

SESSION

4

The Rich Young Man

Catechist Overview

This session focuses on the Gospel of the Rich Young Man asking the Lord how to follow Him. After receiving a specific call to give up his riches and follow Jesus, the young man goes away sad.

Our vocation is always a call to come home to heaven, but the way we get there is always an adventure.

Students will learn about the vocation, or calling, to holiness Jesus offers to everyone. They will hear the stories of saints and how their vocations played out. Parents will read with their children the story of St. Martin de Porres and look for key moments in the story of his vocation to follow the Lord.

SESSION

4

The Rich Young Man



St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the Heavenly Hosts,
by the power of God,
cast into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



Materials

- **Listen and Respond:** The Rich Young Man
- **Make It Your Own:** Adventurous Saints
- **Bring It Home:** St. Martin de Porres
- **Think About These Things:** Matthew 19:26



A. Recall from the last session that St. Michael offers us protection and help to do battle against temptation, and to follow Jesus.

B. Then begin a new discussion about the idea of success to help introduce the Gospel of the day. Make a list on the board of three important things that everyone at school or at sports thinks are the most important to have success in life. *Some answers might be money, a sport or hobby you are good at, a nice car, being popular, and lots of friends.*

C. Then ask the students, what do they personally think is the most important thing to have in life? *They might share various dreams and ideas.*

D. Explain to them that usually what we think is the most important thing in life tells us what our purpose in life is. For example, if I think getting famous is the most important thing in my life, I think that the purpose of my life is to be famous. But in reality, God gave us a true purpose in life.

E. Recall how in last week's Gospel, Jesus taught us to let nothing get in the way of entering the Kingdom of Heaven. From this we know Our purpose is to love, know and serve God and be eternally happy with Him in heaven.

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F. This week we are going to hear in the Gospel that Jesus is calling us specifically to follow Him in a special way through our vocation. A vocation is like a specific quest or adventure that God wants for your life. And just like a quest, He will give you supplies, weapons, and help along the way. It can take years to figure out what our vocation is, but everyone is given a vocation. The vocation is always a call to come home to heaven but the way we get there is always an adventure.

G. Listen to the Gospel and hear a specific call to holiness Jesus gives to the rich young man. Read slowly to your students, from **Listen and Respond: The Rich Young Man**



The Rich Young Man

Adapted from Mark 10:17-30

A man ran up to Jesus, knelt down before him, and asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother."

The young man replied and said to Jesus, "Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth."

Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, "You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."

At that statement the young man's face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" The disciples were amazed at his words. So Jesus again said to them in reply, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God." Peter began to say to him, "We have given up everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come."

The Rich Young Man

As your teacher reads the Scripture again, answer the questions below together.

1 What is the young man asking Jesus?

3 Why are they worried that no one can be saved?

2 What does Jesus ask the rich young man to do?

4 What does Jesus promise to everyone who gives up riches in this life?



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Read the passage aloud a second time, this time pausing where noted to check for understanding.

1 How to get to heaven and live with God forever.

2 Follow the Commandments and give up his possessions.

3 Accept reasonable answers. Maybe because everyone has riches in some way that they want to keep.

4 He promises a hundred times more in the present age (with persecutions), and eternal life in the age to come.

Notes

Session 4



A. Explain to your students that in today's Gospel the rich young man asks an important question that we all must ask Jesus, "What must I do to inherit eternal life"? Put another way, this question is asking "what must I do to live eternally in happiness?" The young man knows God is calling Him to be holy and go to heaven, but he is asking for direction in living it out: a quest.

 **Heart of the Lesson:** Explain that a vocation is a call that God gives to everyone: it is a specific way to live out their life loving God with their whole heart, mind, soul and strength, that fits with their talents, desires, and personality. A vocation is like a specific adventure God has planned just for you. We are called to love God in this life, with the goal of unity with Him in heaven.

