glory Be. Please feel free to adapt enclosed prayers to the age of your students.

During this week, we encourage you to talk about vocations, about God's plan for us to grow in holiness, and answer any questions. You should feel free to let the students see and hold the crucifix, even young children if supervised, making sure they treat it respectfully, like all sacred objects.

Thank you for your commitment to praying for vocations this week!

Your kit is provided by ____________________________

For more information, please contact________________________
A COPY OF DAILY PRAYERS FOR SCHOOL TRAVELING CRUCIFIX TO PROMOTE VOCATIONS

For an electronic copy to project for classroom use, please go to: [https://serraus.org/programs/](https://serraus.org/programs/) and click the link at the bottom of the page. These prayers are provided to make projection easy for classroom use. They can be used for your daily prayer for vocations. Please use what you feel is appropriate for your grade level. Younger grades may just want to say a Hail Mary or Our Father each day for vocations.

The following are ‘Prayers for the Week’ regarding vocations followed by a prayer from the Pope Francis:

**Monday: Prayer to Know One’s Vocation**

*Intention:* We pray for all of those who might not know their vocation in life. Through prayer and with God’s help, may they come to know His will for their lives.

Lord, my God and my loving Father, You have made me to know You, to love You, to serve You, and thereby to find and fulfill myself. I know that every path can lead me to You, but of them all, there is one especially by which You want me to come to You. Since I will do what You want of me, I pray, send Your Holy Spirit to me: into my mind, to show me what You want of me; into my heart, to give me the determination to do it, and to do it with all my love, with all my mind, and with all my strength, right to the end. Amen.

**Tuesday: Prayer to Mary, Mother of the Church**

*Intention:* We pray that we might grow in our love and devotion to Mary.

We turn to you, Mary, Mother of the Church. Through your “yes,” you have opened the door that makes Christ present in the world, in history, and in individual lives. In humble silence and in total availability, you welcomed the call of the Most High. May there be many men and women in our day who respond to your Son’s invitation: “Follow me!” Grant them courage to follow Christ along the road that He walked. Mary, Queen of Apostles, pray for us and for an increase of priestly and religious vocations. Amen.
**Wednesday: Litany for Vocations**

*Intention:* We pray for an increase in religious vocations.

[**Prayer Leader**]  
Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Christ, hear us.  
God the Father of heaven,  
Have mercy on us.  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,  
Have mercy on us.  
God the Holy Spirit,  
Have mercy on us.  
Holy Mary,  
Pray for us.  
St. Joseph, protector of the Holy Church,  
Pray for us.  
St. Theresa of the Child Jesus,  
Pray for us.  
St. John Vianney, patron of parish priests,  
Pray for us.  
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton,  
Pray for us.  
St. Charles Borromeo, patron of seminarians,  
Pray for us.  
St. Katherine Drexel,  
Pray for us.  
St. Stephen, patron ofdeacons,  
Pray for us.  
St. John Berchmans, patron of altar servers,  
Pray for us.  
St. Junipero Serra,  
Pray for us.  
All you holy men and women,  
Pray for us.  
Through your mercy,  
Send workers into Your harvest, Lord.  
Through our prayers and sacrifices,  
Send workers into Your harvest, Lord.  
Through the power of the Mass,  
Send workers into Your harvest, Lord.  
Through the holiness of families,  
Send workers into Your harvest, Lord.  

**All:** Let us pray: O God, who chose the Apostles to make disciples of all nations, we earnestly implore You to choose among us many priests and religious who will love You with their whole heart and will gladly spend their entire lives making You known and loved. Amen.

**Thursday: Prayer for Students at Our School**

*Intention:* We pray that, if it be God’s will, there might be vocations to the priesthood and religious life from our own school and that they be supported through our encouragement.
Lord Jesus Christ, we bring to You in prayer the young people of our school. Give them hearts open to hear Your voice. Help them to be generous in responding to Your call. Give them the grace to persevere in overcoming all the pressures in our world that keep them from embracing and truly living their vocation. Graciously grant to parents a living faith and an ardent love, which will inspire them to encourage their children to live holy lives. May parents genuinely encourage and foster the God-given vocation of their children and help them to respond generously. Let them rejoice when a child of theirs is called to be a priest or religious. May the example of Your life and that of Joseph and Mary encourage parents and children to form holy families and let Your grace sustain them. Amen.

**Friday: Prayer for all priests and religious that have served your school**

*Intention:* We pray for our school, that it may grow in holiness and that from among its members there may be priests and religious to serve the Church.

