

J.M.J.

Nonna's Book of Moral Virtues

For parents to use with young children

FishEaters.com

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This book is meant to be read by parents to their children. Each section contains information asides for parents, in black boxes, and all but the section on chastity also have corresponding stories from Aesop, legend, Sacred Scripture, or the world of fairy tales. When you come to the book symbol in each section, skip to the end of the book to find the relevant stories to read to help illustrate the lessons. It is the reading of the stories that completes a lesson. It's recommended that you buy, rent, or borrow Disney's "Pinocchio" (1940) and "Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" (1971), the first to show your children during the chapter "Moral Virtues," and the second to show them before starting the chapter "About Temperance."

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Habits

Hello! I'm Nonna, and I'm going to teach you about the moral virtues. To start, a question for you: what does it mean to be a "good boy" or a "good girl"??

It means doing good things! And the easiest way to do good things is to make a habit out of doing good things. A "habit" is what you have when you do something over and over, so it becomes easy to do. For example, if you brush your teeth every night before you go to bed, it will feel strange if you go to bed *without* brushing your teeth. Or if you always, always, always keep your favorite stuffed animal on your bed during the day, it will feel strange if he's *not* there.

Some habits are good habits, like brushing your teeth before bed and when you wake up, or always putting things back where they belong when you're done using them so you'll always know where to find them. Can you think of other good habits?

Some habits are bad habits, like always eating too many sweets, or waiting until the last minute to do your work. Can you think of other bad habits?

What sorts of habits do *you* have?

Do you have both good habits and bad habits?

What sorts of good habits do you want to have? How can you develop those good habits?

What sorts of bad habits do you not want to have? How can you stop those bad habits?

Story: Catherine Develops a Good Habit

Catherine recently learned how to read. She wanted to become really good at it, so she wanted to develop the habit of finishing one book each week. She talked to her Mom and Dad about ways to make that happen. They thought up good ideas to help Catherine reach her goal. They decided to go to the library each week so Catherine could find books that she really liked. Catherine thought that carrying her book around with her would remind her to read it, so she started doing that. Her Mom figured out that if Catherine read for 15 minutes each day, she could finish a book a week, so each day they'd set a timer when Catherine would pick up her book.

Catherine thought that reading her stories to her dolls made it all the more fun, so she decided to set up her dollies in chairs and read her books to them out loud. Her Mom told her she'd give her a gold star on a chart each time she finished and understood a new book. Her Dad told her he'd buy her a pretty cloth bookmark if she read and understood one new book a week for four weeks.

And guess what? Catherine now reads a new book each week – and has a beautiful new bookmark to mark them with!

Story: Blaise Breaks a Bad Habit

Blaise was a good little boy, but he had a problem: he sucked his thumb when he went to bed. He just loved the taste of his thumb, and how it felt in his mouth. All night long, he'd suck, suck, suck. It just felt so good to him to have his thumb in his mouth! But Blaise wanted to stop. He got made fun of for sucking his thumb, and no matter how good it felt, it also made him feel like a baby. The dentist also told him that sucking his thumb might push his front teeth out and give him something called an "overbite" – and an overbite might make him need braces later.

So Blaise talked to his Mom and Dad about ways to stop that bad habit. They came up with lots of ideas – some good, some not so good. "I could cut my thumb off!" said Blaise. His parents said, "Not so good of an idea, Blaise. You might need it later!"

Then Blaise said, "I could sleep on my hands! That might help! And I could sleep with mittens on!" His parents agreed. He also thought up the idea of putting something awful tasting on his thumb, and Blaise's parents thought that was brilliant. His Dad came up with the idea of getting a jar full of 100 quarters for Blaise so he could use the money to buy a model airplane in a month – but each time Blaise sucked his thumb, he'd take a quarter out, and if Blaise did better the next day, he'd put the quarter back in.

It was very, very hard for Blaise to stop that bad habit. In the beginning, a number of quarters were removed from that jar. But Blaise didn't let those failures stop him! He started over again, kept at it – and now Blaise is no longer a thumb-sucker. And he and his Dad are going to fly the model airplane this weekend!

Parents: For a week or so, focus with your child on good habits and bad habits so the concepts have been fully realized. For ex., instead of just telling your child to go brush his teeth, talk to him about developing the *good habit* of tooth-brushing when you send him off to the bathroom. Instead of asking him to stop doing X again, talk to him about stopping the *bad habit* of doing X again.

Talk to him about a habit you've tried to adopt or stop engaging in – and how you went about doing it, the things you did to make it all easier. Get your spouse to do the same.

Have your child choose one good habit to develop, and (if he has one) one bad habit to break. Explore with him a plan to make or break those habits. Without nagging, talk about and work on those two habits for a few minutes each day and whenever relevant. Consider a reward system, such as gold star stickers on a chart (kids love those gold star stickers) when your child reinforces a good habit, and does something to break a bad one.

After a week or so, or whenever it is you believe your child has *really understood* the concept of "habit," move on to the next section.

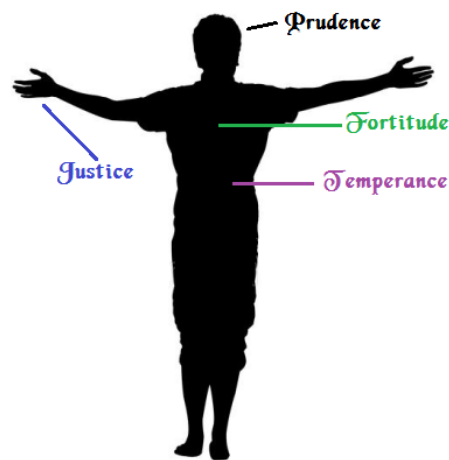
There are good habits we can adopt that make our souls better, make our lives happier, and please God. Those sorts of “soul habits” are called “moral virtues,” and there are four main kinds. We call these four main moral virtues the “four cardinal virtues” because they’re so important. The four cardinal virtues are: Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, and Justice.

Prudence is the good habit of using your mind to choose to do the right thing in the right way at the right time. Prudence can be thought of as ruling the head.

Fortitude is the good habit of doing what needs to be done even if it’s hard or you’re afraid, angry, or feeling hopeless. Fortitude can be thought of as ruling the heart.

Temperance is the good habit of keeping our desires in check – our desires for things that please our senses, like foods, drinks, comforts, and entertainments. Temperance can be thought of as ruling the belly.

Justice is the good habit of giving to God and to our families, friends, and others the time, attention, love, and other things that they are owed by us. Justice can be thought of as ruling the hands.



Parents: After they've made the associations intellectually and the cardinal virtues have been explained, have your children point to the body part in question while naming the associated virtue, in the above order, holding the hands outwards for Justice. After doing that slowly a few times, make it a game by challenging them to do it as quickly as they can. They could do this while singing the rhyme below to the rhythm and melody of "Two bits, four bits, six pence, a dollar," clapping in rhythm during the second line:

Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, Justice:
These are the habits on which we focus.

Which of the cardinal virtues are displayed in these stories?



Story with a question: Mary Agnes saw that her kitty, Skittles, had been digging in the garden and was all dirty. Her friend told her she should put kitty in the washing machine to get her clean (can you *imagine?*). Instead, Mary Agnes got a damp towel and cleaned Skittles's paws. Which of the four cardinal virtues was it that Mary Agnes showed in wiping kitty's paws clean instead of doing what her friend suggested?

Answer: Prudence. Mary Agnes *thought* about it and knew that it wouldn't be a good thing to put Skittles in a washing machine. And thank goodness for that! Poor Skittles! Mary Agnes was being **prudent** in not putting Skittles in a washing machine.



Story with a question: James's father asked him to go into the basement to get a hammer so the two could build a birdhouse. But the basement is dark, and James is afraid of the dark. James wanted to do as his father asked, though, so he took a deep breath, asked God to keep him safe, and went into the basement anyway, praying a Hail Mary all the while. And yes, he got the hammer! Which of the four cardinal virtues was it that James showed here?

Answer: Fortitude. Even though *it was difficult* and *scary* for James to go into the dark basement, he did what he had to do. Yay for James! James was being **fortitudinous** with his bravery.



Story with a question: Xavier loved pie. Any kind of pie. Custard pie. Lemon pie. Blueberry pie. Cherry pie. Pumpkin pie. Banana cream pie. Apple pie. Strawberry pie. Butterscotch pie. And, most especially, sugar cream pie! (Do you have a favorite pie?) One day, his Mom made a sugar cream pie to eat for dessert after dinner. He really wanted to eat a third piece, but he didn't. Which of the four cardinal virtues did Xavier show in not being too piggy with the pie?

Answer: Temperance. Even though he really *wanted* another piece of pie (I mean, he really, really did! Xavier loves pie!), he knew it wouldn't be good for him. And he was right! Xavier was being **temperate** in not eating more pie.



Story with a question: Teresa was out playing in the yard when she found a pretty necklace. It was golden, and had a heart hanging from it. In the middle of the heart was a lovely blue jewel – and blue is Teresa’s favorite color! She really liked the necklace, but she knew whom it belonged to; she’d seen her friend wearing it earlier. “She must have lost it,” thought Teresa. So she went to her friend’s house and gave her the necklace. Which of the four cardinal virtues did Teresa show when she returned the necklace?

Answer: Justice. Teresa gave to her friend what was *rightfully* hers. Teresa was being **just** in returning the necklace.

Vocabulary

Draw lines from the one column to the other to match the name of the virtue with the word we use to describe people who have that virtue:

If someone has this virtue,

he is:

Prudence

temperate

Fortitude

fortitudinous

Temperance

just

Justice

prudent

There are words, too, to describe people who are *lacking* in the four cardinal virtues. If you lack prudence, you are “imprudent.” If you lack fortitude, you are “effeminate.”¹ If you lack temperance, you are “intemperate.” If you lack justice, you are “unjust.”

¹Parents, don’t confuse “effeminate” with “feminine.” To be feminine is not an insult and not a lack of virtue! “Effeminate” means “soft,” lacking in willpower, not “like a girl.” Both men and women are called to *not* be effeminate, to demonstrate fortitude.

Draw lines from the one column to the other to match the name of the virtue with the word we use to describe people who *don't* have that virtue:

If someone *doesn't* have this virtue,

he is:

Prudence

intemperate

Fortitude

effeminate

Temperance

unjust

Justice

imprudent

My, that's a lot of new words! And they're big words, too! But you'll remember them and do just fine if you make a **habit** out of using them! Let's practice! Fill in the blanks (answers at bottom of the page):

◆ John and his family were getting ready to go to Grandma and Grandpa's house. Just then, his sister, Susan, ran past him in her bathing suit and jumped into the pool in the backyard. "Stop, Susan!" he said. "Now is not the right time to go swimming! You're being _____!"

◆ Peter really didn't want to get up for Mass on Sunday. He was so tired, and the bed was so warm! He wanted to stay where it was cozy, and the sheets were all soft against his feet. But his Dad knocked on his door and told Peter to stop being so _____.

◆ Charlie kept taking his brother's toys without asking. His mother told him that those toys didn't belong to him and that he was being _____.

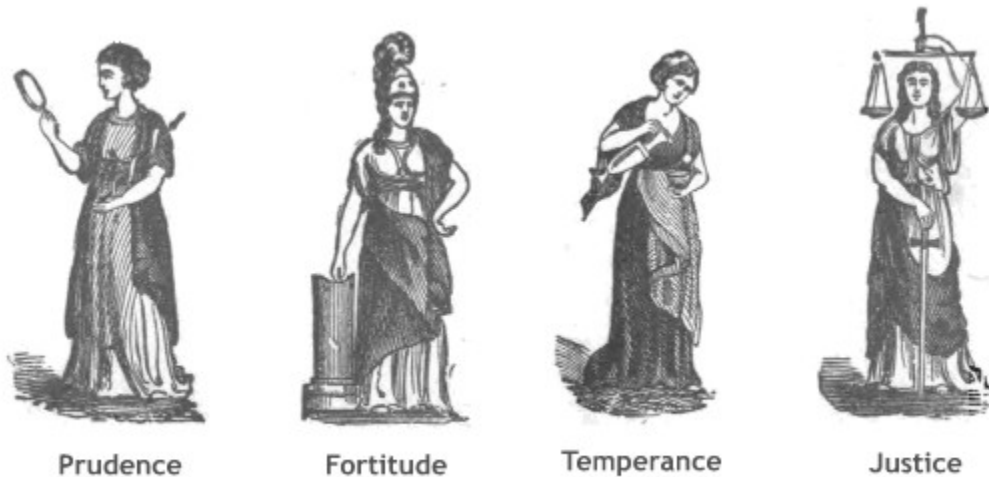
◆ Annie was really shy. A new girl moved in next door, and Annie really wanted to go and meet her, but she was too afraid. Annie's Dad told her, "Annie, you're being _____. You need to face your fears and go say 'hello.'"

Can you think of a time you were imprudent? Effeminate? Intemperate? Unjust? Did you get into any trouble because you were those things? Can you think of any times you saw someone being those things in movies, cartoons, or books?

Answers: Imprudent, intemperate, unjust, effeminate

Symbols of the Four Cardinal Virtues

The four cardinal virtues are shown in lots of Catholic art. You'll sometimes see them in paintings and in stained glass and other works. They're usually *personified* – that is, sometimes images of people (*persons*) are used to symbolize them. Here's an example:



See how Prudence is shown being reflective and thoughtful, looking into a mirror? See how Fortitude looks strong and brave, as if armed for battle? And Temperance is shown holding jars, from which she can pour out some wine – not too little, not too much, but *just enough*. And Justice is shown holding scales, which are used to balance things so they're even and right. (Such scales are called “the scales of justice” and you'll see them associated with the law, lawyers -- also called “attorneys” -- and judges.)

Prudence is sometimes shown with a serpent, because Jesus told us to be “wise as serpents and simple as doves” (Matthew 10:16). And sometimes Prudence is shown with a book, because good books contain wisdom, and it takes wisdom to know what the right things to do are.

Fortitude is sometimes shown with a lion, because lions are strong and powerful. Sometimes fortitude carries a club so she can fight against things like laziness and fear. Sometimes she's shown in front of or holding a column, and sometimes she is shown playing a musical instrument because that takes hard work.

Temperance is sometimes shown with a bridle and reins. Why a bridle and reins? Because sometimes our desires are like powerful horses with minds of their own, and we have to use temperance to control them and keep them in check.

Justice is sometimes shown with a sword or a crown.

How would *you* symbolize the virtues? Which animal, color, season, or other things do you think would make good symbols for Prudence? For Fortitude? For Temperance? For Justice?

Let's see if you can name the pictures on the next page!



Answers at the top of the next page...

Answers to the last page's questions: From left to right, top to bottom: Fortitude, Justice, Prudence, Temperance

Parents: For the next week or so, make a point of mentioning the virtues when relevant. *Look for* instances to talk about them – for ex., when watching a movie or reading a book to your children, or as the virtues (or lack thereof) are displayed during the day.

Now is the time to watch Disney's gorgeously animated *Pinocchio* (1940) with your children ; it demonstrates beautifully the four cardinal virtues:

Prudence: Jiminy Cricket is full of prudence, acting as Pinocchio's conscience.

Fortitude: Pinocchio lacks fortitude (and humility, an aspect of temperance) when he lies to the Blue Fairy – but he becomes brave and full of fortitude when he faces the giant whale, Monstro, to rescue his father.

Temperance: The boys of Pleasure Island have totally given themselves over to intemperance – and suffer the consequences by turning into donkeys.

Justice: After Pinocchio becomes virtuous, he gets his reward from the just Blue Fairy: he becomes a real, live boy.

Meanwhile, use the vocabulary words until they become second nature to your children:

Prudence ♦ prudent ♦ imprudent
Fortitude ♦ fortitudinous ♦ effeminate
Temperance ♦ temperate ♦ intemperate
Justice ♦ just ♦ unjust

Another idea is to make up a story with your children – a story with four characters who each represent one of the four cardinal virtues or the lack thereof. Miss Prudent/Imprudent, Master Temperate/Intemperate, Miss Fortitudinous/Effeminate, and Master Just/Unjust all go on a picnic and find a secret cave filled with gold. What happens? Bring up scenarios along the way in which thoughtful action, bravery or perseverance, the ability to control desires and appetites, and giving others what is owed to them play a part.

On the next few pages are some fun things for your children to do during the course of the next week, all centered around the four cardinal virtues. After a week or so, move on to the next section, which takes a look at the cardinal virtues in more depth and contains stories for each.

OK, Kids, just for fun!

Here's a trick! Look at the words below in a mirror. Then you'll be able to read them!

Prudence

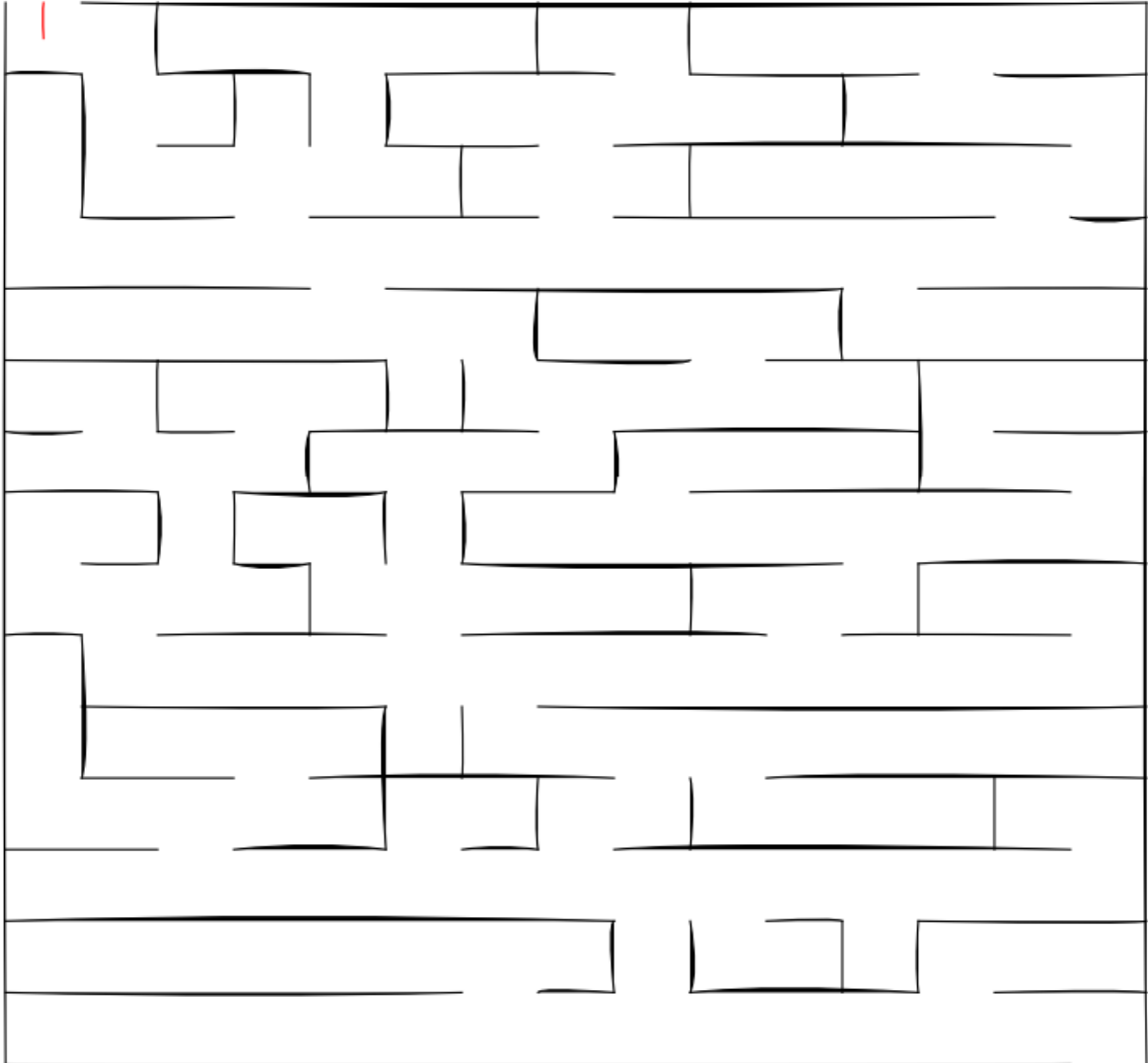
Fortitude

Temperance

Justice

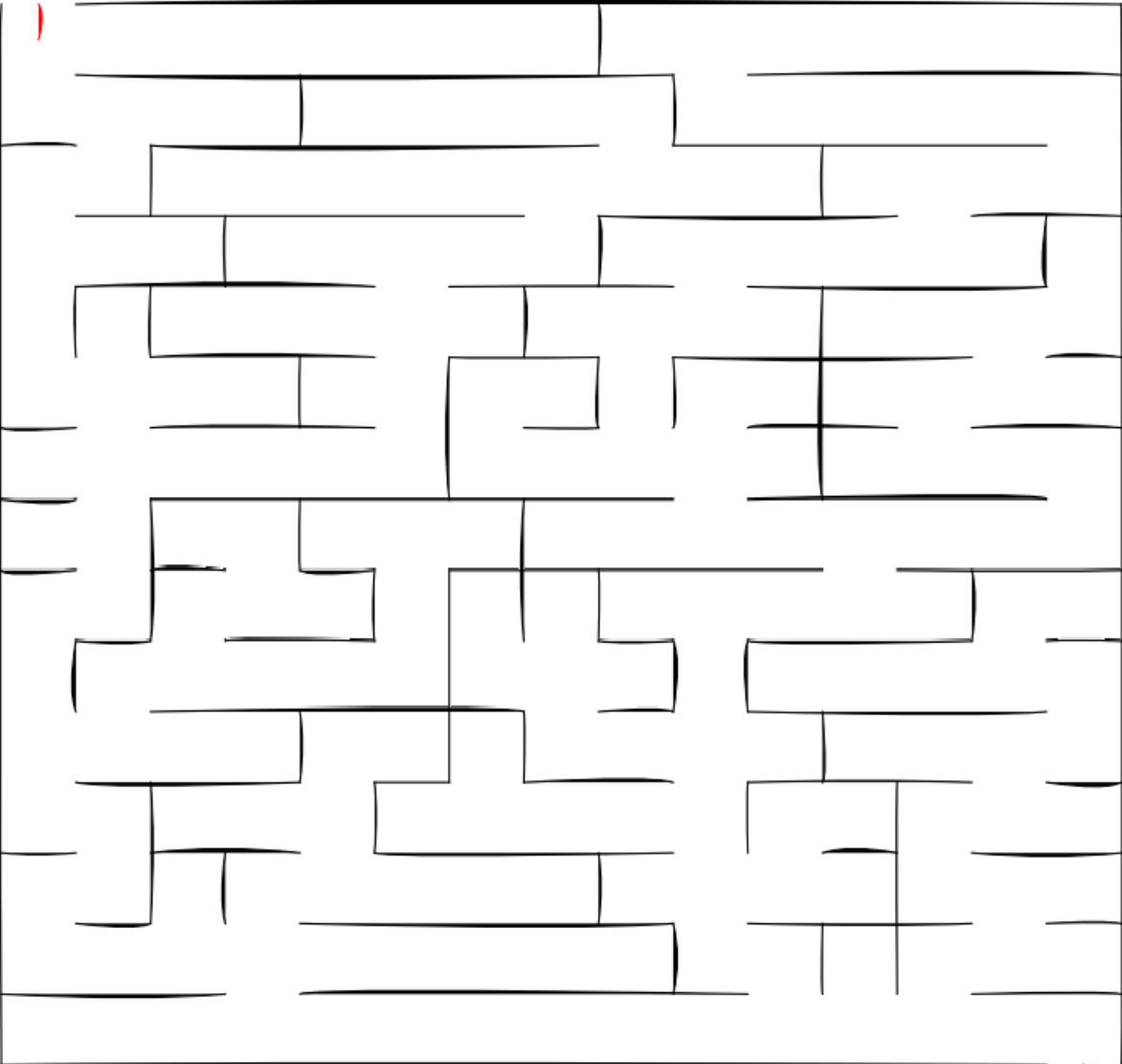
Uh-oh! Prudence has lost her mirror! Can you help her go through the maze to find it?

START



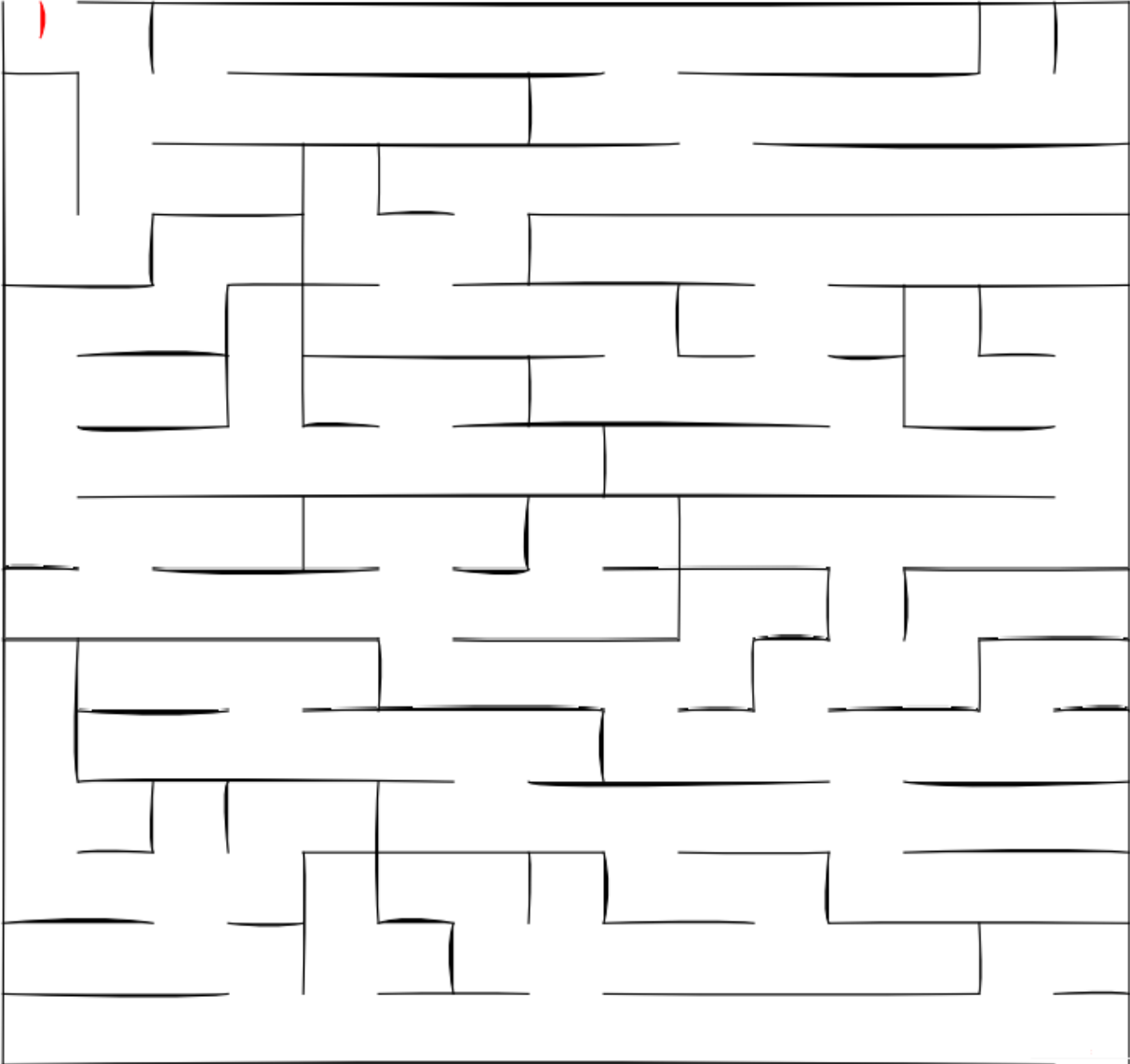
Would you believe it? Fortitude's lion has run off! Can you help her retrieve him?

