

# Welcome to GFS

You have decided to join GFS!  
That means you will have a great time at church with  
your leader and other girls.  
What will you do?



- ❖ Attend meetings with your church friends and have fun
- ❖ Work together on projects that help the people around you
- ❖ Earn badges for your vest by following the study guides: reading the Bible and other stories, talking about what the stories mean, doing crafts and participating in games and drama activities
- ❖ Meet girls from other churches by attending diocesan GFS events such as Rally Day, summer pool parties and camp
- ❖ Wear your vest proudly for special GFS events

This booklet has been written just for you. It has lessons and activities that will teach you about God and church. Keep all of your papers safe in a notebook. 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 for Parents and Leaders

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 anyway 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**

A new member is installed into GFS after she has attended four meetings and is familiar with the GFS motto and prayer. 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 GFS badge and a Membership Handbook.

## **Earning Badges**

The study guides are written to be understood by 6 to 9 year olds; however there are also challenge activities to augment the lessons for 10 to 12 year olds. The work for each should be spread out over 3 to 6 meetings, depending on the age and understanding of the girls.

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 – Fish, Manger (Advent/Christmas), Candle, Heart
- Year 2 – Church Flag, Discovery, Bowl, Latin Cross (Lent/Easter)
- Year 3 – Saint Francis, Star (Epiphany), Celebration, Prayer

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 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.

## **Awarding the Badges**

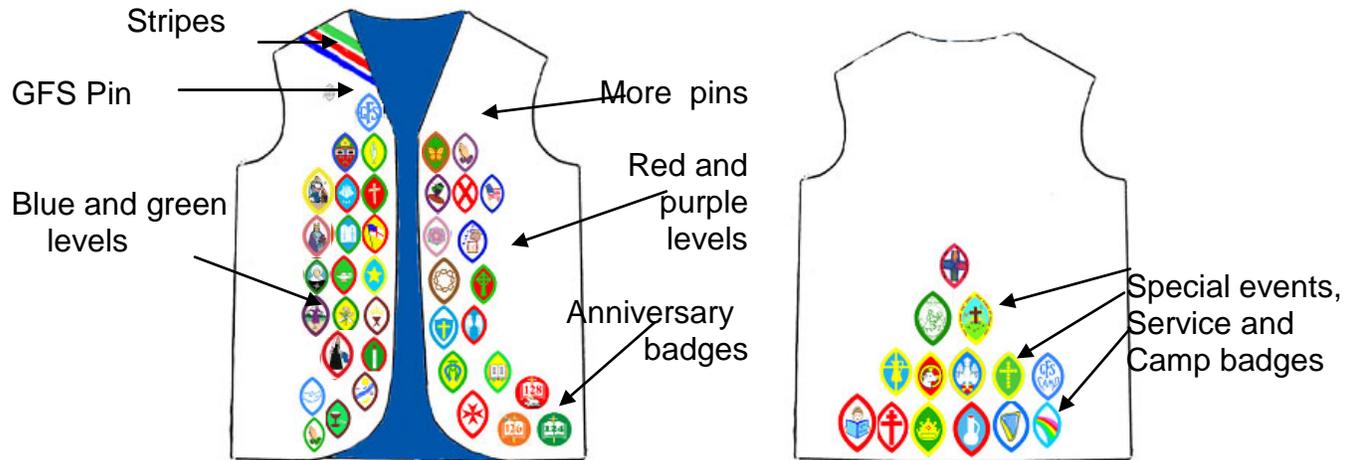
At the end of the year, the branch leader determines which badges each girl has earned. The patches are ordered from the diocesan board. These badges should be presented to the girls in a special way. They can be announced and awarded as part of a Sunday service or in a separate awards service. The special badges listed on pages 3 and 4 of the Introduction are earned for additional service the girls render to their parish and their community.

## **Earning the Green Stripe**

The green level booklet consists of 12 study guides for the girls. The requirements to earn the green stripe for their vests are found in the Green Stripe Requirements. It will take an average of three years to complete. The green stripe 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 vest pattern is available from the diocesan board. It is a hip length, loose fit style. The badges are sewn on the vests. A white blouse and navy skirt can also be worn as part of the uniform.



## Special Badges



**Crown**  
Awarded for the first five hours of service to the parish.



**Byzantine Cross**  
Awarded for an additional eight hours of service to the parish. For every additional eight hours of service, a small jewel is glued to the circles of the Byzantine cross.



**Jug**  
Awarded for the first five hours of service to the community. A jewel is glued around the border of the badge to represent additional service to the community in increments of five hours.



**Cross and Cruet**  
Awarded for one year of regular service as an acolyte. Must be approved by the parish priest. A jewel is glued around the border of the badge to represent additional years of service.



**Hand of God**  
Awarded for assistance for at least one term in religious education work, such as vacation church school, Sunday school, etc. Must be approved by the director of Christian Education. A jewel is glued around the border of the badge to represent additional years of service.



**Harp**  
Awarded for being a faithful member of the choir for one year. Must be approved by the choir director. A jewel is glued around the border of the badge to represent additional years of service.



### Chalice

Awarded for being a faithful member of the Altar Guild for one year. Must be approved by the Altar Guild director. A jewel is glued around the border of the badge to represent additional years of service.



### Patriarchal Cross

Awarded for service at two diocesan events such as the GFS Anniversary service, Diocesan Convention, and ECW events. A jewel is glued around the border of the badge to represent service at every two additional events.



### Dove

Prepare for and receive the sacrament of Confirmation.



### Cross Fitchee

Be instrumental in starting another GFS branch. Must be approved by the diocesan board.



### Agnus Dei

Visit and report on at least two diocesan institutions. Each report must be a one page written report, to be submitted to the diocesan board for approval.



### Triquetra

Awarded to any girl in at least the 10<sup>th</sup> grade who has earned all of the badges in all three levels of the program. This does not include the special badges. Must be approved by the diocesan board. The notebook may be requested by the diocesan board for review. The Triquetra is only awarded at the Anniversary Service.



### Fleur de lis

Awarded upon completion of a minimum of one year of thoughtful study, research and writing under the direction of a clergy person or a person designated by the clergy.

## Additional badges

Many additional badges have been created for camp programs, Not So Quiet Day programs and unique community service projects. The information for earning these badges is compiled separately. Please contact the diocesan board for information on these badges.