

Circle of Grace

Safe Environment Training

Your Circle of Grace and Others

Grade 1 – Lesson Plan

Philosophy

What is a Circle of Grace?

The Catholic Church teaches that God has created each of us as unique and special. Genesis 1:27 tells us that we are created “male and female in God’s image” and that God saw this as “very good.” In that goodness, we are meant to respect ourselves and everyone else as persons created and loved by God.

Adults assist children to recognize God’s love by helping them to understand that each of us lives and moves in a *Circle of Grace*. You can imagine your own *Circle of Grace* by putting your arms above your head then circle down in front of your body including side to side. This circle, front to back, holds who you are in your body and through your senses. It holds your very essence in mind, heart, soul, and sexuality.

Why is it important to help our children understand the Circle of Grace?

God intends our relationships in life to be experiences of divine love. Respectful, nurturing, loving relationships increase our understanding of our own value and help us to love others. It is never too early to help children understand how very special they are and how relationships in life are called to be sacred. Understanding this can help them to protect the special person they are and to be respectful of others.

Adults, as they strive to provide a safe and protective environment, hold the responsibility to help children understand and respect their own dignity and that of others. A truly safe and protective environment is one where children recognize when they are safe or unsafe and know how to bring their concerns, fears, and uncertainties to the trusted adults in their lives.

How is the Circle of Grace Curriculum different from other safety programs?

According to research, one in four girls and one in seven boys will be sexually abused by age eighteen.¹ Many protection programs focus on “stranger danger,” however, up to ninety percent of the time the perpetrator is a relative, family friend or other person known to the child/young person. *Circle of Grace* goes beyond just protection by helping children understand the sacredness of who they are and how to seek help through their relationships with trusted adults.

Goal of the Circle of Grace Curriculum - Grades K-12

The goal of the *Circle of Grace* curriculum is to educate and empower children and young people to actively participate in a safe environment for themselves and others.

Objectives of the Circle of Grace Curriculum - Grades K-12

- Children/Young People will understand they are created by God and live in the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Children/Young People will be able to describe the *Circle of Grace* which God gives each of us.
- Children/Young People will be able to identify, discern and maintain appropriate physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual boundaries.
- Children/Young People will be able to identify all types of boundary violations.
- Children/Young People will demonstrate how to take action if any boundary is threatened or violated.

¹ www.usccb.org, or <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov>

Grade 1 Leader Guidelines

- A **Leader** is defined as clergy (priest or deacon) school administrator, director of religious education/formation, teacher, catechist, or youth minister who has been trained to teach the *Circle of Grace* Curriculum.
- Every leader should read the Philosophy, Goals and Key Concepts to better understand and prepare to teach the *Circle of Grace*. The Key Concepts review the essence of the curriculum, that God is always present in our *Circle of Grace* because He desires an intimate relationship with His children.
- The time frame may vary depending on size of class, age of children, amount of discussion, etc.
- Vocabularies with definitions are intended for the leader. The explanation of vocabulary should be integrated within the context of the lessons to assist the children in their understanding of the *Circle of Grace* Curriculum. The depth of the children's understanding will depend upon their age and developmental stage. A master vocabulary list of the *Circle of Grace* Curriculum is in the administrator/director section. The pertinent vocabulary is listed in each lesson.
- Leader's instructions for each lesson are italicized. Non-italicized text needs to be presented by the leader to the students.
- The Red Signal, Green Signal Activity may be adapted to a Happy, Neutral, and Sad Face Activity if the leader believes the children have not been exposed to a traffic signal.
- If possible, it is always "best practice" to have two adults in the room during the lesson due to the sensitive nature of the material.
- The lesson should be taught in one session. If that is not possible, it needs to be taught the following day/week. Ongoing reinforcement of the concepts is encouraged throughout the year. Hopefully, the language of *Circle of Grace* will become a part of a positive culture of respect, care, and faith that will help protect our children and help them to know what to do when they feel unsafe.
- Your School Administrator, or Religious Education Director, will be sending out a letter to all parents regarding *Circle of Grace*. Lesson specific parent information should be handed out as directed. The parent information is included in the curriculum. Every parish/school is encouraged to provide parent education opportunities both to inform parents about the *Circle of Grace* Curriculum and to foster greater communication in families.
- Evaluations for each grade are to be completed and returned to the School Administrator or the Director of Religious Education/Formation. The evaluations will be used to complete the Summary Evaluation that is used for ongoing improvement of the curriculum and for the audit records.

Summary of the Key Concepts of “Circle of Grace”



God gives each of us a Circle of Grace (see below) where He is always Present:

Raise your hands above your head, then bring your outstretched arms slowly down.

*Extend your arms in front of you and then behind you embrace all of the space around you
slowly reach down to your feet.*

*Know that **God** is in this space with you. This is your **Circle of Grace**; you are in it.*

God is Present because He desires a relationship with us.

