

# Journey of Faith



## Living the Virtues

"I thought," Tanya said to Lisa, "it would be really easy to live like Jesus. We got our sacraments and we're part of the Church now. But sometimes I still say mean things about another girl in class. I always feel bad after, and I don't want to say mean things. Sometimes they just come out."

Lisa nodded. "Sometimes I don't really want to go to Mass," she said. "My parents take me, but instead of paying attention I daydream or look at what people are wearing. I'm trying to be good, but sometimes I mess up."





Do you sometimes have trouble doing the right thing?

When you mess up, how do you try to make it right?

## Virtues

Even after you become a member of the Church, you still have to work hard to do the right thing. Sometimes we make bad choices, sin, even when we really want to live like Jesus. **Virtues** are habits we can grow that will help us always choose the good, the things God wants us to do. But like any skill, from playing sports to doing math, virtues take practice.

## The Human Virtues

There are two types of virtues. Human virtues are the first type. **Human virtues** are habits we form ourselves and actions we choose. There are four human virtues.

### PRUDENCE

**Prudence** means making good decisions by thinking through our actions by consulting the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church *before* we act. We act prudently when we:

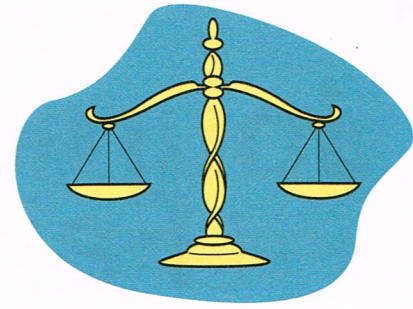
- Examine situations before joining in.
- Think carefully about all our choices.
- Pick choices that bring the greatest good.



What are some things you can do to practice prudence?

### JUSTICE

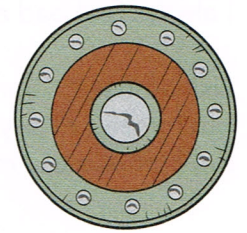
**Justice** means acting with fairness, treating others equally, and sharing so people have enough of what they need. We act with justice when we:



- Care for those who need our help.
- Treat others equally and stand up for people who are being treated unfairly.
- Are honest with others and follow through on our promises.
- Share what we have with others.

### FORTITUDE

**Fortitude** means acting bravely for God. When we have fortitude, we do the right thing even when it's hard or when no one else is doing it. We act with fortitude when we:



- Do good even when we are afraid.
- Do the right thing even when our friends don't.
- Do what God wants even when it's hard or not what we want.

### TEMPERANCE

**Temperance** means balancing what we need and what we want. Acting with temperance means enjoying things we like without making those things more important than God. It's like eating one piece of our favorite cake but saving the rest to share instead of stuffing ourselves with all of it. We act with temperance when we:

- Find time to play with friends and still save time for God.
- Use some of our allowance on a special treat and save some to donate.



How can you include God in the things you enjoy doing?

## The Theological Virtues

The second type of virtue relates to theology. **Theological virtues** come straight from God and help us live our lives for God. These virtues help us live human virtues better.

### FAITH

**Faith** allows us to believe in God and all he does. Faith isn't just saying we believe in God or listing off a bunch of beliefs. Real faith means being friends with God. It means living like God wants us to and working for good things.

When we have faith, we care about others and the world because it's all God's creation. When we have faith, we want to tell everyone we meet about God. We put God first in everything we do, and we thank God for everything he gives us.



*How do you show God he is your friend?*

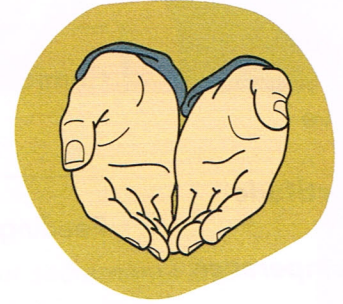
*How can you make your friendship with God stronger?*

### HOPE

**Hope** means being confident in God's presence. Hope is the virtue that comforts us, gives us courage, and helps us to look toward heaven and the things of heaven. When we have hope, we trust that God will complete the good work begun in us.

### CHARITY (LOVE)

**Love** or **charity** means treating others like Jesus would. Jesus said, "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (John 13:34). We should work to love others like Jesus.



*How do you show others you love them as Jesus loves them?*

*How can you love people you have a hard time getting along with?*

## Living the Virtues

The Church has a special name for some of the ways we live virtues in the world. These are called the **works of mercy**. There are works of mercy for people's physical needs and spiritual needs.

WORKS OF MERCY FOR PHYSICAL NEEDS	WORKS OF MERCY FOR SPIRITUAL NEEDS
Feeding the hungry	Teaching those who don't know or need help
Giving drink to the thirsty	Answering questions for those who have doubts
Providing clothes to those who don't have proper clothing	Helping those who do wrong but don't understand why what they've done is wrong
Giving shelter to those without a place to stay	Showing patience to others, even when they aren't nice to us
Visiting the sick	Forgiving others
Working to free those who are captive	Comforting those who are hurting
Burying those who have died	Praying for those who are alive and those who have died



# WORKING WITH VIRTUES

For each work of mercy below, choose one virtue that can help you do that work of mercy. Then write one or two sentences about why the virtue would help.

Virtues  
Word Bank

Works of Mercy

**faith**

Forgiving others

**hope**

Comforting others

**love**

**fortitude**

Feeding the hungry

**temperance**

**prudence**

Clothing those without proper clothes

**justice**

Visiting the sick

Teaching others

## In Short

- We see God's ways in the lives of those who practice the virtues.
- There are both human and theological virtues.
- The greatest of the virtues is love (charity).



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