

## Living in Communion ~ Hope Expectations for Junior Classes

- ❖ Recognize Jesus as a companion and friend who travels with them on the journey of their lives;
- ❖ Appreciate what it means to be a member of the Body of Christ and accept the responsibility of this gift;
- ❖ Participate as an active member in the prayer life of the Communion of Saints to help those saints among us and those who have gone before us and who are in need of our prayers;
- ❖ Recognize and believe in Mary as the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church.

**LC 1.1: With reference to Church Tradition, outline some of the many forms of consecrated religious life within the Church (priestly, monastic, cloistered religious life i.e. Carmelite nuns and monks; orders and congregations i.e. Franciscan and Dominican order) and describe how and why they live out the evangelical counsels (vows of poverty, chastity and obedience). [CCC 914-933]** I would love to come into Grade 6 classes to teach students about this expectation. I can speak from a lived experience and it would be fun to do. I would begin to teach this expectation by explaining that within the Church's Tradition there are four main vocations (ways to live our lives of faith.) The four main ways are single life, married life, priestly life and religious life. Religious life is not more religious than the other three but it has been called this for a long time. Within religious life there are many ways to live a consecrated (vowed) life. It is like there is a continuum from strictly cloistered to freely apostolic (with many differences in between.) Cloistered means that the people living this way are called to a silent life called apart from others. Generally speaking they do not leave their monastery very often and spend a great deal of time in silence and prayer. Apostolic means that the people living this way are called to service in the world and they live in community (with others.) All of these people are called to live the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. Poverty means that they share everything they have with others in their community and with the poor around them; chastity means that they love everyone without special types of exclusive relationships (like marriages) and obedience means to listen to God every day in prayer. Following God's will not necessarily their own will. Some men in religious life live as priests as well as religious/brothers. Some men in religious life are not priests too. Video resources are available on Youtube: Christian Vocation: It All Begins with a Call 2.24 min  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mpx0p0bl3-k&index=9&list=PL1FEF204D8C27FEF4>;  
Eight Common Myths about Religious Life 4.22 min  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcANOXzrel4&list=PL1FEF204D8C27FEF4&index=37>  
I would recommend any of the VISION Vocation Guide videos on Youtube. They come from credible sources. There are 39 such videos.

**LC 1.2: Identify and explain the nature of ministry within the Church (e.g., its hierarchical structure, the role of teaching, sanctifying and governing offices and how they are exercised). [CCC nos. 871-896]** The Church is the people of God and we belong to God's people through our baptism. Through our baptism we become sharers in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal office and we are called to exercise the mission which God has offered us according to the talents and gifts God has given us. We, as the people of God, are invited to spread the Good News of Christ to everyone by our words and our actions. We are referred to as the LAITY in the Church. The deacons, priests and bishops also have a role in the Church to teach, sanctify (bless) and govern in Christ's name and by Christ's power. They have their own role to fulfill. They are called the CLERGY. Both groups must work together to serve the Body of Christ, the Church, in unity and in mission. I would ask your class, What is the Church? Many students will offer the explanation that the building they attend mass in is the Church. You can remind them that they are Church, they are the people of God. All of us are Church together. There are two main groups in the Church, ask your students – Do you know what these two main groups are called. LAITY and CLERGY. Invite your students to identify the whole school community who go to Church to pray together > the group called the Laity. Ask them the name of the priest that is the celebrant. Father \_\_\_\_\_. Do they know the name of the Bishop for their Diocese? [for SSM diocese – Marcel Dampousse; for Hearst diocese – soon to be Robert Bourgon] Ask the class what is our mission as the laity? What is the mission of the clergy? We both have roles and we must work together to serve the Church and the world.

**LC 1.3: Explain the vocation of the baptized and the importance of their participation in the life and mission of the Church, and give examples of how the laity fulfill the priestly office (i.e.**

**sanctification), the prophetic office (i.e., evangelization and teaching), and the kingly office (i.e., pastoral governance) their mission. [CCC nos. 897-913]** Many baptized people do not know they share in the three roles of Jesus, that is: as priest, prophet and king. Each of these roles has certain expressions. I would explain each role first then speak about the importance of their participation in the life and mission of the Church.

