

# *Circle of Grace*

## *Safe Environment Training*

### *What Is a Circle of Grace?*

#### *Preschool - 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org), or <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov>

## *Preschool Leader Guidelines*

- 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.
- Young children learn by repetition. Because of this, preschool through grade 2 lessons build on each other and have a lot of similarities. The goal is to start to introduce the *Circle of Grace* concepts, not to master them.
- 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 is in the administration/director section. The pertinent vocabulary is listed in each lesson.
- The Red Light, Green Light, 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 completed 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 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.

# What is a Circle of Grace?

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 Goal

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

Children will be better able to identify safe and unsafe situations.

Children will start to demonstrate how to take action if their Circle of Grace boundaries are threatened or crossed.

## Lesson Objectives

### Children will begin 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. Begin to learn how to identify when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*.
6. Begin to recognize safe and unsafe situations/ secrets in a person's *Circle of Grace*.
7. Name one or two trusted adults (in addition to their parents) whom they can seek out for help and practice asking for help.

## Materials Needed

### Part 1

1. *Circle of Grace* Logo (end of Preschool Lessons)
2. (Optional) *Circle of Grace* Song (in the Administrator/Director section)
3. Whiteboard or chalkboard
4. Chart paper or flip chart paper to make a "happy/sad face chart"

5. *Circle of Grace* Logo coloring page/black and white version (end of Preschool Lessons)
6. (Optional) Happy Face coloring page and markers/crayons (end of Preschool Lessons)
7. Happy Face Stickers (on the Circle of Grace Partner's Website)

## Part 2

1. Large picture of a traffic signal with all three colors visible - red, yellow, and green (see the 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. You could put the circle cards on a popsicle stick so they look more like the signal in a traffic signal. (Template at the end of the lesson)
3. Feeling Faces Chart (see the end of the lesson)
4. Whiteboard or chalkboard
5. Markers or crayons
6. Construction or color paper for each child
7. Create one large Skill Poster of "How to Ask for Help" with following steps (see the end of the Lesson for a sample):
8. The Traffic Signal and Safety Plan Letter for Parents (see the end of lesson)
  - Attach a copy of How to Ask for Help handout and the Trusted Adult drawing to the parent letter.

## Part 1

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

9. **Children of God**: All people are made and loved by God.
10. **Circle of Grace**: The love and goodness of God that always surrounds me and all others. (Circle – something that goes around)
11. **Grace**: The gift of God's goodness and love to help me live as his child.
12. **Holy**: Special because of a connection with God. (We are holy, connected to God by his love for us.)
13. **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. (The Holy Spirit is not scary.)
14. **Respect**: Being kind to others and doing what's best for myself and others because I honor all people as Children of God. (Being kind to others)
15. **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. The leader does the Sign of the Cross modeling it for the children. 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

## **Lesson Development**

### **Getting Started**

1. Today we are going to learn about God's love for us. (*Show children the Circle of Grace 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*.

### **Activity - Circle of Grace**

1. Where is our *Circle of Grace* and where are other people's Circles of Grace?
2. *Ask children to stand with enough room around them to fully extend their arms without touching each other.*
3. *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."*
4. *Repeat steps a, b, and c to reinforce physical dimensions of Circle of Grace.*

### **Discussion**

1. Now, we will talk about why it is important that we know about our *Circle of Grace*.
2. Jesus told us that he would always love us and always be with us. How do we know someone loves us? (Some examples: they help us, they make us cookies, and they give us hugs.) We are always in a special, holy place because God loves us. That place is our *Circle of Grace*. This is the place the Holy Spirit is with us and within us. (Review that the Holy Spirit is not scary.)

3. If we can remember that we are in a *Circle of Grace*, with God and surrounded by God's love, we will remember to behave by caring and respecting 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 a happy face and one with a sad face.*
2. *What are some nice things that people do or say? What are some hurtful things that people do or say? (Things that hurt your feelings or make you feel angry or sad.)*
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 belong in 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.*

### **Optional Activities - Color page**

1. *Color the Circle of Grace coloring page - black and white version. Leader may choose to use color pages from each Optional Activity to form a Circle of Grace Color Book for the children.*

## Part 2

**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 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 tells you 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 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 myself or others.
12. **Unsafe touch:** Touch that is disrespectful and hurts, scares, or makes me feel uncomfortable or confused.

