Make a Tree Mural

Materials Needed

several copies each of *Leaves* p. 2 printed on green paper and *Fruit* p. 3 printed on white paper; a copy of *Correspondences* p. 4; scissors; stapler, tape or thumb tacks; brown paper or fabric, e.g. grocery bags, to create trunk and branches; crayons or markers to color fruit; stuffed animals and birds

Prepare in Advance

Identify a place to build a tree—a wall, bulletin board, window or door. Gather materials and supplies. Print pages. *Optional*: To save time, create a trunk and branches on the wall before the lesson begins



Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a tree that reached to heaven. While the tree appeared beautiful to him, it was not really good. It only pictured how great he thought he was. When we don't recognize that our talents and energy are a gift from the Lord, we too can think the things we've done show how great we are. This selfish attitude in us has to be completely removed—just as Nebuchadnezzar's tree was cut down—if we are to enter heaven. A new and completely different tree can then grow in its place. The Lord forms the new tree from the stump that is left. This beautiful tree is described in the Word in Psalm 1, verses 1-3:

Blessed are those who walk not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of the scornful;
But their delight is in the law of the Lord,
And in His law they meditate day and night.
They shall be like trees
Planted by rivers of water,
That bring forth their fruit in its season,
Their leaf also shall not wither;
And whatever they do shall prosper.

Children will make a mural of a fruitful tree and label it with the human qualities that correspond to the parts of the tree.

1. In what ways are trees useful? They make oxygen, grow fruit, provide lumber, are a habitat for birds and animals, provide shade and shelter, etc.
2. The Word often compares people with trees. Sometimes trees in the Word represent people who lead lives based on the Word.

continued on next page

New Church Concept
People and Trees

In the Word a person is compared to a tree. The truths of faith are compared to leaves, and forms of the good of charity to fruit; the seeds from which new trees grow correspond to truths which spring from good, or to faith which springs from charity. See *Arcana Coelestia* 8326

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Make a Tree Mural continued

3. Sometimes they represent people who are selfish. In this story the beautiful tree is a picture of the great height of Nebuchadnezzar's selfishness. He thought he was doing fine all by himself—that he didn't need the Lord.
4. When Daniel warned him to change his actions he did not listen or change, and so the dream came true. He was cut off from his life and became like an animal.
3. A new tree would grow from the roots and base of the trunk, which were left in the ground. This is like the change that happens in us when we turn away from being selfish and turn towards the Lord in His Word.
4. We are going to make a tree mural that shows how we can grow in the Lord. Read Psalm 1:1-3 from the previous page.
5. Start by creating the trunk and roots. Crinkle and twist the paper before fixing it to the wall or bulletin board with tape, staples or thumb tacks to make the finished tree look as if it has bark and is three dimensional. If using grocery bags, cut them open and tape into long strips.
6. Hand out scissors and copies of the *Leaves* (p. 2)printed on green paper. Stack several pieces of paper on top of each other before cutting the leaves out to make things go faster. Attach the leaves to the branches.
7. Distribute copies of the *Fruit* (p. 3). Color and cut out the fruit and attached them to the branches.
8. Arrange stuffed animals and birds on or around the tree.
9. Cut apart the *Correspondences* (p. 4) and fasten the signs to the tree near the part of the tree they describe.

New Church Concept Trees

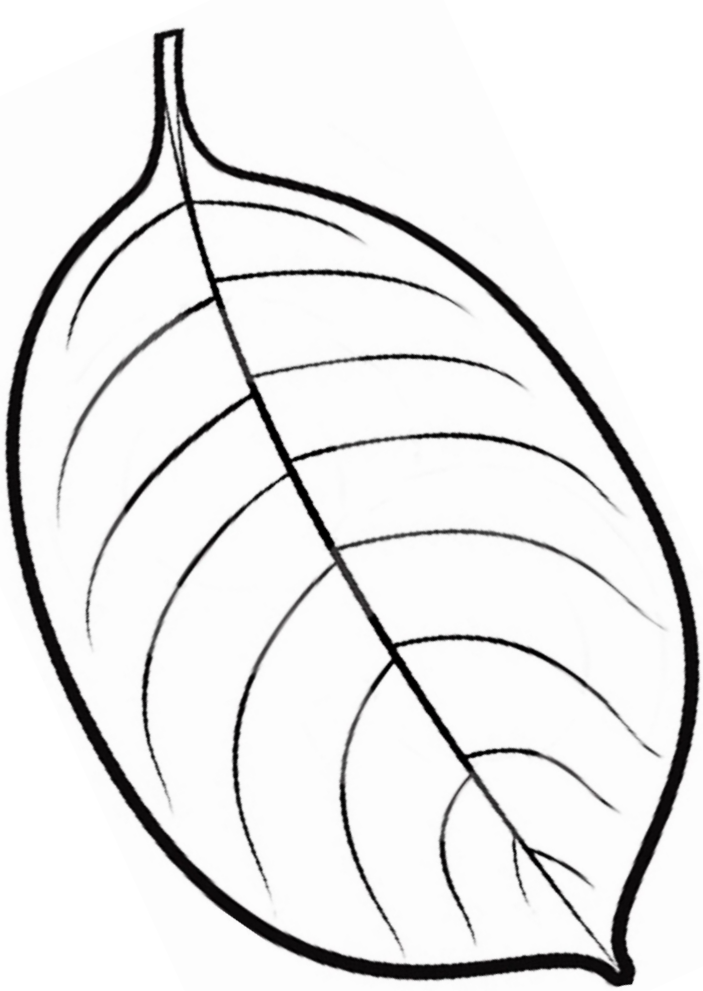
Our early childhood is like the sprout of the tree emerging out of the ground from its seed. Our youth and young adulthood are like that sprout growing into a trunk with slender branches. The earthly truths that we first take in are like the leaves. Our first steps into the marriage of what is good and what is true are like the flowers a tree brings forth. The good deeds done from a caring spirit are like the fruit. The propagation of wisdom from love is like the seeds. In the Word, we are described as trees, and our wisdom, arising from love, is described as a garden. See *Divine Providence* 332.3