Heavenly Father, bless Your Church with an abundance of holy and zealous priests, deacons, brothers, and sisters. To those you have called to the married state and those you have chosen to live as single persons in the world, grant the special graces that their lives require. Form us all in the likeness of your Son so that in Him, with Him, and through Him we may love you more deeply and serve you more faithfully, always and everywhere. With Mary, we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please pray a Hail Mary, Our Father and Glory Be in thanksgiving for all the priests and religious that have served our school.

**Prayer #1 (Pope Francis I Prayer for Vocations)**

*Intention:* With the Holy Father, we pray for an increase in priestly and religious vocations throughout the universal Church.

LORD of the Harvest,

BLESS young people with the gift of courage to respond to your call. Open their hearts to great ideals, to great things.
INSPIRE all of your disciples to mutual love and giving—
for vocations blossom in the
good soil of faithful people.

INSTILL those in religious life, parish
ministries, and families, with the confidence
and grace to invite others to embrace
the bold and noble path of a life
consecrated to you.

UNITE us to Jesus through prayer and sacrament,
so that we may cooperate
with you in building your reign of mercy
and truth, of justice and peace. Amen.

*Prayer #2: Prayer to Know My Vocation*
I glorify You, God in all that I do.
In Mind, body, and spirit
I give my best to you.

Help me to follow your will
No matter the Call:
Sister, brother, or priest,
I promise my all.

If you call me to marriage,
I promise to love,
And to teach my own children
To seek grace from above.

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.
For more ideas on implementing and adapting the Traveling Crucifix Program to your classroom or school, consider these ideas and visit these sites:

Consider:

- Projecting the Daily Vocation Prayer, rather than distributing cards or copies of prayers.
- Inviting a priest or religious brother/sister to visit your classroom and talk about vocations during the week your class hosts the Traveling Crucifix.
- Include a small notebook with the Traveling Crucifix to log thoughts and ideas that arise during the week.
- Find teacher resources and talking points for discussing vocations at www.vocationlessons.com
- Check out the vocation videos at serraspark.org

See ideas, recommendations, sample announcements and letters, prayer books, and more at a few of the schools, parishes, and dioceses which have adopted a Traveling Chalice/Crucifix Program:

- Archdiocese of Baltimore
- Diocese of Evansville Vocation Chalice
- Archdiocese of St. Louis, MO (has helpful brochure in both Spanish and English, with directions, discussion questions, and suggested prayers.)
- Diocese of Saint Cloud, MN
- Diocese of Wichita, KS
- Immaculate Conception School, Fort Smith, AK
- St. Antoninus, Cincinnati, OH

Thank you for praying for vocations. These resources have been provided by the United States Council of Serra International, an organization working to support and promote religious vocations for our beautiful Church. Check us out at Serraus.org
“Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.

What teachers do and how they act are more significant than what they say — inside and outside the classroom. That's how the Church evangelizes.

The more completely an educator can give concrete witness to the model of the ideal person [Christ] that is being presented to the students, the more this ideal will be believed and imitated.”

- Blessed Paul VI
Build a Culture of Vocations in Your Classroom!

“Pastoral work for vocations needs, especially today, to be taken up with new vigor and more decisive commitment by all members of the Church, in the awareness that it is not a secondary or marginal matter, or the business of one group only, as if it were a ‘part’, no matter how important, of the entire pastoral work of the Church…Indeed, concern for vocations is a connatural and essential dimension of the Church’s pastoral work.” - Pope St. John Paul II, Pastores Dabo Vobis, 34

PRAY: “Ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to His harvest.”

INFORM: Spread the word! Get vocational brochures, posters, fliers, and calendars of events out there!

INVITE: Personally encourage youth and young adults to consider the priesthood and religious life as an option.
10 Simple and Quick Ways to Promote Vocations Within the Classroom

1. Speak often and speak well of priests and religious, especially the ones in the parish.

2. Have a Vocations Bulletin Board near the door or where the students line up/gather.

3. Pray for vocations everyday… and pray for a specific person by name.

4. Define terms like “vocation,” “discernment,” “religious life,” etc.…help them to remember the terms by using them often.

5. **3Ps:** Photos, Pictures, Posters… faces and photos make it more real. (This is true for the saints as well!)

6. Use technology: Share movie clips, stories and links from the internet and Facebook (e.g. Arlington Vocations, Imagine Sisters, CMSWR.org, Vianney Vocations and many more.)

