

Called to Live As Jesus' Disciples

23

WE GATHER

✚ **Leader:** Lord, may we follow your call to do good in whatever work we do.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

“Whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:12–13)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

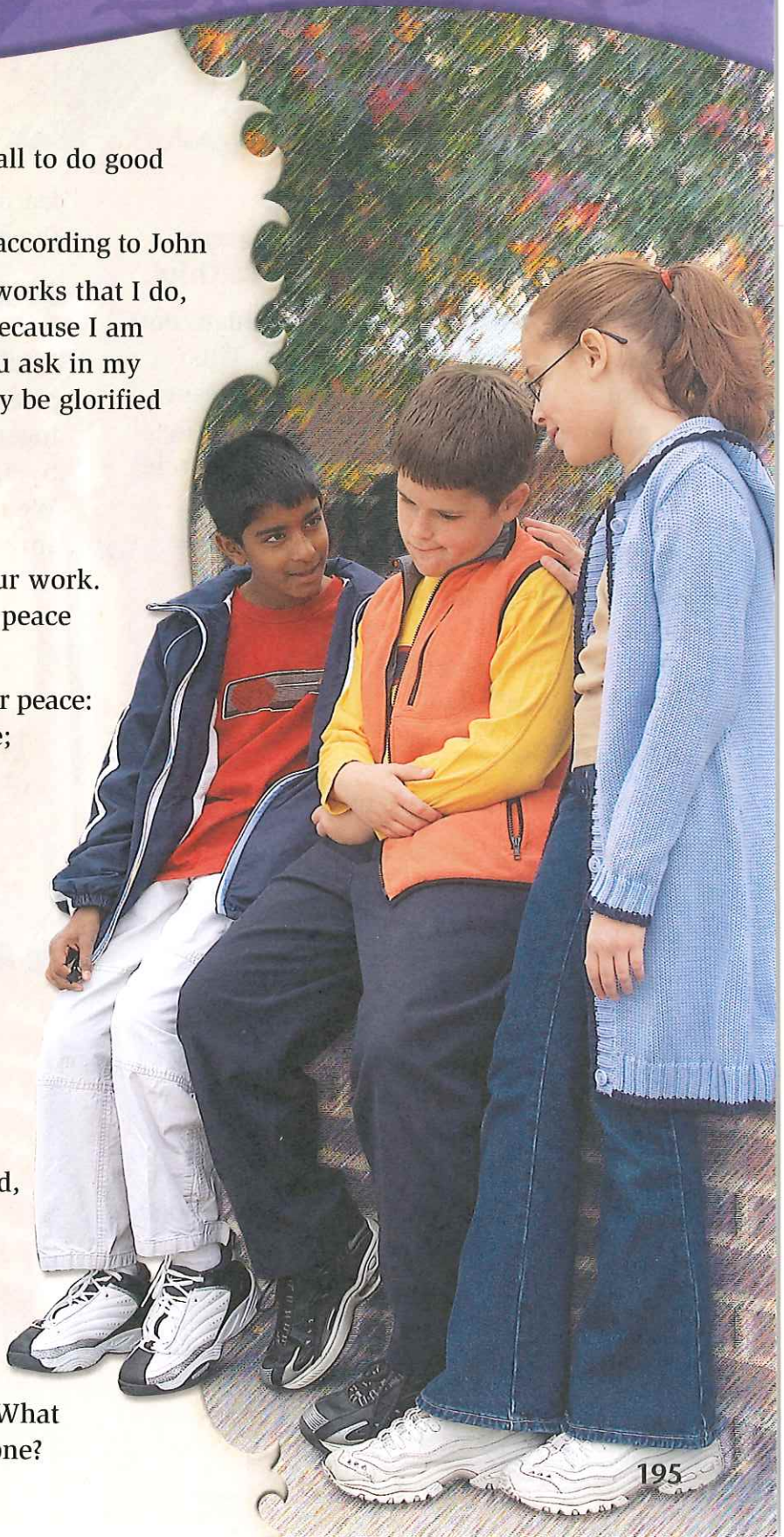
Leader: Lord you ask us to continue your work.
Be with us as we share your love and peace with others.

All: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not
so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we are born
to eternal life.

