

Circle of Grace

Grade Three

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 know what belongs inside and outside of my *Circle of Grace*?

Part C: What action do I take if boundaries are threatened or violated?

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:

Assessment Evidence: By the end of this three-part lesson, learners can demonstrate their *Circle of Grace*, recognize when a boundary may be threatened or violated and what action they should take if their boundaries are threatened or violated.

Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
<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. 	<p>UNDERSTANDINGS: Learners will understand that...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (U₁) 3.1.4.2 All people, despite their differences, deserve respect because they are created in God's image and likeness. (CCC#225; 355; 357; 362; 2319; 2713) (U₂) 3.3.7.2 Healthy physical, emotional and spiritual habits are needed in caring for one's body and for respecting others. (CCC#2258; 2288; 2290-2291;2319) [CVL] 	<p>UNDERSTANDINGS: Learners will understand that...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (U₁) 4.1.1.3 Jesus revealed to people God's plan for true happiness. (CCC3 1718; 1725-26) (U₂) 4.3.6.1 All people are created in God's image and have certain human rights. (CCC# 41; 1701; 1930; 1944; 2319; 2809) [CVL] (U₃) 4.3.6.2 God gives all people an equal human dignity. (CCC# 1933-34; 1945) [CVL]

<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) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (U₃) 3.3.7.4 There are ways to express feelings of love and affection that are positive and respectful and ways that are negative and disrespectful. (CCC# 1763; 1768-1769; 1771) ○ (U₄) 3.3.1.1 God's Law is to love others by doing kind acts. The purpose of this Law is to help people have a happy life. (CC#1823; 1826-1827; 1970-1971; 2074; 2745; 2822; 2842) [CVL] ○ (U₅) 3.3.6.2 All human life is sacred. (CCC#2258; 2319) [CVL] ○ (U₆) 3.3.4.1 A conscience needs to be formed. (CCC#98; 1783-1785; 1802) <p>Knowledge/Skills: Learners will know that / be skilled at...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (K₁) 3.3.7.1 Christians are called to offer help to people in need by serving others as Jesus did, especially the most vulnerable. (CCC# 952; 1586; 1944; 1948; 2122; 2315; 2449; 2642) ○ (K₂) 3.3.2.4 Christians are called to respect all human life. (CCC#2258; 2268; 2319) [CVL] ○ (K₃) 3.1.4.4 Christians are called to show respect and care for God's creation. (CCC#2415; 2456) ○ (K₄) 3.3.3.5 Christians are called to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in choosing to do what is right. (CCC#1996; 1999; 2022-2023) 	<p>(U₄) 4.1.1.2 Jesus, by his life and teaching, taught people how to love God and others. (CCC# 535—559; 561)</p> <p>(U₅) 4.3.1.3 Loving others and treating them as Jesus taught results in a life of true happiness and freedom. (CCC# 1725; 1731; 1733; 1738)</p> <p>(U₆) 4.1.1.4 Jesus is the perfect image of God, sent to show divine love and goodness and to affirm the human potential for good. (CCC# 241; 299; 689; 1701)</p> <p>(U₇) 4.1.3.2 The Holy Spirit is advocate, helper, and guide. (CCC# 91; 243; 747; 852; 1299)</p> <p>(U₈) 4.3.1.2 All moral laws are at the service of love. (CCC# 1950; 1975) [CVL]</p> <p>(U₉) 4.3.7.2 Good moral choices are marked by love of self and others. (CCC# 1751-54; 1760)</p> <p>Knowledge/Skills: Learners will know that / be skilled at...</p> <p>Key Targets -</p> <p>(K₁) 4.1.3.8 People have been given the gift of reason and free will by God. (CCC# 143; 155; 176; 1704-05; 1711)</p> <p>(K₂) 4.3.1.1 Christians love one another based on Jesus' Commandment to "Love one another as I have loved you." (CCC# 459; 1823; 1970; 2074; 2822; 2842)</p> <p>(K₃) 4.3.7.1 The Holy Spirit calls Christians to develop moral virtues and to live lives that seek the good for themselves and others. (CCC# 1811; 1830-31; 1845)</p>
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Objectives for Part One:

1. Understand and explain that as Children of God we are treasured and filled with grace. God's presence is within us and around us creating our own *Circle of Grace*.
2. Describe their own *Circle of Grace*.
3. Identify what behaviors are appropriate within a *Circle of Grace* showing that they treasure themselves and others as Children of God.

