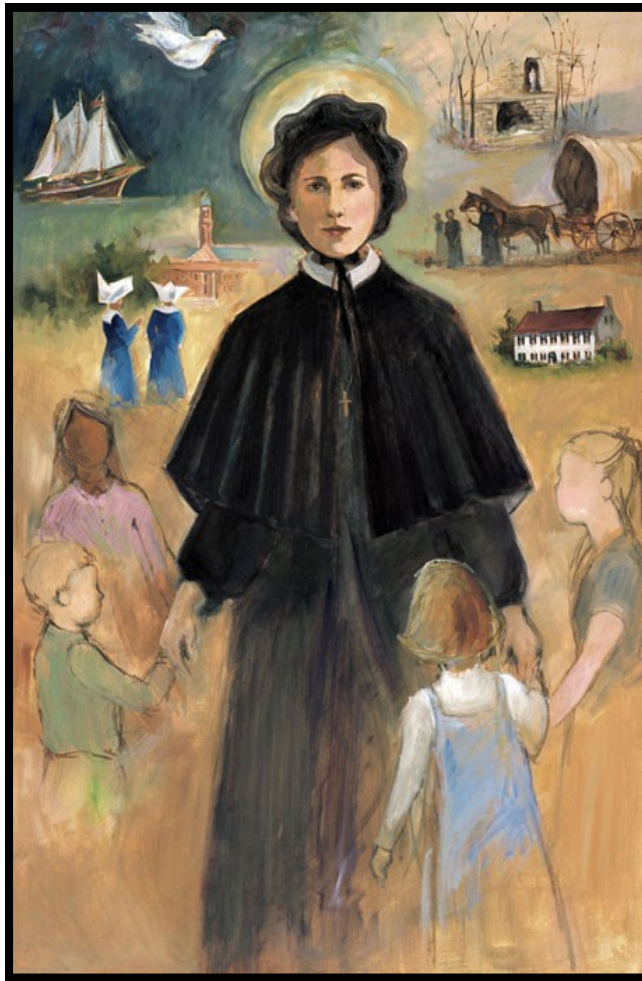


Virtues in Practice



Hope

GRADES 3—5

Virtues
in Practice

Hope

GRADES 3—5

DOMINICAN SISTERS OF ST. CECILIA CONGREGATION
Nashville, Tennessee

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What is Virtue?

A virtue is a good habit.

If we practice thinking about what is right and opening our hearts to grace, we make good choices and develop virtues. If we often do things that are wrong we develop bad habits, or vices. Vices can trap us. Virtues free us to be our best selves, which makes us happy and holy.

There are three virtues that are called *theological virtues*. These virtues are given to us by God, lead us toward God, and open our hearts for God to live within us. We receive these virtues in baptism and develop them as we grow in holiness. They give life to all the other virtues. The theological virtues are *faith, hope, and charity*.

There are four virtues that are called *cardinal virtues*. "Cardinal" is from a Latin word that means "hinge", like the hinge on a door. All the other virtues rely on these. The cardinal virtues are *prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance*.

Who are the Saints?

A saint is a person who is in heaven.

The Catholic Church *canonizes* some saints. "Canon" means list; canonized means someone is added to the list of saints. One of the first steps in the process for canonization is an investigation to see if the person lived a life of "heroic virtue". In the last step of the process, the Church prays for a miracle through the intercession of the person. *Blessed* and *Venerable* are titles for people who are almost canonized. The Church gives us canonized saints as role-models and intercessors, but every single one of us is called by God to be a saint.

YR./MO.	VIRTUE (Theme: Service)	DEFINITION	GR. PK-2 SAINT	GR. 3-5 SAINT	GR. 6-8 SAINT
FAITH					
SEP.	FAITH	Believing in God and all He has revealed	St. Martha	St. Jerome	St. Augustine
OCT.	REVERENCE	Showing your deepest respect for things of God	St. Hyacinth	St. Tarcisus	St. Margaret Clitherow
NOV.	STEWARDSHIP	Returning to God the first fruits of your time, talent, and treasure	St. Elizabeth of Hungary	Bl. Fra Angelico	St. Joseph Moscati
DEC.	GENEROSITY	Giving without counting the cost	St. Nicholas	St. Mary Magdalene	St. Maximilian Kolbe
JAN.	GRATITUDE	Seeing everything as a gift and being thankful	St. Francis of Assisi	St. Julie Billiart	St. Josemaria Escriva
FEB.	HONESTY	Being trustworthy and true	Bls. Jacinta & Francesco Marito	St. Kateri Tekakwitha	St. Athanasius
MAR.	MERCY	Caring for those who suffer	St. John Vianney	St. Faustina	Bl. Teresa of Calcutta
APRIL	JUSTICE	Being fair and giving each his due	St. Anthony of Padua	St. Katharine Drexel	St. Thomas More
MAY	ZEAL	Being driven by an intense love for God	St. Paul	St. Dominic	St. Francis Xavier
HOPE					
SEP.	HOPE	Trusting in God's loving plan	St. Joseph	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	Bls. Louis & Zeile Martin
OCT.	STUDIOUSNESS	Seeking knowledge to grow closer to Truth	St. Albert the Great	St. Thomas Aquinas	St. Edith Stein
NOV.	HUMILITY	Accepting your limitations and God-given talents	St. John the Baptist	St. Pio of Pietrelcina	St. Therese of Lisieux
DEC.	PATIENCE	Waiting or enduring without complaint	St. Monica	St. Isaac Jogues	St. Rita of Cascia
JAN.	FIDELITY	Being faithful to promises and commitments	St. Cecilia	Bls. Luigi & Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi	St. Gianna Molla
FEB.	CHEERFULNESS	Looking on the bright side	St. John Bosco	St. Philip Neri	Bl. Miguel Pro
MAR.	TEMPERANCE	Enjoying things in a proper, balanced way	St. Teresa of Avila	St. Camillus de Lellis	Ven. Matt Talbot
APRIL	OBEDIENCE	Saying "yes" to the loving will of God and those He has set over us	Our Lady	St. Juan Diego	St. Frances Xavier Cabrini
MAY	DILIGENCE	Doing your best and working hard until you're finished	St. Andre Bessette	St. Francis de Sales	St. Catherine of Siena
CHARITY					
SEP.	CHARITY	Loving God with all your heart, mind, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself	St. Gertrude	St. Vincent de Paul	Bl. Laura Vicuna
OCT.	FRIENDSHIP	Sharing a mutual love that seeks the good of the other	Sts. Benedict & Scholastica	Sts. Basil & Gregory	Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati
NOV.	COURTESY	Being thoughtful of others	St. Martin de Porres	Ven. Solanus Casey	Ven. Pierre Toussaint
DEC.	PURITY	Keeping your soul free of sin	St. Dominic Savio	St. Agnes	St. Maria Goretti
JAN.	FORTITUDE	Being brave and strong in the face of trials	St. Bernadette	St. Joan of Arc	Sts. Paul Miki & Companions
FEB.	PRUDENCE	Making good decisions in specific circumstances	Bl. Junipero Serra	St. John Neumann	St. John XXIII
MAR.	RESPECT	Recognizing the dignity of all people	St. Jeanne Jugan	St. Damien of Molokai	St. John Paul II
APRIL	FORGIVENESS	Pardoning those who offend you	St. Patrick	Bl. Margaret of Castello	St. Josephine Bakhita
MAY	RESPONSIBILITY	Being reliable in your duties and accountable for your actions	St. Peter	St. Henry II	Bl. Bartolo Longo

