

## St Augustin's Newport RI Religious Education Program

Dear Parents,

Per Diocesan mandate, all parishes are to provide for every student a Safe Environment Program within the Religious Education year called the *Circle of Grace*. After meeting with the Diocesan Office of Religious Education Director, the Director of the Office of Outreach and Prevention, and the Spokesperson for the *Circle of Grace* program, along with other parishes who offer a Faith Formation program, we at St Augustin's have opted to offer Safe Environment Training/*Circle of Grace* program as a **Take-home lesson** to be covered together at home rather than as an additional mandatory classroom session). This means that you, primary catechist, have received the grade-appropriate Diocesan-mandated lesson which you are expected to complete with your children. For parents with more than one child enrolled, this means you would need to complete grade-specific lesson plans provided today with each of your children.

The following is taken directly from a parent letter from the *Circle of Grace* "*Respecting All God's People*." Out of concern of concern for all of God's people, and in response to the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, we have a program for the safe environment education of children and young people supported and mandated by Bishop Thomas J. Tobin, D.D., of the Diocese of Providence.

*Dioceses will establish "safe environment" programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse. (Article 12- Charter for Protection of Children and Young People)*

This program is called *Circle of Grace*. It is meant to supplement and be integrated into the excellent programs and curricula for the formation of children and young people in our religious education programs. *Circle of Grace* aims to equip our young people by arming them with essential knowledge and skills grounded in the richness of our faith. This program helps our children and young people to understand their own (and others') dignity in mind, body, and spirit.

Each grade-specific lesson contains general information about the *Circle of Grace* program as well as its philosophy. Also included are "Tips for Parents" taken from the program.

Please sign the form on the following page acknowledging receipt of the letter and age-appropriate lesson(s) for your child(ren) that you agree to complete.

Sincerely,

Shawn Burns  
Religious Education Coordinator  
St Augustin's, Newport, RI

### Parent Acknowledgement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent of \_\_\_\_\_  
have received the Circle of Grace Lesson plan(s) to completed with my child(ren) at home. As  
the primary Catechist of the Domestic Church, I agree and promise to work with my child(ren)  
on this lesson for the Safety and Protection of all God's children.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_