

OBJECTIVES

- For students to understand how we as humans are “fallen” and in an imperfect state here on Earth
- For students to understand the Old Law’s “*essence and advantages*,” its ultimate “*inadequacy*” and “*preparatory aspects*” ← (We won’t be using that specific language in this lesson-plan)

OVERVIEW

1. 4:00 pm Mass
2. 5:15- 6:45pm- Small Group Lesson Plan / Dismissal

LESSON COMPONENTS

- A. Community Building (15 minutes)
- B. Shared experiences by adults and teens
- C. Scripture & Prayer
- D. Catholic Teaching
- E. Putting Faith Into Action
- F. Announcements

- Setting the Scene

When humanity sinned, we were left in a zone of alienation from God. Before “*the fall*” humanity enjoyed a certain level of “closeness” with God. Humanity was “perfect” in his eyes. We had an amazing intellect, virtue, perfect obedience and *no emotional+bodily sickness or death*. Life in “the garden” was quite literally close to, “heavenly.” Then, of course, Adam and Eve, together, both chose to disobey God.

After humanity’s fall from God’s grace, these amazing attributes we enjoyed were taken away from us! We became ignorant, committed evil actions (Cain and Able) and overall suffered greatly in mind *and* body. Life became very difficult – and it still is this way *today*. We are still experiencing the results from humanity’s fall.

Although, despite humanity’s betrayal, throughout salvation history, God has still done what he can to draw closer to us – this is in despite of our even *continual resistance*. In a past lesson, we talked about “Covenant” and briefly covered both

← *There is **no teen handout for this lesson!*** Make sure they have their Bibles – if they don’t, ask Maureen if you can borrow one from upstairs!

The Old and New Testament (revisiting these would be great). We will do that a bit here, but we be primarily focusing on something called “**Mosaic Law**” or just simply referred to as “**the Law**.” The Law was handed down by God long ago – and its ultimate end is, of course, to bring us to everlasting life; to be with God, forever. *Only God* can give us a law that could lead here – no law of human origin can do that.

Over this lesson we’ll talk about aspects of the *Old Law* and the *New Law* (in which we live under today). The Old Law was **holy** but it was also, ultimately, **inadequate** (this is the main takeaway today).

Community Building

Act It Out!

Why do we need help – why do we even need a law to follow? For this activity we will be acting out the **Adam and Eve** story in Genesis. Split your class as evenly as you can. First, one half of the class will present for the other half.

First, the first half of the class will read **Genesis 2** and then act it out for the rest of the class, peers and Catechists. Second, when they are done with this – please have the second half of the class read and preform **Genesis 3 or “The Fall.”** Make sure to affirm your students for good effort!

Each of these small performances should be followed by a little conversation. What is God trying to tell us through this narrative? Does God want to restore us from this state we find ourselves in now? At the end of this, explain that our topic today is on the “Old Law” and that this is how God dealt with humanity right after the fall – with the promise of a Messiah in the future.

Shared experiences by Adults and Teens

1. We all have experiences with laws and regulations that are intended to guide our behavior. During this section of the lesson, let’s have our Catechists and Peers open up for us with a time in their life that they felt like a “*law*” or “*regulation*” was beneficial to them or helped keep them in line. *Sometimes, we just don’t know any better.* As children, this is often the case – we look back and are thankful that our parents held us to a certain standard.
2. Now, please let your students share a story or experience where a “*law*” or “*regulation*” affected them in this way. Give each student time to reflect. Was it a school rule? Maybe a rule from a parent? A rule in this class?
3. After shared experiences in this way – let’s flip it! What is a rule or regulation you’ve been asked or expected to follow that you disagreed with? Catechists and Peers go first and then let the students follow with their take. Can humans follow any law perfectly? Is this even possible?

Scripture and Prayer

Before we tackle some of the aspects of the “**Old Law**,” let’s reflect and go back to Genesis 3, or at least a part of it called “The **Protoevangelium**” or the “first-good news” (Genesis 3:15) ← Read this verse again. This is the **FIRST** messianic prophecy of the coming of the Christ figure we find in scripture. This is a big deal. An O.T. scholar described the protoevangelium as the “first glimmer of the gospel.”

