A MOMENT OF REFLECTION

The following lesson is meant to shed light on the beautiful gift of ShareLife. For the Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Toronto, ShareLife provides an authentic, transparent and reliable structure for charitable giving. ShareLife supports numerous outreach groups and is dedicated to the poor and marginalized people in our communities. Your sharing of this gift, by means of educating and igniting students, is fulfilling your baptismal call to spread the Good News and know that you are an integral part of body of Christ. Blessings to you as you embark on this journey.

Official Website: http://www.sharelife.org

A TEACHER’S PRAYER:

Lord Jesus,
You place before me students who are eager to do your will.
Fill my words and actions so that they might come to share in the life of the community by caring for those who need support and assistance. May we collectively focus our attention on the dignity of the human person at all stages of life and may we work tirelessly to serve you in love.

AMEN

ABOUT SHARELIFE

MISSION: To live the Gospel by providing for those in need.
VISION: The Catholic community and its partners responding generously with justice and love.
PRINCIPLES:

• Reverence for life at all stages
• Commitment to Catholic Social Teaching
• Collaboration with stakeholders
• Responsible and accountable for resources
LESSON NAME
Community Helpers, God’s Helpers

FOCUS QUESTION
How do Deacons serve as Responsible Citizens in our Catholic Communities?

Classroom Planner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Goal:</strong> We are exploring how Deacon Michael acted as a</td>
<td><strong>Learning Goal:</strong> We are learning what a Deacon is and recognizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responsible citizen by showing Mike that he was forgiven and</td>
<td>them as Responsible Citizens who have a vocation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>welcome as a member of God’s family</td>
<td>We are exploring our own vocation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We are connecting Deacon Michael’s actions to the transformation</td>
<td><strong>Materials:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>which took place in Mike’s life.</td>
<td>- Bible(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Materials:</strong></td>
<td>- Computer access for students (optional)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Small Sticky notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Pencils</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Chart Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Markers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Interactive White Board or Black Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Paper and art supplies (optional)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Learning Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Education Expectations</th>
<th>Assessment for Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific Expectations</td>
<td>Evidence of Learning/“I Can” Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ML3:</strong></td>
<td>Students will/I can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Grade 7 Big Idea:</em> We are called to become both free and</td>
<td>- Explain how Deacon Michael shows love and demonstrates</td>
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<tr>
<td>responsible in the Christian</td>
<td>forgiveness to others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>moral life, to become more</td>
<td>- Connect his actions to the transformation that took place in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>virtuous through our moral</td>
<td>- Relate this to the story of Jesus forgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>choices.</td>
<td>- Mike’s life.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Grade 8 Big Idea:</em> By living</td>
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<tr>
<td>a Christian moral life, we</td>
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<tr>
<td>give witness within the Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>and society to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC1:</td>
<td>Students will/I can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 7 Big Idea:</strong> God has chosen the Church to be an instrument to build up the reign of God on earth.</td>
<td>• Show how ShareLife helped Deacon Michael to live a life of service to others in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 8 Big Idea:</strong> Each person is called to a role of service in the life of the Church community as witnesses to Christ in the world (laity, consecrated religious life, and ordained ministry).</td>
<td>• Connect the way that Deacon Michael welcomed the members of Dismas to the change that took place in Mike and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explain how we are all called to build up God’s kingdom here on earth.</td>
<td>• Explain how we are all called to build up God’s kingdom here on earth.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>LS1:</th>
<th>Students will/I can:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 7 Big Idea:</strong> Life as vocation means being other-centered, faithful, service-oriented, life-giving, respectful, open to God’s will.</td>
<td>• Demonstrate how Deacon Michael, supported by ShareLife, is a responsible citizen who lives his life in service to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 8 Big Idea:</strong> Each of us is called by God (vocation) to make a difference in our world through our Catholic Christian witness for the betterment of society and the created world.</td>
<td>• Explain how Deacon Michael has a vocation which calls him to welcome and serve others as children of God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## INFORMING YOUR FAITH AND PREPARING TO SHARE YOUR FAITH

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

"Deacons play a vital role in evangelizing both to the gathered and the scattered in our community. Their ministry is of great importance to our archdiocese answering the call of Jesus to love and serve."

The sacrament of Holy Orders has three levels: deacon (servant), priest (elder), and bishop (overseer). In the early days of the Church all three levels were active in the service of the Christian community, but after several centuries the order of deacon largely disappeared, except as a stage on the way to the priesthood, especially in Western Christianity. The Second Vatican Council decided that the order of deacon should be revived as a permanent order in the life of the Church. Since then thousands of deacons have been ordained, and most dioceses in Canada and the United States benefit from their service.

Deacons are meant to work together with lay people, religious, and priests, and to support them in their mission. If we want to get a sense of the mission of the deacon, we should start with the Acts of the Apostles, where we read of the choice of seven men to help in the practical works of service in the community so that the apostles would be freed to devote themselves to prayer and the service of the word (Acts 6:1-6). The apostles ordained these men (Acts 6:6), and two of them are highlighted in the Acts of the Apostles: Stephen became the first martyr (Acts 6:8-8:1), and Philip did effective work in evangelizing (Acts 8:5-8; 8:26-40). In these passages we get early indications of two vital elements that have always been part of the deacon's vocation: it involves a proclamation of the Gospel, but is especially connected to works of practical service to the community.
"It is a deacon's task, as authorized by the competent authority, to administer Baptism solemnly, to reserve and distribute the Eucharist, to assist at and to bless marriages in the name of the Church, to take Viaticum to the dying, to read the Sacred Scripture to the faithful, to instruct and exhort the people, to preside over worship and the Prayer of the Faithful, to administer sacramentals, and to officiate at funeral and burial services. Dedicated to works of charity and functions of administration, deacons should recall the admonition of St. Polycarp: 'Let them be merciful, and zealous, and let them walk according to the truth of the Lord, who became the servant of all'" (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, 29).

Cardinal Thomas Collins
Archbishop of Toronto


ONTARIO CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE EXPECTATIONS

A Responsible Citizen Who:

- c. Seeks and grants forgiveness.
- d. Promotes the sacredness of life.
- e. Witnesses Catholic social teaching by promoting equality, democracy, and solidarity for a just, peaceful and compassionate society.

Scriptural References

Matthew 25: 31-40  I was a stranger and you welcomed me.
Luke 23:32-43   “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”
Colossians 3:12-17  Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.
Catholic Social Teaching

**Life and Dignity of the Human Person:** Deacon Michael has made a conscious effort to work with people who are on the outskirts of the community. Deacon Michael sees the dignity in the prisoners he works with and continues to invite them into a relationship with Jesus.

**Call to Family, Community and Participation:** Deacon Michael has created a safe, warm, welcoming place for the community to share and break bread. Together they form part of God’s family and through the efforts of ShareLife more people can become deacons and create safe, caring and loving communities.

Cross-Curricular Connection

**Language**

- **Oral Communication**
  1.6 Extending Understanding

- **Writing**
  1.2 Developing Ideas

- **Media Literacy**
  1.3 Responding to and Evaluating Texts
GET STARTED: Day 1

LEARNING GOAL

We are learning how Deacon Michael was able to help Mike transform his life through his offer of acceptance and forgiveness. We are connecting that transformation to the essential human dignity that each of us has as children of God.

BEFORE (10 minutes)

Values Line

Before starting, draw the following Values line on the Board or on Chart Paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pose the following scenario:

The house next to you is for sale. Yesterday, a family of 4 came to look at the property. They seemed really nice: There was a mom, dad and 2 children that looked to be about your age. They even had a really cute puppy. Things looked promising, you were hoping that the students would go to your school and you would become best of friends. The adults came over to say hello to your parents and they seemed like great people, a happy family.

