

Family, Faith and Circle of Grace

High School

Modesty: What is it Anyway?

Sometimes young people 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 young person, "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 young person 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:

- Church teachings revealed in the Creed applies in our daily lives
- Human relationships are intended to be experiences of Divine Love
- Personal covenant with God
- Live responsibly as fully initiated members of the Church
- Discipleship is our call to holiness
- The relationship between the love of God, our love of self and our love of others
- The image of God is in ourselves and others

Lesson Objective

Young People will be able to:

1. Identify and understand why modesty is important
2. Recognize the key elements of modesty
3. Understand the connection between modesty and their *Circle of Grace*
4. Recognize that modesty is a healthy boundary which protects the true person created in God's image.
5. Recognize ways they are pressured to not value modesty
6. Know how to respond when they are confronted with inappropriate interactions or violations

Materials Needed

1. What is your Modesty IQ? Quiz for each student (see the end of the lesson)
2. Leader answer guide to the Modesty IQ quiz (see the end of the lesson)
3. Summary of Key Concepts of Circle of Grace Handout for each student (see at the end of the lesson)
4. Intimate Center Handout for each student (see the end of the lesson)
5. Whiteboard or chalkboard

6. Markers, pens, and newsprint paper
7. Approved magazines

It is important to begin the lesson by explaining that God does not want or cause bad things to happen. There will be young people who have already experienced unsafe or hurtful situations. It is important to reinforce that it is not their fault, and it is never too late to tell a trusted adult. We want our young people to understand that God is with them and for them even when they are hurting or sad.

Getting Started

Today we are going to talk about modesty. You may be asking yourself, “how does modesty fit in with my *Circle of Grace*?” Our first activity will help us discuss this connection.

Opening Activity: What is Your Modesty IQ?

Option 1 - *Distribute the quiz to each student. Have the youth do the quiz individually and then go to the large group discussion section.*

Option 2- *Distribute the quiz to each student. Divide the class into several groups. Have the groups discuss the questions on the quiz then go to the large group discussion section.*

Large Group Discussion:

What do you think is the definition of modesty? *Allow for a few responses then provide them with the definition.* Do you think modesty is an ancient concept? Does it have a place in our everyday lives?

Allow for a few responses. Write them on the board.

Let's visit about the questions on the quiz.

The answer guide to the quiz is in the end of the lesson. Discuss each question. Prompt the youth to identify the correct answer and key concepts related to each question. After the discussion, proceed to the review.

Distribute the Key Concepts of “Circle of Grace” to the students. Explain how God is present with us and within us. He wants the best for us in all things. The Circle of Grace concept helps us realize His love for us and desire to keep us safe.

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 people in our lives to help us when we are troubled or struggling with a concern.
- God wants us to talk to trusted grownups about our worries, concerns or funny/uncomfortable feelings so they can help us be safe and take the right action.

It is important that young people understand the relationship between the Circle of Virtue and the *Circle of Grace*. The *Circle of Grace* is always present and never leaves us. Our Circle of Virtue is our positive response to our *Circle of Grace*. Let’s look at the definitions.

Circle of Grace: The love and goodness of God that always surrounds me and others.

Circle of Virtue: Our response to the invitation of God’s grace by cultivating goodness and virtue in our lives.

Modesty: How we express the knowledge of who we truly are in the eyes of God.

Humility: Understanding of the truth of God and who we truly are; made in His image.

Discussion

So what do these concepts really mean? We are going to discuss each concept in depth.

Give a chance for the group to respond to the questions. Write the responses on the board.

1. **Circle of Grace:** God’s presence always; the in-dwelling and out-dwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 - What are some examples of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us?
Examples: Sacraments, Gifts of the Holy Spirit, yearning for the truth and to be loved.
 - What are some examples of the Holy Spirit dwelling outside us?
Examples: Experience unconditional love and forgiveness, all good and holy interactions/relationships.
2. **Circle of Virtue:** Our positive response to God’s Grace. This response springs from an intimate relationship with God.
 - What are some positive responses to God’s Grace?

Examples: A desire to know Him at a deeper level, ability to discern right from wrong, desire to take care of His creation which includes ourselves.

- What does an intimate relationship with God look like?

Examples: One has faith in His love and forgiveness. One desires to spend time in prayer.

3. **Humility**: We develop humility by knowing the truth of God and who we are. Unfortunately, humility has an unjust reputation of being bad/weak. Many view it as a negative. Popular culture would have us believe that it is more important to be proud than humble. Humility is actually a beautiful virtue. It is coming to a clear understanding of the truth of God and who one truly is and that is good news!

- Give some examples of how our culture entices us to have a false sense of pride.

Examples: One has control over his/her life. Winning and being the best becomes our god.

- Give some media examples of how someone showed a true sense of humility.

Examples: The police officer gives a homeless man some boots, TV show where the person in charge secretly does the front-line work.

