SPiritual Qualities to Healthy Living –
A Matter of Life or Death

Presented by Fr. Richard S. Jones
Pastor, St. Joseph Church, Coraopolis, PA
6:45 pm to 8:00 pm

Monday, September 11, 2017 – Spirituality

Monday, September 18, 2017 – Self-Esteem, Wonder, Friendship, Courage

Monday, September 25, 2017 – Teachability, Tolerance, Joy, Interdependence

Monday, October 2, 2017 – Perseverance, Freedom, Love, Generativity

Monday, October 16, 2017 – Balance, Prayer, Forgiveness, Gratitude

Monday, October 23, 2017 – Playfulness, Commitment, Hope, Restlessness

Week 4
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Opening Prayer

God, my Father, may I love You in all things and above all things. May I reach the joy which You have prepared for me in Heaven. Nothing is good that is against Your Will, and all that is good comes from Your Hand. Place in my heart a desire to please You and fill my mind with thoughts of Your Love, so that I may grow in Your Wisdom and enjoy Your Peace.
Opening Song

Power of Your Love (4:45)

by Hillsongs

Lord, I come to You
Let my heart be changed, renewed
Flowing from the grace
That I found in You

And Lord, I've come to know
The weaknesses I see in me
Will be stripped away
By the power of Your love

Chorus 1
Hold me close
Let Your love surround me
Bring me near
Draw me to Your side

Chorus 2
And as I wait
I'll rise up like the eagle
And I will soar with You
Your Spirit leads me on
In the power of Your love

Lord, unveil my eyes
Let me see You face to face
The knowledge of Your love
As You live in me

Lord, renew my mind
As Your will unfolds in my life
In living every day
By the power of Your love

Chorus 1 & 2 [2X]

And I will soar with You
Your Spirit leads me on
In the power of Your love [2X]
Definition

Perseverance is the ability to persist in an undertaking over a long period of time despite counterinfluences, periodic setbacks, or bouts of discouragement.

Biblical Quotes

Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. (Romans 12:12)

Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:9)

Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)

Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation, for when he has been proved he will receive the crown of life that he promised to those who love him. (James 1:12)

Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us. (Romans 5:3-5)

Talking Points

- Perseverance in virtue is no easy task
- From acorn to an oak tree
  - God calls us to love God and love our neighbor. No more, no less.
  - “Persevere! Remember that the greatest oak tree was once a little nut that held its ground.” (an old adage)
• Discipline and Vision
  o Factors that enable us to persevere in this lifelong undertaking of radical transformation
    1. Self-discipline
    2. Vision of the future
• Can you wait to eat the marshmallows?
• Perseverance and Scripture
  o On many occasions Jesus encouraged his disciples to persevere
• St. Teresa of Avila in describing her Perseverance in prayer shared her wisdom, “We must have a determined determination to never give up prayer.”

SOMETIMES GOD DOESN’T CHANGE YOUR SITUATION BECAUSE HE IS TRYING TO CHANGE YOUR HEART.

REPIN IF YOU TRUST HIM
lovethispic.com
6 Ways Virtue is Its Own Reward, According to Science

Doing the right thing really can be it’s own reward — and it can be a huge help to our mental health. A series of studies recently released reveal that being virtuous, helping others, and expressing gratitude produce positive outcomes not only in the lives of those around us, but also in our own lives, too. Granted, we shouldn’t just be kind for our own health benefit, but there is a beauty in the fact that helping others also can have good side affects in our own lives.

Here’s the evidence that virtue can benefit your mental and physical health, in the form of six science-backed benefits of practicing a virtuous life:

1. Better sleep habits
   If you find yourself tossing and turning at night and discover that counting sheep doesn’t seem to solve the problem, living a virtuous and purpose-driven life may be the perfect, drug-free solution for your insomnia. A recent study found that participants who had a purpose for their life experienced fewer sleep disorders and problems and also experienced better quality of rest. The people who participated in the sleep study found that their higher sense of purpose prevented stress and anxiety from plaguing their bedtime habits. Although the study was conducted with senior citizens, the researchers theorize that helping people live a purpose-driven life can reduce the amount of sleep disorders the general population also experiences.

2. Increased general happiness
   Previous studies have shown that when you spend money on others, you’re happier than when you spent the same amount of money on yourself. In fact, brain scans reveal that small acts of generosity and virtue cause the brain to produce a”warm glow” as a response to boosted happiness levels. But if your budget is tight, don’t worry. Even small, random acts of virtue and kindness allow your brain to experience that warm glow. Back in 2004, another study asked participants to perform five random acts of kindness every week for six weeks. At the end, those who had performed little random acts of kindness reported feeling more happy than the participants in the study who hadn’t done any acts of kindness.