However, last night you received a phone call from Betty, another neighbour and a member of your local parish. She told your parents that the man had spent a couple of years in jail. She wasn’t quite sure what it was for but it had something to do with selling drugs or stealing money. Betty wants to start a petition to try to stop this family from moving into the neighbourhood. She is concerned about the safety of the families on your street and believes that the property values in your neighbourhood will go down once people learn that an ex-convict is living in the area. Your parents said they would have to think about it and let Betty know their decision tomorrow.

What do you think? Should your parents sign the petition to let this family know that they are not wanted in your neighbourhood?

Ask each student to write a number from 1-10, on a small sticky note to reflect how they are thinking. Ask them not to sign their name. The number 1 means that they really believe that their parents should sign the petition. The number 10 means that they definitely do not want them to sign the petition. Number 5 means that you are neutral, completely uncertain.
The sticky notes will be collected after about a minute. Mix them up and have a couple of students place the sticky on the appropriate spot on the values line. Multiples of any numbers are placed, one below the other, in the correct position, forming a vertical bar graph. This will allow everyone to see where the class stands on the issue.

If time allows, you can ask students to discuss the results and their opinions.

**DURING (20 minutes)**

Before watching the video tell the class that you are going to watch a video which might impact how they feel about signing the petition. Say something like; “In this video you are going to hear the story of 2 men named Michael. The first Michael is a Permanent Deacon, which means that he has a vocation to support his parish community. While he is not a priest, he has been called to a life of service to the Church and his community. Deacon Michael is married and has a family. He does not get paid so he also has a job. Some deacons are retired.

The other Mike is someone who made some bad choices and, for a time, turned away from the Church. He spent some time in prison because of those choices.

Ask your class to look for evidence as to how Deacon Michael, was able to help Mike turn his life around. Look for ways that Deacon Michael might help alleviate Betty’s concerns.

When the video is over, have students “popcorn out” the evidence they collected. Record their responses on chart paper or on an interactive white board.

**AFTER (15 minutes)**

Ask students if what they saw in the video has changed or reinforced their ideas with regard to the petition. Why or Why not?

Ask them to consider what God would be calling them to do in this situation.

Have students discuss in small groups and then report back to the larger group.

Discuss with students how their participation in ShareLife has allowed people like Deacon Michael to work with others in the community who need our support and guidance.
EXTENSION

Have students read one of the three Bible passages listed above. Ask them to identify a lesson from the scripture story which they might use to help Betty understand our call to love, forgive and welcome others.

Students must reference something from the scripture story in their response to Betty. Their response can take one of the following forms.

- A persuasive letter
- A speech to be given at a community meeting
- An iMovie
GET STARTED: Day 2

LEARNING GOAL

We are exploring how Deacon Michael’s vocation calls him to act as a responsible citizen in service to his community. We are asked to identify the gifts which the Holy Spirit has given us so that we can live out our vocation.

BEFORE (5 minutes)

Ask students if they have ever helped someone to become a Deacon? Let them know that any fundraising activities your school has done on behalf of ShareLife, goes in part to St Augustine’s seminary. This is a school where men who wish to become priests or permanent deacons are educated in the Catholic faith. When we help ShareLife we are helping these individuals to live out their vocation.

Ask your students to think about the video and how Deacon Michael was able to help Mike to become a better person. Ask them to think about the gifts that both Deacon Michael and Mike have received from God which helped them to accomplish this amazing transformation.

DURING (15 minutes)

Which of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit did Deacon Michael use in living out his vocation?

Have the students brainstorm a list and an example of each. If they need a review of the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit, you can show the following: [http://bit.ly/holyspiritvideo](http://bit.ly/holyspiritvideo)

If time permits, you can also look at Mike and the gifts that he used to turn his life around.

AFTER (20 minutes)

Ask students how they are currently living out their vocation? What gifts of the Holy Spirit are helpful to you in answering God’s call? How does ShareLife help us to use our gifts?

Students can answer these questions in one of the following ways:

- Picture collage
- One page reflection
- Prayer
- Poem
### DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Students can use *Inspiration 9* or other app such as Mindomo to create a mind map of their ideas.

Students can use assistive technology: voice to text, word-predicting software.