
SR. HIGH PROJECTS

The following pages suggest several projects which you can do independently, with the *Scripture Reflection Methods* (separate Center for Youth Ministry download) or as part of any youth curriculum. These are not designed to tell you exactly what to do, but rather just to give you ideas. Read them over, talk about which ones you'd like to do, and then figure out, from all of the suggestions, how you'd like to do it. Then create your lesson or action plan and do it!

Remember, these are just suggestions. They might spark you creativity to do something entirely different and that's OK too!

PROJECT #1

WHAT DO I WANT TO DO WHEN I GROW UP?

Possible Goals: (pick one or two or write your own)

- To learn the difference between an occupation and a vocation
- To explore how people see their work as ministry
- To explore what God might be calling me to do

Guiding Scriptures

I Samuel 3:1-19

Isaiah 6:1-13

Acts 22:2-22

I Timothy 4:11-16

Possible things you could do –

To learn the difference between an occupation and a vocation:

- Look up the words: job, occupation, career, and vocation in the dictionary
- Ask various adults to tell you what they think is the difference, and to tell you about how they chose their career and how their choice related to their Christian faith.
- Get *Callings*, a half-hour video with a discussion guide that explores the ministries of five lay professionals in the Episcopal Church (available from Episcopal Parish Services: (800) 903-5544; \$29.95).
- Ask clergy or someone from a religious order to talk about their vocation. Write to seminaries and to your diocesan bishop and ask for materials about being ordained in the Episcopal Church. Talk about the similarities and differences between being ordained, being a lay person with a secular job, and being a lay professional in the church.

To explore how people see their work as ministry:

- Divide into teams, develop a set of questions and an observation sheet, identify people willing to talk about the ministry of their daily lives, interview them using the questions, then tell each other what you learned—put together a “Ministry is Daily Life” booklet for the congregation.
- Visit people at their places of work in teams of two, observe them and talk with them, then report back on what you learned.
- Get a copy of *Ministry in Daily Life* download from www.episcopalchurch.org and do some of the projects suggested in it (there are lots of ideas in it; plus an extensive list of resources in the back that will help you find programs, books, and videos on ministry in daily life and on discovering your vocation).

To explore what God might be calling me to do:

- Get the Decision Series on Vocation from (Augsburg Fortress Publishers; 800-328-4648). It has six sessions including Bible study, role playing, and case studies.
- Get the minicourse entitled *Our Vocation: Reflecting God in LifePac* from the *Celebrate* curriculum (Presbyterian Publishing House (800-524-2612)). Six sessions help you consider how your vocation reflects God in your life and career.
- *This Call's for You: A Christian Vocation Workbook for Congregations* by Judy Atwell, (Presbyterian Publishing House; 800-524-2612). There are materials for all ages, including four one-hour sessions for senior high called "Heart, Mind and Soul", and four one-hour sessions for 18-25 year olds called "The Meaning of Life, A Life with Meaning." Your group could use the materials for the children (aged 6-8 or 9-11) or those for the Rite 13 youth (aged 12-14) and lead classes with those age groups as a way of exploring the topic.
- Get *What Will I Do With My Life? A Sourcebook on Faith and the Work of Life* from (Augsburg Fortress Publishers; 800-328-4648). It is designed to help high school and college youth contemplate their choice of career or life work and how their Christian faith can be a resource for making career decisions.
- *What Color is Your Parachute?* has lots of exercises to help people figure out what kind of work they want to do. It is for adults, but would be useful to older youth as well. You could do the exercises, write resumes, develop job search strategies, and even do job interviews with each other as a way to get ready for summer jobs or jobs you might have during college or right after high school.
- *Get Day by Day*, a video that records the story of five actors who thought they were auditioning for a film but got more than they bargained for when they were asked to improvise scenes of ministry. In the process they explore the meaning of ministry in daily life: reaching out to a friend with a drinking problem, an employee not working up to capacity, a rebellious teenager, etc. It's thirty minutes and comes with a study guide. Available from Episcopal Media Center – www.episcopalmedia.org.