START



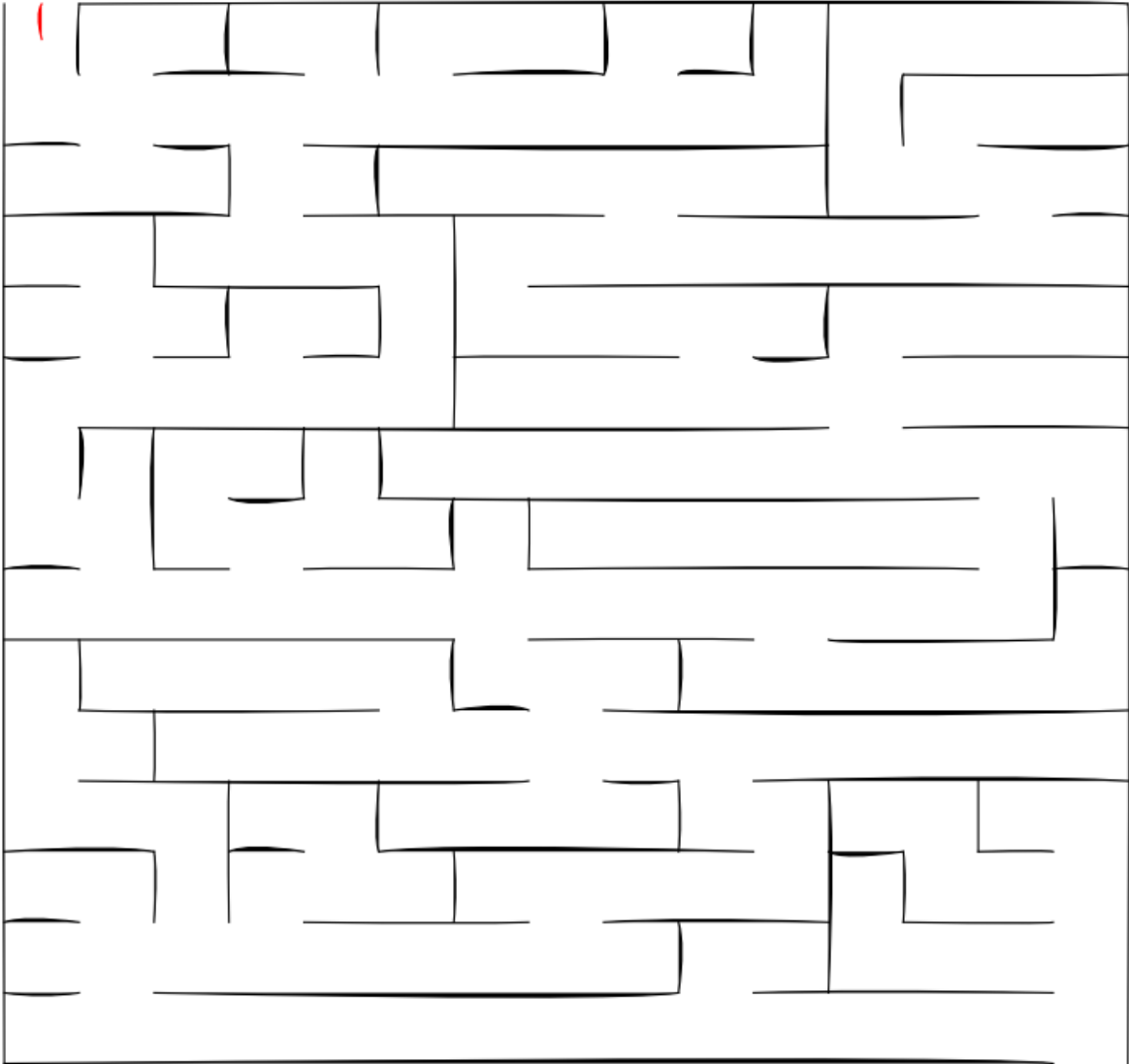
Now Temperance has lost one of her jars! Can you help a sister out?

START



Sigh! Now Justice's scales have been left on the other side of the maze. But I bet you knew that would happen, didn't you?

START



Can you find in the puzzle below all the words listed at the right?

G	E	N	F	A	F	O	R	T	I	T	U	D	E
O	C	T	P	E	E	N	E	T	C	U	U	P	U
O	O	A	R	T	O	N	F	P	E	F	E	O	P
D	S	L	U	F	J	C	R	A	V	D	E	I	Y
Y	A	G	D	E	V	E	I	P	O	R	J	O	T
L	T	R	E	T	I	H	E	R	L	I	E	R	E
I	O	U	N	T	R	A	A	U	T	J	T	C	M
M	I	C	T	E	T	B	E	D	P	Y	B	L	P
A	R	M	A	U	U	I	V	E	B	O	T	J	E
F	R	U	C	T	E	T	F	N	A	O	V	A	R
J	U	S	T	I	C	E	E	C	D	E	A	A	A
E	T	T	T	E	R	Y	M	E	T	O	U	T	T
R	C	P	D	C	I	L	O	H	T	A	C	U	E
T	N	I	T	E	M	P	E	R	A	N	C	E	O

- PRUDENCE
- HABIT
- LOVE
- JUSTICE
- PRUDENT
- GOOD
- FORTITUDE
- CATHOLIC
- VIRTUE
- TEMPERATE
- FAMILY
- YOU
- BAD
- TEMPERANCE

On the next four pages are Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance and Justice for you to color in. Make their dresses pretty (try glitter if it's OK with Mom)! You can even cut them out and use them for dolls or hang them on your refrigerator (if it's OK with your parents, of course).









Now let's talk about the four cardinal virtues more deeply! We'll look at each virtue and see what it looks like close up. We'll also have stories to tell about each of them, so this should be fun!

About Prudence

Prudence is known as the "Emperor of the virtues," that's how important it is. It's about knowing *what* to do, *when* to do it, *where* to do it, *with whom* to do it, *how* to do it properly, and, of course, doing it for the *right reason*. To be prudent is to know that "there's a time and place for everything."

You see, some things are fine to do – but not with certain people, or for bad reasons, or at certain times, or in certain places, or in the wrong way.

For example, think about playing baseball. It's good exercise, right? And it's fun, it hurts no one, and it allows you to be with your friends.



But now imagine playing baseball with your old and very sick Grandpa who needs to rest. Now that game of baseball isn't a good idea. It isn't the *prudent* thing to do.

Or imagine playing baseball if you really should be doing your homework instead. Now that game of baseball isn't such a great idea. It isn't the *prudent* thing to do.

Or imagine playing baseball because you want an excuse to show off. Now that game of baseball isn't the *prudent* thing to do.

Or imagine playing baseball in the middle of a thunderstorm. Now that game of baseball is dangerous. It isn't the *prudent* thing to do.

Or imagine playing baseball -- in your living room! Now that game of baseball will get you in big heap trouble. It isn't the *prudent* thing to do.

And then imagine playing baseball – but with the rules changed so that the losing team has to let themselves get punched in the nose. Now that game of baseball isn't such a slick thing to do. It isn't the *prudent* thing to do.

So, to be prudent when trying to decide whether to do something or not, ask yourself the questions that are called “the journalists’ questions”:

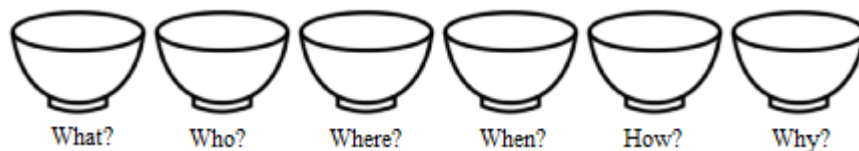
Who?
What?
Why?
When?
Where?
How?

That is: With whom will you do it? What will you do? Why will you do it? When will you do it? Where will you do it? How will you do it?

If any of those answers doesn't make sense or isn't good, then it wouldn't be prudent to do the act.

Parents: Let the above be at least one day's lesson. Talk about the concepts for a few days before moving on. A game to play with your children.

The Bowl Game



One idea to help children think of the circumstances of act an that can change the prudence thereof is to play The Bowl Game. Here's how: Take 6 bowls: one each for *Who*, *What*, *Why*, *When*, *Where*, and *How*. Arrange them in the same order as the graphic above indicates. Into each place phrases that correspond to those categories. That is, place inside the bowls answers to the “Journalists’ questions” above. Have your child pull one answer from each bowl and place them in order on the table. Then have him think about whether doing the What under those conditions is the prudent thing to do. On the next few pages, I provide answers for you to print out, if you like, along with a page to set on your table on which to place the answers. Just cut along the lines, making sure to keep the categories separate and getting them in the appropriate bowls. Note that the “Who?” questions include two for you to fill in.

The Bowl Game: Printout On Which To Place Answers pulled from the bowl. Cut along the outside dotted lines.

Is it OK to:

What?

Who?

Where?

When?

How?

Why?

The Bowl Game: What? Answers. Cut along all the dotted lines.

eat green eggs and ham with	read a book to
pray for	watch videos with
run with	kick
lie to	throw a party for
hug	scream at
dance with	hit
talk to	help

The Bowl Game: Who? Answers. Cut along dotted lines.

Mom	Dad
a stranger	a bad guy
a goat	a friend
Superman	a priest
a brother or sister	a waitress
the Pope	Grandma or Grandpa
<hr/> (write in the name of someone your child knows)	<hr/> (write in the name of someone your child knows)

The Bowl Game: Where? Answers. Cut along dotted lines.

on a boat	in a pig pen
in church	on the Moon
in the bathtub	in the car
at a sports stadium	in the park
outside	at school
inside	in the kitchen
at a library	at the pool

The Bowl Game: When? Answers. Cut along dotted lines.

when it's raining	when you're on vacation
when your Mom or Dad said not to	when someone in your house is sleeping
when you're sick	when you have free time
when it's dinnertime	when it's Saturday
when you have chores to do	when you've just spilled milk
When your Dad needs help	when it's time for Mass
When you've got nothing better to do	when it's Christmas morning

The Bowl Game: How? Answers. Cut along dotted lines.

if you do it carefully	if you do it loudly
if you do it while riding a bike	if you do it happily
if you do it quietly	if you do it when no one's looking
if you do it while praying	if you do it while half-asleep
if you do it quickly	if you try to do it nicely
if you do it while thinking of something else	if you do it well
if you do it while holding a chicken	if you do it with all your might

The Bowl Game: Why? Answers. Cut along dotted lines.

because you just weren't thinking	because you saw someone do it in a video
because a friend told you to	because you're tired
because Mom or Dad told you to	because you want to please someone
because you are angry	because you thought it'd be fun
because you want to	because you are hungry
because you want attention	because you're in trouble
because you are happy	because you're bored

Making Good Decisions

We make decisions based on information, on what we know. So it's important to make sure we get good information!

We get information through our senses – by smelling, tasting, seeing, touching, and hearing. But once in a while, our senses can fool us. Have you ever seen an optical illusion? Ask your Mom and Dad to show you some; you'll love them! But in the meanwhile, here's one:



Oh no! What happened to that poor little girl? Looks like an awful accident, doesn't it? In reality, that's a picture of two little girls: one is lying on her back with her head tilted back over the edge of the bench; the other is squatted down behind the bench so you can't see her body. The way they're positioned makes it look as if it's one girl – a girl who lost her head and left it sitting beside her. Ouch!

The point: we have to be careful in how we interpret what we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch. Sometimes it pays to look twice!

We get information *through* our senses, *from* the world, including from other people. When getting information from others, we have to be careful, too. Why? Because the person telling us something could be wrong or lying. And he might have what's called "an ulterior motive" (if he has an "ulterior motive," it means he's trying to get us to do or think something -- but he doesn't want *us* to know that he's trying to get us to do or think something. Not all ulterior motives are bad, but some are!).

Examples:

- ◆ Gregory thought he heard his Mom say she was going to the school. When his sister asked where their Mom is, Gregory told her she just went to the school and will be right back. But Gregory's Mom didn't go to the *school*: she went to the *pool*. Gregory didn't lie; he just heard incorrectly and was mistaken. But still, he gave his sister wrong information.

- ◆ Marilyn told Cecilia that there'd be no school next week. But Marilyn was told that by Joan, who lied a lot. Marilyn didn't lie when she told Cecilia there'd be no school, because Marilyn *believed* Joan. But Joan lied to *her*. So, because Marilyn got the wrong information from Joan, she was mistaken and gave Cecilia the wrong information.

- ◆ Lucy wanted to buy a candy bar, but she didn't have any money. She lied and told her Dad that she lost her milk money for school (isn't that horrible?). Her Dad gave her some money to replace the milk money, and Lucy bought the candy bar she wanted. Lucy lied and gave her Dad wrong information.

- ◆ A politician wanted his country to go fight a country called Candolar so he could get Candolar's gold. He knew, though, that his countrymen wouldn't want to go to war to get Candolar's gold. So he made up horrible stories about Candolar. He told his people that Candolar was planning to invade their land. The politician lied and had a bad ulterior motive. He gave his countrymen wrong information.

- ◆ A Mom wanted her kids to eat broccoli, but they just didn't like it. They did love lasagne, though! So she cooked some broccoli, ground it up, and put it inside some lovely, tasty lasagne. "Come and eat, kids!" she said. "I made lasagne, your favorite!" The kids loved it, and even had second helpings. The Mom had a good ulterior motive -- but she didn't lie! She just didn't tell the kids about the broccoli, and the kids grew up healthy and strong because they ate their vegetables! She didn't give her kids any wrong information.

So how do we know whom to *trust* when we're given information by others? It's prudent to ask yourself these sorts of questions when someone tells you something:

- ◆ Is this person good at interpreting what his senses tell him? Does he often mis-hear things? Does he usually see things in the right way?

- ◆ Is this person a sound thinker or is he foolish? Does he remember things accurately? Does this person know what he's talking about? Where did this person get *his* information?

- ◆ Does this person have a tendency to lie?

- ◆ Does this person have a bad ulterior motive? Does he want something from me? Is he trying to get me to do something?

God, of course, never lies, and His Church is always trustworthy when She teaches us based on Her Scripture, Tradition, and Magisterium.

Your parents and grandparents undoubtedly love you very much, and it's almost certain that you can fully trust them as well.

As to others, you can come to trust them when they've shown to you that they're sound in perceiving and thinking, that they're honest, and that they don't have bad motives. That's something you can only learn about them over time. Until you learn that about someone, be kind and good to him (always!), and give him the "benefit of the doubt" when it's safe to, but be careful.

Some questions to talk to your parents about:

- ◆ A man on a TV commercial said that a certain toy is the greatest toy ever made. Might he have an ulterior motive?
- ◆ Pope Pius IX wrote an encyclical – a paper – that teaches us about how the Blessed Virgin Mary was immaculately conceived in her mother's womb. Is that true?
- ◆ A total stranger sees you on the street. He tells you he has candy for you and that you have to get into his car to get it. Should you believe him?
- ◆ Your friend told you that a friend told her that a friend's cousin told her that someone you know stole a ring. Should you believe that?

Parents: Spend a few days talking to your kids about truth vs. lies, truth vs. being mistaken, and how to process information and consider sources of information.

In the meanwhile, if it's possible, arrange to play a game of "Telephone" (or "Chinese Whispers") with them. It can be very eye-opening to children to learn how information changes the further it gets from its source.

To play the game well, you'll need at least eight people, but the more, the better. The first person thinks up a sentence or two. You want one with some complexity and detail, but not too hard to remember – something along the lines of "Batman came into the room wearing red clown shoes. He got into a pillow fight over vanilla cake with the Wolverine. Batman won."

That first person then whispers it to the person next to him, who whispers it to the next person, and so on until the last person is whispered to. That last person then says out loud what he heard.

Foresight

Another important part of being prudent is stopping to think about what will likely happen if you do something. Another way to put it is that prudence is, in part, about considering the *consequences* of what you do. It's about *thinking ahead*.

So, if you don't want to be imprudent, when deciding to do something or not, ask yourself, "If I do this, what is likely to happen? If I *don't* do this, what is likely to happen?" This is called having "foresight" --

“fore” meaning “before,” and “sight” for seeing. It means “seeing” -- imagining, really -- what will happen before it happens. Examples:

◆ Rita hated to clean her room. She knew, though, that if she didn’t, things would pile up, and it’d be miserable. She knew, too, that she wouldn’t have time to do it tomorrow because she and her family were going on vacation. She also had the foresight to know that her vacation would be more fun if she could go knowing there wouldn’t be a big mess waiting for her when she got back home. So Rita cleaned up her room right away instead of waiting – and had a much happier vacation because of it.

◆ Dominic was playing with his brother in the kitchen. His brother was very little -- still crawling because couldn’t even walk yet. Dominic looked over and noticed that the basement door was ajar. He had the foresight to see that his brother could crawl too close to the stairwell and maybe fall down the stairs and get badly hurt. Dominic closed the basement door.

Do you have good foresight?



Parents: now go to page 69 for three stories that pertain to prudence:

The Flight of the Beasts
The Fox and the Goat
The Wolves and the Sheep

Next, we’ll talk more in depth about the second cardinal virtue, fortitude!

About Fortitude

Fortitude is about doing the **right things** even when they're hard and take a lot of work, sacrifice, or time. It's also about doing what needs to be done and is **right**, even if you're afraid. If you're fortitudinous, you're tough and capable. You don't quit just because "the going gets tough"; instead, you have "grit"!

There are four virtues that go along with the *cardinal* virtue of fortitude. They are:

patience
munificence
magnanimity
perseverance

Some of those words are hard to say, aren't they? Let's look at them one at a time...

The Virtue of Patience

I bet you already know what patience means, don't you? It means waiting peacefully for something to happen. For example, think about what it's like having to wait for Christmas! It can be hard, can't it? You want Christmas to be today, not twenty days or two months from now!

But sometimes you just *have* to wait, and that's *just* the way it is. Being *impatient* – that means to be fidgety, sad, or angry while waiting – being *impatient* won't make Christmas come any faster, that's for sure.

There are things you can do to make being patient easier, though. Can you think of any?

Here are some stories of what some kids have done when they've had to be patient:

- ◆ Elizabeth was going to have a friend spend the night the following weekend. But that was a whole week – seven days – away. She figured that if she were busy reading a really good book, she'd be less likely to think so much about how far away the next weekend was. So she got a copy of "Charlotte's Web" (a good book!) and started reading it. And it really helped.
- ◆ Two brothers, Kevin and Richard, were at an amusement park with their parents. The line to ride the rollercoaster would take twenty minutes to get through. Ugh! They were so happy to be at the amusement park, and so appreciated how hard their parents worked so they could go, that they didn't want to ruin the trip by being impatient. They wouldn't whine and fidget, no! Instead, they decided to play a game with each other while waiting: Kevin would name an animal, then Richard would have to name a new animal that began with the last letter that

spelled the name of Kevin’s animal. Then it would be Kevin’s turn again, and so on. For ex., Kevin said CAT. Then Richard said TIGER. Then Kevin said RHINOCEROS. Then Richard said SNAKE. And so on. They played the same game using names of people, names of places, song titles – lots of different things! There are many games that can be played while standing in line or riding in a car, and they really help pass the time. You should learn some!

◆ Michael had to wait with his Mom at the doctor’s office. Sigh! But his Mom wasn’t feeling well, and didn’t want to play games or even really talk much. So Michael closed his eyes and imagined seeing a movie of his favorite book. Sometimes when he waited, he would think about being a superhero! Sometimes he would go through the times table in his imagination. And sometimes he’d play a game *with himself*: he’d play the game that Kevin and Richard played at the amusement park, but would just do it alone, in his own mind.

◆ Angela was impatient – but not for something pleasant: she had to go to the dentist in three days and just wanted it to be over! She prayed to God to help her be calm and patient while she waited.

There are lots of things you can do while waiting. You can distract yourself and do something else, like read or work or play games. You can think about other things. You can pray for help. If you know you’ll be waiting somewhere, you could use *foresight* and try bringing a book to read, or bringing some paper and pencil so you can draw.

Because, like all moral virtues, patience is a habit, it’s good to actually *practice* patience so you get really good at it. The next time you want to do something, force yourself to wait some time before you can. Your Mom and Dad can help you figure out a good length of time for you to wait at your age. Waiting on purpose before you get something good or get to do something fun is called “delaying gratification,” and the better you are at that, the happier your life will be in the end. It’s true!

Sometimes we’re impatient about getting something done that we don’t really want to do, but *should* do. For example, if you have to clean your room but really don’t want to, you might rush, rush, rush to get it done. But doing that isn’t a good idea. You’ll do a sloppy job. You’ll put things where they don’t belong. You’ll make mistakes. Be patient and careful when doing what you need to do or else you’re asking for trouble. Just wait until you read the story “The Nail” and hear what happened when a merchant was impatient and rushed while shoeing his horse!

Parents: The ability to delay gratification is highly associated with success in life. It’s important to help your children *practice* patience. First, model patience for them by being patient yourself. Praise patience when you see it in them. Teach them ways to cope with impatience. Finally, consciously make them wait for things sometimes – and *don’t do for them what they can do for themselves*. For ex., I’ve seen a perfectly capable 6-year old ask her Dad to get her a spoon, followed by the father’s jumping up to get it. No! Do kindnesses, obviously, but don’t allow your child to boss you, and don’t rush to meet their desires in that way. Let your children do for themselves as much as possible – and don’t underestimate their abilities.



Parents: now go to page 75 for three stories that pertain to patience:

The Nail
The Wind and the Sun
The Crow and the Pitcher

The Virtue of Munificence

Another aspect of the *cardinal* virtue of fortitude is the virtue of munificence. “Munificence” is a funny word one doesn’t hear too often, but it stands for a beautiful thing: giving to others. The munificent kind of giving isn’t the sort of giving that is *owed* to others, but the kind of giving that is done “just because,” out of great generosity.

- ◆ Helen borrowed a book from Luke. Then she gave it back to him. Was her giving back his book “munificent”? No, because Luke was owed the book; it was rightfully his.
- ◆ Joseph thought hard about how much he loved his mother. He wanted to do something really, really nice for her, so he talked to his Dad about making her a rose garden. He and his Dad planned out where to plant things, bought the rose plants, and spent an entire weekend digging in the dirt and making a beautiful garden. Joseph carefully, with great patience, lined bricks around the garden to make it extra-pretty. Then he and his Dad bought a beautiful statue of Mary to place in it. Joseph spent all the money he’d saved so he could please his Mom. Was Joseph being “munificent”? He most certainly was! And his Mom just loved the rose garden!



Parents: now go to page 79 for the story that pertains to munificence:

The Giving Tree

The Virtue of Magnanimity

Think about Superman or Batman. Even better, think about the *real* super-heroes, the Saints! Think about King St. Louis IX, who battled the enemies of Christ, or of St. Francis or St. Joan of Arc! Think of the men and women who’ve used their talents to invent new things, make beautiful music, fight in just battles, or write great books and plays!

We honor these people because they are great. They have the virtue of magnanimity, which is the virtue of doing such wonderful things that they deserve high honor and respect.

Magnanimous people use their God-given gifts and talents to honor God and to help others. They know they might get high honors from other people when doing something great, but that's not why they do what they do; they do great things because they love God and love others, which are the two very greatest things anyone can do.

They also know that anything great they do is only because God graced them with such wonderful gifts. They know that, without Him, they are nothing.

Can you think of people, even not-real people from books or movies, who have the virtue of magnanimity?

Can you think of people who get lots of applause and rewards, but who *aren't* magnanimous? (there are lots of them, sadly!) Why does that happen, do you suppose?

What talents and gifts has God given to you?

How do you want to use those talents and gifts to honor God and help others?

Do you work hard to develop your talents and gifts? It takes a lot of patience and fortitude to get really good at something so that you can do wonderful, magnanimous deeds! And that's where the virtue of perseverance comes in, which we'll learn about next!



Parents: now go to page 82 for the two stories that pertain to magnanimity:

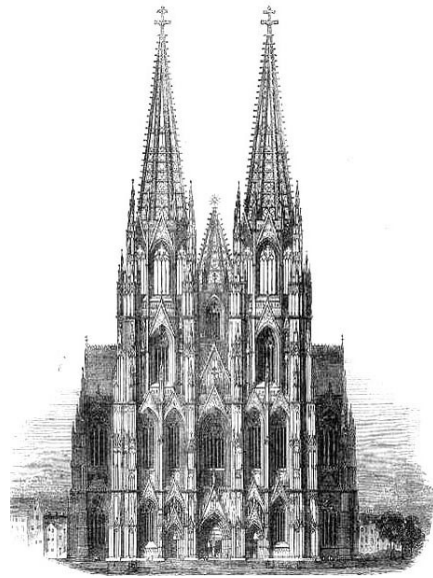
The Legend of St. George
David and Goliath

The Virtue of Perseverance

Back in the Middle Ages, people built great cathedrals to honor God. They're absolutely beautiful churches with their carved stonework and stained glass. I hope your Mom and Dad show you lots of pictures of some!

But did you know that they could take three hundred years to build? That's three centuries! A man who started carving stone for a cathedral in the first year would never live to see the end result. But such a man kept on anyway. He knew that his children's children's children's children's children might get to see the finished cathedral in all its glory, and that helped keep him going.

Such a man had perseverance.



Perseverance is sticking to your guns and doing or saying the right things no matter how hard it is, no matter how many people might be against you, no matter if it takes a lot of time. It's working hard when you need to, even when you don't want to. It's a very, very good habit to develop! Without perseverance, you won't succeed or be happy in life.

When you need to do something and feel like quitting, ask God to help you persevere. Prayer always helps, no matter what! There are other things you can do, too, to make persevering easier. You can try:

◆ **Prioritizing** To prioritize is to figure out which things are most important, and then doing the most important thing first. If you have lots of different things to do and it all feels so overwhelming so you don't know where to start, figure out which thing is most important, and start with that.

It can also mean using prudence and doing "first things first." Sometimes it's just silly do things out of a certain order. For example, you don't dry yourself and *then* take a bath! So if you have to do a whole bunch of different things, and doing them in a certain order makes good sense, make a list and start at the top!

