

3rd Grade: Religious Life

OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVE:

- To appreciate a the ways religious brothers and sisters live.

MAIN CONCEPTS:

- Religious brothers and sisters live the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience.
- They live together in communities.
- They are dedicated to service and to prayer, especially the Liturgy of the Hours.

PLANNING DIRECTIONS:

- Complete the core components of the lessons. Select and do other components given the time you have and the needs of your students.

INTRODUCTION

2 min

Summarize today's theme.

Today we'll be studying people who have answered the vocation to religious life. In religious life/consecrated life, people follow God through living in poverty, community, and prayer.

SIMPLE PRAYER

2 min

Slowly read aloud Matthew 10:7-10, allowing a few seconds of silence between each phrase.

"Preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay. Take no gold, silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff." – MATTHEW 10:7-10

Pray this or another simple prayer from the heart:

Thank you, Lord, for this day and for our lives. We place in your hands all the concerns of our minds, and we love you in the midst of all our actions. Please guide us now as we seek a glimpse of your plan for your people and the powerful ways you call us.

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RELIGIOUS LIFE

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ACTIVITY

OBJECTS IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

Some things have strong symbolic meaning. For example, a religious sister's veil symbolizes that she is a bride of Christ.

Many things in the religious life have special meaning, too. Your teacher will give the class a few objects. Explain how they religious life.

When explaining, show your knowledge of religious life. The more creative your answer, the better!



Three knots symbolize the three vows that religious make.

cord os st francis cilice cincutre PIX BY WAYNE PERRY

VISUAL ART



"At the Monastery Gate"
by Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller

VOCATION LESSONS | 3rd Grade: Religious Life

TEACH

5 min

Teach the main concepts.

- People in the religious life follow God through poverty, community life, and prayer.
- Religious people live together in communities, or groups.
- If they are a group of men, they are called "brothers" or sometimes "monks." If they are a group of women, they are called "sisters" or sometimes "nuns."
- The biggest similarity between all the different groups of religious is that they have taken vows called the evangelical vows.
- A vow is a promise for life that is made before God and others. These vows are to poverty, chastity, and obedience.
- People in religious life are dedicated to service and to prayer, especially the Liturgy of the Hours.

ACTIVITY

10 min

OBJECTS IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

1. Bring in several objects related to religious life (i.e. rope similar to monk's belt, a rosary, a breviary, a can of soup, a hymnal, a veil).
2. Randomly give students the objects.
3. Discuss how this object could be a tool to help his/her mission as a potential consecrated religious.

Sample answers:

A rope with three knots reminds religious of their three vows. A breviary symbolizes the commitment to daily prayer. A can of soup symbolizes an apostolate to feed the hungry. A veil symbolizes that a sister is a bride of Christ, etc.

VISUAL ART

5 min

1. Display "At the Monastery Gate" by Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller.
2. Direct students to study the painting in light of today's theme.
3. Use the questions below to prompt discussion.
 - Who is in this picture? Why are they there?
 - What is the little one holding, and why?
 - How is this scene reflected in the small painting over the door?
 - How does this scene show the brothers living out their vocation?

READING

15 min

1. Have students read "Fun Friars" aloud together or silently on their own. Consider showing pictures of the Friars from their website: <http://franciscanfriars.com/media/photo-galleries/>
2. Discuss the reflection questions with the students.
3. Solicit student's open responses, and answer their questions.



RELIGIOUS LIFE

READING



FUN FRIARS

Imagine walking down a busy street in New York City and seeing a man with a big beard dressed in a long simple robe like Saint Francis. Well that's exactly what happens every day in some poor, rough neighborhoods of New York. Some people may be surprised to see these men who wear ropes for belts and often shave their heads, but the people who live in those neighborhoods know and rely on these simple, loving, and brave brothers. The brothers are men from all around the world who have given their lives to love Jesus, to serve him in the poor, and to share the Gospel. They have given away all their belongings and money so that they can be free, poor, and close to those who are hurting. They share the Good News of God's love by bringing food, shelter, and friendship. Prayer is a big part of their life. These brothers are the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.



Take a look at the friars' daily schedule.

DAILY SCHEDULE

6:00 a.m. Office of Readings
6:30 a.m. Morning Meditation Hour
7:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
7:50 a.m. Holy Mass
Breakfast
Serve Others (teach, work at soup kitchen, etc.)
12:00 p.m. Midday Prayer
Lunch
Serve Others (visit school, help at homeless shelter, etc.)
5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer
5:00 p.m. Holy Hour with Eucharistic Adoration
Recreation (sports, reading, music, painting, etc.)
Supper
9:15 p.m. Night Prayer and Rosary

Does it seem too wild to imagine that a boy from a nice place and home may one day decide become a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal? Well, hundreds have! Plus, there is a similar group of women in New York City called the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal. The Friars keep in mind what it is like to be young. They travel the country putting on retreats for teenagers, organizing Bible studies, holding assemblies at high schools, and even writing Christian rap music!

VOCATION LESSONS | 3rd Grade: Religious Life

2

DISCUSS:

- Why do brothers wear ropes?
- What is a religious habit?
- What would make someone want to be a Franciscan Friar?
- How are the friars living the evangelical vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience?
- What do you think would be the hardest thing about living the life of a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal?
- What would be the most exciting?

REINFORCE

1. Display the main concepts on the board.
2. Have the students verbally repeat them, write them down or ask questions about them.
3. Quiz the students a bit to see if they grasp the concepts. If it is helpful, refer to the Vocation Glossary found at www.vocationlessons.com/glossary.

5 min

EXPLORATION

10 min

Direct students to do one of the following activities.

IMAGINE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Imagine that you are serving at a soup kitchen with religious sisters. You and a couple of the sisters will perform some music and poetry during dinner.

1. Make up a song or a poem with rhythm that would encourage the homeless people during dinner. If you want, you can pick a common song like “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” and change the lyrics.

Or:

2. Create a map of a neighborhood where you imagine the brothers’ or sisters’ monastery to be. Include brief descriptions of who lives and works in the neighborhood. Create a map key that shows how the brothers serve their neighbors.

MEDITATIVE PRAYER

5 min

1. Introduce the meditation.

Our focus on vocation is not just to learn about things, but also to realize deep inside that God calls each of us to something both now and in the future. Let us take some time to listen to him and speak with him. This is a passage that the Franciscan Friars of Renewal really take to heart and try to live.

2. Read from the Gospel of Matthew, and ask the students to imagine people in Jesus’ day doing what Jesus asks in this scripture.

“Preach as you go, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay. Take no gold, silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff.”

– MATTHEW 10:7-10



RELIGIOUS LIFE

EXPLORATION

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PRAY TOGETHER

Vocation Prayer

I glorify You, God,
In all that I do.

Mind, body and spirit,
My best is for You.

For us to be close, Lord,
Is what you desire.
I trust that your good love
For me will not tire.

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.

VOCATION LESSONS | 3rd Grade: Religious Life 3

3. Read the passage again, and ask the students to imagine people today doing what Jesus asks in this scripture.

4. Conclude the meditation.

Consider in silence what Jesus is asking of you today.

In your heart speak to God about it.

VOCAL PRAYER

2 min

1. Direct the students to look over the prayer.

2. Lead the students in praying the Vocation Prayer.