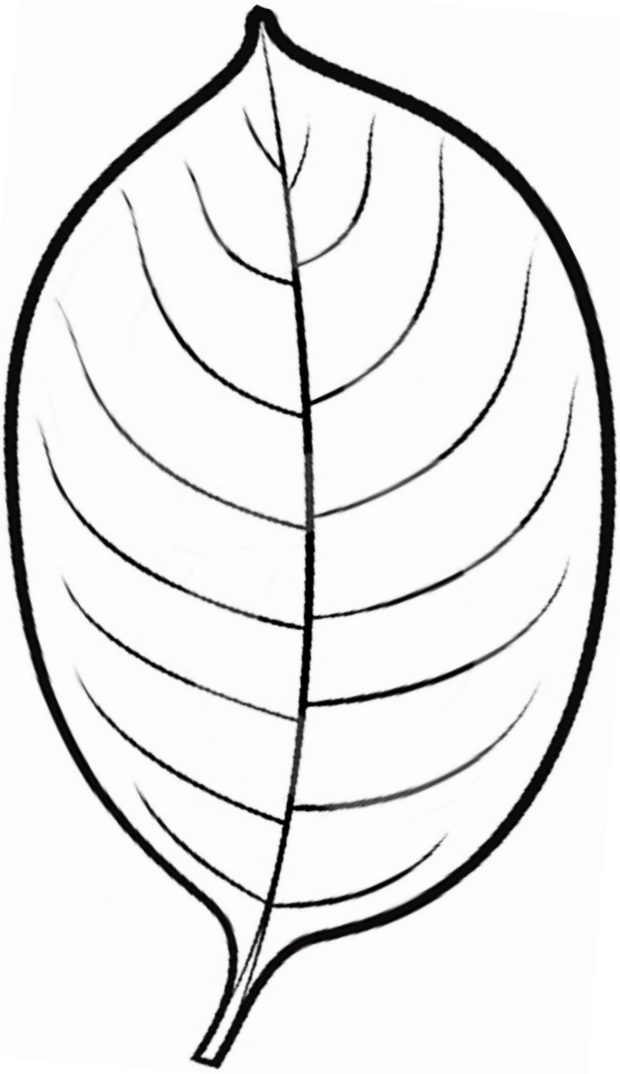
New Church Concept: The Stump

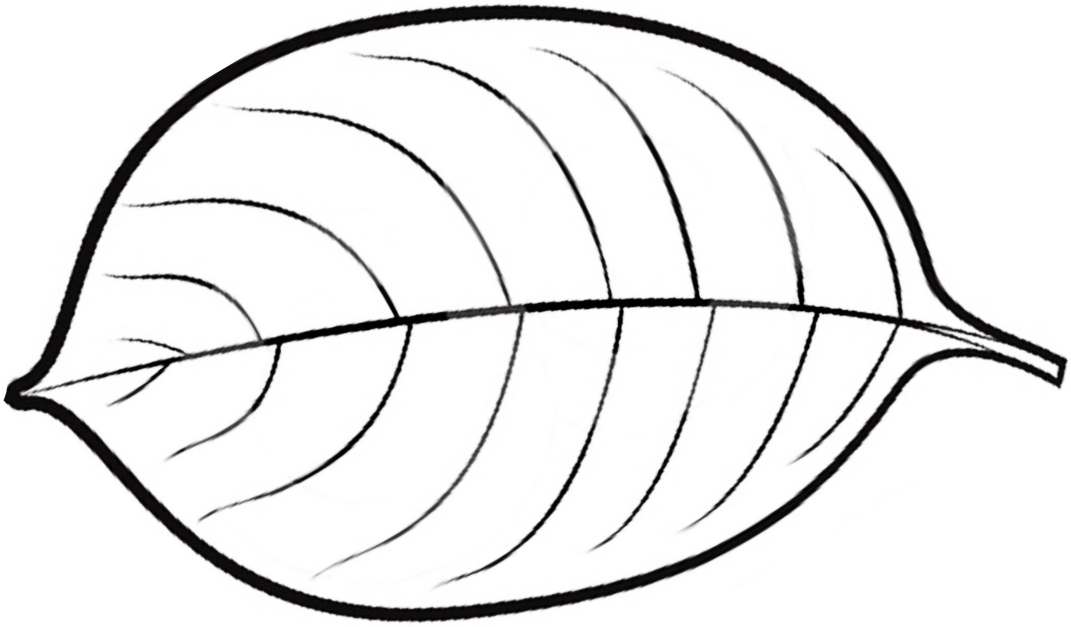
The stump of the roots which they should leave [in the ground] means the Word being understood as to the letter only, which is knowledge in the memory. The bands of iron and brass mean that the interior truths and goods are closed up and bound. When separated from interior things outermost things are falsities and evils. And since a person is then almost like a beast in understanding and will, for evils of the affections and falsities of the thoughts are dominant, it is said that his portion shall be with the beast, and that his heart shall be changed from man's, and the heart of a beast shall be given to him. This change took place because Nebuchadnezzar claimed to himself a right over holy things and over heaven. See *Apocalypse Explained* 650.32