◆ **Making a schedule** Sometimes it's good to make yourself work for a certain amount of time each day so that a job gets done. And some things require lots of practice to get good at – for example, playing a musical instrument. So if the task at hand is "to learn how to play the piano," make a schedule so that you practice every day for a certain amount of time.

◆ **Breaking tasks into chunks** When a job is a really big one, it can help to break it up into

smaller parts. Violet's Mom told her to clean the refrigerator, a pretty big job. So Violet decided she'd clean the top shelf, and then go do something else for a while. Then she'd come back later and do the second shelf, and take another break. Then she'd come back and finish the job.

◆ **Rewards** Getting a reward when you finish something that requires perseverance can help! Of course, as they say, "virtue is its *own* reward," and you should always do what needs to be done just *because* it needs to be done. But getting another sort of reward is nice, too. For example, if you really want to watch a video but have work to do, tell yourself that you can watch a video *after* you've done your work. That makes the video your reward.

◆ **Asking for help** You can always ask God and your Guardian Angel for help, and the Saints for their prayers. And you can ask family and friends to help you if they have time and are able. (If someone helps you, tell him "thank you"!)

◆ **Thinking of alternatives** Veronica was going to have a birthday party, and she wanted everything to be perfect! She wanted to decorate the room, come up with games, and help her Mom make a cake shaped like an elephant. She worked really hard on the room, and got some of the games ready, but when it came time to make the elephant cake, she had the foresight to see that making one would take so much time that she wouldn't be able to get the other games ready. So, she settled for a plain, round cake instead.

It can be easy to abuse this option! Don't take the easy way out or get lazy! But do use prudence to determine if an alternative might be a better idea.

◆ **Distraction** Remember the section on patience where we talked about mental games people can play with themselves while waiting? (page 36) Sometimes that sort of thing can make work go more easily, too. If you're doing work that doesn't require much thinking, you can do things like play games, listen to music, listen to audio-books, or sing to make the work go smoothly (that's pretty much what the seven dwarfs did in the movie of "Snow White," which we'll read later. They whistled while they worked!). It's even more fun if you're doing work with others and you all sing together. Have you ever sung a "round"? If not, you should try it! Sing one the next time you have work to do with people.

Can you think of any other ideas to make persevering in work and getting things done easier?

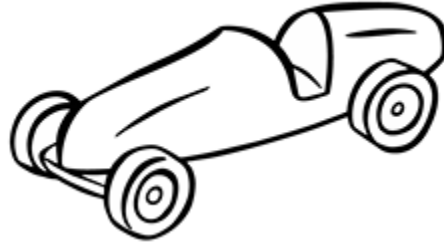
Have you ever quit working on something you should have kept working on – and later regretted it? How would things have been different if you'd finished?

Has someone else ever quit a job and it made you angry or sad or caused trouble for you?

What sorts of things would you say to a friend who is lacking in perseverance, who wants to give up on

something he'd really wanted to get done?

OK, let's play a couple of games...



◆ You and a friend have decided to build a Soap Box Derby car (yes! It'll be so much fun!). Your Dads have helped you put it together, and now you have to paint it up. But what started out as fun is becoming boring. Turns out you don't much like painting! How can you make the work seem to go faster so that you persevere?

◆ Another game: Your Mom and Dad have asked you to do all of these things (what are you? Cinderella?). It's just *so many things!* In what order would you finish these tasks?

Wash the dinner dishes

Homework, which is due tomorrow morning

Take a bath

Put a tablecloth on the table

Close the door "before all the cool air gets out"

Go to bed

Set dishes on the table for dinner, which is in a half an hour

Feed the dog



Parents: Try to use the following vocabulary words for a few weeks, until they're second nature to your children:

- ◆ patient ◆ impatient ◆ patience ◆ impatience
- ◆ magnanimity ◆ magnanimous ◆ munificence ◆ munificent
- ◆ perseverance ◆ persevere

I so hope you consider teaching your children to sing, especially if you incorporate harmony. A good song to sing as a round is the old hymn "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms." Or one person can start in, another can sing the refrain while the first chorus is sung, and when both sing the refrain together, the two can harmonize. Even memorizing just the first verse and refrain is enough to make beautiful music when they are sung together. The lyrics:

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
by Anthony J. Showalter and Elisha Hoffman
1887

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain:
Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

O how sweet to walk, In this pilgrim way,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain

What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain



Parents: now go to page 87 for the three stories that pertain to perseverance:

The Little Red Hen
The Little Engine that Could
The Ant and the Grasshopper

Now is the time to show them the movie "Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" (1971) if at all possible, before starting the next chapter, "About Temperance."

About Temperance

Has anyone ever said to you, “Control yourself, child!” Well, that’s what the virtue of temperance is all about: controlling yourself. It’s about regulating what we eat and drink and do with our bodies. It’s about making sure our emotions don’t get the best of us and make it easy for us to act out. And it’s about not always needing to be the center of attention.

There are six virtues that go along with the *cardinal* virtue of temperance. They are:

abstinence
chastity
modesty
humility
meekness
clemency

What are those? Let’s find out, one by one!

The Virtue of Abstinence

A person has the virtue of abstinence when he has control over how he deals with his desire for bodily pleasures, like the desire for food or drink or things. A person who lacks the virtue of abstinence might eat too much, drink too much, watch too many videos, play too long on his phone, or want to buy too many things. That’s not good!

Have you ever read the book “Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” or seen the movie? The character of Augustus Gloop was a boy who definitely needed to learn abstinence. Remember how much he *ate*? Remember what the Oompa Loompas sang to him? It started with these words:

Augustus Gloop! Augustus Gloop!
The great big greedy nincompoop!
How long could we allow this beast
To gorge and guzzle, feed and feast
On everything he wanted to?
Great Scott! It simply wouldn't do!
However long this pig might live,
We're positive he'd never give
Even the smallest bit of fun
Or happiness to anyone.

Harsh! Not a very nice thing to say to or about someone, and I hope you don't go around talking like an Oompa Loompa! But, just between you and me, Augustus Gloop *was* a bit of a piggy. He needed to learn some self-control – to eat better foods, and not so many of them at a time.

I imagine you know all about which foods are good to eat and which aren't, so we don't need to get into that too deeply. And I'm sure you know that eating *too much* candy, cake, and pie isn't good for you, right? Eating good things isn't that difficult, and enjoying a little dessert is easy. Not eating *too much*, though, can be hard! Some tricks are to use a smaller plate, take smaller amounts, use a smaller fork or spoon, take smaller bites, eat slowly, and chew thoroughly. Halfway through your meal, you can stop for a few minutes and talk to your family, too. That can help!

The point is to just try to be healthy and to not be greedy or allow an out-of-control desire for foods to have *too much* power over you. If you're ever worried about being "too skinny" or "too fat," though, you talk to your Mom and Dad about that. And know that some people are bigger, some are smaller. Some are shorter, some are taller. Everyone's body is different, and that's a *good* thing!

Another way to violate the virtue of abstinence is to be greedy for or wasteful of things. Some people are always wanting, wanting, wanting -- something new, something more, the latest thing. And once they get something new, they quickly forget about it and want something even *newer*. Think about the very spoiled Veruca Salt who went to Willie Wonka's factory along with Augustus Gloop; she was awful! (Then there's MikeTeavee, who was so lacking in the virtue of abstinence that he was always glued to a screen, staring, staring, staring and not accomplishing much.)

Many children are like Veruca, and sometimes it's because they don't realize how *hard* it is and how much *time* it takes to work to get money to buy all those things. Most kids don't know, either, how expensive some things are, or how much it costs to keep a family fed, housed, clothed, and otherwise cared for.

All of the foods and things we enjoy exist because, first, God made the world for us, and second, because someone takes the things God made and *works* with them. Farmers work to grow our food and raise the animals that give us milk and meat. Men work to cut down trees to get wood, and truckers work to deliver the wood to sawmills. At the sawmills, men work to make the wood usable. Miners work to get metals from the ground, and people in factories work to turn those metals into things we use. Scientists and engineers work to find new ways to make better things for us to use. Chefs and waiters in restaurants work to cook and serve food. Writers work to teach or entertain. Priests work to offer us the sacraments and teach us about God. Homemakers work to keep families growing and healthy, and to raise children to become those lumberjacks, truckers, sawmill workers, miners, factory workers, scientists, engineers, chefs, waiters, writers, priests, and homemakers.

Everyone has to work. And it's *only* through work that we're able to have things we need and want. Since you are a child, your work is to learn how to know, love, and serve God, to obey and be helpful to your parents, to do well with your schoolwork, and to keep yourself as healthy as you can.

What work do your parents do?

What work do your grandparents do?

What things can you do to help make your parents' and grandparents' work easier for them?

What work do you want to do when you grow up?

Parents: A great video to show your children is "I, Pencil", various versions of which can be found on the internet. It shows the incredibly complex labor chain that's involved in making a simple pencil (just so you know, some versions can get political at the end, typically with a libertarian slant).

Get your kids to think about all the labor involved in the production of the foods and things they enjoy (and likely take for granted). During dinner, ask them to trace the labor and travel involved in the foods they're eating, the table they're eating off of, the house they're sitting in, etc. (and don't leave off your and your spouse's labor!).

If possible, it's a good idea to give your child work to do by which he can earn a little money. Knowing the value of a dollar, how to budget, and how to save are very important. Teach him to try to save a percentage – 5 or 10 percent, perhaps -- of any money he makes, and put it away in a piggy bank.

Another idea is this: the next time he asks for something that's unnecessary to his health or well-being, say, "Let's see how much that costs," and look up the price together. Then give him chores he can do for pay to save up for it. Keep the money earned in a place where he can see and count it and watch it accumulating so he gets a real sense of the labor and time involved in making money, saving, etc.

In the meanwhile, you can use the characters of Augustus Gloop, Veruca Salt, and MikeTeavee to keep your kids in line. "Don't be a Gloop!" or "Don't be a Veruca!" might go far. And an "OK, Mike Teavee, is that a good idea?" might help your child think twice about watching yet *another* video.



Parents: now go to page 96 for the three stories that pertain to abstinence:

Choosing a Bride
The Woman of Stavoren
The Cat and Mouse in Partnership

The Virtue of Chastity

Parents: I leave it to you to discuss with your children chastity – the regulation of the sexual faculty. It's such a delicate matter, and so much of the approach depends on the child's maturity, knowledge, imagination, etc. Perhaps for very young children, it could be taught about in terms of "kissing – grown-up kissing" or some such. At the very least, you could just say that "another part of temperance is a virtue called 'chastity'; we'll talk about that one later."

However you approach the subject, I implore you to never speak of sex as dirty or bad. It's a beautiful gift – wonderful, important, fun, a great good with a great purpose. It's like fire: in itself, it is a *good*. And setting a fire in the fireplace or at a campout is *good*. But setting fire to the house is evil, the *misuse of something good*. It, in itself is good; its misuse is evil.

The same goes with the body and the virtue of modesty, which is next. We don't cover certain parts of our bodies because they're bad, but because they're precious and exclusive – for the eyes of one person only, if we marry (and doctors, when needed, of course). Those who dress immodestly in the sense of dressing in a too revealing way aren't exposing something bad; they're cheapening what is meant to be treated with exclusivity and respect. They're giving to everyone what is meant for only one, in marriage. They're making the very special not special at all.

Also, please, use the proper medical words for the genitals and other private parts. This is actually very serious; I knew a mother who, out of some bizarre sense of modesty, foolishly had her children referring to their bottoms as their "backs." Now, imagine if one of those children were, God forbid, molested, and a cop were to ask, "Where did the man touch you?" "On my back" as an answer would result in a pedophile going free.

The Virtue of Modesty

Have you ever met a show-off? Have you ever met someone who always has to be the center of attention? Well, if you have, you've met an immodest person. An *immodest* person is a person who is not *modest*, who doesn't have the virtue of *modesty*.

What is modesty? Modesty is using prudence to regulate how you use your body -- especially how you move, talk, or dress -- so that your behavior, appearance, and demeanor fit the situation you're in, and you're not trying to bring attention to yourself in order to show off.

For example, if you see a friend at Mass and wave your arms around and shout to get her attention, that's not being modest. That's being immodest.

If you wear a princess ball gown or a baseball uniform to go swimming in, you're not being modest.

Taking your clothes off at the store would be horribly immodest, but taking them off at the doctor's office when you're asked to isn't.

Dressing up like Batman would be fun while playing or for Hallowe'en, but it would be an immodest thing to do when going to church.

Doing twirls and pirouettes with your sister while listening to music at home might be fine and dandy, but it wouldn't be modest to do that while you're at a funeral.

It's important to know, too, that some parts of our bodies are called "private parts" because they're meant to be kept *private*. Your Mom and Dad can talk to you about those particular parts and how to dress to keep them private, but just know that, to be modest, those parts need to be covered up when you're in public. You can walk around outside without wearing a bag over your head to cover your face, but if you walk around without something covering your bottom – well, that would be very immodest indeed (babies are an exception to this rule. They're too little to know any better, not almost grown up like you!).

Some people are immodest by focusing *too much* on how they look. Both boys and girls can become immodest in this way, but girls are especially prone to it, especially when they become teenagers.

Now, it's good to look nice – to be clean and to wear clothes that are clean and pretty and fit the occasion. And most people enjoy seeing people who look beautiful. But to look in the mirror all the time, to be anxious about getting attention for how you look – well, that's not very modest.

Look, I want to tell you something, and I hope you really listen because it's very important: Physical beauty is a wonderful thing, a gift that some people have, and some people don't. But it fades. Or it can be lost in a *moment* in a horrible accident. Inner beauty – which is loving God, loving others, and being virtuous -- is what deeply matters. And love *makes people beautiful* to the people who love them. Maybe not on the outside in a way that other people can see, but in a way that those who love can see. That's just how love works: a man marries a woman, and even though she gets older, wrinkled, gray, and bigger around the middle after giving him children, she still looks beautiful to him because he loves her. And a woman can marry a young, handsome man who looks like a prince – then soon enough his skin wrinkles, his muscles go away, his hair turns gray and starts to fall out, and he sports a much bigger belly than he used to. But she loves him all the more because of the history they've shared, and the memories they've made. To her he is always handsome. So don't worry if you don't look like one of those silly movie stars (they don't look in real life as they do in movies, I promise!). Don't look in the mirror too often; look instead to your heart and fill it with love so you see the beauty in others, and pray that others see you with love so they see the beauty in you, too.

Oh, and guess what? Your Mom and Dad love you, so you're always beautiful in their eyes.

And guess what else? God loves you. So you're always beautiful, even if *no one else* sees it.

Parents: In this age of video, Photoshop, and social media like Instagram, in a world in which getting “likes” for how “amazing” one looks is “everything,” it’s really important to deal with the unrealistic beauty standards that are out there – and that affect *both* boys and girls. Both sexes need to know how photos and video are manipulated and how make-up is used to give people, especially females, a very unnatural sort of beauty. Showing them – *both girls and boys* -- before and after make-up pictures or some of those make-up tutorials one finds on the internet might help open their eyes as to what people actually look like. Teach them to take anything they see on film (as it were) with a very large grain of salt.

If you have daughters who are physically beautiful, it’s *crucial* to teach them to think far, far beyond their looks, to realize that beauty is a powerful gift that can be abused or wasted, and to deal squarely with the fact that beauty fades or can vanish in an instant by accident or disease. In our culture, with its feminism and lax sexual mores, so many young women rely on their looks to get by, and spend lots of time dating around and enjoying attention from the opposite sex. They play the field – but by the time they’re 35 and their already-hanging-by-a-slim-thread biological clock “is ticking” loudly, those days are over, and they find themselves alone, no longer capable of getting the attention they thrived on when younger, and thought would last forever. They’ll likely never marry; they’ll almost undoubtedly never give you grandchildren. Too many young women have *no sense at all* of how brief is the time they really have to marry and have children. They effectively have about fifteen years, between the ages of 18 and 33 – and that’s pushing it (90% of a woman’s ova are gone by the age of 30; the average woman is infertile at 37; and in between those ages, fertility drops *precipitously*). It’s tragic that so many women lack foresight in those years, only wanting to “settle down” *after* they’ve wasted their beauty and fertility.

Finally, compliment your children on their accomplishments and, especially, their virtues much, much more than you do their physical beauty.



Parents: now go to page 104 for the four stories that pertain to modesty:

The Fox and the Crow
The Peacock and the Crane
The Fighting Cocks and the Eagle
Beauty and the Beast

The Virtue of Humility

Humility is knowing your weaknesses, the things you need to work on. And humility is knowing your strengths and gifts, but knowing they come from God, and using them to do good. Humility is not caring so much about what people think of you that you fail to do the right thing. Humility is also knowing your place, and serving others and God in accordance to that place you have. To sum it all up, humility is just respecting the truth, including the truth about yourself and what you are in God's eyes.

When God created the angels – way before He created the earth, animals, and people – He let them have a choice: they could serve God, or they could refuse to know their place and choose not to serve Him. Most of the angels chose to serve God; one angel, the one we call “Lucifer” or “Satan,” chose to not serve God. He lacked humility, and was filled with pride instead. So God kicked him out of Heaven, and some of the other angels who also chose not to serve were kicked out with him (we call those angels “devils” or “demons”). So pride – not being *humble*, not having the virtue of *humility* -- is the very first sin.

A lack of humility leads people to lack other virtues. If you don't care about serving God, you won't care if you have the fortitude to stand up for the right things, or the temperance to not be greedy. And a lack of virtue leads to sin: why, if you aren't humble and know your place, you might do bad things like sass your parents or be disrespectful to your grandparents. So humility is very important!

Now, as I said before, humility is knowing the truth about yourself. It isn't unnecessarily putting yourself down! If, for example, you happen to be a great singer, it isn't a lack of humility to know it. It'd be immodest to run around talking about how great of a singer you are, of course -- and if you acted like that, you wouldn't have very many friends, I assure you! No, a great singer who knows he's a great singer and who's also humble wouldn't brag, but will thank God for his voice, use his gifts for good, and know that, with perseverance, he can maybe become an even better singer in the future. A humble person always looks to improve himself and do better.

Because humility is knowing the truth about yourself, humility means accepting who it is God means you to be and become. So many people today want to become rich and famous, and think they couldn't be happy as anything else. So many people want to be “models” and have big Youtube channels and get lots of attention. But most people aren't rich or famous or models or famous Youtubers who get lots of attention. And that's how things are meant to be sometimes. St. Therese of Lisieux, the Saint we call “The Little Flower,” wrote about how some are called to be little, and some to be more grand, and how that fact makes the world more beautiful:

Jesus set before me the book of nature. I understand how all the flowers God has created are beautiful, how the splendor of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not take away the perfume of the violet or the delightful simplicity of the daisy. I understand that if all flowers wanted to be roses, nature would lose her springtime beauty, and the fields would no longer be decked out with little wild flowers.

So it is in the world of souls, Jesus' garden. He has created smaller ones and those must be content to be daisies or violets destined to give joy to God's glances when He looks down at His feet. Perfection consists in doing His will, in being what He wills us to be.

Exactly so. Maybe you're meant to be a daisy. Maybe you're meant to be a rose. Or a violet or a hyacinth or a water lily. Maybe you're meant to be a rose at one stage of your life, and a daisy at another. Whatever God wills for you, accept it and be glad.



What is a good way to practice the virtue of humility? The very best thing you can do is to pray every day. Think of God, be thankful to Him, and consider what He wants from you. Ask Him to help you to be humble, and He will, I promise!

Be respectful of others, and be especially mindful of those who have authority over you. Don't be like Satan, who said "Non serviam!" ("I will not serve!"); be willing to serve others and do right by them.

Now, some questions for you to think and talk to your parents about:

What talents do you have?

Do you thank God for your talents?

How do you use your talents to do good and serve God and others? How *could* you use them in that way?



Parents: now go to page 117 for the two stories that pertain to humility:

The Emperor's New Clothes
The Wolf and the Lion

The Virtue of Meekness

Meekness is not giving in to the desire for evil to come to someone who does something bad to you. Pretty simple, huh?

Have you ever seen someone get really, really, really angry – *too* angry -- after someone insulted them or did something wrong to them? And sometimes people get really angry like that even if others *didn't* do anything wrong to them, but they just *think* they do. That can be really scary!

Now, if someone does something bad to you, it's normal and okay to feel some anger. Not all anger is bad (of course, what you *do* with your anger can be)! A good type of anger – “righteous anger” – is anger that makes sense. I mean, if someone were to steal something from you, being a bit angry about it makes sense. But getting angry to the point that you want to poke the thief's eyes out, beat him up, and pull out all his hair doesn't make sense.

It's not wrong to want justice – to want for things to be made right when wrong is done to you, and it isn't wrong to want evil to be punished. Those make sense, too. But feeling *righteous* anger, wanting justice, and wanting the evil-doer to be punished are different from hating the evil-doer and wanting evil to come to him. And that's not how Jesus wants us to live. Instead, we must try to be meek by keeping in check any desire for the sort of revenge that's fueled by hate. See how Cinderella handles things when her very mean step-sisters treat her very, very badly!



Parents: now go to page 123 for the story that pertains to meekness:

Cinderella

The Virtue of Clemency

Clemency is very close to meekness. Meekness is about not giving in to hatred of those who do wrong, and clemency is about showing mercy – when *it makes sense* to show mercy -- in *punishing* those who've done wrong.

To illustrate, imagine your sister, Irene, takes your favorite stuffed animal and hides it from you. You're upset, looking all over the house for – let's call the stuffed animal Boopsie (why not call him Boopsie? Do you have a better name in mind?) You love Boopsie! You've had him all your life, and now he's gone, and your sister won't tell you where she hid him. You're righteously angry (that's OK), and you want the justice of getting Boopsie back and for your sister to get punished (that's OK, too). But your sister still won't tell you where it is. So you go tell your parents what's happened. Your parents talk to your sister about what she did. Turns out, she didn't really understand how much you love Boopsie; she thought

she was being kind of funny. Your parents tell her how worried about Boopsie you are, and how much not knowing where Boopsie is hurts you. Irene hadn't known that. She starts to feel very, very bad and ashamed. She really is truly sorry, and she tells you she's sorry. She runs to get Boopsie, hands him to you, and breaks down in tears asking you to forgive her.

In such a situation, it may well be right to be clement toward Irene. It makes sense. She's learned what she did wrong, she is truly sorry, and you really believe she won't do that again. So when your parents tell her she's grounded for two weeks, you whisper to them that one weekend is enough. Or maybe you tell them that, as far as you're concerned, they need not punish her at all since she's so truly sorry and has learned her lesson. That is what *clemency* is.

Now, if instead of all that, Irene weren't sorry, wouldn't tell you where Boopsie is, only gave him back to you after she got in big trouble, and screamed in anger that she'd do it again –well, clemency then wouldn't make sense.

Got that? Good! And get this, too: God is clement with *us*. We do so many things that we're not supposed to do. We forget God. We hurt others. We commit all kinds of sins. But God loves us so much that He sent His Son to take the punishment *we deserve* for our wrongdoings. That'd be like you telling your parents, "No, instead of punishing Irene for taking Boopsie, punish me! I'll take her punishment for her!"

Think about that...



Parents: now go to page 129 for the story that pertains to clemency:

The Prodigal Son

About Justice

Justice is about giving others what you owe them. To “owe” something is to have the duty to do something for someone because he has a right to it. For example, if you borrow my book, you owe it to me to give it back to me. If you commit a crime, you owe it to others to pay for it in some way. If someone does something nice for you, you owe it to him to say “thank you.”

We owe different people different things, and there are different words for the different ways we owe others. That’s why there are so many different words for the virtues that go along with the *cardinal* virtue of justice. Those words are:

religion
piety
gratitude
liberality
affability

Let’s look at all of them – but one at a time! Let’s look at the virtue of religion first...

The Virtue of Religion

The very first thing we owe is our love to God. I bet you already knew that, though, right? But have you ever stopped to really *think* about it? Without Him, you wouldn’t exist. Your Mom and Dad wouldn’t exist. Your house wouldn’t exist, and neither would your city or country or even the whole world!

Every beautiful flower, and every little puppy with sticky-uppy ears exists *only* because God created it and keeps wanting for it to be.

Then, after He made us and gave us things like beautiful flowers, and little puppies with sticky-uppy ears, we do such bad things to Him by sinning – by doing things like lying, being mean, or sassing our parents! But, still, He sent His Son, Jesus, to take our punishment for us so we can go to Heaven someday.

So how do we give to God what we owe Him for all *that*? By worshiping Him – by loving Him, thanking Him, and doing what He wants us to do.

And how do we know what He wants us to do? His Church teaches us these things.

And how do we know what the Church teaches? We listen to good priests and we read books called “catechisms.” If you haven’t read a catechism yet, you *really* should. It will teach you what you need to know so that you can practice the virtue of religion and give to God what you owe Him.

In the meanwhile, pray to God every day. Tell Him your troubles, for sure, but also thank Him for all the people you love, all the things He’s blessed you with, and for the hope of Heaven.

Go to Mass and receive the Sacraments as you’re able. When you’re at Mass, behave yourself! Be patient, quiet, humble, and modest. Girls, cover your heads, and boys, remove your hats! Genuflect toward the tabernacle (that’s where Jesus is) when you enter or leave the pew you sit on. Never clap in church – not ever! Listen carefully to the sermon. Follow along with your Missal, if you have one and are able. Don’t kick the backs of the pews!

--- In other words, just do what your parents are always telling you to do. They’re right, you know. And God deserves our best behavior from us, doesn’t He?

Parents: All four of the Baltimore Catechisms are available, for free, on the FishEaters website (in the “Catholic Library”). Baltimore Catechism No. 1 is for young children around the ages of 1-10; Baltimore Catechism No. 2 is for children preparing for Confirmation, typically around the ages of 10-12. I really hope you make use of them!



Parents: now go to page 131 for the two stories that pertain to religion:

The Little Match Girl
Noe and the Ark

The Virtue of Piety

Piety is the virtue of giving what we owe to certain people in special ways. Let me explain: we owe everyone basic human kindness (we’ll talk about that soon, when we learn about the virtue of affability), but there are some people we owe something extra to. For example, you owe your Mom and Dad obedience – but you don’t owe that to some stranger on the street; you only owe the stranger basic kindness, and respect for his humanity. If your Mom tells you to you have to do your homework *right now*, you have to do what she tells you. But if the stranger tells you that, you don’t. Understand?

We have relationships with people in different ways. Our first relationship is, of course, with God because He made us, and He made us for Himself. So the virtue of religion is important to piety as well. Our first allegiance is to God, always, even before our parents. If you didn’t have nice, God-loving parents, and your parents told you to not love God, you’d have to love God anyway. God always comes first.