Adventurous Saints

Read these lives of the saints. Each one had a very specific personality, background, and talents. One of the saints was called to the priesthood, a second to marriage, and a third was called to religious life. As you read, find the events in each of the saint's life as they lived out their vocation.

Underline these parts of their adventure:

1. The person finds his or her vocation by being called by God directly or through someone else in the Church.
2. They must renounce (or give up) everything and follow God alone.
3. They encounter difficulties, distractions, and maybe even get sidetracked, but work with God's grace to overcome them.
4. They face the final trial and stay faithful to God.
5. They receive the eternal reward: they get to be in heaven.

Saint 1: St. Aloysius Gonzaga

Aloysius was the oldest son and heir of the noble house of Gonzaga, and his father was training him in the art of war. At the age of eight, he was sent to the grand duke's court to continue his training. There, he fell sick. To pass the time, he read about the lives of the saints, especially the brave Jesuit missionaries in India. The more Aloysius read, the more he realized that he did not want to live the life of war his father had chosen for him. He wanted to save souls, not destroy them.

When he turned nine, Aloysius made a vow never to marry, because he wanted to



Portrait of Luis Gonzaga, by El Greco

B. Continue to explain that we can know that He has these adventures planned for people by looking at the lives of the saints. Each responded to God's call or quest. The rich young man is sad because he was asked to give up his own plans and riches to follow Jesus. A vocation may seem impossible, but as Jesus said in the Gospel today, "All things are possible with God."

give his entire life to God. Aloysius told his parents that God was calling him to be a Jesuit priest. His mother was happy at the news, but his father was furious because Aloysius was supposed to be his heir. He was so angry that he did not give his permission, and Aloysius had to wait until he was 18 to give up his inheritance and enter the seminary in Rome.

He still dreamed of becoming a missionary, but ever since he had fallen sick as a boy, he had struggled with weak health. He was not strong enough to travel to India. This made Aloysius sad because he wanted to be brave and save souls. But he knew that God would show him what He wanted him to do.

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When Aloysius was 22, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to him in a vision. In the vision, the angel told him he would die within a year's time. Aloysius knew he must make ready for his death and do his best to become a saint. The next summer, a terrible plague broke

out in Rome. The Jesuits opened a hospital for the victims. Aloysius knew that this was his chance to be brave for God just as he had hoped he could be. He searched for the sick in the streets, carried them to the hospital, and tended to their wounds. He knew that when he served the sick, he served Jesus.

Then came the day when Aloysius caught the plague. Aloysius knew that the angel's prophecy was coming true and he would die soon. In another vision, he learned the exact day of his death: June 21, eight days after the Feast of Corpus Christi, which is the glorious feast day celebrating the Body of Christ. On the day he had predicted his death, Aloysius became terribly weak, and he received the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Right before midnight, he gazed at the crucifix in his hands and breathed the name of Jesus as he died. St. Aloysius, help me to save souls for God!

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Saint 2: St. Elizabeth of Portugal

Elizabeth was the daughter of the king and queen of Aragon in Spain. She married King Denis of Portugal and became Portugal's queen. Even though she was queen, Elizabeth prayed, fasted, and took special care of the poor and the sick. Elizabeth made many enemies because the nobles thought she did not live a life befitting a queen. But she knew that pleasing Jesus was more important than pleasing the royal court and that a good queen cared for all her people, not just the rich and titled. Her good example brought her husband

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Saint Elizabeth of Portugal, by Francisco de Zurbarán

23

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C. Your students may be familiar with adventures or quests from video games or movies. In every adventure, we see the same story. The steps are listed out below. List them on the board if possible and encourage students to find these steps in games or stories they know. You could also choose a story the whole class knows and go over them all together.

1. The hero receives the call.
2. They need to give up something that is very dear to them: safety, a home, or they may have to leave behind friends.
3. The hero then encounters obstacles and difficulties.
4. The hero receives help from friends and unexpected treasure to help overcome the obstacles.
5. There is usually a final battle with the boss or villain.
6. Then the quest is accomplished and they receive a reward.

