

Ages 7-10: The Offerings of Cain and Abel

Materials Needed
copies of *The Offerings* and *The Altar* printed in color on stiff paper for each student; scissors; split pins, brads or paper clips
optional: colored pencils or crayons if color printing is not available

Prepare in Advance
Print *The Offerings* and *The Altar* on stiff paper. Gather other supplies.

New Church Concept Teacher Background

When they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. The meaning is that while both faith and charity grew out of the doctrine concerning faith, faith detached from love could not help completely devaluing charity and in this way extinguishing it. People do the same thing today when they claim that faith alone will save them even if they never perform a single act of neighborly love. So their theory itself annihilates charity, even though they recognize and pay lip service to the idea that faith does not save unless there is love. See *Arcana Coelestia* 369

Children will create a moving project to show that Cain brought a food offering, and Abel brought an animal offering to the Lord.

1. Cain and Abel brought offerings to the Lord. Why did the Lord accept Abel's offering, but not Cain's? (Abel's worship of the Lord was genuine, and Cain's was not.)
2. Cain's offering represents doing something you know is right, but not because you love others. Abel's offering represents doing what is right because you love the Lord and love others. Can you think of examples like this in our own lives? For example, think of a time when you were asked to say "thank you". Did you really mean it? Or did you just say "thanks" because you had to?
3. We will make a moving project of the offerings to help remember this story. Hand out *The Offerings* and *The Altar* pages. *Optional*: If color printing was not available, hand out colored pencils or crayons to add color to the pictures.
4. Distribute scissors and have students cut out *The Altar* on the pale gray lines.
5. Polk at hole in the black dot in the center of *The Altar* with a split pin. Alternatively, un-bend a paper clip and stick one end through the black dot.
6. Polk a hole through the black dot at the center of *The Offerings* page. Push the ends of the split pin through this hole as well and spread it out to hold the two pieces together. Alternatively, bend the paperclip on the front and back to hold the pieces in place.
7. Rotate the altar to show Abel's name, with his offering, or Cain's name, with his offering. As you move the circle, think about why the Lord could accept Abel's offering, but not Cain's offering.



New Church Concept Teacher Background

'Murders of every kind' include enmity, hatred, and revenge of every kind, which breathe murder, for murder lies hidden in them, like fire in wood underneath the ashes. Infernal fire is nothing else, and this is the origin of the expressions to 'kindle with hatred,' and to 'burn with revenge.' All these are 'murders' in the natural sense. But in the spiritual sense 'murders' mean all methods of killing and destroying the souls of people, which are varied and many. And in the highest sense 'murder' means to hate the Lord. These three kinds of 'murder' form a one, and cleave together, for someone who wills the murder of a person's body in this world, after death wills the murder of their soul, and wills the murder of the Lord, for they burn with anger against Him and desire to blot out His name. See *Doctrine of Life* 67



