



Virtues to Live By

Our Virtues to Live By programme is rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and supports the development of Catholic virtues across the school. Each month, the school focuses on a specific virtue, enabling children to explore its meaning and significance in depth. This focus is reinforced throughout school life in collective worship, curriculum learning, personal relationships, and the wider school environment.

By linking virtues to Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching, the programme helps children understand how these qualities guide their behaviour and attitudes. It encourages children to grow in faith and character, developing qualities that contribute to their spiritual, moral, and personal growth.

Through this approach, children are supported to live out Gospel values, becoming increasingly aware of how to reflect God's image in their daily lives through their thoughts, words, and actions.

This programme ensures that children have opportunities to:

- Experience a positive and purposeful Catholic ethos that fosters a sense of belonging within the school community.
- Grow in their knowledge and understanding of the virtues as an essential part of their faith formation.
- Practice the virtues in everyday life as a response to God's call to live life to the full.
- Appreciate the connection between Scripture, Church teaching, and practical living.
- Hear the Catholic story and see it enacted through worship, service, and community involvement.
- Understand their uniqueness and dignity as children created in the image and likeness of God.
- Recognise that challenges and limitations offer opportunities for growth in virtue.
- Engage in reflection, prayer, and active participation in their spiritual and moral development.
- Develop the cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects of virtue by knowing it intellectually, feeling it emotionally, and demonstrating it through their actions.

Each week, we provide opportunities for children to reflect on how they have embodied the virtue of the month, culminating in a celebration assembly where children from each class receive a certificate in recognition of their efforts.

The programme is closely linked to the school's liturgy and curriculum, ensuring that Gospel teachings and Catholic Social Teaching underpin the exploration and application of virtues throughout the year.

The virtues we follow are organised into two distinct cycles, Year 1 and Year 2, each featuring a unique set of virtues. This two-year rotation ensures a comprehensive exploration of the virtues over time, allowing for deeper understanding and development.

Cycle 1 Virtues

September: Respect / Courtesy

Saint: Mary, who showed respect and courtesy by humbly listening and serving others with kindness.

Signs of living the virtue of respect and courtesy:

- I listen carefully and speak politely to others
- I treat everyone fairly and with dignity as children of God
- I honour God's creation by respecting people and things around me
- I show good manners inspired by Mary's gentle and humble example

October: Thankfulness

Saint: St. Francis of Assisi, who thanked God for all creation and shared his joy with those around him.

Signs of living the virtue of thankfulness:

- I thank God daily for all His gifts and blessings
- I express gratitude to Jesus for His love and sacrifice
- I recognise the goodness in others and say thank you
- I share my blessings with others, inspired by the generosity of the saints

November: Hope

Saint: St. Joan of Arc, who kept hope alive in God's promises even during great trials.

Signs of living the virtue of hope:

- I trust in God's promises and believe that He is always with me
- I keep a hopeful heart even during difficult times, following Mary's faith at the cross
- I look forward to the joy of eternal life with Jesus
- I encourage others to trust in God's mercy and love

December: Patience

Saint: St. Joseph, who patiently trusted God's plan for his family despite challenges.

Signs of living the virtue of patience:

- I wait calmly and trust in God's timing, just as Jesus did
- I show understanding and forgiveness when things are hard
- I practise patience with others, following the gentle example of Mary
- I pray for strength to endure challenges with hope and peace

January: Faith

Saint: St. Paul, who boldly lived his faith and spread the Good News everywhere he went.

Signs of living the virtue of faith:

- I believe in God and trust in His plan for me
- I follow Jesus' teachings and share my faith through actions
- I turn to prayer and the sacraments to grow closer to God
- I ask Mary and the saints to guide and support me in my faith journey

February: Simplicity

Saint: St. Martin de Porres, who lived simply and humbly served others.

Signs of living the virtue of simplicity:

- I live with gratitude for what God has given me
- I focus on what truly matters—love, faith, and family—like Jesus and Mary did
- I care for God's creation by living simply and responsibly
- I practise humility, following the example of the saints

March: Love / Charity

Saint: St. John the Apostle, who loved others deeply as Jesus taught.

Signs of living the virtue of love and charity:

- I love others as Jesus loves me, with kindness and mercy
- I share my time, talents, and resources generously as Mary and the saints did
- I forgive and help those in need without expecting anything in return
- I pray for the grace to love more deeply each day

April: Forgiveness

Saint: St. Maria Goretti, who forgave her attacker with the same mercy Jesus showed.

Signs of living the virtue of forgiveness:

- I say sorry and ask God's forgiveness when I do wrong

- I forgive others, remembering how Jesus forgave those who hurt Him
- I let go of anger and seek peace in my relationships
- I ask Mary and the saints to help me have a forgiving heart

May: Resilience / Perseverance

Saint: St. George, who showed great courage and kept going bravely even when facing tough challenges.

Signs of living the virtue of resilience and perseverance:

- I keep trying with God's help, even when faced with difficulties
- I learn from mistakes and trust Jesus to strengthen me
- I support others to keep going, inspired by the courage of the saints
- I pray for the grace to persevere in faith and goodness

June: Kindness

Saint: St. Nicholas, who showed kindness by helping those in need quietly and generously.

