



# RUAH WOODS INSTITUTE'S PARISH LABOR/VOCATION

## Family Day Overview

Labor (work) and Vocation Theme by Age Group	Ruah Woods Institute's REVEALED K-12 Theology of the Body Curriculum Lesson to Teach by Age Group
K-1st	Grade K — Lesson 5: Dignity of Work
2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup>	Grade 2 — Lesson 2: Gift of Self
4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup>	Grade 4 — Lesson 2: Vocation
6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	Grade 8-Unit 1: Vocation and Gift
High School CTBM	Course 7 — Lesson 6 The Dignity of Work
Suggested Prayer:	USCCB Prayer for Vocations: #2 <a href="https://www.usccb.org/prayers/prayers-vocations">https://www.usccb.org/prayers/prayers-vocations</a>
Suggested Parish Project:	Activity for All Families: Grade 1: Lesson 4 (Vocation- Part 1)  Wrap up activity: Interview with an Adult. This can be completed on this day or sent home to use with a different adult than parent.  Suggestions for Parish support: 10 Ways to Strengthen Vocations Ideas List (Appendix 2)





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### Introduction: (10 min)

Welcome all parents and children together for this special Labor/Vocation focused day.

Distribute the prayer below (or have it displayed on a screen to pray together). Encourage everyone to say the prayer with you.

**Heavenly Father, I know that You love me. I trust that You have a special vocation for my life that will lead to my holiness, my happiness and the salvation of souls.**

**Teach me how to talk with You and listen to You, so that in the quiet of prayer You can open my heart to know and follow this plan.**

**If I am called to a vocation in Your Church, give me the courage to say "yes." If I am called to the vocation of marriage, lead me to my future spouse.**

**Please place holy people along my path to help me know, love and serve You, so that I become an effective witness of Your love in the world.**

**Amen.**

**(From the Catholic Diocese of Arlington)**

**Before dismissing the grade level groups read aloud:**

**SAY:** "When God created man, he set him within the Garden of Eden, "to till and keep it". That means work was God's loving plan for us even before original sin made work hard. We are capable of thinking and planning what we do because God created us in his own image. He gave to us the rest of creation as a gift for our needs. Out of gratitude and respect we therefore need to take good care of God's creation and we do so through our work.

### **Breakout sessions/activities: (45-60 min)**

#### **Grades K-1<sup>st</sup>:**

\*DRE/Catechist: Read Kindergarten Lesson 5: The Dignity of Work, pgs. 59-64 in the Teacher's Guide.

See **Lesson Materials needed** to prepare ahead of time for the day: pg. 60. Each student will need their own Kindergarten Student Activity Book pages/worksheets indicated.

#### **Grades 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>:**

\*DRE/Catechist: Read Second Grade, Lesson 2: Gift-of Self, pgs. 15-20 in the Teacher's Guide.

See **Lesson Materials needed** to prepare ahead of time for the day: pg. 16. Each student will need their own 2nd Grade Student Activity Book pages/worksheets indicated.



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### Grades 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>:

\*DRE/Catechist: Read Fourth Grade, Lesson 2: Vocation, pg. 15-21 in the Teacher's Guide.

See **Lesson Materials needed** to prepare ahead of time for the day: pg. 16. Each student will need their own 4th Grade Student Activity Book pages/worksheets indicated.

### Middle School 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>:

Grade 8, Unit 1: Vocation and Gift (pgs. 2-15)

Each student will need their own Grade 8 Common Place Book.

### High School:

Course 7, Lesson 6: The Dignity of Work ("Called to be More" Online Module at <https://app.ruahwoods institute.org>. You may print out the lesson, if you wish.)

### Group Four-Parent Session:

See Appendix 1

### Closing Activity/Prayer (Together) (20 min)

Recap the theme

Closing activity: Ideas: spiritually adopt a pre-born baby, cards for pro-life organizations/mothers, support agency/diaper drive

Give them a dinner table question- send

Announce parish project

Closing prayer





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### Appendix 1

#### RUAH WOODS INSTITUTE PARISH VOCATION DAY PARENT BREAK-OUT SESSION

##### **LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION (provide an area for large group that is convenient to transition to small group discussion)**

##### **Introduction (5-10 minutes)**

**Leader/Clergy/Catechist:** We welcome all of our parents gathered here today. The theme for our families today is to ponder the meaning of VOCATION. There is a special quote from the theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar that is a perfect reminder of the meaning of vocation. "What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God." Your presence today is proof that the family unit is the foundation of all vocations; to live in the image and likeness of God as a special light to the world.

