

# Ages 3-6: The Golden Calf

## Materials Needed

*The Golden Calf Template*, sturdy disposable plates, scissors, glue, yellow play dough (see recipe below) or modeling clay  
*optional*: elbow macaroni, gold paint

## Prepare in Advance

Print *The Golden Calf Template* for each child. For very young children, cut out and glue the calf to the plates before class. Cut several at once by stacking several templates carefully, so the pictures line up, and cutting a circle around the calf. Gather other supplies. If wished, paint the macaroni gold.

## Play Dough

Ingredients (US measures):

Mix in a saucepan:

1 cup flour  
½ cup salt  
1 tablespoon cream of tartar

Add:

1 cup water  
yellow food coloring

Stir until thoroughly mixed. Cook on medium heat until thickened and jelly-like, stirring constantly. Turn out on a table or wax paper to cool. Knead while warm.

For video directions, see [www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-play-dough/](http://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-play-dough/).

Moses spent many days on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments. The children of Israel could not see him. They asked Aaron to make them a false god they could see that was like the false gods they remembered from Egypt. Aaron took their golden earrings, shaped them into a calf and set up an altar to worship the calf.

Children will make a model of the golden calf on a plate and decorate it with macaroni “earrings” to show that the children of Israel stopped listening to the Lord.



1. If you have not prepared ahead of time, ask children to cut around the *Golden Calf Template* in a big circle and glue it to a disposable plate.
2. Give each child a ball of play dough. Invite them to fashion the play dough into a calf, following the lines on the template. Some may choose to make just the body. Others may also form legs, head, etc.
3. *Optional*: Give each child a handful of macaroni elbow “earrings” to press into the calf to remember how the calf was made. You could invite children to pretend the macaroni noodles are earrings by holding them up to their ears and then “taking them off” before pressing them into the calf.
4. What happened to the calf when Moses came down from the mountain?
5. The calf the children of Israel made had to be destroyed because making it broke one of the Ten Commandments.

## New Church Concept Teacher Background

The people gathering to Aaron means that they turned to the externals of the Word, of the church, and of worship. Aaron represents these externals separate from the internals because in Moses' absence he was the head of the nation. Moses represents the Word in the internal and the external sense. This can be seen from the fact that Aaron made the calf, proclaimed a feast and did not restrain the people. People who separate the internal of the Word, of the church, and of worship from the external, separate it from the holy Divine. For the internal of these is their spirit; but the external is the body of this spirit, and the body without the spirit is dead. Accordingly to worship what is dead is to worship an idol, in this case to worship the golden calf and to proclaim a feast to it. See *Arcana Coelestia* 10397.