Signs of living the virtue of kindness:

- I look for ways to help others
- I show kindness to every person and creature
- I care for God's creation with love and respect
- I share what I have freely and treat myself with kindness as God's beloved child

July: Honesty

Saint: St. Thomas More, who lived honestly and stood firm in his beliefs.

Signs of living the virtue of honesty:

- I tell the truth
- I admit my mistakes and seek to make things right
- I keep my promises, following the integrity of Jesus and the saints
- I act with honesty in all I do, reflecting God's light

August: Service

Saint: St. Vincent de Paul, who served the poor and needy with great humility and love.

Signs of living the virtue of service:

- I serve others joyfully, following Jesus' example of washing His disciples' feet
- I give my time and talents to help those in need
- I act with humility and generosity as Mary and the saints taught us
- I take responsibility for caring for my community as part of God's family

Cycle 2 Virtues

September: Love of Learning

Saint: St. Catherine of Siena, who loved learning about God and used her wisdom to help others.

Signs of living the virtue of love of learning:

- I am curious and eager to discover God's world
- I work hard to grow in knowledge and faith, inspired by the wisdom of Mary and the saints
- I listen and ask questions to deepen my understanding of God's love
- I thank God for the gift of learning and seek to use it well

October: Citizenship

Saint: St. Therese of Lisieux, who cared for others through simple acts of love.

Signs of living the virtue of citizenship:

- I care for my community as part of God's family on earth
- I respect the rights and dignity of all people, following Jesus' teaching to love neighbour
- I act responsibly and with kindness to help others belong and thrive
- I pray to Mary and the saints to guide me in living justly and peacefully

November: Prayer

Saint: St. Teresa of Avila, who taught others how to pray deeply and listen to God's voice.

Signs of living the virtue of prayer:

- I speak to God regularly through prayer, trusting His love
- I listen quietly to God in my heart, following Mary's example of contemplation
- I join with others in worship to praise and thank God
- I use prayer to find peace, strength, and guidance in my daily life

December: Generosity

Saint: St. Elizabeth of Hungary, who gave generously to the poor and cared for those in need.

Signs of living the virtue of generosity:

- I freely share my gifts, time, and talents, following Jesus' example of giving
- I think about those in need and give with joy and compassion
- I show a generous spirit inspired by Mary and the saints
- I give thanks to God for all I have and use it to bless others

January: Friendship

Saint: St. Benedict, who built strong friendships and community through love and trust.

Signs of living the virtue of friendship:

- I am loyal and trustworthy, following Jesus who calls us friends
- I listen and support others with love and understanding
- I forgive and work to restore peace when friendships are broken
- I cherish friends as part of God's loving family

February: Love of Neighbour

Saint: St. Damien of Molokai, who loved and cared for people suffering from leprosy without fear.

Signs of living the virtue of love of neighbour:

- I care for all people as Jesus taught us to love one another
- I help and support those in need, following the example of Mary and the saints
- I respect everyone's dignity and differences as God's creation
- I act with compassion and mercy in daily life

March: Self-control

Saint: St. Augustine, who learned to control his actions and chose to follow God faithfully.

Signs of living the virtue of self-control:

- I manage my feelings and actions with the help of the Holy Spirit
- I think before I act and make choices that please God
- I resist temptations that harm me or others
- I practise discipline and patience, following Jesus' example in the desert

April: Reflection

Saint: St. Ignatius of Loyola, who took time to reflect on his life and grow closer to God.

Signs of living the virtue of reflection:

- I think carefully about my actions and choices in light of God's word
- I learn from experiences and seek to grow in holiness
- I take time to pray and listen for God's guidance
- I strive to become more like Jesus every day

May: Confidence

Saint: St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, who showed great confidence and courage in following God's call despite many challenges.

Signs of living the virtue of confidence:

- I believe in my God-given gifts and talents
- I try new things with courage, trusting God's presence with me
- I speak up for what is right and good
- I rely on Mary and the saints to support me when I feel unsure

June: Trust

Saint: St. John Bosco, who trusted completely in God's plan and cared for young people.

Signs of living the virtue of trust:

- I place my trust in God's love and plan for my life
- I am honest and dependable in my relationships
- I keep my promises and listen carefully to others
- I build strong, loving relationships inspired by Jesus and Mary

July: Courage

Saint: St. Philomena, who stood bravely for her faith even when it was difficult.

Signs of living the virtue of courage:

- I stand up for what is right, even when it is hard
- I face challenges bravely, knowing Jesus is with me
- I support others who are afraid or struggling
- I pray for the strength to do good even in difficult situations

August: Wisdom

Saint: St. Thomas Aquinas, who showed great wisdom and knowledge inspired by faith.

Signs of living the virtue of wisdom:

- I seek to understand God's will and live according to His teachings
- I make decisions based on faith, prayer, and the example of the saints
- I learn from my experiences and mistakes
- I share my understanding to help and guide others

We encourage parents and carers to join us in fostering these virtues at home, supporting children's spiritual and moral development as a vital part of their education. Together, as a school, family, and parish community, we aim to help each child live out these virtues in their daily lives, becoming compassionate, faithful, and responsible members of society.