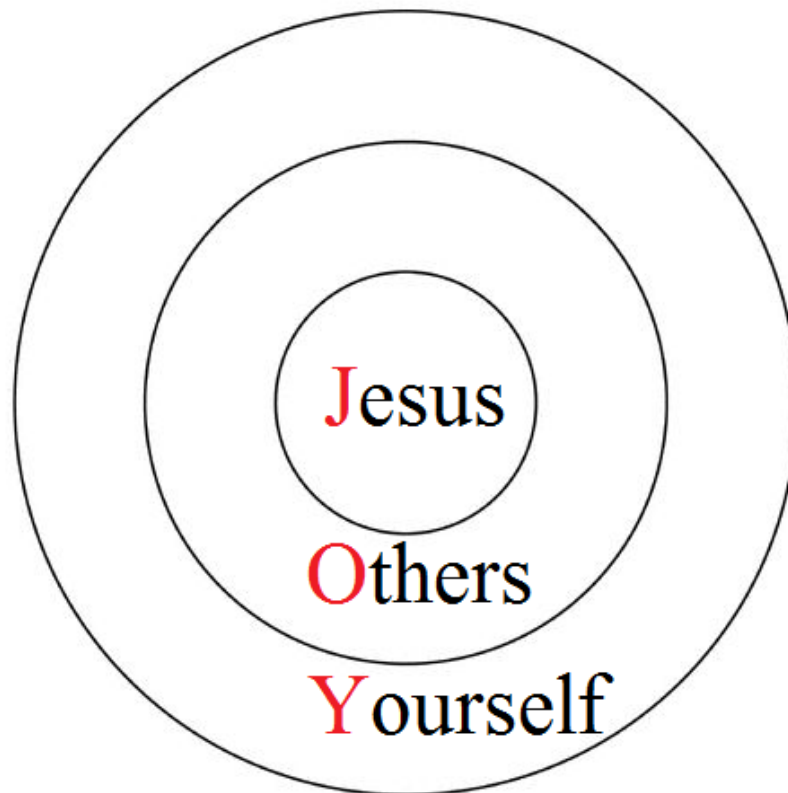
Our next allegiance is to our parents. We owe them a certain kind of love, a love called “filial piety.” We have to be for them kind, respectful, helpful, thankful, and (before we’re grown up) obedient. If they become old and unable to care for themselves, we have to care for them as best as we can, and make sure they’re safe.

Then come other family members – our grandparents, especially, and then our brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and cousins. We love them more than we do other people because God put us all together as a family.

Then come others who are closest to us – friends especially, and then neighbors and the citizens of our country.

Last come all the other people in the world.

You can imagine circles inside of each other (called “concentric circles”), with the innermost being the most important. Something I was shown when I was very young looked something like this:



Put Jesus first. Then others, starting with your family, and then going outward to include your fellow citizens, and only then going out to the rest of the world. Then put yourself last. Jesus – Others – Yourself: the first letters of these put all together spell JOY.

Now, we've already talked about giving God what He's owed by practicing the virtue of religion. But what are some of the ways we can give our family what we owe them?

One way I can think of is to learn about the people in your family. Talk to them, and really listen to them! What are their stories? What do they like and not like? What are their favorite things? What is your family's history? What parts of the world do your family members come from?

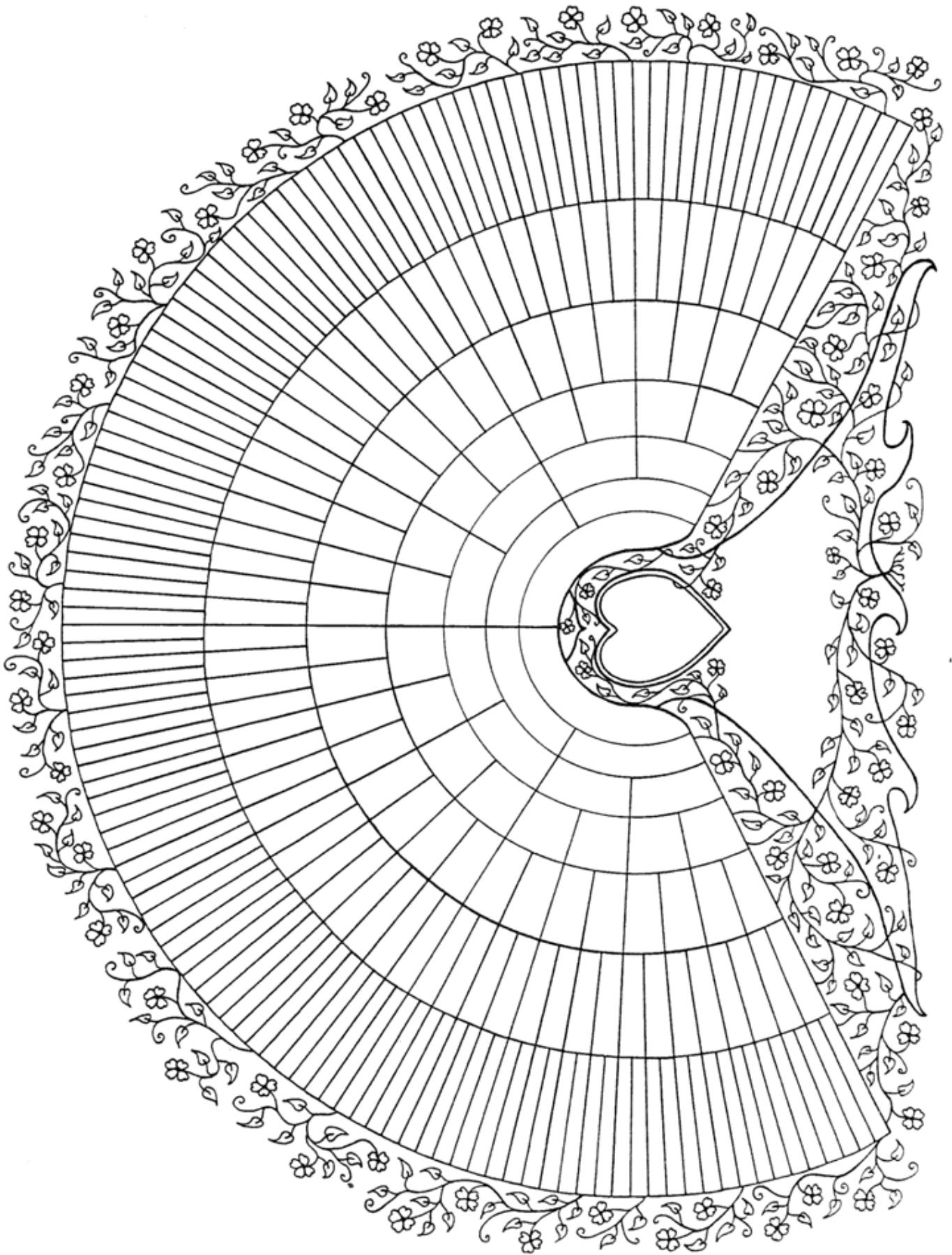
Some things for you and your parents to do:

- ◆ Here's a game you can play: on the next page is a table – the "Guess Me" game. Print one out for each person in the room. Write the name of one person in the room in each of the cells of the top row, in the columns that read " ____ 's answers." Then fill in with your answers in the first column, and how you think the others will answer for themselves in their columns. Read out your answers, circle the ones you get right, add them up, and see who knows whom best! (I bet Mom wins!) Talk about your answers! Did you learn anything?
- ◆ On the page after the game is a family history chart. Fill it out as best as you can. Write little biographies of your ancestors – where they came from, how the couples met, the children they had, the stories of their lives, the dates involved (birth, marriage, death), where they're buried, memories you have of them, etc. Keep these with your family Bible (Douay preferred).
- ◆ Write the names of your dead ancestors on a pretty piece of parchment. Keep it on your family's altar so you remember to pray for the dead.
- ◆ Visit graves on All Souls Day. Keep the memory of your ancestors alive, and pray for their souls.
- ◆ Celebrate Name Days.
- ◆ Buy or make Christmas tree ornaments that symbolize each person in your family, including those who've died.
- ◆ Make Sundays special family days – days on which you do something together. Play games, make things, have picnics, make music – you know your family's talents and skills. Have a special dinner on that day, complete with a tablecloth (your mileage may vary) and candles.



The Guess Me Game

	My answer	_____’s answers	_____’s answers	_____’s answers
Favorite color				
Favorite flower				
Favorite animal				
Favorite song				
Favorite dessert				
Favorite movie				
Favorite book (aside from the Bible)				
Favorite Saint (aside from Mary)				
The animal I’m most like is the				
Favorite season				
The place I’d most like to travel to is				
One thing I really want to learn is				
Favorite holiday				



OK, now let's talk about the piety you owe your country. This sort of piety is called "civil allegiance" or, more commonly, "patriotism." When you're patriotic, you study to learn your country's history, know how its government works, know its laws, learn how to speak its official language(s), put the welfare of its people above the welfare of other countries' peoples, and are willing to sacrifice, when necessary, to defend it. It doesn't mean thinking your country is (necessarily) "better" than others, or that its government always does the right things; it means appreciating that it is *your* country, your *home*, and caring for the people who live in it.

If you're have piety for your country, you also respect its symbols. For example, in the United States, we stand up, remove our hats, put our right hands over our hearts, face the flag, if present, and quietly, respectfully listen (or sometimes sing along) when we hear the National Anthem. Out of respect, we don't applaud when it's finished.

When we say the Pledge of Allegiance, we stand up, face the flag, put our right hands over our hearts, and say the pledge's words:

I pledge allegiance to the flag
of the United States of America,
and to the republic for which it stands,
one nation, under God, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

We never let our country's flag touch the ground, and we stand in respect, hand over heart, when the flag is being raised or lowered. If the flag is displayed with the flags of other countries, we put our flag in a place of prominence (for ex., we'll make sure our flag pole is the tallest).

People of other countries have different symbols and ways of respecting them that are right for them. Different peoples have different ways of life, and that is a good thing. Other people, in their countries, put their people first; in ours, we put our people first, and that's just how it should be.

The virtue of piety is a very important virtue, but it's often ignored today, especially when it comes to the piety owed to one's country. Some people are so lacking in this sort of piety that they think more of strangers than their own families and countrymen. They think they are being kind by thinking and talking that way, but what they are really doing is mistreating their own people by giving away to others a loyalty that belongs to to their own. Each person and each country has only so much time and so many things to share with others, so we have to prioritize (remember that word?) -- and God tells us whom to put first: Himself, and ***then*** Mom and Dad, and ***then*** the rest of our family, and ***then*** others who are close to us, and ***then*** our neighbors and countrymen, and ***then*** the world. In that order.

When you're older and start thinking about "politics" (politics is everything that goes along with governing a country or city or state), you'll hear all sorts of bad ideas. You'll hear some politicians come up with plans that hurt the people of *their own* country to benefit people of *different* countries, and they talk about it as if it's the only "kind" thing to do because those others are helped. They'll say that to

not help those others even though it hurts the people of *your own* country is “mean.” But that sort of plan lacks piety.

None of that means it’s not good to help people of other countries! We should love and care for all people because *all people* – no matter where they live, no matter what language they speak or what race they are -- are made in the image of God and called to be our brothers and sisters in Christ. It’s always good to help those in need – but only *after* one has taken care of one’s own family and countrymen. Now, just how to do that, and whether it should be done by government or individuals – well, that’s the sort of thing grown-ups talk about when they “talk politics.” Boy, do big people *love* to talk politics!

Some things to think and talk about:

- ◆ No one wants anyone to be homeless, and we’re supposed to help those in need. So would you let twenty homeless people move into your house? Is that a good idea or a bad idea? How big is your house? How would having twenty homeless people move in affect your Mom? Your Dad? Your brothers and sisters? You? Would it be good for your family? If letting them move into your house isn’t a good idea, what are some smart ways to help the homeless?
- ◆ Your brother and your neighbor have a birthday on the same day. Whose birthday party do you attend?
- ◆ The lady next door tells you to rake her yard. Do you have to? (it might be a nice thing to do, especially if she asks you nicely instead of tells you. And even if she’s mean and orders you around as if she’s “the boss of you,” showing her a kindness might teach her a lesson and make *her* more kind. One never knows!) Do you owe her filial piety? What if she’s paid you to do it and you haven’t done it yet? (your doing what you were paid to do wouldn’t go to piety, but to simple justice).
- ◆ You have \$20 and you decide to spend it to help the needy. If you know of two equally needy and deserving people, one who lives in your town, and one who lives in a different town, should you choose to help the needy person in your town or in the other town?
- ◆ Your friend needs your help. But so does a girl you’ve just met. Whom do you help if you only have time to help one of them?



Parents: now go to page 136 for the story that pertains to piety:

The Old Grandfather and His Grandson

The Virtue of Affability

The virtue of affability refers to kindness, friendliness, cheerfulness, openness, and hospitality. To sum it up in one phrase, it's the habit of offering brotherly love.

While the virtue of religion is about what we owe to God, and the virtue of piety is about what we owe to our families, friends, and countrymen, the virtue of affability is what we owe to all men.

When we meet strangers, we should treat them with respect and dignity. We should want for things to go smoothly, and for the stranger to be better off in spirit if we spend any time with him.

One of the easiest ways to make going about in the world nicer for everyone is to have good manners. You know, I hope, about saying "please" when asking for something, and "thank you" when receiving it. But there are a lot more things you should know, too. Here's a list (I warn you, it's a long one!):

In General:

- ◆ Look around you and see who might need or want something. Then help them get what they want or need. Is someone carrying something heavy? Help him! Does someone look hot? Turn a fan on for him! Does someone look thirsty? Get him a drink. Is Grandma having a hard time getting out of the chair? Help her up! Use your eyes! And pay special attention to the elderly, the pregnant, people carrying babies, the sick, the blind, etc.
- ◆ If you're in a place that doesn't have enough seating, give up your seat to someone in more need to rest -- the elderly, pregnant, or sick, etc. Boys are especially to give up their seats for girls and women. Why? Because boys are stronger! (yay for boys! I just love boys!)
- ◆ If someone does something embarrassing, help him to "save face" -- to feel less embarrassed. If no one but you saw or heard him do the embarrassing thing, you can pretend you didn't even see or hear it. If it's clear to both of you that you did see or hear it, and something embarrassing has ever happened to you, you can say something like, "Oh, something like that happened to me once -- it was kind of funny." Smile, then very quickly change the subject and act as if nothing's happened.
- ◆ When dealing with others, pay attention to their moods. If someone is sad, cheer him up. If he just wants to talk, listen. If he's really happy, don't rain on his parade by talking about sad things.
- ◆ Don't gossip. And follow the "Thumper rule": If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.
- ◆ If someone is being bullied, stand up for him. Don't ever approve of bullying, and don't engage in it yourself. Ever.

- ◆ Don't ever litter.
- ◆ Refer to grown men as "Sir" and grown women as "Ma'am" unless you're given permission to call them something else. If you know the person's last name, you can also call him "Mr. Trumblethwaite" – or call her "Miss Throttlebottom," or "Mrs. Glickyschtall." You use "Miss" for women who are single, and "Mrs." for women who are married. If you're not sure, use "Miss." (Some women prefer to be called "Ms.").
- ◆ Call priests "Father," followed by their last names (or just "Father."). Doctors are called "Doctor." Professors are called "Professor." Use people's titles.
- ◆ Don't interrupt people when they're talking or busy unless it's an emergency or really, truly important. If you must interrupt, say "Excuse me."
- ◆ If you bump into someone, say "Excuse me!"
- ◆ When someone asks, "How are you?" answer with something like "Fine, thank you. And how are you?" If it's a friend or family member asking, then you can tell him how you really feel.
- ◆ If you want something, use the words "may I" followed by a please.
- ◆ Don't talk on the phone or stare into screens while talking or eating with others. It's very rude. Turn phones and screens off and put them away when you're with others.
- ◆ Be a gracious winner: don't gloat (unless it's the pretend, just-for-fun kind of gloating). A "Good game!" or "You played hard" would go far.
- ◆ Be a cheerful loser; don't whine and cry if you lose. "Good game!" works here, too.
- ◆ Learn how to introduce people. When you're with two or more people who've never met, introduce them to each other – the younger *to* the elder, the one with less social prominence *to* those with more, men *to* women. And let them know something about each other so they'll have something to talk about. It might go something like this if your're with your friend Lisa, and another friend named Mark walks up, but the two don't know each other:

Oh hi, Mark. I'd like you to meet Lisa. She's in my class at school. Lisa, this is Mark; he lives next door to me.
- ◆ If you don't know what to talk about with people, ask them questions about themselves and really listen to what they say. If all else fails, there's always the weather to talk about.
- ◆ When you talk to people, look at them and give them your full attention. This includes clerks, waitresses, and others who perform services for you.
- ◆ Boys, don't wear your hats indoors (there are a few exceptions to this when it comes to special sorts of hats).

◆ Don't talk about gross things in public (bathroom stuff, guts, vomit, etc.), and don't do gross things in public (like picking your nose or passing gas). Remember the virtue of prudence: there's a time and place for everything, and there's a big difference between the private life of home, and the public life outside of home.

◆ If you cough, cover your mouth. If you sneeze, use a hankie to cover your nose and mouth, or sneeze into your sleeve or shirt. If someone else sneezes, say "God bless you!"

◆ Hold doors open for people behind you.

◆ If you make a phone call, identify yourself to the person you've called. When someone answers, say, "Hi, this is Joseph. I'm calling for Jane. May I speak to her, please?" If they go to get her, thank them. If Jane isn't there, say something like "I'm sorry to have bothered you. Have a nice day. Bye."

◆ If you're invited to a party, thank the host or hostess when you leave, and say something nice.

◆ When someone is in your house, make him comfortable. Offer him a drink and, at least, a snack.

◆ If you borrow something, return it as quickly as you can, and in at least as good a shape as it was when you borrowed it. If it gets lost or stolen, replace it with at least an equally good replacement.

◆ When walking with old, sick, or pregnant people, slow down.

◆ Boys, learn how to tip your hat to a lady. Ask your Dad to teach you. It's very charming.

When eating:

◆ Make sure your hands are clean at the table.

◆ Don't blow your nose at the table.

◆ Elbows off the table when the eating begins and until the eating stops.

◆ Put your napkin on your lap.


◆ Don't start to eat until everyone's sitting, everyone's been served, and the person with the highest authority begins (at home, that's Dad; at parties, it's the host or hostess).

◆ Eat with your mouth closed, don't talk with your mouth full, don't drink with your mouth full, and don't make loud chewing sounds.

◆ Don't gesture with the cutlery.

- ◆ Don't reach over people to get things from the table. Ask the person closest to what you want to please pass it to you.
- ◆ Offer to help whoever is cooking, serving, or cleaning up after meals.
- ◆ Thank whoever made and served the food. If you enjoyed it, tell them you did, and what you especially loved. If you didn't enjoy it, you can still show gratitude and likely think of something nice to say – maybe “the food was so beautifully colorful!” or “The table was set so nicely. I love your centerpiece!”
- ◆ When you're done eating and leave the table, push your chair back in toward the table.
- ◆ If you're eating in a restaurant: Don't put the waiter in the position of having to make unnecessary trips back and forth. Figure out what you want and what you'll need, and ask for it all at once as best as you can. Be polite and respectful to those who wait on you; say “thank you” every time a waiter brings you something. Don't make waiters' jobs more difficult; in fact, make their jobs easier if you can. If you're in a fancy place, your cloth napkin goes to the left of your plate when you leave the table. Don't forget to tip your waiter well.

Practice good manners. Give to others. Make yourself useful to others. Memorize a few jokes. And then you'll be a model of affability, someone Nonna would be happy to share her cookies with.

	<p>Parents: now go to page 138 for the story that pertains to affability:</p> <p>Snow White</p>
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The Virtue of Gratitude

Gratitude is thankfulness for others' kindness.

As always, we owe God the most gratitude because He made us, and that's what the virtue of religion is about. We owe our parents and grandparents gratitude for what they do for us, and that's what the virtue of piety is about. But the virtue of gratitude itself includes thankfulness for favors and kindnesses shown to us by anyone.

We're grateful not just for things people give us, but also for their time, attention, prayers, and a host of other good things. And when we're grateful, we show it if we have the virtue of gratitude.

The most obvious way we practice gratitude is by thanking a person who's been good to us. We can do this just by looking him in the eye and, very sincerely, saying “thank you.”

We can show gratitude by writing thank you notes (a lost art, I'm afraid).

We can show gratitude by doing kindnesses in return.

We can show gratitude by speaking highly of the person who's been good to us, and defending him when he needs defending.

But before we can express our gratitude, we first have to realize that we need to be grateful. So often, though, we take for granted many of the kindnesses shown to us – especially the goodness God gives to us. God gives us the incredible beauties of nature – but we so often just walk right by and don't even really *see* them. A Mom might work for four hours making a special dinner – and no one even notices or says “thanks, Mom.” A Dad might spend all day Saturday working to fix his kid's bike – and get no gratitude in return, not even a “Thanks, Pops!”

This is why it's good to take some time each day to stop and *really think* of all you have to be grateful for. You might pet your cat ten times a day, but when was the last time you really *looked* at your cat, remembered that God made her, and then said, “Thanks, God, for making cats so soft and purry!”

Here's something for you and your family to consider doing together to help you think more often of all you have to be grateful for: make a gratitude tree! From outside, get some small, dry branches – ones with many jaggy edges from which to hang things -- and put them in a vase (if the branches are heavy, you may have to weigh the vase down with rocks inside it). Then take unlined index cards and cut them in half vertically. Punch holes at the tops of the cards, and then add string or ribbons to make hangers. Leave them next to the vase, which you'll keep in a public place in your home, and keep a pencil beside them. Throughout the week -- whenever it occurs to them during the days, and also at dinner time -- family members take the cards and write on them things they are grateful for. It could be anything from “I'm thankful for the snow” to “I'm thankful Anthony put away his toys without my asking.” Then the cards are hanged on the tree – but not read until Sunday dinner, when they're taken down and read aloud. You can have fun, too, guessing who wrote which cards!



If you don't have the room for a vaseful of branches, you can skip the hole-punching and ribbons and just put the cards in a pretty box or jar. Doesn't matter! The point is to foster the virtue of gratitude, a very important habit to acquire!



Parents: now go to page 147 for the three stories that pertain to gratitude:

Androcles and the Lion
The Lion and the Mouse
Snow-White and Rose-Red

The Virtue of Liberality

The virtue of liberality is the virtue of giving things and money to those in need. A liberal person is someone who is very generous with his material goods and treasure, who isn't miserly and greedy and wanting everything for himself. He has a generous heart!



Ahem! Excuse me, pardon the interruption, but I simply *must* make this known: Mind you, the word "liberal" also has various political meanings – meanings that pertain to "liberalism." But we're not talking about *liberalism*; we're talking about *liberality*, and the kind of liberal that has the virtue of liberality is *very* different from the kind of liberal who embraces liberalism. They're day and night! Chalk and cheese!

-- Cheese! Oh! I'm sorry, and beg pardon. But I *must* get back to my cheddar!

Sorry about that! I hadn't known mice were so interested in politics! Anyway, let's continue! Now, as I was saying, the liberal man has a generous heart – and it's the generosity of heart that matters, not so much how much a person is able to give. If you have a gazillion dollars and give me twenty, that's very nice and all, and I'd be very grateful – but if you only had twenty-five dollars and give me twenty – well, that's exceedingly liberal. It might be too much, depending on your circumstances: you, of course, have to take care of yourself, and you can't spend on me, a stranger, what you have a duty to spend on the unmet needs of those to whom you owe piety.

Anyway, the point is that even if you have nothing at all to give to others, you can still be liberal if your heart is generous. You could be very, very poor – but dream of riches only because you wish to help others with them. That makes you a person with the virtue of liberality.

Lord Jesus tells us that we have a duty to care for others, so it's good to think of how we can give according to our means.

Some people try to budget money each week or month for the poor, the Church, and those who serve. Some might be able to give a lot after their families' needs are met; some might have very little; and some might have nothing at all.

Some go through their belongings periodically and determine what they no longer need. They then give those things to the poor (this is a good way to keep your house from getting cluttered, too).

Maybe once a year, perhaps during Lent when lots of folks do their Spring-cleaning, you and your parents can sort through your belongings and give away what you no longer need.

And, of course, if you benefit from the liberality of others, don't forget your virtue of gratitude!



Parents: now go to page 155 for the three stories that pertain to liberality:

The Widow's Mite
The Star Talers
The Dog in the Manger

**There now! We've covered all the moral virtues,
and old Nonna is tired. So I bid you goodnight!**

... that naughty mouse!





The
Stories



Prudence

The Flight of the Beasts

A tale from Tibet

At a long distant period there stood on the shore of a lake a vilva forest. In this forest dwelt six hares. Now a vilva tree in that forest fell into the lake, thereby producing a great noise. When the six hares heard this noise, they began, as they had but small bodies, to run away full of fear.

The jackals saw them running, and asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The hares replied, "There was a great noise." Thereupon the jackals also took to flight.

When the monkeys saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The jackals replied, "There was a great noise." Thereupon the monkeys also took to flight.

When the gazelles saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The monkeys replied, "There was a great noise." Thereupon the gazelles also took to flight.

When the boars saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The gazelles replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the boars also took to flight.

When the buffaloes saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run? "

The boars replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the buffaloes also took to flight.

When the rhinoceroses saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The buffaloes replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the rhinoceroses also took to flight.

When the elephants saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The rhinoceroses replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the elephants also took to flight.

When the bears saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The elephants replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the bears also took to flight.

When the hyenas saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The bears replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the hyenas also took to flight.

When the panthers saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The hyenas replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the panthers also took to flight.

When the tigers saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The panthers replied, "There was a noise." Thereupon the tigers also took to flight.

When the lions saw them running they asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye run?"

The tigers replied, "There was a loud noise." Thereupon the lions also took to flight.

At the foot of the mountain there dwelt a maned lion, which likewise seemed to wear a diadem. When it saw the lions running it asked, "O honored ones, wherefore do ye all run, although each of you is strong in claws and strong in teeth?"

The lions replied, "There was a loud noise."

"O honored ones, whence did the noise come?" it asked.

"We do not know," they replied.

Then said that lion, "O honored ones, do not run. Inquiry must be made as to where the noise came from."

It asked the tigers, "Who told you about it?"

The tigers replied, "The panthers."

It asked the panthers, "Who was it told you?"

The panthers replied, "The hyenas."

It asked the hyenas, "Who was it told you?"

The hyenas replied, "The bears."

It asked the bears, "Who was it told you?"

The bears replied, "The elephants."

It asked the elephants, "Who was it told you?"

The elephants replied, "The rhinoceroses."

It asked the rhinoceroses, "Who was it told you?"

The rhinoceroses replied, "The buffaloes."

It asked the buffaloes, "Who was it told you?"

The buffaloes replied, "The boars."

It asked the boars, "Who was it told you?"

The boars replied, "The gazelles."

It asked the gazelles, "Who was it told you?"

The gazelles replied, "The monkeys."

It asked the monkeys, "Who was it told you?"

The monkeys replied, "The jackals."

It asked the jackals, "Who was it told you?"

The jackals replied, "The hares."