- God is with us when we are happy and sad. God does not cause bad things to happen to us. He loves us very much.
- God desires to help us when we are hurt, scared or confused (unsafe).
- Having faith may not take away all of life’s struggles. It is because of these struggles, God promised to always be present; providing guidance and comfort in our time of need.

God helps us know what belongs in our Circle of Grace

- Our feelings help us know about ourselves and the world around us.
- God helps us know what belongs in our *Circle of Grace* by allowing us to experience peace, love or contentment when something or someone good comes into our *Circle of Grace*.

God helps us know what does not belong in our Circle of Grace

- God desires to help us when we are hurt, scared or confused (unsafe).
- The Holy Spirit prompts (alerts) us that something does not belong in our *Circle of Grace* by giving us “a funny or uncomfortable feeling” that something is not safe. This feeling is there because God wants us to be safe.

God helps us know when to ask for help from someone we trust.

- God gives us several trusted adults, in addition to our parents, to talk to about our worries, concerns or “funny/ uncomfortable feelings” so they can help us be safe. If a parent or trusted adult is not available or unable to help us, God wants us to go to another trusted adult until we get the help needed to be safe.

Your Circle of Grace and Others

Sometimes children reveal personal information or details about incidents that, in order to respect confidentiality, need to be handled outside of the group environment. If this happens, tell the child, "Thank you for sharing that, _____. That sounds really important. I will talk to you about that later (at the end of class, at the break, as soon as humanly possible, etc.)." When this happens, be sure you talk to the child at your first opportunity and alert the administration. Remember that you are the responsible reporter in cases of suspected abuse.

This lesson complements the following Catholic teachings:

- We are all Children of God
- As Children of God, we are unique and loved by Him
- Jesus teaches us how to love and respect God and others and self
- We are all called to do good

Lesson Goals

Children will come to understand and describe the concept of a *Circle of Grace*.

Children will be able to identify safe and unsafe situations.

Children will demonstrate how to take action if they feel unsafe or are not sure if someone or something is unsafe

Lesson Objectives

Children will be able to:

1. Demonstrate his/her own *Circle of Grace*.
2. Describe what makes a person's *Circle of Grace* a holy space.
3. Identify the behaviors appropriate for the *Circle of Grace*.
4. Understand that God does not want or cause bad things to happen to them and that God is with them and for them even when they are hurting or sad.
5. Learn how to recognize when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*.
6. Be able to recognize safe and unsafe situations/secrets in a person's *Circle of Grace*.
7. Name two or three trusted adults (in addition to their parents) who they can seek out for help.
8. Practice asking for help.

Materials Needed

Part 1

1. Symbols (examples: stop sign, Nike swoosh, slippery when wet sign, peace symbol, etc.)
2. *Circle of Grace* Logo color (end of the lessons)
3. *Circle of Grace* Logo Black and White (end of the lesson)

4. Whiteboard or chalkboard
5. Chart paper or flip chart paper to make a “happy/sad face chart”
6. (Optional) *Circle of Grace* Song (in the Administrator/Director section)
7. Circle of Grace Meditation Link: <https://vimeo.com/207836764>

Part 2

1. Large picture of a traffic signal with all three colors visible - red, yellow, and green (end of the lesson)
2. One set of red, yellow, and green circle cards for the leader, the backside of each colored card should be white and the front side red, yellow, or green. Put the circle cards on a popsicle stick so they look more like the signal in a traffic signal. (template is at the of the lesson)
3. Feeling Faces Chart is optional to assist with the traffic signal activity (end of the lesson)
4. Completed Happy and Sad Face chart from part 1.
5. “Secrets” Photo Discussion poster
6. Paper, crayons/markers
7. “How to Ask for Help” handout for teacher and students (end of lesson)
8. Pictures of “Trusted Adult” from magazines
9. Parent Letter and Activity. Attach the trusted adult drawing and “how to ask for help handout ” (end of the lesson)

Part 1: What is a Circle of Grace?

Vocabulary (*Below is a guide for the leader. Children are not expected to memorize them*)

10. **Children of God**: All people are made and loved by God.
11. **Circle of Grace**: The love and goodness of God that always surrounds me and all others.
12. **Grace**: The gift of God’s goodness and love to help me live as his child.
13. **Holy**: Special because of a connection with God.
14. **Holy Spirit**: God present with and within me. The Holy Spirit helps me to remember that I belong to God. The Holy Spirit helps me to experience and live God’s love.
15. **Respect**: Being kind to others and doing what’s best for myself and others because I honor all people as Children of God.
16. **Symbol**: A picture or object that stands for something else.
17. **Trust**: Being able to count on someone to help me to stay safe within my *Circle of Grace*.

