

Justice Prayer Service

Introduction: In this month's Mass, we are celebrating the virtue of Justice. By being just and fair with the people in our lives, we learn to play by the rules, to take turns and share, to listen to others' viewpoints before judging. By learning to act justly, we develop the courage to stick up for those who are treated unfairly, and we learn to treat all people equally. In our Mass today, we will ask God to help us develop the self-control that will allow us to act justly, think fairly, and speak kindly.

Opening Prayer: God our Father, deepen our conviction that each person is created in your image and likeness. Help us all to work for justice for each human being. You sent us Jesus to show us the way to be fair to everyone. Help us to answer your call to live in the way of Jesus. We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

First Reading: A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians 2: 1-5

Responsorial Psalm: God lives justly among his people.
My king and my God, Deep in my heart I long. For your temple. And with all that I am I sing joyful songs to you.

Lord God, all-powerful, Sparrows find a home. Near your altars; Sparrows build nests there To raise their young

You bless everyone who lives in your house and they sing your praises. You bless all who depend On you for their strength.

Second Reading: Matthew 5:38-45

Gospel Reading—A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke 19: 1-10

Universal Prayers:

Response: "Lord, may justice bring hope to our world

- For Pope Francis, our Bishop and all the clergy, that they may continue to work for justice throughout this world, we pray to the Lord.
- For our government leaders, that they may work for the equality of each person, of every race and culture, we pray to the Lord.
- For the homeless, that they may see themselves as equal in God's eye, we pray to the Lord.
- For those who are suffering from loneliness and poverty, that they may seek the love of Christ to support them in their daily trials, we pray to the Lord.
- For poor children in the developing world, that they may be given the right to universal education, we pray to the Lord.
- For the students of our school, that we may treat each other fairly especially when we disagree, we pray to the Lord.

Closing Prayer: May we know ever more clearly, God our Father that you are especially close to us when we work for justice. Give us hearts like yours that we may act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with you in our lives. May we always co-operate with your care and interest in our world. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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Northeastern Catholic District School Board

Growing our Faith through virtues

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER
VIRTUE: JUSTICE

The Importance of Justice:

Justice is a cardinal virtue found in the character of persons who show a practiced determination to live in right relationship with God and neighbor and to seek that, is just in every situation. Justice is about reaching out so that others are treated with equal dignity as God's children. Justice is living with righteousness. Justice is visible in our Catholic schools whenever we see people striving to meet their obligations to God and neighbor both near and far away.



Justice is the permanent determination to give everyone his or her rightful due. Justice is concerned with what we owe someone else. The virtue of justice can be practiced by anyone and perfected through habit. Justice always required perfect precision in rendering to each person that is his or her due. While justice is often used in a negative sense today—"justice was served"; "he/she was brought to justice" - the focus of the virtue is positive. Justice then, respects the rights of others, whether those rights are natural (the right to life, the fights that arise from our natural obligations to family and kin, the most fundamental property rights, the right to worship God) or legal (contract rights, constitutional rights, civil rights). Should legal rights ever come into conflict with natural rights, however, the latter should take precedence and justice demands that they be respected. A just person is first and foremost a grateful person. In this light, we can see the relationship between justice and humility; for humility is bound up with truth.

The need to do justice stems from our obligation to respect the dignity of every human person. This dignity comes from being created in God's image. Failing to respect human dignity and to do justice, is a failure to respect the image of God in others. Justice means that we deal fairly with others, recognizing the equality and dignity of all. It requires that we work to ensure that all people, especially the poor have access to opportunities.

DEVELOPING CHARACTER THROUGH JUSTICE

The goal of this virtue:

- To base our actions on truth and justice
- To help our students seek what is good in every situation
- To help our students recognize that their decisions affect the lives of others (fair trade products)
- To practice living in relationship with God and neighbour

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere"

Martin Luther King Jr.

Scripture readings:

- Isaiah 42:1-4
- Micah 6:8
- Matthew 5:6
- Matthew 5:10
- Matthew 6:33
- Luke 18:3
- 1 Titus 6:11
- Deuteronomy 16:20
- Psalm 33:5
- Proverbs 21:3
- Psalm 140:12

PRAYER CENTRE IDEAS FOR JUSTICE



- Build a justice chart—What does Justice look like, sound like and feel like? Add to your chart throughout November & December as understanding of the virtue increases
- Display pictures of people who exemplify the virtue of justice (Gandhi, Craig & Marc Kielburger, Stephen Lewis, Shannen Koostachin) and discuss how these individuals are working for the benefit of others
- Display powerful images of justice (endangered animals, children around the world, environmental issues) and discuss with students how our decisions affect others
- Display fair trade products and discuss the importance of making decisions that support the dignity of others
- Display an image of Christ and have your students discuss how Jesus was an instrument of justice

BUILDING LOVE IN OUR HOMES AND SCHOOLS

As parents and educators we want to instill in our children and students the need to consider others when making daily decisions. We are powerful role models. If children see the adults in their lives behaving in ways that support other people, the environment and all of God's creation, they too will learn the value of justice. We need to discuss with students the importance of taking care of one another and basing decisions on what is the kind and most loving thing to do. We need to look to Jesus as our model.

