This particular lesson plan using the above text is geared for students in Grades Four to Six. The text is an excellent resource of Saint Damien’s early life in Belgium and his call to the priesthood. A vocabulary list has been developed to enhance the students’ understanding of the reading material. It is recommended that teachers review the vocabulary list with students prior to instruction which will provide teachable moments for students’ understanding of Saint Damien and our Catholic faith.

The themes presented in the text are threefold and are grouped by chapters.

**Mission**—Chapters 1-6

**Message**—Chapters 7-10

**Legacy**—Chapters 11 to Epilogue
Flanders is a land of bells, and Joseph de Veuster was to know and love their pealing all his life. Many bells would ring for him: monastery bells, paced into prayerful silence; ship’s bells, marking time across two oceans; tinny chapel bells, clanging madly in a tropical earthquake; the almost soundless tinkle of a tiny Communion bell in a darkened room; and, finally, Saint Rombaut’s again, flinging a mighty peal of triumph across the world, even to the bitter gray cliffs of an island once known as Godforsaken.” (Page 10).
The Mission

Chapter 1—A Fireside in Flanders

Vocabulary:
- Kermesse (12)
- swaggered (19)
- sermon (21)
- hermits (21)
- priests (25)
- missionary (25)

1) In this first Chapter, Joseph de Veuster [Saint Damien] is lost during the Kermesse. Why did his godfather Joseph Goovaerts feel responsible to go looking for the young de Veuster?

2) The Feast of Pentecost was always celebrated in Flemish villages by a Kermesse? What other ethnicity celebrates the Feast of Pentecost in a similar way in Hawaii?

Chapter 2: Decision of a Champion

Vocabulary:
- penance (30)
- Redemptorist Fathers (35)
- Ursuline Sisters (35)
- seminary (36)
- Trappist Priests (36)
- Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (37)
- guillotine (37)
- perpetual (37)
- Saint Sacrament (37)
- reparation (37)
- postulant (41)

1) Why was Joseph de Veuster convinced that God was calling him to the Religious life?

2) Why did Joseph feel that he must “pray for his father to say “yes” to his vocation”? 
Chapter 3: **The Old Tower Falls**

Vocabulary:
- postulant (41)
- generosity (47)
- heroism (47)
- gratitude (47)
- patience (47)
- novices (47)
- vows (48)
- prostrated (49)
- Apostolate (50)
- Refectory (51)
- Vicar Apostolate (51)

1) In Chapter 3, Joseph de Veuster prepares for his religious profession as a Brother in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. What was the significance of placing a large black cloth symbolic of a funeral pall over Damien during the ceremony?

2) Why was Damien’s motto-“Silence, Prayer and Recollection” important for him?

Chapter 4: **Call to the South Seas**

Vocabulary:
- Brabant (53)
- citadel (53)
- typhus (53)
- plague (53)
- altar vessels (53)
- crucifix (57)
- prelate (60)

1) Why was the Father General of the Congregation of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary hesitant to send Damien to Hawaii?

2) Why did Damien ask his mother to meet him at the Flemish shrine of Our Saint Mother of Montaigu near the town of Diest?
Chapter 5: Voyage Around the Horn

Vocabulary:
- sacristan (65)
- altar (65)
- devotion (65)
- novitiate (70)
- martyrdom (70)
- chalice (70)
- novena (70)
- Feast of Purification (70)
- Feast of Saint Joseph (73)

1) On the voyage to Hawaii, Brother Damien said “I hope to lead souls there (in Hawaii) to an even greater paradise”. What did Damien mean by this statement?

2) Damien served as a sacristan on the voyage to Hawaii. What were some of his duties as a sacristan?

Chapter 6: Land of the Volcanoes

Vocabulary:
- Congregation (74)
- Solemn High Mass (74)
- caldera (77)
- Provincial (79)
- catechism (83)
- Benediction (84)
- rosary (84)

1) Name the Cathedral that Damien was ordained a priest. Describe his ordination to the priesthood.

2) Why was Bishop Maigret concerned about Damien’s youthfulness in his first assignment which was the Puna District on the Big Island?

3) Why was it important for Damien that each church or chapel in Puna have a bell?

4) What was Petero’s duty as a missionary helper?
The Message

Chapter 7: Petero's Problem

Vocabulary:
- forlornly (89)
- parish (91)
- breviary (93)
- gable (96)
- consecration (97)
- exultant (97)

1) Damien wanted Petero and other Christians of the village to build a chapel. He said, “Let it be an act of thanksgiving for having received the Catholic faith.” What did he mean by this?

2) What were the duties of a “prayer leader”?

Chapter 8: Shadows of a Gray Land

Vocabulary:
- converts (99)
- impetuous (99)
- sanctuary (107)

1) What was maipake and why was it called this?

2) In Chapter 8, Damien says “On the day of my religious profession, I was covered by a funeral pall. So I willingly accept this second death……”. What did he mean by this?

Chapter 9: Night Under the Pandanus Tree

Vocabulary:
- gangplank (114)
- clerical clothing (114)
- barren (121)

1) Who was Lui ka Epikopo?

2) Who was Kaimu?
Chapter 10: The Rosary and the Hammer

Vocabulary:
- repository (137)
- acolytes (138)
- monstrance (138)

1) Explain why you think the authors entitled this chapter, The Rosary and the Hammer?

2) When Damien arrived in Kalaupapa, there were 800 patients, the colony was seven years old, and Father Damien was 33 years old. What was Damien called to do?

3) What affected Damien was that he was not able to leave Molokai to receive the Sacrament of Confession, nor could a priest visit with him. Going without the Sacrament of Penance was one of the sharpest sufferings Father Damien had to endure. Why do you think he felt this way?

4) Damien once said, “I know my work is succeeding when I hear the people start to sing.” Why do you think hearing the people sing was an important milestone to Father Damien and his work?
Chapter 11: The Enemy Strikes Back

Vocabulary:
- disposition (140)
- pali (140)

1) On September 1881, Queen Liliuokalani visited the settlement. Why did her joy turn to sadness?

2) Queen Liliuokalani made Damien a Knight Commander of the Royal Order. After the Queen left Kalaupapa, Damien once said, “May all the honor, all the praise they can give to me, return to God, whose servant I am.” What did he mean by this?

3) In Chapter 11, Damien says “My children die like saints.” What did he mean by this?

Chapter 12: Aloha Kamiano

Vocabulary:
- promontory (153)
- last rites (158)
- homage (161)
- outcasts (163)

1) On November 14, 1888, Damien referred to three “angels” who arrived at Kalaupapa. Who were these three angels?

2) In Chapter 12, Damien says that he “could not bear to leave the children twice orphaned.” What did he mean by this?

Epilogue

1) At the Beatification of Father Damien, Pope John Paul II said “Holiness ......is for everyone. It is the Lord who brings us to holiness, when we are willing to collaborate in the salvation of the world for the glory of God.” What did Pope John Paul II mean by this?