Opening Prayer

*Leader calls class to prayer by asking children to quiet down and join in the Sign of the Cross.
Then say together,*

**Holy Spirit, show us the way.
Be with us in all we think, do, and say. Amen.**

Optional Prayer- *The Circle of Grace Song (Located in the Administrator/Director Section)*

Getting Started

1. *Show symbols one at a time to the children. Ask what each represents. Make the point that symbols are a way of telling us something or reminding us of something.*
2. *Write the term "Symbol" on the board. State the vocabulary definition of symbol: a picture or object that stands for something else.*

Lesson Development

Discussion

1. *Show children the Circle of Grace symbol. Ask children what they see in the symbol.*
2. *This is a symbol for our Circle of Grace. It reminds us that God loves us and His love is always around us. Everyone has a Circle of Grace.*
3. *Review what each part represents:*
 - a. Red Circle of Grace Words - Color of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Person - Child of God
 - c. Yellow Circle - Grace
 - d. Dove - Holy Spirit
 - e. Blue Background - The World in Which We Live



Activity - Circle of Grace Link :<https://vimeo.com/207836764>

1. *Review the Circle of Grace movement. Ask children to stand with enough room around them to fully extend their arms without touching each other.*
2. *Give the following directions while modeling the desired actions:*
 - a. Raise your hands above your head
 - b. Bring your arms slowly down
 - c. Extend your arms in front of you and then behind you
 - d. Embrace all the space around you
 - e. Then reach down to your feet
 - f. Know that God is in this space with you
 - g. Tell the children, "This is the Circle of Grace in which you live."

Discussion

1. *Suggested opening: Now, we will talk about why it is important that we know about our Circle of Grace.*
2. *Ask the children: Do you remember that Jesus told us how he would always love us and always be with us? If God is always with us, we are always in a special, holy place. That place is our Circle of Grace. God is present in our Circle of Grace because he wants a close relationship with each of us. This is the place the Holy Spirit is with us and within us.*
3. *Remember that we are in a Circle of Grace with God and surrounded by God's love. God wants us to be safe and to respect ourselves and others.*

Activity - Happy and Sad Face Chart

1. *Make a chart with two columns on the poster paper/flip chart paper. Label one with happy face and the other sad face.*
2. *Ask the children: What are some nice things that other people do or say? What are some hurtful things that other people do or say? What are some nice things you do or say? What might be some hurtful things you do or say?*
3. *Allow a few responses. List on the board in the appropriate column.*
4. *Point out that words and behaviors listed in the happy face column are those that respect our Circle of Grace. The words and behaviors in the sad face column are those that do not belong in anyone's Circle of Grace.*
5. *Keep happy and sad face chart posted for future reference*

Part 2: The Traffic Signal and a Safety Plan

Vocabulary (*Below is a guide for the leader. Children are not expected to memorize them*)

1. **Bullying**: Repeatedly being mean to someone on purpose
2. **Feelings**: Something I sense inside myself (e.g., angry, sad, happy, afraid, embarrassed, confused, excited, peaceful, etc.) that gives me information about others or myself.
3. **Holy Spirit**: God present with and within me in a special way. The Holy Spirit helps me to remember that I belong to God. The Holy Spirit helps me to experience and live God's love.
4. **Safe**: I am safe when my body and my feelings are respected by me and by others.
5. **Safe Touch**: Touch that respects others and me.
6. **Secret**: A secret is something I know but do not tell.
Safe secret: A secret is safe when it does not hurt others, me and eventually will be revealed.
Unsafe secret: A secret is unsafe when I think that someone, including me, might be hurt or get in trouble if I do not tell. A secret is always unsafe if someone states you are not to tell your parents or trusted adults.
7. **Signal**: A sign that tells me something may be safe or unsafe. This may be internal or external.
8. **Traffic Signal**: A traffic light (red, yellow, green) that is a visual signal for keeping vehicles and people safe.
9. **Trust**: Being able to count on someone to help me to stay safe within my *Circle of Grace*.
10. **Trusted Adult**: A grown-up who helps me to stay safe in my *Circle of Grace* and to respect others within their *Circle of Grace*.
11. **Unsafe**: Anything that causes harm to me or others.
Unsafe touch: Touch that is disrespectful and hurts, scares, or makes me feel uncomfortable or confused.

Getting Started

Suggested comment: We are going to continue talking about words and actions that we like and don't like in our *Circle of Grace*. We will use the traffic signal to identify what doesn't belong in our *Circle of Grace*.

Discussion

1. Show a large picture of a traffic signal (sample at the end of the lessons)
2. Review the meaning of a traffic signal by asking:
 - a. Why do we have traffic signals? *Pause for answers*. The reason we have traffic signals is to protect people and keep them safe.
 - b. What does each color of the traffic signal mean? (STOP, BE CAREFUL, and GO AHEAD.)

