



CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY CENTRE
Incentrating God • Healing Hearts • Empowering Lives

22 August 2021

CHARITY

*“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is **love**”*
(1 Corinthians 13:13)



Seven Capital Virtues: Humility, Diligence, Temperance, Chastity, Charity, Patience, Kindness.

The last four weekends we reflected on Humility, Diligence, Temperance, Chastity. This weekend we will reflect on **Charity**



Charity in its purest sense encompasses our love for God and our love for our fellow people. St. Thomas Aquinas said, *“The habit of charity extends not only to the love of God, but also the love of our neighbour.”*

These two kinds of love are closely tied to one another. Charity is the ultimate perfection of the human spirit since it is a reflection and glorification of God’s nature. It binds all virtues together in perfect harmony. It also purifies and uplifts human love to the perfection of God’s love.

Charity is the first and most important of all commandments, the summary of them all. The whole Law and the prophets depend on charity (Matthew 22:38; 1 Corinthians 13:1–13; Matthew 22:40).

Charity is the bond of perfection (1 Corinthians 3:14; Romans 3:10). Charity is a certain friendship with God. It can be defined as a supernatural virtue infused by God, by which we love God for His own sake as the Supreme Good, and ourselves and our neighbour for God's sake.

The two terms "love" and "charity" are frequently used interchangeably, and with good reason, since the virtue of charity is in fact a kind of love. However, the two are not identical; not all forms of love are also charity.

For example, we often hear expressions like, "*I love hot chocolate,*" or "*I love swimming,*" or even "*I love chicken rice,*" and these kinds of love, while all good in themselves, still fall somewhat short of the love that is charity.

What sort of love is charity?

Exploring Your Inner Self

We need to pray for the virtue of charity when we are:

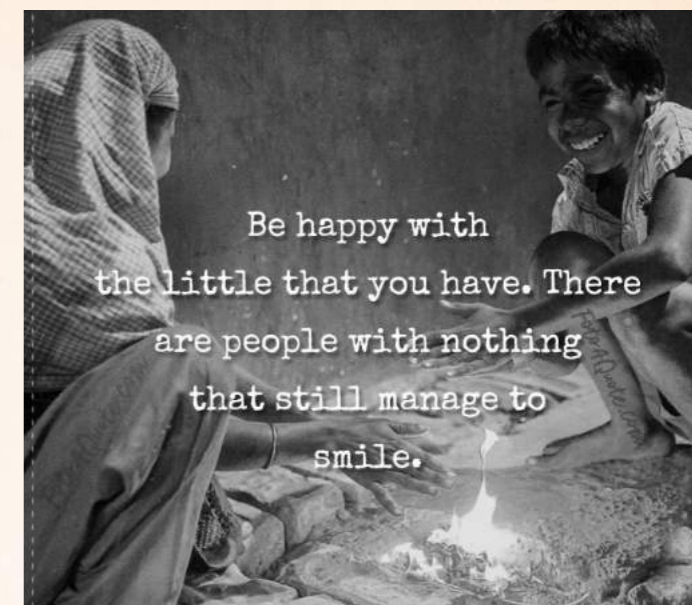
- Self-absorbed
- Acting unkindly or in nasty ways
- Thinking only of our needs
- Stingy with our time and material objects
- Neglectful or indifferent to the needs of others



We may wish to explore the virtue of charity:

- Charity allows us to give to others unconditionally
- Charity allows us to share our time and talents with others
- Charity brings the world close to home
- Charity allows us to make a positive qualitative difference
- Charity does not think ill of others nor engage in gossips

The virtue of Charity means being generous with our presence, time, and money. Charity allows us to give freely without expecting anything in return. The virtue of Charity is an essential sign of faith. Christian ethics are built upon charitable acts and deeds. The virtue of charity encompasses a range of small acts and habits that affects our own immediate surroundings as well as the larger global community. This gives us a sense of purpose in life as well. It can be as simple as **giving someone a smile** or it can be expressed on a larger scale through donations for a good cause. It applies not just to our personal relationships with other people, but also extends to things, animals, plants, and the Earth. All creation is interrelated. Charity allows us to see how we are connected to others through time and space. We have a responsibility to nurture, support, and be in solidarity with those around us.





The simplest way we can express charity is to speak, act and think with love.

We must keep in mind that charity is all about love, and as it says in St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians: *"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"* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

With this Bible verse in mind, let us remember to always **treat others with compassion**. When we have love in our hearts and minds, it is easy for us to put the needs of others first. We act without self-interest and always with the goal of helping others out.

Agape

ä-gä-pā

Agape is selfless, sacrificial, unconditional love, the highest of the four types of love in the Bible.

DEVELOP CHARITY

We develop a charitable spirit by supporting and engaging in parish social outreach ministries, programs at local Catholic Charities or the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The act of being charitable is not only during 'Charities Week' at Lent, but in all seasons of life. Charity calls for purity of heart and purity of intention, like the widow's mite in the bible story who gave so little but gave all she had.

Each one of us has a special gift that can be of use in God's work.

How do we practice charity in our life?

What charity work do we plan to do?