Amen. (Saint Francis of Assisi)

☀ Think of a time when a group that you were part of was given a job to do. What was the job? How did the group get it done?





WE BELIEVE

Jesus calls the baptized to serve him in the priesthood of the faithful.

When Jesus was baptized at the Jordan, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. This anointing by the Holy Spirit marked Jesus as priest, prophet, and king. Our anointing at Baptism makes us sharers in Christ's role as priest, prophet, and king.

So all those who are baptized share in Christ's priestly mission. This is known as the **priesthood of the faithful**. In the priesthood of the faithful, each and every one of us is called to

- worship God
- spread the Good News of Jesus Christ
- serve one another and the Church.

In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, priests and bishops become members of the ordained priesthood. They participate in Christ's priestly mission in a unique way. They receive the grace to act in the name of and in the person of Christ.

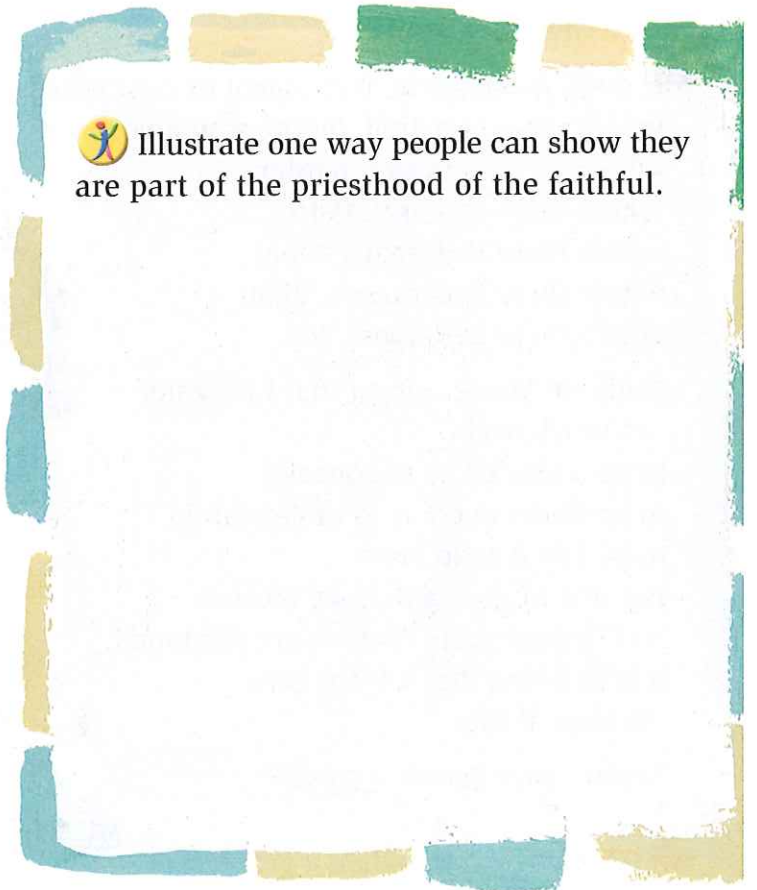
Being part of the priesthood of the faithful is not the same thing as being an ordained priest. However, members of the priesthood of the faithful work with ordained priests to lead and care for God's people. These women and men help us to participate in Christ's priestly mission. They help us to

learn the faith, to worship, and to care for the needs of others.

As members of the priesthood of the faithful, we continue to learn about Jesus and the teachings of the Church. We live out the priesthood of the faithful by gathering together for the celebration of the Mass and by opening our hearts to God in prayer. We focus on loving God and others, and on spreading the Good News of Christ.



Illustrate one way people can show they are part of the priesthood of the faithful.





The laity share in the mission to bring the Good News of Christ to the world.

Because all Christians share in the priesthood of the faithful, we all share a common vocation, too. Our common vocation is to grow in holiness and spread the message of Jesus' life and saving work. God calls each of us to live out our common vocation in a particular way. We do this as laypeople, religious, or ordained ministers.

Laypeople are all the baptized members of the Church who share in the mission to bring the Good News of Christ to the world. Laypeople are also known as the Christian faithful or the laity. Most Catholics are members of the laity and follow God's call either in the single life or in marriage.