Lesson Development

Introduction

The use of the word “signal” (instead of “light”) is intentional in order to point to the fact that a “signal” can be both internal and external. A “traffic signal”, however, is only an external reality.

Most of the time you know what is safe and good to allow in your *Circle of Grace*. Sometimes, though, you need others who respect your *Circle of Grace* to help you know what is safe and what is not, people like our parents or teachers. God has given each of us our own kind of signal to keep us safe and protected. Sometimes these signals are called feelings. Our feelings are one of the main ways the Holy Spirit helps to guide us.

Discussion

1. *Continue by saying:* Let’s review how the three colors of a traffic signal can remind us of the signals God gives us to help keep us safe and protected.
2. **Green signal** - Means GO AHEAD. Some things are definitely safe. Some examples are telling the truth, being kind and respectful, helping others, and caring about others. You are also safe when others respect your body and feelings. Could you name some other things that would always be safe to do or let someone else do with you? *(Leader points out that everything written on the happy emoji face column of the poster would be a green signal word or action.)*
3. **Red Signal** - Means STOP. Some things are unsafe and always mean trouble. *Be sure to spend some time reviewing general concepts. Ask the children to define them and what does it look like etc.* Some examples of bullying (repeatedly being mean to someone on purpose), are lying, hitting, fighting, etc. Can you help me think of other things that are never good to do or let someone do to you? *(Leader points out that everything written on the sad emoji face column of the poster would be a red signal word or action.)* When this happens, tell someone that you trust, like your mom, dad, leader, or other trusted adult.
4. **Yellow Signal** - Means BE CAREFUL. Sometimes you can’t tell if a situation is safe or unsafe. You might feel confused or unsure about it. These are like a yellow signal. It may seem like just a funny feeling in your heart or tummy. When this happens, tell someone that you trust, like your mom, dad, leader, or other trusted adult.
5. Define trusted adult and remind them there will be a discussion later in the lesson.

Activity -

Red Signal Green Signal

*The purpose of this activity is to help children learn how to identify dangerous and unsafe situations, feelings, and touch, but not to scare or shame them. Make sure to give clear and concise reasons why a situation falls into the green or yellow/red signal category. For children, it may sometimes be hard to distinguish between red and yellow situations. Take the example of a stranger coming up to them asking for help. The children may be thinking it is “good” to help someone” but “bad” to talk to strangers. They cannot discern which one takes priority. The children need to be aware of their internal process of conflicting feelings which they might be experiencing. Children will learn that when possible they should always talk to a trusted adult before acting in a red or yellow situation. **Remind children that there are always adults available to listen and talk. Children only need to ask a trusted adult for the time to talk.***

1. *The leader needs a set of red, green, and yellow circle/traffic signal cards to lead the discussion. The leader can choose whether the children should have their own set of cards to use in discussing the situations or just the leader.*
2. *Suggested instructions:*
 - In a moment, I’m going to describe some situations.
 - Please listen very carefully.
 - At the end of each, I’m going to ask you if you think the situation calls for a red signal, a yellow signal, or a green signal. I will hold up the signal and you tell me if I am right or wrong.
 - Then we’ll talk about each situation.
3. *Read each situation aloud. **Make sure to vary the order in which the green, red, and yellow situations are read.***
4. *After reading a situation, give children a moment to think and then hold up a red, green, or yellow card or have the children hold up their own card. Some situations, though clearly red to adults, may be unclear (yellow) from a child’s perspective. This activity will help children identify their own confusing feelings and to understand that they should talk to a trusted adult. Allow time for children to discuss their feelings connected with these situations. Use the Feeling Fact Chart at the end of the lesson for a reference.*
 - a. **GREEN SITUATIONS (Select two or more)**
 - Your mom or dad gives you a hug when you are sad (loved, comforted).

- You are at the doctor and your mom is with you. The doctor checks your body to make sure it is healthy (*safe, secure, embarrassed*).
 - You see your friend crying and you ask if you can give her/him a hug (*sad, caring*).
 - Your dad is planning a surprise birthday party for your mom (*happiness, excitement, anticipation*).
 - Your grandmother/grandfather wipes your tears when you fall down and hurt yourself (*loved, comforted, safe*).
 - You tell your teacher that a classmate is being mean on purpose (*embarrassed, sorry, happy that you told*).
 - You decide not to laugh when a classmate falls down and cries even though your friends are laughing (*sad, happy that you did not make fun of them*).
- b. YELLOW/RED SITUATIONS (*Select three or more and reinforce they are always to talk to a trusted adult.*)
- You are playing outside your house when a group of older kids come by and ask your name. They say they will show you a new game on their phone if you go with them (*cautious, scared*).
 - Your big brother's friend wants you to play a video game your mom or dad told you not to play (*worried, afraid of getting into trouble, excited to play the game*).
 - Someone touches you in a way that you don't think is safe - even if the person says it is safe and says, "Don't tell anyone about this special time between you and me," (*funny feeling in your tummy, confused, etc.*).
 - Your friend's brother takes a picture of you with his cell phone. He asks you not to tell and states that you will get into trouble. (*guilty, afraid of punishment*).
 - You are at a family party. Someone asks you to sit on his/her lap, but you don't want to (*pressured, mad, unsure*).
 - A friend wants you to do something you don't want to do because it makes you uncomfortable (*pressured, confused*).