Our children are a precious treasure. We want them to know and live by our Catholic values. We can encourage them to practice the virtue of justice in the following ways:

- Modeling purchases that honour others instead of exploiting (fair trade)
- By modeling a decision making process that considers others and looks to the Gospel for inspiration
- By discussing world current events and helping others who have less opportunities for success
- Support social justice work

Websites to support

Social Justice

Development & Peace

- Catholic organization committed to change by advocating for human rights (www.devp.org)

Free The Children

- Resources and support for students who are wanting to make a difference in the world (www.freethechildren.com)

Free Rice

- Website dedicated to end world hunger. (www.freerice.com)

Quotes about JUSTICE

“If you want peace, you must work for justice” Pope Paul VI

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” John 1:9

“Let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry” Amos 5:24

“True peace is not merely the absence of tension, it is the presence of justice” Dr. Martin Luther King

“There can be little growth in holiness without growth in a sense of social justice”

“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” Proverbs 4:18

“There are only two ways of spreading light—to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it” Edith Wharton

Resources to support the Virtue of JUSTICE

Shannen and the Dream for a School. Author: Janet Wilson

The Composition. Author: Antonio Skarmela. Lesson idea—Great to discuss power, authority and governance

A Little Peace. Author: Barbara Kerly. Lesson Ideas—Discuss reflective messages

A Cool Drink of Water. Author: Barbara Kerly. Lesson Ideas—Discuss universal need for water and the justice surrounding our access to it.

A Life Like Mine. Unicef. Author: Harry Balafonte. Lesson Ideas—Great to discuss how children around the world live.

Ten Amazing People. Author: Maura D. Shaw.



A Child of God. Author: Michael J. Caduto. Lesson Ideas—Looking to Jesus as our model for stewardship

God Gave Us the World. Author: Lisa T. Bergen. Lesson Ideas—Suitable for young learners about the importance of stewardship

One Hen. Author: Katie Smith Milway. Lesson Ideas—Go to onehen.org for lessons for both numeracy and literacy

Ryan and Jimmy. Author: Herb Shoveller. Lesson Ideas—Go to ryanswell.org for lesson ideas

The Rainbow Fish. Author: Marcus Pfister

Skin Again. Author: Bell Hooks

One Green Apple. Author: Eve Bunting

Let's Talk About Race. Author: Julius Lester

Martin's big word: The life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Author: Doreen Rappaport

Web Resources to Support Justice

Show R World

- A new way to look at the world! Can look at the world through the eyes of literacy, food resources, water.... (www.showmappingworlds.com)

Education for Justice

- Catholic Organization website with some free resources to educate the world on issues of social justice (www.educationforjustice.org)

Anti-Hunger Coalition

- Timmins organization dedicated to reducing hunger and poverty in the Timmins and surrounding areas (www.antihungercoalition.com)

Ryan's Well Foundation

- A Canadian registered charity to help bring safe water and improve sanitation services to people in developing countries (www.ryanswell.ca)

CaFod

- Catholic organization dedicated to end water poverty. Contains lesson ideas, prayers (www.cafod.org.uk)

Green Street

- Bilingual website to support environmental education, lesson ideas (www.greenstreet.ca)

Imagination—Bilingual website dedicated for student driven social action (www.imagine-action.ca)

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world”

”
Gandhi

Reflection Ideas:

- Devote one of your meals together or an hour after dinner to a “week in review”. Talk about what is happening in the world, especially politically and economically
- Decide on one action you can take as a class or school in response to the world—prayers, letters to newspaper, letters to elected representatives, petitions, contributions, etc.
- Try to consume less so that there will be more available for others
- Identify an injustice that troubles you. What emotions first made you aware of it? Then talk about one action you could take to combat it
- Do you think that all people are born with a yearning for justice or does it have to be taught?
- According to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., life's more persistent question is “What are you doing for others?”

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Links to Catholic Graduate Expectations

A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community

Actively reflects on God's Word as communicated through the Hebrew and Christian scriptures

Seeks intimacy with God and celebrate communion with God, others and creation through prayer and worship

An Effective Communicator

Listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of Gospel Values

A Collaborative Contributor

Finds meaning, dignity, fulfillment and vocation in work which contributes to the common good

Respects the rights and responsibilities of self and others

A Reflective and Creative Thinker

Recognizes there is more grace in our work than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges

A Caring Family Member

Relates to family members in a loving, compassionate and respectful manner