## Getting Started

*It is important to begin the lesson by explaining that God does not want or cause bad things to happen. There will be children in every group who may have already experienced unsafe or hurtful situations. It is important to reinforce it is not their fault. We want our children to understand that God is with them and for them even when they are hurting or sad.*

## Review

1. Briefly demonstrate the *Circle of Grace* as learned in part 1
2. Point to *Happy Face* and *Sad Face* chart. Ask children the following:
  - a. What did we write on this chart? (Answer: words and actions we like and don't like from others.)
  - b. What were some of the words and actions you liked? Why?



- c. What were some you did not like? Why?

We are now going to continue talking about words and actions that we like and don't like in our *Circle of Grace*. We will also learn a new way to identify what doesn't belong in our *Circle of Grace*.

## Discussion

1. Show a large picture of a traffic signal.
2. Discuss the meaning or purpose 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

*Review the definition of "signal" with children. See vocabulary. Reinforce that the activity is using the word "signal" (instead of "light") intentionally in order to point to the fact that a "signal" can be both internal and external.*

Towns and cities have traffic signals to keep people safe and protected. God has given each of us our own kind of signal to keep us safe and protected. Sometimes these signals come from other people like our parents or teachers. Sometimes these signals are called feelings and are one of the main ways the Holy Spirit helps to guide us. 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.

## Discussion

1. Let's think of the signals God gives us to help keep us safe and protected like the three colors of a stoplight: green, red, and yellow.
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 face poster, from first lesson, 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 of bullying. Ask the children to define it and what it looks like etc.* Some examples are bullying (being mean to someone on purpose), 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 face poster, from first lesson, 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 something 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.*
2. *Suggested instructions:*
  - In a moment, I'm going to describe some stories.
  - Please listen very carefully.
  - At the end of each, I'm going to ask you if you think the story describes a red signal, a yellow signal, or a green signal. I will hold up a signal and you tell me if I am right or wrong.
  - Then we'll talk about each story.

3. Read each situation aloud. **Make sure to vary the order in which the green, red, and yellow situations are read.**

After reading the story, give the children a moment before asking them if the circle card you are holding up is right or wrong. Some stories, though clearly red to adults, may be unclear (yellow) from a child's perspective. This activity will help children identify their own confusing feelings about these stories and to understand that they should talk to a trusted adult. Allow time for children to discuss their feelings connected with these stories. (Refer to Feeling Faces chart as needed at the end of lesson plan.)

a. GREEN STORIES (*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*).
- Your grandmother/grandfather wipes your tears when you fall down and hurt yourself (*loved, comforted, safe*).
- You tell the leader when you accidentally break something in your classroom (*embarrassed, sorry, guilty, happy that you told*).
- You let your teacher know that you saw some classmates being really mean to your friend. You told them to stop being mean and they laughed (*mad, happy that you told*).

b. YELLOW/RED STORIES (*Select three or more and reinforce that they are always to talk to a trusted adult.*)

- Your big brother's friend wants you to see something on his cell phone using the internet. Your family rule is that you can only use the internet with your mom or dad (*worried, afraid of getting into trouble*).
- Someone gives you a special gift and tells you not to tell your mom or dad.
- You are playing at the neighborhood park with your older sister. A man/woman says "Hi," to you and asks if you can help find his/her lost puppy (*sad, anxious*).
- Your friend's big brother/sister wants you to do something you don't want to do (*pressured, confused*).
- An adult or older kid asks you to go with him to the park. He says that your parents won't care and won't understand about our special time together. (*confused, curious*)
- A neighborhood friend has started to be mean to you. You don't know why your friend is acting this way (*sad, anxious, worried*).
- Your friend wants you to ride your bike down the street even though your mom/ dad told you that you must stay in the driveway (*confused, pressured*).

***This Next 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 good secret and a bad secret. This understanding could be the key in them seeking help.*

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. 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. 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 Signal Green Signal - 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 some safe secrets? Who is involved in the secret? Is there a time that it is finally told?
- 3) Can you name an unsafe secret? Who is involved in the secret? Can the secret hurt you or someone else? Are you told NEVER to tell the secret to your parent/trusted adult?

Reinforce that it is important always to tell their parent or trusted adult the secret even if someone tells them not to.