I would like you to rest for a moment in silence and peace, and listen to these beautiful words that reflect the call to live out the beautiful mystery of vocation: [READ THE FOLLOWING SLOWLY AND THOUGHTFULLY]

- From all eternity, God has a vision for our lives and prepares a path for us and invites us to grow into his plan for our lives. (pause)
- Pope St. John Paul II called this plan God has for our lives our "vocation," which comes from the Latin word vocare [VO-CAR-AY], which means "to call." (pause)
- The call to holiness, which means the fullness, perfection or completion of who we are through our love of God and neighbor, is the first and fundamental vocation of man. (pause)
- Due to the effects of original sin, it is often hard to see and choose what is best for ourselves; however, God sees, knows, and loves us better than we do ourselves. (pause)
- God gives each of us a special mission that is unique, unrepeatable and irreplaceable. (pause)
- Pope St. John Paul II considered vocation through the lens of "gift of self". In marriage, for instance, the husband and wife are called to a reciprocal total self-giving out of love. Those who have a vocation to the consecrated life or the priesthood are also called to total self-giving to Our Lord. Whatever mission we have in life, whether as a single person, or widow/widower it will involve achieving fulfillment and happiness through the gift of self to others out of love. (pause)

We are going to take some time to share with one another on how we can more fully understand the meaning of vocation. In particular, we will discuss ways to live out more fully the vocation of marriage and family life that the Lord is calling us to amidst the challenges of our society.

Let us break into small groups to continue our discussion further.





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### SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT:

1. Provide an area for each group of 5-9 to have their own discussion.
2. Provide a copy of the small group discussion questions below for each parent.
3. Assign a small group leader to facilitate, using these guidelines and ask them to briefly share the following principles of Respect and Sacred Confidentiality with their group:
  - a. Respect — Listen with attention and concentration and try to understand before being understood. Avoid interrupting others and give everyone a chance to speak.
  - b. Sacred Confidentiality — What the group shares remains within the group unless given permission by the participant to share with the larger group. Avoid gossip.
  - c. Flow — The facilitator should not use this time to answer questions or teach, but to allow each participant a short amount of time to share without dominating the conversation.

#### Small Group Discussion (25-35 minutes)

- ***Review the following points on Vocations that were read by the leader and comment/discuss ONE POINT you found interesting or inspiring.***
  1. From all eternity, God has a vision for our lives and prepares a path for us and invites us to grow into his plan for our lives.
  2. Pope St. John Paul II called this plan God has for our lives our “vocation,” which comes from the Latin word Vocare [VO-CAR-AY], which means “to call.”
  3. The call to holiness, which means the fullness, perfection or completion of who we are through our love of God and neighbor, is the first and fundamental vocation of man.
  4. Due to the effects of original sin, it is often hard to see and choose what is best for ourselves; however, God sees, knows, and loves us better than we do ourselves.
  5. God gives each of us a special mission that is unique, unrepeatable and irreplaceable, and calls us to live that mission in a state of life.
  6. Pope St. John Paul II paid particular attention to the states of life that involve the total gift of self, namely the sacrament of marriage, the priesthood and Consecrated Life.
  7. These states of life involve sacred vows that will be a source of grace for us to be able to live holy lives
- ***Each person is “called” by God (Vocare) to the vocation of holiness. This is lived out by making a gift of ourselves to God and others, and slowly becoming the best version of ourselves.***
  1. In your family life, what are you doing (or hope to do) to help your family become holy and share self-giving love?
  2. Share one family goal that you will strive to achieve with your family in the quest for holiness (ex. weekly mass, monthly confession, patiently supporting one another in daily life, less technology, etc.)
- ***Vocations to the priesthood and religious life often stem from strong families, which stem from the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.***
  1. How can we grow in our own appreciation of the worth of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and how can we transmit this worth in an attractive way to our children?
  2. What are some positive ways we can discuss with our children the beautiful gift of offering one's life (body and soul) to God in the priesthood or religious life?

**\*If time allows you may share the following question within your group and with your family later.**



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### DINNER TABLE QUESTION/DISCUSSION TO SHARE WITH YOUR FAMILY:

Read slowly to your family:

***God is calling each one of us to become the best version of ourselves by offering selfless love to one another. This is called holiness.***

1. What are some things we can do as a family to become more holy?
2. Share and make concrete plans to execute One Family Goal.