Activity -

Red Signal Green Signal – Secret

This Section is on Secrets.

Most offenders use secrecy as a tactic to control the child from telling about the abuse. It is important that the students understand the difference between a safe secret and a unsafe secret. This understanding could be key to them seeking help.

This activity can be a good start to helping them understand the concept of secrets.

- 1) *Make a safe secret and unsafe secret chart with two columns. This can be done on poster paper/flip chart paper (safe secret ☺ and unsafe secret ☹).*
- 2) Can you name a safe secret in the previous situations? Can you name some unsafe secrets in the previous situations? Who is involved in the secret? Is there a time that it is finally told?
- 3) Can you name additional safe and unsafe secrets? *Add them to the chart.*
- 4) *Continue by saying: "Sometimes secrets can even give us a funny feeling in our heart or tummy. A safe secret is one that does not hurt others or me and it is eventually told. A secret is unsafe when I think that someone, including me, might be hurt or get in trouble if I do not tell. It is never safe if someone tells you to not ever tell your parents/trusted adult. A good way to decide if a secret is safe or unsafe is to ask ourselves, 'Can this secret hurt me or someone else?'" "Is it a secret I can eventually tell?"*
- 5) Display each photo for the class to see. (Back of the lesson)
- 6) *Ask them the following questions:*
 - Is this a safe or unsafe secret or are you unsure?
 - How would you feel if you were the one telling the secret?
 - How would you feel if you were the one hearing the secret?
 - How would you feel if you saw the secret being told?
 - These photos are about sharing secrets, how would you know that someone has a secret and is scared to share it?



Safety Plan

Introduction

1. We have already mentioned the need to talk to a “trusted adult” when you are feeling unsafe, uncomfortable or unsure. Remember that funny/uncomfortable feeling is the Holy Spirit prompting you to seek help from a trusted adult.
2. Today we are going to learn what to do if someone comes into your *Circle of Grace* without your permission or does something that makes you feel unsafe.
3. Write “Trusted Adult” on the board.
4. Let’s review what “Trusted Adult” means.
5. Allow a few responses.
6. A trusted adult is a grown-up who helps you to stay safe in your *Circle of Grace* and to respect others within their *Circle of Grace*. Examples of trusted adults, other than your parents, could be a teacher, a neighbor, an aunt, or uncle, your grandparent, church leader, or a family friend.
7. How do you know you can trust someone?
8. Allow a few responses.
9. You know someone is trustworthy when they help you to be safe, when they tell the truth, and when they are there for you in good times and bad.

Activity - Identifying My Trusted Adults

1. Can anyone name a person who loves you and helps you to stay safe? *Encourage the children to name adults in addition to their mom and dad. You are encouraged to bring in photos or magazine clippings of typical trusted adults. These can be of parents, teachers, doctors, or clergy. It is important NOT to show the photo until it is mentioned by the children.*
2. List children’s responses on the board.
3. These are people whom you can ask to help you if you are unsafe or confused. We call these people trusted adults.
4. *Instruct the children to think of two or three trusted adults besides mom or dad who they could ask for help.*
5. Tell a person next to you the names of the trusted adults that you picked.
6. Distribute crayons/markers and paper. Instruct them to draw a picture of their trusted adults. *Remind children that mom and dad may be trusted adults even if they are not in the picture.*
7. *Attach the drawing to the Home Activity Sheet to the Parent Letter. (end of the lesson.)*
8. *Instruct the children to have their parents sign the Home Activity Sheet.*
9. *Remind the children to bring the home activity sheet back to the classroom next week. This is to ensure the parents know who their child picked as a trusted adult. Sometimes children may pick someone who is not available or inappropriate.*

Skill Introduction

How to Ask My Trusted Adult for Help

Ask the class to brainstorm a list of Red Signal or Yellow Signal times when they might need to talk to or ask a trusted adult for help. Write their suggestions on the board.

1. *Post the adapted skill poster "How to Ask for Help". (See the end of the Grade 1 Lessons.)*
 - a. Picture an eye
 - b. Picture of a child speaking/mouth
 - c. Picture of "?"
 - d. The words "Thank You"
2. Skill steps are:
 - a. Look at the person. (Picture of an eye)
 - b. Say to the person "I need help. I do not feel safe." (Picture of a child speaking/mouth)
 - c. Tell the person what is wrong, why you don't feel safe. (Picture of "?")
 - d. Tell the person, "Thank You." (Words "Thank You")
3. This is how we ask for help. You can use these steps whenever you need to ask anyone for help. Today we are going to practice how to ask for help from your parents or a trusted adult.