PROJECT #2

Love and Marriage

Possible Goals: (pick one or two or write your own)

- To explore the concept of Christian marriage
- To explore the differences between marriage, living together, and just being friends
- To make some decisions about whether we might want to marry someday and, if so, how we might choose a partner

Guiding Scriptures

Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)

Genesis 1:26–28

Genesis 2:4–9, 15–24

Deuteronomy 10:12–14, 17–21

Deuteronomy 11:8–21

Deuteronomy 28:1–12a

I Chronicles 16: 8-12; 23–34

Proverbs 3: 1–6

Song of Solomon 2:10–13;8:6–7

Isaiah 61:8–11

Tobit 8:5b–8 (New English Bible Apocrypha)

Psalms

Psalms 67

Psalms 96

Psalms 101

Psalms 104

Psalms 127

Psalms 128

Psalms 148

New Testament

Matthew 5:1–10

Matthew 5:13–16

Matthew 7:21,24–29

Matthew 25:31–40

Mark 10:6-9, 13–16

Luke 1:46–55

Luke 6:27–38

Luke 11:9–13
John 13:34–35; 14:15–17,25–27a
John 15:9–12
Romans 12:9–18
I Corinthians 13:1–13
Ephesians 3:14–19
Ephesians 4:25–5:2
Ephesians 5:1-2; 21–33
Philippians 4:4–9
Colossians 3:12–17
Hebrews 13:1-6, 16, 20–21

List from *Mentoring the Marriage Journey*, LeaderResources

Possible things you could do:

- Prepare questions and then interview people who are just married, who have been married for many years, people living together but not married, and people who are “just friends.” Talk about what you learned.
- Interview your parents and grandparents about how they met, why they decided to get married, why being married is important to them. Those whose parents have divorced can also be asked why they divorced and what that experience was like for them. Likewise ask about re-marriage. You might want to interview each other’s parents, if you don’t want to ask your own parents these questions. Again, talk about what you learned. Why did people get married, stay married, or get divorced?
- Research the success of marriage vs. living together, the impact of marriage on happiness and health, what makes marriages work, etc. Go to your local library, surf the net, or visit your local bookstore to gather data. Discuss what you learned.
- Invite your clergy to visit your group and describe what he/she does to prepare couples for marriage.
- Read a couple of chapters of *The Marriage Journey* by Linda L. Grenz & Delbert Glover (available from LeaderResources, 800-941-2218 or from Church Publishing) and discuss the questions at the end—the first chapter on the Sacrament of Marriage and the ninth chapter, “Yes, No, Maybe, Why Bother?” would be good ones to start with. Then pick any other topics that interest you—“Fighting Fair,” “Living Together,” “Extended Families,” and “Being With Others” might be interesting.
- Read *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* (Gray) and *You Just Don’t Understand* (Deborah Tanner), and then discuss how the differences between men and women might impact their approach to marriage.
- Attend a wedding service at your church and discuss what you saw, heard, and felt. Ask a rabbi if you can attend a Jewish marriage service and if he/she will

explain their marriage preparation process. Ask a Roman Catholic priest how they prepare people for marriage. Do some research about what other faith groups say about marriage—Muslim, Buddhist, etc.

- Talk about what the crucial elements are in marriage. Talk about how people live out some of those elements in other relationships—a celibate member of a religious order, a gay/lesbian partnership, a communal living family group, etc. Talk about the differences—what do people gain or give up in various relationships. Look at the personal, legal, religious, and societal differences.

PROJECT #3

Law and Justice

Possible Goals: (pick one or two or write your own)

- To learn the difference between how the legal system treats adolescents and adults
- To learn the basics of the criminal justice system
- To make personal decisions about my response to laws or to situations with legal implications.

Guiding Scriptures

Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)

Exodus 23:1-13a
Micah 6:8
Proverbs 21:15
Isaiah 30:18; 56:1
Amos 5;21-24

New Testament

Matthew 7:12
Matthew 12:1-8
Matthew 22:34-40
Matthew 23:23-24
Luke 10:25-36
Luke 18:1-8a

Possible things you could do:

- Ask someone from your police force, the court system, and a lawyer to talk with you about how adults are treated vs. adolescents.
- Visit family court for an afternoon and adult court for an afternoon. Discuss what you saw, heard, felt, and learned.
- Research legal issues: define what constitutes breaking the law in each case and what the consequences are for breaking the law. For example, driving under the influence, possession of drugs, writing a bad check, failing to pay a debt, jay walking, traffic violations, sexual harassment, rape, theft, arson, murder, conspiracy.
- Research the role of the Grand Jury. What can a Grand Jury do? Who can they talk to? Who must answer what kinds of questions?
- Set up case studies—situations that involve youth and adults engaging in legally-questionable behavior—and either discuss the case or take roles (police, lawyers, judge, etc.) and act out an arrest and trial scenario.
- What is justice? Identify situations where you feel justice is not being

done and ask a couple of lawyers and/or a judge, a clergy person, and others in the community to discuss it with you. You could set it up as a debate or as a research problem (looking for root causes, answers), or as a problem solving session.

