

Homily Guide
Sunday, March 27, 2011
Fr. James Flynn

Virtues

Catechism of the Catholic Church #**1803** "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (Philippians 4:8)

A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions.

A virtue is the middle or "mean" between the two extremes of excess and deficit. For instance: A person who is courageous is neither displays rashness nor cowardice. He uses his intellect to discern a situation and decide the right course of action.

The Catholic Church identifies 7 Virtues

1- Prudence

2 - Justice

3 - Fortitude/Courage

4 - Temperance

5 - Faith

6 - Hope

7 - Love

Explanation of the Virtues

Prudence - Exercising sound judgment in practical affairs. A prudent person looks at the concrete reality of a situation with a clear, honest objectivity; references and applies the moral truths (e.g the Ten Commandments or the teachings of the Church); makes a moral judgment; and then commands an action. Moreover, prudence also seeks to accomplish the action in a good way — doing what is good in a good way.

Justice- The will to render each person his due. The just man recognizes his essential equality with every other human person. He does not believe he is entitled without qualification. A just man is first and foremost a grateful man. Where there is no gratitude, there is no justice. Justice is a harmony where everyone is doing their part in society as best they can. It is like a symphony, where everyone plays a different instrument, but the same song at the same tempo.

Fortitude/Courage - Moderates fear in the face of adversity or danger. Fortitude demands that we aspire to something greater than ourselves and love truth more than our own life. Fortitude is an understanding of our true end.

Temperance - The control of the desire for pleasure. Temperance allows us to forgo instant gratification for lifelong happiness. It is the ability to temper out desires for good things, that if taken to excess or out of their proper, order become harmful/sinful.

Faith - belief in God, and in the truth of His revelation as well as obedience to Him. Faith is more than just believing, it is the act of following God. Faith is not subjective, we don't get to define what or who God is...with faith we accept the God that has revealed Himself to us through Scripture, Tradition and Church Teaching.

Hope - Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." (Hebrews 10:23)

Love/Charity - is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

