

Circle of Grace

Grade One

The Big Picture (for the catechist)

Unit #3: How does Jesus Christ teach us to live a moral life?

Essential Question:

How does knowing how to identify safe situations help me to live a moral life?

Sub-Essential Questions:

Part A: What is a *Circle of Grace*?

Part B: How do I identify safe and unsafe situations?

Part C: How do I know when to ask for help and who I should ask to help me?

Emerging themes: Jesus teaches us how to love and respect God and others and self and we are all called to do good.

Textbook Resource: *Circle of Grace*, Archdiocese of Omaha, 2013

Suggested Scripture: John 13:34-45: *I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so also are you to love one another. This is how all will you know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

Romans 12:10: *Love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor.*

Assessment Evidence: By the end of the three-part lesson, learners can demonstrate their *Circle of Grace*, be able to better identify safe and unsafe situations and be able to take action if boundaries are threatened or violated.

Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2
<p>UNDERSTANDINGS: Learners will understand that...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (U₁) A5.1.1.10 Jesus teaches everyone to love and care for others. (CCC#459; 561; 1823; 2055; 2822; 2842) [CVL] (U₂) A5.3.1.1 People show God's love by treating others with kindness and respect. (CCC#912; 1807; 1944) [CVL] (U₃) A5.3.4.1 Making good choices is loving to others. (CCC#1723; 1728) 	<p>UNDERSTANDINGS: Learners will understand that...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (U₁) 1.3.1.1 Jesus showed great love for all people and taught them to love God, themselves, and others. (CCC#1840-50; 1871) (U₂) 1.3.4.1 God wants people to make good choices and not bad choices. (CCC#311; 1777; 1799) (U₃) 1.3.6.1 Christians are called to love all people. (CCC#459; 1823; 1944; 1970-71; 2074; 2822; 2842) [CVL] 	<p>UNDERSTANDINGS: Learners will understand that...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (U₁) 2.3.7.5 It is a loving choice to keep oneself safe from harmful words and touch. (CCC# 1650; 1664-65; 2384-85; 2389) (U₂) 2.3.5.1 The "Golden Rule" teaches people to treat others the way one wants to be treated. (CCC#1789; 1970; 2261; 2407; 2510) (U₃) 2.3.3.10 Grace is the gift of God's life and love. Grace helps one to make good choices.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (U₄) A5.3.4.2 God wants people to choose to do good things. (CCC#1723; 1798) ○ (U₅) A5.3.5.1 God helps people to do good things. (CCC#2082) ○ (U₆) A5.1.1.1 Jesus loves all people. (CCC#342; 561; 851) ○ (U₆) A5.1.1.9 Jesus promises to be with his followers always. ○ (U₈) A5.4.1.5 Catholics pray to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (CCC#2659; 2660) ○ (U₉) A5.5.2.1 A Christian family helps others in need. (CCC#2208; 2452; 2459; 2462) ○ (U₁₀) A5.1.2.2 The Holy Spirit lives in every person. (CCC#733; 738; 747; 809) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (U₄) 1.3.7.1 Jesus taught people how to love God by expressing gratitude to his Father and by being kind to others. (CCC#561; 1937; 2052; 2134; 2196; 2637; 2638; 2456; 2458; 2459) ○ (U₅) 1.3.7.2 Christians act as Jesus did by showing their appreciation for God's gifts and by being kind to members of their family and to others. (CC#1937; 1944; 2052; 2196; 2456; 137-38) ○ (U₆) 1.3.7.3 The human body is a gift from God that needs to be protected from harm. (CCC#225; 356-61; 369; 747; 759; 777-78; 959; 1604; 1655; 1700-01; 1944-48; 2179; 2233; 2255; 2319; 2334; 2451-52; 2456; 2458-59) ○ (U₇) 1.5.2.2 There are certain behaviors needed to build healthy friendships. (CCC#1717; 1719; 1724-26) ○ (U₈) 1.5.2.3 The effects of Christians' faith extends beyond their families. (CCC#154; 180) 	<p>(CCC#1999; 2001-2002; 2022-2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (U₄) 2.1.1.6 Jesus is the model of love and goodness. (CCC#459; 520) ○ (U₅) 2.3.1.2 Choosing to follow Jesus means loving God with all one's heart and loving one's neighbor as oneself. (CCC#1822; 7844; 1944) [CVL] ○ (U₆) 2.3.7.2 Generosity, compassion, and forgiveness are qualities for a Christian life. (CCC#1503; 1506; 1832; 1937; 2843-44) ○ (U₇) 2.4.2.3 In prayer, Christians thank God for good things received and ask God for things needed. (CCC#2644; 2648) ○ (U₈) 2.5.3.1 There are many kinds of family relationships, all of which are called to be loving. (CCC#1603; 2199; 2203-2206; 2232; 2248; 2251) <p>Knowledge/Skills: Learners will know that / be skilled at...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (K₁) 2.3.4.1 A conscience is that part of a person that helps one to distinguish between right and wrong. (CC#1777-78; 1786; 1796) ○ (K₂) 2.3.7.3 Feelings are a gift from God which help people to love others. (CCC#1769) ○ (K₃) 2.3.7.4 Church teachings help Catholics learn how to live a life in Christ. (CCC#87; 89; 93; 97-98) ○ (K₄) 2.6.3.2 Christians are called to be peacemakers every day. (CCC#1716; 2305; 2330)
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Objectives for Part One:

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*.

Vocabulary sheet (attached for catechist reference only).

Materials Needed:

Symbols: (Examples: Stop sign, Nike swoosh, slippery when wet sign, peace symbol, etc.)

White Board, markers. One *Circle of Grace* symbol. One stoplight sheet to be colored in advance by catechist. Catechist Evaluation. How to ask for help poster. Parent Connection materials to be sent home with students.

Opening Prayer

Catechist:

Pray: Sign of the Cross

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

Pray: Sign of the Cross

Engage

Mental warm-up; personal connection

Catechist: Show the symbols (stop sign, Nike swoosh, slippery when wet sign, peace symbol, etc.) and ask students what they represent. Make the point that symbols are a way of telling us something or reminding us of something.

Write "Symbol" on the white board.

Catechist says: **"A symbol is a picture or object that stands for something else."**

Show children the Circle of Grace symbol. Ask: **"What do you see in this symbol?"**

Say: **"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."**

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

Catechist: Ask children to stand with enough room around them to fully expand their arms without touching each other.

Give the following directions while modeling the desired actions:

Reach with both arms as high as you can over your head.

- a. ***Circle your arms down on each side and bend down until you reach all the way under your feet.***

b. As you stand back up again, turn all the way around once as you raise your arms back over your head.

c. This is the Circle of Grace that you live in.

Repeat steps a, b, and c to reinforce physical dimensions of Circle of Grace.

Say: **Now we will talk about why it is important that we know about our Circle of Grace.**

Essential Questions

Share and post this lesson's Essential Question: **How does knowing how to identify safe situations help me to live a moral life?**

A. What is a *Circle of Grace*?

B. How do I identify safe and unsafe situations?

C. How do I know when to ask for help and who I should ask to help me?

Explore

[Part A]

Ask: **"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."**

"When we remember that we are in a Circle of Grace, with God and surrounded by God's love, we will also remember to behave with the respect for ourselves and for others that is called for when we are in a holy place."

Explain and Check for Understanding

[direct teaching, infused with Scripture & group work]

Activity: Make a chart with two columns on white board. Label one column with a happy face and the other with a sad face.



Catechist say: **What are some nice things that people do or say? What are some hurtful things that people do or say? What are some nice things you do or say? What might be some hurtful things you do or say?** (Allow a few responses. List on the board in the appropriate column.) Point out that words and behaviors listed in the happy face column are those that respect everyone's *Circle of Grace* and others. The words and behaviors in the sad face column are those that do not belong in anyone's *Circle of Grace*.

[Part B]

For Catechist

Objective: help students identify safe and unsafe situations.

1. God does not want or cause bad things to happen to us and God loves us even when we are hurting or sad.
2. Learn how to identify when someone comes into our Circle of Grace.
3. Recognize safe and unsafe situations in a person's Circle of Grace.
4. Distinguish between safe and unsafe secrets in a person's Circle of Grace.

Show a large stoplight poster.

Discuss the meaning or purpose of a stoplight by asking:

1. ***Why do we have stoplights?*** (pause for a few responses.)
 - a. ***The reason we have stoplights is to protect people and keep them safe.***

2. ***What does each color of the stoplight mean?*** (stop, be careful, go ahead)

Catechist says: ***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 or 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.***

Catechist says: ***Let's review how the three colors of a stoplight can remind us of the signals God gives us to help keep us safe and protected.***

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? (Catechist points out that everything written on the happy face column would be a green signal word or action.)