***God calls many of us to make a gift of ourselves in marriage.***

1. Name some married couples that you know who you look up to and admire.
2. What are the qualities they have that make them so special and a light to others?
3. If you are called by God to marriage, what do you imagine your marriage and family would be like?

***God calls many of us to make a gift of ourselves in the priesthood and religious life.***

1. Name some special priests or religious sisters or brothers that you know.
2. What are some special qualities they have and share with others?
3. Discuss all the amazing blessings a priest and/or a sister or brother in a religious community might encounter in their vocation and daily life.

### LARGE GROUP WRAP UP (10-15 minutes)

**Leader/Clergy/Catechist:** Thank you for your participation and sharing with one another. Are there any highlights that each group would like to share with the large group? Please select a representative from your group to present your highlights and for the sake of time, keep your comments to 2 minutes or less.

Before we return to our children, I want to remind you of the holiness that God is calling each of us to deepen and grow within our homes. This is Vocare [VO-CAR-AY]. The Lord is calling our families to be a light to the world. Here are three reminders to take with you:

(Share the details of the following)

1. Dinner Discussion that was given in small group
2. One family goal to implement in your home (striving for holiness)
3. Parish Pro-Life Project

Let's return to our children where we will conclude with prayer.





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### Appendix 2

#### 10 Ways to Foster Vocations in Your Parish:

(Some ideas from the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, VA)

1. Foster a culture of respect and esteem for all priests and religious: Speak well of them, invite them to your homes, encourage young people to seek them out for advice.
2. Organized prayer for vocations: General intercessions for Vocations, Vocation Holy Hours, Stations of the Cross for Vocations, seminarian/married couple speaker night/fundraiser.
3. Vocations Bulletin Board: Featuring holy and happy seminarians, priests, religious, consecrated persons, married couples. This can tell their stories and how they discerned their call.
4. "Adopt a Seminarian" from your parish. Send them homemade cards, and care packages throughout the year. Offer prayers for them in your family prayer (rosary).
5. Include websites with vocational information on the parish website including:
  - a. <https://www.vocationministry.com/>
  - b. <https://www.pathsoflove.com/>
6. Have vocation nights in youth/teen groups: Mention that attendance at daily Mass, participation in parish activities especially the liturgy, service projects, etc. are good indicators of a young person striving to grow closer to God. Don't be afraid to approach individuals and mention the qualities you see in them that could indicate God might be calling them to the priesthood or religious life. Planting this seed at a young age could be a significant step in their discernment.
7. Encourage parents to be positive and supportive if one of their children is called to the priesthood or consecrated life.
8. Celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week: form a committee from the parish and school to make the most of this week, the first full week in November (speakers, posters, contests, testimonies, etc.). [VocationMinistry.com](http://VocationMinistry.com) has great material for this.
9. Publicize quotes by the Holy Father and other Church teachings about vocations. Here are a few quotes, and you could add more!
  - a. "Jesus has a specific task in life for each and every one of us. Each one of us is hand-picked, called by name by Jesus! There is no one among us who does not have a divine vocation!"<sup>1</sup> Some are called audibly by God, but the usual kind of call is internal, through the inner working of the Spirit. — JP II "Paths of Love" Joseph Bolin
  - b. "The vocation is truly a treasure that God places in the hearts of some men, chosen by Him and called to follow Him in this special state of life. This treasure, that must be discovered and brought to light, is not made to 'enrich' someone alone." Pope Francis
  - c. "Only in Christ do we find real love, and the fullness of life. And so I invite you today to look to Christ. When you wonder about the mystery of yourself, look to Christ who gives you the meaning of life." – Pope St. John Paul II from the Address to High School Students, (October, 1979).
  - d. "The call of God is one of the most beautiful things on earth. Think of the interweaving of divine and human love involved in a vocation. When God calls us to a particular way of life, he looks on us with his love; the moment we become aware of it a new life begins for us." Pope Paul VI, Manila, 29 November 1970.
  - e. "The discernment of a vocation is above all the fruit of an intimate dialogue between the Lord and his disciples. Young people, if they know how to pray, can be trusted to know what to do with God's call." Pope Benedict XVI
10. [VocationsMinistry.org](http://VocationsMinistry.org) has several programs and ideas of ways to promote vocations in your parish, starting from the very basic to the more advanced.