7. Share a vocation story… and tell it like you would a love story.

8. Invite priests, sisters, and religious to come and visit, and be sure to BUILD UP the visit to make it the most successful possible!

9. Adopt a seminarian, priest, religious brother and or sister… have the students send them cards and messages.

10. Invite each student to personally consider why God created them and invite them to be open to His will.

Shared with Serra by the Diocese of Arlington
Grades K - 3
Vocation Lesson One: You Belong to Me!

Objective:
To reinforce the reality that we are special in God's eyes and that we belong to Him through the gift of our baptism.

Materials:
Copies of "You Belong to Me" Worksheet

Procedure:

Begin with a short prayer and a song like "I am special." Sitting in a circle, ask the children to tell what they know about baptism form their experiences, as well as facts about the sacrament. Teach them about the sacrament, especially that we become God's children and belong to him through this sacrament. Ask "Do you know anything about Jesus' baptism? How old was he? Where was he? Who was there with him?" Read/tell the story of Jesus' baptism from Luke 3:15-16, 21-22. Talk about how God the Father called him his beloved son. Discuss that they are beloved children too and especially blessed through baptism too. Remind them that God calls each of us to belong to him in a special way and to live the vocation he gives us. Follow with the "You belong to Me" worksheet.

Activity:
Distribute "You Belong to Me" worksheet. Ask students to draw their first name and color it. Make a yarn hanger. Invite them to hang it where it is a reminder that they are loved by God and that he has called them by name. Ask them to find out the date of their baptism and write it under their name so that they can remember the day they became his child.
You Belong To Me!

Draw your name and color it.

“You,

are My beloved child. You are special in My eyes.”
Vocation Lesson Two: By Our Actions We Bring Peace

Objective:
To teach that, like Jesus, our actions can bring peace to others.

Materials:
Copies of "By Our Actions We Bring Peace" Worksheet

Procedure:
Ask students to sit quietly and tell them you are going to darken the room, light a candle and play peaceful instrumental music. Invite them to find the quiet place in their hearts and listen to the music. After a few minutes, fade the music out and give them a chance to say how they felt and what they were thinking about during that time. Remind them that at Jesus' baptism, his Father told him that he was especially loved. Jesus remembered those words and he went out into the villages, telling others about God's love for them too. Jesus treated people in a kind way. Ask students to tell what Jesus did to show kindness to others. Ask "How do you think this made the people feel after Jesus did these things?" After they share, tell the children that his actions brought peace to the people who believed in him. It was a little like the quiet peace they knew when they listened to the music. Ask "In what ways can you bring peace to others?" Let them give some suggestions. Remind them that when we sit quietly we can listen to God in our hearts and he helps us know how to share his peace with others. End with a prayer of your own or use these words: Dear Jesus, help me to bring peace to my world by my actions. Help me to be kind to others. Help me to play fairly. Help me to share your gifts with others. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.

Activity:
Distribute "By Our Actions We Bring Peace" Worksheet. Ask students to complete the sentence and illustrate their idea.
By Our Actions We Bring Peace

I can help Jesus bring peace to the world by

This is a picture of me bringing peace to my world.
Grades 4 - 6:
Vocation Lesson Plan One

Objective:
Students will identify gifts and talents in others and in themselves. Students will apply their gifts and talents to be followers of Jesus by generating a plan that uses their gifts and talents as tools of service to others.

Materials:
Holy cards of saints or pictures of famous people
Copies of Gift Worksheet

Procedure:
1. This lesson may be introduced by presenting students with pictures of saints or famous people with whom they might be familiar. Ask them to name talents and gifts which they see and respect in others. As students name gifts and talents, list them on the board.
2. After a considerable list has been made, ask the students to take a few moments to consider which talents they see in themselves.
3. Ask the students to complete the first three boxes in the Gift Worksheet. ("Some of my gifts are…," "The gift I like best is…," "One gift I want to develop is…")
4. After the worksheet has been completed, discuss the following concepts with the students:

-We are all uniquely different from each other. God has given us different gifts and talents. Many of us may have the same talents, but because of other talents and the combination of these, we are different.

-Through our Baptism, we are given the gift of being a child of God and called to be a disciple of Jesus. Each of us is also called to follow Him is a special way through our personal vocation. Our gifts and talents will be used by the Lord as we live out that vocation. By using our talents we come to know and love Jesus more and more and we also make the world we live in a better place.

5. Ask the students to reflect on the Gift Worksheet and on what has been presented. Invite them to consider how God might use each gift they listed in the possible vocation He may call them to. Add these to Box 4 of the Gift Worksheet.
The Gifts God Gave Me...

