



Welcome to the Red Level!

You are now in the red level. Perhaps you have just joined the GFS program or perhaps you have been in GFS for several years. If you are in 5th to 9th grade, the study at this level will be appropriate for you! You will have a great time earning badges for your vest and learning more about the church.

This is what you will do:

- ❖ Attend meetings and maintain a good attendance record
- ❖ Live out the GFS motto; *Bear ye One Another's Burdens* by working with other girls on community service projects and supporting each other
- ❖ Meet girls from other churches by attending diocesan GFS events such as Rally Day, summer parties and camp
- ❖ Wear your vest proudly for special GFS events

This booklet has been written just for you. It has readings, discussions, crafts that will teach you about God and church. Keep your papers safe in a notebook. You will need your notebook as a record of your work. Your leader will help you get everything done so you earn many badges and have a great time earning them.

Introduction to Girls Friendly Society

Girls Friendly Society is a parish based fellowship for girls, ages 5-21. It is affiliated with the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. This society was originally founded in England in 1876 to support the needs of young girls who had left their homes in rural areas to work in city factories. GFS has existed in the United States since 1877.

Description of GFS and the Program

Today, GFS is designed to meet the needs of the girls in our congregations. The meetings usually take place twice a month at a time the leader and girls choose. *At the meetings, the group may spend their time in any way they choose that creates fellowship and supports the GFS motto "Bear Ye One Another's Burdens and so Fulfill the Law of Christ."* The badge curriculum is helpful because it gives structure to the purpose of GFS and provides many ideas for leaders that are practical to do and fun for the girls.

Installation Service for New Members

If you have not previously been a member of GFS, you should purchase or sew a vest. After you have attended four meetings and are familiar with the GFS motto and prayer, you may be officially admitted as a member of GFS. The GFS admission service is found in the Leader's Handbook. At the service, which is conducted by the priest or a lay reader, the girls receive their GFS pin. The admission service is traditionally conducted at the parish, but can be performed at a diocesan worship service.

Earning Badges

The study guides in the red level are written to be understood by 10 to 14 year olds (5th to 9th grade). Some study guides are more challenging than others. Also, some are relevant to a particular season of the church year. A suggested order of study would be:

Year 1 – Sharing, Tau Cross (Advent), Butterfly (Easter), Wheat (Ruth)

Year 2 – Diocesan Seal, Shell (Baptism), Crown of Thorns(Lent), Pentecost

Year 3 – Lamb (Eucharist), Lily (Mary and Joseph), Lamp, Sword (St. Paul)

Remember, the study guides are only part of the GFS program. It is important that GFS includes other types of fun and enriching activities, service projects for the community, and worship.

Notebooks

Each girl should have a notebook to keep their work in. This notebook will contain their study guides and any additional work done. The branch leader should sign off on the girls work and help the girls keep their notebooks organized so they can be reviewed by the branch advisor or diocesan board if necessary. The notebook also becomes a memento of the girls' work that they often save into adulthood.

Each notebook should contain the ribbon requirements page, the study guides, and additional work papers as required by the study guides.

Awarding the Badges

At the end of the year, the branch leader determines which badges each girl has earned. The badges are ordered from the diocesan board. These badges should be presented to the girls in a special way. They can be announced and awarded as part of a Sunday service or in a separate awards service. The special badges are earned for additional service the girls render to their parish and their community.

Earning the Red Ribbon

The red level consists of 12 study guides for the girls. The requirements to earn the red ribbon are listed in the Red Ribbon Requirements. It will take about three years to complete the red level. The red ribbon is awarded at the diocesan Anniversary Service held in May or June each year.

Uniform

The GFS uniform is a white vest with blue lining. The badges are sewn on the vests. A white blouse and navy skirt can also be worn as part of the uniform.