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”
(Genesis 3:15, KJV)

This verse speaks of the **defeat** of Satan. God is saying here that good will prevail in the end! He promises this to us from the very beginning. God does this before he institutes any laws... it’s almost like God knows that we will not be able to perfectly overserve his “Old Law.”

God never institutes rules to *just* have rules – they always serve a purpose. Just like the perfect parent, his rules and regulations help teach us how to become better and more holy people. Also, just like a good parent who is realistic, God doesn’t actually expect us to follow his directions perfectly (*because we are imperfect*). It’s really about the meaning behind them and the lessons they teach us.

In the verse we just read and discussed, we can see this *clearly* displayed. God promises us that he will defeat Satan in the end – and that the “Old Law” will not last forever – that a Messiah will come and “crush the serpents head” by his power.

- Closing this section with some class prayer to thank God for his goodness would be great! Feel free to let the conversation drift in and out if the discussion goes on. We just want to highlight for them that God is ultimately concerned with *bringing us back to him* and nothing less than that!

Catholic Teaching

Essence: In Old Testament Law – there are 3 different types of law presented. These types are the, “**moral**,” “**ceremonial**,” and the “**juridical**.” Open your bibles and find the “Ten Commandments.”

Moral: *The Ten Commandments* (can anyone list them all? Who can find them the fastest?!) These are the foundational and straightforward laws given to God’s people the Jews.

Ceremonial: These are the first three commandments! They regulate *how* we are to worship God. Go over these.

Juridical: These are commandments four to ten! These regulate how we are to behave. The rest of the Torah is more rules on the ceremonial and juridical.

CATECHIST NOTES

If you, as a Jew, observed these laws right – you were made interiorly-right (or justified) with God. To do this, though, ***you had to mean it*** – you could not just go through the motions externally. Ask your teens how often they do what they are asked, not because they believe it, but just because they want to appear like they do. We do this to *get something*, more often than not.

Inadequacy: The “Old Law” is imperfect and the “New Law” is perfect. Both of these laws are guiding us towards heaven, but they are not equal. The “Old Law” is just a mere shadow of what is to come.

The Old Law is divided up into **613** little rules that Rabbis would command from their congregations. That’s **613!** The intent was to instruct Israel like you’d instruct a child. The most basic among all these laws, unfortunately, was continually broken by Israel. Israel would rebel and worship other Gods – they wouldn’t practice monotheism.

At the end of the day, these laws were only meant to teach and instruct. They *cannot* give grace like our Lord came to earth to give us. We need grace to forgive our sin and to live a holy life.

St. Paul could tell the faithful of Rome that they were “not under the (Mosaic) law, but under grace.” St. John could similarly write: “For the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

Prep-Aspects: In the “Old Law” there were sacrifices of food and animals (sometimes sacrifices of animals where the entire animal was burned, and nothing was left over to be eaten – these were called a “***holocaust***.”) These various sacrifices foreshadowed Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. His was the *final* sacrifice.

When your discussing this, Peer-Ministers, take out your phones and look up some of the prophesies that have come to their fulfillment in Christ. *There are many in scripture!* St. Paul says, “The end of the Law is Christ” (Rom. 10:4).

Putting Faith into Action

As an ending activity, there will be some posters available on the Narthex carts. Please, Peer-Ministers, head to the Narthex and grab your class one of these. **Pick one of the Commandments** (and go over why?) – and then write it on the poster as a class! Take some time on this and design it with care – we may display it in the office upstairs. Some type of drawing or design should be done by each student. Have each student explain what they are doing – the meaning behind it.

- Colored pencils and markers will be available in the Narthex as well!
- Drop your poster off at the end of class!

LESSON PREPARATION NOTES:

Is there something I want to pick up or go over from last week's class?

My community building activity this week will be

What parts of the lesson will the Peer Ministers lead/facilitate?

Do I need anything from the Faith Office prior to class?

Other

Things I will need for class this week:

The Key Ideas/Objectives for this week are

Things I need to consult Mel about