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September

PRAYER

Act of Hope

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Hope: trusting in God's loving plan

The theological virtue of hope, given to us in baptism and strengthened as we grow in faith, is very different from the way we often use the word "hope." Usually, we say "hope" when we mean "wish" or "want" (such as, "I hope you're doing well" or "I hope I get an A").

Christian hope does not mean a wish, but a certainty—a trust in God's promise that He has created us to be with Him in heaven and that He will help us reach our final destination.

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton
(1774–1821, United States)

Feast: January 4

"Though we are so weak of ourselves, [God's] grace is able to carry us through every obstacle and difficulty." A true woman of hope, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton wrote these words as one who trusted in God, even when that trust was sorely tested.

Elizabeth Ann Bayley was born in New York City to a wealthy Episcopalian family. A deeply prayerful and joyful person, Elizabeth married William Seton and became the happy mother of five children. Her life seemed full and complete when tragedy struck: her husband's business failed, and he himself died soon after.



Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton
by Rebecca Pearl

HOPE: trusting in God's loving plan

For many years Elizabeth had felt drawn to the Catholic faith, especially to Jesus' real presence in the Eucharist. Placing all her hope in God, the poor young widow was received into the Catholic Church, at which point her family and friends deserted her. Left with no support for herself or her children, she opened a private school to earn money. She was so good at what she did that the archbishop of Baltimore asked her to open a Catholic girls' school, which became the first Catholic parish school in America. She was also the first canonized American-born saint.

DISCUSSION:

What is a theological virtue? (See inside front cover.) If a theological virtue is a gift from God, can we still help it grow?

HOME PROJECT: Due September _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word! (Read and discuss Psalm 62:6-9 and Hebrews 6:19.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:*Anchored in Hope*

On a clean sheet of paper, do the following:

1. Use a pencil to trace or draw the outline of an anchor.
2. Along the pencil line, in small letters, write the *Act of Hope* in pencil (back page of this booklet).
3. Trace the pencil in black marker and erase the pencil lines.
4. Using different colors, write words inside the anchor that represent promises you trust God will fulfill as well as promises He has already kept in your life and throughout history.
5. Around the anchor, draw clouds and blue sky to represent heaven. where our *true* hope is anchored.

When you see this symbol,
remember to invoke your guardian angel!



HOPE: trusting in God's loving plan

PRAYER:

Saint Elizabeth, you trusted in God's plan for your life, even when it was confusing or you did not know where He was leading you. Help us to have a loving trust like yours, and to say with Jesus, "Thy will be done." Amen. Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us.

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Dividing into groups, research and teach the class about Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. For each period of her life, include reasons why she had to hope in God.

- Group #1: Failure of husband's business & emigration to Italy
- Group #2: Illness, quarantine, and death of her husband
- Group #3: Conversion to Catholicism & family reaction
- Group #4: Founding of schools & religious order (Sisters of Charity)

HOPE: trusting in God's loving plan

PRAYER:

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you do we send up our sighs, mourning, and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

R. *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

REVIEW:

What is hope?

Who is Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton?

GROWTH IN HOPE:

Describe what you did to grow in hope this month and whether it helped you.

What should you do to continue to grow in hope this year?

HOPE: trusting in God's loving plan

October

PRAYER:

Act of Hope

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Studiosness: seeking knowledge to grow closer to Truth

All of us are born with the desire to know things. The virtue of studiosness helps us to curb our desire to know things that would lead us away from God and to choose to know the things that bring us closer to God. When we fill our minds with unimportant information or with popular news and gossip, we do not leave room or energy to seek to know truth. Studiosness makes us eager to gain the kind of knowledge that leads us to God.

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Thomas Aquinas

(1225-1274, Italy)

Feast: January 28

When he was five years old, Saint Thomas' parents sent him to be a student in a rich monastery. Even at that age, Saint Thomas was very smart, and asked his teachers, "*What is God?*"

Saint Thomas' parents wanted him to become a monk at an important monastery, and to be the abbot, or superior. But one day Thomas met the Order of Preachers, the Dominicans, and knew that God was calling him to join this new religious community. His family was unhappy with this, because Dominicans were poor, and Thomas would be a beggar instead of a powerful man. They tried everything they could to stop him, but Saint Thomas won and became a Dominican.



Statue of Saint Thomas Aquinas

STUDIOUSNESS: seeking knowledge to grow closer to Truth

The other student brothers made fun of Saint Thomas. He was big and never spoke in class, so they called him "the Dumb Ox". But Saint Albert the Great, one of the teachers, told the brothers to stop saying that one day Thomas' voice would be heard around the world. He knew that Saint Thomas was quiet, but a genius.

Saint Albert was right, and over time Thomas became famous for writing brilliant books about God which people still use and study today. One day, Jesus spoke to him and offered him a reward saying, "You have written well of Me, Thomas. What would you have?" But Thomas replied, "I want nothing but You, O Lord."

Saint Thomas is the patron saint of Catholic schools and of students.

DISCUSSION:

What do you think Saint Thomas meant by his answer to God? How can studiousness influence what we read, the music we listen to, and the programs we watch?

HOME PROJECT: Due October _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word!
(Read and discuss Psalm 25:4-5.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

On a separate piece of paper draw what you think is the perfect study space.

