

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Archdiocese of Galveston – Houston
1530 Norwalk Drive, Katy, Texas 77450
(281) 578-0707 fax (281) 578-9161
epiphany@epiphanycatholic.org

Dear Parents of Kindergarteners in Epiphany's Faith Formation program:

I would like to make you aware of the information that will be taught in your student's *Circle of Grace* class this coming week. The *Circle of Grace* program replaces "Sacred and Safe" which the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston previously taught to the children. In my opinion, the *Circle of Grace* program is a great improvement. Attached is a copy of Parent Information that comes with the program guide. However, as a parent myself, I know that I would like to have additional information.

The Kindergarten 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

The goal for Part One is to demonstrate and describe a person's *Circle of Grace* (holy space) and identify the behaviors appropriate for the *Circle of Grace*. Also, an objective of this lesson is for children to be better able to identify safe and unsafe situations as well as good and bad secrets.

Part Two uses a stoplight symbol (green, red/yellow) for evaluating responses to various situations. Students will be asked to identify if the situation is "green," "yellow," or "red" and how they might feel about that situation.

- Situation examples:
 - Your grandparent wipes your tears when you fall down and hurt yourself. (This is a Green situation. Possible feelings: loved, comforted, safe)
 - You are playing at the neighborhood park. A man/woman who has said, "Hi," to you a few times comes up and asks if

you can help find his/her lost puppy. (This is a yellow/red situation. Possible feelings: sad, anxious).

- Secret examples:
 - Your dad is planning a surprise birthday party for your mom. (This is a green secret. Possible feelings may include happiness, excitement, anticipation.)
 - Someone tells you that you will get into trouble if you tell a secret to your mom and/or dad or teacher. (This is a red/yellow secret situation. Possible feelings may include being afraid of punishment.)

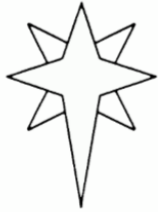
Part Three of this lesson focuses on a Safety Plan which includes identifying Trusted Adults. The children will be instructed that when they feel uncomfortable, sad, anxious or afraid of getting in trouble, they should tell a Trusted Adult. The majority of this part of the lesson will be sent home with the student. Please complete the activity at home so that students know who they can trust and turn to when they feel that their *Circle of Grace* has been compromised.

If you have any questions or would like to see the lesson plans please contact me. Parents are encouraged to join the class for the Circle of Grace lesson.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "LouAnn Svoboda".

LouAnn Svoboda
Director of Religious Education



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Dear Parents of First Grade Students in Epiphany's Faith Formation program:

I would like to make you aware of the information that will be taught in your student's *Circle of Grace* classes during the next two weeks of faith formation. The *Circle of Grace* program replaces "Sacred and Safe" which the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston previously taught to the children. In my opinion, the *Circle of Grace* program is a great improvement. Attached is a copy of Parent Information that comes with the program guide. However, as a parent myself, I know that I would like to have more specific information.

The First-Grade 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

The goal is to demonstrate and describe a person's *Circle of Grace* (holy space), identify the behaviors appropriate for the *Circle of Grace* and learn to recognize when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*. A stoplight symbol (green, red/yellow) will be used for evaluating responses to various situations. Students will be asked to identify if the situation is "green," "yellow," or "red" and how they might feel about that situation.

- Situation examples:
 - Your grandparent wipes your tears when you fall down and hurt yourself. (This is a Green situation. Possible feelings: loved, comforted, safe)
 - Your big brother's friend wants you to play a video game your mom or dad told you not to play. (This is a yellow/red

situation. Possible feelings: worried, afraid of getting into trouble, excited to play the game.)

- Examples of good and bad secrets:
 - Your parents plan to get a puppy but don't tell you until they bring it home. (This is a green secret. Possible feelings may include surprised, loved.)
 - Your teenage neighbor tells you that you will get into trouble if you tell your mom and/or dad what he/she showed you on the computer. (This is a yellow/red secret. Possible feelings may include afraid of punishment.)

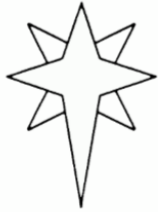
This lesson concludes with a Safety Plan in which students identify Trusted Adults. Students will demonstrate how to take action if boundaries are threatened or violated. They will name three Trusted Adults (in addition to their parents) whom they could seek out for help. A "Trusted Adult: Home Activity Sheet for Parents" will be sent home with the students.