D. Have the class turn to **Make It Your Own: Adventurous Saints**, and explain that we will follow the lives of three saints who received three different vocations or adventures and how they made it to heaven. You may choose to read one, two, or all three of the stories.

Activity Continues

Session 4

E. Point out to your students that each of these saints was called to a different vocation: one was called to be a priest, one was called to marriage, and one was called to be a religious sister. All vocations call us to live holy lives in a special way in loving service to others. Every vocation is a call to holiness, to know, love and serve God in this world and be happy with Him eternally.

back to the Faith, as he had been living a sinful life. As queen, Elizabeth was responsible for maintaining her people's well being in politics. War broke out between her son, Afonso, and her husband, King Denis. They were fighting because Afonso did not believe that his father would name him heir to the throne. Elizabeth **3** knew she must stop the bloodshed between father and son. She rode a mule onto the battlefield and placed herself between the dangerous armies of her husband and son. Father and son's anger cooled when they saw the brave queen on her mule facing down their soldiers in the name of love and family. And so, the two agreed to make peace. After King

Denis died, Afonso became king and Elizabeth retired to a monastery of Poor Clare nuns. After many years, she was called to be a peacemaker once more. **4** This time, her son had marched his troops to fight his son-in-law, Alfonso XI of Castile, who had been treating Afonso's daughter poorly. But Elizabeth knew that even though what Alfonso had done was wrong, war must be stopped. She journeyed toward the battle and once again arranged peace. But now Elizabeth was very old. The exhausting journey brought about her final illness. She died with the title of "peacemaker" and beloved **5** by her country. St. Elizabeth of Portugal, help me to be a peacemaker for Jesus!

Saint 3: St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

Edith was a Jewish girl in Germany, but she had left behind her Jewish faith because she did not know if God was real. Edith longed to learn what the truth was, and so she studied philosophy under the best masters in the university. She was a prized pupil and became a philosopher herself, writing many important works. One day, she was inside a Catholic cathedral and saw a woman slip inside from the busy marketplace and kneel in silent prayer. Edith could not take her eyes away from the woman. She had never seen someone pray to God and speak to Him so closely, as if she and God were friends. This moment touched Edith's soul and made her wonder if maybe her desire for truth was really a desire for God. Later, she was staying the night with some friends and was looking for something to read before going to sleep. She picked at random St. Teresa de Ávila's

book about the story of her life. The book was so fascinating that Edith stayed up all night reading. When she had finished, she said, "This is the truth!" She realized that her **1**



Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

Notes

longing for truth had been a prayer to God all along. Edith became a Catholic and at the same time felt that she was Jewish again. She knew that Jesus was also a Jew, and that He was the promise of the Jewish religion. By becoming Catholic, she received the fullness of the faith that belonged to her blood. She

- 3 wanted to become a Carmelite nun, but her spiritual advisers told her to remain at the university and teach. Edith agreed and through her teaching led others to God. But she did not remain a teacher for long. Adolf Hitler and the Nazis were rising to power in Germany, and they wanted to hunt down and kill all the Jews. Edith was no longer allowed to teach at the university because of her Jewish blood. So she entered the Carmelite order and took the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.
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She knew the suffering of the Cross was her destiny and the destiny of the Jewish people.

Soon, the Carmelite sisters snuck Edith out of Germany to a convent in the Netherlands because her life was in danger. Edith knew that her death was approaching, and she wrote down that she would willingly die if that was God's plan, offering her life for the salvation of Germany and the peace of the world.

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The Nazis took over the Netherlands and hunted down the Jews and the Jewish Catholics. Edith was arrested and taken to the fearful concentration camp, Auschwitz, where she died offering her life up to God as she had said she would. St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, help me offer up the crosses in my life to God!

