

VIRTUS Teaching Safety – First Grade

Learning about Boundaries and Safe Adults

Catechists are to review the Teaching Safety guidelines from VIRTUS and the lesson plan guidelines before the class session. Parish catechetical leaders are to make sure that parents or guardians have been advised of their right to have their child opt out of this class session.

Recording Form Due Date:

March 31 of every calendar year

Length of class session: 45-60 minutes

This lesson plan may have more activities than can be included in your 40-60 minute session. Please feel free to choose which activities your class will connect with the best and drop any activities that you think your class would not connect with. Catechists should include opening and closing prayers. They should also review Religious Education Standards for their correlation with the VIRTUS activities.

Educator Resources:

Archdiocesan Religious Education Tasks, Essential Concepts, and Standards: By the end of the class the child will be able to:

Task III: Moral Formation

- *Made in the Image of God: Foundation of Human Dignity*
 - Recognize that God loves us so much that human bodies are made in God's image with body and **soul**.
 - Recognize that because God makes everyone in His image and likeness, people are to be **respected**.
 - Begin to associate being made in the image and likeness of God with the concept of **human dignity**.
- *Made for Happiness with God, Beatitudes*
 - Begin to understand that following wise rules and obeying our parents, **guardians and safe adults** helps us stay happy, healthy, and holy.
- *Human Freedom and Conscience Formation*
 - Recognize that we make choices (**free will**) to love God and others.
 - Know that God and our parents or guardians help us to know what is right and wrong.
 - Distinguish between right and wrong thoughts and actions; give examples of how our actions have **consequences**.
- *The Human Community*
 - Discuss ways we help each other to do good things when we together in our families, our classroom and in our Parish (e.g. knowing and following the safety rules that help keep all of us safe).
- *Catholic Social Teaching*
 - Appreciate creation as a gift from God, and recognize our responsibility to care for this gift (**stewardship**) (e.g. such as our bodies).

Task V: Education for Community Life

- *Models of the Catholic Church: Temples of the Holy Spirit*
 - Recognize that the **Holy Spirit** lives in each of us and also in the Church, which helps us to be close to God.

Teaching Safety Course Objectives: By the end of the class the child will be able to:

- Repeat and understand the touching **rules**: “If someone tries to touch a child’s body parts or wants the child to touch their **private body parts**, the child should...”
 - Say, “No!”
 - Run away.
 - Tell a parent or other safe adult what happened.
- Identify what are boundaries
- Identify strong and weak boundaries
- Name their safe friends and **safe adults**.
- Identify **special safe adults**.
- Respond in an appropriate manner to **unsafe** situations.

Note to Catechist: The introductory video for grades K through 5 is designed to open a simple discussion with children about touching safety and personal boundaries. The video is approximately six (9) minutes long and is neither created nor intended as a substitute for the lesson itself. It is merely an introduction designed to “break the ice” among those in this age group and to get everyone talking about the relevant personal boundary and personal safety issues. Importantly, the video will get children focused on the topic matter, which will help the teacher to facilitate an easy transition into the interactive activities within the lesson. These interactive activities are the critical components where children have a real opportunity to learn how to protect themselves.

We recommend that you watch the video in advance at least a couple of times prior to showing it to your students, so you’ll be able to more easily anticipate when the video will end. The video really needs no introduction. Just put it into the machine, and hit “play.” If you’re using a DVD version of the video, you’ll select the English or Spanish version and the appropriate age group from a menu screen.

In preparing for this activity, review *Teaching Boundaries and Safety: A Guide for Parents, Guardians, and Other Caring Adults*. **Help children to see that they have a say in what happens to their bodies.**

English Link: <https://seattlearch.box.com/shared/static/q5odkngf74wbaestvebvysldqd2cp9fe.pdf>

Spanish Link: <https://seattlearch.box.com/shared/static/6j4th0n2h11sfo75o4kj0xe2l2ismv1n.pdf>

This age group: Dealing with the primary age—key concept is “activity”

Young children have lively and vivid imaginations, are growing less self-centered, and are becoming more conscious of others. Their attention span is short—approximately 20 minutes. They build on concrete experiences, love to learn, and are highly inquisitive. However, they rely almost entirely on others to define good and bad, and safe versus unsafe behavior—but they do understand “rules”, which is another phrase for boundaries. At this age, children are beginning to differentiate between the positive and negative aspects of everyday life. They are beginning to question adults’ expectations of blind obedience. At the same time they are learning how to respect and care for their own bodies in terms of hygiene, eating, and activity. Parents or guardians and caring adults should make every effort to create an environment with honesty and trust, where children are free to ask questions about life and their own bodies to set the stage for each child’s life-long relationships with others. This is the time to discuss safe and unsafe behaviors, and to enable children to practice safety away from home.

Vocabulary words and definitions: (NOTE - This list is designed to help the catechist explain relevant terms. It includes more terms than the students are expected to know).

