



the messenger

The 12 Virtues Series

Information collected from around the globe.

Thanks to all contributors past and present!

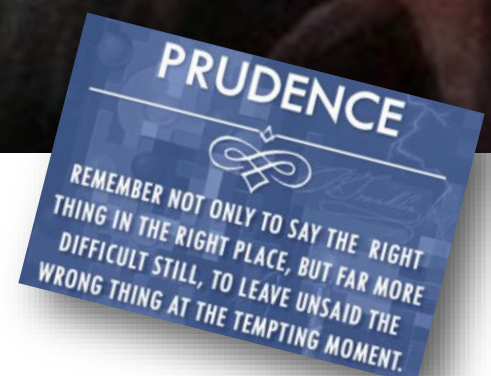
The 12 Virtues of a Good Teacher - Prudence

- "Prudence is a virtue that makes us understand what we need to do and what we need to avoid."
- "The operations of this virtue are to deliberate carefully, to judge rightly, and to order all things properly."
- "Prudence requires that we apply to the future the experience of the past."
- "Prudence requires that we grasp fully the matter we are dealing with and the means most appropriate for imparting it to the students."
- "... Saint Thomas says that no one is always entirely self-sufficient in what pertains to Prudence. A good teacher, therefore, ... will never undertake anything of importance without consulting whomever he is bound to consult."
- Foresight "is the action of the mind by which we recognize in advance what may happen following the natural course of events."
- "... reflected attention that thoroughly examines a plan before giving it final approval."
- "... precaution carefully avoids the inconvenience in what we may wish to carry out. This is why a prudent teacher will never punish students without witnesses present and will never be alone with a student unless he can be seen by someone."



A Question:

How do you exercise prudence when you are under pressure to make a quick decision?





"Prudence is a virtue that makes us understand what we need to do and what we need to avoid."

"... precaution carefully avoids the inconvenience in what we may wish to carry out. This is why a prudent teacher will never punish students without witnesses present and will never be alone with a student unless he can be seen by someone."

"The operations of this virtue are to deliberate carefully, to judge rightly, and to order all things properly."

Prudence

"Circumspection ... is a reflected attention that thoroughly examines a plan before giving it final approval. Thus a prudent teacher will not act unless she has carefully considered what she has to do; she will make it a practice to choose the most appropriate methods, given the circumstances of time, place, temperament, and persons."

"Prudence requires that we apply to the future the experience of the past."

"Prudence requires that we grasp fully the matter we are dealing with and the means most appropriate for imparting it to the students."

Foresight "is the action of the mind by which we recognize in advance what may happen following the natural course of events."

"... Saint Thomas says that no one is always entirely self-sufficient in what pertains to Prudence. A good teacher, therefore, ... will never undertake anything of importance without consulting whomever he is bound to consult."

For Reflection

What statement speaks especially to you and your educational responsibilities?

What does this virtue look like in action?

How does one exercise prudence towards oneself?

How do you know when your prudence is effective?

How do you know when your prudence is ineffective?



the messenger

PRUDENCE

A virtue makes us understand
what we need to do and what we need to avoid.



Strategy 20-4: Praise and Rewards for All

Purpose: To encourage a group without slighting any student and to develop a close community in the classroom.

Description: Offering praise or a reward to the group as a whole.

Most students enjoy praise and rewards. Such attention makes them feel worthy and, presumably, motivates them to work harder and behave better. But a look under the surface might reveal undesirable side effects.

- *Addiction.* If students get too much praise and receive rewards too easily, the result can be like watching TV: easily attained satisfaction smothering the growth of independence, diligence, self-control, initiative. Or it can be like eating candy: a quick delight smothering interest in more nourishing choices. Praise and rewards can become addictive and, like other addictions lead to endless desires for more of the same, making students further dependent on others for their feelings of worth.
- *Devaluation.* Many students notice that whereas some classmates receive a lot of rewards and praise, they rarely receive either. "We are not at all appreciated in this class" is the message these students absorb, which too often leads to a sense of "I am not worth being appreciated."
- *Manipulation.* "Look how good the first row is," says the teacher with the intention of getting students in all the other rows to straighten up. The subtler message that students receive is this: "The teacher is just saying that to get what she herself wants. She does not really care about it."
- *Puffery.* "Great answer!" gushes the teacher, followed by "Wonderful! Sensational! Super! Amazing! Let's give a round of applause to Kendra for that answer." Exaggerated praise can quickly devalue language and honest appreciation. Puffery can also lead students to say to themselves, "He must think I'm really dumb, expecting me to believe that nonsense," or "She must think I'm really weak, needing such hype."

The goal is to build personal dignity and motivate hard work and self-discipline without such harmful side effects (Brophy, 1981; Kohn, 1966; Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001). Does that mean never praising students? Not at all. One way to avoid these side effects is to offer praise to the group as a whole when we feel they genuinely deserve it. Some examples:

- This group is making good progress. I appreciate that. It's a pleasure for me to work with you.
- What a good group this is! Even though that material was hard, you folks stuck with it. I sure admire that perseverance.
- We did it right on time! Thanks for that.
- This sure is a powerful bunch, isn't it?
- Let's give ourselves a hand for the way we handled today's lesson.
- You all are working so well together! I told the principal today how special you are.
- This class is going so well I'm giving you all a treat today.

