

## Homily Outline

*Mass is being held in the Convent Chapel, and I am grateful for the sister's hospitality. If anything goes wrong with our first attempt at livestreaming, check back later, as the Mass will be recorded and available for playback.*

We remember especially in our prayers today all those who are suffering from the coronavirus outbreak and we are praying especially for our leaders in the government and the Church

### **What should we do during this extraordinary time?**

*By prudence, penance and prayer we should be heroic and courageous in following Jesus*

#### **1. Prudence**

*What exactly is a virtue?*

**Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 1804** 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.

**CCC 1833** VIRTUE IS A HABITUAL AND FIRM DISPOSITION TO DO GOOD.

**CCC 1834** THE HUMAN VIRTUES ARE STABLE DISPOSITIONS OF THE INTELLECT AND THE WILL THAT GOVERN OUR ACTS, ORDER OUR PASSIONS, AND GUIDE OUR CONDUCT IN ACCORDANCE WITH REASON AND FAITH. THEY CAN BE GROUPED AROUND THE FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES: PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE, AND TEMPERANCE.

*Then, specifically what is prudence?*

**CCC 1806** 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." ...IT IS NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH TIMIDITY OR FEAR, NOR WITH DUPLICITY OR DISSIMULATION. IT IS CALLED *AURIGA VIRTUTUM* (THE CHARIOTEER OF THE VIRTUES); IT GUIDES THE OTHER VIRTUES BY SETTING RULE AND MEASURE. ... THE PRUDENT MAN DETERMINES AND DIRECTS HIS CONDUCT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS JUDGMENT. WITH THE HELP OF THIS VIRTUE WE APPLY MORAL PRINCIPLES TO PARTICULAR CASES WITHOUT ERROR AND OVERCOME DOUBTS ABOUT THE GOOD TO ACHIEVE AND THE EVIL TO AVOID.

**Prudence** (Lat. *prudentia*, contracted from *providentia*, seeing ahead) is the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason.

*Prudence is wisdom applied to our practical decisions each day.*

So two important things about prudence:

1. It is the first virtue because it guides and directs all the other virtues.
2. We make our decisions using our brains, not our emotions or feelings.

*Right now we are being called to be especially virtuous*

So right now, in prudence we are being asked to practice temperance (self-control), and fortitude, and justice – and specially to pursue the good of health and life.

**So, how do we practice the virtue of prudence in this situation?**

1. Wash your hands a lot.
2. Maintain social distance.
3. Figure out how to reach out to those in need, to those who are vulnerable, to those who are isolated, those in danger of slipping through the cracks.

**Y'know what is not prudent?** Complaining!

Rather than seeing this time of reduced public activity and social distancing as a hardship we should take advantage of the time at home – and try to be grateful and see it as a blessing.

- Organize all your kitchen cupboards
- De-clutter
- Polish your shoes
- Sharpen your kitchen knives
- Read a book
- This is your chance to help your children to become active responsible members of the community of your family
  - Teach your children how to cook
  - And how to load and run and unload the dishwasher
  - And how to set goals and figure out the steps to accomplish
  - Teach them how to make a to-do list
  - Teach them how to make a daily schedule and follow it
  - Teach your children how to make their bed and clean their rooms
  - How to do the laundry

Parents this could be a great opportunity for you to change the whole dynamic of your family life.

*People are going to want to just get back to “normal” – My question is “why”? Most people’s “normal” is unreasonable and unhealthy and unsustainable. This little retreat can be a chance to make a new “normal”.*

## **2. Penance**

So, let’s talk about penance for a minute. Lent is a time of voluntary penance and now we have a lot of involuntary penances being foisted upon us.

*Why is penance still important? There are a lot of people who are suffering in the world – as I mentioned at the beginning, those who are sick, those who are isolated in nursing homes, their families – not to mention the doctors and nurses and medical workers going without sleep and food and comforts. Well doing penance, denying ourselves little comforts, denying ourselves some of the pleasures of life, fasting from food and entertainment – all those things are ways that we can be in solidarity with those who suffer and share in their sufferings, and live in communion with suffering humanity which is caught up in the mystery of Christ’s sufferings.*

## **3. Prayer**

So right now, we don’t have public prayer together as in Holy Mass.

*So, does that mean that our faith and our relationship with God is going to be just sort of dying for the next month or so? And that we are on quarantine from God, since there’s no obligations anymore?*

**We are not having Mass, but the church is still open all day long (and night if you call the office and get a code). We will have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 7am to 8pm every single day for as long as this pandemic lasts.**

*So you are welcome to come in, and keeping your social distance, to pray, just make sure you wash your hands when you come in and when you leave.*

**So, prudence, penance, and prayer –  
My suggestions for the ways that we can be courageous and  
generous and heroic in this difficult time**