Single people and married people serve God and the Church in many ways. They share God's love in their families and parishes. A husband and wife share God's love with each other and form a new Christian family. Much of their time is focused on loving and caring for their families.

Single people can share their gifts and talents with others through their work. Sometimes they care for their brothers or sisters or take on extra responsibility in caring for their parents. They may also dedicate their time to their parishes and communities.

You are a member of the Christian faithful. You are called to share the Good News at home, in school, and in your neighborhood.

You can take part in your parish celebrations. You can live as Jesus taught. You can be an example of Christian living for others. With your family and your parish, you can care for the needs of others. You can stand up for what is right. You can help others to see Christ's love and his presence in the world.


Laypeople have a responsibility to bring the Good News of Christ to their work and communities. They do this when they treat others fairly and justly. They also have a responsibility to act and make decisions based on the teachings of Jesus and on their faith.

The Christian faithful are called to be active in their parishes. We

- participate in the celebration of the sacraments and parish programs
- serve as lay ecclesial ministers, on the pastoral council, in the parish school or religious education program, or in youth ministry
- perform different liturgical ministries during the Mass.

The laity serve in their dioceses, too. They may work in offices for education, worship, youth, and social ministries.



 Imagine yourself ten years from now. In what ways do you see yourself taking part in the work of the Church? Act these out for the group.

Women and men in religious life serve Christ, their communities, and the whole Church.

God calls some women and men to the religious life. **Religious** refers to the women and men who belong to communities of service to God and the Church. They are known as religious sisters, brothers, and priests. They devote themselves to Christ's work through the work of their communities.

Religious make vows, or promises, to God. By taking these vows religious try to follow Jesus' example of living each day for God. The vows that religious sisters, brothers, and priests often make are:



Chastity They choose to live a life of loving service to the Church and their community. They do not marry. Instead they promise to devote themselves to the work of God and to the Church as members of their communities.

Poverty They promise to live simply as Jesus did. They agree to share their belongings and to own no personal property.

Obedience They promise to listen carefully to God's direction in their

lives by obeying the leaders of the Church and of their communities. They serve wherever their community and the Church need them. Religious try to live the way Christ did and follow God's will.

Many religious live as a family in one community. They pray together, work together, and share their meals. Other religious may live away from their community and work where they are needed.

Some communities are set apart from the rest of society. These religious usually live in places called monasteries. They devote their lives to praying for the world. Whether they farm, prepare food to sell, or work on computers, their work is a way of prayer.

Other communities combine prayer with a life of service outside their communities. These religious sisters, brothers, and priests may serve in many different parish ministries. They may also be teachers, missionaries, doctors, nurses, or social workers. In these ways they can directly help those who are poor, elderly, suffering, or in any type of need.

Together the laity, religious, and ordained ministers make up the Church. No one group is more important or special than another. The Church needs all its members to be able to continue Jesus' work.



Talk about the ways religious sisters, brothers, and priests may serve in your community.



Friendships prepare us for future vocations.

For most of us discovering our vocation is a process that takes many years. We are encouraged to pray and think about our talents and abilities.

The Holy Spirit will guide and help us as we pray about our future. Our families, friends, and parish also support us as we try to find out what God is calling us to do.

You might not realize it, but you are actually preparing for your future vocation. The ways that you are responding to God and other people in your life right now are preparing you to respond to God in the future.

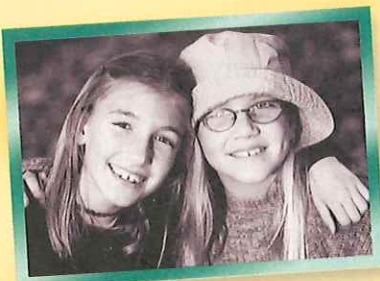
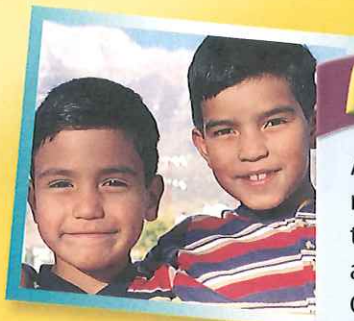
Right now you are discovering the importance of responsibility, faithfulness, and self-respect. These values are essential in all of your relationships. You are also learning about love and service in

your families and with your friends.