- What books or objects should be included in the picture?
- What should be left out in order that you might study better?
- Below the picture write what time you devote to study.

Brainstorm your ideas before you draw:

STUDIOUSNESS: seeking knowledge to grow closer to Truth

PRAYER:

Saint Thomas, patron of students, you overcame many personal obstacles so that you could grow closer to God through seeking the truth in study and in every area of your life. Help me to persevere in my study of truth so that I will grow closer to God and one day meet you in heaven where we will praise God together forever. Amen. Saint Thomas Aquinas, pray for us.

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Below are two of many hymns that Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote for the Feast of Corpus Christi, a celebration of the great gift of the Eucharist. When we adore the Blessed Sacrament, either reposed in the tabernacle or exposed in the monstrance, we can sing or pray these prayers.

Draw a monstrance (use the shape of small sun with big rays and add a stem like a chalice). Use some of the lyrics below to decorate around it.

-1-

*O Sacred Banquet
In which Christ is received
The memory of His passion is recalled
The soul is filled with grace
And the pledge of future glory is given us. Alleluia.*



-2-

<i>I shall praise the Savior's glory Of His flesh the mystery sing, And the blood, all price excelling Shed by our immortal King: God made man for our salvation, Who from Virgin pure did spring.</i>	<i>On the night before He suffered Seated with His chosen band, Jesus, when they all had feasted, Faithful to the Law's command, Far more precious food provided: Gave Himself with His own hand.</i>
<i>Born for us, and for us given, Born a man like us below Christ as man with man residing Lived the seed of truth to sow, Suffered bitter death unflinching, And immortal love did show.</i>	<i>Word made flesh, true bread of heaven By His word made flesh to be; From the wine His blood is taken, Though our senses cannot see; Faith alone which is unshaken Shows pure hearts the mystery.</i>

STUDIOUSNESS: seeking knowledge to grow closer to Truth

PRAYER:

Pray the Fifth Joyful Mystery, the Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple. Reflect on how Our Lady sought for Jesus, and ask her to help you find Him in all your studies.

REVIEW:

What is studiousness?

Who is Saint Thomas Aquinas?

GROWTH IN STUDIOUSNESS:

Describe what you did to grow in studiousness this month and whether it helped you.

What should you do to continue to grow in studiousness this year?

STUDIOUSNESS: seeking knowledge to grow closer to Truth

November

PRAYER:

Act of Hope

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Humility: accepting your limitations and God-given talents

Humility is knowing the truth about yourself. There are some things that you do very well such as studies, sports, or art. The humble person acknowledges these gifts because they come from God and should be used for His glory. Humility helps us to rejoice in one another's achievements, because we know every person's talents are a gift from God.

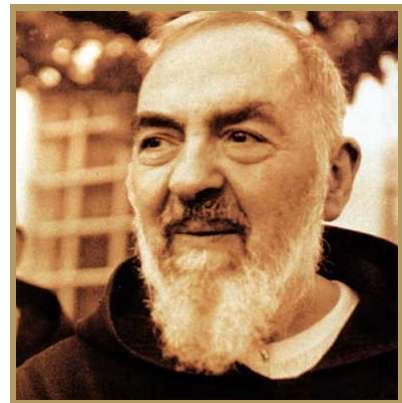
We all also have areas of weakness, such as a certain school subject, or a lack of artistic or athletic skill. Humility reminds us that all people are weak, and nobody is perfect. Yet God loves us and uses even our weaknesses to make us holy if we rely on His strength.

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)
(1887-1968, Italy)

Feast: September 23

Padre Pio was a Capuchin friar who is best known for the unusual spiritual gifts he received from God, including the stigmata and the ability to read souls and heal physical illnesses. As a priest, he always helped people to make a good and thorough Confession. Because God worked miracles through Padre Pio, many people proclaimed that he was a living saint. This was very difficult for Padre Pio, because he only wanted to be a simple, humble priest.



Saint Pio of Pietrelcina

There were also many people who were jealous of Padre Pio's spiritual

HUMILITY: accepting your limitations and God-given talents

gifts and tried to get him into trouble with the bishop and the pope. While the pope and bishops were investigating these accusations, Padre Pio was forbidden to hear Confessions, to celebrate Mass publicly, and to associate with lay people. A less holy priest might refuse to obey. Padre Pio chose to accept these limitations. He knew that God wanted him to obey authority, and he wanted to glorify God. He recognized that the gifts were from God, and that if God intended the gifts to be used, then he would be permitted to exercise them.

DISCUSSION:

Some people think that humility means thinking only bad things about yourself. What is wrong with this idea? What do you think of Padre Pio's acceptance of limitations?

HOME PROJECT: Due November _____

**PRAYER:**

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and hearts to God's living Word!
(Read and discuss Matthew 11:29.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

1. Think of all the gifts of mind and soul that God has given to you. Choose three and write them on a separate piece of paper. Share with a partner how you can develop these gifts and how God might be asking you to use them. Ask if your partner has other ideas to add.
2. Think over the past week and recall times when you thought, "I wish I were..." or "I wish I weren't...", regretting something about yourself that you can't change. Write a prayer in which you tell God that you accept this challenge about yourself and tell Him that you trust in His plan for your life.

HUMILITY: accepting your limitations and God-given talents

PRAYER:

Dear Padre Pio, teach us humility of heart, so that we may be counted among the little ones of the Gospel to whom the Father promised to reveal the mysteries of His Kingdom ... Accompany us on our earthly pilgrimage toward the blessed Homeland, where we too, hope to arrive to contemplate forever the Glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Saint Padre Pio, pray for us!

~excerpt from the prayer of Pope John Paul II at the canonization of St. Pio of Pietrelcina

SAINT ACTIVITY:

The stigmata and the miracles of Padre Pio were visible to all people. These special graces made him very popular, but popularity was not God's purpose for giving Padre Pio these gifts. God gave him these special spiritual gifts because they made him more like Jesus Christ. Having the wounds of Jesus on his hands made Padre Pio constantly remember the wounds of Jesus Christ on the Cross and allowed him to unite his suffering to that of Jesus for the salvation of sinners. Like Jesus, Padre Pio spent much of His adult life listening to people who were sick and healing them.

Reflect on the miracles of Jesus such as healing the lame, forgiving sins, making the blind see and the mute speak, casting out demons. Side by side in the space below draw a picture of one of Padre Pio's miracles and one of Jesus' miracles that is most similar to it.



