

Lesson Plan, Grade 8 - Chapter 13

Catechist Background

Doctrinal Content

- God made a covenant with his Chosen People, the Israelites. The Ten Commandments are laws of the covenant God established with the Israelites; they still hold true today. (CCC, 781)
- The First Commandment calls us to put God first in our lives. Keeping God first requires a daily intentional choice. Attitudes and behaviors that are not in accord with the First Commandment can lead us away from God. (CCC, 2086-2087)
- Faith, hope and love are called the Theological Virtues because they relate directly to God. Idolatry keeps us from experiencing true faith, hope, and love. (CCC, 1812-1813, 2113-2114)
- The Second Commandment states that God's name is holy and we should always refer to his name with respect and reverence. Blasphemy shows a lack of reverence for God and his name. (CCC, 2143-2144, 2161-2162)

Catechist Background

One of the scribes ... asked [Jesus], "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus replied, "The first is this: 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'" —Mark 12:28-30

Reflect How do you show that God is Lord in your life?

When reflecting upon the First Commandment, our first reaction might be that most people don't worship wooden or metal idols that represent false or imaginary gods. This type of pagan practice doesn't seem to apply to our current culture. So, what else is meant by idols and false gods? What does the First Commandment require of us today?

Placing God first in our lives, or as Scripture says at the center of our lives, helps us to focus on desires and actions that should take priority. But, when we allow anything (people, ideas, or personal interests) to lead us away from God, we are in effect worshipping idols and false gods. The idols that exist in our lives today might look different, and the false gods might promise different things than they would have during the time of the pagans, but they have the same effect: drawing us away from God, keeping us from giving him the honor and prominence in our lives that is rightly his.

The truth is that idolatry is still a threat that we must guard against. We must

remember that anything that replaces God in a person's heart is an idol. Some examples of modern day idolatry include a fixation on acquiring power, wealth, prestige, and sexual pleasure. But the greatest idolatry of all today may just be the mistaken notion that human beings have evolved to the point where we no longer need God. And that notion is one that Christians must surely stand in witness against.

Reflect What are some of the idols that you need to be vigilant about in your own life?

Catechist's Prayer

God, our Father, you created all things. May I show my gratitude in whatever I do by giving freely and generously of myself in the service of your people. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sharing the Message

How Eighth-Graders Understand Chapter Topics

Most eighth-graders are familiar with the Ten Commandments, but they might have some trouble seeing them as relevant today and applying them to their own lives. They will benefit by reviewing some concrete examples of moral choices faced by eighth-graders and how the Ten Commandments apply to these issues.

Teaching Tip

Brainstorm together on the things that are valued most highly by people in our modern society (especially young teens). Some examples might include popularity, celebrities, brand names, and technology. Invite discussion on how these things can take God's place in some people's lives if they don't make a conscious effort to limit or diminish their importance.

Sharing the Message with Eighth-Graders

Younger adolescents are still forming personal value systems. Many will be largely influenced by the values of their peers and our media driven culture.

- It is important to communicate the concept that, for the Christian, God is not a priority in life but the priority. Help the young people reflect on their priorities in life and on how they might be reordered for the better.
- Young people often struggle with their impulses for what seems gratifying at the moment and what others determine is popular versus what they know is right. Encourage the youth to let their conscience be their guide.

Chapter Connections

Tasks of Catechesis

Helping children grow in a faith that is "known, celebrated, lived, and expressed in prayer" (NDC, 20). This chapter focuses on the following tasks of catechesis:

- Promoting Knowledge of the Faith
- Moral Formation

NCEA IFG: ACRE Edition

Knowledge of the Faith

- Objective: To know and understand basic Catholic teaching about the Incarnate Word Jesus Christ as the way, truth, and life

Moral Formation

- Objective: To be knowledgeable about the teachings of Jesus and the Church as the basis of Christian morality and to understand Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Faith Literacy

blasphemy, Ten Commandments

Catholic Social Teaching

To integrate Catholic Social Teaching into your lesson, choose one of the following features: Rights and Responsibilities of the Human Person, pages 338–339; or Care for God's Creation, pages 346–347.

- Start the Live step of the process by talking about Saint Blaise on page 220. Then move directly to the Catholic Social Teaching feature.
- Or, to expand the lesson, complete page 220, then move to the Catholic Social Teaching feature.
- Return to Chapter 13 for the prayer on page 221.