Some of my gifts are...
The gift I like best is...

One gift I want to develop is...
I can use my gifts by...
Grades 4-6:  
Vocation Lesson Plan Two

Objective:
Students will understand how the saints were ready to be what the Lord called them to be.

Students will recognize the various vocations in the different Christian states of life.

Materials:
Stories of saints who were married, who were priests, who were consecrated religious and who were consecrated lay persons living in the world. Some good examples are St. Joseph, St. Louis, St. Jane de Chantal, St. John Vianney, St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Martin de Porres, St. Catherine of Siena, & Blessed Pierre Frassati.

Copies of Vocation Word Search Worksheet

Procedure:
1. Have ready short biographies of saints from different states in life. The children could be asked to do this for homework to share in class.
2. Read aloud a sampling of the different saints.
3. Consider how God called them each to become holy in their particular vocation.
4. What special virtues did God help each of them grow in through their vocations? Use some of the words from the Vocation Word Search Worksheet.
5. Distribute the Vocation Word Search Worksheet to complete.
Vocation Word Search Worksheet

D O C I L E C F A I T H B A S F K
M B O E E P O H N Y D I S C E R N
A E U M R R L E O S I S T E R E E
R D R V A E T J I I E P N T V E E
R I A L P S V I N N C Q E Z E A L
I E G O I P S E T U Z E L O V E T
A N E L P O V E T Y U A N I M F
G C B E L N C G L O R Y T I R U P
E E E P I S T L E B Y C B C S E R
N X J S O E H B O R I A M L A N O
O E P O P Y E O N P L B I C E B M
I V I G R A C E L U S I E D Y A I
T M A T I A X W I Y N L M T A P S
A B O S E L T S O P A E R D F T E
C L W P S A L M B R O T H E R I L
O O G Y T I T C N A S R V E H S G
V K C H A S T I T Y R E T S Y M C

1) Baptism
2) Mystery
3) Pray
4) Grace
5) Celibacy
6) Purity
7) Promise
8) Talents
9) Discern
10) Apostle
11) Nun
12) Peace
13) Priest
14) Deacon
15) Brother
16) Sister
17) Serve
18) Gospel
19) Listen
20) Response
21) Anoint
22) Obedience
23) Poverty
24) Psalm
25) Chastity

26) Choice
27) Docile
28) Epistle
29) Vocation
30) Courage
31) Revere
32) Kneel
33) Pope
34) Gift
35) Bible
36) Love
37) Hope
38) Faith
39) Marriage
40) Vows
41) Zeal
42) Assent
43) Free
44) Joy
45) Act
46) Holy
47) Seed
48) Sanctity
49) Glory
Grades 7 - 8:
Vocation Lesson One

Objective:
Students will identify the vocations to married life, to consecrated single life, to religious life, and to the priesthood.
Students will recognize the uniqueness of each person's call to follow Christ and will understand the difference between their Vocation and a professional career. Students will begin to understand the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Students will contrast the vows of a religious with the promises that a priest makes.

Materials:
Flash cards of names of various service professions.
Flash cards of various men's and women's religious orders and of the diocesan priesthood.

Web links:
http://www.cmswr.org/ . . .

Priests or religious who may visit class and discuss their vocations.
Writing and drawing supplies

Procedure:

1. Review with students that our Baptism is a call to the fullness of life. Our vocation is the special way which God wants to give us that fullness of life through love. Identify the vocations to married life, to consecrated single life, to religious life and to the priesthood.

2. Ask the students to name some service professions and how each can be particularly Christian. For example, nursing and all health care professions reflect the caring and healing Christ; teaching and learning reflect Jesus the teacher (Rabbi); construction workers reflect Jesus the carpenter of Nazareth. Use the flash cards to help prompt student responses.

3. Now focus on the vocations to priesthood and religious life and how these same "jobs" can be a way of serving Christ and others. Discuss the different apostolates of religious congregations and how the priesthood shares in the healing, teaching and guiding work of Christ.
4. Emphasize that a vocation to priesthood or religious life is a call to love Christ in a special way and that the work is really secondary. Have students research the following topics using texts or by interviewing people. They may work in groups and come up with a presentation on the following topics. Encourage them to generate a visual that helps illustrate their main points.

Religious sisters and brothers: respond to their call by choosing to live in a community with others who are called to serve people through religious life. They publicly solemnize their response to God by making three vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience. Religious life is one special way of being Christian.