HUMILITY: accepting your limitations and God-given talents

PRAYER:

Pray the First Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, the Annunciation.

Stay with me, Lord, for I desire to love You very much, and always be in Your company...Stay with me Lord, for it is You alone I look for, Your love, Your grace, Your will, Your heart, Your spirit, because I love You and ask no other reward but to love You more and more. With a firm love, I will love You with all my heart while on earth and continue to love You perfectly during all eternity. Amen.

~ excerpt from Padre Pio's prayer after receiving Communion

REVIEW:

What is humility?

Who is Saint Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)?

GROWTH IN HUMILITY:

Describe what you did to grow in humility this month .

What should you do to continue to grow in humility this year?

HUMILITY: accepting your limitations and God-given talents

December

PRAYER: *Act of Hope*

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Patience: waiting or enduring without complaint

When we are faced with situations, people, and events that irritate us, we have an opportunity to practice patience. As we grow in virtue, little things will bother us less and less. Many people learn patience through very great trials, such as waiting for a loved one to return from war, waiting to find a job, or enduring a long sickness. Sometimes it's difficult to suffer without complaining, but we know that God has a plan, so we rely on His strength and wait for His will.

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Isaac Jogues
(1607-1646, France)
Feast: October 19

Isaac Jogues was a member of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) and the first priest to go to present-day New York. He and his companions traveled from France to North America to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Native Americans. Isaac knew and believed that Jesus died for all people and took to heart His words, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28: 19-20).



Mosaic from the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis, MO, photograph by Mark S. Abeln

Once he arrived, Saint Isaac Jogues first had to learn to speak the language of the Mohawks, and since they did not use the same

PATIENCE: waiting or enduring without complaint

alphabet, it took a long time to be able to speak with them about Jesus. Since he knew he was doing what God sent him to do, he persevered patiently, and many people converted. In the end, however, the natives grew suspicious of the saint and captured, tortured, and killed him. Through all of this, Saint Isaac Jogues suffered without complaining, not growing angry with God or the people he evangelized. His patient endurance won him the martyr's crown—and life in heaven with Jesus Christ!

DISCUSSION:

What might be some ways Saint Isaac practiced patience when he was your age? (Remember he lived in the early 1600s.)

HOME PROJECT: Due December _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word! (Read and discuss Psalm 130:5-8.)

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Do you remember how Saint Isaac Jogues spent years trying to learn the language of the Mohawks? With a partner, make up a code language using words or gestures not commonly used in the English language. (If one or more of you speaks another language, that could be the language you use). Then, get with another group of partners and take turns: try to crack their code so that you can speak to them. Then see if they can crack your code and learn your new language. A team is awarded one point for every word they are able to learn.

When you finish this activity, discuss the following questions:

1. What was the biggest difficulty in trying to crack the code of a new language?
2. What was your reaction when you were unable to decipher a word or a phrase?
3. Why does it require the virtue of patience to be a good listener?

PATIENCE: waiting or enduring without complaint

PRAYER:

Saint Isaac Jogues, you patiently taught the peoples of North America about Jesus, never giving up, even under persecution. Help me to be patient like you, even in small things, for the sake of Jesus' love for me. Amen. Saint Isaac Jogues, pray for us.

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

During Advent, it is traditional to decorate a Jesse Tree. We read Old Testament stories to remember how God prepared the world for the coming of Jesus Christ, and place symbols on the tree related to those stories. The Israelites waited for thousands of years for the Messiah to come...a real test of patience! Match each word to its symbol and explain to a partner its meaning in the Old Testament.

Look up the following passages in Scripture for help:

- *Genesis 3:1-5*
- *Isaiah 11:5-8*
- *Genesis 9:11-12*
- *Exodus 20:1-17*
- *Matthew 1:18-25*
- *1 Samuel 16:17-23*
- *Revelation 1:8*
- *Matthew 3:4*

Color the picture if you finish early.

End by singing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" together.



PATIENCE: waiting or enduring without complaint

PRAYER:

Pray the Third Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, the Nativity. Reflect on how Our Lady awaited the birth of Christ, and ask her to give you patience.

REVIEW:

What is patience?

Who is Saint Isaac Jogues?

GROWTH IN PATIENCE:

Describe what you did to grow in patience this month and whether it helped you.

What should you do to continue to grow in patience this year?



PATIENCE: waiting or enduring without complaint

January

PRAYER: *Act of Hope*

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Fidelity: being faithful to promises and commitments

What is a commitment? We see our parents and grandparents live the commitment of marriage. In baptism we become the adopted children of God and are consecrated to Him. In these commitments, we make promises to God or another person. Sometimes promises can be very difficult to keep, especially when we no longer feel like keeping the promise, or when another person does not seem to be keeping their part of the promise! Every day gives us the opportunity to practice the virtue of fidelity by choosing anew to remain faithful to our promises.

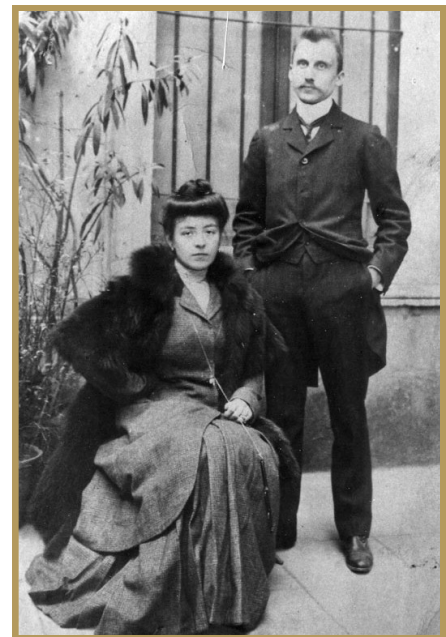
SAINTS OF THE MONTH:

Blesseds Luigi & Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi
(1880-1951 and 1884-1965, Italy)

Feast: November 25

Blessed Luigi and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi met and were married in 1905 in Rome. This couple was known for their openness to life, their hope in the midst of difficult family situations, and their loving commitment to one another.

Luigi and Maria were blessed with four children. The oldest became a Benedictine nun, and the next two children were called to the priesthood. Luigi and Maria received a unique gift in their fourth child, a girl named Enrichetta. From the start Maria experienced great difficulties in her pregnancy, and doctors warned that she had less than a five-percent chance of living if she gave birth to her baby, and that the baby had even less of a chance of



Blesseds Luigi and Maria

FIDELITY: being faithful to promises and commitments

surviving. Enrichetta was born a healthy child, and both Luigi and Maria grew in their love for one another and their love for God by trusting in His promises.