Materials Needed:

Photos or props of precious things that are cared for and protected. Catechists chooses which photos or props are appropriate to show students.

Whiteboard, markers.

Box and lid wrapped separately with a mirror inside (wrapped like a gift). May need more than one. This box should be available from CCE office.

Paper, pen/pencil for writing 10 most precious gifts.

White Board, markers.

One *Circle of Grace* symbol.

Worksheet Number One Word/Phrase List.

Vocabulary sheet (attached for catechist reference only).

Catechist Evaluation.

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: **Today, we are going to discuss how God treasures all of us by giving each of us a *Circle of Grace*.**

- Show students pictures or examples of precious items that, because they are so special, receive extra care. Possibilities might include:
 - The American Flag
 - A rare collector's item like a gold coin or an autographed baseball that might be kept in a glass case under lock and key
 - A vintage automobile that is kept in a heated garage and only driven on days when the weather is good
 - The Declaration of Independence which is kept in a climate controlled case under bulletproof glass
 - A special set of china dishes that are a family heirloom
- Ask the children for other examples, write them on the whiteboard. Make a point that everything that is considered extra special, rare, or valuable is given extra care and protection.

- The final and MOST IMPORTANT example of care given to a precious item is the special measures taken to protect and care for ...
 - A consecrated Host, the Blessed Sacrament
 - Not only do we keep it in a special vessel and in a special locked box but also when we handle it we do so with the ultimate reverence and respect.
 - We even build a special building, the church, where it is housed, and there are many special behaviors for when we are in the presence of Christ in The Blessed Sacrament.
 - *Ask students for examples of special behaviors we use in church to show respect. (See possible responses below.)*
 - Folding hands
 - Kneeling
 - Bowing heads
 - Genuflecting
 - Reverent silence

ACTIVITY: Precious, Gift-Wrapped Boxes

(Use a box with a separate lid that you can wrap. Inside the box is a mirror so that the students will see their reflection when they look inside the box.) [May need several boxes for catechists around the room to hold.]

- Show the children a gift-wrapped box. Tell them: **This box contains something very precious, something that both you and God treasure very highly. This is so special, unique, and valuable that it should be handled with the highest level of care and respect. Each of us should do everything in our power to keep it safe.”**
- **You are invited to come up one at a time and look into the box, to see this precious gift.**
- **Once you have seen the contents of the box, don’t tell anyone else what you have seen. The beauty of the gift is that everyone will see something very different.**
- While students are waiting to take their turn to view the special gift, you may have the children make a list of their ten most precious possessions.

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?***

Sub-Essential Questions:

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

Part B: How do I know what belongs inside and outside of my *Circle of Grace*?

Part C: What action do I take if boundaries are threatened or violated?

Explore

Discussion

After they have all had a chance to look in the box, say: **Most of the time when we think of people who need special care we think of the following:**

- **Unborn or Newborn baby**
- **The elderly**
- **People with special needs**

It is important to remember that all of us are deserving of this special care and respect. Why should we consider ourselves as a precious and special gift deserving of special care and respect? (allow a few responses.)

Emphasize the following points:

- **We are made by God. We are all Children of God.**
- **We are all made by God and in His own image and likeness which means that we are made for the purpose of loving God, ourselves, and others and for doing good.**
- **God promised that as His children we will always be in His presence and surrounded by His love (like a *Circle of Grace*). He promised this because He wants a close relationship with each of us.**
 - **Even when we are not in our family home, we are each still a member of our family (belonging) and the love of our family goes with us.**
 - **We belong to the family of God, so even when we are not in the church building, we are always Children of God.**
 - **God's loving presence goes with us wherever we go.**
 - **This constant loving presence of God is called "grace." It is as though we carry our own little church with us wherever we go.**

Activity

Catechist: Show the *Circle of Grace* logo. Ask the children: ***What do the various parts of the logo represent?*** (Guide them toward the conclusion that):

- 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

Remember how we surround those things and people we find precious with extra care much like the “Circle of Grace?”

Catechist: Ask students 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:

Ask the students to stand with enough space between them that they can extend their arms without touching their neighbors. Tell them to: ***reach with both hands as high over your head as you can and then bring your arms down in a big arc until they circle around your feet. As you stand back up again, turn in a circle as you bring your arms up, to show that your Circle of Grace is really a sphere that surrounds you on all sides.***

Explain that: ***all persons, every Child of God, lives and breathes in their own circle of God’s love and goodness, their own Circle of Grace.***

Explain and Check for Understanding
[direct teaching, infused with Scripture & group work]

[Part B]

For Catechist

Objective: help students identify safe and unsafe situations.