4. **Modesty**: Because of this humility, we desire others to know us as we are created “In His image”.

- Give some examples of assaults on modesty in the media.

Examples: TV shows, Music Videos, Movies. Ask the youth for more examples.

- Give some examples of positive views of modesty in the media.

Examples: A football player blesses himself before a game. Teens raise money for a classmate who has cancer. Ask the youth for more examples.

Activity - Intimate Center

1. *Distribute the Intimate Center Handout to each student.*
2. *Divide the class into four groups.*
3. *Give each group two large pieces of paper/newsprint. Display the four above terms for class to reference: Circle of Grace, Circle of Virtue, Humility, Modesty.*
4. *On the first piece of large paper, write a letter from a reader seeking help from an advice columnist about their struggles with modesty (you can add images for a visual).*
5. *On the second large piece of paper, write the advice of the columnist on how to live the modesty concept in daily life. (you can add images for a visual)*
6. *Bring the groups back together and have them report on their columns. Which part was harder to do? Consider displaying it in the classroom.*

Final Discussion -

What are some ways a young person can seek help if he/she is pressured to be immodest or experience violations of other personal boundaries?

Give the youth a chance to respond to the question. Write the responses on the board. Prompt the following responses.

- Listen to your gut, it is the Holy Spirit prompting you that something is wrong. Learn to recognize the settings and interactions that can get you into uncomfortable situations.

Examples:

- *There is alcohol at a party which makes you uncomfortable.*
- *Someone dares you to send a semi-nude photo.*
- *A classmate wants you to join in on defaming another classmate on a social network site.*
- When someone pressures you, try to take yourself out of the situation.

Example: Prepare a response to get out of difficult situations. Discuss possible responses with your parent or trusted adult.

- You can free yourself from unhealthy relationships by seeking help from a trusted adult.
 - Tell someone who can help you. Talk to someone you trust – parent, professional, counselor, or other trusted adults.
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What is your Modesty IQ?

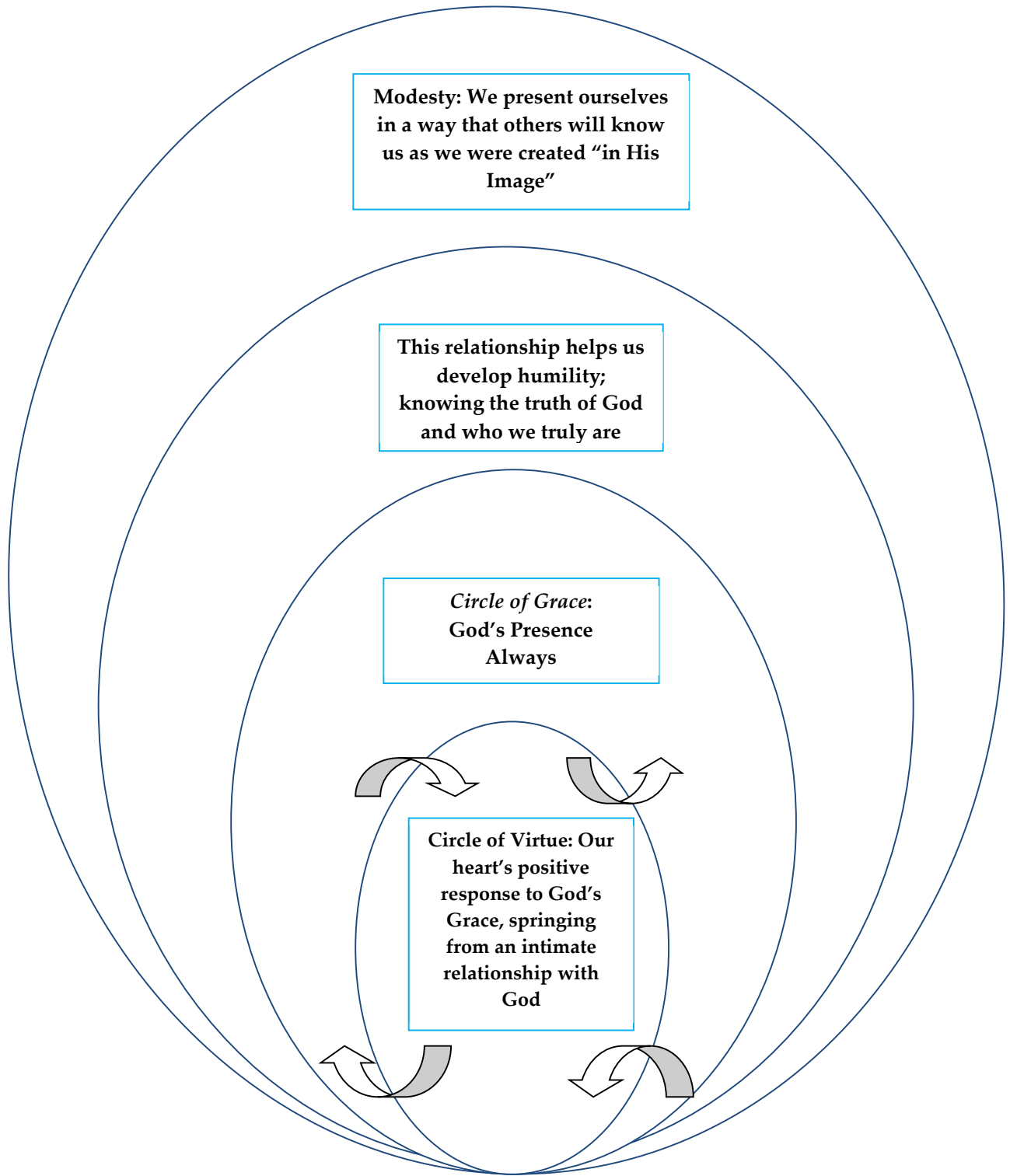
Complete the following questions. Be prepared to discuss them in the large group.