Consequences – the results of our actions; what happens from the things we say and do

Free Will – we can make choices

Holy – close to God; filled with God's grace

Holy Spirit - the third Person of the Trinity; the Spirit of God. (CCC #685; 152; 243)

Human Dignity – The belief that all people are created in God's image and worthy of honor or respect

Private Body Parts – those body parts covered by a bathing suit

Rules – tell us what we can and cannot do

Respect – want only the best for other people and do good things for us

Safe – protected, taken care of

Safe friend/ safe adult/ safe touch – people who respect our wishes and the rules of our parents or guardians; they won't hurt or scare us without a good reason

Secret – something kept hidden or unexplained

Sin - choosing to disobey God. It is doing what you know is wrong. (CCC #1849; 1853)

Special safe adult – our parents, guardians, doctor or nurse – are those very special adults who can see or touch our private body parts, but only to keep us clean and healthy and only when we are sick or need help

Soul – where God lives within us

Stewardship – taking care of God's creation, such as our bodies that God has created

Temple of the Holy Spirit – At baptism, the Holy Spirit comes to live in our bodies and souls to nourish, heal, guide, and protect us (CCC 739, 809-810)

Ten Commandments – rules from God that help keep us safe and respect others

Unsafe friend/ unsafe adult/ unsafe touch – people who do not respect our wishes and the rules of our parents/guardians; they could hurt us.

Lesson Plan:

Resources:

Children's Bible open to the passage of 1Corinthians 3:16

Religion textbook (optional)

Touching Safety introduction DVD for Grades K - 5 or provided video links

English: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/As5weSqt9Jw>

Spanish: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/-ELCTmNKsw4>

Box of cereal

A plastic bag

- Welcome the children. Tell them that in today's class we will be talking about how God made each of us in his image and likeness. Did you know that God calls our bodies "**Temples of the Holy Spirit**"? That means that God made us good and **holy**. Because we are good and holy, God wants us to learn how to **respect** and to take care of our bodies by following safety **rules** and knowing those people who help keep us **safe**.
- Opening prayer that includes scripture and begins and ends with the Sign of the Cross.
 - All: + **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**
 - Catechist: A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians... (*read verse 3:16*). Short pause. Explain to the children that God, the **Holy Spirit** lives in their bodies. That their bodies are temples, holy places, like our Churches. Thus, all of our body parts are special and **holy**. God wants us to take care of them by following rules to keep them safe, healthy, and holy.
 - Optional: Review **relevant** vocabulary words and definitions.
 - Catechist, please bow your heads as we pray... *Dear God, you made each of us in your image, as good and wonderful. You want us to always take care of ourselves and to be with others, who want to keep us safe and holy. Help us to learn the safety rules, so that we can respect ourselves and each other. Thank you for the gifts of Jesus, our parents our guardians, and our teachers, who help us to learn and follow your rules, through Christ our Lord. Amen.*
 - All: + **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Show the introductory video (8 ½ minutes).

Activity #1: Reviewing Body Parts, Safe Touches, and Saying NO!

- **Ask children to name their body parts.** May do so using the following song, where everyone touches their body parts as they are named.
 - Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.*
 - Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.*
 - Eyes and ears and mouth and nose.*
 - Head and shoulders, knees and toes.*
 - Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.*
- Repeat song several times, gradually increasing speed (tempo) each time.

Who created your toes? GOD

Who created your eyes? GOD

Who created these silly little things on the side of our heads? (point to or touch your ears) GOD

That's right, God created every part of us. Our whole body and even our souls deep on the inside where God lives in us that we can't see or touch. He created us in his image and likeness.

Our bodies, that God created, are Temples of the Holy Spirit, because God (in the 3rd person of the Trinity) lives in our souls and guides us to be holy.

Because every part of our bodies is so special, even these silly little things (point to or touch ears again), and God lives in each of us, we need to always treat our bodies with respect and only allow others to treat them with respect too.

- **Talk with children about the difference between these "regular" body parts and their private body parts:**
 - We treat private body parts as "special" by keeping them covered. One reason is to help keep our private body parts clean and healthy.
 - Private body parts are those body parts that are covered by our bathing suits.

 - *When God created our bodies, he gave us an intellect (our brains that allow us to think clear and smart), and a free will, so we can choose what is right and avoid what is evil. He gave us a conscience too! That is the little voice in our hearts that helps us figure out what is right and wrong. Both God and our parents can help us learn how to know what is right and wrong by giving us rules. These rules make it so we can be happy, healthy and holy.*
 - *Sometimes though, people don't always know what is right or they choose not to do what is right. We can help them know when what they are doing is wrong and not let them harm our bodies or souls.*

- **Ask children what to do if someone wants to touch their private body parts or if an adult asks a child to touch the adult's private body parts.**
 - Say, "No!"
 - Run away.
 - Tell a safe adult what happened.