Poverty: Through this vow to God, religious men and women want to have Jesus' attitude toward material things. They try to live a life of sharing. The deepest reason for making a vow of poverty is love. When Gospel poverty is accepted as a way of life it means a person lives simply and willingly shares who he is and what he has.

Chastity: Through this vow to God, religious and priests promise not to marry and promise to love and help all people freely. They freely and joyfully give up the privilege of marrying and having children because they want to be free to love and help all who need them. The vow of chastity lets them be free to think and work only for the Kingdom of God. The vow of chastity also frees them to remind us that God and the Kingdom must always be first in the lives of all Christians.

Obedience: Religious by their vow of obedience to God promise to seek and do His will, working together with others in their community to try to understand what God is asking of them in their lives. They promise to listen to God with and in their communities. They promise to find out and follow the will of God together and to obey their superiors, especially in the decision of where they will serve the people of God.

Diocesan priests: Diocesan priests are called to serve God's people in celibate love through their ministry of the sacraments of the Church and by teaching and proclaiming the Gospel through their lives of generous service. Rather than serving the Church in distant lands, diocesan priests are generally called to live and work among the people of their home diocese.

5. After these presentations, invite students to share their thoughts and feelings about these vows. If a priest or religious is available, it would be an excellent follow-up for them to answer any questions.
6. Explain to the students the difference between the above vows and the promises of obedience and celibacy that diocesan priests make at ordination.

In closing, have students write one paragraph that completes the statement below.

"It is important that we have priests, brothers and sisters serving in the Church because...."

**Vocation Lesson Two**

**Objective:**
To realize that prayer is essential for baptized Christians in discovering their call to serve.

**Materials:**
Bible
Music
**Activity Sheet: Listen!**

**Procedure:**
Refer back to Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7. What was God asking his chosen servant to do? Name at least 5 types of service you can do and how they serve God's people. You may want to discuss a service project for the class to do. Invite students to become quieted for prayer.

**Activity:**
Introduce the prayer service with the following or something similar: Consider that before Jesus did anything important He went off by Himself and prayed. Before He began His public ministry after John baptized Him, He prayed for forty days. Before he gave the Sermon on the Mount, He prayed alone. Before He chose His apostles, He prayed for guidance. Before He entered into His passion and death, He prayed with His disciples at the Last Supper and in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Reading the passages of Scripture for these would be good.)

Praying before acting is a virtue of the Disciples of Christ. Praying for guidance is sometimes called praying for discernment or for an understanding of God's will so it can be accomplished. Discerning requires listening.

Jesus taught us to pray. How did He do that? By giving us the Our Father
Together pray SLOWLY the Our Father and think about how He may be asking you to follow and serve Him.

*Have you ever been to a museum? Maybe you saw and admired a dish that was 1000 years old. Someone created it to use on a table, to carry or hold something, to serve others in its own unique way. The potter never considered that the bowl might be admired by people hundreds of years later. Like the bowl, God created us to serve others in our own unique way.*

Distribute Activity Sheet: Listen!
DISCERNING REQUIRES LISTENING

Listen to the Spirit of God

1. Who do I listen to?
2. What do I listen to?
3. How do I listen?
4. Name a time when...
5. Where did Jesus listen?
6. To whom did Jesus listen?
7. How do Jesus listen?
8. What have I heard God tell me about my life?
Teachers’ Resources

There are great resources for the four National Days for Praying for Religious Vocations at serraspark.org. You can find videos with quick reviews and length of video. You can find worksheets and tools to highlight religious vocations. You can find special rosaries and holy hours that can be adapted for your grade level.

Priesthood Sunday—Oct. 28, 2018
Resources found at
- PriestSunday.org
- www.serraus.org
- Lesson Plans on Priesthood Sunday USCCB.org
- Priesthood Sunday at Serraspark.org

National Vocation Awareness Week—Nov. 4-10, 2018
Search for
- National Vocation Awareness Week at the USCCB Website
- Classroom resources on the NRVC website
- Vianney Vocation Lesson Plans at Vianneyvocation.com

World Day of Consecrated Life –Feb. 2, 2019
Search for
- “Year of Consecrated Life Activities” on the USCCB website
- Vocations Curriculum on the Congregation of Holy Cross website

World Day of Prayer for Vocations—May 12, 2019
- Resources on Vocations for Religious Education Instructors on catholicpriest.com
- Rosary for Vocations on serraspark.org
- Vocation prayer cards on vianneyvocation.org

Need more supplies or have questions, email Judy: jcozzens@msn.com