Red Signal – Means STOP. Some things are unsafe and always mean trouble. Review some general concepts of bullying. Ask the children to define it and what it looks like (being mean to someone on purpose, lying, hitting, fighting, etc.) ***Can you name some other things that are never good to do or let someone do to you?*** (Catechist points out that everything written on the sad face column would be a red signal word or action.) ***When this happens, tell someone that you trust, like your mom, dad, teacher, or other trusted adult.***

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, teacher or other trusted adult.

SITUATIONS:

ACTIVITY: This activity helps students learn how to identify dangerous and unsafe situations, feelings, and touch, but it is not to scare or shame them. Remind students that there are always adults available to listen and talk.

Catechist will display a “stoplight” color circle. Students agree or disagree verbally.

Catechist says: ***In a moment, I am going to describe some situations. Please listen very carefully. At the end of each situation, I am going to ask you if you think the situation describes a red signal (STOP), Yellow signal (BE CAREFUL) or green signal (GO AHEAD). Then we’ll talk about each situation.***

Catechist: read each of the situations attached. Make sure to vary the order in which the green, red, and yellow situations are read.

Situations

GREEN Situations:

- **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 grandmother/grandfather wipes your tears when you fall down and hurt yourself** (loved, comforted, safe).
- **You tell the teacher when you accidentally break something in your classroom** (embarrassed, sorry, guilty, 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).

YELLOW/RED Situations:

- **You are playing outside your house when a group of older kids come by and ask your name. They say they will give you a computer game 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).
- **You push someone out of line so you can be first** (mad, selfish).
- **You are at a friend's birthday party when your friend says "let's all go downstairs so we can play on the computer without my mom or dad around"** (pressured, curious, worried).
- **You are at a family party. Someone asks you to sit on his/her lap, but you don't want to** (pressured, mad, unsure).
- **Your friend's big brother/sister wants you to do something you don't want to do because it makes you uncomfortable** (pressured, confused).

SECRETS:

Catechist says: *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. A secret is unsafe when I think that someone, including me, might be hurt or get in trouble if I do not tell. A good way to decide if a secret is safe or unsafe is to ask ourselves, "Can this secret hurt me or someone else?"*

ACTIVITY: Red light/Green light – SECRETS



Make two columns on the white board (good secret 😊 and bad secret ☹️)

Catechist asks the students: ***Can you name some good secrets? Who is involved in the secret? Is there a time that it is finally told?*** (examples: surprise birthday party, special gift for Mother's Day, etc.)

Can you name a bad secret? Who is involved in the secret? Can the secret hurt you or someone else? (examples: When asked not to report to a teacher that or parent that you someone asked you not to tell anyone about something they did that you know was wrong or unsafe. Or, a friend of yours was hurt by someone else but they asked you not to tell the teacher, parent, or other adult.)

Show them the feeling chart at the back of this lesson and ask them to identify how they would feel if they saw someone whispering secrets.

Catechist: read each of the "secret" situations below. Make sure to vary the order in which the green, red, and yellow situations are read.

Using the "stop light" poster, teacher shows one color. Ask students to agree or disagree with the color choice.

Situations

GREEN

- **Your friend tells you, "I think Joey is cute," and tells you to keep it a secret** (special, trusted).
- **You dad is planning a surprise birthday party for your mom** (happiness, excitement, anticipation).
- **Your parents plan to get a puppy but don't tell you until they bring it home** (surprised, loved).

YELLOW / RED (Always talk to a trusted adult.)

- **Your friend's brother takes a picture of you with his cell phone. He asks you not to tell and says that you will get into trouble** (*guilty, afraid of punishment*).
- **An adult, who you know well, asks you to go with him without asking permission from your parents. He/she tells you that your parents won't**

care if you go with him, but he says “Don’t tell your parents about our visit. They won’t understand,” (*unsure, funny feeling in your tummy or heart, curious*).

