

# THE VIRTUES

## FOR COUPLES

### INTRODUCTION



**COMING SOON  
TO OUR PARISH!**

See Parish Bulletin  
for details.

### WOULD YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE LIKE TO GO ON FOUR WONDERFUL DATES?

Dear Couple,

We invite you to participate in **THE VIRTUES** - a program for couples of any age.

Pope Francis said that the Church is fully involved in the story of every Christian marriage, "She is built on their successes and she suffers in their failures." (May 2015)

The Pope is telling us that when marriages are strong, the Church is strong.

**The purpose of this program is to help you strengthen your marriage.**

**THE VIRTUES** provides you with the opportunity to go on four special dates with your spouse.



#### WHAT CAN WE EXPECT when we attend the program?

- You will meet a group of couples that, like you, care about their marriage.
- You will come to the parish where you will view a 10 minutes video.
- After the video, you will depart for your own private date.
- You will receive a flyer like this one, which will contain a short article and questions to guide the conversation during your date.
- You do not have to talk about every question. Choose the questions that most interest you.
- If you miss one or more dates because of your schedule, do not give up – attend the ones you can.

**If you cannot participate in the Four Dates program, read the flyers that you will find in the parish bulletin and talk about the subject with your spouse or with your children in the car, or at home.**

#### THE TOPIC

The topics of this program are based on the four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Courage and Temperance. These virtues are so important that they are like four hinges that open the door to a person's success in life. They help us grow and mature as persons.

It is the personal maturity of each spouse that contributes to the success of the marriage.

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#### THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

*"Moderation and prudence, justice and fortitude... nothing in life is more useful than these." Wisdom 8:7*

**Prudence – Justice – Courage – Temperance**

**"As a couple grows in virtue, they grow in holiness."**

*Love and Life in the Divine Plan, USCCB*

## Helpful Steps in Sharing Your Feelings With Each Other

As you reflect on your daily habits, you may find that you have differences of opinions, or differences in how you do things. That is natural and it is something all couples experience. Here are some suggestions for talking about differences.

1. Make sure to listen to your spouse's point of view and feelings. If you disagree it doesn't mean that one of you is right and the other is wrong.
2. Listen respectfully, and if necessary ask your spouse to explain, so that you can understand better. As you do this watch your tone of voice and your attitude toward your spouse.
3. It may be that it is perfectly fine to have a difference of opinion, or different ways of doing things, as long as you are both willing to live with the differences and the minor discomfort that they may cause.

Dr. John Gottman in studying couples found that 69% of marital conflicts cannot be resolved. Couples choose to live with them.

4. If you come across something that is upsetting to either one of you, take a deep breath. Keep calm and listen to each other's feelings.
5. When necessary, agree to take a break and cool off. Then return to the conversation.
6. Decide if this is an issue that you can tackle alone, or one with which you need assistance. Perhaps you want to talk to a priest or to a counselor.
7. Remember that you are partners on a life journey that leads to God. You will find some bumps along the way and these are opportunities for growth.

Practicing the virtues and praying are great tools for staying on track on your journey and overcoming your challenges. Prayer in particular can be the source of the graces you need.



### WE WILL TALK ABOUT HABITS

When we talk about virtues we talk about our habits - the ways we do things, and when we talk about how we do things, we may disagree.

Most couples find that their habits can be the source of conflicts. Conflicts are unavoidable in marriage and are opportunities for growth.

What contributes to the peaceful resolution of our conflicts is how we talk to each other.

We encourage you to read: **How to Share feelings in Your Conversations**, on the left side of this page.

**“Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits.”**

Mark Twain

Your participation in **THE VIRTUES** will help you strengthen your good habits. Through the practice of **Prudence, Justice, Courage**

and **Temperance** you will mature in wisdom and grow in your ability to love.

Watching you, your children will learn the virtues, and by practicing them they will be successful in life.

**“A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do good.”**

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1808

As Christian spouses we are aided on our journey to virtue by God's grace. At baptism we received the gifts of Faith, Hope and Charity.

These three supernatural virtues guide us and strengthen us as we cultivate the human virtues of **Justice, Prudence, Courage and Temperance.**

**Come join us!**

*To participate in this program see the details in the parish bulletin.*

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