1. The *Circle of Grace* is really someone's personal space.
True False
2. The *Circle of Virtue* allows someone to discern right from wrong in difficult situations.
True False
3. Define humility:
4. Define modesty:
5. Modesty protects the "intimate center of the person".
True False
6. Modesty is only about the type of clothing you wear.
True False
7. There is freedom in being modest.
True False
8. There is nothing wrong with showing off your physical attributes.
True False
9. What does popular culture say about modesty?
10. On the back of this paper, list 5 ways youth are pressured not to be modest and some ways you could seek help if you are pressured to be immodest or experience violations of other personal boundaries?

What is your Modesty IQ?

Answer Guide for Leaders

1. The Circle of Grace is really someone's personal space.
False, Circle of Grace is much more than "personal space". It is the love and goodness of God that always surrounds each of us. It is space that is always shared with God who longs for an intimate relationship with each of us.
2. The Circle of Virtue allows someone to discern right from wrong in difficult situations.
True, but it is much more. Circle of Virtue is our response to the invitation of God's grace by cultivating goodness and virtue in our lives.
3. Define humility: Humility is based on knowledge of the truth about God, oneself and others. The more we truly know God, the more we realize who we truly are... each second of our lives is held in existence by the loving hand of God.
4. Define modesty: Catechism of the Catholic Church states that modesty protects the intimate center of the person. This intimate core holds our true divine desire to love completely (body, mind and soul) in union with God's will and love for us.
5. Modesty protects the "intimate center of the person".
True, see answer 4
6. Modesty is only about the type of clothing you wear.
False, one may think modesty is a response to outward influences such as faith, parents or culture. True modesty stems from an inward influence. This inward influence directs our appearance and interactions with the world. It has a direct correlation to our relationship with God and our understanding of being made in His image. In the image of God he created them male and female, and found it very good. (Genesis 1:27-31)
7. There is freedom in being modest.
True. Freedom to be who you really are and not what media/culture dictates you to be.
8. There is nothing wrong with showing off your physical attributes.
False, there is nothing wrong with wanting to look your best! But highlighting or accentuating one particular part of your body, in an immodest way, does not give honor to your true self (examples: low cut blouses, very short skirts, shirtless or pants that hang below the waist.) You want people to remember you for who you truly are and not a particular part of your physical appearance
9. What does popular culture say about modesty?
Its motto is "if you got it, flaunt it". The key word is "it". Culture deceives youth into believing that their body is separate from who they are. It encourages them to believe the lie that what they do with their body does not have an impact on a person. This disconnect causes them to lose sight of who they really are, a child of God.
10. List 5 ways youth are pressured not to be modest and some ways a young person can seek help if he/she is pressured to be immodest or experience violations of other personal boundaries?
Write students responses on the board.



*Intimate Center of a Person:
How it influences the outward expression of our true selves*

Summary of the Key Concepts of “Circle of Grace”



God gives each of us a Circle of Grace 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.

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- 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.

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Evaluation

Date _____

Parish/School _____ *City* _____

Leader _____ *Number of young people in class* _____

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

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

1. YES _____ NO _____ Young People understand they are created by God and live in the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. YES _____ NO _____ Young People will be able to describe the *Circle of Grace*.
3. YES _____ NO _____ Young People will be able to describe Circle of Virtue.
4. YES _____ NO _____ Young People understand how having an intimate relationship with God helps us know who we truly are.
5. YES _____ NO _____ Young People understand that modesty comes from an inner desire to present oneself in a way that others will know us as we are created, "in His Image".
6. YES _____ NO _____ Young People will identify ways in which they are pressured to be immodest, not honoring who they truly are.
7. YES _____ NO _____ Young People will know what action to take when pressured in to being immodest or other boundary violations.

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

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

Return to your School Administrator, Director of Religious Education, or Director of Youth Ministry.