Throughout their lives, Maria and Luigi served the Church by faithfully living the vows of their marriage and through their many charitable works. The family was consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and prayed the Rosary together each evening. Because of the holiness of their lives and their particular witness to the virtue of fidelity in their marriage, in 2001 Luigi and Maria became the first married couple to be beatified together. November 25, the date of their wedding anniversary, is now celebrated as their feast day.

DISCUSSION:

Do you know priests, religious, or married people who have been faithful for a lifetime? Do you think fidelity was always easy for them? How do you think they remained faithful?

HOME PROJECT: Due January _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and hearts to God’s living Word!
(Read and discuss Psalm 116:10-19.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

Think about the difference between a commitment and a duty. In the chart below, list several *commitments* you have made in your life, or which you see in the lives of your family members, and several *duties* for which you are responsible:

Commitments	Duties

Choose one *commitment*. Who is it made to? What does it ask one to do? How can someone remain faithful to this commitment?

FIDELITY: being faithful to promises and commitments

PRAYER:

Blesseds Luigi and Maria, please help me to practice the virtue of fidelity. Help me to remember that in all things, whether big or small, the Lord is pleased by my fidelity to what I have promised. Like you, may I put all my trust in the Lord in moments of great difficulty and remain faithful to what I know to be true and good. Finally, help me to hope in His promise to bring me to heaven by living faithfully the vows of my baptism here on earth. Amen. Blesseds Luigi and Maria, pray for us!

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Maria and Luigi were called to live the virtue of fidelity in many different ways throughout their lives. In particular, they lived the vows and promises of their marriage with great fidelity, which allowed them to make a difficult decision before Enrichetta was born. Imagine you are listening to the doctor speaking to Maria and Luigi. What might they say to him when he explained the danger of Maria's pregnancy? Write out a short dialogue below:

Doctor _____

Maria _____

Luigi _____

Doctor _____

Maria _____

Luigi _____

FIDELITY: being faithful to promises and commitments

PRAYER:

Pray the Fifth Sorrowful Mystery of the Rosary, the Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord. Reflect on Our Lady, standing at the foot of the Cross, and ask her to pray that you, too, might be faithful to Jesus.

REVIEW:

What is the virtue of fidelity?

Who are Blesseds Luigi and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi?

GROWTH IN FIDELITY:

Describe what you did to grow in fidelity this month.

What should you do to continue to grow in fidelity this year?

February

PRAYER:

Act of Hope

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Cheerfulness: looking on the bright side

Cheerfulness is the virtue that helps us to be joyful, even when times are hard. God loves us and wants us to be truly happy. We can think and act in a way that is gloomy, forgetting God, and dragging ourselves and others down, or we can count our blessings, praise God for His goodness, and lift everyone up toward Him. So make the choice to be *joyful in the Lord* and spread hope through joy!

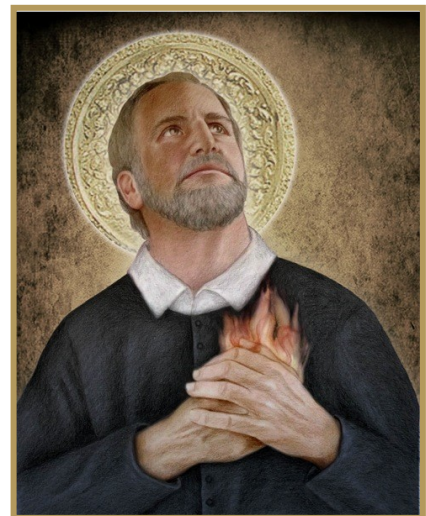
SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Philip Neri

(1515-1595, Italy)

Feast: May 26

Philip Neri was known as “Pippo buono,” or “good little Phil,” because he was a cheerful, thoughtful boy and well-liked. Philip’s cheerfulness helped others remain hopeful and faithful. When he was a young man and was about to move away from home, it was his cheerfulness and his faith that gave his sisters hope that everything would be all right, even with him leaving.



Saint Philip Neri
by Tracy Christianson

As an adult, he used his sense of humor and his friendliness to gain the attention of passersby and helped them give up their careless ways of life to follow Christ. Philip inspired his friends to serve the sick in the hospitals and to pray. His heart burned and expanded with love for God and others. He often asked, “Well, brothers, when shall we begin to do good?”

CHEERFULNESS: looking on the bright side

In 1551 he was ordained a priest. He often heard Confessions, and helped many people with his wisdom, warmth, and compassion. Saint Philip kept a Bible and a joke book by his bed. He hung a little sign on his door that said "The House of Christian Mirth." He said, "Christian joy is a gift from God flowing from a good conscience." Many came to know Christ through the cheerfulness of Saint Philip Neri.

HOME PROJECT: Due February _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word!
(Read and discuss Proverbs 15:30a.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

Role-play one of the following situations with a classmate. Then, discuss how your cheerfulness in these circumstances could help others.

1. A neighborhood friend of one of your classmates moved away over the summer. Your classmate is okay now, but still misses the friend from time to time. No one in the class has told you that the friend moved away, but you see that your classmate is not as cheerful as usual. What would you do or say?
2. One of your parents picks you up from school and seems grumpy. When you ask what is wrong, you find out that your upcoming family vacation to Disney World has been cancelled because your family can't afford it now. What would you do or say?
3. When you come to school one day, you find out that your teacher is absent and will not be back for a few days because her husband is very ill and she must take care of him. When she returns, what would you do or say?

How do you think cheerfulness is related to the virtue of hope (trusting in God's promises)?