It asked the hares, "Who was it told you?"

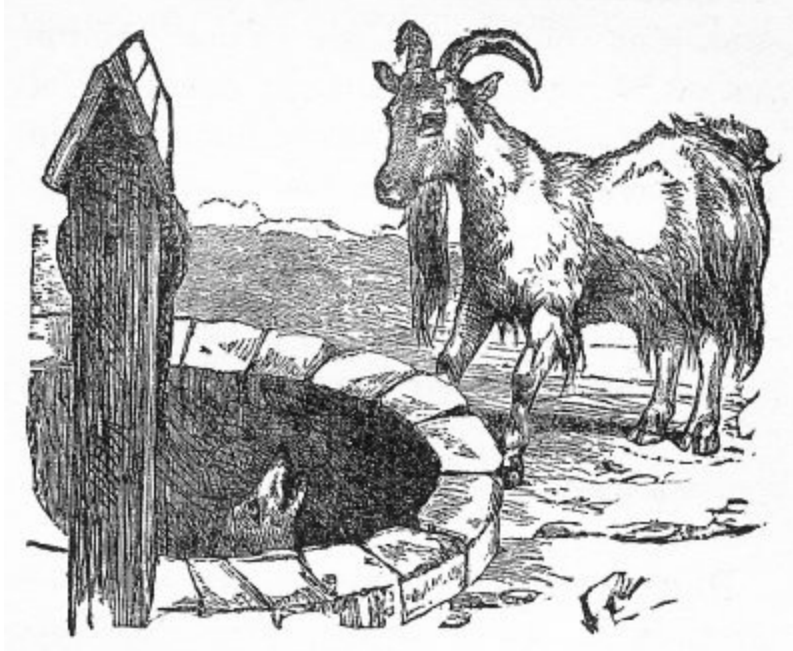
The hares replied, "We saw the terrible thing with our own eyes. Come, we will show you whence the noise came." So they guided the lion, and showed it the vilva forest, saying, "That is where the noise came from."

Inasmuch as the noise was caused by the fall of a vilva tree out of that forest into the lake, the lion said, "O honored ones, be not afraid, for that was only an empty sound."

Consequently they were all tranquilized. And a deity uttered this verse, "Let not men believe in words. They ought to see everything for themselves. Observe how, through the fall of a vilva, the forest lost its beasts."

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What does this story mean? (to know your facts before you come to conclusions, to question the authority, reliability, and veracity of the one giving your information, etc.)
2. Why did the hares panic?
3. Why did the other animals, in turn, believe the hares?
4. How could the flight of the beasts been prevented?
5. What cardinal virtue did the animals fail to display? (prudence)



Prudence

The Fox and the Goat

Aesop

A Fox fell into a deep well from which he could not get out. A Goat passed by shortly afterwards, and asked the Fox what he was doing down there.

“Oh, have you not heard?” said the Fox; “there is going to be a great drought, so I jumped down here in order to be sure to have water by me. Why don’t you come down too?”

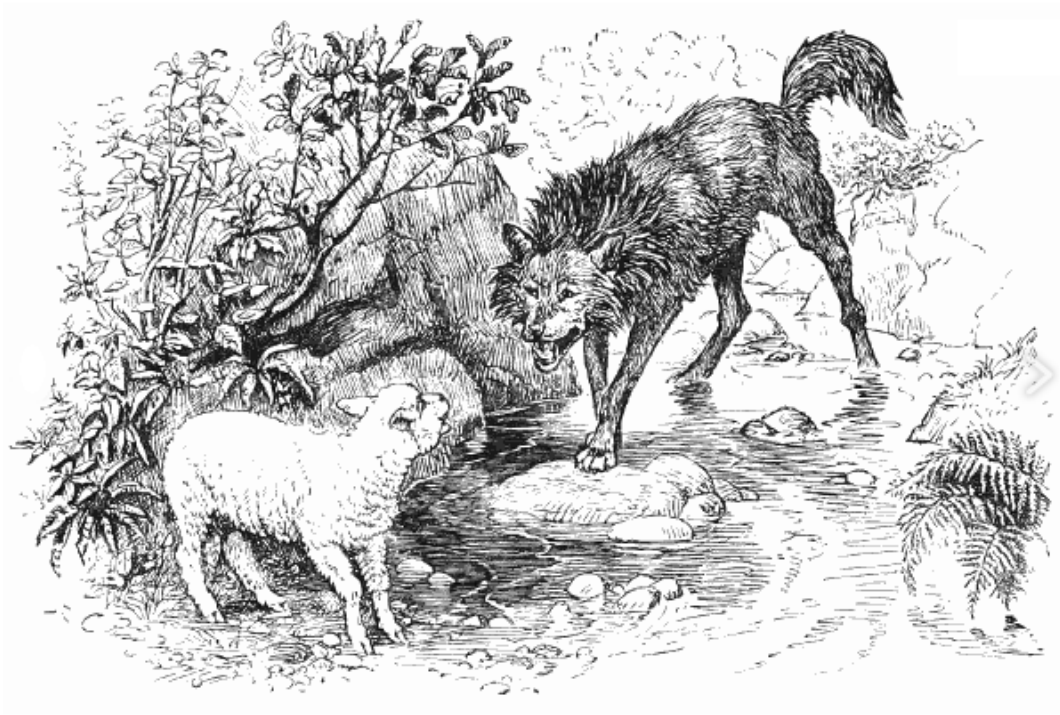
The Goat thought well of this advice, and jumped down into the well.

The Fox immediately jumped on her back, and by putting his foot on her long horns managed to jump up to the edge of the well. “Good-bye, friend,” said the Fox, “if you had brains equal to the number of hairs in your beard you would not have jumped down without a way back up.”

“Look before you leap”

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Did the fox have an ulterior motive?
2. Did the goat trust the fox too easily?
3. Did the goat lack foresight?



Prudence

The Sheep and the Wolves

Aesop

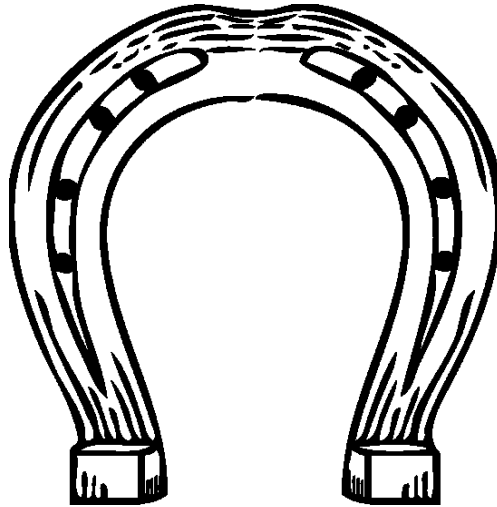
A pack of Wolves lurked near the Sheep pasture. But the Dogs kept them all at a respectful distance, and the Sheep grazed in perfect safety. But now the Wolves thought of a plan to trick the Sheep.

“Why is there always this hostility between us?” they said. “If it were not for those Dogs who are always stirring up trouble, I am sure we should get along beautifully. Send them away and you will see what good friends we shall become.”

The Sheep were easily fooled. They persuaded the Dogs to go away, and that very evening the Wolves had the grandest feast of their lives.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Should the sheep have listened to the wolves talk badly about the dogs? Did the wolves have an ulterior motive?



Fortitude : Patience

The Nail

A merchant had done well at the fair. He had sold all his wares, and filled his moneybag with gold and silver. He now wanted to make his way toward home, and to be in his own house before nightfall. So he loaded his duffel bag with the money onto his horse, and rode away.

At noon made a rest stop in a town. When he was about to continue on his way, a servant brought him his horse and said, "Sir, a nail is missing from the shoe on his left hind hoof."

"Let it be," answered the merchant. "The shoe will certainly stay on for the six hours that I still have to ride. I am in a hurry."

That afternoon, when he dismounted once again and had his horse fed, a servant came into the inn and said, "Sir, a shoe is missing from your horse's left hind hoof. Shall I take him to the blacksmith?"

"Let it be," answered the man. "The horse can manage for the few hours that I still have to ride. I am in a hurry."

He rode on, but before long the horse began to limp. It did not limp long before it began to stumble, and it did not stumble long before it fell down and broke a leg. The merchant had to leave the horse where it was, and unbuckle the duffel bag, load it onto his shoulder, and walk home on foot, not arriving there until very late that night.

"All this bad luck," he said to himself, "was caused by that cursed nail."

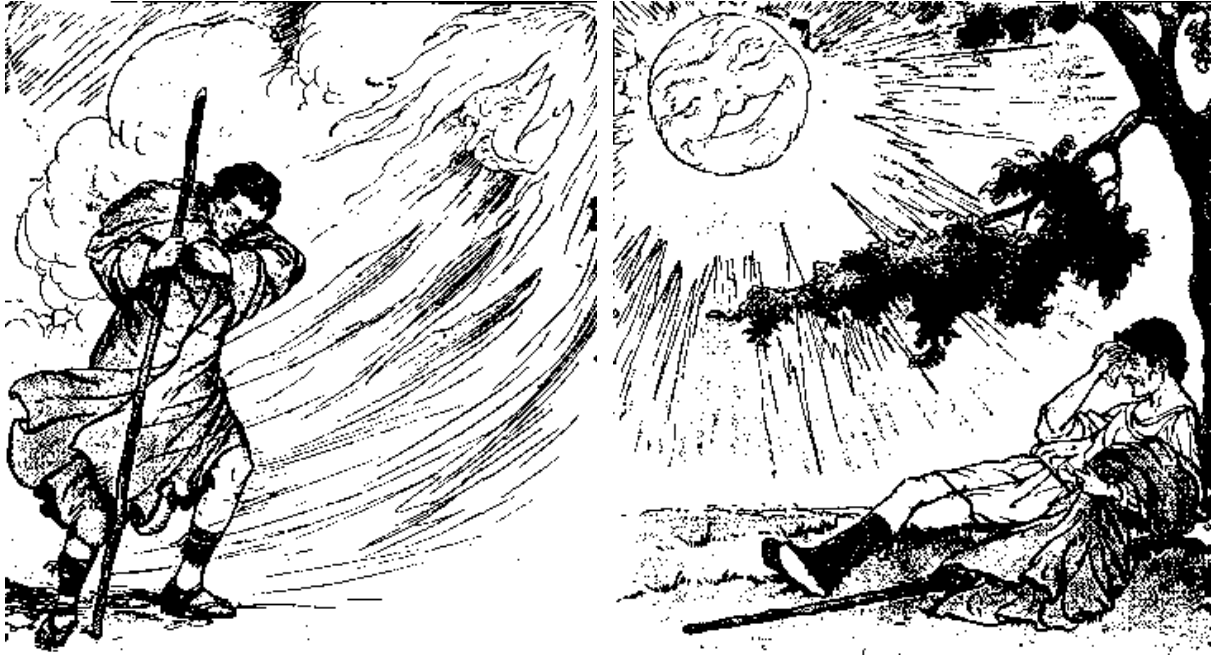
Haste makes waste.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Tell them a story about how something as small as a horseshoe nail can cause big problems down the road:

For want of a nail the shoe was lost.
For want of a shoe the horse was lost.
For want of a horse the rider was lost.
For want of a rider the message was lost.
For want of a message the battle was lost.
For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

2. How can rushing through things and not being prudent cause trouble?



Fortitude : Patience

The Wind and the Sun

Aesop

The Wind and the Sun were disputing which was the stronger.

Suddenly they saw a traveller coming down the road, and the Sun said: "I see a way to decide our dispute. Whichever of us can cause that traveller to take off his cloak shall be regarded as the stronger. You begin."

So the Sun retired behind a cloud, and the Wind began to blow as hard as it could upon the traveller.

But the harder he blew the more closely did the traveller wrap his cloak round him, till at last the Wind had to give up in despair.

Then the Sun came out and shone in all his glory upon the traveller, who soon found it too hot to walk with his cloak on.

*"Sometimes patience and persuasion
are more powerful than blustery, impatient force."*



Fortitude : Patience

The Crow and the Pitcher

Aesop

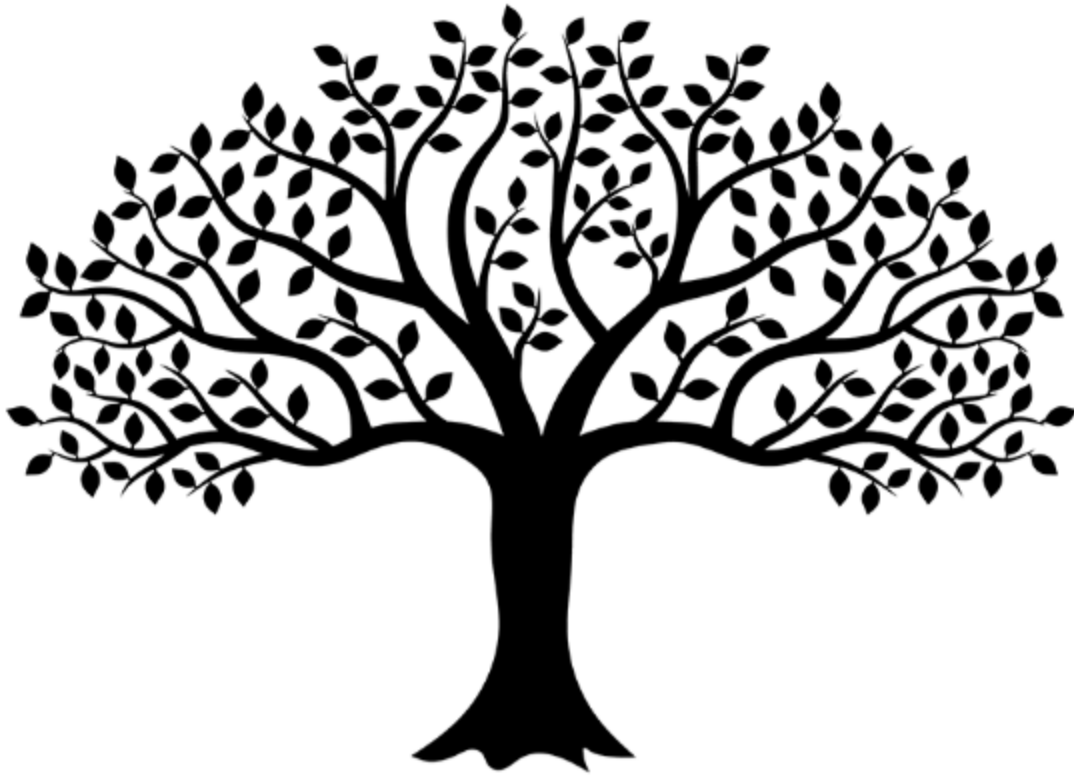
For weeks and weeks there had been no rain. The streams and pools had dried to dust, and all of the animals were thirsty. Two crows flying together in search of water, spotted a pitcher that had been left on a garden wall. They flew to it and saw that it was half full of water. But neither one could reach far enough inside the pitcher's narrow neck to get a drink.

"There must be a ways to get that water," said the first crow. "If we think it through, we'll find an answer."

The second crow, a very impatient bird, tried to push the pitcher over, straining with all of his might. But it was too heavy to budge. Very soon, much too quickly, he just gave up. "It's hopeless!" he croaked, and flew away to look for water elsewhere.

But the first crow was much more patient. He stayed by the pitcher and thought, and after a time he had an idea. Picking up some pebbles in his beak, he dropped them one by one into the pitcher until at last the water rose to the brim. Then the clever bird happily quenched his thirst.

"Wisdom and patience succeed where force fails."



Fortitude : Munificence

The Giving Tree

Once there was a tree....
and she loved a little boy.

And everyday the boy would come and he would gather her leaves and make them into crowns and play king of the forest.

He would climb up her trunk and swing from her branches and eat apples. And they would play hide-and-go-seek. And when he was tired, he would sleep in her shade. And the boy loved the tree.... very much.

And the tree was happy.

But time went by.

And the boy grew older.

And the tree was often alone.

Then one day the boy came to the tree and the tree said, "Come, Boy, come and climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and eat apples and play in my shade and be happy."

"I am too big to climb and play" said the boy. "I want to buy things and have fun. I want some money?"

"I'm sorry," said the tree, "but I have no money. I have only leaves and apples. Take my apples, Boy, and sell them in the city. Then you will have money and you will be happy."

And so the boy climbed up the tree and gathered her apples and carried them away.

And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time....
and the tree was sad.

And then one day the boy came back and the tree shook with joy and she said, "Come, Boy, climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and be happy."

"I am too busy to climb trees," said the boy. "I want a house to keep me warm," he said. "I want a wife and I want children, and so I need a house. Can you give me a house?"

"I have no house," said the tree. "The forest is my house, but you may cut off my branches and build a house. Then you will be happy."

And so the boy cut off her branches and carried them away to build his house.

And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time.

And when he came back, the tree was so happy she could hardly speak.

"Come, Boy," she whispered, "come and play."

"I am too old and sad to play," said the boy. "I want a boat that will take me far away from here. Can you give me a boat?"

"Cut down my trunk and make a boat," said the tree. "Then you can sail away... and be happy."

And so the boy cut down her trunk and made a boat and sailed away.

And the tree was happy
... but not really.

And after a long time the boy came back again.

"I am sorry, Boy," said the tree," but I have nothing left to give you - My apples are gone."

"My teeth are too weak for apples," said the boy.

"My branches are gone," said the tree. " You cannot swing on them - "

"I am too old to swing on branches," said the boy.

"My trunk is gone, " said the tree. "You cannot climb - "

"I am too tired to climb" said the boy.

"I am sorry," sighed the tree. "I wish that I could give you something... but I have nothing left. I am just an old stump. I am sorry...."

"I don't need very much now," said the boy. "just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired."

"Well," said the tree, straightening herself up as much as she could, "well, an old stump is good for sitting and resting Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest."

And the boy did.

And the tree was happy.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Have you ever given something to someone just to make them happy? If so, how did it feel?
2. What virtue did the tree have? (munificence, an aspect of fortitude)



Fortitude : Magnanimity

The Legend of St. George

From The Golden Legend

Saint George was a knight and born in Cappadocia. One time he came to the city of Silene in the province of Libya. Near this city was a pond, wherein there was a dragon which was poisoning all the country. Whenever he approached the city he poisoned the people with his breath, and therefore the people of the city gave to him every day two sheep to eat, so that he would do no harm to the people. When they ran out of sheep, he was given a man and a sheep. Then an ordinance was made that the children and young people of the town should be chosen by lottery to feed the dragon. Whoever the lot fell upon, wealthy or poor, he or she was delivered to the dragon.

One time the lot fell upon the king's daughter, and the sorrowful king said to his people, "For the love of the gods take gold and silver and all that I have, but let me have my daughter."

They said, "Sir, you have made the law, and our children are now dead, but you would do the contrary. Your daughter shall be given, or else we shall burn you and your house."

Seeing that he could do no more, the king began to weep, and said to his daughter, "Now I shall never see you married."

Then he returned to the people and asked for eight days' respite, which they granted to him. When the eight days were passed they came to him and said, "You see that the city is perishing."

Then the king had his daughter dressed like a bride, embraced and kissed her, gave her his blessing, then led her to the place where the dragon was.

When she was there Saint George passed by, and seeing the lady, he asked her what she was doing there.

She said, "Go your way, fair young man, lest you perish as well."

Then he said, "Tell me why you are weeping."

When she saw that he insisted on knowing, she told him how she had been delivered to the dragon.

Then Saint George said, "Fair daughter, doubt not, for I shall help you in the name of Jesus Christ."

She said, "For God's sake, good knight, go your way, for you cannot save me."

While they were thus talking together the dragon appeared and came running toward them. Saint George, who was on his horse, drew his sword, made the sign of the cross, then rode swiftly toward the dragon. He struck him with his spear, injuring him severely.

Then he said to the maid, "Tie your belt around the dragon's neck, and be not afraid."

When she had done so the dragon followed her meekly. She led him into the city, and the people fled in fear.

Saint George said to them, "Doubt not. Believe in God and Jesus Christ, and be baptized, and I shall slay the dragon."

Then the king and all his people were baptized, whereupon Saint George killed the dragon and cut off his head. It took four ox-carts to remove his body from the city.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did St. George display in killing the dragon? (Magnamity, an aspect of Fortitude. This act required great bravery and is worthy of high honor.)
2. Do you think St. George was afraid to approach the dragon?
3. How do you think St. George overcame his fear?



Fortitude : Magnanimity

David and Goliath

I Kings 17 (II Samuel in Bibles with Masoretic numbering)

When David, the Psalm-writer of the Bible, was still a young teenager, King Saul's people, who were known as the Israelites, went to war against the Philistines. There were two mountains, with a valley between them, and the Israelites were gathered on the side of one of those mountains, and the Philistines were gathered on the other.

The Philistines, though, had a secret weapon: a giant named Goliath. Goliath was "six cubits and a span" tall. Now, a cubit is about 18 inches, and a span is about 9 inches, so that means Goliath was over nine and a half feet tall! Ask your parents how tall the ceiling is in the room you're in right now; that will give you an idea of just how tall Goliath was!

Well, Goliath walks into the valley wearing a brass helmet and brass chain mail, with brass armor on his legs. He must have looked like a giant made of gold! In his hands, he wielded a spear made of iron – a giant-sized one! He yells out to the Israelites, "Choose out a man of you, and let him come down and fight hand to hand. If he be able to fight with me, and kill me, we will be servants to you: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, you shall be servants, and shall serve us. I have defied the bands of Israel this day: Give me a man, and let him fight with me hand to hand."

Twice a day – morning and night – for forty days, Goliath would yell that out, taunting the Israelites. King Saul and his people heard the giant bellowing, and they were afraid.

But it turns out that they had a secret weapon, too: the young David. David was King Saul's lyre-player (a lyre is like a harp), but one day he came to the Israelites' mountain-side camp to deliver some bread and cheeses. While he was there, he heard Goliath carrying on as he did. David turned to one of the Israelites and said, in essence, but not in these exact words, "Who does this fool-giant think he is defying the armies of God like that? And what does the man get who kills him?"

When David heard that the man who kills the giant would receive great riches, get to marry King Saul's daughter, and that his family would no longer have to pay a certain tax, he got busy. He told King Saul, "I thy servant will go, and will fight against the Philistine!"

King Saul looked at David and undoubtedly shook his head. "Thou art not able to withstand this Philistine, nor to fight against him: for thou art but a boy, but he is a warrior from his youth."

David replied to the King with a story, a true one. He told King Saul about how once, when he was watching his father's sheep, a lion and a bear came and stole one of them. But David went after the lion and the bear – and he beat them both! He did it with his bare hands, too, by strangling them! He told King Saul, "The Lord who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."

Saul heard that and figured David was more capable than he'd thought. So he decided to let David fight Goliath. He said to him: "Go, and the Lord be with thee." He gave to David some armor to wear during the battle. David tried it on, but found it heavy and hard to move around in. He told the King that, instead of armor, he'd just like to take his staff, a sling, and five stones.

So that's what he did. He went into the valley to meet up with Goliath. When Goliath showed up, he took a look at David and hated him right away. He said to him, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with a staff? Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the birds of the air, and to the beasts of the earth."

David said back to him, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, which thou hast defied. This day...the Lord will deliver thee into my hand, and I will slay thee, and take away thy head from thee: and I will give the carcasses of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air, and to the beasts of the earth: that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel!"

With that, the battle was on! Goliath came nearer and nearer to David. Then, summoning up his fortitude, David ran toward him. But as he ran, he put one of his five stones into his sling. He pulled back on the sling... pulled back some more.... pulled back.... Then bam! He releases the sling and the stone goes flying!

And guess where it went! It hit Goliath right in the middle of his forehead! Goliath tumbled down like a felled tree.

Since David didn't have a sword, he took the giant's sword. And then he used it to cut off the giant's head.

David was richly rewarded, and well-loved by the Israelite people. He had many more adventures and battles to go through, but he eventually became King David.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Have you ever been really afraid? How did you cope? What did you do?



Fortitude : Perseverance

The Little Red Hen

A Little Red Hen lived in a barnyard. She spent almost all of her time walking about the barnyard in her picketty-pecketty fashion, scratching everywhere for worms.

She dearly loved fat, delicious worms and felt they were absolutely necessary to the health of her children. As often as she found a worm she would call: "Chuck-chuck-chuck!" to her chickies.

When they were gathered about her, she would distribute choice morsels of her tid-bit. A busy little body was she!

Acat usually napped lazily in the barn door, not even bothering herself to scare the rat who ran here and there as he pleased. And as for the pig who lived in the sty – he did not care what happened so long as he could eat and grow fat.

One day the Little Red Hen found a Seed. It was a Wheat Seed, but the Little Red Hen was so accustomed to bugs and worms that she supposed this to be some new and perhaps very delicious kind of meat. She bit it gently and found that it resembled a worm in no way whatsoever as to taste although because it was long and slender, a Little Red Hen might easily be fooled by its appearance.

Carrying it about, she made many inquiries as to what it might be. She found it was a Wheat Seed and that, if planted, it would grow up and when ripe it could be made into flour and then into bread.

When she discovered that, she knew it ought to be planted. She was so busy hunting food for herself and her family that, naturally, she thought she ought not to take time to plant it.

So she thought of the Pig - upon whom time must hang heavily and of the Cat who had nothing to do, and of the great fat Rat with his idle hours, and she called loudly:

"Who will plant the Seed?"

But the Pig said, "Not I,"
and the Cat said, "Not I,"
and the Rat said, "Not I."

"Well, then," said the Little Red Hen, "I will."

And she did.

Then she went on with her daily duties through the long summer days, scratching for worms and feeding her chicks, while
the Pig grew fat,
and the Cat grew fat,
and the Rat grew fat,
and the Wheat grew tall and ready for harvest.

So one day the Little Red Hen chanced to notice how large the Wheat was and that the grain was ripe, so she ran about calling briskly: "Who will cut the Wheat?"

The Pig said, "Not I,"
the Cat said, "Not I,"
and the Rat said, "Not I."

"Well, then," said the Little Red Hen, "I will." And she did.

She got the sickle from among the farmer's tools in the barn and proceeded to cut off all of the big plant of Wheat.

On the ground lay the nicely cut Wheat, ready to be gathered and threshed, but the newest and yellowest and downiest of Mrs. Hen's chicks set up a "peep-peep-peeping" in their most vigorous fashion, proclaiming to the world at large, but most particularly to their mother, that she was neglecting them.

Poor Little Red Hen! She felt quite bewildered and hardly knew where to turn.

Her attention was sorely divided between her duty to her children and her duty to the Wheat, for which she felt responsible.

So, again, in a very hopeful tone, she called out, "Who will thresh the Wheat?"

But the Pig, with a grunt, said, "Not I," and the Cat, with a meow, said, "Not I," and the Rat, with a squeak, said, "Not I."

So the Little Red Hen, looking, it must be admitted, rather discouraged, said, "Well, I will, then."

And she did.

Of course, she had to feed her babies first, though, and when she had gotten them all to sleep for their afternoon nap, she went out and threshed the Wheat. Then she called out: "Who will carry the Wheat to the mill to be ground?"

