Greetings,  

November 15, 2013

I’m happy to announce that the Circle of Grace curriculum for K-12 is now ready for your review.

I encourage you to preview the curriculum and DVD in preparation for our December 17th training at Nazareth Retreat Center in Boise, Idaho. Our morning training is scheduled from at 9:00 to noon. We will have a lunch break from 12:00-1:30pm our afternoon training following lunch and concluding at 4:30.

Please be advised that the morning and afternoon training sessions will be exactly the same. We are offering the training twice in hopes of allowing flexibility to your schedule. You do not have to attend both sessions. However, I would like to know beforehand which session you will attend to ensure that we have space for everyone. Seating at Nazareth is limited.

We are also making every effort to offer these sessions via a Webinar. At this time we are experiencing some difficulties, but we hope to have the issue resolved before December 17th. More information about the Webinar offerings will be forthcoming.

Be advised that our license for Circle of Grace goes into effect on January 1, 2014. We are not able to begin using this program in our parishes or schools until then. However, you will need your curriculum manuals at the training sessions.

The Circle of Grace is currently being used at 21 other diocese and I thought you would like to hear what they have to say about this program.

TESTIMONIALS

"The training component was the key to the successful implementation of Circle of Grace. It gave the coordinators more confidence to go out and actually use the program. Circle of Grace is an excellent program in that it is faith-based and has all the components for each grade level."

-Maureen Fontenot, Director of Human Resources/Safe Environment, Diocese of Lafayette

"Effective advance training helped our diocese to embrace the program. When you introduce a new program, having it presented from an "outside person" gives it credibility. The trainer, Mary Beth Hanus, was passionate and
enthusiastic and her warmth won over the crowd. I am more impressed with Circle of Grace now that we have launched it in our diocese. It is refreshing to see DRE’s and school employees get excited about teaching safe environment! Circle of Grace has turned the process into a mission of “changing attitudes and hearts” and less about Charter requirements.

We were most impressed that the program follows the teaching of our faith. What makes Circle of Grace the top choice in our diocese is the emphasis on relationships with God and others. We’ve seen the difference in our school children. We hear them using the language with each other on the playground, and we see them treating each other with more respect.”

-Renee K. Leach, Safe Environment Coordinator, Diocese of Sioux Falls

"Our participants were excited about Circle of Grace after the training. It is a wonderful program that equips each child with the skills to protect himself/herself. Circle of Grace is also designed in such a way that teachers do not have to search for ideas on how to meet children on their level. The program focuses on the dignity and holiness of the person.

It was the easiest program to implement, because the directors were thrilled about it, which carried over to the parish. Our first year with Circle of Grace was wonderful. We received comments from teachers and DRE’s regarding the success of the program and examples of how children actually implemented what they were taught.”

-Dr. Faith Ann Spinella, Director of the office of Religious Education, Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux

"The training empowered us to successfully implement Circle of Grace. Feedback on the program has been good. We first implemented it in our rural parishes. Due to the positive feedback, it was implemented in all parishes and schools.”

-Mary Frances Horton, Safe Environment Coordinator, Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph MO

"Our impression of Circle of Grace is very favorable. The materials are user-friendly and everyone, once trained, seemed excited about implementing the program in their parishes and schools. We like the flexibility of the program because of the limited time we have in religious education. We have had a good response from those teaching the program.”

-Kristi Skrobarczyk, Safe Environment Coordinator, Diocese of Corpus Christi

"The training provided background information, rationale, and logic behind Circle of Grace. Training reinforced the importance of the program and reduced the apprehension and intimidation. Circle of Grace is thorough, effective and consistent with Catholic teaching. Implementation went better than anticipated. I had several comments about how simple it was to implement.”

-Lorraine Lajiness, Safe Environments, Archdiocese of Detroit

"Even if Church leadership did not require it, the culture that we live in requires something like Circle of Grace. It is a perfect way to show that living our faith is a real adventure in the world in which we live. With Circle of Grace, faith intersects life.”

-Sister Judanne Stratman, O.S.F., Director of Religious Education, West Point, NE

"It was such a relief to finally have these professional lessons so infused with our Catholic doctrine. We can now comfortably say to our parents that we will teach their children about the dignity of each child, physically and spiritually. The fact that the program came out of an Archdiocese with the exact same needs and mission was what made this a good fit. The passion they have for this important mission was contagious.”
"Our diocese had a strong desire to implement a safe environment training program for our children and youth which not only provided the traditional healthy/unhealthy boundary lessons, but went beyond to integrate the divine sacredness of each person. We believe we found it in Circle of Grace. The curriculum focuses on the fact that children are God’s precious creation, who are never outside the circle of His love and grace.

Circle of Grace offers easy-to-follow, age-appropriate lessons which are sequenced for preschool through 12th grade. We are grateful to Mary Beth Hanus and the Archdiocese of Omaha "GRACES" committee for the development of this program."

-Tom Tenerovicz, Safe Environment Coordinator, Diocese of Gaylord, MI

"Excellent feedback from the many schools that utilized the program. It was very successful and easily implemented. The program is very user friendly and effective. The Archdiocese of Omaha has been very helpful and available to answer questions."

-Kenneth P. Gaughan, Director of Counseling, Archdiocese of Washington

I look forward to hearing back from you when you decide which training session you plan to attend. Please feel free to contact me anytime should you have questions about the new program.

Respectfully,

Veronica Childers

CYAP/ HR Assistant

1501 S. Federal Way, Suite 400

Boise, Idaho 83705

(208) 350-7556