## **Safety Plan**

### **Introduction**

1. We have already mentioned the need to talk to a "trusted adult" when you are feeling unsafe, uncomfortable, or unsure.
2. Let's discuss what we mean by a "Trusted Adult". Write term on board.
3. Allow a few responses.
4. Shape their responses: "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."
5. How do you know you can trust someone?
6. Allow a few responses
7. 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.
8. 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.*

*List children's responses on the board.*

9. These are people whom you can ask to help you if you are unsafe or confused. We call these people Trusted Adults.

### **Activity** - Identifying My Trusted Adults

1. Give each child a piece of paper and crayons or markers.
2. Instruct the children to think of one or two Trusted Adults besides mom or dad whom they could ask for help.
3. Tell a person next to you the names of the Trusted Adults that you picked.
4. Have the children draw a picture of each of their Trusted Adults. Remind children that mom and dad may be trusted adults even if they are not in the picture.
5. Attach the drawing to the Home Activity Sheet for Parents (see the end of the Kindergarten Lessons).
6. Instruct the children to have their parents sign the Home Activity Sheet.
7. Remind the children to bring the Home Activity Sheet back to the classroom for the next class. 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**

1. Ask the children to think of times when they might need to talk to or ask a trusted adult for help. List these on the board.
2. Post the adapted skill poster "How to Ask for Help".
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 – see the end of the lessons.)
  - c. Tell the person what is wrong, why you don't feel safe. (Picture of the question mark "?" see the end of the lessons)
  - d. Tell the person "Thank You". (Picture of the words "Thank You" at the end of the lessons.)
4. 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.

## **Practice makes Perfect**

*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. *Have the children as a group practice the following:*
  - a. Children look at the leader.
  - b. Children say aloud, "I need your help. I don't feel safe."
  - c. Children say aloud, "Please help me".
  - d. Children say aloud, "Thank You."
2. *Remember to attach "How to Ask for Help" Handouts to the Parent Home Activity Sheet.*

## **Wrapping Up**

1. *Encourage children to pray for and/or write a note of thanks to each of their trusted adults.*
2. *Review the definitions of feelings with the children.*
  1. *They are not right or wrong, good or bad.*
  2. *They may be God's signals about what is going on in our lives*
3. *Review the Circle of Grace movement. Ask children to stand with enough room around them to fully extend their arms without touching each other.*

## **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.**

*Optional: Color the How to Ask for Help or Stoplight page. Leader may choose to use color pages from each handout to form a Circle of Grace Color Book for children.*

## Opening Prayer

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

## Closing Prayer

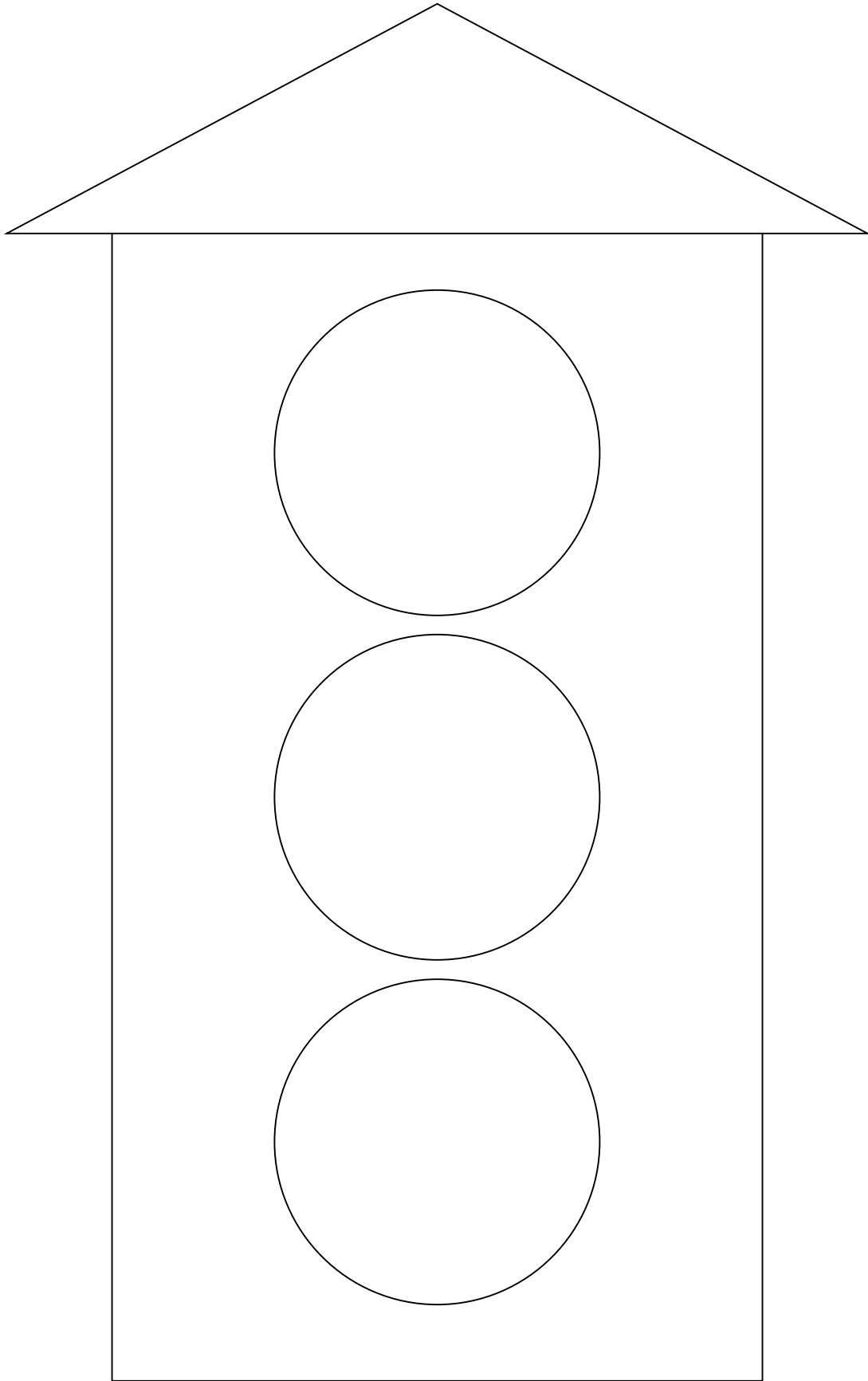
Thank you, God,  
for always being with me in my *Circle of Grace*.  
Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit  
who helps me know what is good.  
Thank you for giving me people who care about me  
and want me to be safe.  
Amen.

