

*Virtues
in Practice*

Faith ~ Hope ~ Charity

Virtues in Practice
Monthly Newsletter

April 2019



April's Virtue - *Forgiveness*

“God offers us freedom from our sins. However, every time we pray the *Our Father*, we place a condition on God’s mercy towards us. We say, “Forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those who trespass against us.*” The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains that God’s “outpouring of mercy cannot penetrate our hearts as long as we have not forgiven those who have trespassed against us. Love, like the Body of Christ, is indivisible; we cannot love the God we cannot see if we do not love the brother or sister we do see. In refusing to forgive our brothers and sisters, our hearts are closed and their hardness makes them impervious to the Father’s merciful love...” (paragraph 2840). It is in forgiving others that we experience true freedom from the bondage of sin.

“Forgiving others does not mean we approve of their behavior or do not want their actions to have consequences. It means that we let go of bitterness in our hearts and pray for their conversion and for God to show them mercy. Jesus gave the perfect example of forgiveness when he prayed for those who crucified him, “Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.” (*Virtues in Practice, 2013*)

Explore the sections below to support you and your family’s virtuous growth in ***forgiveness*** throughout the month of April. May God continue to bless you and yours!

Forgiveness and Sacred Scripture

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 4:31-32

Pre-K-2nd Grade



Prayer: *Act of Charity*/Come Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word!

What is *Forgiveness*? *Pardoning those who offend you*

Saint: *Saint Patrick (Feast Day: March 17)*

Question to ponder: Why did Saint Patrick need to forgive?

Saint Patrick, even though the Irish people made you a slave, you forgave them and brought them God's love. Help us to forgive others, as you did. Amen.

Saint Patrick, pray for us.

3rd Grade - 5th Grade

Prayer: *Act of Charity*/Come Holy Spirit, open our minds and our hearts to God's living Word!

What is *Forgiveness*?

Saint: *Blessed Margaret of Castello (Feast Day: April 13)*

Questions to ponder: Does it surprise you that Blessed Margaret forgave her parents? Why do you think she was able to forgive them?

Blessed Margaret, even though your own parents abandoned you, you forgave them and would not allow others to speak evil of them. Help us not to hold grudges and build resentments. Help us to be like you and to forgive those who offend us, even if they are not sorry.

Amen.

Blessed Margaret of Castello, pray for us.



6th Grade-8th Grade



Prayer: *Act of Charity*

What is *Forgiveness*? *Pardoning those who offend you.*

Saint: *Saint Josephine Bakhita (Feast Day: February 8)*

Questions to ponder: What evidence is there that St. Josephine forgave those who enslaved her? Does forgiving them mean she thought what they did to her was right?

Saint Josephine, you forgave those who stole you, sold you, and harmed you, even though they were not sorry.

You trusted God to bring good out of evil, and recognized that a lack of forgiveness would only hurt you more. Although you were enslaved in body, your soul was free because you had the faith to forgive. Help us to be free from bitterness and resentment, and to forgive others as you did.

Amen.

Saint Josephine Bakhita, pray for us.

Monthly Home Project Suggestions - Forgiveness

For details on these and other suggestions, see the **Virtues in Practice Parent Guide** for the Year of Charity and the month of April. ([ASCS: Virtues in Practice](#))

All: Hang up a copy of the *Act of Charity* on the refrigerator. Pray the *Act of Charity* together as a family. (See the end of this newsletter for a large-print copy.)

Pre K-2nd Grade: Practice saying "I forgive you." Look for chances to say it this month; Practice giving someone the benefit of a doubt. When someone seems mean, could there be another reason? Maybe they are hungry or sad about something, etc.

3rd-5th Grade: Is there someone you have trouble forgiving? Discuss why and compare to God's forgiveness. What would it take for you to forgive that person? Work toward making that happen this month.

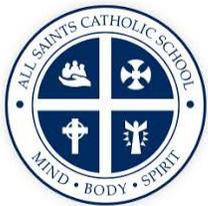
6th-8th Grade: Discuss how to ask for and grant forgiveness. What is the difference between saying "I'm sorry" and asking "Will you forgive me?" Are there things that are better not to say when you're apologizing? Is the response "That's okay" or "I forgive you" always true when someone apologizes after hurting you? What other ways could you respond to an apology?

Forgiveness is pardoning those who offend you.

Next month's *Virtue in Practice*: Responsibility

What is responsibility?

Responsibility is being reliable in your duties and accountable for your actions.



2018-2019 Virtues Committee: Carie Bellamy, Terese Gibb, Mary Ann Jenkins, Michelle MacLellan, Carol Pisarski, Jessica Railling, Amy Roose, Andrew Willing

For more information or for suggestions on monthly classroom activities/home projects please see: [Virtues in Practice](#) program website or contact a member of the 2018-2019 Virtues Committee. Also, for .pdf versions of ALL *Virtues in Practice* materials please see the [Catholic Identity](#) tab at [All Saints](#)' website.

*What is a **virtue**?*

A good habit is called a virtue. A bad habit is called a vice. Habits grow by practice. God always gives us the grace to choose and do what is good. If we think about what is right and open our hearts to God, we will make good choices and grow in virtue. Virtues make us free, happy, and holy. (from the Grades 1-2 student book)

Please continue praying the *Act of Charity* with your families. We are all working together to show children that God is first and foremost in our lives. The graces from this prayer are needed to open hearts, to guide leaders, and to beg the healing that only Our Lord can provide.

Act of Charity

*O my God, I love you above all things,
with my whole heart and soul,
because You are all good
and worthy of all love.*

*I love my neighbor as myself
for the love of You.*

*I forgive all who have injured me,
and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.*

Amen.