Music Option

► Use one or more of the following songs to enhance catechetical learning or for prayer.

- "Take Me," Live, Page 221
- "Take, Lord, Receive," Live, Page 221

Catechist Instruction, Grade 8 – Chapter 13

Invite Page 211

Objective

- Reflect on God's personal invitation through Scripture

♥ Let Us Pray

Invite the young people to gather in the prayer space and make the Sign of the Cross. Pray the leader prayer. Choose a volunteer to read aloud the Psalm verse. Prompt the group's response.

Have the youth move out of the prayer space and back to their seats.

Explain that God should be number one in our lives. He should be our top priority.

Say: The first three Commandments focus on our relationship with God—loving him with all our heart, soul, and mind. Let's listen to how Jesus responds to the question, "Which is the first of all the commandments?"

† Scripture

Guide the youth through the process of Scripture reflection.

Invite the young people to be still, close their eyes, and focus on their breathing.

Encourage them to open their minds and hearts to what God is saying to them.

- Proclaim the Scripture and have the youth sit in silence.
- *Ask:* What did you hear God say to you today?
- Allow volunteers to share.

► You may play instrumental music to begin the reflection.

Remember, this is a spiritual discipline that takes practice. The young people will grow in their capacity to sit in silence. Throughout the year, build to four minutes.

Have you ever thought...

Say: Living in a true covenant relationship with God requires that everything we do and say is a witness to being loved by God and loving him in return.

- Invite the young people to respond to the questions.

Discover (1) Pages 214-215

Objectives

- Recall the covenant that God established with the Israelites
- Examine ways to keep the First Commandment by making God our first priority
- Discover why faith, hope, and love are called the Theological Virtues

Teaching Activity: Put God First

Youth will play a game to help show that when we put God first in our lives every other relationship will fall into the right order. This will bring us the happiness that comes from living out the purpose of our creation.

Before the Lesson

Materials Needed

✪ Go to **aliveinchrist.osv.com** and download Put God First and Catholic Faith Words balloons (1 per participant), paper, scissors, tape

Preparation

- Post the Catholic Faith Word on the wall in the room.
- Write the following words on separate slips of paper: Parents, Spouse, Children, Friends, Neighbors, Money, Entertainment, Talents, Time, and Possessions. You will need one slip of paper for each participant so use the words multiple times as needed.
- Roll up each slip of paper and insert the slips into separate balloons. Blow up the balloons and tie the ends. You will need 1 balloon per participant.
- Print and post the pages of the Put God First pages in order on the board. Write the phrase "Put God First" under the pages.

Activity Directions

Begin the activity by addressing the group and calling their attention to the Put God First pages posted on the board.

Say: To help us understand more deeply God's desire to live in a covenant relationship with us, let's quickly journey through the greatest story ever told!

Point to the first page of the Put God First pages posted on the board.

Say: God chooses to create human beings. He does so by giving us a desire or yearning to know him, the capacity to hear his call, and the free will to say, "yes" or "no."

Point to the second page of the Put God First pages that shows Original Sin.

Say: Then human beings chose to look for meaning and purpose outside of their relationship with God—they sin.

Point to the third page of the Put God First pages that shows God's covenant.

Say: But because of God's mercy, he made a sacred promise to Abraham and Moses that he would always remain faithful to his People and offer us a way to return to him.

Point to the image of the Cross on the last page of the Put God First pages.

Ask a volunteer to read aloud the definition for Great Commandment that is posted on the wall.

Say: If we put God first, everything else in our lives is in right order. And it is logical that the First Commandment, to honor the Lord your God, is about putting God first. Let's think about and name some of our relationships and what it means to put God first.

Start throwing the balloons towards the group. Let the participants bounce the balloons around the room for a minute or so and then ask the participants to stop and grab a balloon. Direct the youth to break their balloons and ask them to look out for the piece of paper that is inside. Ask them to hold on to the paper and throw away the pieces of balloon that fall on the floor.