CHEERFULNESS: looking on the bright side

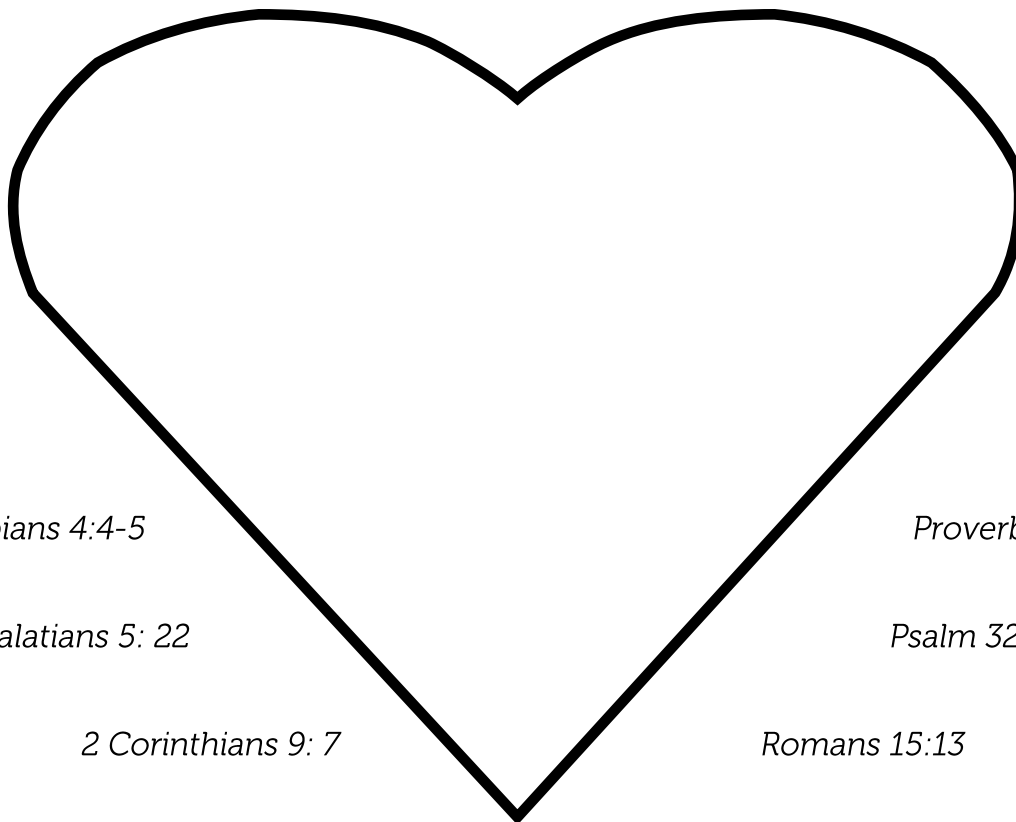
PRAYER:

Dear Saint Philip Neri, you always used the gift of cheerfulness to bring joy and happiness to others, especially when they were sad or troubled. Help me to do the same so others will know of God's love for them. Amen. Saint Philip Neri, pray for us.

**SAINT ACTIVITY:**

"Cheerfulness strengthens the heart and makes us persevere in a good life. Therefore the servant of God ought always to be in good spirits," said Saint Philip Neri. In 1544, the night before Pentecost, Saint Philip had a mystical experience in which a globe of fire entered his mouth and caused his heart to physically expand, filling him with a real understanding of God's love. For the rest of his life, Saint Philip would often have this strong reminder of God's love and his heart would feel like it was on fire!

Look up the Scripture passages listed below. Pick the one that you think best fits you, and write it inside the heart. Color/decorate the heart to fit the quote.



Philippians 4:4-5

Proverbs 17: 22

Galatians 5: 22

Psalms 32:11

2 Corinthians 9: 7

Romans 15:13

CHEERFULNESS: looking on the bright side

PRAYER:

Pray the Second Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, the Visitation. Reflect on how Mary sang God's praise with joy and ask her to help you to do the same.

REVIEW:

What is cheerfulness?

Who is Saint Philip Neri?

GROWTH IN CHEERFULNESS:

Describe what you did to grow in cheerfulness this month and how it helped you.

What should you do to continue to grow in cheerfulness this year?

CHEERFULNESS: looking on the bright side

March

PRAYER:

Act of Hope

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Temperance: enjoying things in a proper, balanced way

What are some things that you like to do for fun? What would happen if we only did these fun things and did not do other things that we have to do? Who would take out the trash? Who would play on the sports teams and represent our school? Who would find a cure for the world's diseases? If we only did what we wanted, we would become selfish and unhealthy. Temperance helps us to balance the different aspects of our life. God wants us to enjoy good things, but in the right amounts so that they are good for us. If we are temperate, then we will be free to enjoy things or set them aside as needed, instead of becoming irresponsible or addicted.

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Camillus de Lellis

(1550 - 1614 Italy)

Feast: July 18

While Camillus was still a boy, he developed bad habits of foul language, meanness, and gambling. He was bright but lazy, and by the age of 12 he quit going to school so he could spend his time gambling and fighting. At 17, he entered the army but continued his bad behavior. After being wounded in battle, he had to take a job—working in the garden of a Franciscan monastery! It was through the compassion of one of the



St. Camillus de Lellis by Nino Musio

TEMPERANCE: enjoying things in a proper, balanced way

friars that God's grace entered his heart, and Camillus gave his life to Christ.

Camillus went to Saint James Hospital in Rome where he became both a patient (to recover from the wounds he had received in battle) and a caregiver. Now, instead of giving into his sinful desires to gamble, he followed a strict life and practiced many penances. With Saint Philip Neri as his spiritual guide, Saint Camillus was eventually ordained a priest and founded a religious order, the Congregation of the Servants of the Sick and Poor, to serve the physical and spiritual needs of the sick in hospitals. For the rest of his life, Saint Camillus saw the opportunity to serve the sick as an opportunity to serve the Lord.

HOME PROJECT: Due March _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word!
(Read and discuss Luke 9:23.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

Let's see how well we practice temperance in regard to food! Think about your favorite foods, especially your favorite snacks. Then:

1. On a piece of paper, write down all of your favorite foods in a column on the left.
2. In the middle, make a column with the words: *None, A Few, A Lot.*
3. Then on the right, make a column with these words: *Daily, Weekly, Monthly.*
4. Draw lines from your favorite foods (in the first column), to how many servings of this food that you eat (in the middle column), to how often you eat this food (in the third column).

Compare your list with your classmates. How often are you eating your favorite foods? Is this healthy? Is healthy eating part of temperance?

