

LENT 2007

IN 2005 AND 2006 MANY FOUND THE FOLLOWING TO BE HELPFUL IN MAKING THEIR LENT A FRUITFUL EXPERIENCE

The following outline is a suggested series of Spiritual Exercises to help you grow spiritually by changing your attitude and action. The goal is to develop a virtue, a habit of doing good, that becomes second nature.

For best results

- Desire to change and grow.
- Select one virtue to develop or vice to change each week.
- Make your daily prayer exercise in the morning and evening. (10-20 minutes)

First Thing in the Morning

- Get up 1/2 hour earlier than usual, if you can.
- Fix a cup of coffee, shower, exercise, etc. - whatever helps you "get started".
- Do not read the newspaper or turn on the TV before your prayer exercise.
- Go to your favorite spot (chair, room); it is best to be alone.
- Keep a journal at that favorite spot.

Step 1

Write in your journal: **"I am the beloved son/daughter of the Father who takes delight in me."**

Step 2

Recite the above (aloud, if possible) for at least 2 minutes (longer if time permits).

Step 3

Write in your journal the Virtue Statement you have chosen. (See list on other side.)

Step 4

Recite the Virtue Statement for at least 2 minutes (longer if time permits).

Step 5

Review your plans for that day, picturing yourself fulfilling the Virtue Statement when possible.

Step 6

Say a prayer from your heart, offering that day to the Lord, seeking His grace to believe that you are His beloved and asking His help in fulfilling your Virtue Statement.

During the Day

Step 1

Write the "Virtue Statement" in your Palm Pilot, Day Planner, on a card, anywhere that you will see it during the day.

Step 2

Recite (aloud, if possible) the Virtue Statement with conviction.

Last Thing of the Day

Step 1

Get ready for bed.

Step 2

Go to your favorite spot and open your journal.

Step 3

Read the Virtue Statement.

Step 4

Review the day asking yourself how successful you were regarding the Virtue Statement.

Step 5

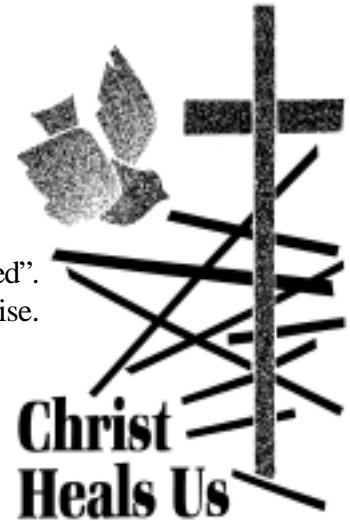
Rate yourself from 1 to 5 as regards your success.

Step 6

For at least two (2) minutes recite the statement, **"I am the beloved son/daughter of the Father who takes delight in me."**

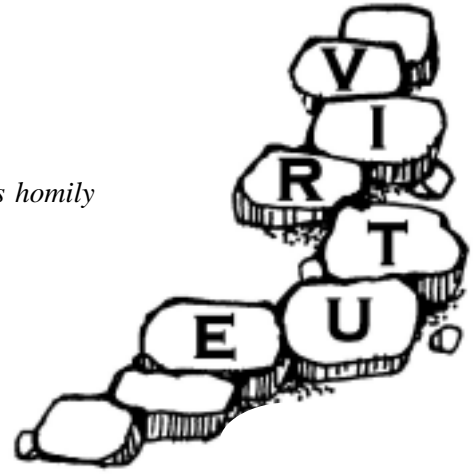
Step 7

Say a prayer asking the Lord for the grace to fulfill your Virtue Statement the next day.



SELECTING YOUR VIRTUE STATEMENTS

“Who we are on Ash Wednesday does not have to be who we are on Easter Sunday.”—from Father Harold’s homily



VIRTUE STATEMENTS SHOULD BE

- **Personal** “I”
- **Present tense** “am...”, “seeking to...” not “I will...”
- **Positive** not in the negative (“I will *not* be selfish”)
- **Simple** Fewer words, the better

The following are examples. As time goes by you may find it helpful to refine the statements, stating them more precisely. (For example, “I am kind to my fellow employees.” instead of “I am kind to those I meet.” Choose one Virtue Statement for all of Lent or one for each week.

CAPITAL SINS

Pride

“I am humble in my attitude and actions.”
“I seek to understand before being understood.”
“I seek to see things from the other’s point of view.”

Greed

“I only long for what I genuinely need.”

Lust

“I am chaste in my thoughts and actions.”
“I am prudent in my speech and entertainment.”

Envy

“I am pleased at others’ gifts and good fortune.”

Gluttony

“I eat only what is good for my body.”

Anger

“I try to be understanding.”
“I am patient with others’ faults.”
“I seek to be forgiving of others.”

Sloth (Spiritual Laziness)

“I am willing to make sacrifices.”
“I am faithful to my daily prayers.”
“I am consistently faithful to my commitments.”

AND MORE

CARDINAL VIRTUES

Prudence

“I am setting a good example.”

Justice

“I am just in my actions.”

Fortitude

“I am courageous in the practice of my faith.”

Temperance

“I am modest in my consumption of alcoholic drinks.”

OTHER VIRTUES

Love

“I am loving God with all my being.”
“I am loving my neighbor as I love myself.”

Kindness

“I seek to be kind and understanding to others.”

Gentleness

“I seek to be gentle and considerate of others.”

Generosity

“I am generous with my gifts.”
“I am generous with my time.”
“I am generous with my material goods.”

Forgiving

“I seek to let go of hurts and disappointments.”

Prayerfulness

“I strive to listen to the Lord’s voice.”
“I spend time in His presence daily.”