No one loses when praise and rewards are honest and are directed to the group as a whole. There is no envy. No one is left out. Besides, it encourages feelings of the class being one warm community.



the messenger

Even when rewards cannot be distributed equally, we may want to communicate appreciation to everyone, as when we say something like, "I'm proud that one of our own classmates, Nicky, won first prize. And I'm proud of the way you people supported Nicky. So, in honor of the occasion, let's all give ourselves a hand."

But Praise and Rewards for All can be used manipulatively, as when a teacher offers a reward only when students do what the teacher wants. A class party on Friday because of diligent work all week often falls into this category. The motive of the teacher, then, is less to bring the class together for a delightful occasion, or to show appreciation, or to share good feelings with the class. The motive is more to shape the behavior of students. Not only is that less generous, it models manipulation and may well encourage students to try to manipulate others.

We recommend against making group praise or rewards contingent on student behavior. It is not advisable, then to announce that if students do this or that they will get a reward. It is preferable to model someone who likes to bring joy into others' lives – and not only when it is earned. Indeed, we might better model someone who brings joy into the lives of people who are *not* earning it, for those are the people who most often need positive feedback. And if the intention is to bring out students' most positive, constructive traits, would we not want to model someone being positive and constructive?

Strategy 20-3: Incorrects with Appreciation

Purpose: To acknowledge a students' efforts.

Description: Informing a student that although the answer was not correct, the effort was commendable and we appreciate it.

Here are a few examples:

- The correct answer is 64, but that was a good risk taking on your part.
- The answer was *alternating current*, but that was good thinking.
- That is a good answer, but it doesn't really apply to this situation. In this situation, the best answer would be *hardly ever*.
- You have the first part right, and you sure are on the right track. The complete correct answer is...

This strategy shifts the focus from the answer itself to the process of thinking or to the willingness to risk speaking up, which is honestly commendable. We thereby balance any disappointment the student might feel with some positive feedback. That is often valuable for students with a shaky self-confidence.





Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

The Spirit lives to set us free

1. The Spi - rit lives to set us free, walk, walk

in the light. He binds us all in u - ni - ty, walk, walk

Chorus

in the light. Walk in the light, walk in the light,

walk in the light, walk in the light of the lord.

2. Jesus promised life to all,
walk, walk in the light.
The dead were awakened by his call,
walk, walk in the light.

3. He died in pain on Calvary,
walk, walk in the light,
to save the lost like you and me,
walk, walk in the light.

4. We know his death was not the end,
walk, walk in the light.
He gave his Spirit to be our friend,
walk, walk in the light.

5. By Jesus' love our wounds are healed,
walk, walk in the light.
The Father's kindness is revealed,
walk, walk in the light.

6. The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light..
His light will shine for all to see,
walk, walk in the light.

Words: Damian Lundy

Music: Unknown, arranged by Michael Irwin



Reading from Brother Agathon 1785, translated by Brother Gerard Rummery 1998

Prudence is a virtue which makes us understand what we need to do and what we need to avoid.

Since the good teacher's main aim is the education of the children, prudence enlightens him about the means he must use to bring them up properly by educating their minds and hearts. Hence, this virtue is highly to be esteemed. Prudence, moreover, regulates and modifies the other virtues of the good teacher.

Prudence requires of a teacher to prepare himself carefully before each lesson he gives to his students. He must give clarity, order, and proper arrangement to what he has to say, to make it more easily grasped and to prevent the disorientation which confusion and disorder would produce in the students' minds.

A teacher with good judgment, with ordinary knowledge and with the information gained from study will carry out perfectly the duties imposed by prudence.

Our response from Ephesians 5

Side One: Do not let anyone deceive you with foolish words; it is because of these very things that God's anger will come upon those who do not obey him.

Side Two: You yourselves used to be in the darkness, but since you have become the Lord's people, you are in the light.

Side One: So you must live like people who belong to the light, for it is the light that brings a rich harvest of every kind of goodness, righteousness and truth.

Side Two: Have nothing to do with the worthless things that people do, things that belong to the darkness. Instead bring them out to the light.

Side One: So be careful how you live. Don't live like ignorant people, but like wise people.

Side Two: Make good use of every opportunity you have, because these are evil days. Don't be fools, then, but try to find out what the Lord wants you to do.

All: Glory be to the Father Amen.

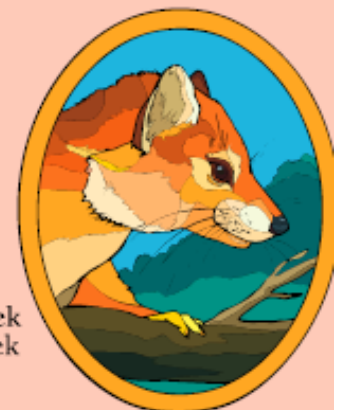
Pause for quiet reflection

Reading from Our Catholic Philosophy by Dr. Hayden Ramsay

Prudence often means cautiousness, canniness, thriftiness, but for Christians it is simply the ability to make right decisions. Prudent people may characteristically get things morally right. Some of us seek the good unreasonably, chaotically, unrealistically; prudent people seek it reasonably, intelligently, wisely.