**Role/office of baptized**

Priest

**What this means**

Through their work, prayer and spiritual practices, which are accomplished with the help of the Holy Spirit, these may be offered to God. Their lives become a living sacrifice of praise and worship when they live a holy life like Christ.

Prophet

Through their efforts to spread the Word of God and the witness of their lives, they announce Christ's presence to the world. People can learn how to live by watching the good and holy lives of the baptized.

King

Through their effort to support their pastors in governing the Church, they minister to the people of God using the gifts and grace God gives them for the community

So even as young people they can live their lives as priest, prophet and king. They can have a significant life and mission in the Church. They are important witnesses especially to other young people. The Church is the people of God and we need all the people of God to play a significant role in living good and holy lives. In that witness, people who do not know Christ yet, may be inspired by the example of those who live their baptismal call.

**LC 2.1: Define the Church's teaching concerning the life of Mary from Scripture and Tradition (i.e. Immaculate Conception, Assumption) and why these are important signs which point to the life of Jesus Christ. [CCC nos. 484-511; 963-975]**

The Immaculate Conception is Mary being conceived without sin so that she could be Jesus' mother, if she said yes. Assumption takes place when Mary's earthly life was complete, she was taken up body and soul into heaven. These teachings are part of the Tradition of the Church. Explain the Immaculate Conception and Assumption of Mary as teachings from Tradition. Have the students read the passages in the Bible that help us to learn about the life of Mary. These passages (Immaculate Conception or Assumption) cannot be found in the gospels. These are teachings that have been given by Mary herself in apparitions (when Mary appears to people on Earth, i.e. Mary tells St. Bernadette that she is the Immaculate Conception.) There were a few other times when Mary is in the Gospels. In John's gospel 19:25 Mary is at the foot of the cross supporting her son in his dying moments. Ask your students: why are these important signs which point to the life of Jesus Christ?

**LC 2.2: Articulate the reasons why our faith teaches us that Mary is the Mother of the Church. [CCC nos. 963-975; 2673-2682]** Ask your students if they are connected to their mothers in a serious way. Maybe ask them if there is anyone else that they are as connected to, to see what they say. They may say their fathers, which would be right of course. Mary is Jesus' mother and so "Mary's role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it." [CCC 964] Mary walked with Jesus throughout his life up to his death on the cross. No one knew Jesus better than Mary. When we pray to Mary it is to ask her to speak to her Son, Jesus, about the person or situation we are praying for. Mary is not God. We do not worship Mary like we can worship Jesus. But Mary can speak to Jesus for us so we ask for her intercession.

**LC 2.3: Explain how Mary, as both the first disciple and the Mother of the Church, supports us in our growth in holiness and virtue (John 19:27 – Behold, your mother). [CCC nos. 963-975; 2673-2682]**

Mary, as Jesus' mother, would have been his first disciple (follower) because she would have known his sincerity and that he was God's son. When Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the Temple for Presentation to God (a Jewish ritual), the parents are greeted by two prophets (Luke 2:22-38) Simeon and Anna who tell Mary about her son's mission. **You may want to read this passage to the students – in late Advent or Christmas season.** We claim her as Mother of the Church because she was Jesus' mother. Mary lived a simple, humble, good and holy life so it makes sense that we can find support in her to help us as we grow in holiness and virtue. **Ask the class to describe the qualities of a good mother/grandmother. Ask the class – Do you think Mary has all these good qualities? Do you think Mary had other qualities that good mothers/grandmothers might not have? [being without sin] Ask your students, Do you notice how people live? Does how they live inspire you to live likewise? Can you name someone who inspires you? It would be good to have a conversation with your students about virtue and holiness – who do they know who lives the virtues? Who do they know that they would give an award for the virtue of faith? The virtue of courage? The virtue of wisdom? The virtue of hope? The virtue of wholeness – or whatever is this month's virtue. Have a conversation about who/what is it about how a person lives that inspires them, how much money/possessions, fame (popularity), skill level (music/athletic/artistic). It may surprise you that they do not notice when someone does something noteworthy in virtue. Maybe you can inspire them to want to be holy and virtuous.**