



Virtue Lesson - Prudence

Parent Note:

Dear Parents/ Caregivers,

These activities have been designed to support you, as parents, in the process of forming your child(ren) in the Christian virtues. They are designed to be done as a family, as God has made you a unique and special Domestic Church. You, as parents, are the most influential people in the lives of your children, and you are who they look to most for handing on the faith. You are also on your own journey to grow in the faith, and our goal is to help *you!* Please think of these lessons and activities as guides, and make them your own to best serve your family. We encourage you to modify, scale back or expand as you find developmentally appropriate for your family.

As a note of encouragement, parents, please remember you have permission to fail sometimes. You don't have to be perfect all the time and you can show that to your children. Don't be afraid to admit your faults to your children, don't be afraid to let them see your failures- show them the grace to move forward and persevere despite failures. Be vocal and tell them the graces God has given you in times of failure. Frequent confession together so they know you are always seeking God's forgiveness and mercy and you are working on holiness yourselves. Finally, take this opportunity to learn and grow together, to grow closer to Christ together and to become Saint's together. God loves you very much, and Jesus wants to be with you in life to give you security as your savior, your model of virtue, and your friend. You have the opportunity to arise, Domestic Church, and bring God's hope and light to this world!

Our prayers are with you,
Our Lady of Good Counsel Discipleship Formation Team



Focus Virtue : What is Prudence and what are the vices of Prudence?

Read the questions and discuss with them with your child(ren):

- ❖ What is Prudence?
 - Prudence is the virtue that uses the intellect (our brain! The ability to think and reason). It enables us to act wisely and choose good.
 - Prudence makes us think, understand, identify, and command. It uses reason to enable us to act or refrain according to the good of the persons. It helps us understand when to wait and hold back *and* when to act boldly and creatively. Prudence is used all the time throughout the day in different situations.
 - Prudence is the “mother” of virtues. It is the only intellectual virtue and is used to help inform the other virtues.
 - Prudence is about allowing the truth, not our feelings, to determine our choices.
- ❖ What is the vice of prudence?
 - The Vice of Prudence is foolishness. If we are not acting wisely, we are acting foolishly. This is when mistakes are made. You can learn from your mistakes and then use it to act more prudently in the future.
 - You can also learn from the wisdom of other people. You may not have the experience to make a good decision but asking a trusted adult can help you make a prudent decision. If you ignore their wisdom, it can be foolish.

Catechism Look Up:

CCC: 1806

Have each family member practice finding the paragraph in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Allow your child(ren) to read it aloud if they are able. Don't worry if they can't completely understand it. This will be taught and brought to their level throughout the year. This exercise is more for them to get familiar with the CCC and be comfortable using it.



Saint Example: St. Joseph

Prudence is a virtue that we all value and desire. Let us look at this virtue in St. Joseph.

1. St. Joseph never acted on impulse. He always reflected before acting. What husband would not have put away his wife without any delay when he discovered that she was about to give birth to a child that was not his. Not so St. Joseph. He waited and pondered and prayed, and gradually formed the prudent resolve of sending her back in secret to her friends. Even after deciding on this plan as the best, he again waited and commended it to God, turned it over and over in his own mind, prayed still more before proceeding to act. It was this prudence of his, this charitable delay, that earned for him the solution of his doubts by an angel's voice.
2. St. Joseph had entrusted to him the raising up of Jesus. The formation of the character of the divine Child was committed to him. What prudence, what perfect prudence must he have possessed him whom God considered as the fit guardian of the Eternal Word! If I were more prudent, God would entrust to me greater works to be done for Him.
3. Our Lady must have had wonderful confidence in the prudence of her spouse when she arose unhesitatingly at dead of night to fly with him to Egypt, just because he told her he had had a dream warning him to do so. But she knew not only how naturally careful and wise he was, but that he had an infused and supernatural prudence that could not be deceived. If I were more prudent, others would trust me more, and listen with greater confidence to my advice or commands.

Let us go through the four passages in the gospel of Matthew that lead us to St. Joseph, Most Prudent.

Annunciation to Joseph

But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins..." When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus (Mt. 1: 20-25)."

The ancient religious people deeply believed in dreams as divine avenues of communication. Joseph knew instantly that anything that came from God through the message of divine



messenger/angel Gabriel was the right thing to do. There was absolutely no hesitation on his part. He was determined to do it.

St. Joseph, most prudent, incredible model and exemplar of the virtue of prudence, as soon as you knew the message of the Angel Gabriel, you took Mary your wife into your home. Pray for Us.

Family's flight into Egypt

An Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him. "And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod (Mt. 2: 13-15)."

St. Joseph, most prudent, incredible model and exemplar of the virtue of prudence, at the instruction of the Angel, you rose from sleep and took the child Jesus and Mother Mary at night, left for Egypt and remained there. Pray for Us.

The death of Herod

But when Herod died, behold an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel (Mt. 2: 19-21)."

St. Joseph, most prudent, incredible model and exemplar of the virtue of prudence, at the message of the Angel, you rose and took the child Jesus and Mother Mary and went to the land of Israel, Pray for Us.

Taking the family to Nazareth

But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled. "He shall be called a Nazarene (Mt. 2: 22-23)."

St. Joseph, most prudent, incredible model and exemplar of the virtue of prudence, by obeying the warning, you took the family to Nazareth, Pray for Us.



Did Joseph act haphazardly? Was his decision rushed? Did he decide in haste? Was he pressured? Was he under duress? Or was it his character, that is, the character of a prudent Holy Man? The fact that Joseph was able to make that instant decision, it is most telling that he knew right away on the spot the will of God. This is extraordinary. He had an inner insight and instinct of the ways and plan of God. He acted decisively and swiftly, not rashly, nor timidly but prudently. His responses are splendid examples of prudential judgment. Prudence doesn't come easy. It is nurtured through deep prayer, inner instinct and close relationship with God.

St. Joseph, incredible model and exemplar of the virtue of prudence, Pray for Us.

Lectio Divina: Matthew 7:24-27

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."

Have each family member practice finding Matthew 7:24-27 in the Bible. Allow your child(ren) to read it aloud if they are able.

BONUS: Proverbs 13:16. "In everything the prudent man acts with knowledge, but a fool flaunts his folly." Discuss the verse and look up any words your child(ren) might not understand. Learn the verse and recite it by memory! Once everyone in the family has learned it by memory, consider a small celebration and share a special dessert!

End your Lectio Divina with a Prayer for Prudence

Dear Lord, please help me to know what is right. Guide me on when and how to do what is good. Teach me to think before I act. You are my Rock and I trust you will lead me to make decisions that are pleasing to you. Amen