If you have any questions or would like to see the lesson plans please contact me. Parents are encouraged to join the class for the Circle of Grace lesson.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "LouAnn Svoboda".

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Dear Parents of Second Grade Students in Epiphany's Faith Formation program:

I would like to make you aware of the information that will be taught in your student's *Circle of Grace* classes during the next two faith formation classes. The *Circle of Grace* program replaces "Sacred and Safe" which the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston previously taught to the children. In my opinion, the *Circle of Grace* program is a great improvement. Attached is a copy of Parent Information that comes with the program guide. However, as a parent myself, I know that I would like to have more specific information.

The Second-Grade 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

The goal is to demonstrate and describe a person's *Circle of Grace* (holy space), identify the behaviors appropriate for the *Circle of Grace* and learn to recognize when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*. Students will use *Circle of Grace* cards with pictures on them to decide if they welcome this situation into their *Circle of Grace* or would want to keep this situation out of their *Circle of Grace*.

- Card examples:
 - two girls pulling on a doll
 - Parents in an argumentative pose with a little girl in the foreground with her hands over her ears
 - An angry looking woman with her fist clenched.
 - A family sitting outside on a blanket with heads bowed in prayer.

There will be two activities using a stoplight symbol (green, red/yellow) for evaluating responses to various situations. Students will be asked to identify if the situation is “green,” “yellow,” or “red” and how they might feel about that situation.

- Examples of good and bad situations:
 - You are at the doctor and your mom is with you. The doctor checks your body to make sure it is healthy (This is a Green situation. Possible feelings may include: safe, secure, embarrassed.)
 - During school a classmate tries to cheat from your test. They whisper not to tell or they will beat you up. (This is a yellow/red situation. Possible feelings: mad, anxious, pressured.)

- Examples of good and bad secrets:
 - Your parents are planning a fun vacation but don't tell you until the summer. (This is a green secret. Possible feelings may include surprised, loved.)
 - You saw your babysitter drink some of your parents' beer, but the babysitter said not to tell. (This is a yellow/red secret. Possible feelings may include fear, worried.)

The lesson concludes with a Safety Plan in which students identify Trusted Adults. Students will demonstrate how to take action if boundaries are threatened or violated. They will name three Trusted Adults (in addition to their parents) whom they could seek out for help. A “Trusted Adult: Home Activity Sheet for Parents” will be sent home with the students.

If you have any questions or would like to see the lesson plan please contact me. Parents are encouraged to join the class for the Circle of Grace lesson.

Sincerely,



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Dear Parents of Third Grade Students in Epiphany's Faith Formation program:

I would like to make you aware of the information that will be taught in your student's *Circle of Grace* classes during the next two faith formation classes. The *Circle of Grace* program replaces "Sacred and Safe" which the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston previously taught to the children. In my opinion, the *Circle of Grace* program is a great improvement. Attached is a copy of Parent Information that comes with the program guide. However, as a parent myself, I know that I would like to have more specific information.

The Third-Grade lesson complements the following Catholic teachings:

- God takes care of us and is always with us.
- God calls us to a loving relationship with Himself and with others.
- The Holy Spirit helps us to live as Jesus did, making good choices.
- God calls us to be responsible for our actions.
- God teaches us to lead a healthy life and to make good choices.

The goal is to demonstrate and describe a person's *Circle of Grace* (holy space), recognize when a boundary (*Circle of Grace*) may be threatened or violated and demonstrate how to take action if boundaries are threatened or violated.

Examples of a classroom activity involve describing examples of things that are precious to us. Possible examples include the American Flag, a special set of china dishes, an autographed baseball, etc. Children will be asked to offer examples. These items will be compared with a Consecrated Host and the Blessed Sacrament. This activity concludes with the students looking into a gift box that contains a mirror, where they see themselves – very much a precious gift! "It is important to remember that all of us are deserving of special care and respect."

Students will join in a conversation and activity about boundaries and limits to their *Circle of Grace*. Examples:

- Physical boundaries: fence bathroom/bedroom doors, seat belts
- Symbolic boundaries: “Do Not Enter” signs, PG 13 movie rating, Video game parental warnings
- Internal boundaries: (a rule or limit that we carry in our heads taught to us by those who care for and recognized as the Holy Spirit nudging us)
 - acceptable volumes on radios/CD players (sensitivity to others)
 - space between you and another person
 - sensation of being full when eating
 - not playing in the street
 - *knowing* not to participate in activities we know our parents would not approve of
 - appropriate behavior in church and school

The lesson concludes with students discussing who a “Trusted Adult” is and demonstrate a “Safe Action Plan” that involves three steps:

- Say “No!”
- Get Away!
- Tell a Trusted Adult!