- **Someone touches you in a way that you don’t think is safe – even if the person says it is safe and says, “This special time is between you and me,”** (*Funny feeling in your tummy, confused, etc.*).
- **Your friend tells you, “I stole a video game from my older brother that we can play downstairs. Don’t tell anyone because it is an adult game.”** (*confused, worried, maybe excited*).
- **Someone acts like your friend but then tries to get you do something you don’t want to do because you know it is wrong or because it makes you feel confused or funny. They say, “If you tell, I will tell everyone that this was your idea,”** (*confused, funny feeling, trapped*).
- **Your teenage neighbor tells you that you will get into trouble if you tell your mom and/or dad what he showed you on the computer** (*afraid of punishment*).

Allow students time to share their feelings connected to the secrets.

If students are unsure or offer the wrong answers, catechist may ask the following questions:

- ***What do you think your mom or dad, teacher or priest would say about this situation?***
- ***Would they think it is a red, green, or yellow signal? Why?***

Evaluate

[Individual Accountability]

[Part 3: Safety Plan]

Catechist says: ***Now, 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.*** Catechist: write “Trusted Adult” on the white board. ***Let’s discuss what we mean by a “trusted adult.”*** (allow a few responses.) Catechist may shape their responses by saying: ***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, a church leader, or a family***

friend. How do you know you can trust someone? (allow a few responses) **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.**

Catechist says: **Can you name a person who loves you and helps you to stay safe?** List appropriate responses on the white board. **These are people whom you can ask to help you if you are unsafe or confused. We call these people Trusted Adults.**

Extend

Post the adapted skill poster “How to Ask for Help.”

- a) **Look at the person** (point to the picture of eyes)
- b) **Tell the person, “I need help. I do not feel safe.”** (point to the picture of child speaking/mouth)
- c) **Tell the person what is wrong, why you don’t feel safe.** (point to the picture of the question mark)
- d) **Tell the person “thank you.”** (point to the picture of the words “Thank you.”)

This is how we ask for help. You can use these steps whenever you need to ask anyone for help.

Debrief/Self-Reflect

[Mystagogy; transfer beyond the lesson]

Review the Circle of Grace Movement. Ask the students to stand with enough room around them to fully extend their arms without touching each other.

Catechist says: **Reach with both arms as high as you can over your head. Circle your arms down on each side and bend down until you reach all the way under your feet.**

As you stand back up again, turn all the way around once as you raise your arms back over your head. This is the Circle of Grace that you live in.

Closing Prayer:

Sign of the Cross.

Than 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.*

Sign of the Cross.

Parent Connection:

Send home Activity Sheets for Parents (attached)

Parent Connection

The Trusted Adult: Home Activity Sheet for Parents

In this lesson, parents should ask children to name and draw a picture of Trusted Adults (in addition to you). 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 you approve of.

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 at 281-578-8271, ext. 285 if you have questions.

At-Home Activity: Trusted Adults

Ask your child to name one person who loves them and helps them to stay safe.

Encourage children to name adults in addition to their mom and dad.

Tell the children: These are people who you can ask to help you if you are unsafe or confused. We call these people **Trusted Adults**.

Give the child a piece of paper and crayons or markers.

Instruct the children to draw a picture of their Trusted Adult. Remind children that mom and dad are Trusted Adults even if they are not in the picture.

At Home Activity: HOW TO ASK FOR HELP

1. Ask the children to think of times when they might need to talk to or ask a trusted adult for help.
2. Use the attached poster “How to Ask for Help”
 - a. Picture of eyes
 - b. Picture of a child speaking/mouth
 - c. Picture of “?”
 - d. The words “Thank You”
3. Adapted skill steps are:
 - a. Look at the person (Picture of eyes)
 - b. Tell the person, “I need help. I do not feel safe.” (Picture of a child speaking/mouth safe.)
 - c. Tell the person what is wrong, why you don’t feel safe. (Picture of the question mark “?”)
 - d. Tell the person “Thank You.” (Picture of the words “Thank You”)

Have the children role-play asking a Trusted Adult for help.

1. Have them look an adult in the eyes and say aloud: “I need your help. I don’t feel safe.”
2. Children say aloud: “Please help me because ... (Example: “Please help me because I don’t think my mom or dad want me to go with her. I don’t know her.”)
3. Children say aloud: “Thank You.”

Remind children that this is how we ask for help. You can use these steps whenever you need to ask anyone for help.

Optional Take-Home Activity:

Color the “How to Ask for Help” color page.