



FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

A FAMILY-FOCUSED APPROACH TO FAITH FORMATION

CALLED TO LOVE: THE ADVENTURE OF LIFE IN CHRIST

TOPIC: New Law Fulfills the Old Law

Incarnation - God Becomes Man, Beatitudes as the Way of Christ

SACRED SCRIPTURE

MT 5 - 7; JN 15:12;
JER 31:31-34

REFERENCES:

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

no. 1965-66

CREED	LITURGY	LIFE	PRAYER
nos.	nos.	nos.	nos.
456-83, 512-21, 571-667, 727-47, 772-76, 798	1113-34, 1210-13, 1262-84, 1337-40, 1391-98,	1716-29, 1949-2005, 2012-16	2559-65, 2608, 2761-64

GOAL(S):

- Families will learn about the *Incarnation* and the *Beatitudes*.
- Families reflect on and answer how they can live the Beatitudes.
- Families will make a Lenten Plan.

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
We entrust our family to You and ask for Your blessing and protection. We love You Lord Jesus with all our hearts and we ask that You help our family become more like the Holy Family. Help us to be kind, loving, and patient with one another. Give us all the grace we need to become saints and Your faithful disciples.
Amen.

ICE BREAKER

Ten Commandments Charades

1. Step 1: Print, cut out and fold each commandment. (1 set per family)
2. Step 2: Place each set of folded strips in a bag or container.
3. Step 3: Family members take turns drawing out a piece of paper and silently acting out what's written on it while the rest of the group tries to guess.

THE TEN

♥ LOVE GOD ♥

1. I am the Lord thy God. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

COMMANDMENTS

♥ LOVE NEIGHBOR ♥

4. Honor your father and mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet your neighbor's goods.



MATERIALS

- Bibles
- **Ice Breaker/Review:** [10 Commandments Poster](#) for reference
- [Free Beatitude Poster](#)
- [Sermon on the Mount Coloring Page](#)
- Crayons or markers, paper & pens
- **Family Conversation:** [Beatitudes Handout](#)
- **Family Activity:** Beatitude Unscramble ([see link for materials list](#))



CONTENT

Explain: Last month, we learned about the Ten Commandments (the key moral rules of the Old Law, grounded in the natural moral law) that God gave to the Israelites to teach and remind them the basics of how to love. (Recall that the Lord had just freed the Israelites from slavery, and the Ten Commandments were a path of freedom and happiness.) The Israelites had made a covenant or sacred agreement with God where the Israelites were supposed to keep God's commandments and, in return, God would be their God. He would love and protect them as His own children. However, the Israelites were often unwilling to follow the laws and keep the covenant that they had made with God. But God, who is love, had a wonderful plan!

Introduce the Topic:

Invite families to open their bibles to [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#) and read along.

“The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand and led them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant and I had to show myself their master, says the Lord. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and kinsmen how to know the Lord. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the Lord, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sins no more.”

Ask: Who will make the New Covenant through which all people may know the Lord and through which God will forgive their evildoing and remember their sins no more?

Answer: Jesus

Watch: Bite Size Catholic; Incarnation (2:41)



Explain: The Incarnation is when “the Son of God was made ‘flesh’ (John 1:14) and became truly man,” body and soul like us, to save us (*Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 86).”

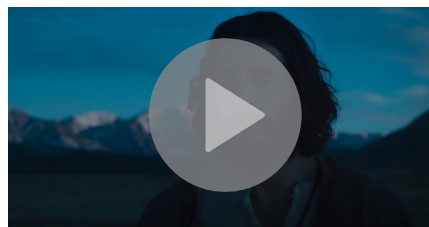
God would teach all people true love through His own sacrificial love for us! The Father gave us His Son, Jesus, to teach us how to love through His words, His actions, and most powerfully, in the laying down of His life for us. Even more, not only did Jesus teach us to love, but by His love poured out for us, He rescued us from sin and gave us the grace to love God and others (and ourselves).

This is the New Law or Law of the Gospel which fulfills the Old Law (the Old Covenant is fulfilled in the New). The New Law is both teaching and grace—the grace of the Holy Spirit that allows us to love one another as Christ has loved us (see CCC, nos. 1966 and 1970). Jesus both teaches and embodies the New Law by His very life.
The New Law—summed up in the commandment to love God and neighbor and to love one another as Christ loved us—is expressed in a special way in Jesus’ first public sermon.

In Jesus’ first public sermon, the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expands and fulfills the rules of love that God gave to Moses (the Old Law). He begins this sermon by teaching us the Beatitudes.