Ask a volunteer to read the word that is on his/her slip of paper. Depending on what the word is, ask that participant one of the following questions:

- How do you put God first in your relationship with your parents?
- When you think about having a spouse, how do you put God first in that relationship?
- When you think about a future with children, how do you put God first as a parent?
- How do you put God first in your relationships with your friends?
- How do you put God first in your relationships with your neighbors?
- When you think about your money how do you put God first?
- How do you put God first when you think about entertainment?
- When you think about your talents, how do you put God first?
- How do you put God first when you plan your time?
- When you think about your possessions, how do you put God first?

Allow the participant to answer the question and ask him or her to tape the slip of paper under the phrase Put God First that is written on the board. Continue with each participant until all of the slips have been read and posted on the board. Be sure to ask the questions that correspond to each slip of paper.

Say: When we make God our number one priority, everything else falls in the right order—the order that will bring us the happiness that comes from living out the purpose of our creation. We honor the First Commandment and show God he is our number one priority by worshiping him, adoring him, praying to him, and living out his will. God gives us everything we need to be able to do those things and to practice our religion. The purpose of religious practice is to hold us all together. Remember Our

that we call the three virtues that God gives us, the Theological virtues. Who remembers what they are? ***faith, hope and charity (love)*** The Theological virtues come from God and point us back to him.

Discover (2) Pages 216-217

Objectives

- Explain why idolatry keeps us from experiencing true faith, hope, and love
- Describe attitudes and behaviors that are not in accord with the First Commandment

Ask: What are some ways people fail to give God the honor he deserves?

- Invite the young people to discuss.

We Can't Replace God

Ask a volunteer to read aloud the first paragraph.

Putting Others in God's Place

Direct the youth to silently read the two paragraphs in this section. To check for understanding, *ask*:

- What is idolatry? ***when we put other people or things before God in our lives***
- What happens when we practice idolatry? ***The idols keep us from experiencing true faith, hope, and love, and our lives eventually fall apart***
- Discuss the reflection question at the end of this section with the whole group

Leading Away from God

Ask the young people to name some attitudes or practices that might be "dead ends" in a person's relationship with God.

Summarize the text.

Sins Against the First Commandment

Allow the youth to work with a partner to review the content of the chart.

* Have them place a check mark next to the issues they think most affect people their age.

- Review the issues in the chart with the group and make sure everyone understands them.

Activity

Explain the activity.

- Have the young people work independently to finish the sentences and write their own prayers. Provide time for reflection.

Quick Review

When we worship other people or things in God's place, this is idolatry. If we practice idolatry and other behaviors that are not in accord with the First Commandment, our lives will eventually fall apart.

Discover (3) Pages 218-219

Objectives

- Examine attitudes and behaviors that are not in accord with the Second Commandment

What's in a Name?

Read aloud the first two paragraphs.

- Invite three volunteers to each read one of the bullet points on blasphemy.
- Have another volunteer read aloud the next paragraph and the Scripture passage from Matthew.
- Ask the youth to work with a partner to discuss the reflection questions at the end of this section.

The Truth in God

Explain that in addition to honoring the name of God, the Second Commandment forbids us from making false oaths (swearing to God that something is true when it isn't).

Continue reviewing the text in this section with the group. Make sure they understand how perjury goes against the Second Commandment.

† Go to the Source

Invite a volunteer to read Matthew 5:33–35, 37 from the Bible to share what Jesus teaches us about swearing and oaths.

Work with Words

Point out the Catholic Faith Words box on page 218.

- Ask volunteers to read aloud the two definitions.
- If time permits, have the young people create vocabulary flash cards and quiz a partner on the definitions.

Activity

Read the instructions to the group.

- Have them complete the activity.
- Invite volunteers to share their promises with the rest of the group.

In Summary

Have volunteers read aloud the Catholics Believe information.

- Invite the youth to describe how we can recognize a person who holds each belief listed here.

Extend the Lesson

Use **Activity Master 13: Advice Column** to extend the lesson; it is not included in the timed estimate for this section of the Lesson Plan.

Live Pages 220-221

Objectives

- Discuss ways to strengthen a relationship with God
- Explore the faith life of Saint Blaise
- Offer the Prayer for Guidance

Our Catholic Life

Ask a volunteer to read aloud this section.

- Have the young people work in groups of two or three to discuss the questions at the end of the text.

People of Faith

Explain to the youth that Saint Blaise was executed because he refused to deny Christ.

- Have a volunteer read aloud the People of Faith paragraph.
- Review the extra content from the People of Faith Background box with the young people.
- Invite them to reflect on ways they can strengthen their relationship with God.
- Encourage the youth who do extra research at home on Saint Blaise to bring their findings back to group.