Friendships are an important part of finding out what it means to be faithful to Christ and one another. Good friends are

true to each other. They are honest. They keep their promises. They stand up for each other. However, friends sometimes make mistakes. They may forget something important or hurt each other's feelings. But they learn to forgive each other. They encourage each other to be fair and loving in the future.

Good friends help us to live as disciples of Christ at home, in school, and in our neighborhood. They also prepare us to serve God in whatever vocation we accept and follow.



As Catholics...

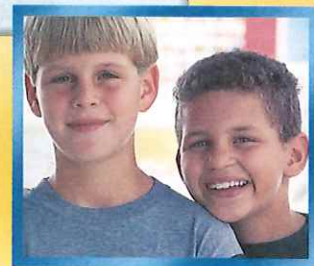
All of us are called to share in the mission of the Church. We can do this by our prayers, words, and actions. We are called to share the Good News of Christ and to live lives of holiness. Laypeople, religious, and ordained ministers can also do this as missionaries.

Missionaries serve here in our own country and in places all over the world. They may spend weeks, months, or even years doing mission work. They live with the people they serve and share their love with them. Some missionaries learn the customs and traditions of the people they serve. They may even learn a new language so that they can teach about Jesus and the Catholic faith.


Find out what missionary opportunities your parish and diocese offer.



Key Word
religious (p. 269)



WE RESPOND

 God calls us to our vocation. Here are ways we can listen to God's call.

- ☐ prayer
- ☐ advice from good people
- ☐ recognizing our God-given abilities and talents

Listen in each of these ways. Check the box when you have listened to God in this way.

Pray together the Prayer for Vocation found on page 259.



PROJECT

Show What **you** Know

Using L for laypeople and/or R for religious, identify the groups that correspond to each statement.

1. _____ Through Baptism, share in the priesthood of the faithful.
2. _____ Live their faith as citizens, voters, and workers.
3. _____ Make vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.
4. _____ May follow God's call in the married life.
5. _____ Devote themselves to Christ through the work of their religious community.



Fast Facts

The monastery of Saint Anthony the Great is the oldest active Christian monastery in the world. Built in 356 A.D. on the burial site of Saint Anthony, the monastery is located in an oasis of the Egyptian desert.



What Would **you** do?

Good friends help us to be the people God wants us to be. What advice could you give to someone about making new friends?



In 1963 Pope Paul VI designated the Fourth Sunday of Easter as the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. On this day, all members of the Church, throughout the world, are called to pray for those who are serving in the vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and for those whom God is calling to those vocations.

More to Explore

When a parish does not have a resident priest to serve the people, the bishop of the diocese appoints a pastoral administrator to serve the parish. Pastoral administrators may be religious sisters and brothers as well as laypeople. A pastoral administrator serves as the leader of parish life. Pastoral administrators make sure parish communities have worship, religious education, and social outreach programs. They often lead their faith communities in prayer services and community outreach. The bishop assigns a priest to celebrate the Mass and other sacraments for the parish, or the community joins with another parish for the celebration of the sacraments.


- Who might lead the parish if a priest is not available?

- Who can be a pastoral administrator?

- Does your parish have a pastoral administrator?

Take Home

What are some ways that your family, as members of the Christian faithful, can be active in your parish?

 **DISCIPLE CHALLENGE** With your family, choose one idea from your list to live out this week.

CHAPTER TEST

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. _____ are baptized members of the Church who share in the mission to bring the Good News of Christ to the world.
a. Laypeople b. Vows c. Vocations
2. _____ are men and women who belong to communities in which they dedicate their lives to the service of God and the Church.
a. Christian faithful b. Laity c. Religious
3. _____ are an important part of finding out what it means to be faithful to Christ and one another.
a. Vocations b. Laity c. Friendships
4. The _____ is Christ's priestly mission in which all those who are baptized share.
a. laypeople b. ordained priesthood c. priesthood of the faithful

Short Answers

5. Name three things that help us to live out the priesthood of the faithful.

6. As Christians, what is our common vocation?

7. Name three ways that laypeople can be active and serve in their parish community.

8. What are the three vows, or promises, that religious might make to God?

Write a sentence to answer each question.

9. What are two ways men and women in religious life serve others?

10. How do friendships prepare us for future vocations?
