



Vocations Sunday

**Spice of Life - An introduction
for all ages
(often called 'the children's talk')**

*Prepared by Nick White, CYDO for
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Preparation:

- Find a spice rack (or a picture of one which you could display.)
- If you decide to do the tasting activity, then prepare a few plates / dishes of labelled food with the spices/herbs/flavouring left out e.g. curry without the spice; mint sauce without the mint (i.e. just vinegar !); plain crisps in a bag labelled cheese and onion). Lay these out on a table with some spoons as appropriate. You might want to cover them until the appropriate point in the service.
- Print some A4 cards each with a different gift or ministry on them. You could select from the gifts and ministries listed in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Romans 12:4-8; and Ephesians 4:11-12, but you might want to add one or two others e.g. Elder and Church Secretary.
- You could set out a row of chairs for the human spice rack activity, so you have a row of people standing on the chairs and a row standing on the floor in front of them.
- If you have the equipment, download one of the URC Charter for Children video clips which were shown at General Assembly 2014 (will be available on the URC website). A number of them are relevant to our theme, but especially the clip for the following statement: 'The discovery and development of gifts in children and adults is a key function of the church.'

Script

Who enjoys eating ? *[do a straw poll]*

I wonder what is your favourite food and why? *[invite 3 or 4 brief responses]*

Many people around the world use herbs and spices to make their food extra tasty, whether it's the mint on a roast dinner; coriander, cumin and chilli in a curry; or even the secret recipe in the coating of Kentucky Fried Chicken!

[If you have planned to do the tasting activity, do it now. Point out the plates of food, invite a few volunteers to taste the samples of food and ask them what is wrong with it hopefully someone will point out things like the flavour is missing, it doesn't taste very nice, it's bland, disappointing flavour etc..]

Without the flavouring of things like herbs and spices, some food just tastes bland *[Show a spice rack]*. On their own each herb or spice may not taste very nice and can actually be a bit overpowering! But when they are used in food by someone who knows how to cook, they can combine to produce wonderful flavours.

What has this got to do with church? Well, we wouldn't want people to have a taste of the church and go away disappointed because it has no flavour. And neither does

God. In the church, God brings together different people, who are good at doing different things (we sometimes say they have different 'gifts'). It's a bit like each person has a different flavour to bring to the church.

Let's see if we can put together a spice rack made up of people !! *[Invite people to come out and pick one of the cards to hold up]* I wonder if there are other abilities or gifts which you have noticed in people within the church? *[Invite people to make suggestions]*

God calls each of us to use our different abilities to love and serve other people both in the church and outside the church. It's like God wants the church to have a really good flavour which makes them a blessing to other people.

God calls on some people to be those with a particular responsibility to lead and encourage everybody else to play their part in a way which brings out the best flavour. For example, the minister and the elders. But everyone else has a part to play too. *[Remember to ask the human spice rack to return to their seats]*

And it's not just adults who have gifts to share. As the URC Children's Charter says, 'Children are equal partners in the life of the church' and 'The discovery and development of gifts in children and adults is a key function of the church'. *[If you planned to show a video clip from the URC Charter for Children videos shown at General Assembly 2014, do it at this point.]*

[Show the spice rack again, making sure there is space for a few more jars.] On this spice rack, there is plenty of space for more jars. I wonder what gift you can share and what you can do which will add to the flavour of the church?