1. Recognize when a boundary (*Circle of Grace*) may be threatened or violated.

2. God does not want or cause bad things to happen to us and God loves us even when we are hurting or sad.

We will now talk about the boundaries that are the borders or limits we need to protect ourselves within our Circle of Grace. (As you go through the examples below, it is important to relate them to the children's safety.)

Write "Physical," "Symbolic," and "Internal" on the board. During the discussion, write which items belong under each boundary heading.

Physical: An actual barrier that blocks or restricts something.

- Fence (*defines property*)
- Bathroom/bedroom door (*can be shut and locked to respect privacy*)
- Clothes (*protect our bodies from elements and covers private areas*)
- School Building (*Secures learning environment, doors, alarms, school office*)
- Home (*keep family secure: alarm system, protection from the weather*)
- Seat Belt (*protects our body if there is an accident*)

Symbolic: A limit you can see that does not physically restrict you. You can choose to respect or ignore this limit.

- Playing Field (*visual lines to help lay fairly*)
- "Do Not Enter" sign (*privacy or potential danger alert*)
- A Crosswalk (*a guide as to where to safely walk*)
- PG 13 movie rating (*an alert regarding mature content*)
- Video game with a parental warning on the label (*a warning of mature and violent content*)
- "No Trespassing" sign (*alerts you to stop and keep out of another's property*)

Internal: An understanding of a rule or limit that you carry in your head. Most of these are learned through experience or taught by those who care for us. The Holy Spirit nudges us to remember our internal limits in order to help us be safe.

- Acceptable volume on a radio or CD player (*respects others sensitivity to noise*)
- Space between you and an unknown or known person (*this space could vary depending on culture, family, and current relationship*)
- You stop eating when you are full (*an internal sensation that no more food is needed*)
- Not playing in the street (*internal limit regarding danger taught by those who care for us*)

- Knowing not to participate in an activity your parents would not approve (*internal limit based on prior parental guidance*)
- Appropriate behavior in church and school (*internal limit based on prior adult guidance*)

Boundary Scenarios – Keeping One Safe

Depending on time, you can divide the students into small groups with each small group discussing one scenario and bringing their results to the large group for discussion or catechist can read the scenarios out loud to the students and use verbal responses or you can have students stand if they believe it **IS** a boundary violation, stay sitting if they are **NOT SURE**, or sit on the floor if they believe that it is **NOT** a boundary violation. With each scenario, catechist may ask the following questions:

1. How do you know this is a boundary? Is it physical, symbolic, or internal?
2. Whose rights would be violated if this boundary were not respected?
3. Does this boundary violation affect one's *Circle of Grace*?

Fence

You are playing alone in your back yard and someone you don't know comes in your yard without permission.

- a) Has there been a boundary violation of your Circle of Grace? Why?
- b) How would you feel if this were to happen? Why? (Refer to feeling chart.)
- c) If this boundary were violated, what can you do?
- d) What would be needed to make this situation safe?

Bedroom Door

Your parents are out for the night. You are in your bedroom getting ready for bed with your door shut. Your babysitter comes in your room without knocking and you feel uncomfortable.

- a) Has there been a boundary violation of your Circle of Grace? Why?
- b) How would you feel if this were to happen? Why? (Refer to feeling chart.)
- c) If this boundary were violated, what can you do?
- d) What would be needed to make this situation safe?

Clothes

You are at a family reunion and a relative pulls you on his/her lap and starts tickling you in a way that makes you uncomfortable.

- a) Has there been a boundary violation of your Circle of Grace? Why?
- b) How would you feel if this were to happen? Why? (Refer to feeling chart.)
- c) If this boundary were violated, what can you do?
- d) What would be needed to make this situation safe?

Home (Yours or others)

You are at a friend's house and your friend turns on an R-rated movie for you to watch together. When you say your parents don't want you watching this kind of show your friend laughs and says, "If you don't tell them, they'll never know."

- a) Has there been a boundary violation of your Circle of Grace? Why?
- b) How would you feel if this were to happen? Why? (Refer to feeling chart.)
- c) If this boundary were violated, what can you do?
- d) What would be needed to make this situation safe?