Here are some additional details about Saint Blaise to assist you in presenting this section:

- Saint Blaise, who lived around A.D. 300, is believed to have been doctor.
- Each year on February 3, some Catholics have their throats blessed with crossed candles, asking Saint Blaise for protection against diseases of the throat.

Activity

Have the young people read the activity directions on page 220.

- Give them time to reflect on and respond to the prompt.

Prayer of Acknowledgement

♥ A key element of this prayer experience is having the youth "walk in prayer" by following a simple path created on the floor of the room or the prayer space.

- Appropriate instrumental music should be chosen/played for the prayer walk.
- Assign five readers. You will be the leader.
- Follow the order of prayer on the prayer page.

► Conclude by inviting the young people to sing or reflect on the song "Take Me," downloaded from **aliveinchrist.osv.com**. • Alternate Music Options: "Take, Lord, Receive"

Chapter Review

If you are using eAssessments, remind the young people that they will need to be completed by the due date. Feedback is important at this age. For the tool to be used effectively provide feedback to the young people about their work.

Chapter 13 Lesson Plan

Objectives	Process	Materials
Invite, 15 minutes		
Honoring God Page 211	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psalm 19:9 Pray the opening prayer. Mark 12:28–30 Guide the youth through the process of Scripture reflection • Discuss Have You Ever Thought questions. 	
Discover, 45 minutes		
I Am the Lord, Your God Pages 214–215 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall the covenant that God established with the Israelites • Examine ways to keep the First Commandment by making God our first priority • Discover why faith, hope, and love are called the Theological Virtues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Activity Youth will play a game to help show that when we put God first in our lives, every other relationship will fall into the right order. This will bring us the happiness that comes from living out the purpose of our creation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put God First, Catholic Faith Words <input type="checkbox"/> construction paper, scissors, tape <input type="checkbox"/> balloons
We Can't Replace God Pages 216–217 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why idolatry keeps us from experiencing true faith, hope, and love • Describe attitudes and behaviors that are not in accord with the First Commandment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the attitudes and behaviors that lead us away from God ★ Identify First Commandment issues that affect young people this age. • Activity Write a prayer of faith, hope, and love. • Activity Master Living What I Believe: The Nicene Creed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens
What's in a Name? Pages 218–219 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine attitudes and behaviors that are not in accord with the Second Commandment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss why it's important to respect God's name. Read Psalm 8:1 and Matthew 5:33–35, 37. • Activity Write promises to God. • Activity Master Advice Column 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens Activity Master 13
Live, 15 minutes		
Our Catholic Life Page 220	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the questions in the Our Catholic Life section. • People of Faith Learn about Saint Blaise. • Activity List ways to strengthen the focus we give to God. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> pencils or pens
Prayer for Guidance Page 221	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign five readers. • Follow the order of prayer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Take Me"

CATHOLIC FAITH WORDS

Great Commandment, idolatry, blasphemy, perjury

ASSESSMENT

Chapter Review, Page 222

aliveinchrist.osv.com Customize and Download Assessments, Interactive Student Reviews, eAssessments

Name _____

Date _____

Advice Column

You've been asked to write the "Wise Person" column for the local paper by answering these letters. Provide advice that is based on the First and Second Commandments.

Dear Wise Person,

My mom refuses to take me to a concert after hearing me swear at my friends yesterday. She also grounded me. Don't you think she's overreacting?

Sad Kid

Dear Sad Kid,

Dear Wise Person,

I'm a Catholic girl who goes to 10 a.m. Mass every Sunday and sings in the choir. I just met a boy I really like. He wants me to go to a ball game next Sunday and skip Mass. How can I explain to this guy that my religion is really important to me?

Singing in the Choir

Dear Singing in the Choir,

Name _____

Date _____

Match each description in Column A with the correct term in Column B.

Column A

Column B

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| ___ 1. Lying under oath | a. blasphemy |
| ___ 2. Showing contempt or lack of reverence for God and his name | b. idolatry |
| ___ 3. Identifying certain objects or practices with religious power | c. superstition |
| ___ 4. Putting other people or things in God's place | d. perjury |

Indicate whether the following statements are true or false. Then rewrite the false statements to make them true.