Role-Play Introduction

According to research we remember less of what we hear and more of what we do. Allowing children to role-play greatly increases their chances of remembering what to do when a real problem arises. It is very common for children to use play to help them understand confusing situations.

1. *Explain:* Role-play is a way to practice something new.
2. *Pair the students and give each a "How to Ask for Help" poster.*
3. *Instruct them to practice asking for help using the below skills:*
 - a. Look at the person. (Picture of an eye)
 - b. Say to the person "I need help. I do not feel safe." (Picture of a child speaking/mouth)
 - c. Tell the person why you don't feel safe (Picture of "?")
 - d. Tell the person, "Thank You." (Words "Thank You")
4. Bring the children back to a large group.

Wrapping Up

1. *Direct children's attention back to the "How to Ask for Help" Skill Handout.*
2. *Ask children to repeat the steps for "How to Ask for Help".*
3. *Encourage children to pray for and/or write a note of thanks to each of their trusted adults.*

Closing Prayer

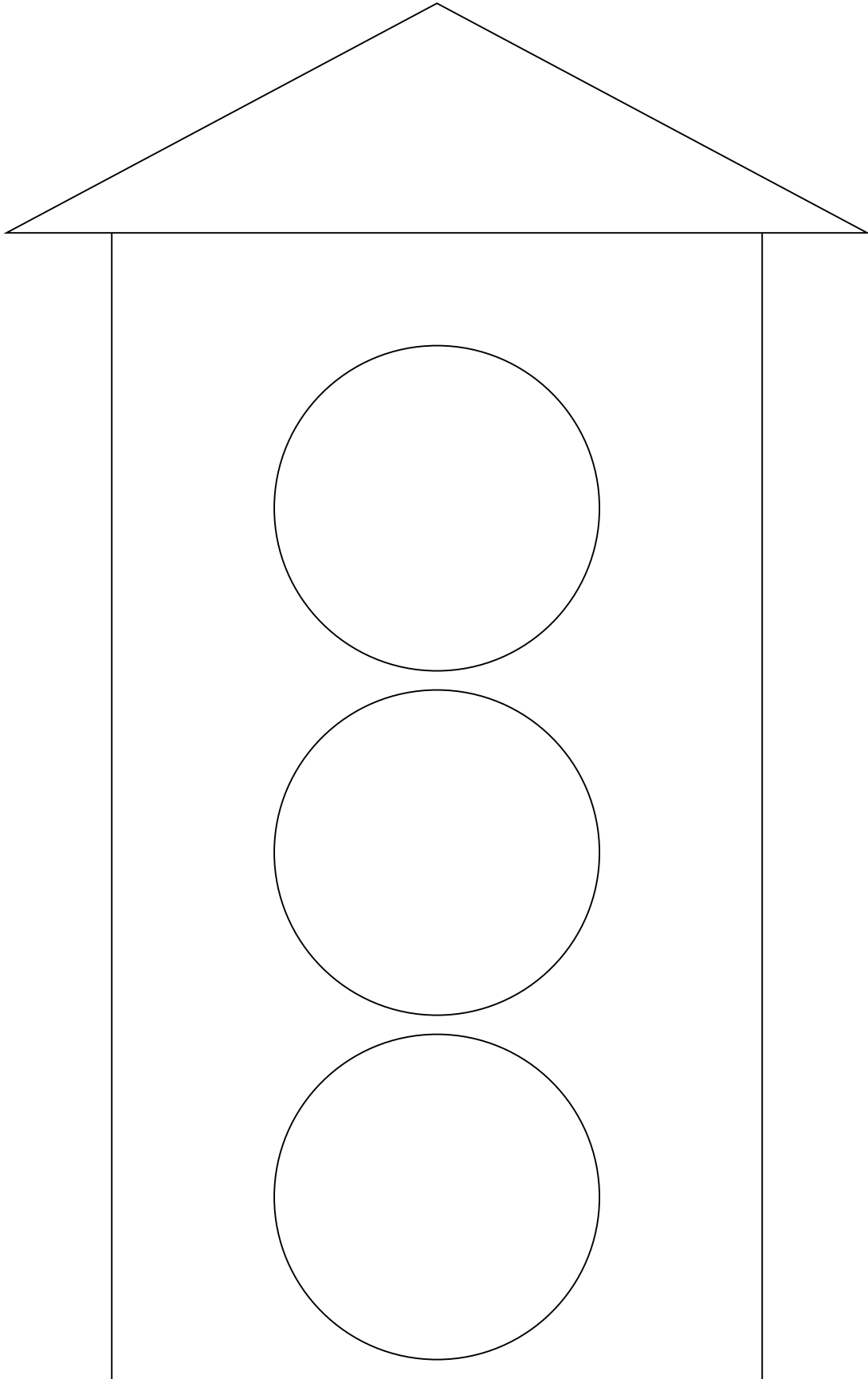
Leader calls class to prayer by asking children to quiet down and join in the Sign of the Cross. Then say together,

