Vocation Lesson Plan
High School Girls, Grades 9-12

Photocopy the worksheet on the back for students. Use the following points in your discussion.

Purpose:
1. To introduce students to Catholic Vocations as a life option.
2. To give students an opportunity to imagine themselves as a Consecrated Sister or Nun.
3. To help students understand how they can use their gifts and skills and commit their lives to God as sister/ nun.

Highlighted Points:
1. What is a Vocation?
   a. Everyone has a vocation. It's your life's call from God. It is our personal response to give back to God by using the gifts God gave us with an open heart. A Vocation is NOT a job; it is about a way of life. Your job or career is separate.
   b. God calls each of us to one of these vocations in life
      i. Married Life – A call to a lifelong commitment of deep and shared love in union with another person.
      ii. Single Life – To live out your life as a single person independently with a serving heart and energy.
      iii. Consecrated Life as a Sister or Nun – To dedicate your life to God and to follow Jesus through vows. They live a prayerful life in community and in service to others.
2. Sisters vs. Nuns
   a. Definitions
      i. Sisters – a ***Sister*** shares her gifts out in the world, directly impacting those in need. They live in community.
      ii. Nuns – a ***Nun*** lives her life within the walls of a monastery cloister, serving others through c*ontemplative* prayer.
   b. Though there has been great debate in recent years, the term "Nun" has often come to mean Sister or Nun, while the term "Sister" is still generally used to refer to women committed to an apostolic or active religious lifestyle. *Ask students what types of careers are fulfilled by Sisters/ Nuns. Emphasize most all careers are represented through the vast array of orders and congregations.*
3. What kind of Sisters/ Nuns are there? The main types of religious lifestyle are:
   a. ***Apostolic/ Active*** – The most well-known form of consecrated life, Sisters share a common vision and mission that can include a variety of ministries in the world, such as social work, healthcare, pastoral work or serving the poor. Members live in community and maintain active prayer lives.
   b. ***Cloistered*** – These sisters limit direct contact with people and access to the outside world. They choose to live and work exclusively within the monastery. Usually, their ministry is to pray for the needs of the world.
   c. ***Contemplative*** – Nuns focus primarily on prayer. These communities generally pray many times a day, attend daily Mass, read scripture and spiritual works, maintain periods of silence, and perform labor to sustain the community.
4. To Habit or Not To Habit (A History)
   a. The original reason for Sisters/Nuns to wear a habit, was to wear the dress of the common people. Over time, the habit became a sign or recognized symbol of faith in God. In the early 1960s, a council, termed Vatican II, met and called for modernization of the Catholic Church. Leaders called for Catholics to go back to basics and live more like Christ. Out of those discussions, many orders of Sisters/ Nuns decided to stop wearing habits, and instead go back to wearing the dress of the common people. These Sisters/ Nuns generally wear a simple ring and/or medals as a sign of their commitment to God. Some communities still wear habits, many wear clothing of the common people, and some allow habits to be optional. *Ask students whether they think habits or clothing of the people is important or not.*
5. Following Jesus through ***ministry and service***
   a. Each community has a different '**charism**' – a specific ***mission*** and gift to the church and world that meets a need. Charisms reflect the Gospel or an aspect of Jesus. Most often communities were formed because the founder had a profound experience. Example: Josephine Potel founded the Sisters of Bon Secours after the French Revolution. Seeing that the sick did not have access to health care, she nursed them in their homes. She spoke of God's love because people could not practice their faith publicly. *Ask students: What can a community contribute to the world?*
6. Activity: *Copy the handout on the back for students. Invite a sister to share her story.*
7. Resources
   a. VISION Vocation Guide - http://www.vocation-network.org/
   b. Vocation Placement - http://www.vocationsplacement.org/
   c. Busted Halo - http://www.bustedhalo.com/
   d. Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible - http://www.drbo.org/
   e. Quintessential Careers (Career Testing) - http://www.quintcareers.com/career_assessment.html
   f. Catholics On Call - http://catholicsoncall.org/

SISTERS OF BON SECOURS
www.BonSecoursVocations.org
410-442-3172

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