Watch: Jesus Gives the Beatitudes (The Chosen Scene) (3:45 min)

Note for catechists: Recall that *The Chosen* is imaginatively rendering various scenes based on the Gospels with various degrees of artistic license. It is important to keep in mind the Church’s teaching on Jesus’ human knowledge as the divine Son: “With his human intellect Jesus learned many things by way of experience; but also as man the Son of God had an intimate and immediate knowledge of God his Father. He likewise understood people’s secret thoughts and he knew fully the eternal plans which he had come to reveal” (*Compendium*, no. 90).



Invite families to open their bibles to **Matthew 5:1-12** and read along with you.

Explain: In the Old Testament, each covenant that the Israelites made with God came with a promise. For example, see **Genesis 12:1-3**, when God made the covenant with Abraham. God said that if Abraham kept the covenant, God would fulfill His promise and give Abraham many descendants, land, and they would become a blessing to the whole world!

For each Beatitude or blessing, Jesus also makes a promise!

FAMILY CONVERSATION

1. Give each family one or two of the Beatitudes from the [Beatitudes Handout](#).
2. Ask them to write their thoughts, comments, and answers.
3. Ask each family to share what they have written in the larger group with other families.

Family Activity: [Beatitude Unscramble](#)



MISSION ACTIVITY

1 First, Introduce Mission Activity

Mission Activities are to be done at home during Week 2 and to be shared at the gathering of families on Week 3.

2 Second, Explain Activity

Your Family At-Home Mission is to:

- i. Watch the videos about the Incarnation and the Sermon on the Mount.
- ii. As a family decide how you will live the Lenten Season together. What will you do? Consider the three Lenten Pillars of Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving as you ask God how He wants your family to prepare your hearts for Jesus. Be prepared to share your plan at the Week 3 gathering.
- iii. Gather as a family around your home altar and pray a [Divine Mercy Chaplet](#), or Watch and pray with: [Divine Mercy Chaplet by The Catholic Crusade](#).

3 Last, Model for Families:

- vi. Share your family's plan to prepare your hearts for Jesus this Lent.

REVIEW & PRAYER

Lord Jesus,

Help our families to always remember that our true happiness comes from following Your path of righteousness.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Lord, teach us to be humble in all our ways, to put others before ourselves, and to recognize that true greatness lies in serving others with a loving heart.

You are the way, truth and life.

Open our eyes to see the love that You have for each of us.

Give us the courage to let that love transform us.

As we do our best to walk the way You have laid out for us, help us when we struggle to love those around us.

May we encounter the truth and life that service brings as we serve and let ourselves be served and loved.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Adapted from www.catholic.org and www.commongrace.org

REMIND

Remind families about the next meeting date and time.

SUPPORTING QUOTES FROM CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 1965-66:

The New Law or the Law of the Gospel is the perfection here on earth of the divine law, natural and revealed. It is the work of Christ and is expressed particularly in the Sermon on the Mount. It is also the work of the Holy Spirit and through him it becomes the interior law of charity: “I will establish a New Covenant with the house of Israel.... I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

The New Law is the *grace of the Holy Spirit* given to the faithful through faith in Christ. It works through charity; it uses the Sermon on the Mount to teach us what must be done and makes use of the sacraments to give us the grace to do it:

If anyone should meditate with devotion and perspicacity on the sermon our Lord gave on the mount, as we read in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, he will doubtless find there ... the perfect way of the Christian life.... This sermon contains ... all the precepts needed to shape one's life.

Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* (1993), no. 24:

The gift does not lessen but reinforces the moral demands of love: “This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another just as he has commanded us” (1 Jn 3:32). One can “abide” in love only by keeping the commandments, as Jesus states: “If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love” (Jn 15:10).

Going to the heart of the moral message of Jesus and the preaching of the Apostles, and summing up in a remarkable way the great tradition of the Fathers of the East and West, and of Saint Augustine in particular, Saint Thomas was able to write that *the New Law is the grace of the Holy Spirit given through faith in Christ*. The external precepts also mentioned in the Gospel dispose one for this grace or produce its effects in one's life. Indeed, the New Law is not content to say what must be done, but also gives the power to “do what is true” (cf. Jn 3:21). Saint John Chrysostom likewise observed that the New Law was promulgated at the descent of the Holy Spirit from heaven on the day of Pentecost, and that the Apostles “did not come down from the mountain carrying, like Moses, tablets of stone in their hands; but they came down carrying the Holy Spirit in their hearts... having become by his grace a living law, a living book.”

