



Come Follow Me

This week we celebrate Vocations Awareness Week. Vocation Awareness Week is an annual week-long celebration of the Catholic Church in Scotland dedicated to promote vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life through prayer and education, and to renew our prayers and support for those who are considering one of these particular vocations.

This week, in schools throughout Scotland, we are considering the different aspects of vocation. Looking at the example of The Rich Young Man, Third Year students will consider how serving God forms an important part of any vocation.

Scripture Mark 10:17-22– Serving God

Jesus started to leave, but a man ran to him and bowed down on his knees before him. The man asked, “Good Teacher, what must I do to get the life that never ends?”

Jesus answered, “Why do you call me good? Only God is good. And you know his commands: ‘You must not murder anyone, you must not commit adultery, you must not steal, you must not lie, you must not cheat, you must respect your father and mother ...’”

The man said, “Teacher, I have obeyed all these commands since I was a boy.” Jesus looked at the man in a way that showed how much he cared for him. He said, “There is still one thing you need to do. Go and sell everything you have. Give the money to those who are poor, and you will have riches in heaven. Then come and follow me.”

The man was upset when Jesus told him to give away his money. He didn’t want to do this, because he was very rich. So he went away sad.

Jesus Calls

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus calls people to follow him. Some, like the twelve disciples, respond very positively and choose to dedicate their life to him. With others it’s a slightly different story. They hear the call of Jesus but are perhaps pre-occupied with other things or, like the Rich Young Man, think they have too much to lose. When it comes to following Jesus it’s always our choice. God never imposes His plans upon us. We’re always free to accept them or not.

Answering a question with a question.

When the Rich Young asks Jesus how to inherit eternal life, Jesus answers with another question “Why do you call me good?”. Many people have said that Jesus’ answer seems a little too direct and even a bit snappy. Some bible scholars suggest that Jesus was slightly frustrated with the rich young man’s question because it seemed self-centered – the rich young man didn’t ask ‘how can I help you’ or ‘how can I help other people get eternal life’ he only asked about himself and this frustrated Jesus.

What happened next?

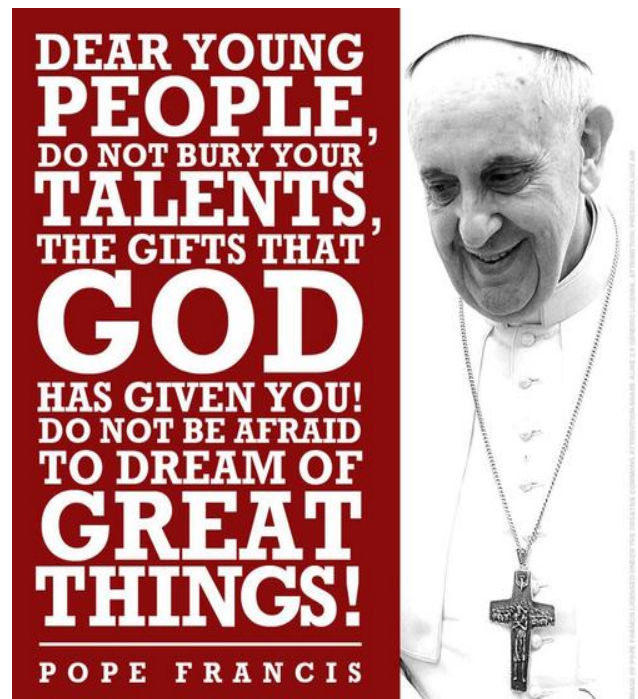
Some people think the Rich Young had a change of heart and began to follow Jesus. Others think the story ended here. The Rich young man went to his normal life. The truth is that we don’t really know what happened to him.

The Big Word - Synoptic

Versions of this story are also found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the Synoptic Gospels. Synoptic means similar!

Being Rich

When we hear the term ‘rich’ we immediately think about lottery winners, premiership footballers and pop stars. We think being rich is all about having lots of money and possessions. But, believe it or not, there are other ways of being ‘rich’. Being ‘rich’ also means that we have plenty of resources, skills, talents and gifts. In that sense we are all rich! God has given each and every one of us the gifts and the talents we need to follow His plan or for our lives. When it comes to giving us the tools and resources we need to follow our path in life, God hasn’t scrimped and saved, He has given us the best!



Gifts and talents are not just those things for which we receive certificates or awards or prizes. They’re not simply about being good at football or dancing or on the PlayStation. Our gifts and talents, our real gifts and talents, are those qualities

that we can put at the service of our family, our community and our God. Are you a good friend? Are you a good listener? Could you be a good leader? Are you responsible? Do you think about the needs of other people? Are you comfortable putting others first?

The problem with the Rich Young Man wasn't so much that he had lots of money but the fact he was more concerned about himself than other people. He wasn't prepared to put his gifts and talents at the service of others. What about you?

Reflection

1. In the centre of your page draw a mind map with your name in the middle
2. Around the mind map make a list of all your gifts and talents.
3. Pick three of your gifts and talents and explain how you could use them for the good of your friends/family/school/parish

Vocation Example

People often ask me why I became a priest. I often wish I could tell them a great story about God how appeared to me one night and told me in a big, booming voice that being a Priest was my destiny but that's just not the case.

My vocation story is far less dramatic and far less exciting. I just felt that the Priesthood was simply the place where I was meant to be. I felt that it was only by being a priest that I could live out God's plan for my life. That's not to say that my journey to Priesthood was in any way easy or uncomplicated. When I was in primary school I was bullied quite badly. The experience made me really, really shy and I found it difficult to talk to people. I was terrified of having to answer out in class and I kept myself to myself. As I got older, things got a bit easier but I was still really shy and, sometimes, I really lacked self - confidence.

About that time, I really got into my faith and started thinking about becoming a priest. But I was scared, really scared! All the Priests I knew seemed very confident, they were really good at getting to know people and they were also great at saying Mass and giving great homilies. How could I ever do all of that?

How would I manage – I mean I could barely speak to my best friend – how would I manage speaking to hundreds of people?

I couldn't really see a way forward and began to think about doing other things with my life. Then one day I was reading a book by an American Priest called Thomas Merton. In one chapter in the book, Fr. Merton was talking about the gifts and talents we receive from God and how we should use those gifts and talents to respond to God's call. He said that God will always give us the resources, the gifts and the talents we need to follow His plan for our lives. That really struck with me and I thought 'God, if you want me to be a Priest you must have hidden all those gifts and talents in me somewhere. Help me find them!'

I went on to apply to train to be a Priest. At times it was difficult and at times it was very demanding. I found there were lots of areas in my life I had to really work at but, with God's help, I got there. Believe me, I'm living proof that if God calls you He will give you all the talents and gifts you need to respond to that call!

**Father, show us
the gifts and
talents you have
given us. Let us
learn to use them
for Your glory.**

1 Peter 4:10

A Priest of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

Activity

1. Working with a partner discuss the following:

- (a) In the Vocation story above what obstacles were there that stopped the Priest from initially following his vocation
- (b) In what ways do you use your gifts and talents for the good of others ?

2. Working in groups/pairs:

Produce a collage/wall display on the theme 'Serving God'

End of Lesson Prayer

Lord, thank you for giving me so many gifts and talents. Give me the determination, the strength and the courage to always use them in a way that will serve others and serve You.

Amen