Fertile Question: **How can I create my preferred future?**

Core Content Area 1: Imagine!

**TOPIC 1.1: My vocational self**

Extending Knowledge: The art of discernment

In this lesson students will investigate what it means to engage in a process of discernment.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Read the Teacher Background about Vocations.
2. Consider inviting a member of a religious order to speak about religious life.

**For students select from the following activities:**

1. Explore what it means to discern a vocation.
   a. Consider the concept of being called to a particular vocation. Christians believe that God calls them into being. They believe that they don’t walk life’s journey alone. Their belief in God, their prayer life and reflective practices assist and guide them to make important life decisions.
      i. Listen to the Matt Maher song “Alive Again” whilst reading the lyrics (in Useful Resources) to gain understanding about the singer’s response to being called.
      ii. Explore the spiritual gift of discernment. The word discernment has a Greek origin and means to cut away. To discern means to make an **intentional** life stance towards something for a given period of time. In the next ten years, statistically you will have the opportunity to discern your chosen employment, your chosen life partner and whether or not to become a parent. For some, the process of discernment may result in entering religious life.
        A process of discernment usually begins with a feeling in your heart that some call yearning. The next step is usually to seek out someone who will be a mentor or guide for you as you discern your response. If you feel a calling to religious life, you will need a mentor who can help you to discern whether or not this is the right path for you. It involves deep listening and deep talking so that through intentional dialogue you can arrive at the awareness or ‘ah ha’ moment. When you land on the answer that is right for you, you will know it and you will have feelings of joy, passion and peace.
      iii. Take a moment to intentionally direct your thoughts to what you are supposed to do with your life. Intentionally directing your thinking allows you to become aware of the signposts along the way that will point you in the right direction. Create a journal entry imagining where you’d like to be in the future, noting where you intentionally chose a particular life path.
   b. Consider inviting a member of a religious order to interview about religious life.
      i. Construct questions to ask a member of a religious order to increase knowledge about religious life.
2. Research various types of religious vocations - Catholic priesthood, monastic life, consecrated religious life and lay religious life.
   a. Form learning teams of four and choose one of the types of religious vocations to investigate. Record findings in a retrieval chart using the following headings: how to enter the religious order, who can join, how much study and time is required, main activities/duties.
   
   Some useful websites are given here:
   **Catholic Priesthood**
   **Buddhist Monasticism**
   **Good Samaritan Oblates**
   **Ordained Ministers in the Anglican Church**
   **Benedictine Monasticism**
   **Good Samaritan Sisters**
   **Sisters of Mercy**
   **Marist Brothers**
   
   Present findings to the class.
Lyrics to Matt Maher’s “Alive Again”

I woke up in darkness
surrounded by silence
oh where, where have I gone?
I woke to reality
losing its grip on me
oh where, where have I gone?

Cause I can see the light,
before I see the sunrise

You called and you shouted
broke through my deafness
now I’m breathing in
and breathing out
I’m alive again!

You shattered my darkness
washed away my blindness
now I’m breathing in
and breathing out
I’m alive again!

You called and you shouted
broke through my deafness
now I’m breathing in
and breathing out
I’m alive again!

You called and you shouted
broke through my deafness
now I’m breathing in
and breathing out
I’m alive again!

Late have I loved you,
you waited for me,
I searched for you…
what took me so long?

I was looking outside
as if love would ever want to hide
I’m finding I was wrong

Cause I can feel the wind
before it hits my skin