- Visit a jail or prison. Ask the warden to set up a time for you to talk with some of the prisoners and guards. Talk with them about how they got there, what life is like in prison, what they would like to do differently if they could live their life over again. [Note: make sure you have someone knowledgeable to help you set this up so it is a controlled and beneficial experience)
- Identify several situations you think you will encounter in the next year or two that will require you to make a decision that may have legal consequences. For example: drinking and driving, taking drugs, selling drugs, stealing, cheating on tests or taxes, covering up or ignoring illegal things going on at work or school, etc.
- Is the law fair? Would the law (written code) or the legal system (people who interpret and implement the code) treat the following cases differently: someone who robs a man who was dealing drugs, or robs an elderly woman taking cash to pay her rent, or robs a prostitute turning tricks, or robs a businessman. Take sides and debate the question. Then talk about what you learned.
- Set up a mock trial with group members playing all of the roles using behaviors that violate the group norms or that cause a member to lodge a "citizen's complaint". If you like, you can ask all the parents of the group to refer any behavior they might "punish" to the court and use real cases (do several so no one person gets singled out) or you can make up a case. If you use real cases, covenant with each other for a period of about six months (so you get enough stuff to work with) and covenant with the parents that the ruling and sentence of the court will be the maximum imposed (no fair imposing a second punishment or over-ruling the court). This means that the parents will, most likely, be witnesses in the case. Get a couple of lawyers to help you and make sure you learn the rules and set up a fair court system.

PROJECT #4

Responsibility

Possible Goals: (pick one or two or write your own)

- To understand what responsibility means.
- To differentiate between responsibility to self, to others, to your community, and to God.

Guiding Scriptures

Genesis 39:21-23

Numbers 3:23,31,36

Judges 19:16-21

John 10:1-18

Possible things you could do:

- Set up a meeting with members of the congregation's governing board, and ask about their actual responsibilities in the church, and what their feelings about their responsibilities are.
- Discuss the difference between creating a garden and tending it through the summer, committing to caring for a pet, and having a baby. Talk to pet owners, parents, and childless couples in your congregation to find out more about the varying levels of responsibility.
- List a number of different situations in which you'd have to make a choice between responsibility to yourself, and responsibility to someone else. Role-play the situations. Examples:
 - A married couple has agreed to care for the husband's mother who is in her eighties, but over the years the care has become an emotional and financial burden for them. Where do they draw the line? Or do they commit to caring for her no matter what the cost? What factors would go into a decision like this? What role do children or young people in the family have in making this decision?
 - You become pregnant or impregnate your girlfriend. Do you quit school to take care of the baby or get a job? If you are the male, are you responsible for the mother and child? If you are the female, are you legally and/or morally responsible for the father and child—even if you decide you did not want the baby but he did so you gave birth and gave him custody. Should you quit school and get a job to pay child support?
 - Your household income drops because of a parent's illness or loss of a job. Do you stay in school, or quit and get a job to help support the family? Do you go to school and get a job? Do you

change your spending habits? Do you have any financial responsibility in this situation at all?

- Ask your clergy to speak with you about his or her responsibility to the congregation. Does the responsibility change over time? Does it increase or decrease?
- Discuss with your group individual perspectives on responsibility: to whom are you responsible first? To God? To others? To yourself? To your community? Why do different people have different responses? Try to see through the eyes of another—why does he or she feel that way?
- Ask if you may visit people in their workplaces to talk about their responsibilities—e.g. a doctor/nurse responsible for people's health and lives, a lawyer responsible for defending someone or acting on behalf of the state, a teacher responsible for shaping the lives of children, etc.
- Look up the word responsible/responsibility. Talk about it in the sense of response-ability, i.e., one's ability to respond. Divide into teams and write situations that show young people facing questions about their responsibility. Trade situations and respond to the questions. Discuss what you learned.
- Talk about your responsibilities to yourself, your family, your school, your friends, your church and God. Make a list of what you need to fulfill or better fulfill those responsibilities. Talk about how you can get what you need.

