

Week 14 Home Study

Lesson Plan for Middle School Faith Formation Home Study

Supplies you might need:

1. A Catholic family or teen Bible (go to USCCB for approved Bible translations)
2. An electronic device with reliable internet access
3. Sticky notes
4. Art or any unlined paper
5. Crayons, markers and pencils
6. Supplies mentioned in the appropriate grade-level Circle of Grace lesson(s) that you will be covering. Most of these items are simply printouts of the support resources included in the body of the lesson plans.

Opening prayer:

Before we begin today's lesson, let's take a moment to open our hearts and minds in prayer. This time helps us center our focus on God, invite His presence into our study, and prepare ourselves to receive His wisdom and guidance. Whether you're studying alone or with family, take a few quiet moments to pray sincerely.

Lesson to complete: Circle of Grace

This week we will be discussing how Jesus teaches us to love and respect ourselves and others. This will be accomplished by presenting the children's annual Safe Environment curriculum, called Circle of Grace, mandated by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Each year, every learner (Grades K through 12) in the Archdiocese is expected to be presented with their appropriate grade-level material in this regard. This is one of the many responses to the comprehensive [CHARTER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE](#) issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops ("USCCB") in June 2002.

This initiative was launched in direct response to the Church's sexual abuse crisis in this country. As Cardinal DiNardo states, the Circle of Grace program, "... is centered on helping children and young

people understand their own sacredness, the sacredness of others, and how to seek help through their relationships with trusted adults. It also teaches a culture of respect and faith that goes beyond mere protection.” As we should recall from the story of Creation in the Book of Genesis (see [Genesis 1: 25-28](#)), we believe that all human beings, as God’s crown jewels of His Creation, are created in the likeness and image of God Himself (“imago dei”), meant for nothing more than to reflect His love and light into the world and to be in relationship with Him. In this, God also grants humanity responsibility for the good stewardship (or care) for all of Creation, including each other.

From these realities flow our inviolable dignity as human beings from the moment of conception until the time of our natural death. God alone is the author of all life which we are called to care for in all of its forms and conditions. Our inherent human dignity affects how we are called to live out relationships with each other and also how we are to care for ourselves, i.e., with respect. God intends for all of our relationships to be experiences of divine love (remember the reflecting God’s love reason for our creation?).

Respectful, nurturing, loving relationships increase our understanding of not only our own value in the eyes of God, but also that of others. Remembering this helps us to LOVE divinely (as God does) and to see the world, and those who share it with us, as our Creator does. All grade levels will be presented with their Circle of Grace (COG) lessons this week with you, the Parent Catechist, leading your child(ren) in recognizing how God (through the Holy Spirit) is always present with them in their Circle of Grace. God wants us to be healthy and safe from harm.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Circle of Grace grade-level lessons have been condensed by the publisher into an ‘at home’ version for relative ease of implementation in one sitting and not over multiple weeks (as would occur on campus). These lessons are meant to be presented to your learner by a mentor catechist (parent or guardian). This is not a lesson which should be turned over to a child (of any age) to be completed by themselves, as there are certain prompts and activities that need to be navigated through and important topics to be discussed by parent and child. If you commit to reading through the lessons beforehand, you will be able to easily cover this important content with your child or children.

Once you have completed this lesson with your child or children, please complete the [COG PARENT VERIFICATION FORM](#) and return it to my attention at cwhite@stlaurence.org.

6th Grade: [6th Grade Circle of Grace](#)

7th Grade: [7th Grade Circle of Grace](#)

8th Grade: [8th Grade Circle of Grace](#)

Closing Prayer:

As we wrap up today's study, let's take a few moments to thank God for what we've learned and ask Him to help us live it out. Ending in prayer helps us reflect on the lesson and commit it to our hearts and actions.

The Saint of the week:

St. Maria Goretti was a young girl of deep faith who showed extraordinary courage, purity, and forgiveness. At just 11 years old, she chose to defend her dignity and resist sin, even when it cost her life. As she lay dying, she forgave her attacker, offering her suffering to God. Her powerful example of mercy and virtue in the face of violence has inspired countless people to pursue holiness and forgiveness. St. Maria reminds us that true strength lies in purity, love, and the grace to forgive. Learn more about her here: [St. Maria Goretti](#).