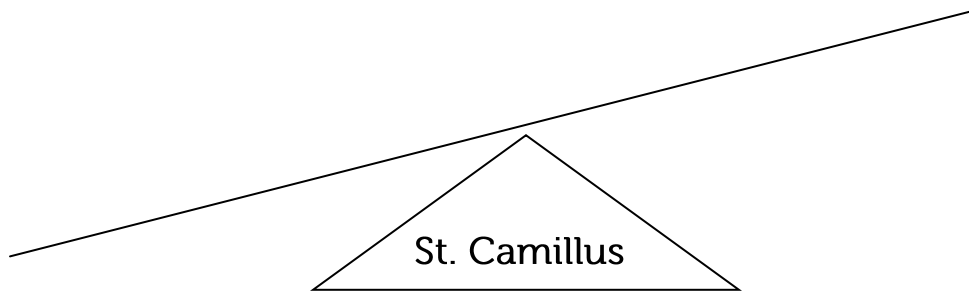
TEMPERANCE: enjoying things in a proper, balanced way

PRAYER:

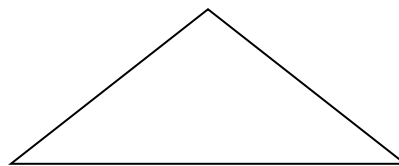
Dear Saint Camillus, by accepting the grace of God, you were able to overcome your desires and give your love and your time to Him, especially by caring for those who were sick. Give me your spirit of temperance so that my love and desires will always be centered in Christ our Lord. Amen. Saint Camillus de Lellis, pray for us.

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Before his conversion, the life of Saint Camillus was "out of balance." On the balance beam below, add those things from the saint's life on the "heavy end" that kept his life "weighted down" in sin. Add the things that were missing from his life to the "light end."



The next balance beam is your life! Write your name in the fulcrum and draw a balance beam on top. On each end of the beam, write the things you spend time doing. Does it "balance"? If not, what needs to be taken away? What needs to be added?



TEMPERANCE: enjoying things in a proper, balanced way

PRAYER:

Pray the Second Sorrowful Mystery of the Rosary, the Scourging at the Pillar. Ask Our Lady's help to make many small sacrifices for love of Jesus.

REVIEW:

What is temperance?

Who is Saint Camillus de Lellis?

GROWTH IN TEMPERANCE:

Describe what you did to grow in temperance this month.

What should you do to continue to grow in temperance this year?

TEMPERANCE: enjoying things in a proper, balanced way

April

PRAYER: *Act of Hope*

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Obedience: saying “yes” to the loving will of God and those He has set over us

Obedience comes from a Latin word which means “to listen.” Listening in a loving way with an open heart requires a response to the speaker. God’s authority over us, like our parents’ authority, is one of love. All that God does is for our good and for our salvation. If someone we love asks us to do something, obedience is easy and pleasant. By responding to our parents, teachers, and especially God with a cheerful and quick “yes” to what they ask, we grow in this very important virtue.

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Juan Diego
(1474-1548, Mexico)
Feast: December 9

Saint Juan Diego was a simple farmer and weaver who lived in modern day Mexico City. His act of obedience brought about the peaceful conversion of millions of people in Mexico.

One morning when he was walking 15 miles to daily Mass, as was his custom, he passed by Tepeyac hill where he saw a beautiful Aztec princess and heard her calling out to him. She said she was the Virgin Mary and that she wished to have a Church built on that site.

Obediently, Juan Diego went to the bishop as she had asked, and made the request for a Church to be built there. The bishop was a little



Our Lady of Guadalupe

OBEDIENCE: saying “yes” to the loving will of God and those He has set over us

skeptical, so he asked for proof that it was indeed the Virgin Mary who was making this request. When Juan Diego was returning the Lady told him to climb the hill. There, in the middle of winter and in the frozen soil, Juan Diego saw beautiful red roses, which he plucked and took to the bishop as his sign. These roses were large Castilian roses which did not grow naturally in Mexico, but were common in the bishop's home town in Spain. Juan Diego wrapped these roses in his peasant style tilma and took them to the bishop as proof that it was Mary who was asking for this church. When he released the tilma, the beautiful flowers fell to the ground, and on Juan Diego's tilma was a beautiful image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The image remains in a shrine in Mexico City today. Through this extraordinary obedience, thousands and eventually millions, converted to Christianity.

DISCUSSION:

Give at least two examples of how Saint Juan Diego practiced obedience.

HOME PROJECT: Due April _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word!
(Read and discuss Matthew 26:36-44.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

Discuss rules and boundaries that your parents have for your little brothers and sisters. (If you don't have a younger sibling listen to your classmates' responses.) For each rule or boundary, explain the reason your parents require this. Does the rule or boundary show your parents' love and care?

One of the most difficult practices of obedience is being able to accept the answer "no" from our parents. But we know that our parents make rules and decisions based on what's best for us and for our family.

Consider a scenario where you get invited to a friend's birthday party

OBEDIENCE: saying "yes" to the loving will of God and those He has set over us

that you really want to attend. All your friends will be there. But the date or time conflicts with something your parents have planned for your family, and after giving it some thought, they tell you that you will not be able to attend your friend's party this time.

- What is the typical response you would give to your parents?
- How would you feel in this situation?
- With a partner, act out an obedient response.

PRAYER:

Saint Juan Diego, intercede for me that I might have your childlike trust and obedience to God and those who have authority over me. Pray that my heart might respond in simple confidence, obedience, and love, so that I may join you one day in sharing everlasting joy, where our heavenly Mother reigns in the glory of her Son. Amen. Saint Juan Diego, pray for us.

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Make a tilma like Saint Juan Diego's!

Materials: brown bag from grocery store, scissors, crayons or markers.

Instructions:

1. Starting at the open end of the bag, cut out the side panels.
2. Cut a large circle from the bottom of the bag, large enough for your head to go through.
3. Cut fringe at the bottom of your tilma (the top of the bag).
4. Decorate it to look like Juan Diego's tilma when he brought roses to the bishop in Mexico City. There is much symbolism in this image; pay careful attention to how she looks, what is on her mantle, what she is standing on, etc.
5. If you finish early, top it off by making roses to carry in your tilma!

OBEDIENCE: saying "yes" to the loving will of God and those He has set over us

PRAYER:

Pray the First Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, the Annunciation. Reflect on Our Lady's "fiat" and ask her to give you perfect obedience to the will of God.

REVIEW:

What is obedience?

Who is Saint Juan Diego?

GROWTH IN OBEDIENCE:

Describe what you did to grow in obedience this month and how it helped you.

What should you do to continue to grow in obedience this year?