Continued on next page
3. A boost in positive emotions
Living a life of gratitude can lead to increased levels of positive emotions. When people participate in activities like thanking others, reflecting on their blessings throughout the day, and writing thank you notes, they experience an increase in their experience of positive emotions.
Not only does gratitude boost your happiness levels, but it also raises your happiness set-point (the “default” level of happiness you feel independent of circumstances), according to psychologist Robert A. Emmons. Other positive emotions that are increased by living virtuously include joy, optimism, pleasure and enthusiasm. Virtue also suppresses feelings of depression, envy and resentment.

4. A lowered rate of depression
Giving your time, talent, and treasures can lower your chances of depression. The more you volunteer your time, the happier your life will be, according to research conducted at Harvard. Their research revealed that there was “a strong relationship between volunteering and health: those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer.” By giving your time to others and striving for a virtuous life, you’ll be better equipped to ward off feelings of loneliness and depression.

5. “Helper’s high”
Thanks to endorphins that flood into your brain when you’re practicing good deeds, you’ll experience a natural “helper’s high” when you live virtuously. In fact, some research shows that those who help may actually gain more in terms of mental health than those on the receiving end of their kindness and generosity. Helping others also leaves you with a greater appreciation for what you’ve been blessed with, as well as a sanctification that comes from giving of yourself: Focusing on the needs of others also helps put your own personal struggles into perspective.

6. Increased self-esteem
Living generously can give you a sense of purpose. For instance, volunteering allows you to help out in your own community and make a difference in the lives of your neighbors and friends. It also gives you an empowering opportunity to spend time making an impact in people’s lives. By taking the focus away from yourself, and spending time building up social interaction within your community, you also are able to foster a greater sense of belonging. Volunteering your time can also give you a new set of skills and experiences. It leaves you with a sense of achievement. By growing out of your comfort zone and giving of yourself to those around you, you cultivate opportunities to face your fears and contribute to society.

from: https://aleteia.org/2017/09/28/6-ways-virtue-is-its-own-reward-according-to-science/
Definition
Freedom is the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.

Biblical Quotes
Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (2 Corinthians 3:17)

A slave does not remain in a household forever, but a son always remains. So if a son frees you, then you will truly be free. (John 8:35-36)

For you were called for freedom, brothers. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Galatians 5:13-14)

For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1)

Be free, yet without using freedom as a pretext for evil, but as slaves of God. (1 Peter 2:16)

Talking Points
- Freedom is discipline’s aim
- Being free to love
- The Ten Commandments
- Jesus and Freedom
Twelve Steps to Self-Discovery
Modeled after the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

Step 1
Take time to think. Consider what you are powerless over. This requires you to be honest with yourself and admit that you are powerless over “X” weakness. You may also have to recognize typical faults you exhibit in responding to “X” weakness. Do you blame others? Become overly defensive? Condemn others in an attempt to hide your own failings? Start a personal inventory of the areas where you are powerless. Face your shortcomings and realize you are powerless over other people. Period!

Step 2
Focus on a higher power – God. Trust that God will restore your balance and sanity. Have faith that God is on your side and always willing to help.

Step 3
Turn to your higher power and ask for help in the areas where you recognize you are powerless.

Step 4
You began your personal inventory in step one as you examined the areas where you are powerless. Look that over as you make a moral inventory in this step. It may be helpful to write down.

Step 5
Communicate with a “sponsor,” someone you can turn to in times of struggle, someone who holds you accountable but also reminds you to think in terms of “progress, not perfection” and to be kind to yourself.

Step 6
Stop running. After consulting with your sponsor, you know deep down you are tired of shirking from your feelings and weaknesses. You are determined enough now—at least in this moment—to be free of these character defects. You know you need help, so turn to God once more.

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Step 7
Pray. Humbly ask for help in correcting these character defects. You are serious about assisting your higher power in every way you can to be free of your weaknesses—refusal to face feelings, blaming others, being defensive, and ultimately negating your own needs.

Step 8
Consider those you have harmed with your actions, including yourself, and make amends, except when to do so would hurt them or others. Perfectionism and pride are the barriers to your becoming fully aware of your weaknesses and correcting them. You know happiness is never found in being right or perfect. Be willing to be kind to yourself. This newfound empathy will lead you to want to make amends with all involved.