Space between you and a known or unknown person

Your coach always asks you to stay after practice so the two of you can talk. He doesn't do that with anyone else on the team and sometimes when he's talking to you, you feel uncomfortable with how close he sits or stands by you.

- a) Has there been a boundary violation of your Circle of Grace? Why?
- b) How would you feel if this were to happen? Why? (Refer to feeling chart.)
- c) If this boundary were violated, what can you do?
- d) What would be needed to make this situation safe?

The Rules or Limits your parents have set for you

An adult you know has become very friendly to you. The extra attention and kind words make you feel special. Lately, he or she has been giving you small gifts and ask you not to tell your parents because they would not understand your special relationship.

- a) Has there been a boundary violation of your Circle of Grace? Why?
- b) How would you feel if this were to happen? Why? (Refer to feeling chart.)
- c) If this boundary were violated, what can you do?
- d) What would be needed to make this situation safe?

Appropriate Behavior in school

You are in school. The classmate next to you keeps talking to you during class. This is distracting to you and you're afraid of getting into trouble.

- a) Has there been a boundary violation of your Circle of Grace? Why?
- b) How would you feel if this were to happen? Why? (Refer to feeling chart.)
- c) If this boundary were violated, what can you do?
- d) What would be needed to make this situation safe?

Evaluate

[Individual Accountability]

[Part 3: Action Plan]

For Catechist

Objective: Demonstrate how to take action if boundaries are threatened or violated.

Children will be able to:

1. Understand that God wants them to do what they can to take care of themselves.
2. Name three trusted adults (in addition to their parents) whom they could seek out for help (send this part home for parents to do)
3. Demonstrate the three-step action plan
 - a. Say, "No!"
 - b. Get Away!
 - c. Tell a Trusted Adult.

Catechist says: ***Now that we have talked about what does and does not belong in our Circle of Grace, let's talk about what to do if you need to take steps to protect yourself. We will call this your action plan.***

There are situations when it is very clear that someone is trying to enter your Circle of Grace and would be harmful to you. Can you think of some examples?

Maybe you have heard about some situations that have happened to other kids or have seen something on the news. It is important in these situations to have an action plan for how to stay safe. This action plan can also work with people in our lives that are doing something in our Circle of Grace that we do not like or

make us uncomfortable. An example would be an older sibling teasing a younger brother / sister.

Extend

Below are the three steps necessary for a safe action plan:

Say “No!”

- ***Let the other person, someone you know or a stranger, know in a clear and strong way that you do not want whatever it is they are doing or saying.***
- ***Words like, “Go away!” or “Stop that! I don’t like it!” are often enough to get the person to leave you alone, especially if you say it loud enough so others can hear. Most people, this includes people we know like classmates or family, do not want to attract attention when they are doing something wrong.***
- ***If you are in a mall or other public place and someone you do not know or trust is trying to get you to go with them, say loudly, “Leave me alone!” “You are not my dad / mom!” This will draw other people’s attention and the person will probably leave you alone.***

Get Away!

- ***Do what you need to get away from the person. Walk, run, scream, or even kick to stop the other person. Again, most people who try to hurt children will stop if the child resists strongly or if the person is afraid someone will notice.***
- ***Don’t worry about being embarrassed. It is much better than being hurt.***
- ***Most situations that you want to get away from may not have immediate danger. Such as: your friend asks you to come over after school. He indicated there are several friends coming over to play on the computer. He states that his parents are not home and will never find out. In this situation, you need to say something that will get you out of the situation. Discuss what to say in uncomfortable situations with your parents or trusted adults.***

Tell a Trusted Adult!

- ***Go immediately to an adult that you trust, tell them what has happened, and ask them for their help.***
- ***If the first adult you tell doesn't believe you or understand, be very insistent! If that still does not convince them, tell another adult until you find one who will help you.***
- ***Never let yourself go on being hurt or feeling confused just because the first person you tell does not help you. Be clear about what has happened, tell the truth, there are lots of people who are ready to 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 Parent handouts.

Parent Connection

The Trusted Adult: Home Activity Sheet for Parents

In this lesson, parents should ask children to name three Trusted Adults (in addition to you). 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.

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**.

At Home Activity: Lesson 3 Action Plan

Discuss the scenarios and complete the “Lesson 3: Action Plan” worksheet with your student.