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F. After reading, connect the season to the season of **Ordinary Time** and growing closer to Jesus. Ask the students to think about what kind of quest or adventure He might be calling them to – how they might respond to the call to holiness in their lives. They might have dreams about what they want to be when they grow up. You might share your own vocation story with them. Encourage them to ask God to show them which adventure He wants for them.



A. If possible, invite the parents to pick up their children in your classroom. Before you close the session, begin a discussion with your students. Ask for a volunteer student to retell the story of the rich young man. Ask a student to explain what a vocation is. Ask several volunteers to retell the vocation story of a saint you learned about today, and what parts are common to every story.

B. Explain to your students the take-home activity on **Bring It Home: St. Martin de Porres**. They will review with their parents what it means to have a vocation and explore the story of St. Martin de Porres, finding the events in his story. Invite the parents to share their own vocation story with their children at home.

Activity Continues

Session 4

C. Students can color and decorate **Think About These Things: Matthew 19:26**.

D. Close with a Glory Be, or offer a prayer for the students and their families. You could ask for any special intentions they might have this week, and pray for them out loud, asking them to respond with a simple "Lord, hear our prayer."



Prepare for the Next Session

- Review the next session for needed materials.



Bring It Home

St. Martin de Porres

1579–1639 - Peru
Feast Day: November 3



26

Walking with Jesus, Grade 4

GRADE 4, SESSION 4

A vocation is a call to holiness that God gives to everyone, a specific way to live out their life loving God with their whole heart, mind, soul, and strength that fits with their talents, desires, and personality. A vocation is like a specific adventure God has planned just for you. We know that He has these adventures planned for people by looking at the lives of the saints. Every saint responded to God's call to holiness in their lives.

Read the story together and find the events in St. Martin de Porres's life using the usual events in every vocation or adventure. Then color the picture.

Martin was the son of Juan de Porres, a Spanish nobleman, and Ana Velasquez, a freed black slave from Panama. When Martin was two, after the birth of his little sister, Juana, their father abandoned them. The family grew up in poverty, with Martin and Juana's mother working as a laundress. As Martin grew older, people mocked him for being of mixed race. But even at the young age of eight, Martin remembered the priest at Mass saying, "We were all made in God's image and likeness." He would tell Juana that God was concerned about people's souls, not the color of their skin. He became an apprentice to a barber-surgeon (someone who practiced medicine as well as cut hair) and learned to care for the sick. One day, when Martin was alone in the barber-surgeon's office, a man was carried in with a deep cut in his head. The people who carried him in wanted the barber-surgeon, not a twelve-year-old boy. But to everyone's amazement, Martin bandaged the wound, and the man was able to walk home.

Martin spent many hours at night praying before a crucifix that hung above his bed. He knew he wanted to give his whole life to God. So when Martin was fifteen, he went to live with the Dominicans in Lima at the convent of

Santo Domingo. One night, he was praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament when the step he was kneeling on caught fire. Despite all of the chaos the fire caused, Martin did not even notice and continued kneeling in prayer.

The Dominicans gave Martin the duties of caring for the sick and the clothes room. When Martin was 24, the Dominicans made him a religious brother, and he took charge of the infirmary. Later on, he founded a residence for orphans and abandoned children.

When an epidemic struck Lima, the young novices (those who had just entered the order) were locked in a separate part of the convent to prevent the spreading of disease. Martin miraculously passed through the locked doors to take care of the sick. Martin performed many other miracles: he could heal others instantly, and he could be in two places at once. Light would fill the room when he prayed, and his ecstasies would lift him into the air. When Martin turned sixty, he fell ill and endured terrible pain. He suffered for almost a year and then died a holy death. He was so famous for his miracles that crowds flocked to his body and took pieces of his habit for relics. St. Martin de Porres, help me to remember that everyone is made in God's image and likeness!

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27

All things are possible for God.

MATTHEW 19:26