Step 9
Pledge to take better care of yourself. Face uncomfortable feelings and allow them to simply be present without relenting your power to them. Make a list of ways in which you will take better care of your own needs. Next, approach those who’ve been affected, take responsibility for your mistakes, and pledge to do your best in whatever capacity fits the circumstances.

Step 10
Take a daily personal inventory. Each day before bedtime, assess whether you are staying aware of ways in which you may have transgressed into your areas of weakness. When you catch yourself making a mistake, make amends as soon as possible.

Step 11
Be proactive. Make it a practice to talk with God throughout your day. Ask for guidance and the ability to continually let go of your need to control life so that you live the life your higher power has planned for you. Recognize that you connect with your higher power through interaction with others, and human connection helps you to be mentally and emotionally healthy.

Step 12
Share what you have learned. Speak up and be willing to share—both good and bad—about yourself and the progress you are making. Each day, you’re likely to become more aware of working through each step, especially when you find yourself out of step, so to speak.

—Fr. Charlie Wehrley, CSsR
from: Liguorian – A Redemptorist Pastoral Publication (Liguorian.org) – October, 2017
7 Life Lessons from Dr. Seuss:

1. “A person’s a person, no matter how small.”
2. “Why fit in when you were born to stand out?”
3. “You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.”
4. “Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.”
5. “I’m afraid sometimes you’ll play lonely games too, games you can’t win because you’ll play against you.”
6. “Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple.”
7. “And the turtles, of course... All the turtles are free – As turtles and, maybe, all creatures should be.”

From: Oh, The Places You’ll Go by Dr. Seuss
Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged.
—Ronald Reagan
1911 - 2004
**Song**

**Draw Me Close**

*by Michael W. Smith*

**Verse 1**

Draw me close to you  
Never let me go  
I lay it all down again  
To hear you say that I'm your friend

**Verse 2**

You are my desire  
No one else will do  
'Cause nothing else can take your place  
To feel the warmth of your embrace  
Help me find the way  
Bring me back to you

**Verse 3**

You're all I want  
You're all I've ever needed  
You're all I want  
Help me know you are near

Verse 1 [1X]  
Verse 2 [1X]  
Verse 3 [2X]

Help me know you are near [2X]
Definition

Love is an intense feeling of deep affection.

Biblical Quotes

Do not let love and fidelity forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. Then will you win favor and esteem before God and human beings. (Proverbs 3:3-4)

We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. In this is love brought to perfection among us, that we have confidence on the day of judgment because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother. (1 John 4:16-21)

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing. For we know partially and we prophesy partially, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. (1 Corinthians 13:4-10)

So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)
Talking Points

- Six Sure and Simple Statements
  1. God loves us
  2. God loves me
  3. God loves us (me) no matter what
  4. Everybody needs love
  5. The purpose of life is to learn how to love
  6. Love is not easy

http://www.metanoialiving.com/blog/the-5-love-languages
10 WAYS TO LOVE

1. **Listen without interrupting.** (Proverbs 18)
2. **Speak without accusing.** (James 1:19)
3. **Give without sparing.** (Proverbs 21:26)
4. **Pray without ceasing.** (Colossians 1:9)
5. **Answer without arguing.** (Proverbs 17:1)
6. **Share without pretending.** (Ephesians 4:15)
7. **Enjoy without complaint.** (Philippians 2:14)
8. **Trust without wavering.** (1 Corinthians 13:7)
9. **Forgive without punishing.** (Colossians 3:13)
10. **Promise without forgetting.** (Proverbs 13:12)

From: https://atapestryoflove.com/2014/12/02/10-ways-to-love/
There seems to be some debate about how many emotions we have. According to Robert Plutchik, psychologist and professor (1927 – 2006), there are 8 basic emotions. They are: sadness, disgust, anger, anticipation, joy, trust, fear and surprise. The other emotions are combinations of these primary emotions to expand the range of experiences. Example of the combinations:

Basic Emotion: Anger

- Opposite emotion: Fear
- Degree of intensity: Annoyance $\rightarrow$ Anger $\rightarrow$ Rage
- Primary dyads:
  - Anger + Disgust $\rightarrow$ Contempt
  - Anger + Anticipation $\rightarrow$ Aggressiveness
What is true love?

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, is does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Love that bears another's burden,
Love that shares another's pain,
Love that heeds another's struggle,
Love that seeks another's gain:
Love like this reveals Christ Jesus
As the Law that will remain.

