

LESSON 1: A New Commandment

AIM

To help learners understand that by living the new commandment that Jesus gives us we come closer to God and to our fellow human beings. (11.3.9)

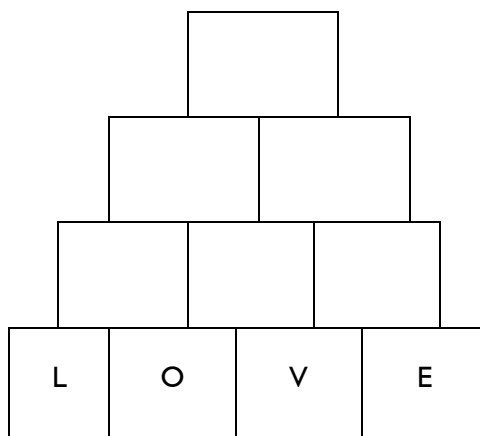
OUTCOME

Learners value the commandment of Jesus as guide to living.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Love experience:** Gather the children in a circle and in a position they all can clearly see. Put the building blocks as in a pyramid, starting with the four lettered ones at the bottom, facing away from them. Ask one of the learners to remove one or two of the bottom ones. As the pyramid collapses explain to them that by removing the foundation, the structure loses equilibrium (balance) and collapses.

Build the pyramid again, but this time with the word LOVE facing them. Point out to them that when we love and support one another, we are like the building blocks. We give one another support and strength.



- 2 When **Jesus gathered people** to form his community, he showed them what being part of it was all about. The group of people he gathered grew more and more in love and strength. They learned from Jesus' constant love and service of others. This inspired them to share in his love. Explain that to say I love, without acting on it doesn't mean much. For love to be alive it needs to be acted upon, to be shown in word and action as Jesus did. We show our love for others when we care, help and serve as Jesus did, by being aware of the needs of others and responding to them as best as we can. This means giving of ourselves for the good of others.



WHAT YOU NEED

- * 10 building blocks: On 4 of them you will stick the letters: L- O- V- E (1)
- * Bible (3)
- * 🎵 *A New Commandment* or *This Is My Will, My One Command* (5)
- * 📖 Copies of the worksheet (6) ⇨
- * 🎵 *Sing for Life – Love* (p.87) (7)

- 3 **A New Commandment:** Jesus asked his disciples to continue his work of loving and serving others, to do good to others, to share God’s love with all people. He said to them, “I give you a new commandment. Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another. By the love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples.” [John 13:34-35]
- 4 Our **actions speak for themselves.** Help learners to understand that people can often tell who we are or where we come from, or what our abilities or talents are, by our actions, by the way we walk or talk, by what we express ourselves in words and deeds. We are recognised or identified by the image we project. Invite the learners to give examples of how people reflect who they are. How might we recognise athletes, ballet dancers, body builders, or artists, for instance? Draw their attention to how people who act in a loving or compassionate way make an impression in our lives. As Christians, people will recognise us by the way we love one another.
- 5 End the lesson by gathering the children around the **prayer corner.** Say a prayer thanking God for all the people who have left an impression in our lives by the love they have for one another. Invite the children to do the same. Sing together, *A New Commandment* or *This Is My Will, My One Command.*

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 6 The **prayer of St Francis** is a beautiful prayer that can help learners understand how we are called to love one another. Hand out the worksheet. Divide the learners into groups and give each group one phrase of the prayer at random. In their groups they are to discuss the meaning of the phrase and think of a situation they can enact that will reflect what the phrase says.

Where there is hatred, let me show love;



Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

For some ideas on their acting look at the worksheet.  
- 7 **Sing:** *Sing for Life – Love* (p.87)

A New Commandment

FOLLOWING JESUS IN THE STEPS OF ST. FRANCIS

This activity will help learners to put words into action.

Here are some ideas as to how they might enact what the phrase says:

Where there is hatred, let me bring hope.