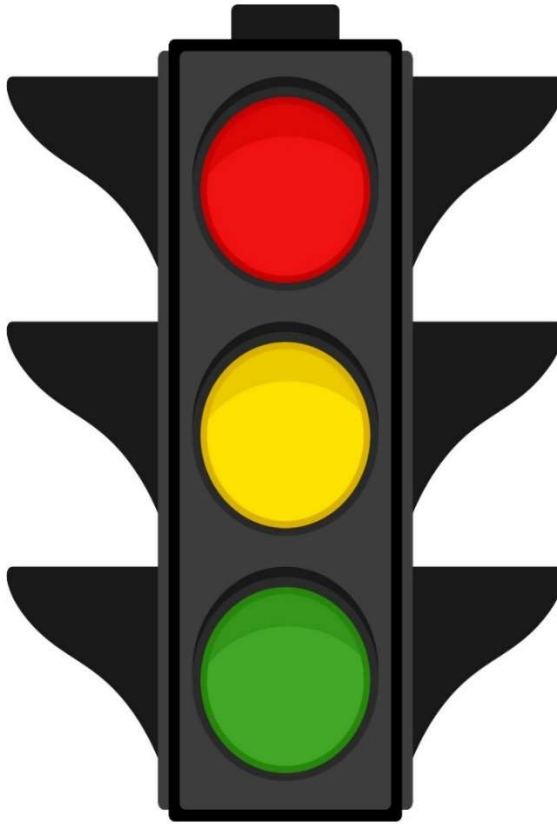
**Thank you, God,
for always being with me in my *Circle of Grace*.
Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit
who helps me know what is good.
Thank you for giving me people who care about me
and want me to be safe.
Amen.**

(



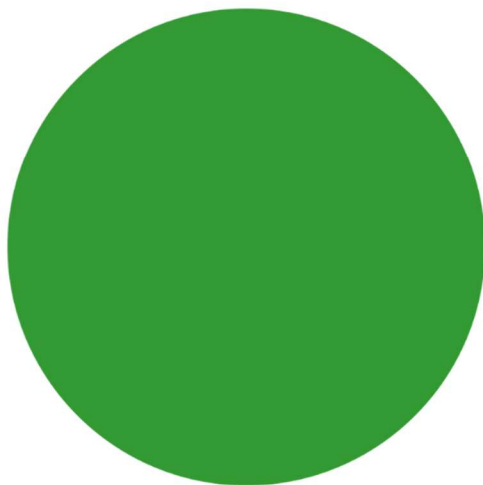
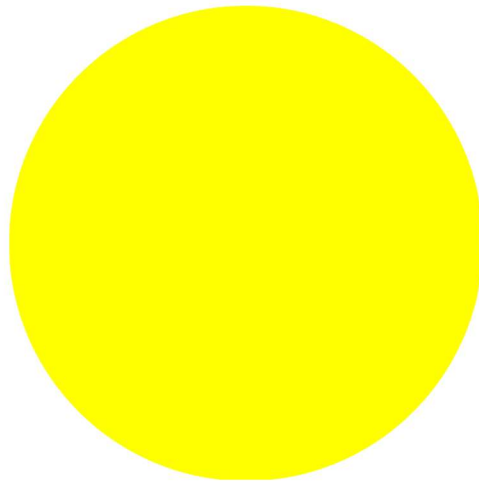
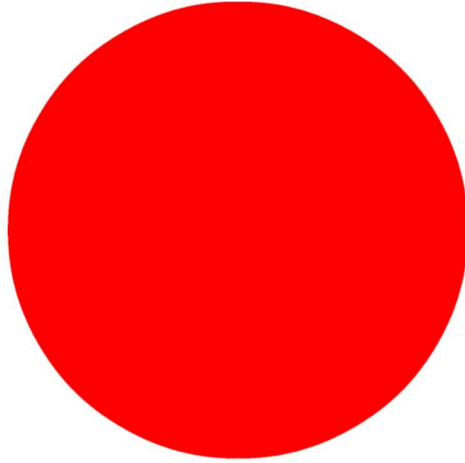






Red and Green Signal Activity

Template for a Set of Signal Cards



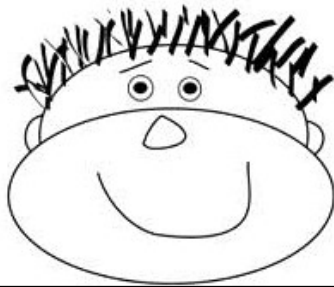
Feeling Faces Chart



Embarrassed



Frustrated



Happy



Lonely



Loved



Mad



Sad



Nervous



Proud



Relaxed



Scared



Stressed

“Secrets” Photo Discussion Poster



Is this a safe or unsafe secret or are you unsure?

