

Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. CCC 1807

Are we fair? How often do we say or hear "It's not fair!"? Justice often means overcoming greed and becoming self-sacrificing. *"You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor."* Leviticus 19:15

How do we practice justice?

Do we live simply so that we can give to the poor? Do we treat others as we want to be treated? Do we accept the consequences of our decisions or do we try to place blame on others?

Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. CCC 1808

Fortitude is the will to overcome and endure hardship or difficulties . Our instant-gratification society seems to be far from this virtue. *"In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."* John 16:33

Questions to ask ourselves . . .

Do we complain excessively about hardship? Do we give in to discouragement easily?
Do we pray about our difficulties with our families and for our families?
Do we remember to give God thanks for the blessings we do have?

Temperance is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will's mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. CCC 1809

Temperance is moderation! We are called to enjoy and use the good things in life in balance. We are not a society of balance! *"Do not follow your base desires, but restrain your appetites."* Sirach 18:30

How do we live temperance?

When is enough, enough – whether it be food, clothing, entertainment, sports or toys?
How do we bring balance to our lives?

Cardinal Virtues

Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance

From the Catechism we read that the Cardinal/Moral Virtues or *Human virtues* are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our actions, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in leading a morally good life. The virtuous man is he who freely practices the good. The moral virtues are acquired by human effort. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts; they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with divine love. CCC1804

The *Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance* are described in the Catechism as the “pivotal” virtues because all other human virtues are grouped around them. The Cardinal Virtues require some effort on our part! These virtues when adopted and practiced help us to become more like Christ and to stay on the road to Heaven. Rest assured that we cannot become virtuous on our own. God gives us the grace and He sent his Spirit to enable us to live out the virtuous life.

Prudence is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; "the prudent man looks where he is going." CCC 1806

Prudence is sound judgment, the ability to make distinctions between good and evil, truth from falsehood. We need to always be asking ourselves questions and determine the fruits – or lack of – produced by an activity or relationship.

Some questions we can ask ourselves:

Is the media influencing me in a good or bad way? Do I treat others more or less respectfully after having played certain computer games or watching particular TV shows?

Does the clothing I choose to wear show respect for my body? Does the clothing I wear tempt someone else to sin through lust? Does this friendship or relationship bring out the best in me? Does this activity or work give glory to God?