You hear a group of girls and boys talking about a member of your class. You hear them say: "I can't stand him. He is so fat, wears such funny shoes, is so stupid." What can you say to help these individuals stop doing that? Stop hating and begin loving? What could you do to bring love to the boy or girl they dislike?

Where there is injury, let me bring pardon.

One of the people in your class you thought of as a friend is having a party but you have not been invited. What do you do when you meet this person the next time?

Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.

A friend of yours says she is not really sure there is a God. Her prayers, she says, never seem to be answered. And there is so much trouble in the world. How can we know God is really there? What can you say to that person?

Where there is despair, let me bring hope

A friend of yours is discouraged. He is upset because everything seems to be going wrong. His marks in school are down. His parents are after him trying to get him to work harder. He is doing the best he can and doesn't know how to improve. Whatever he tries seems to turn out wrong. He wonders if God cares about him. What do you say to your friend?

Where there is darkness, let me bring light.

You have a friend whose parents are going through divorce. Her whole life is upset and she cannot imagine things will ever be peaceful and joyful again. What can you say or do to help her?

Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.

Your brother has been practising very hard to make a particular team. When he comes home on the day of the trials he goes running up to his room and shuts the door. You realise he did not make the team. What can you do or say that will cheer him up or console him?

Give the groups sufficient time for discussion. Then ask each group to share their phrase, situation and course of action. This extends the benefit of the small group discussions to the entire class.

(Adapted from Patricia Mathson. 1995. *Seasons and Celebrations*. Ave Maria Press)

LESSON 2: The Golden Rule


AIM

To help the learners understand that the Golden Rule is a summary of all God's commandments, and realise that it has been expressed in most religious traditions (I I.3.9)

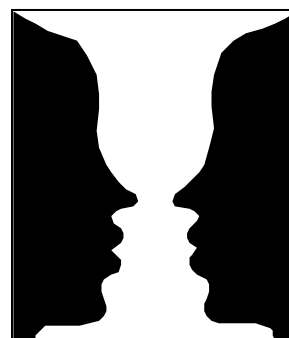
OUTCOME

Learners recognise the Golden Rule as a summary of God's commandments.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 How do people like to be treated?** Discuss this with the learners. Ask them to reflect on how they treat others. Allow some time for sharing and list the main ideas on the board (fairly, justly, kindly, or respectfully). Make the learners realise how often they hear people say, "It's not fair." How often do they say so themselves! We all want to be treated with justice. What is good for one is good for all.
- 2** Invite the learners to **study the illustration** on the worksheet.  ⇒ What do they see?



Some will readily identify a cup or chalice. Others will see first, the profiles of two human faces. Just so, there are two ways of looking at most things. Laws compel us to avoid certain things such as stealing, killing, and damaging property. They are worded negatively. But there is another way of expressing them. We need to see the difference between saying, 'I must not damage public property'; 'I must not injure or hurt others', and 'I must go out of my way to take care of and maintain public property'; 'I must go out of my way to help other people and treat them with respect and kindness, just as I would like to be treated myself.'



- 3 The Golden Rule:** The new commandment Jesus gave we discussed in the previous lesson. It is often called the Golden Rule. If we apply it in every situation, we will never go wrong. Jesus said, "Always treat others as you would like them to treat you. That is the meaning of the Law." Rather than tell us what we should not do, Jesus gives us a positive command.
- 4** What is it like to **live according to the Golden Rule**? The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates this quite clearly. We often see people in our lives who don't want to 'get involved' or to 'complicate their lives'. They are quite happy to say, "I do no harm to others, I do not go against the law." What is greatly missing here is the attitude of love and concern for others. The Golden Rule is an attitude that makes us treat others not just as the law says, but as love demands.
 - To love as we'd like to be loved.
 - To forgive as we'd like to be forgiven.
 - To help as we'd like to be helped.