OBEDIENCE: saying "yes" to the loving will of God and those He has set over us

May

PRAYER:

Act of Hope

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Diligence: doing your best and working hard until you're finished

Notice that there are three parts to this definition of diligence. We do our best when we remember that we are offering all our work to God. "Working hard" reminds us not to be afraid of a challenge, because we have strength that comes from Him. The third part is "until you're finished". This means having the self-control to conquer the goal, even if we get tired of it. Then, we can be proud of our work, and rejoice in a job well done for God's glory!

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Francis de Sales

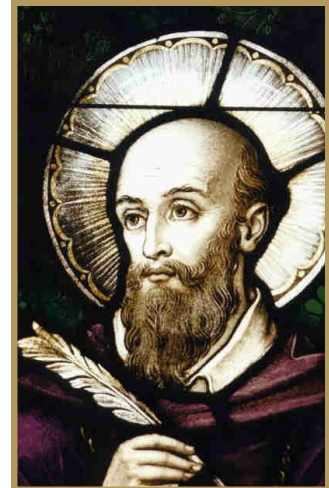
(1567–1622, France)

Feast: January 24

Born in France, and later the Bishop of Geneva, Saint Francis de Sales lived at a time and in a place where many people were hostile to the Catholic faith.

Saint Francis is a Doctor of the Church which means that he was a great scholar and teacher whose writings continue to influence people today. Yet he was very simple and faithful to Jesus and His Church.

When he was bishop, he walked from parish to parish, despite the difficulties in travel, to visit the priests in his diocese and all of their parishioners. As a bishop, he would have had a claim to live a comfortable lifestyle, but he preferred to dress and eat very simply. He loved serving the poor, because it was a way he could imitate Jesus, his Savior.



Saint Francis de Sales

DILIGENCE: doing your best and working hard until you're finished

Saint Francis de Sales was an excellent preacher and loved doing God's work, speaking and teaching about the Catholic faith, both to Catholics and non-Catholics. He was very diligent in his teaching, taking care to write letters and to preach in a way that people would fully understand. He wrote a book that is still very popular today, called *Introduction to the Devout Life*. In this book he teaches people how to grow in holiness.

He loved God to the very end of his life, and the words last spoken on his death bed were, "God's will be done! Jesus, my God and my all!"

DISCUSSION:

Often in the diocesan newspaper there is a description of the bishop's travels. Look up what the bishop is doing in your area in the next week. Discuss why he might make the visits he is making and what discussions he might need to have with various groups of people.

HOME PROJECT: Due May _____

PRAYER:

Come, Holy Spirit, open our hearts and minds to God's living Word!
(Read and discuss 2 Timothy 4:6-8.)

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

In your school planner, review each week of the past school year. Was every week your best? Give yourself a grade for each week. Divide by the number of weeks. What is your average grade? Make it a goal to beat that average every week this month.



DILIGENCE: doing your best and working hard until you're finished

PRAYER:

Saint Francis de Sales, you were diligent in your duties as priest, bishop, and spiritual director. Help me to be diligent in my duties as son or daughter, student, and friend. When life gets too hectic for me, help me to remember that God is always at my side and that I have many friends in heaven who are praying for me and who are willing to help me. Amen. Saint Francis de Sales, pray for us.

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Imitate Saint Francis de Sales by writing about the truths of our faith. Make a tract or a small brochure that explains a topic of the Catholic faith. Select one of the topics below.

- Loving God with all your heart
- Loving your neighbor as yourself
- The Holy Eucharist and Adoration
- The Blessed Virgin Mary
- Ways to console a friend who is suffering
- How to lose and how to win virtuously
- Keys to a good friendship

1. Include a title
2. Draw a picture that relates to the title
3. Include three key points about your topic
4. Support one of your key points with a story or a comic

DILIGENCE: doing your best and working hard until you're finished

PRAYER:

Pray the *Memorare* for an increase in the virtue of diligence, and for opportunities to grow closer to Jesus over the summer.

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To you I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

REVIEW:

What is diligence?

Who is Saint Francis de Sales?

GROWTH IN DILIGENCE:

Describe what you did to grow in diligence this month and how it helped you.

What should you do to continue to grow in diligence during the summer months?

DILIGENCE: doing your best and working hard until you're finished

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Bronze statue of St. Thomas Aquinas located in the Library of St. Cecilia Motherhouse in Nashville, Tennessee. Photograph courtesy of Sister Mary Justin Haltom, O.P.

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Page 36: St. Juan Diego/Our Lady of Guadalupe

Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Juan Diego's tilma. Public domain.

Page 40: St. Francis de Sales

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Acknowledgements

The *Virtues in Practice* program was originally written by a team of parents and faculty members at St. Gertrude School in Cincinnati, Ohio in 2005, and implemented beginning with the 2006 academic year. The program began as a nine-year cycle with students in kindergarten through eighth grade learning about a different virtue, and a saint who exemplified that virtue, each month. It was intended only for the use of St. Gertrude School, but within a short time it became clear that many schools desired the use of such a program.

To make the program accessible to a wider audience, Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia from St. Gertrude School, St. Mary's School in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Newport News, Virginia, and St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School in Woodbridge, Virginia worked together with faculty and staff volunteers in those schools to create the current program which follows a spiraling curriculum that repeats the same virtues over a three-year cycle while introducing new saints each year. To all who have contributed time and talent to the creation of this program, we are deeply grateful.

This program is the fruit of grace and collaboration, and is offered free of charge to those who wish to use it in their home or school. It is our prayer that all who read it will be inspired to pattern their lives more faithfully on that of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May our lives radiate His virtues, so that others may come to know and believe in the life and love He offers freely! To that end, we offer this work to His glory through the patronage of Mary, our Mother, and Star of the New Evangelization.

~ The Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation
801 Dominican Drive
Nashville, Tennessee 37228
(615) 256-5486
www.nashvilledominican.org

For questions related to the *Virtues in Practice* program,
please contact the Office for the New Evangelization at neoffice@op-tn.org.



Eight centuries ago St. Dominic de Guzman, inspired by the Holy Spirit in response to the needs of his time, founded an Order with the mission of preaching for the salvation of souls. Dominic's love for God and neighbor continues to inspire the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation today, as they joyfully embrace the Church's call to the New Evangelization. Through their teaching apostolate, the Sisters serve over 16,000 students in 41 schools in the United States, Canada, Australia, Italy, and Scotland.

Act of Hope

O my God,
relying on Your almighty power
and infinite mercy and promises,
I hope to obtain pardon of my sins,
the help of Your grace,
and life everlasting,
through the merits of Jesus Christ,
my Lord and Redeemer.
Amen.