5. The Ten Commandments are the laws of the covenant God established with the Israelites, but they don't apply to us today. **True/False**

6. The purpose of religious practice can be compared to the ligaments in our body, to hold us together. **True/False**

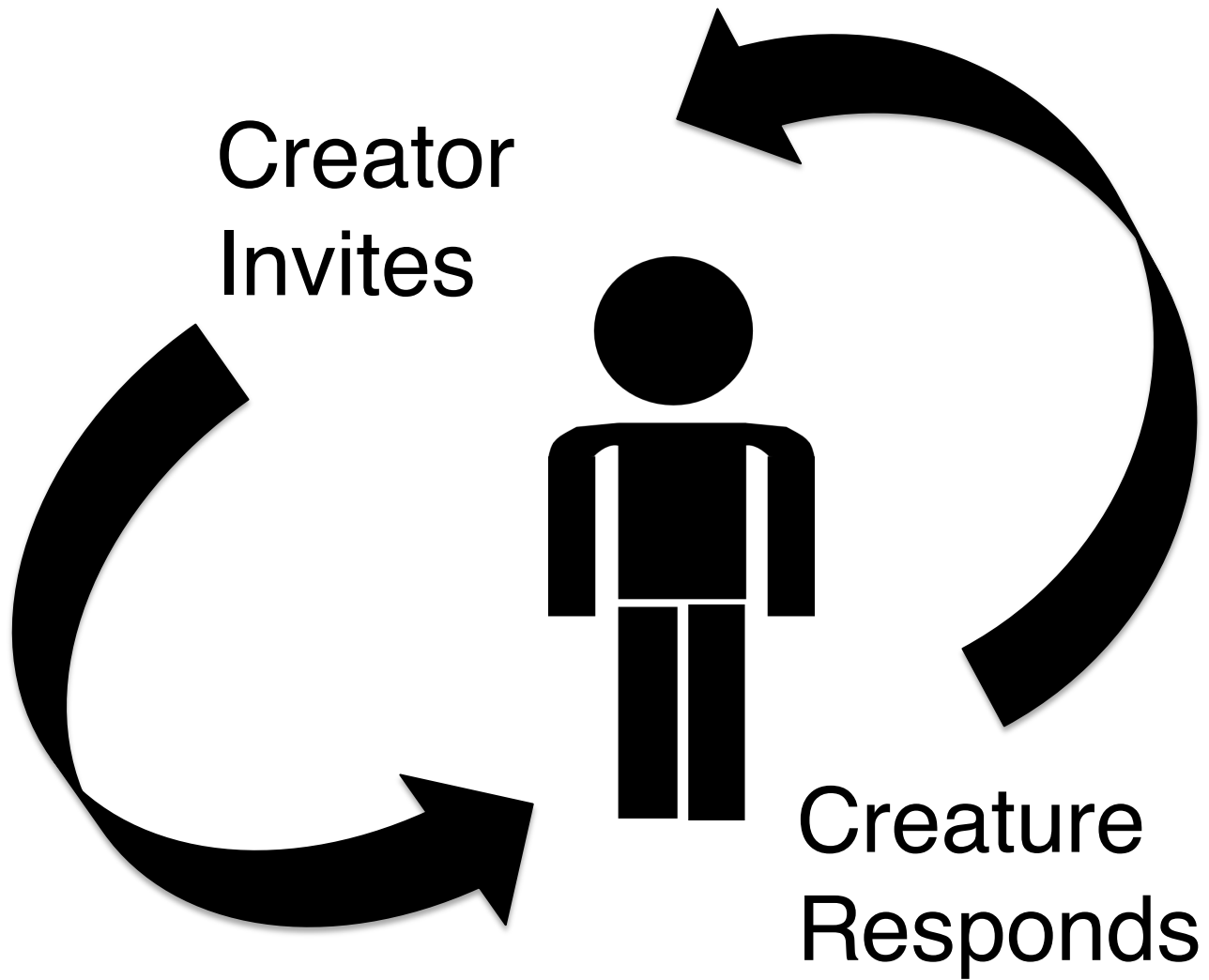
7. God's name is so holy that we are not allowed to say it at all. **True/False**

8. Idolatry is something people did a long time ago. People today don't have any idols that take God's place of priority. **True/False**

Write a response on the lines below.