Love that hears another's weeping,
Love that dries another's tears,
Love that spares another's sorrow,
Love that calms another's fears:
Love like this reveals Christ Jesus
As God's mercy down the years.

Love that offers first forgiveness,
Love that soon forgets a wrong,
Love that laughs in all rejoicing,
Love that sings in ev'ry song:
Love like this reveals Christ Jesus
As the Heart where we belong.
Darkness can only be scattered by light.

Hatred can only be conquered by love.

SAINT JOHN PAUL II

The measure of love is love without measure.

St. Francis of Sales

"There are those who seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge; that is Curiosity.

There are those who seek knowledge to be known by others; that is Vanity.

There are those who seek knowledge in order to serve; that is LOVE."

St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Doctor of the Church
Generativity is a concern for establishing and guiding the next generation. (It was coined by psychoanalyst Erik Erikson in 1950.)

**Biblical Quotes**

Bear one another’s burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:1)

And whoever does not provide for relatives and especially family members has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Timothy 5:8)

Those who give to the poor have no lack, but those who avert their eyes, many curses. (Proverbs 28:27)

Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but [also] everyone for those of others. (Phillipians 2:3-4)

“He said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:37-40)

**Talking Points**

- A sense of mission
- Generativity
- Sister Cleophas taught with incredible competence, undaunted enthusiasm and remarkable kindness. She taught high school and college math for over 50 years, no small accomplishment. Near the end of her life, she replied, “My smile is all I have to give.” That is generativity.
Erikson’s Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development

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from: Erik Salomonsen, German Developmental Psychologist (1902 – 1994) - Based on his 8 stages of Psychosocial Stages of Development

GENERATIVITY VS STAGNATION

GENERATIVITY – an extension of love into the future.

STAGNATION – self absorption, caring for no one.
THE MOTIVATIONAL MODEL
By Dr. Richard P. Johnson

I. BELIEFS
1. God-reliance
2. Humility
3. Acceptance
4. Mercy
5. Hope

II. ACTION
6. Honesty/Truth
7. Inspired
8. Kindness
9. Steadfast
10. Perseverance

III. FEELING
11. Joy
12. Trust
13. Love-finding
14. Empathy
15. Gratitude

IV. THINKING
16. Faith
17. Wisdom
18. Love
19. Wholeness
20. Charity

V. PERCEPTION
21. Vision
22. Humor
23. Peace
24. Adaptability
25. Simplicity

VI. DECISION
26. Harmony
27. Patience
28. Strength
29. Transcendence
30. Self-Discipline
Closing Prayer

Eternal Father, I humbly adore Thee, and thank Thee for having created me, and for having redeemed me through Jesus Christ. I thank Thee most sincerely for having made me a Christian, by giving me the true faith, and by adopting me as Thy son, in the Sacrament of Baptism.

I thank Thee for having, after the numberless sins I had committed, waited for my repentance, and for having pardoned (as I humbly hope) all the offences which I have offered to Thee, and for which I am now sincerely sorry, because they have been displeasing to Thee, who art infinite goodness.

I thank Thee for having preserved me from so many relapses, of which I would have been guilty if Thou hadst not protected me. But my enemies still continue, and will continue till death, to combat against me, and to endeavor to make me their slave.

If Thou dost not constantly guard and succor me with thy aid, I, a miserable creature, shall return to sin, and shall certainly lose Thy grace.

I beseech Thee, then, for the love of Jesus Christ, to grant me holy perseverance unto death.

Jesus, Thy Son, has promised that Thou wilt grant whatsoever we ask in his name.

Through the merits, then, of Jesus Christ, I beg, for myself and for all the just, the grace never again to be separated from Thy love, but to love Thee forever, in time and eternity.

Mary, Mother of God, pray to Jesus for me.

Amen.
Join us in **2 weeks** (October 16) as Fr. Rich discusses

**Balance**

**FORGIVENESS**

**Prayer**

This series has been based on:

*Traits of a Healthy Spirituality* by Melannie Svoboda, SND

*Filled with the utter fullness of God: Caring for the one who ministers* by Sr. Carla Przybilla, O.S.F., Ph.D. (1935-2004)
And don’t forget next week

October 9 – 11, 2017– Parish Mission
Each Evening @ 7:00 PM in the Church
Featuring Fr. John Petrikovic, OFM CAP
Theme: Letting God Be a Mystery in Our Lives