Turning their backs with snippy glee, that Pig said, "Not I," and that Cat said, "Not I," and that Rat said, "Not I."

So the good Little Red Hen could do nothing but say, "I will then." And she did.

Carrying the sack of Wheat, she trudged off to the distant mill. There she ordered the Wheat ground into beautiful white flour. When the miller brought her the flour she walked slowly back all the way to her own barnyard in her own picketty-pecketty fashion.

She even managed, in spite of her load, to catch a nice juicy worm now and then and had one left for the babies when she reached them. Those cunning little fluff-balls were so glad to see their mother. For the first time, they really appreciated her.

After this really strenuous day Mrs. Hen retired to her slumbers earlier than usual - indeed, before the colors came into the sky to herald the setting of the sun, her usual bedtime hour.

She would have liked to sleep late in the morning, but her chicks, joining in the morning chorus of the hen yard, drove away all hopes of such a luxury.

Even as she sleepily half opened one eye, the thought came to her that to-day that Wheat must, somehow, be made into bread.

She was not in the habit of making bread, although, of course, anyone can make it if he or she follows the recipe with care, and she knew perfectly well that she could do it if necessary.

So after her children were fed and made sweet and fresh for the day, she hunted up the Pig, the Cat and the Rat.

Still confident that they would surely help her some day she sang out, "Who will make the bread?"

Alas for the Little Red Hen! Once more her hopes were dashed! For the Pig said, "Not I," the Cat said, "Not I," and the Rat said, "Not I."

So the Little Red Hen said once more, "I will then," and she did.

Feeling that she might have known all the time that she would have to do it all herself, she went and put on a fresh apron and spotless cook's cap. First of all she set the dough, as was proper. When it was time she brought out the moulding board and the baking tins, moulded the bread, divided it into loaves, and put them into the oven to bake. All the while the Cat sat lazily by, giggling and chuckling.

And close at hand the vain Rat powdered his nose and admired himself in a mirror. In the distance could be heard the long-drawn snores of the dozing Pig.

At last the great moment arrived. A delicious odor was wafted upon the autumn breeze. Everywhere the barnyard citizens sniffed the air with delight.

The Red Hen ambled in her picketty-pecketty way toward the source of all this excitement.

Although she appeared to be perfectly calm, in reality she could only with difficulty restrain an impulse to dance and sing, for had she not done all the work on this wonderful bread?

Small wonder that she was the most excited person in the barnyard!

She did not know whether the bread would be fit to eat, but - joy of joys! - when the lovely brown loaves came out of the oven, they were done to perfection.

Then, probably because she had acquired the habit, the Red Hen called: "Who will eat the Bread?"

All the animals in the barnyard were watching hungrily and smacking their lips in anticipation, and

the Pig said, "I will,"

the Cat said, "I will,"

the Rat said, "I will."

But the Little Red Hen said,

"No, you won't. I will."

And she did.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Why did the fortitudinous Little Red Hen work so hard?
2. Do you think she enjoyed the bread all the more for all the work she put into making it?



Fortitude : Perseverance

The Little Engine that Could

By Watty Piper

Chug chug chug. Puff puff puff. The little train ran along the tracks. She was a happy little train. Her cars were full of good things for boys and girls. There were all kinds of toy animals. Giraffes with long necks, teddy bears with no necks, and even a baby elephant. There were all kinds of dolls. Dolls with blue eyes and yellow hair, dolls with brown eyes and brown hair, and the funniest toy clown you ever saw. There were toy trucks, airplanes, and boats. There were picture books, games, and drums to play. The little train carried every kind of toy that boys or girls could want.

But that was not all. The little train carried good things to eat, too. Big, round oranges...fat, red apples...long, yellow bananas...fresh, cold milk...and lollipops to eat after dinner. The little train was taking all these good things to the other side of the mountain. "How happy the boys and girls will be to see me!" said the little train. "They will like the toys and good food that I am bringing."

But all at once the train came to a stop. She did not move at all. "Oh, dear," said the little train. "What can be the matter?" She tried to start up again. She tried and tried. But her wheels just would not turn.

"We can help," said the toy animals. The clown and the animals climbed out of their cars. They tried to push the little train. But she did not move. "We can help, too," said the dolls. And they got out and tried to push. Still the little train did not move. The toys and dolls did not know what to do.

Just then a shiny new engine came puffing down another track. "Maybe that engine can help us!" cried the clown. He began to wave a red flag. The Shiny New Engine slowed down. The dolls and toys called out to him. "Our engine is not working," they said. "Please pull our train over the mountain. If you do not, the boys and girls will not have any toys or good food."

The Shiny New Engine was bit friendly. "You want me to pull you?" he asked. "That is not what I do. I carry people. They sit in cars with soft seats."

They look out the windows. They eat in a nice dining car. They even sleep in a fine sleeping car. "I pull the likes of you? I should say not!"

Off went the Shiny New Engine without another word.

How sad all the toys and dolls felt!

Then the toy clown called out, "Here comes another engine. A big, strong one. Maybe this engine will help us." Again the clown waved his flag. The Big Strong Engine came to a stop. The toys and dolls called out together, "Please help us, Big Strong Engine. Our train is not working. But you can pull us over the mountain. "You must help us. Or the boys and girls will not have any toys to play with or good food to eat."

But the Big Strong Engine did not want to help. "I do not pull toys," he said. "I pull cars full of heavy logs. I pull big trucks. I have no time for the likes of you." And away puffed the Big Strong Engine without another word.

By this time the little train was no longer happy. And the dolls and toys were ready to cry. But the clown called out, "Look! Look! Another engine is coming. A little blue engine. A very little one. Maybe this engine will help us." The Little Blue Engine was a happy engine. She saw the clown waving his red flag and stopped at once. "What is the matter?" she asked in a kind way.

"Oh, Little Blue Engine," cried the dolls and toys. "Will you pull us over the mountain? Our engine is not working. If you do not help, the boys and girls will have no toys or good food. "Just over the mountain. "Please, please help us."

"Oh, my," said the Little Blue Engine. "I am not very big. And I do not pull trains. I just work in the yards. I have never even been over the mountain."

"But we must get there before the children wake up," said the toys and dolls. "Please?"

The Little Blue Engine looked at the dolls and toys. She could see that they were not happy. She thought about the children on the other side of the mountain. Without toys or good food, they would not be happy either.

The Little Blue Engine pulled up close. She took hold of the little train. The toys and dolls climbed back into their cars. At last the Little Blue Engine said, "I think I can climb up the mountain. I think I can. I think I can."

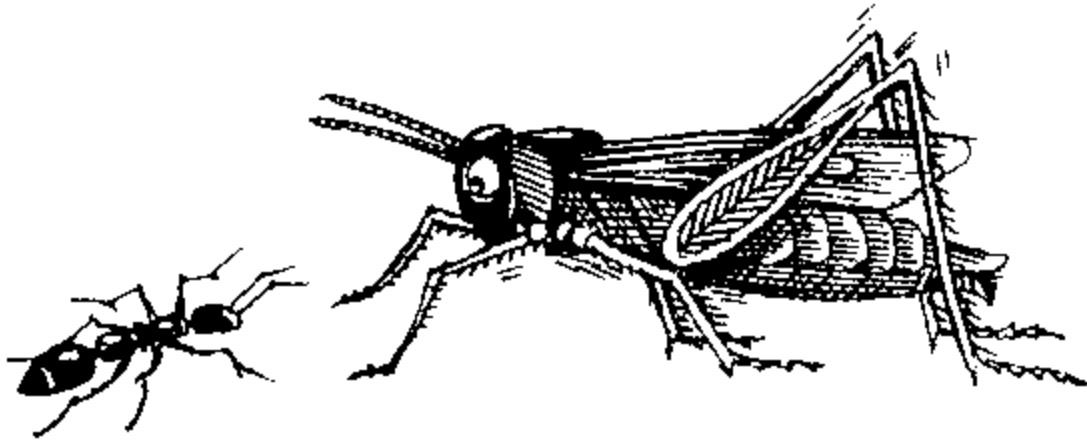
Then the Little Blue Engine began to pull. She tugged and she pulled. She pulled and she tugged. Puff puff, chug chug went the little engine. "I think I can. I think I can," she said.

Slowly, slowly, the train started to move. The dolls and toys began to smile and clap. Puff Puff, chug chug. Up the mountain went the Little Blue Engine. And all the time she kept saying, "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can..." Up, up, up.

The little engine climbed and climbed. At last she reached the top of the mountain. Down below lay the city. "Hurray! Hurray!" cried the dolls and animals.

"The boys and girls will be so happy," said the toy clown. "All because you helped us, Little Blue Engine."

The Little Blue Engine just smiled. But as she puffed down the mountain, the Little Blue Engine seemed to say..."I thought I could, I thought I could, I thought I could, I thought I could.



Fortitude : Perseverance

The Ant and the Grasshopper

One sunny Summer day, a grasshopper was making music and dancing when he noticed an ant very busy at work. The ant was dragging bits of food toward his home, struggling with each step.

“Mr. Ant,” said the grasshopper. “Why don’t you come sing and dance with me?”

The ant replied that he had lots of work to do. “Winter is coming,” he said, “and I have to store up food now, before the snows come and I won’t be able to find any.”

“Oh, phooey,” said the grasshopper. “Winter is a long way off! You should relax and have some fun! Come! Dance!”

“I thank you for your invitation, Mr. Grasshopper, but I really must get my work done. And you should work, too, because Winter is coming, and you’ll be sorry if you don’t!”

The grasshopper just laughed, and went on dancing and singing and having his fun.

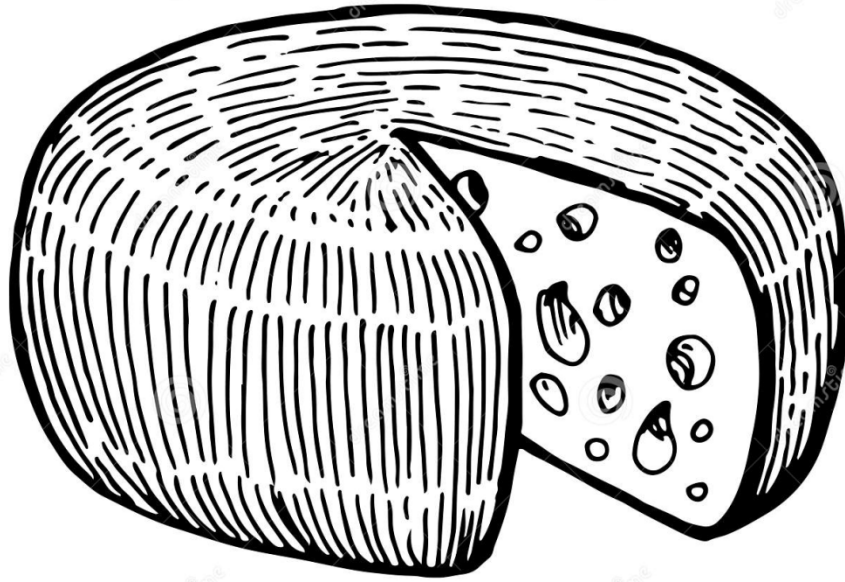
Every day, for weeks on end, the grasshopper would see the ant carrying heavy bits of food, and every day he’d invite the ant to sing and dance with him. But the ant always told the grasshopper that he had much to do – and that the grasshopper would regret putting off doing what needs to be done.

Finally, one day, the snows did come. The ground was blanketed in white, covering up all the grass, and leaves, and scraps of food. The grasshopper trudged through the bitter cold, looking for something – anything – to eat, but he found nothing. And he grew weaker and weaker. “I wish I’d listened to Mr. Ant,” he said miserably, in a very faint voice. “Oh, how I wish I’d listened!”

But the ant rested all cozy and warm in his sweet little home, dining on all the delicious morsels he'd worked so hard to obtain.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Why didn't the grasshopper do the work he should have done?
2. What is the name of the virtue that the ant displayed by working so hard? (fortitude)
3. What is the name of the sin the grasshopper displayed by goofing off? (sloth or laziness)
4. What should you do if you have work to do, but don't feel like doing it?
5. What are some ways to make work easier to do and more pleasant?



Temperance : Abstinence

Choosing a Bride

There was a young herdsman who wanted very much to marry, and was acquainted with three sisters. Each one was just as beautiful as the other, so it was difficult for him to make a choice, and he could not decide to give the preference to any one of them. Then he asked his mother for advice, and she said, "Invite all three, and set some cheese before them, and watch how they cut off a slice."

The youth did so. The first one ate the cheese with the rind on. The second one hastily cut the rind off the cheese, but she cut it so quickly that she left much good cheese with it, and threw that away also. The third peeled the rind off carefully, and cut neither too much nor too little. The shepherd told all this to his mother, who said, "Take the third for your wife."

This he did, and lived contentedly and happily with her.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Why did the herds man choose the third sister for a wife?
2. What are the virtues the third sister displayed? (prudence, and abstinence, an aspect of temperance)
3. Why is it important not to be wasteful?



Temperance : Abstinence

The Woman of Stavoren

The fine harbor at Stavoren welcomed the ships of many countries, and many countries were visited by the ships of Stavoren. So rich and proud became the city's merchants, they fitted their doors with handles and hinges of gold.

Among these merchants was a young widow, richest of the rich and proudest of the proud. They called her the Lady of Stavoren.

The Lady would stop at nothing to show herself better than her fellow merchants. She filled her palace with the most costly goods from wherever her ships made port. But her rivals always found the means to copy her.

"I must show them once and for all that I am their better," she said to herself. "Somehow, I must get hold of the most precious thing in the world."

One evening, the Lady attended a grand ball at the palace of another merchant. There she met a rich and handsome sea captain who had just sailed into Stavoren. He asked her for every dance.

At the end of the evening, the Captain kissed her hand. "My Lady, I was told you were the wealthiest woman in Stavoren. But no one warned me you were also the most charming."

From then on, the Lady and the Captain were seen everywhere, her arm in his. And everywhere they went, people talked about what might come of it.

“She’ll marry him,” said one.

“She’ll send him away,” said another.

“She’ll keep him dangling,” said still another.

It was not long before the Captain knelt before her. “My Lady, will you honor me by becoming my wife?”

“Gladly, dear Captain,” said the Lady. “But there is one condition. As a wedding gift, you must bring me the most precious thing in the world.”

“The most precious thing? What is that? And where do I find it?”

“If I knew,” said the Lady gently, “I would have purchased it myself. I ask you to discover it and bring it to me.”

“I will do so, dear Lady!” declared the Captain. “Until I return, please wear this ruby ring as a token of my love.”

The next day, the Captain sailed from Stavoren in search of the most precious thing in the world.

Months passed. Everyone in Stavoren knew of the Captain’s quest. Wherever the Lady went, she heard people guessing what the most precious thing would be.

“A magnificent gown,” said one.

“A marvelous statue,” said another.

“A pearl as big as an egg,” said still another.

The Lady was delighted to be causing such a stir. “And how they will envy me,” she said to herself, “when my Captain returns with his gift!”

At long last, the Captain’s ship was sighted entering the harbor. The people of Stavoren streamed to the dock. When the Lady arrived, dressed in her finest, they made way.

The Captain’s ship was just docking. “My Lady,” he called, “I have brought what you desired! The most precious thing in the world!”

“What is it, my Captain?” called back the Lady, barely able to hold in her excitement.

“I visited many ports in many lands,” the Captain said. “I saw many wonderful things. None could I say was the most precious of all. But at last, in the city of Danzig, I came across it. Then I laughed at myself! I should have known it from the first!”

“But what is it?” said the Lady impatiently.

“Wheat!” cried the Captain. “My ship is filled with wheat!”

“Wheat?” said the Lady. Her face grew white. Behind her, she heard murmurs from the crowd, and laughing. “Did you say *wheat*?”

“Yes, dear Lady!” said the Captain joyously. “What could be more precious, more valuable, than wheat? Without our daily bread, what good are all the treasures of the world?”

The Lady was silent for a moment, listening to the whispers and snickers of the crowd. “And this wheat belongs to me, to do with as I like?”

“Yes, my love! It is my wedding gift to you!”

“Then,” said the Lady, “pour it into the harbor.”

“What?” Now the Captain’s own face was white.

“Pour it into the harbor! Every grain of it!”

Murmurs of horror and approval both rose behind her.

“My Lady,” said the Captain, “please consider what you say. There is wheat enough here to feed a city! If you have no use for it, then give it to the poor and hungry. After all, you too may someday be in need.”

“I?” shrieked the Lady. “In need?”

She plucked from her finger the ruby ring the Captain had given her and held it high. “This ring will return to my hand before I am ever in need.”

With all her might, she flung it far into the harbor.

The Captain watched as the ring hit the water and sank. Then he looked at the Lady on the dock, her face red with rage.

He spoke not another word to her, but turned to his men.

“Cast off!”

When the ship reached the harbor mouth, the Captain had his men pour all the wheat overboard. Then he sailed from the harbor, never to return.

The next day, the Lady held a grand feast for all the richest merchants of Stavoren. She spared no expense, to show that she still had every cause for pride.

A huge roast fish was set before her for carving. As she was about to cut into it, the Lady saw something glinting in the fish’s mouth. She pulled out the object and held it up.

The diners gasped. The Lady turned pale.

It was the ruby ring.

A few weeks later, fishermen found that a sand bar was building beneath the water at the harbor's mouth. The discarded wheat had sprouted and grown, and was catching the sand that before had drifted freely.

Soon, the tall ships could not enter. The harbor was ruined, and with it went the fortunes of the city. Many of the merchants lost everything.

Among them was the Lady of Stavoren.

In the tiny town of Stavoren today, the sand bar is still called "Lady's Sand"—a reminder how the Lady of Stavoren scorned the most precious thing in the world.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Why do you think the woman wanted so many fine things? Did she appreciate them? Did she just want to show off to others?
2. After the harbor was ruined and the city and the woman lost their wealth, which do you think the woman would have rather had: food or her ruby ring?
3. Do you know what it means to take something "for granted"?
4. The woman lacked abstinence; she had a voracious appetite for things (She also had lacked humility, modesty, justice – and all sorts of things we'll learn about later)



Temperance : Abstinence

Cat and Mouse in Partnership

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

A cat had made the acquaintance of a mouse, and had said so much to her about the great love and friendship that he felt for her, that at last the mouse agreed that they should live and keep house together. "But we must make preparations for winter, or else we shall suffer from hunger," said the cat, "and you, little mouse, cannot venture out everywhere, or in the end you will be caught in a trap."

This good advice was followed, and they bought a pot of fat, but they did not know where to store it. Finally, after much consideration, the cat said, "I know of no place where it will be better stored up than in the church. No one dares take anything away from there. We will put it beneath the altar, and not touch it until we are need it."

So the pot was stored safely away, but it was not long before the cat took a great longing for it, and said to the mouse, "I wanted to tell you, little mouse, that my cousin has brought a little son into the world,

and she has asked me to be his godfather. He is white with brown spots, and I am to hold him over the baptismal font. Let me go out today, and you look after the house by yourself."

"Yes, yes," answered the mouse. "By all means go, and if you get anything good to eat, think of me. I would like to drink a drop of sweet red christening wine myself."

All this, however, was untrue. The cat had no cousin, and had not been asked to be godfather. He went straight to the church, crept up to the pot of fat, began to lick at it, and licked off the top of the fat. Then he went for a stroll on the roofs of the town, looked out for opportunities, and then stretched out in the sun, licking his whiskers whenever he thought of the pot of fat. He did not return home until it was evening.

"Well, here you are again," said the mouse. "You must have had a happy day."

"Everything went well," answered the cat.

"What name did they give the child?" asked the mouse.

"Top-Off," said the cat quite coolly.

"Top-Off?" cried the mouse. "That is a very odd and uncommon name. Is it a usual one in your family?" "What does that matter?", said the cat. "It is no worse than Crumb-Thief, as your godchildren are called."

Before long the cat was seized by another fit of longing. He said to the mouse, "You must do me a favor, and once more manage the house alone for a day. I have been asked again to be godfather, and since the child has a white ring around its neck, I cannot refuse."

The good mouse consented. However, the cat crept behind the town wall to the church, and devoured half the pot of fat. "Nothing tastes as good as that which one eats by oneself," he said, and was quite satisfied with his day's work.

When he arrived home the mouse asked, "What name was this child christened with?"

"Half-Gone," answered the cat.

"Half-Gone? What are you saying? I have never heard that name in all my life. I'll wager it is not in the almanac."

The cat's mouth soon again began to water for the delicious goods. "All good things come in threes," he said to the mouse. "I have been asked to be godfather again. The child is totally black, only it has white

paws. Otherwise it has not a single white hair on its whole body. This only happens once every few years. You will let me go, won't you?"

"Top-Off. Half-Gone," answered the mouse. "They are such odd names, that they make me stop and think."

"Here you sit at home," said the cat, "with your dark gray fur coat and long braid of hair capturing fantasies. That is because you do not go out in the daytime."

During the cat's absence the mouse cleaned the house, and put it in order, but the greedy cat devoured all the rest of the fat. "One has peace only after everything is eaten up," he said to himself. Well filled and fat, he did not return home until nighttime.

The mouse immediately asked what name had been given to the third child.

"You will not like it either," said the cat. "His name is All-Gone."

"All-Gone!", cried the mouse. "That is the most worrisome name of all. I have never seen it in print. All-Gone! What can that mean?" Then she shook her head, curled herself up, and lay down to sleep.

From this time forth no one invited the cat to be godfather, but when winter had come and there was no longer anything to be found outside, the mouse thought of their stored food, and said, "Come cat, we will go to our pot of fat which we have stored up for ourselves. It will taste good now."

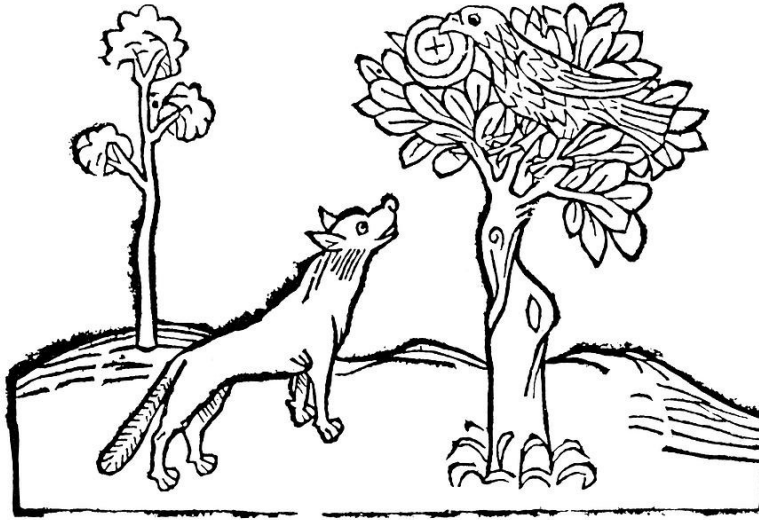
"Yes," answered the cat. "You will enjoy it as much as you would enjoy sticking that dainty tongue of yours out of the window."

They set out on their way, but when they arrived, the pot of fat, to be sure, was still in its place, but it was empty. "Alas," said the mouse, "now I see what has happened. Now it comes to light. You are a true friend. You ate everything when you were serving as a godfather. First top off, then half done, then ..." "Be quiet!" cried the cat. "One more word, and I will eat you too."

"All gone" was already on the poor mouse's lips. She had scarcely spoken it before the cat sprang on her, seized her, and swallowed her down. You see, that is the way of the world.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. One lesson here is that it's important to be careful with the friends you keep. Poor Mouse thought of the Cat as a friend – but kitty's out of control appetites put an end to that idea. Sometimes a friend's lack of virtue can be hard on *you*. Can you think of ways in which this is true?



Temperance : Modesty

The Fox and the Crow

Aesop

A Fox once saw a Crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree.

"That's for me, as I am a Fox," said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree.

"Good-day, Mistress Crow," he cried. "How well you are looking to-day: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds."

The Crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox.

"That will do," said he. "That was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future. Do not trust flatterers."

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1. What virtue did the crow fail to have? (modesty, an aspect of temperance. She wanted to show off.)
 2. Have you ever seen someone showing off? If so, what did you think of them when you saw that?
 3. What are other ways of being immodest (of not being modest)?
 4. The crow's lack of virtue allowed her to be taken advantage of. Are there other ways that a lack of a good habit makes someone weak and vulnerable?



Temperance : Modesty

The Peacock and the Crane

Aesop

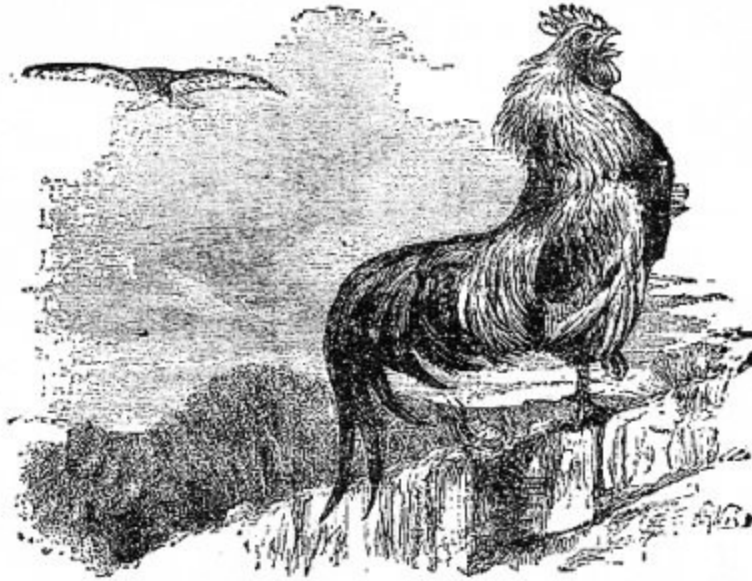
A Peacock, puffed up with vanity, met a Crane one day, and to impress him spread his gorgeous tail in the Sun.

“Look,” he said. “What have you to compare with this? I am dressed in all the glory of the rainbow, while your feathers are gray as dust!”

The Crane spread his broad wings and flew up toward the sun.

“Follow me if you can,” he said. But the Peacock stood where he was among the birds of the barnyard, while the Crane soared in freedom far up into the blue sky.

“The useful is of much more importance and value, than the ornamental.”



Temperance : Modesty

The Fighting Cocks and the Eagle

Aesop

Two game cocks were fiercely fighting for the mastery of the farmyard. One at last put the other to flight. The vanquished Cock skulked away and hid himself in a quiet corner. The conqueror, flying up to a high wall, flapped his wings and crowed exultingly with all his might. An Eagle sailing through the air pounced upon him, and carried him off in his talons. The vanquished Cock immediately came out of his corner, and ruled henceforth with undisputed mastery.

“Pride goes before destruction.”



