

December: Virtue of Charity

Week 1 Morning Prayer: Virtue of the Month - Charity

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

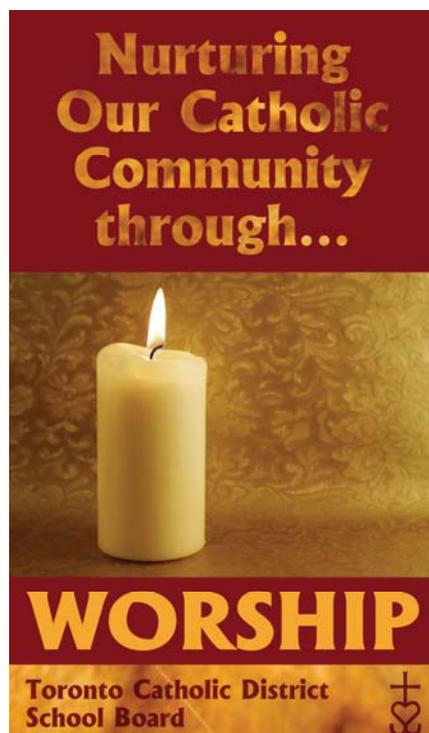
The Virtue of the Month for December is Charity. It is often remarked that charity begins at home, for as we know from experience there is a great challenge involved in living happily with our immediate family and friends. Because of past hurts and the complexity of living, it can be difficult to be generous and forgiving. Yet the call to charity begins inside the home that is our hearts, and extends in an ever widening circle to include the entire community of being – all who are, and all that is. When we respond to the call to charity by giving something of ourselves to those in need, we find ourselves transformed, alive, and at peace.

As we wait in longing this Advent for the celebration of the birth of Jesus, we ask for an increase of charity in our thoughts, words and deeds. We pray to You, Lord. (Response: Lord, hear our prayer.)

For all those in this community in need of our love, kindness and generosity. We pray to You, Lord. (Response...)

Let us pray an Our Father together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



Week 2 Morning Prayer: Virtue of the Month - Charity

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

In this Advent season our religious tradition reaches back to the prophet Isaiah to catch the flavor of the extraordinary moment we celebrate in thinking about the birth of Jesus. In Isaiah chapter 41 it says, "I, the Lord, your God, I am holding you by the right hand; I tell you, 'Do not be afraid, I will help you.'" This image of affection, solidarity and compassion gives us a glimpse of the charity burning in the heart of God. It inspires us to reach beyond ourselves, to stretch our own hearts, our talents and our resources to touch and to strengthen those in need.

That the power of your Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with charity and love. We pray to You, Lord. (Response: Lord, hear our prayer.)

That our community will be an example of generosity, justice and kindness in this special time of expectation. We pray to You, Lord. (Response...)

Let us pray a Hail Mary together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Week 3 Morning Prayer: Virtue of the Month - Charity

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

During these weeks our Gospel readings are filled with the stories that anticipate the birth of Jesus - the Annunciation encounter between Mary and the Angel Gabriel, and the story of the Visitation when Mary goes to help her cousin Elizabeth who is with child – the future John the Baptist. These stories are cherished moments in our collective memory. They tell of trust and love, of hope and generosity, of openness to the mystery of God's ways and to the wonder of being. They tell of charity and love. And as the ancient hymn says: Where we find charity and love, there we find God.

That the stories of Mary and Elizabeth will help us to meet the challenges of life with joy and generosity. We pray to You, Lord. (Response: Lord, hear our prayer.)

That the shining light of God's charity will open our eyes to the true meaning of Christmas. We pray to You, Lord. (Response...)

Let us pray a Hail Mary together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Week 4 Morning Prayer: Virtue of the Month - Charity

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

The thought of the birth of Jesus fills a longing for belonging deep inside our souls. It brings us back to that unconscious memory - so vital, so filling, so significant, so extraordinary – when we first experienced the gaze of love. Even though the family of Joseph and Mary and their newborn were not at home in their own place of residence at that time, yet for us who have the benefit of history and everything that happened in the aftermath, this is in a real sense home for all of us - in that stable, around the crib. This is our place of dwelling for now. This is a time to gaze into the face of Charity itself, to allow ourselves to be transformed and transported, and sing out loud: Glory to God, and peace to God's people now and forever.

For all peoples everywhere that they will experience the goodness and love of God. We pray to You, Lord. (Response: Lord, hear our prayer.)

That those who are lonely at this time of year will find themselves discovering the touch of a hand of friendship and care. We pray to You, Lord. (Response...)

Let us pray a Glory Be together.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen