



National Office for Vocation

Called into God's wonderful light

RCIA



You show me the path of life

Lord,
You call these
chosen ones to the
glory of a new birth
in Christ, the second
Adam.

Help them to grow in
wisdom and love as
they prepare to
profess their faith
in you

(Opening prayer,
First Scrutiny)

This module
provides an
introduction to
'vocation' as a
faith journey
and asks some
questions to
allow
discussion /
sharing within
small groups.
We have
included an
opening and a
closing prayer.

Themes:

- To get across that your vocation is unique and personal
- That we respond to God in a variety of ways (and let's explode the myth that Vocation is simply another word for 'Priest' or 'Religious').
- To get across that life is a journey, especially in the light of RCIA

Introduction (5 - 10 mins)

*I have called you by your name
you are mine
Is 43:1*

Vocation is simply a **Call** from God. A call to life, through love. As Creator, God is calling us into life and the mystery of incarnation, through Jesus and the Church. We **recognise** life as a 'gift' received, which tends of its

nature to be a 'gift' that is given. We yearn to **respond** to God's call - like Philip, we ask Jesus, 'Show us the Father', and then we shall be satisfied' (Jn 14:8).

We come to the Father through Jesus who calls us to follow him. And so we follow in our individual ways - some obviously religious and some not. Our 'following' is a **journey**. What we choose

to do is less important - what matters most is that we do respond to God's invitation. So there are three aspects of vocation which we will explore: **Recognising** God, the **Call** to Life - of simply 'being'; our desire to **respond** - what we do about it; and this cycle of listening and response which forms our **journey** to God.

Recognising God (10 mins)

*You are a chosen race, a
royal priesthood, a consecrated
nation, a people set apart to
sing the praises of God who
called you out of the darkness
into his wonderful light"
1 Peter 2:9*

Our scriptural history is rich with examples of how God has called people, time and again, for example

Genesis 1:26-27
Exodus 3:1-6
1 Samuel 3:3-10
Isaiah 43:1-4
Mark 2:17
John 10:1-16
John 15:15
Romans 11:29

God creates man and woman
Moses and the burning bush
Lord calls Samuel
I have called you by your name, you are mine
Jesus came to call, not the righteous, but sinners
Jesus, the Good Shepherd (esp v.3)
I no longer call you servants, but friends
"The gifts and the calling of the Lord are irrevocable"

*Do you have a favourite piece of Scripture?
What is it, and why?*

Responding to God (10 mins)

"The mystery of ministry is that we have been chosen to make our own limited and very conditional love the gateway for the unlimited and unconditional love of God."

Henri Nouwen

We yearn to respond to God - 'As the deer yearns for running streams, so my heart longs for you, O God' (Ps 42:1). God wants us to live our lives in the way which gives us greatest joy and fulfillment - sometimes this may be in a vocational career or ministry, sometimes it may be in hidden service to others. In all cases it is to live our vocation wholeheartedly. Our response is a 'Call to Action'. Here are a few examples:

Genesis 12:1-4a

Matthew 4:19

Matthew 9:37-38

Luke 4:18 / Is 61:1-2

Ephesians 4:1-16

Abram is called to leave his country

Jesus calls Andrew and Simon

Harvest plentiful; labourers few

He has sent me to give the good news to the poor ...

Many parts, one body; many gifts, one Spirit

Take the passage from Ephesians and explore how it compares to the traditional notion that 'vocation is a call to the priesthood or religious life'. What gift do you feel you have been given?

Faith Journey (30 mins)

Prayer of Thomas Merton

My Lord God,

I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me
Nor do I really know myself,
And the fact that I think I am following your will
Does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
Does in fact please you.
And I hope that I will never do anything
apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this,
You will lead me by the right road
Though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always,
Though I may seem to be lost and in the
shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are with me,
And you will never leave me to face my
struggles alone. Amen

As we are called, deep down, we long to respond, and return some love to the One who loves us. But so many things prevent us from listening clearly and reacting to the promptings of God's Spirit. Conversion (turning towards God) is a gradual journey. Here are a few examples that show vocation as a journey:

Hosea 11:1-4

Ezekiel 36:24-28

Luke 15:11-32

Luke 19:1-10

John 4:1-42

John 14:6

How God loves us despite our ingratitude
I will wash you clean, and put my Spirit
within you

Prodigal son

Zacchaeus

Woman at the Well

Jesus, the way, the truth and the life

Be still for a moment and reflect on your own 'faith journey'. How has God moved in your life, how have you come to be where you are today? When ready, you may want to share in pairs.

Liturgy

Opening Prayer

Loving Father, your plan for us is like a dream found in your heart, because each of us is found in God's heart.

You call us to life. You call each of us to express a particular aspect of your mind and heart.

In your call we find our name and our identity; we recognise our freedom and uniqueness. Father, help us to hear your voice. Through Christ our Lord, **AMEN**.

Closing Prayer (Eph 1, selected from vv3-14)

Light a candle. Everyone in the RCIA group should read out a section of the prayer to which all reply 'Blessed be God', and pass it onto the next person. (Allow a short pause between verses)

Reader: Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ.

All: Blessed be God

Reader: Before the world was made, God chose us ...

All: Blessed be God

Reader: Chose us in Christ to be holy and spotless and to live through love in his presence ...

All: Blessed be God

Reader: ... determining that we should become his adopted children, through Jesus Christ ...

All: Blessed be God

Reader: ... for his own kind purposes; his free gift to us in the Beloved.

All: Blessed be God

Reader: And it is in him that we were claimed as God's own, chosen from the beginning.

All: Blessed be God

Reader: Now you too, in him have heard the message of the truth and the good news of your salvation, and have believed it; and you too have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise, the pledge of our inheritance which brings freedom for those whom God has taken for his own, to make his glory praised! Through Christ our Lord, **AMEN**.