WHAT YOU NEED

- *  Copies of the worksheet (2)(6)(8) ⇒
- * Bible (5)
- *  *Love Is His Word or When I Needed a Neighbour or Sing for Life – Love (p.87) (7)*
- * One sheet of blank A3 paper or A4 per group.

GRADE 5


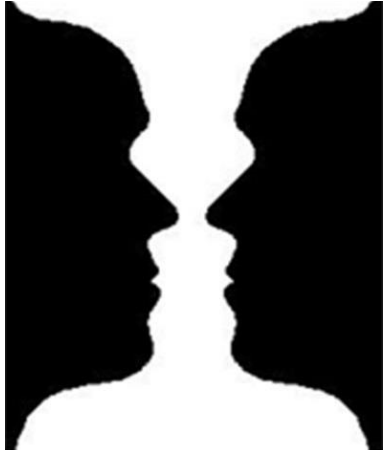
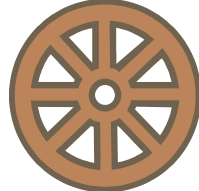
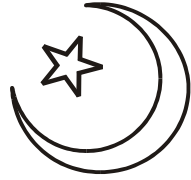
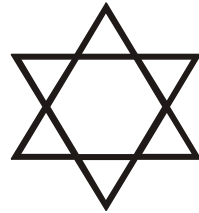

- 5 The parable of the **Good Samaritan** [Luke 10:25-37]. Discuss the different attitudes of the people in the parable of the Good Samaritan, allow the children to say who is the person living the Golden Rule.
 - 6 The Golden Rule of **Sacred Scriptures**. Treating others with care and consideration, as one would like to be treated, is the rule of most religions of the world. Invite the learners to read the different formulations of the Golden Rule on the worksheet. 📖 ⇒ Discuss the similarity. Why do they think it is there? God's Spirit is with every human being and culture that searches for the truth.
 - 7 Conclude the lesson by drawing the children around the prayer corner and **sing** *Love Is His Word* or *When I Needed a Neighbour* or *Sing for Life – Love* (p.87)
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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 8 Divide the learners into groups and give one of the religion's formulations of the Golden Rule to each group. 📖 ⇒ Ask them to use the words to **create a scroll** which they should then decorate. Display their work in a suitable place at school.

The Golden Rule of Sacred Scriptures

Treating others with care and consideration, as one would like to be treated is the rule of most religions of the world.

<p style="text-align: center;">HINDUISM</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>The Hindu religion says, “the rule is to guard and do by the things of others as you do by your own.”</p> <p>“This is the sum of duty. Do not do to others what would cause you pain if done to you”</p> <p><i>Mahabharata 5.15.17.</i></p>		<p style="text-align: center;">BUDDHISM</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>The Buddhist religion says, “one should seek for others the happiness one desires for oneself.”</p> <p>“Hurt not others in ways that you would find hurtful”</p> <p><i>Udanavarga 5:18</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ISLAM</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>The Moslem Faith says, “Let none of you treat your brother in a way he himself would dislike to be treated.”</p> <p>“No one of you is a believer until you love for you brother or sister that which you love for yourself.”</p> <p><i>The 42 Traditions of An-Nawawi.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JUDAISM</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>The Jewish religion says, “Do to no one what you would not want done for you.” [Tobit 4:16]</p> <p>“What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow human being. That is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary.”</p> <p><i>Talmud, Shabbat 31 a</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AFRICAN TRADITION</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>The African Traditional religion says, “What you give (or do) to others, these will give (or do) to you in return.”</p> <p><i>Rwandan proverb.</i></p>

LESSON 3: The Way to Happiness

AIM

To introduce the children to the Beatitudes. (8.3.7)