 - *God made us all to live in community with each other and to help care for the needs of others people. That is why he gave us rules to keep us safe and doesn't want us to harm other people or for other people to harm us. This is called human dignity, when we respect the rights of others and they respect us because we are all created in God's image and by God, so we are all worthy of this respect.*
 - *When people don't treat us with respect the little voice in our hearts that tells us if something is good or bad, might feel icky or strange, that means that our hearts know that whatever they are doing is bad.*
 - *Let's look at some examples of things that would be bad and what we should do:*

Activity 2: Life is Like a Box of Cereal – Discovering the Boundaries in Your Life

- **Activity:** The purpose of this activity is to create scenarios for children that will give them ideas about boundaries and limits, and how both are an important part of our daily lives. You'll be inviting the children to stand in a circle with you while holding hands with each other. Then, together, you'll sing the introductory song prayer. Afterward, everyone will sit down in the same circle shape, and the you'll lead the discussion about boundaries.
- **Discussion:** Begin the lesson by inviting all of the children to gather into a circle around you. Ask them to sit at arm's length from one another. (You're seated in a chair at the top of the circle—this is in and of itself a boundary that you're placing about appropriate distance). Begin a conversation with the children about boundaries by asking them if they know what a "boundary" is, and have them explain it from their perspective.
- Then ask the children to think about the rules they have at home. For example:
 - Where are you allowed to eat food in your house? Why?
 - What time is bedtime on a school night? What about weekends? (If they're different, why are they different?)
 - When do you finish your homework? Are there other things you're not allowed to do until your homework is finished?
 - Are animals allowed inside your house? If so, when and in which rooms?
 - Are you allowed to play outside when it's raining? If you are, do you have to wear special clothes? If you aren't allowed, why not?
 - Are you allowed to eat dessert before you eat dinner? Why not?
 - Do you wear a seatbelt or sit in a special seat when you're riding in a car? Why?
- Explain: Each of these "rules" that we just talked about establishes a boundary. Talk with the children about these boundaries or limits and the fact that everyone has them, including adults. Some are rules that are given to us by others—like our parents, guardians, teachers or coaches. But, sometimes, we get to choose our own boundaries. Ask the children if they can think of any ways that they have created boundaries or rules for the people in their lives. Some examples are:
 - When you don't want a hug from someone like a friend, parent, grandparent or other family member, or don't want to give a goodnight kiss.
 - When someone wants to use your toys and you don't want the other person to do that.
 - When you want to pick out your own clothes without help from mom or dad.
- Explain that boundaries or limits sometimes seem like "no fun" because they seem like they are getting in the way of what we really want to do. However, boundaries can also protect us from harm. They help us know when something or someone is not acting in a way that is healthy and good for us.
- **Visual display:** Children are very visual at this age. One way to demonstrate the effect of boundaries is by using a box of cereal.
- Remove half the cereal from the box and pour it into a large plastic bag. Show the children how the box demonstrates well-formed boundaries that keep the cereal inside and other things outside. The box fits in a particular space and does not allow the cereal to spill out into other areas. Meanwhile, the bag of cereal has no definite form. It is hard to hold onto and the cereal can spill out unexpectedly and become contaminated by other things in or on the cabinet or table.
- This is what boundaries do. Like boxes, they define the space that keeps things safe and predictable. They also let us know what is expected of children and adults, and that children have the same rights as adults to have their personal boundaries respected. And while weak boundaries—like the bag of cereal—are not always the best way to protect something, strong boundaries—like the box—provide a much better way to protect something.

Activity 3: Discussion: Identifying Safe Adults

- Explain to Children who *safe adults* are:
 - *Safe adults are people who touch only in ways that are safe.*

- *They are people who don't hurt us without a good reason, such as a nurse who gives us a shot. The shot may hurt, but it will help us.*
 - *They are people who don't confuse or scare us without a good reason, such as someone who might tell us to leave a building because of a fire. Telling us about a fire and helping us escape might be scary, but it would be for a good reason, to keep us safe.*
 - *Safe adults are people who respect your boundaries and your parent's rules.*
- **Special Safe Adults**
 - *Explain to the children that they may know many safe adults, such as their teachers. However, there are only a few select people, who have the right to touch their private body parts. Special safe adults are the only people who may see or touch a child's private body parts, and only for the purpose of keeping the child clean and healthy.*
 - *Your parents or guardians will tell you who, of the adults in your life, are special safe adults – and when these special safe adults have permission to touch your private body parts. No one has the right to touch your private body parts except these special people and they can touch your private body parts only under certain circumstances – to keep you clean and healthy.*
 - *Special safe adults are those who have permission to help you take a bath, go to the bathroom with you if you need help, to help you put clothes on or change clothes, or to help you when you are sick.*

Closing prayer:

- All: + **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**
- Teacher: *Dear God, thank you for the gifts of our bodies, which are Temples of your Holy Spirit, holy and good. Thank you for helping us learn rules to respect our bodies and to keep them safe. We thank you for *all those*, who guide us and always love us, even when we might feel confused or scared. We thank you for making us healthy, happy, and holy through Christ our Lord. Amen.*
- All: + **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**