9. Why should we speak of God with reverence and respect?

10. What can happen to a person's life when he or she puts other people or things in God's place?



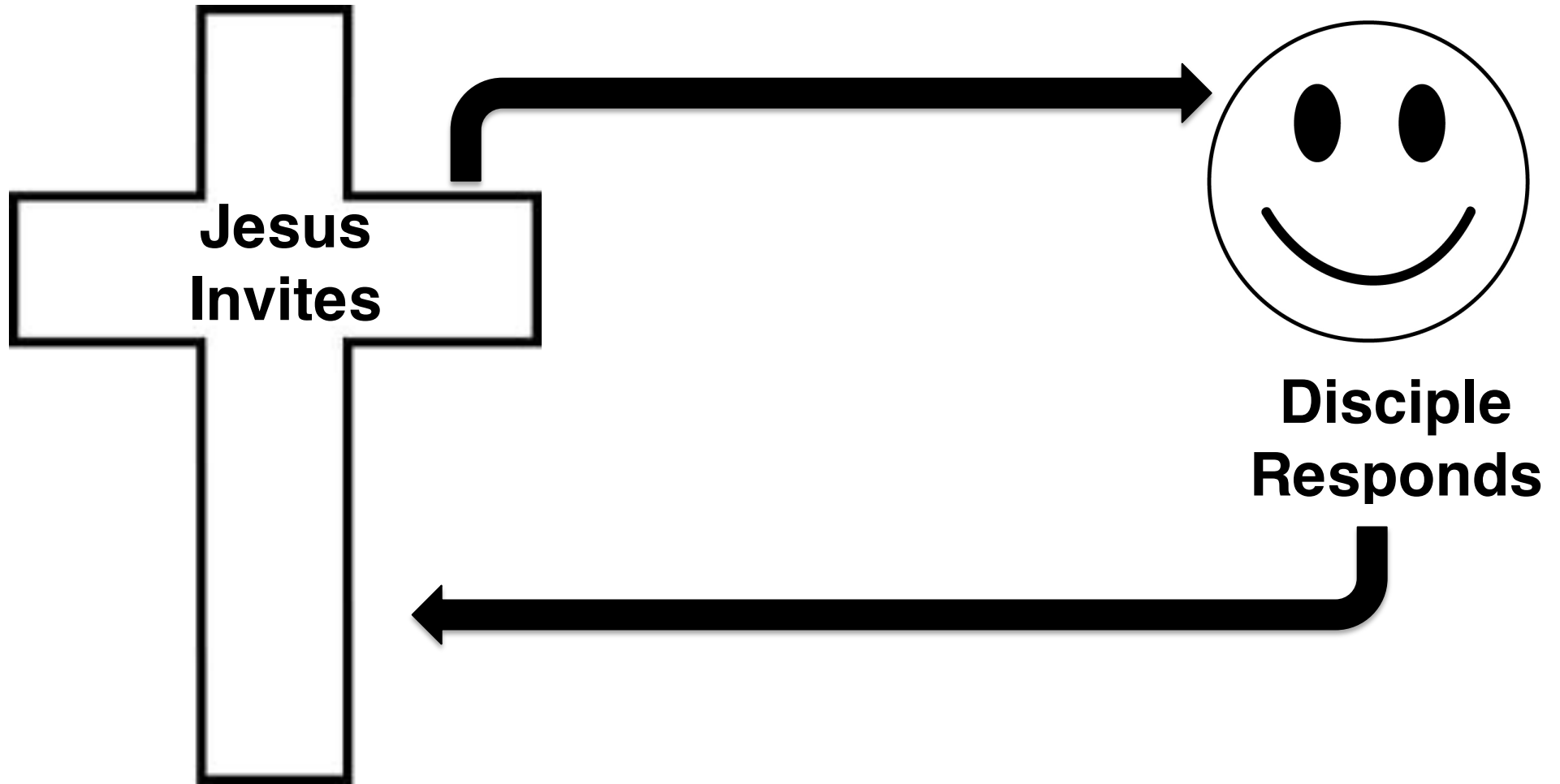
ORIGINAL S I N

COVENANT

ABRAHAM

MOSES

NEW COVENANT



Catholic Faith Words

Great Commandment the twofold command to love God above all and your neighbor as yourself. It sums up all of God's laws.