Temperance : Modesty

Beauty and the Beast

Jeanne-Marie LePrince de Beaumont

There was once a very rich merchant, who had six children, three sons, and three daughters; being a man of sense, he spared no cost for their education, but gave them all kinds of masters. His daughters were extremely handsome, especially the youngest. When she was little everybody admired her, and called her "The little Beauty;" so that, as she grew up, she still went by the name of Beauty, which made her sisters very jealous.

The youngest, as she was handsomer, was also better than her sisters. The two eldest had a great deal of pride, because they were rich. They gave themselves ridiculous airs, and would not visit other merchants' daughters, nor keep company with any but persons of quality. They went out every day to parties of pleasure, balls, plays, concerts, and so forth, and they laughed at their youngest sister, because she spent the greatest part of her time in reading good books.

As it was known that they were great fortunes, several eminent merchants made their addresses to them; but the two eldest said, they would never marry, unless they could meet with a duke, or an earl at

least. Beauty very civilly thanked them that courted her, and told them she was too young yet to marry, but chose to stay with her father a few years longer.

All at once the merchant lost his whole fortune, excepting a small country house at a great distance from town, and told his children with tears in his eyes, they must go there and work for their living. The two eldest answered, that they would not leave the town, for they had several lovers, who they were sure would be glad to have them, though they had no fortune; but the good ladies were mistaken, for their lovers slighted and forsook them in their poverty. As they were not beloved on account of their pride, everybody said; they do not deserve to be pitied, we are very glad to see their pride humbled, let them go and give themselves quality airs in milking the cows and minding their dairy. But, added they, we are extremely concerned for Beauty, she was such a charming, sweet-tempered creature, spoke so kindly to poor people, and was of such an affable, obliging behavior. Nay, several gentlemen would have married her, though they knew she had not a penny; but she told them she could not think of leaving her poor father in his misfortunes, but was determined to go along with him into the country to comfort and attend him. Poor Beauty at first was sadly grieved at the loss of her fortune; "but," said she to herself, "were I to cry ever so much, that would not make things better, I must try to make myself happy without a fortune."

When they came to their country house, the merchant and his three sons applied themselves to husbandry and tillage; and Beauty rose at four in the morning, and made haste to have the house clean, and dinner ready for the family. In the beginning she found it very difficult, for she had not been used to work as a servant, but in less than two months she grew stronger and healthier than ever. After she had done her work, she read, played on the harpsichord, or else sung whilst she spun.

On the contrary, her two sisters did not know how to spend their time; they got up at ten, and did nothing but saunter about the whole day, lamenting the loss of their fine clothes and acquaintance. "Do but see our youngest sister," said they, one to the other, "what a poor, stupid, mean-spirited creature she is, to be contented with such an unhappy dismal situation."

The good merchant was of quite a different opinion; he knew very well that Beauty outshone her sisters, in her person as well as her mind, and admired her humility and industry, but above all her humility and patience; for her sisters not only left her all the work of the house to do, but insulted her every moment.

The family had lived about a year in this retirement, when the merchant received a letter with an account that a vessel, on board of which he had effects, was safely arrived. This news had liked to have turned the heads of the two eldest daughters, who immediately flattered themselves with the hopes of returning to town, for they were quite weary of a country life; and when they saw their father ready to set out, they begged of him to buy them new gowns, headdresses, ribbons, and all manner of trifles; but Beauty asked for nothing for she thought to herself, that all the money her father was going to receive, would scarce be sufficient to purchase everything her sisters wanted.

"What will you have, Beauty?" said her father.

"Since you have the goodness to think of me," answered she, "be so kind to bring me a rose, for as none grows hereabouts, they are a kind of rarity." Not that Beauty cared for a rose, but she asked for

something, lest she should seem by her example to condemn her sisters' conduct, who would have said she did it only to look particular.

The good man went on his journey, but when he came there, they went to law with him about the merchandise, and after a great deal of trouble and pains to no purpose, he came back as poor as before.

He was within thirty miles of his own house, thinking on the pleasure he should have in seeing his children again, when going through a large forest he lost himself. It rained and snowed terribly; besides, the wind was so high, that it threw him twice off his horse, and night coming on, he began to apprehend being either starved to death with cold and hunger, or else devoured by the wolves, whom he heard howling all round him, when, on a sudden, looking through a long walk of trees, he saw a light at some distance, and going on a little farther perceived it came from a palace illuminated from top to bottom. The merchant returned God thanks for this happy discovery, and hastened to the place, but was greatly surprised at not meeting with any one in the outer courts. His horse followed him, and seeing a large stable open, went in, and finding both hay and oats, the poor beast, who was almost famished, fell to eating very heartily; the merchant tied him up to the manger, and walking towards the house, where he saw no one, but entering into a large hall, he found a good fire, and a table plentifully set out with but one cover laid. As he was wet quite through with the rain and snow, he drew near the fire to dry himself. "I hope," said he, "the master of the house, or his servants will excuse the liberty I take; I suppose it will not be long before some of them appear."

He waited a considerable time, until it struck eleven, and still nobody came. At last he was so hungry that he could stay no longer, but took a chicken, and ate it in two mouthfuls, trembling all the while. After this he drank a few glasses of wine, and growing more courageous he went out of the hall, and crossed through several grand apartments with magnificent furniture, until he came into a chamber, which had an exceeding good bed in it, and as he was very much fatigued, and it was past midnight, he concluded it was best to shut the door, and go to bed.

It was ten the next morning before the merchant waked, and as he was going to rise he was astonished to see a good suit of clothes in the room of his own, which were quite spoiled; certainly, said he, this palace belongs to some kind fairy, who has seen and pitied my distress. He looked through a window, but instead of snow saw the most delightful arbors, interwoven with the beautifullest flowers that were ever beheld. He then returned to the great hall, where he had supped the night before, and found some chocolate ready made on a little table. "Thank you, good Madam Fairy," said he aloud, "for being so careful, as to provide me a breakfast; I am extremely obliged to you for all your favors."

The good man drank his chocolate, and then went to look for his horse, but passing through an arbor of roses he remembered Beauty's request to him, and gathered a branch on which were several; immediately he heard a great noise, and saw such a frightful Beast coming towards him, that he was ready to faint away.

"You are very ungrateful," said the Beast to him, in a terrible voice; "I have saved your life by receiving you into my castle, and, in return, you steal my roses, which I value beyond any thing in the universe, but you shall die for it; I give you but a quarter of an hour to prepare yourself, and say your prayers."

The merchant fell on his knees, and lifted up both his hands, "My lord," said he, "I beseech you to forgive me, indeed I had no intention to offend in gathering a rose for one of my daughters, who desired me to bring her one."

"My name is not My Lord," replied the monster, "but Beast; I don't love compliments, not I. I like people to speak as they think; and so do not imagine, I am to be moved by any of your flattering speeches. But you say you have got daughters. I will forgive you, on condition that one of them come willingly, and suffer for you. Let me have no words, but go about your business, and swear that if your daughter refuse to die in your stead, you will return within three months."

The merchant had no mind to sacrifice his daughters to the ugly monster, but he thought, in obtaining this respite, he should have the satisfaction of seeing them once more, so he promised, upon oath, he would return, and the Beast told him he might set out when he pleased, "but," added he, "you shall not depart empty handed; go back to the room where you lay, and you will see a great empty chest; fill it with whatever you like best, and I will send it to your home," and at the same time Beast withdrew.

"Well," said the good man to himself, "if I must die, I shall have the comfort, at least, of leaving something to my poor children." He returned to the bedchamber, and finding a great quantity of broad pieces of gold, he filled the great chest the Beast had mentioned, locked it, and afterwards took his horse out of the stable, leaving the palace with as much grief as he had entered it with joy. The horse, of his own accord, took one of the roads of the forest, and in a few hours the good man was at home.

His children came round him, but instead of receiving their embraces with pleasure, he looked on them, and holding up the branch he had in his hands, he burst into tears. "Here, Beauty," said he, "take these roses, but little do you think how dear they are like to cost your unhappy father," and then related his fatal adventure. Immediately the two eldest set up lamentable outcries, and said all manner of ill-natured things to Beauty, who did not cry at all.

"Do but see the pride of that little wretch," said they; "she would not ask for fine clothes, as we did; but no truly, Miss wanted to distinguish herself, so now she will be the death of our poor father, and yet she does not so much as shed a tear."

"Why should I," answered Beauty, "it would be very needless, for my father shall not suffer upon my account, since the monster will accept of one of his daughters, I will deliver myself up to all his fury, and I am very happy in thinking that my death will save my father's life, and be a proof of my tender love for him."

"No, sister," said her three brothers, "that shall not be, we will go find the monster, and either kill him, or perish in the attempt."

"Do not imagine any such thing, my sons," said the merchant, "Beast's power is so great, that I have no hopes of your overcoming him. I am charmed with Beauty's kind and generous offer, but I cannot yield to it. I am old, and have not long to live, so can only loose a few years, which I regret for your sakes alone, my dear children."

"Indeed father," said Beauty, "you shall not go to the palace without me, you cannot hinder me from following you." It was to no purpose all they could say. Beauty still insisted on setting out for the fine palace, and her sisters were delighted at it, for her virtue and amiable qualities made them envious and jealous.

The merchant was so afflicted at the thoughts of losing his daughter, that he had quite forgot the chest full of gold, but at night when he retired to rest, no sooner had he shut his chamber door, than, to his great astonishment, he found it by his bedside; he was determined, however, not to tell his children, that he was grown rich, because they would have wanted to return to town, and he was resolved not to leave the country; but he trusted Beauty with the secret, who informed him, that two gentlemen came in his absence, and courted her sisters; she begged her father to consent to their marriage, and give them fortunes, for she was so good, that she loved them and forgave heartily all their ill usage. These wicked creatures rubbed their eyes with an onion to force some tears when they parted with their sister, but her brothers were really concerned. Beauty was the only one who did not shed tears at parting, because she would not increase their uneasiness.

The horse took the direct road to the palace, and towards evening they perceived it illuminated as at first. The horse went of himself into the stable, and the good man and his daughter came into the great hall, where they found a table splendidly served up, and two covers. The merchant had no heart to eat, but Beauty, endeavoring to appear cheerful, sat down to table, and helped him. "Afterwards," thought she to herself, "Beast surely has a mind to fatten me before he eats me, since he provides such plentiful entertainment." When they had supped they heard a great noise, and the merchant, all in tears, bid his poor child, farewell, for he thought Beast was coming. Beauty was sadly terrified at his horrid form, but she took courage as well as she could, and the monster having asked her if she came willingly; "ye -- e -- es," said she, trembling.

The beast responded, "You are very good, and I am greatly obliged to you; honest man, go your ways tomorrow morning, but never think of coming here again."

"Farewell Beauty, farewell Beast," answered he, and immediately the monster withdrew. "Oh, daughter," said the merchant, embracing Beauty, "I am almost frightened to death, believe me, you had better go back, and let me stay here."

"No, father," said Beauty, in a resolute tone, "you shall set out tomorrow morning, and leave me to the care and protection of providence." They went to bed, and thought they should not close their eyes all night; but scarce were they laid down, than they fell fast asleep, and Beauty dreamed, a fine lady came, and said to her, "I am content, Beauty, with your good will, this good action of yours in giving up your own life to save your father's shall not go unrewarded." Beauty waked, and told her father her dream, and though it helped to comfort him a little, yet he could not help crying bitterly, when he took leave of his dear child.

As soon as he was gone, Beauty sat down in the great hall, and fell a crying likewise; but as she was mistress of a great deal of resolution, she recommended herself to God, and resolved not to be uneasy the little time she had to live; for she firmly believed Beast would eat her up that night.

However, she thought she might as well walk about until then, and view this fine castle, which she could not help admiring; it was a delightful pleasant place, and she was extremely surprised at seeing a door, over which was written, "Beauty's Apartment." She opened it hastily, and was quite dazzled with the magnificence that reigned throughout; but what chiefly took up her attention, was a large library, a harpsichord, and several music books. "Well," said she to herself, "I see they will not let my time hang heavy upon my hands for want of amusement." Then she reflected, "Were I but to stay here a day, there would not have been all these preparations." This consideration inspired her with fresh courage; and opening the library she took a book, and read these words, in letters of gold:

Welcome Beauty, banish fear,
You are queen and mistress here.
Speak your wishes, speak your will,
Swift obedience meets them still.

"Alas," said she, with a sigh, "there is nothing I desire so much as to see my poor father, and know what he is doing." She had no sooner said this, when casting her eyes on a great looking glass, to her great amazement, she saw her own home, where her father arrived with a very dejected countenance. Her sisters went to meet him, and notwithstanding their endeavors to appear sorrowful, their joy, felt for having got rid of their sister, was visible in every feature. A moment after, everything disappeared, and Beauty's apprehensions at this proof of Beast's complaisance.

At noon she found dinner ready, and while at table, was entertained with an excellent concert of music, though without seeing anybody. But at night, as she was going to sit down to supper, she heard the noise Beast made, and could not help being sadly terrified. "Beauty," said the monster, "will you give me leave to see you sup?"

"That is as you please," answered Beauty trembling.

"No," replied the Beast, "you alone are mistress here; you need only bid me gone, if my presence is troublesome, and I will immediately withdraw. But, tell me, do not you think me very ugly?"

"That is true," said Beauty, "for I cannot tell a lie, but I believe you are very good natured."

"So I am," said the monster, "but then, besides my ugliness, I have no sense; I know very well, that I am a poor, silly, stupid creature."

"'Tis no sign of folly to think so," replied Beauty, "for never did fool know this, or had so humble a conceit of his own understanding."

"Eat then, Beauty," said the monster, "and endeavor to amuse yourself in your palace, for everything here is yours, and I should be very uneasy, if you were not happy."

"You are very obliging," answered Beauty, "I own I am pleased with your kindness, and when I consider that, your deformity scarce appears."

"Yes, yes," said the Beast, "my heart is good, but still I am a monster."

"Among mankind," says Beauty, "there are many that deserve that name more than you, and I prefer you, just as you are, to those, who, under a human form, hide a treacherous, corrupt, and ungrateful heart."

"If I had sense enough," replied the Beast, "I would make a fine compliment to thank you, but I am so dull, that I can only say, I am greatly obliged to you."

Beauty ate a hearty supper, and had almost conquered her dread of the monster; but she had like to have fainted away, when he said to her, "Beauty, will you be my wife?"

She was some time before she dared answer, for she was afraid of making him angry, if she refused. At last, however, she said trembling, "no Beast." Immediately the poor monster went to sigh, and hissed so frightfully, that the whole palace echoed. But Beauty soon recovered her fright, for Beast having said, in a mournful voice, "then farewell, Beauty," left the room; and only turned back, now and then, to look at her as he went out.

When Beauty was alone, she felt a great deal of compassion for poor Beast. "Alas," said she, "'tis thousand pities, anything so good natured should be so ugly."

Beauty spent three months very contentedly in the palace. Every evening Beast paid her a visit, and talked to her, during supper, very rationally, with plain good common sense, but never with what the world calls wit; and Beauty daily discovered some valuable qualifications in the monster, and seeing him often had so accustomed her to his deformity, that, far from dreading the time of his visit, she would often look on her watch to see when it would be nine, for the Beast never missed coming at that hour. There was but one thing that gave Beauty any concern, which was, that every night, before she went to bed, the monster always asked her, if she would be his wife. One day she said to him, "Beast, you make me very uneasy, I wish I could consent to marry you, but I am too sincere to make you believe that will ever happen; I shall always esteem you as a friend, endeavor to be satisfied with this."

"I must," said the Beast, "for, alas! I know too well my own misfortune, but then I love you with the tenderest affection. However, I ought to think myself happy, that you will stay here; promise me never to leave me."

Beauty blushed at these words; she had seen in her glass, that her father had pined himself sick for the loss of her, and she longed to see him again. "I could," answered she, "indeed, promise never to leave you entirely, but I have so great a desire to see my father, that I shall fret to death, if you refuse me that satisfaction."

"I had rather die myself," said the monster, "than give you the least uneasiness. I will send you to your father, you shall remain with him, and poor Beast will die with grief."

"No," said Beauty, weeping, "I love you too well to be the cause of your death. I give you my promise to return in a week. You have shown me that my sisters are married, and my brothers gone to the army; only let me stay a week with my father, as he is alone."

"You shall be there tomorrow morning," said the Beast, "but remember your promise. You need only lay your ring on a table before you go to bed, when you have a mind to come back. Farewell Beauty." Beast sighed, as usual, bidding her good night, and Beauty went to bed very sad at seeing him so afflicted. When she waked the next morning, she found herself at her father's, and having rung a little bell, that was by her bedside, she saw the maid come, who, the moment she saw her, gave a loud shriek, at which the good man ran up stairs, and thought he should have died with joy to see his dear daughter again. He held her fast locked in his arms above a quarter of an hour. As soon as the first transports were over, Beauty began to think of rising, and was afraid she had no clothes to put on; but the maid told her, that she had just found, in the next room, a large trunk full of gowns, covered with gold and diamonds. Beauty thanked good Beast for his kind care, and taking one of the plainest of them, she intended to make a present of the others to her sisters. She scarce had said so when the trunk disappeared. Her father told her, that Beast insisted on her keeping them herself, and immediately both gowns and trunk came back again.

Beauty dressed herself, and in the meantime they sent to her sisters who hastened thither with their husbands. They were both of them very unhappy. The eldest had married a gentleman, extremely handsome indeed, but so fond of his own person, that he was full of nothing but his own dear self, and neglected his wife. The second had married a man of wit, but he only made use of it to plague and torment everybody, and his wife most of all. Beauty's sisters sickened with envy, when they saw her dressed like a princess, and more beautiful than ever, nor could all her obliging affectionate behavior stifle their jealousy, which was ready to burst when she told them how happy she was. They went down into the garden to vent it in tears; and said one to the other, in what way is this little creature better than us, that she should be so much happier? "Sister," said the oldest, "a thought just strikes my mind; let us endeavor to detain her above a week, and perhaps the silly monster will be so enraged at her for breaking her word, that he will devour her."

"Right, sister," answered the other, "therefore we must show her as much kindness as possible." After they had taken this resolution, they went up, and behaved so affectionately to their sister, that poor Beauty wept for joy. When the week was expired, they cried and tore their hair, and seemed so sorry to part with her, that she promised to stay a week longer.

In the meantime, Beauty could not help reflecting on herself, for the uneasiness she was likely to cause poor Beast, whom she sincerely loved, and really longed to see again. The tenth night she spent at her father's, she dreamed she was in the palace garden, and that she saw Beast extended on the grass plat, who seemed just expiring, and, in a dying voice, reproached her with her ingratitude. Beauty started out of her sleep, and bursting into tears. "Am I not very wicked," said she, "to act so unkindly to Beast, that has studied so much, to please me in everything? Is it his fault if he is so ugly, and has so little sense? He is kind and good, and that is sufficient. Why did I refuse to marry him? I should be happier with the monster than my sisters are with their husbands; it is neither wit, nor a fine person, in a husband, that makes a woman happy, but virtue, sweetness of temper, and complaisance, and Beast has all these valuable qualifications. It is true, I do not feel the tenderness of affection for him, but I find I have the

highest gratitude, esteem, and friendship; I will not make him miserable, were I to be so ungrateful I should never forgive myself." Beauty having said this, rose, put her ring on the table, and then laid down again; scarce was she in bed before she fell asleep, and when she waked the next morning, she was overjoyed to find herself in the Beast's palace.

She put on one of her richest suits to please him, and waited for evening with the utmost impatience, at last the wished-for hour came, the clock struck nine, yet no Beast appeared. Beauty then feared she had been the cause of his death; she ran crying and wringing her hands all about the palace, like one in despair; after having sought for him everywhere, she recollected her dream, and flew to the canal in the garden, where she dreamed she saw him. There she found poor Beast stretched out, quite senseless, and, as she imagined, dead. She threw herself upon him without any dread, and finding his heart beat still, she fetched some water from the canal, and poured it on his head. Beast opened his eyes, and said to Beauty, "You forgot your promise, and I was so afflicted for having lost you, that I resolved to starve myself, but since I have the happiness of seeing you once more, I die satisfied."

"No, dear Beast," said Beauty, "you must not die. Live to be my husband; from this moment I give you my hand, and swear to be none but yours. Alas! I thought I had only a friendship for you, but the grief I now feel convinces me, that I cannot live without you." Beauty scarce had pronounced these words, when she saw the palace sparkle with light; and fireworks, instruments of music, everything seemed to give notice of some great event. But nothing could fix her attention; she turned to her dear Beast, for whom she trembled with fear; but how great was her surprise! Beast was disappeared, and she saw, at her feet, one of the loveliest princes that eye ever beheld; who returned her thanks for having put an end to the charm, under which he had so long resembled a Beast. Though this prince was worthy of all her attention, she could not forbear asking where Beast was.

"You see him at your feet, said the prince. A wicked fairy had condemned me to remain under that shape until a beautiful virgin should consent to marry me. The fairy likewise enjoined me to conceal my understanding. There was only you in the world generous enough to be won by the goodness of my temper, and in offering you my crown I can't discharge the obligations I have to you."

Beauty, agreeably surprised, gave the charming prince her hand to rise; they went together into the castle, and Beauty was overjoyed to find, in the great hall, her father and his whole family, whom the beautiful lady, that appeared to her in her dream, had conveyed thither.

"Beauty," said this lady, "come and receive the reward of your judicious choice; you have preferred virtue before either wit or beauty, and deserve to find a person in whom all these qualifications are united. You are going to be a great queen. I hope the throne will not lessen your virtue, or make you forget yourself. As to you, ladies," said the fairy to Beauty's two sisters, "I know your hearts, and all the malice they contain. Become two statues, but, under this transformation, still retain your reason. You shall stand before your sister's palace gate, and be it your punishment to behold her happiness; and it will not be in your power to return to your former state, until you own your faults, but I am very much afraid that you will always remain statues. Pride, anger, gluttony, and idleness are sometimes conquered, but the conversion of a malicious and envious mind is a kind of miracle."

Immediately the fairy gave a stroke with her wand, and in a moment all that were in the hall were transported into the prince's dominions. His subjects received him with joy. He married Beauty, and lived with her many years, and their happiness -- as it was founded on virtue -- was complete.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Beauty saw Beast's inner beauty, and her love for him made him beautiful to her on the outside, too.
2. Beast "married Beauty, and lived with her many years, and their happiness – as it was founded on virtue—was complete." What does that mean? Could they have been truly happy without virtue?
3. After they lived happily together for many years, do you think they found each other more beautiful or less beautiful?



Temperance : Humility

The Emperor's New Clothes

Many years ago, there was an Emperor who was so very fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on them. He did not trouble about his soldiers. He did not care to go to the theatre. He only went out when he had the chance to show off his new clothes. He had a different suit for each hour of the day. Most kings could be found sitting in council. It was said of the Emperor, "He is sitting in his wardrobe."

One day, two fellows calling themselves weavers came to town. They said that they knew how to weave cloth of the most beautiful colors and patterns. The clothes made from this wonderful cloth would be invisible to everyone who was unfit for the job he held, or who was very simple in character.

“These must, indeed, be splendid clothes!” thought the Emperor. “If I had such a suit, I might at once find out what men in my kingdom are unfit for their job. I would be able to tell the wise men from the foolish! This stuff must be woven for me immediately.” He gave large sums of money to both the weavers in order that they might begin their work at once.

So the two pretend weavers set up two looms. They worked very busily, though in reality they did nothing at all. They asked for the finest silk and the purest gold thread. They put both into their own knapsacks. Then they pretended to work at the empty looms until late at night.

“I should like to know how the weavers are getting on with my cloth,” said the Emperor to himself one day. When he remembered that a simpleton, or one unfit for his job would be unable to see the cloth he began to worry. To be sure, he thought he was safe. However, he would prefer sending somebody else to bring him news about the weavers, and their work. All the people in the kingdom had heard of the wonderful cloth. All were eager to learn how wise or how foolish their neighbors might be.

“I will send my faithful old wise man to the weavers,” said the Emperor at last. “He will be best able to see how the cloth looks. He is a man of sense. No one can be better for his job than he is.”

So the faithful old wise man went into the hall where the thieves were working with all their might at their empty looms. “What can be the meaning of this?” thought the old man, opening his eyes very wide. “I cannot find the least bit of thread on the looms.” However, he did not say his thoughts aloud.

The thieves asked him very kindly to be so good as to come nearer their looms. Then, they asked him whether the cloth pleased him. They asked whether the colors were not very beautiful. All the time they were pointing to the empty frames. The poor old wise man looked and looked. He could not see anything on the looms for a very good reason. There was nothing there.

“What!” thought he again. “Is it possible that I am a fool? I have never thought so myself. No one must know it now if I am so. Can it be, that I am unfit for my job? No, the Emperor must not know that either. I will never tell that I could not see the stuff.”

“Well, Sir!” said one of the weavers still pretending to work.

“You do not say whether the cloth pleases you.”

“Oh, it is excellent!” replied the old wise man, looking at the loom through his spectacles. “This pattern, and the colors, yes, I will tell the Emperor without delay, how very beautiful I think them.”

“We shall be much obliged to you,” said the thieves. Then they named the many colors and described the pattern of the pretended stuff. The old wise man listened with care to their words so he might

repeat them to the Emperor. The thieves asked for more silk and gold saying that it was necessary to complete what they had begun. Once again they put all that was given them into their knapsacks. They went on working with as much effort as before at their empty looms.

The Emperor soon sent another man from his court to see how the weavers were getting on. Now he wanted to know if the cloth would soon be ready. It was just the same with this gentleman as with the wise man. First he looked closely at the looms on all sides. He could see nothing at all but the empty frames.

“Does not the stuff appear as beautiful to you, as it did to my lord the wise man?” asked the thieves of the Emperor’s second advisor.

“I certainly am not stupid!” thought the man. “It must be, that I am not fit for my good job! That is very odd. However, no one shall know anything about it.”

And so he praised the stuff he could not see. He declared that he was happy with both colors and patterns. “Indeed, your Imperial Majesty,” he said to his emperor when he returned. “The cloth which the weavers are preparing is extraordinarily magnificent.”

The whole city was talking of the splendid cloth, which the Emperor had ordered to be woven.

Finally, the Emperor himself wished to see the costly material while it was still in the loom. He took many officers of the court and the two honest men who had already admired the cloth. As soon as the weavers saw the Emperor approach, they went on working faster than ever although they still did not pass even one thread through the looms.

“Is not the work absolutely magnificent?” said the two officers of the crown, already mentioned. “If your Majesty will only be pleased to look at it! What a splendid design! What glorious colors!” and at the same time they pointed to the empty frames; for they imagined that everyone else could see this exquisite piece of workmanship.

“How is this?” said the Emperor to himself. “I can see nothing! This is indeed a terrible affair! Am I a simpleton, or am I unfit to be an Emperor? That would be the worst thing that could happen—Oh! The cloth is charming,” said he, aloud. “I approve of it completely.” He smiled most graciously and looked closely at the empty looms. No way would he say that he could not see what two of his advisors had praised so much. Everyone with the Emperor now strained his or her eyes hoping to discover something on the looms, but they could see no more than the others.