How would you feel if you were the one telling the secret?

How would you feel if you were the one hearing the secret?

How would you feel if you saw the secret being told?

“Secrets” Photo Discussion Poster



Is this a safe or unsafe secret or are you unsure?

Why would an adult tell a child a secret?

What would you do if they said you couldn't tell the secret to your parents?

How would you know that someone has a secret and is scared to share it?

“Secrets” Photo Discussion Poster



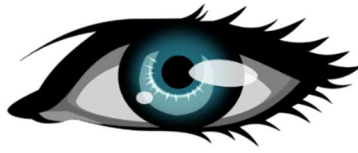
Is this a safe or unsafe secret or are you unsure?

Does the girl hearing the secret look happy or sad?

Do you think this secret can be told later?

HOW TO ASK FOR HELP

When you feel unsafe or unsure if something or someone is unsafe



LOOK AT THE PERSON



SAY TO THE PERSON "I NEED HELP. I DO NOT FEEL SAFE."



TELL THE PERSON WHY YOU DO NOT FEEL SAFE



TELL THE PERSON "THANK YOU"

Circle of Grace

Parent Letter and Activity

Your Circle of Grace and Others

Grade 1 Lesson

Circle of Grace is a faith-based curriculum used by your diocese.

Today, the Circle of Grace concept, traffic signal and safety plan were reviewed with your child.

These concepts and activities helped your child identify safe and unsafe situations/secrets and to know how to talk to a trusted adult, in addition to you. The children are taught that God does not want or cause bad things to happen to them, to understand that God is with them even when they are hurting or sad. They are able to identify when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*, and to recognize safe and unsafe situations and how to talk to a trusted adult if they feel unsafe or unsure if something or someone is unsafe.

We use the analogy of a traffic signal to connect a green signal with safe situations, a red signal with unsafe situations, and a yellow signal with situations in which a child might feel confused or unsure.

Sometimes it is hard for a child to distinguish between the yellow and red situations. When that happens, children need to talk to someone they trust like their parents, leader, or other trusted adult. Learning to be more aware of these signals helps children recognize them as one of the main ways the Holy Spirit helps to guide us.

We also talk about secrets. Most offenders use secrecy as a tactic to control the child from talking about the abuse. It is important that the students understand the difference between a good secret and a bad secret.

This understanding could be key to them seeking help.

Secret: A secret is something I know but do not tell.

Safe secret: A secret is safe when it does not hurt others or me.

Unsafe secret: A secret is unsafe when I think that someone, including me, might be hurt or get in trouble if I do not tell. A secret is always unsafe if someone states you are not to tell your parents or trusted adults.

It is important for you as parents and guardians to reinforce these concepts at home with your child. You are encouraged to talk with your child about real situations in his or her everyday life and invite your child to identify whether the situations are green (GO AHEAD, this is safe), red (STOP, this is unsafe always talk to a trusted adult before acting), or yellow (BE CAREFUL, always talk to a trusted adult before acting). There is a "how to ask for help" handout for you to review with your child.

The last part that was presented included asking children to name and draw a picture of trusted adults (in addition to their parents) and practicing asking for help. Please ask your child to show you this drawing. If your child names someone you find inappropriate, please help him/her to identify someone else.

Please contact these individuals to let them know you and your child have identified them as trusted adults. This can be done in person, by phone, or a letter. (letter-writing is a fun activity you can do with your child.) Being identified as a trusted adult will most likely make them feel honored as well as alert them to your safety plan for your child.

Please have your child return the drawing with your signature as a confirmation for us that you received this information and discussed it with your child. Please call the parish, school, or religious education office if you have questions.

Thank you for allowing us to partner in providing a Safe Environment for your child.

Grade 1 Evaluation

Date _____

Parish/School _____ City _____

Leader _____ Number of children in class _____

Each grade's curriculum was designed to meet the overall program objectives.

Please check whether the objectives of the *Circle of Grace* Program were met.

1. YES _____ NO _____ Children understand they are created by God and live in the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. YES _____ NO _____ Children will be able to describe the *Circle of Grace* which God gives each of us.
3. YES _____ NO _____ Children will be able to identify and maintain appropriate boundaries.
4. YES _____ NO _____ Children can identify types of boundary violations.
5. YES _____ NO _____ Children can demonstrate how to take action if a boundary is threatened or violated.

Please list what worked well and any resources that you would like to share (use back if necessary).

Please list any suggestions that would improve lessons (use back if necessary).

Return to your School Administrator or Director of Religious Education.