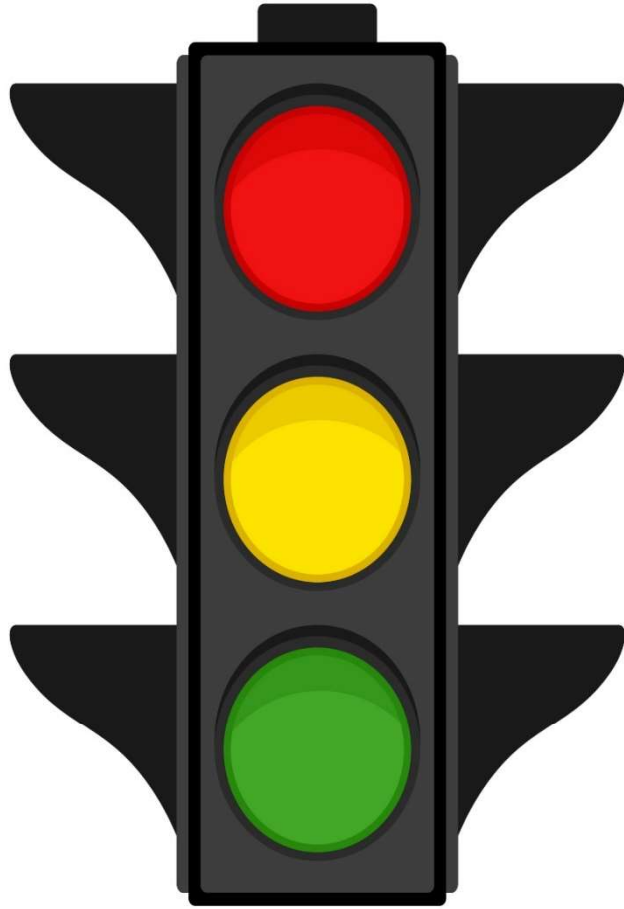






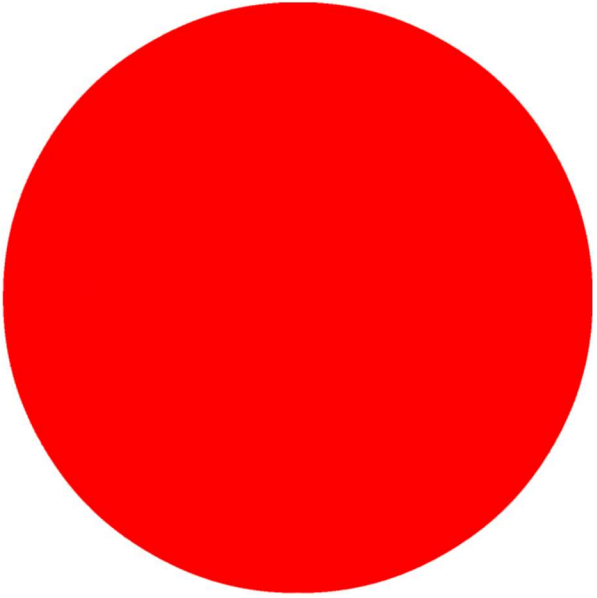
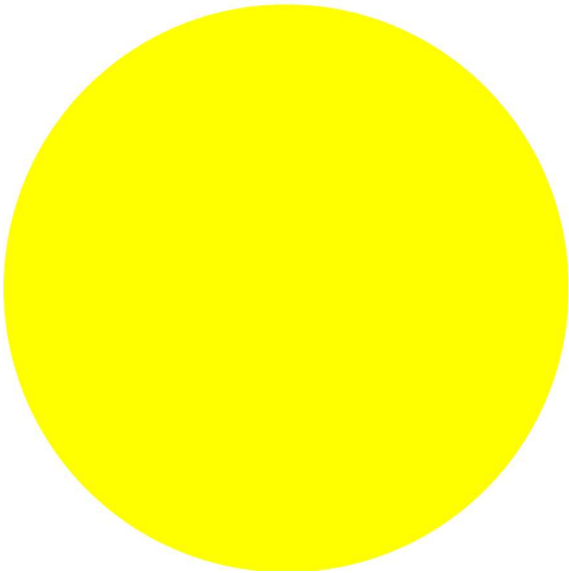
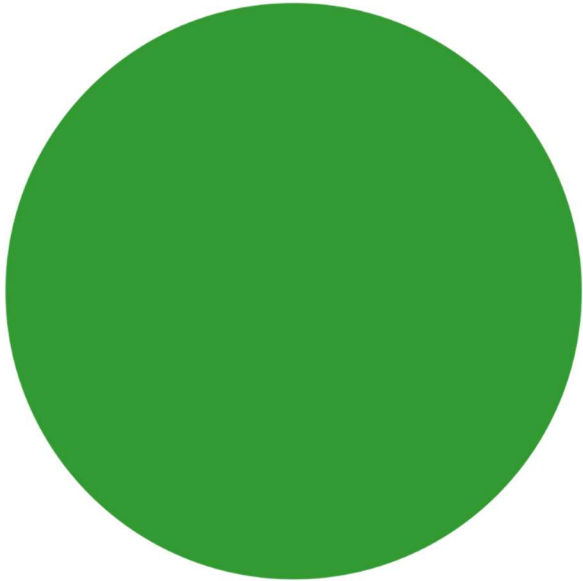




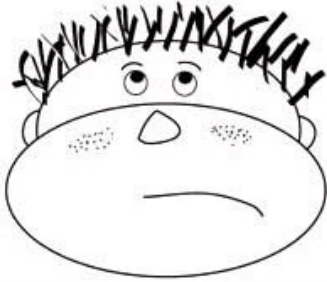


# Red and Green Signal Activity

## Template for a Set of Signal Cards



# Feeling Faces Chart



**Embarrassed**



**Frustrated**



**Happy**



**Lonely**



**Loved**



**Mad**



**Sad**



**Nervous**



**Proud**



**Relaxed**



**Scared**



**Stressed**

# 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*  
*What is a Circle of Grace?*  
*Preschool Lesson*

Dear Parent,

Circle of Grace is a faith-based curriculum used by your arch/diocese. The lesson focused on the Traffic Signal Activity and Safety Plan. The discussion and activity begins to help your child identify safe and unsafe situations/secrets and know how to talk to a trusted adult. The children are taught that God does not want or cause bad things to happen to them, to understand that God is with them and for them even when they are hurting or sad. They begin to understand when someone comes into their *Circle of Grace*, and to recognize safe and unsafe touch/situations and how to talk to a trusted adult if they feel unsafe or are confused.

In this lesson, 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. 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. 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.

It is important for you as parents and guardians to reinforce this lesson 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 take home “secrets” and “how to ask for help” handout for you to review with your child.

The last part of the lesson is the safety plan. It includes asking children to name and draw a picture of trusted adults (in addition to their parents). Please ask your child to show you this drawing and tell you who is the trusted adult in the picture. 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!

## *Preschool Evaluation*

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Parish/School* \_\_\_\_\_ *City* \_\_\_\_\_

*Leader* \_\_\_\_\_ *Number of children in class* \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please list what worked well 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.**