

For the Classroom – Formation in Christian Chastity, Grade 7

Lesson Plan 2

Theme: God Made Us To Be Happy In Him

Objectives:

1. Students will learn what “vocation” means, and that God is lovingly calling each of us to follow Him in a particular way.
2. Students will understand the importance of choosing friends who want the best for us, in both body and soul.
3. Students will know that chastity is a spiritual power that helps us to follow God’s call.
4. Students will see that living a prayerful, sacramental life is essential to forming solid friendships and chaste lives, thereby ascertaining the way of life to which God is calling them.

Tell the story of St. Dominic Savio, given below.

St. Dominic Savio:

Dominic Savio was born in Italy in 1842. Dominic, who loved to pray, became an altar boy when he was just five years old. When he was twelve he met a holy priest who later was named a saint, St. John Bosco. Don Bosco ran a school for boys called the Oratory. Dominic joined the school. In those days, children were twelve when they received their First Holy Communion. On the day of his First Communion, St. Dominic wrote four simple rules for himself in his journal. The four rules were:

1. I will go to Confession and to Communion often.
2. I will keep holy the feast days.
3. Jesus and Mary will be my best friends.
4. I will rather die than commit a mortal sin.

He was very well liked by his schoolmates because of his kind and cheerful disposition. However, because of poor health, he had to leave the oratory and return home. When he was just fifteen years old, as he lay dying from sickness, he was heard to speak of the beautiful things that he was seeing. God was showing Dominic a glimpse of the marvelous reward awaiting him in heaven. After his death, Don Bosco wrote the story of Dominic’s life. St. Dominic Savio is Patron Saint of Children.

Opening Prayer: Dear Saint Dominic Savio, please help us to be holy. Pray that we might have the grace for us to live chastely and purely. We ask that you intercede for us to have good friends who truly want the best for us. We ask that these friends will help us to faithfully pursue God's call to each of us. Help us by your prayers to help those around us to be holy so that we may make this world a better reflection of God's kingdom, and that we may, one day, share fully in His unlimited love in heaven – the love that never ends. Amen.

Review:

So far, we've discussed that our true and lasting happiness is to be found in loving God and neighbor. We learned that to love God, we must keep His commandments. We also learned that God gave us the gift of free will and we can use it either to choose good or to choose evil. God wants us to choose good and He gives us the grace to do so, especially through holy Mass, the sacrament of Penance, and prayer.

Now you will learn that God calls each one of us to holiness in a particular way and that to successfully navigate our way though life, we must live chastely and choose our friends wisely, receive the sacraments regularly, and pray persistently just as St. Dominic Savio did.

(The following Scripture quotes, and quotes from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, as well as the "Key Concepts" Reading are reproduced at the end of this Lesson for your distribution to your students. Have the students take turns reading the handout out loud.)

Quotations from Sacred Scripture:

The Lord called me from birth, from my mother's womb he gave me my name. (Isaiah 49:1)

But the Lord answered me, "Say not, 'I am too young.' To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak." (Jeremiah 1:7)

Some friends bring ruin on us, but a true friend is more loyal than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24)

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. (Matthew 5:8)

Quotations from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

Strengthened by so many and such great means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their condition or state – though each in his own way – are called by the Lord to that perfection of sanctity by which the Father himself is perfect. (825)

The virtue of chastity blossoms in friendship. It shows the disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as friends, who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality. Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one's neighbor. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion. (2347)

“Key Concepts” Reading:

Following God’s call to holiness, happiness, and true friendship.

As you have already learned, God desires our true and lasting happiness. To achieve this we must use the gift of freedom that he gave us to act obediently toward Him and His commandments. God calls each and every one of us to be holy, to be a saint. He calls us each to be a saint, but each in a different way, in a way particular to us. There are certain things that everyone is called to do, such as keeping the commandments, but no one’s path in life will be exactly the same. Yet God desires that everyone’s path end in eternal glory and happiness with Him in heaven.

The call to us from God is called “vocation.” This word actually comes from a Latin word “*vocare*,” which means “to call.” There are four general types of vocations, or callings: ordained priesthood, consecrated life, married life, and single life. Regardless of what one’s general vocation is, the path that an individual takes to attain holiness will differ. However, all are called to holiness.

To clearly hear the voice of God calling to us in our heart, it is very important that we live purely. “Chastity is a moral virtue. It is also a gift from God, a *grace*, a fruit of spiritual effort.” (CCC 2345) Chastity is a spiritual power, and helps us live out our vocation by imitating the purity of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. Chastity is not just for priests and sisters. Everyone, whether married, single, priest, or religious is called to live chastely, though one who is married would live out this virtue in a different way than one who is not married.

To live chaste and holy lives, it is very important that we choose our friends wisely. We must never be unkind to anyone, but we must be careful to choose friends who want what is best for both our body and our soul. It is important that our friends accept us for who we are, children of God and “soldiers of Christ.” It is good to have friends who are of the opposite sex, as well as friends of the same sex. While it is good to have friends who are of the opposite sex, this is the time to happily enjoy these friendships without the pressures of dating.

Finally, we need God’s grace to be the holy people that he wants us to become. Prayer, going to Mass every Sunday and on holy days of obligation, and regular reception of the sacrament of Penance gives us the grace that we need so that we can become the people we are called to become, and know more clearly what path God is calling us to follow.

Discussion Questions:

Question: To what does God call everyone?

Answer: God calls everyone to be holy. God calls everyone to live chastely. God calls everyone to give Him glory. God calls everyone to keep His commandments. God calls everyone to be happy forever in heaven.

- Question: What are the four general types of vocations?
Answer: Ordained priesthood, consecrated religious life, married life, and single life.
Question: What is chastity and who is called to it?
Answers: Chastity is a spiritual power (virtue) that helps us to live out our vocation in a holy way by imitating the purity of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Everyone is called to chastity.

Activities:

Students will make a list of ten characteristics of a good friend. Teacher will give 5-10 minutes for this and then discuss with the students what characteristics they chose, highlighting those that are virtues.

Read a brief biographical sketch of a saint who is known for his or her purity and discuss with the students how that saint practiced the virtue of chastity to a heroic degree, explaining why this was so admirable. Examples may include: St. Joseph, St. Dominic Savio, St. Maria Goretti, or St. Thomas Aquinas.

Summary:

Today we have discussed that a vocation is the particular call that God gives to each person to live out his or her life in a holy way. We must practice the virtue of chastity, as well as the other virtues, if we are to live out this call to holiness. Part of being holy is choosing our friends wisely, choosing only those who will help us to follow God. If we choose our friends wisely, practice the virtues, and receive the sacraments regularly throughout our lives, we will be the holy people that God made us to be. One day we will reign with Him forever in heaven, where we will have total and unending happiness.

Closing Prayer: Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us! Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us! St. Joseph, pray for us! St. Dominic Savio, pray for us!

Quotations from Sacred Scripture

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