Child Protection Curriculum

Circle of Grace

In 2021, the Diocese of Knoxville adopted the *Circle of Grace* curriculum (2018) for implementation in the 2022 school year. This curriculum replaces the “Keeping Kids Safe Curriculum” previously used for pre-kindergarten through Grades 12. The *Circle of Grace* curriculum was developed by the Archdiocese of Omaha in response to the mandate of the U.S. Bishops’ *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. The curriculum extends the scope of the mandate for a safe environment program by teaching a culture of respect and faith that goes beyond mere protection. This program helps children and young people understand three fundamental concepts: 1) Their own sacredness, 2) the sacredness of others, and 3) how to seek help through their relationships with trusted adults.

The *Circle of Grace* is a metaphor for the love and goodness of God that surrounds every person. It is the recognition that God is with us always and is there to help us in difficult situations. Through the *Circle of Grace Curriculum* Program, catechists assist children and youth to recognize God’s love by understanding that each of us lives and moves within a *Circle of Grace*. Every person’s *Circle of Grace* encompasses who he/she is in his/her body and includes his/her senses. It holds a person’s very essence in mind, heart, soul, and sexuality. This holistic concept allows children and youth to identify uncomfortable situations long before any inappropriate actions may occur and includes ways for young people to seek the help of a trusted adult. The *Circle of Grace PreK-12 Program* goals and objectives are met in all grades. A *Summary of Key Concepts* is attached.