PROJECT #5

Fighting Fair, Disagreeing, Giving Feedback

Possible Goals: (pick one or two or write your own)

- To learn at least three ways of disagreeing without alienating or offending people
- To practice fighting fair
- To learn and practice giving feedback

Guiding Scriptures

Genesis 4:1-16

Numbers 11:1-30

2 Samuel 12:1-14

Mark 11:15-19

Acts 15:1-40

James 1:19-27

Ephesians 4:25-32

Possible things you could do:

- Develop a list of "Fighting Fair Rules" and live by them for a week or two. Discuss what happened. Adjust the list according to what you learned or thought of in the meantime.
- Take the list home and ask your family to live by it for a week. Discuss it at the end of the week and report on it to your group.
- You can even give a presentation to the congregation and invite them to make a commitment to live by it for a week or two and then talk about how it went. Give a presentation to the children of the congregation as part of this.
- Go to your library, on-line, or ask professionals in the communications consulting or counseling careers (including your clergy) for books on conflict. Find some that have games and activities in them, do them, then discuss what you learned.
- Talk about the differences between voting, going with the leader/leading group, or working to achieve consensus. Try the different methods and talk about what each felt like, how effective it was, what you experienced as positives or negatives, etc..
- Give feedback to each other, first saying what behaviors you value, like, appreciate about the person and then what you experienced as hurtful, embarrassing, or discomfoting. Only discuss behaviors or what the person said—not things the person can't do anything about. Giving

feedback is not demanding that the person change—it is giving the person information about the impact of his/her behavior or statements which gives that person an opportunity to choose to change or not change, depending on whether he/she wants to create that impact or the consequences of it. Use "I language" ("I feel.....").

- Try the formula: "When you did/said (specific behavior/statement), I felt (emotion) and I wanted to (consequence)." After you've done the formula a few times, say it in more normal conversation, keeping the three elements (behavior/statement, emotion, consequence).
- Role play disagreeing with an authority figure—your parents/grandparents, teacher, school principal, police officer, city or organization official. Discuss what you learned. Invite some of these people to meet with you, tell them what you learned, invite them to share what they experienced—when they did or did not respond positively to young people disagreeing. Analyze together what made the difference.

PROJECT #6

Add it up!

Possible Goals: (pick one or two or write your own)

- To increase our awareness of financial realities
- To gain economic competencies
- To improve our stewardship

Guiding Scriptures

Luke 14:28-30
1 Corinthians 16:2
1 Timothy 6:7
Matthew 6:31-32
Philippians 4:19
Heb 13:5
Acts 2:44-45
Ecc 5:10-15

Possible things you could do:

- Go to an electronics store and have each person select one item you'd really love to own – go for that huge TV or the latest phone. Record the price and then find out what it would cost if you put it on a credit card and only paid the minimum. Calculate the total amount you would pay. Remember that when you are borrowing money and paying interest on that money you are also losing interest on the money you could have saved if you weren't paying the credit card interest...or you could have used that money to make money. What does buying on credit really cost you? Add it up!
- Keep a record of everything you buy or "get" from your parents in a month. Figure out what you spend on sodas, phone/internet, electronics, clothes, food outside of your home, etc. Look at your list of what you spend and mark each item as "want" and "need." What are the things you really, really "need." i.e., things that are essential for life or for you to do your job (which is, most likely, going to school). Look at your "wants" – what are they costing you? Add it up!
- How much of your spending could you give up? What would it take to empower you to give up some of your discretionary spending? What might you do with the money you spend on your wants? What do you think you could do with the money you saved by not spending it on non-essential things? Add it up!
- Pair up and become "parents" – assume you will give birth to a baby.

Figure out what it will cost you for the first year of that baby's life. What will be the hospital bill? Will insurance cover it (check your families policy to find out – and to find out how much it will cover – and remember to add in the cost of the insurance). How much does it cost to get the clothes, crib, stroller, clothes, etc. How many times will your baby outgrow the clothes and need new ones? How many diapers will you need each month? How much will the food cost? Medical checkups for the baby? Where will you live? Will one of your families take you in? Assume not – so how much will it cost to rent a place to stay? What will that housing look like? What will the utilities cost? How much will transportation cost? What will your food and household needs cost? Add it up!

- Assume you need to live on your own....how much will it cost for food, shelter, transportation, etc. What job could you get to support yourself? How much will it pay? How much will go to health insurance, taxes, etc.? Add it up!
- What will getting additional education add to your lifetime earnings? What financial difference will it make? Research how education impacts your income and look at that over a lifetime? What's the total amount? Add it up!
- How much money will you have if you put money into a savings vehicle like an IRA? Assume that you will put the current maximum allowed into your IRA every year of your working life? How rich will you be at the end? Add it up!
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