OUTCOME

Learners appropriate relevant aspects of the Beatitudes for daily living.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1 **Choices:** We constantly make decisions about what we should do. Ask the children to make a list in their workbooks about the choices they had to make, from the time they went home yesterday until now, and to place a **G** next to the good ones and a **B** if they were bad ones.
- 2 We normally make decisions that we think are best for us and others. We see that our **choices often affect others**. We are not alone when we make difficult choices: our parents, teachers and good friends are there to help us if we need it.
- 3 God gave us the Holy Spirit to guide us in making choices, and Jesus gave us the secret of how to make happy choices. This way to happiness is known as **The Eight Beatitudes**.
- 4 **The Way to Happiness:** Read from the Bible [Matthew 5:1-12], slowly and prayerfully.
- 5 Print the following reflections on **cards** and choose eight learners to read them one at a time giving the class the opportunity to think about and understand what Jesus meant by each of these statements.

HAPPY THE POOR IN SPIRIT:

Material things alone cannot make us happy forever. We need God and we depend on him. We are poor in spirit when we see that material things are only there to help us, and to be shared with others.

HAPPY THE GENTLE:

Gentle people are loving, kind and patient. They are like God who is gentle and kind with us.

HAPPY THOSE WHO MOURN:

We mourn when we feel sorry for those who are lonely or sad, when we see violence and sin around us, and when another person's suffering makes us sad.

HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR WHAT IS RIGHT:



When we see an unfair thing done to a friend, we want to see justice done. We stand up for what is right and fair - for ourselves and others.

HAPPY THE MERCIFUL:

We choose to forgive others instead of getting even. When we've done unloving things we ask forgiveness, knowing that God is infinitely more merciful and forgiving than we are.



WHAT YOU NEED

- * Bible (4)
- * Cards with reflections (5)
- * Old magazine pictures, A4 sheets of blank paper (6)
- *  Copies of the worksheet (7) ⇨
- *  *Sing for Life – Happy in the Presence* (p.54) (8)

HAPPY THE PURE IN HEART:

They are those who see clearly what God wants of them. They listen to God's words and understand their meaning. They love God and others with all their heart.

HAPPY THE PEACEMAKERS:

We try to settle fights and arguments. We want people to respect each other and be together in harmony.

HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED:

We do what we know is right, regardless of what others might say or do. We share in the victory of Jesus, who triumphed over evil and injustice, and invites us to share in his victory.

- 6 Divide the class in groups of 4 or 5. Give each group an A4 sheet of blank paper. Give each group one of the Beatitudes, ask them to write the words of the Beatitude on it. The group has to **illustrate the meaning** of the Beatitude given to them, either with cut-out pictures or drawings. They display their work in a suitable place at school with a poster heading which reads: THE BEATITUDES - THE WAY TO HAPPINESS.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 7 After they have listened to the explanation on the meaning of the Beatitudes, invite the children to go through the **worksheet**, reading it carefully and reflectively, and responding by indicating what they are going to do to live the Beatitudes themselves. 📖 ➔
- 8 **Sing:** *Sing for Life – Happy in the Presence* (p.54)

The Way to Happiness

THE BEATITUDES OF JESUS	WHAT THEY MEAN	HOW AM I GOING TO LIVE THEM?
Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs.	People who are poor in spirit are humble. They know they need God.	
Happy are those who mourn; they shall be comforted.	People who mourn are sad at the sin and suffering around them.	
Happy those who are gentle; they will inherit the land.	People who are gentle are patient with each other.	
Happy are those who hunger and thirst for what is right; they shall be satisfied.	People who hunger and thirst for what is right are fair. They feel sorry for those in trouble and try to help them.	
Happy the merciful; they shall have mercy shown them.	People who are merciful forgive those who hurt them. They are kind to everyone.	
Happy the pure in heart; they shall see God.	People who are pure in heart love sincerely. They do not envy others.	
Happy the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God.	Peacemakers help everyone to be friends. They help people to make up with one another.	
Happy are those who are persecuted in the cause of right; theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	People who are persecuted suffer bravely because they do what is right.	