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Leaves

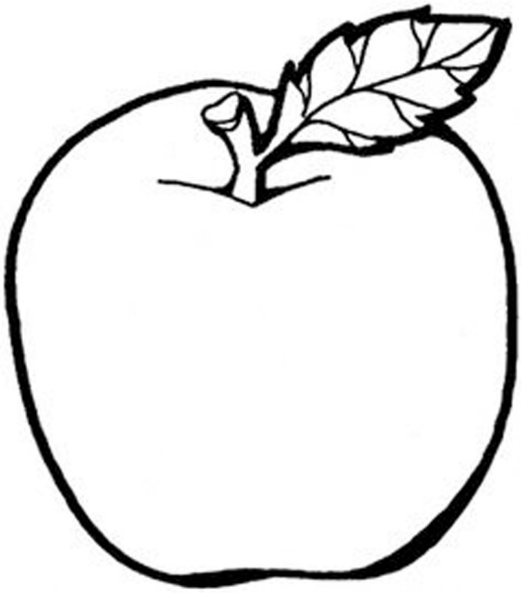


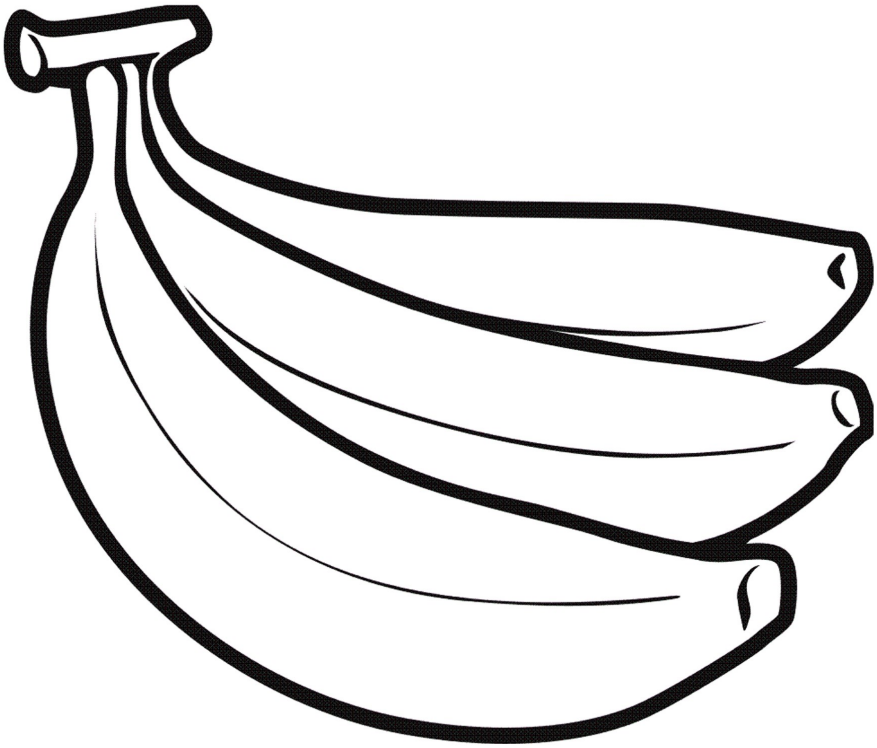




Fruit









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Correspondences

Fruit

Good actions we do because we love the Lord and want to obey Him. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 885)

Leaves

True ideas from the Word. (*Arcana Coelestia* 885)

Roots

We must be rooted in the Lord's Word. (*Doctrine of Life* 93)

Flowers

Happy thoughts from the joy of useful service. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 5116)

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