To think and act reasonably is not to use the head at the expense of the heart, but rather to use the head to work out what will really satisfy the heart. We all know some unreasonable people: people who plunge in thoughtlessly, dither hopelessly, etc.... These are good people, perhaps confused because they cannot see any certain answers or direction in the moral life. Reasonable people understand there is no absolute certainty that our choices will turn out for the best; they are content to use their judgment, trust God and act with hope and love.

People who lack prudence live in moral danger. When their courage, justice, etc. are tested, the fact that they cannot judge well when and how to act means they might use courage in a way that endangers themselves or others. So our exercise of all other virtues depends on having the virtue of prudence.





Our response

from Book of Proverbs

Side One:

A wise, mature person is known for his prudence. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is..

Side Two:

Are you immature? Learn to be mature. Are you foolish? Learn to have sense.

Side One:

Prudent people keep quiet about what they know, but foolish people advertise their ignorance.

Side Two:

Why is a prudent person wise? Because he knows what to do. Why is a stupid person foolish? Because he only thinks he knows.

Side One:

Intelligent people think before they speak; what they say is then more persuasive.

Side Two:

Prudent people will see trouble coming and avoid it, but an unthinking person will walk right into it and regret it later.

Side One:

If you are prudent, you will control your temper. When someone wrongs you, it is a great virtue to ignore it.

Side Two:

It is better much better to have wisdom and knowledge than gold and silver.

All:

Glory be to the Father Amen.

Pause for quiet reflection

Intercessions

Closing prayer

All:

You, my God, are my strength, my patience, my light, and my counsel; it is you who open the mind and hearts of the children confided to my care. Abandon me not to myself for one moment. For my own conduct and for that of my pupils, grant me the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety, the spirit of holy fear of you, and an ardent zeal to procure your glory.
Amen





Come Holy Ghost, Creator come

Come, Ho - ly Ghost, Cre - a - tor, come from thy bright heavenly throne, come,

take pos - ses - sion of our souls, and make them all thine own.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>2. Thou who art called the Paraclete, best gift of God above, the living spring, the living fire, sweet unction and true love.</p> | <p>5. Far from us drive our deadly foe; true peace unto us bring; and through all perils lead us safe beneath thy sacred wing.</p> |
| <p>3. Thou who art sev'nfold in thy grace, finger of God's right hand; his promise, teaching little ones to speak and understand.</p> | <p>6. Through thee may we the Father know, through thee th' eternal Son, and thee the Spirit of them both, thrice - blessed Three in One.</p> |
| <p>4. O guide our minds with thy blest light, with love our hearts inflame; and with thy strength, which ne'er decays, confirm our mortal frame.</p> | <p>7. All glory to the Father be, with his co-equal Son: the same to thee, great Paraclete, while endless ages run.</p> |



Words: Attributed to Rabanus Maurus (c. 776-856),
Music: Thomas Tallis (c. 1510-85)

**Prudence is a virtue which makes us understand what
we need to do and what we need to avoid.**

St. John Baptist de La Salle, pray for us. Live Jesus in our hearts, forever!



the messenger

REFERENCES FOR THIS ISSUE OF "THE MESSENGER"

**THE FOLLOWING ARE
KINDLY
ACKNOWLEDGED...**

- **Pages 1-2:**
Mr. Greg Kopra
- **Pages 3-5:**
**Br. Jeffrey
Calligan**
- **Pages 6-9:**
**Lasalle Hong
Kong**

**MANY THANKS FOR
YOUR TIME, EFFORT
AND ENERGY IN THE
CREATION OF THESE
RESOURCES. YOUR
GIFT IS IMMENSE.**

**LIVE
Jesus
IN OUR
HEARTS
FOREVER**



A Good Teacher is a Prudent Teacher

Prudence is the most important of all virtues as no other virtue can contradict it. What is prudent is what is good. When someone is prudent, he recognizes his moral duty and the good means to accomplish it. He is honest and objective; fair and right; makes moral judgements and applies moral truths.

A prudent teacher is, therefore, one that is open-minded and susceptible to advice. He attempts to overcome temptations of injustice in the classroom, apathy towards his students and ignorance in his teaching by means of a good conscience and with care and diligence. He is inquisitive enough to seek further knowledge in his subject and educational matters by communicating with experienced teachers and through life-long learning.

He reflects on his own teaching and relationships in search of room for improvement and so as to avoid making errors of the same nature.

He has a clear goal in mind which he works perseveringly towards -- his personal goal, as well as the objectives of his lessons. He works meticulously but not impulsively. He is sensible enough to foresee the consequences of his negligence and selfishness on the part of his students.

He does not make judgements on his students without first examining the background carefully. A good teacher is a prudent teacher.