If you have any questions or would like to see the lesson plan please contact me. Parents are encouraged to join the class for the *Circle of Grace* lessons.

Sincerely,



LouAnn Svoboda
Director of Religious Education



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Dear Parents of Fourth Grade Students in Epiphany's Faith Formation program:

I would like to make you aware of the information that will be taught in your student's *Circle of Grace* classes during the next two faith formation classes. The *Circle of Grace* program replaces "Sacred and Safe" which the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston previously taught to the children. In my opinion, the *Circle of Grace* program is a great improvement. Attached is a copy of Parent Information that comes with the program guide. However, as a parent myself, I know that I would like to have more specific information.

The Fourth-Grade lessons complement the following Catholic teachings:

- God calls us to be responsible for our actions
- God teaches us to lead a healthy life and to make good choices
- Human life is sacred and must be respected
- Responsible relationships are based on love, honesty, and respect
- We are called to respect the human body as sacred life
- Our conscience helps us to know what is right and to what we believe is right
- God calls us to be responsible for our own actions

The goal is to demonstrate and understand the concept of the *Circle of Grace* in relation to use of the internet on computers, phones, etc.

Examples of classroom activities are:

- listing positive and negative uses of the Internet
- discussion on rules and guidelines for safe Internet use
- discussion on identity and maintaining appropriate internet boundaries
- activity called "telephone game" to demonstrate how stories or conversations on the Internet may occur and not be totally accurate or true

- activity with an “Internet Smart Worksheet” to be sent home to parents for review

The lesson concludes with students discussing who a “Trusted Adult” is and demonstrate an “Action Plan” that involves two scenarios:

Scenario A: You are unsure or feel unsafe while viewing something or interacting with someone while using the computer or other technical device

- Find a trusted adult and show them what you are concerned about. Do not exit the site.
- Review how you got to this point on the computer
- Have an adult help you exit the site

Scenario B: You are unsure or feel unsafe when you are asked by someone to view something on the computer/technical device which makes you uncomfortable.

- Action Plan:
 - Walk away from the computer
 - Tell a Trusted Adult

If you have any questions or would like to see the lesson plan please contact me. Parents are encouraged to join the class for the *Circle of Grace* lessons.

Sincerely,



LouAnn Svoboda
Director of Religious Education



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Dear Parents of Fifth Grade Students in Epiphany's Faith Formation program:

I would like to make you aware of the information that will be taught in your student's *Circle of Grace* classes during the next two faith formation classes. The *Circle of Grace* program replaces "Sacred and Safe" which the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston previously taught to the children. In my opinion, the *Circle of Grace* program is a great improvement. Attached is a copy of Parent Information that comes with the program guide. However, as a parent myself, I know that I would like to have more specific information.

The Fifth-Grade lessons complement the following Catholic teachings:

- Jesus' life as a model for our own
- God calls us to be responsible for our actions
- Understand the importance of serving others as Jesus did
- God teaches us to lead a healthy life and to make good choices
- Human life is sacred and must be respected
- Our conscience helps us to know what is right and to what we believe is right
- God calls us to be responsible for our own actions

The objective of the lessons is to understand students' *Circle of Grace*, recognize that trusted adults help us stay safe in our *Circle of Grace* and help us respect others' *Circle of Grace* and to identify and recognize different types of media and how they influence our *Circle of Grace* in positive and negative ways.

Examples of classroom activities are:

- Demonstrate a person's *Circle of Grace*
- Identify Trusted Adults
- Discuss rules for using the Internet in a safe manner so boundaries are not violated

- Discuss how all forms of media and mass communication influence our Circle of Grace
- Activity demonstrating positive and negative influence of media
- Activity based on the Ten Commandments and how they help us to know what is right to do even when other influences try to confuse or manipulate us

The lesson concludes with students discussing “Trusted Adults.”

If you have any questions or would like to see the lesson plan please contact me. Parents are encouraged to join the class for the *Circle of Grace* lessons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "LouAnn Svoboda".

LouAnn Svoboda
Director of Religious Education