Nevertheless, they all exclaimed, “Oh, how beautiful!” and advised his majesty to have some new clothes made from this splendid material for the parade that was planned. “Magnificent! Charming! Excellent!” was called out on all sides. Everyone was very cheerful. The Emperor was pleased. He presented the weavers with the emblem of an order of knighthood. The thieves sat up the whole of the night before the day on which the parade was to take place. They had sixteen lights burning, so that everyone might see how anxious they were to finish the Emperor’s new suit. They pretended to roll the cloth off the looms. They cut the air with their scissors and sewed with needles without any thread in them. “See!” cried they, at last.

“The Emperor’s new clothes are ready!”

The Emperor, with all the grandees of his court, came to the weavers. The thieves raised their arms, as if in the act of holding something up. “Here are your Majesty’s trousers! Here is the scarf! Here is the mantle! The whole suit is as light as a cobweb; one might fancy one has nothing at all on, when dressed in it.”

“Yes indeed!” said all the courtiers, although not one of them could see anything of this special cloth.

The Emperor was undressed for a fitting, and the thieves pretended to array him in his new suit. The Emperor turned round and from side to side before the looking glass.

“How splendid his Majesty looks in his new clothes, and how well they fit!” everyone cried out. “What a design! What colors! These are indeed royal robes!”

“I am quite ready,” said the Emperor. He appeared to be examining his handsome suit.

The lords of the bedchamber, who were to carry his Majesty’s train felt about on the ground as if they were lifting up the ends of the mantle. Then they pretended to be carrying something for they would by no means want to appear foolish or not fit for their jobs.

The Emperor walked under his high canopy in the midst of the procession, through the streets of his capital. All the people standing by, and those at the windows, cried out, “Oh! How beautiful are our Emperor’s new clothes! What a magnificent train there is to the mantle; and how gracefully the scarf hangs!” No one would admit these much admired clothes could not be seen because, in doing so, he would have been saying he was either a simpleton or unfit for his job.

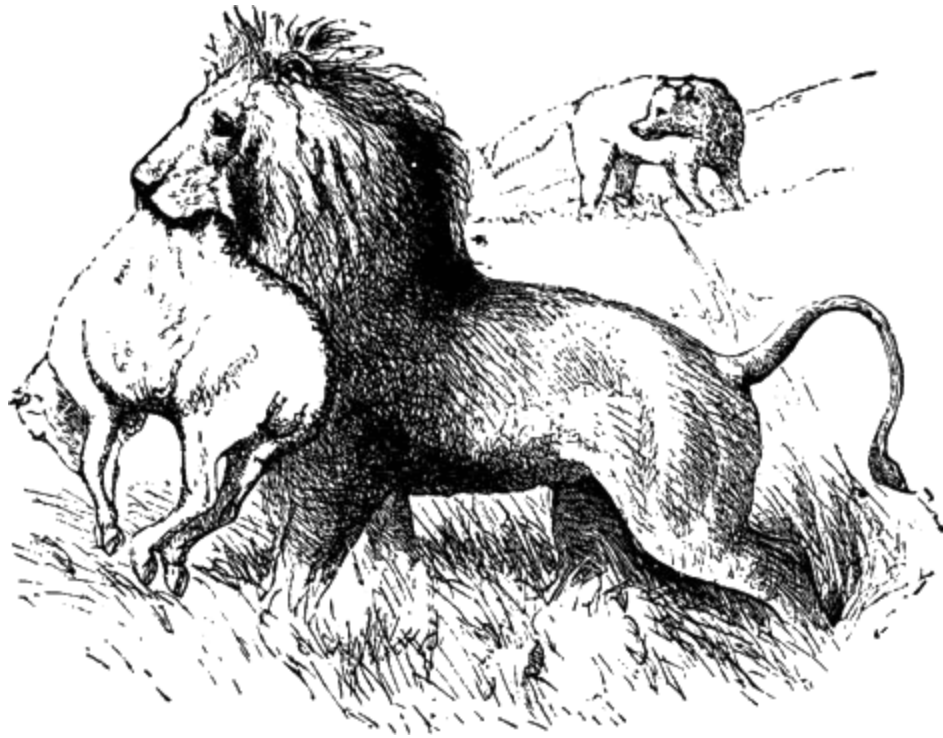
“But the Emperor has nothing at all on!” said a little child.

“Listen to the voice of the child!” exclaimed his father. What the child had said was whispered from one to another. “But he has nothing at all on!” at last cried out all the people. The Emperor was upset, for he knew that the people were right. However, he thought the procession must go on now! The lords of the bedchamber took greater pains than ever, to appear holding up a train, although, in reality, there was no train to hold, and the Emperor walked on in his underwear.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. Why did all the people but the boy pretend to see the Emperor’s clothes when he wasn’t wearing any? (pride, not wanting to appear foolish to others. The virtue of humility is lacking.)

2. Why did the people finally admit that the Emperor wasn't wearing clothes after the little boy cried out that he wasn't?
3. If you were in that crowd of people watching the Emperor walk by, what would you be thinking? And what would you *do*?
4. What virtues did the little boy have? (humility in speaking the truth even though no one else agreed with him, with no worries about "looking stupid." He cared more for the truth than what people thought of him. And the boy had fortitude in being willing to speak the truth even if it went against what the crowd thought.)
5. What virtues did the Emperor lack? (modesty and humility. He was proud of himself, he liked to show off, and he didn't care about the truth.)



Temperance : Humility

The Wolf and the Lion

Aesop

Roaming by the mountainside at sundown, a Wolf saw his own shadow become greatly extended and magnified.

He said to himself, "Why should I, being of such an immense size and extending nearly an acre in length, be afraid of the Lion? Ought I not to be acknowledged as King of all the collected beasts?"

While he was indulging in these thoughts, a Lion fell upon him and killed him. He exclaimed with a too late repentance, "Worthless me! This overestimation of myself is the cause of my destruction."

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did this wolf lack? (Humility. He thought he was bigger and better than he actually was.)



Temperance : Meekness

Cinderella

Once there was a gentleman who married for his second wife the proudest and most haughty woman that was ever seen. She had by a former husband two daughters of her own humor, who were, indeed, exactly like her in all things. He had likewise, by another wife, a young daughter, but of unparalleled goodness and sweetness of temper, which she took from her mother, who was the best creature in the world.

No sooner were the ceremonies of the wedding over but the mother-in-law began to show herself in her true colors. She could not bear the good qualities of this pretty girl, and the less because they made her

own daughters appear the more odious. She employed her in meanest work of the house: she scoured the dishes, tables, etc., and scrubbed madam's chamber and those of misses, her daughters; she lay up in a sorry garret, upon a wretched straw bed, while her sisters lay in fine rooms, with floors all inlaid, upon beds of the very newest fashion, and where they had looking-glasses so large that they might see themselves at their full length from head to foot.

The poor girl bore all patiently and dared not tell her father, who would have rattled her off; for his wife governed him entirely. When she had done her work she used to go into the chimney-corner and sit down among cinders and ashes, which made her commonly be called a cinder maid; but the youngest, who was not so rude and uncivil as the eldest, called her Cinderella. However, Cinderella, notwithstanding her mean apparel, was a hundred times handsomer than her sisters, though they were always dressed very richly.

It happened that the King's son gave a ball and invited all persons, of fashion to it. Our young misses were also invited, for they cut a very grand figure among the quality. They were mightily delighted at this invitation, and wonderfully busy in choosing out such gowns, petticoats, and head-clothes as might become them. This was a new trouble to Cinderella, for it was she who ironed her sisters' linen and plaited their ruffles. They talked all day long of nothing but how they should be dressed.

"For my part," said the eldest, "I will wear my red velvet suit with French trimming."

"And I," said the youngest, "shall have my usual petticoat; but then, to make amends for that, I will put on my gold-flowered manteau and my diamond stomacher, which is far from being the most ordinary one in the world."

They sent for the best tire-woman they could get to make up their head-dresses and adjust their double pinners, and they had their red brushes and patches from Mademoiselle de la Poche.

Cinderella was likewise called up to them to be consulted in all these matters, for she had excellent notions and advised them always for the best, nay, and offered her services to dress their heads, which they were very willing she should do. As she was doing this they said to her:

"Cinderella, would you not be glad to go to the ball?"

"Alas!" said she, "you only jeer me. It is not for such as I am to go thither."

"Thou art in the right of it," replied they. "It would make the people laugh to see a cinder wench at a ball."

Any one but Cinderella would have dressed their heads awry, but she was very good and dressed them perfectly well. They were almost two days without eating, so much they were transported with joy. They broke above a dozen of laces in trying to be laced up close, that they might have a fine, slender shape, and they were continually at their looking-glass. At last the happy day came. They went to Court, and Cinderella followed them with her eyes as long as she could, and when she had lost sight of them she fell a-crying.

Her Godmother, who saw her all in tears, asked her what was the matter.

"I wish I could-I wish I could-"

She was not able to speak the rest being interrupted by her tears and sobbing.

This Godmother of hers, who was a fairy, said to her: "Thou wishest thou could'st go to the ball. Is it not so?"

"Y-es," cried Cinderella, with a great sigh.

"Well," said her Godmother, "be but a good girl, and I will contrive that thou shalt go." Then she took her into her chamber and said to her: "Run into the garden and bring me a pumpkin."

Cinderella went immediately to gather the finest she could get and brought it to her Godmother, not being able to imagine how this pumpkin could make her go to the ball. Her Godmother scooped out all the inside of it, having left nothing but the rind; which done, she struck it with her wand, and the pumpkin was instantly turned into a fine coach, gilded all over with gold.

She then went to look into her mousetrap, where she found six mice all alive, and ordered Cinderella to lift up a little the trapdoor, when, giving each mouse as it went out a little tap with her wand, the mouse was that moment turned into a fine horse, which altogether made a very fine set of six horses of a beautiful mouse-colored dapple-gray. Being at a loss for a coachman, Cinderella said:

"I will go and see if there is never a rat in the rattrap-we may make a coachman of him."

"Thou art in the right," replied her Godmother. "Go and look."

Cinderella brought the trap to her, and in it there were three huge rats. The fairy made choice of one of the three which had the largest beard, and having touched him with her wand he was turned into a fat, jolly coachman, who had the smartest whiskers eyes ever beheld. After that she said to her:

"Go again into the garden, and you will find six lizards behind the watering-pot. Bring them to me."

She had no sooner done so but her Godmother turned them into six footmen, who skipped up immediately behind the coach, with their liveries all bedaubed with gold and silver, and clung as close behind each other as if they had done nothing else their whole lives. The fairy then said to Cinderella:

"Well, you see here an equipage fit to go to the ball with. Are you not pleased with it?"

"Oh! yes," cried she; "but must I go thither as I am, in these dirty rags?"

Her Godmother only just touched her with her wand, and at the same instant her clothes were turned into cloth-of-gold and silver, all beset with jewels. Ah! who can describe a robe made by the fairies? It was white as snow, and as dazzling; round the hem hung a fringe of diamonds, sparkling like dewdrops in the sunshine. The lace about the throat and arms could only have been spun by fairy spiders. Surely it was a dream! Cinderella put her daintily gloved hand to her throat, and softly touched the pearls that encircled her neck.

"Come, child," said the Godmother, "or you will be late."

As Cinderella moved, the firelight shone upon her dainty shoes.

"They are of diamonds," she said.

"No," answered her Godmother, smiling; "they are better than that—they are of glass, made by the fairies. And now, child, go, and enjoy yourself to your heart's content."

But her Godmother, above all things, commanded her not to stay till after midnight, telling her at the same time that if she stayed one moment longer the coach would be a pumpkin again, her horses mice, her coachman a rat, her footmen lizards, and her clothes become just as they were before.

She promised her Godmother she would not fail of leaving the ball before midnight, and then away she drives, scarce able to contain herself for joy. The King's son, who was told that a great Princess, whom nobody knew, was come, ran out to receive her. He gave her his hand as she alighted out of the coach; and led her into the hall among all the company. There was immediately a profound silence, they left off dancing, and the violins ceased to play, so attentive was every one to contemplate the singular beauties of the unknown newcomer. Nothing was then heard but a confused noise of "Ha! how handsome she is! Ha! how handsome she is!"

The King himself, old as he was, could not help watching her and telling the Queen softly that it was a long time since he had seen so beautiful and lovely a creature.

All the ladies were busied in considering her clothes and headdress, that they might have some made next day after the same pattern, provided they could meet with such fine materials and as able hands to make them.

The King's son conducted her to the most honorable seat and afterward took her out to dance with him. She danced so very gracefully that they all more and more admired her. A fine collation was served up, whereof the young Prince ate not a morsel, so intently was he busied in gazing on her.

She went and sat down by her sisters, showing them a thousand civilities, giving them part of the oranges and citrons which the Prince had presented her with, which very much surprised them, for they did not know her. While Cinderella was thus amusing her sisters, she heard the clock strike eleven and three-quarters, whereupon she immediately made a courtesy to the company and hastened away as fast as she could.

Being got home, she ran to seek out her Godmother, and after having thanked her she said she could not but heartily wish she might go next day to the ball, because the King's son had desired her.

As she was eagerly telling her Godmother what had passed at the ball her two sisters knocked at the door, which Cinderella ran and opened.

"How long you have stayed!" cried she, gaping, rubbing her eyes, and stretching herself as if she had been just waked out of her sleep. She had not, however, had any manner of inclination to sleep since they went from home.

"If thou hadst been at the ball," said one of her sisters, "thou would'st not have been tired with it. There came thither the finest Princess, the most beautiful ever was seen with mortal eyes. She showed us a thousand civilities and gave us oranges and citrons."

Cinderella seemed very indifferent in the matter. Indeed, she asked them the name of that Princess, but they told her they did not know it, and that the King's son was very uneasy on her account, and would give all the world to know who she was. At this Cinderella, smiling, replied:

"She must, then, be very beautiful indeed. How happy you have been! Could not I see her? Ah! dear Miss Charlotte, do lend me your yellow suit of clothes which you wear every day."

"Ay, to be sure," cried Miss Charlotte; "lend my clothes to such it dirty cinder maid as thou art! I should be a fool."

Cinderella expected well such answer and was very glad of the refusal, for she would have been sadly put to it if her sister had lent her what she asked for jestingly.

The next day the two sisters were at the ball, and so was Cinderella, but dressed more magnificently than before. The King's son was always by her, and never ceased his compliments and kind speeches to her, to whom all this was so far from being tiresome that she quite forgot what her Godmother had recommended to her, so that she at last counted the clock striking twelve when she took it to be no more than eleven. She then rose up and fled as nimble as a deer. The Prince followed, but could not overtake her. She left behind one of her glass slippers, which the Prince took up most carefully. She got home, but quite out of breath, and in her old clothes, having nothing left her of all her finery but one of the little slippers, fellow to that she dropped. The guards at the palace gate were asked if they had not seen a Princess go out.

They said they had seen nobody go out but a young girl, very meanly dressed, and who had more of the air of a poor country girl than a gentlewoman.

When the two sisters returned from the ball Cinderella asked them if they had been well diverted and if the beautiful Princess had been there.

They told her yes, but that she hurried away immediately when the clock struck twelve, and with so much haste that she dropped one of her little glass slippers, the prettiest in the world, which the King's

son had taken up; that he had done nothing but look at her all the time at the ball, and that most certainly he was very much in love with the beautiful person who owned the glass slipper.

What they said was very true, for a few days after the King's son caused it to be proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that he would marry her whose foot this slipper would just fit. They whom he employed began to try it upon the Princesses, then the Duchesses and all the Court, but in vain. It was brought to the two sisters, who did all they possibly could to thrust their feet into the slipper, but they could not effect it.

On the following morning there was a great noise of trumpets and drums, and a procession passed through the town, at the head of which rode the King's son. Behind him came a herald, bearing a velvet cushion, upon which rested a little glass slipper. The herald blew a blast upon the trumpet, and then read a proclamation saying that the King's son would wed any lady in the land who could fit the slipper upon her foot, if she could produce another to match it.

Of course, the sisters tried to squeeze their feet into the slipper, but it was of no use—they were much too large. Then Cinderella shyly begged that she might try. How the sisters laughed with scorn when the Prince knelt to fit the slipper on the cinder maid's foot; but what was their surprise when it slipped on with the greatest ease, and the next moment Cinderella produced the other from her pocket! Once more she stood in the slippers, and once more the sisters saw before them the lovely Princess who was to be the Prince's bride. For at the touch of the magic shoes the little gray frock disappeared forever, and in place of it she wore the beautiful robe the fairy Godmother had given to her.

The sisters hung their heads with sorrow and vexation; but kind little Cinderella put her arms round their necks, kissed them, and forgave them for all their unkindness, so that they could not help but love her.

The Prince could not bear to part from his little love again, so he carried her back to the palace in his grand coach, and they were married that very day. Cinderella's stepsisters were present at the feast, but in the place of honor sat the fairy Godmother.

So the poor little cinder maid married the Prince, and in time they came to be King and Queen, and lived happily ever after.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What is one of the main virtues Cinderella showed? (meekness, an aspect of temperance)
2. How might the story have gone if Cinderella had been vengeful instead of meek?
3. What are some things to do when people are mean to you?



Temperance : Clemency

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15

Lord Jesus told this story, so pay extra attention! He told how a father had two sons. One day, the younger son asked his father for his inheritance; he'd decided to take off to a different country and live an exciting life. And so he did. He also lived a very "prodigal" life – "prodigal" means wasteful and extravagant. He didn't practice abstinence at all! He was the sort of man who, today, wouldn't want to just eat good food, but would only eat the best, most expensive food! He wouldn't have been happy today with just any car; he'd want the most expensive, fancy car he could get so people would see him in it! He was the kind of man who, today, would be seen on TV with all the fancy people in fancy dresses, attending fancy parties and showing off.

Well, after some time, he'd spent all of his inheritance. And then a famine came over the land he'd moved to, and he began to go very hungry – so hungry that he even ate what the pigs ate to survive. He was so sad and so desperate that he decided to return to his father's house even though he was ashamed. He knew he'd done very wrong and treated his father badly. He knew he didn't deserve to even be called his father's son. He felt like a fool.

But he returned home anyway. His father saw him as he was approaching the house. What do you think the father thought? What did you think the father did?

I'll tell you! Instead of being angry, the father was so happy to see him that he ran to him and threw his arms around him. The boy told his father, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy son."

But his father was so relieved to see him that he called to a servant to bring his son a robe, a ring, and shoes, and to kill a fatted calf so they could eat and be merry.

The older son, though, saw what was happening, and he got jealous. In so many words, he said to his father, "I've been good all this time! I've done all you've asked me to do, and haven't broken any rules! " Pointing to his brother, he cried, "*He* goes off and acts all – prodigal! He blows all the money you gave him – and you throw him a party! That's not *fair!*"

His father smiled and said, "we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is come to life again; he was lost, and is found."

Even though the son did bad things and deserved nothing from his father, his father loved him very much. He knew his son had learned his lesson and was sorry, so he forgave him and offered him clemency.

And that's how much God loves *us*. When we do the wrong thing and are truly sorry, we go to confession and tell God how sorry we are. And He always forgives us when we do.



Justice : Religion

The Little Match Girl

Hans Christian Andersen

It was terribly cold and nearly dark on the last evening of the old year, and the snow was falling fast. In the cold and the darkness, a poor little girl, with bare head and naked feet, roamed through the streets. It is true she had on a pair of slippers when she left home, but they were not of much use. They were

very large, so large, indeed, that they had belonged to her mother, and the poor little creature had lost them in running across the street to avoid two carriages that were rolling along at a terrible rate. One of the slippers she could not find, and a boy seized upon the other and ran away with it, saying that he could use it as a cradle, when he had children of his own. So the little girl went on with her little naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old apron she carried a number of matches, and had a bundle of them in her hands. No one had bought anything of her the whole day, nor had anyone given her even a penny. Shivering with cold and hunger, she crept along; poor little child, she looked the picture of misery. The snowflakes fell on her long, fair hair, which hung in curls on her shoulders, but she regarded them not.

Lights were shining from every window, and there was a savory smell of roast goose, for it was New-year's eve—yes, she remembered that. In a corner, between two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sank down and huddled herself together. She had drawn her little feet under her, but she could not keep off the cold; and she dared not go home, for she had sold no matches, and could not take home even a penny of money. Her father would certainly beat her; besides, it was almost as cold at home as here, for they had only the roof to cover them, through which the wind howled, although the largest holes had been stopped up with straw and rags. Her little hands were almost frozen with the cold. Ah! perhaps a burning match might be some good, if she could draw it from the bundle and strike it against the wall, just to warm her fingers. She drew one out—"scratch!" how it sputtered as it burnt! It gave a warm, bright light, like a little candle, as she held her hand over it. It was really a wonderful light. It seemed to the little girl that she was sitting by a large iron stove, with polished brass feet and a brass ornament. How the fire burned! and seemed so beautifully warm that the child stretched out her feet as if to warm them, when, lo! the flame of the match went out, the stove vanished, and she had only the remains of the half-burnt match in her hand.

She rubbed another match on the wall. It burst into a flame, and where its light fell upon the wall it became as transparent as a veil, and she could see into the room. The table was covered with a snowy white table-cloth, on which stood a splendid dinner service, and a steaming roast goose, stuffed with apples and dried plums. And what was still more wonderful, the goose jumped down from the dish and waddled across the floor, with a knife and fork in its breast, to the little girl. Then the match went out, and there remained nothing but the thick, damp, cold wall before her.

She lighted another match, and then she found herself sitting under a beautiful Christmas-tree. It was larger and more beautifully decorated than the one which she had seen through the glass door at the rich merchant's. Thousands of tapers were burning upon the green branches, and colored pictures, like those she had seen in the show-windows, looked down upon it all. The little one stretched out her hand towards them, and the match went out.

The Christmas lights rose higher and higher, till they looked to her like the stars in the sky. Then she saw a star fall, leaving behind it a bright streak of fire. "Someone is dying," thought the little girl, for her old grandmother, the only one who had ever loved her, and who was now dead, had told her that when a star falls, a soul was going up to God.

She again rubbed a match on the wall, and the light shone round her; in the brightness stood her old grandmother, clear and shining, yet mild and loving in her appearance. "Grandmother," cried the little one, "O take me with you; I know you will go away when the match burns out; you will vanish like the warm stove, the roast goose, and the large, glorious Christmas-tree." And she made haste to light the whole bundle of matches, for she wished to keep her grandmother there. And the matches glowed with a light that was brighter than the noon-day, and her grandmother had never appeared so large or so beautiful. She took the little girl in her arms, and they both flew upwards in brightness and joy far above the earth, where there was neither cold nor hunger nor pain, for they were with God.

In the dawn of morning there lay the poor little one, with pale cheeks and smiling mouth, leaning against the wall; she had been frozen to death on the last evening of the year; and the New-year's sun rose and shone upon a little corpse! The child still sat, in the stiffness of death, holding the matches in her hand, one bundle of which was burnt. "She tried to warm herself," said some. No one imagined what beautiful things she had seen, nor into what glory she had entered with her grandmother, on New-year's day.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did the Little Match Girl show in this story? (Religion, an aspect of Justice. As poor, hungry, and cold as she was, she kept her faith in God.)
2. What virtues could people have shown to the Little Match Girl if they'd seen her hungry in the streets and trying to keep warm? (Affability and liberality, which we'll learn about next)
3. When was the last time you thanked God for all the blessings you have?



Justice : Religion

Noe and the Ark

Genesis 6-9

You know that God created the earth, and then created Adam and Eve, right? Well, He did, and they had children. Then their children had children, and so on, until Noe (some people call him "Noah") was born.

Adam was Noe's great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather -- that seven "greats" -- so that gives you a sense of when this story happened (and this is a true story, from the Bible, not like some of the fairy tales we've heard!).

By the time Noe was born, the world had become filled with wickedness. God, of course, saw all this and became angry. Justice needed to be served. The world needed to be punished, so God decided to send a deluge -- that means flood -- upon the earth.

But, though almost all of the world had become bad, Noe and his family were good. So God told Noe to build an ark -- that's a sort of boat. He told Noe to make it 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits tall. Now, a cubit is about one and a half feet, so the ark was to be 450 feet long and 75 feet wide and 45 feet tall. That's as long as one and a half football fields! And that's about as tall as the average four-storey building!

God told him to take two of each -- one male and one female -- of certain kinds of animals and put them in the ark when he was finished building it. And God told him to take seven males and seven females of other sorts of animals. And then God told him to get his family on to that ark, too.

That's a lot of work, but Noe had the virtue of religion, so he obeyed God and did as he was told. After he loaded up the animals, he and his wife got onto the ark, and so did their sons and their sons' wives.

Then the rains came -- for forty days and forty nights. Rain, rain, rain, rain. All the time, non-stop. There was so much rain that it covered the the land, and everyone perished. Well, not everyone: Noe and his family and the animals they brought floated on the waters, safe and sound.

After about one hundred and fifty days, the waters started to go away. Noe sent out a raven, and when the raven flew back, Noe knew that the bird hadn't found any place to land. He waited some time, then he sent out a dove. The dove also flew back, so Noe knew the earth was still flooded. After a few more days, he sent out another dove, and yes, the dove flew back -- but this time, the dove had an olive branch in its beak. By seeing that, he knew that the waters were going away. He waited a few more days, sent out the dove once more, and this time the dove never came back. So Noe knew she found a dry place to land. The flood was over!

Noe and his family got out of the ark. They released the animals, who went on to fill the earth once more with more of their kind. And Noe was so thankful to God that he made a sacrifice to Him.

God saw Noe's great virtue of religion, and made a promise. He said He would never send a flood that covers the entire land again.

Then He did something beautiful: He put a rainbow in the sky, and told Noe, "This is the sign of the covenant which I give between me and you, and to every living soul that is with you, for perpetual generations. I will set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of a covenant between Me, and between the earth. And when I shall cover the sky with clouds, My bow shall appear in the clouds: And I will remember My covenant with you, and with every living soul that beareth flesh: and there shall no more be waters of a flood to destroy all flesh."

Things to talk to your children about:

1. How did Noe show the virtue of religion?
2. What does a rainbow *really* symbolize?
3. When you see a rainbow, think about Noe, and God's promise to him and to us. Stop for a moment and thank God for His mercy and love.



Justice : Piety

The Old Grandfather and His Grandson

Once upon a time there was a very, very old man. His eyes had grown dim, his ears deaf, and his knees shook. When he sat at the table, he could scarcely hold a spoon. He spilled soup on the tablecloth, and, beside that, some of his soup would run back out of his mouth.

His son and his son's wife were disgusted with this, so finally they made the old grandfather sit in the corner behind the stove, where they gave him his food in an earthenware bowl, and not enough at that. He sat there looking sadly at the table, and his eyes grew moist. One day his shaking hands could not hold the bowl, and it fell to the ground and broke. The young woman scolded, but he said not a word. He only sobbed. Then for a few hellers they bought him a wooden bowl and made him eat from it.

Once when they were all sitting there, the little grandson of four years pushed some pieces of wood together on the floor.

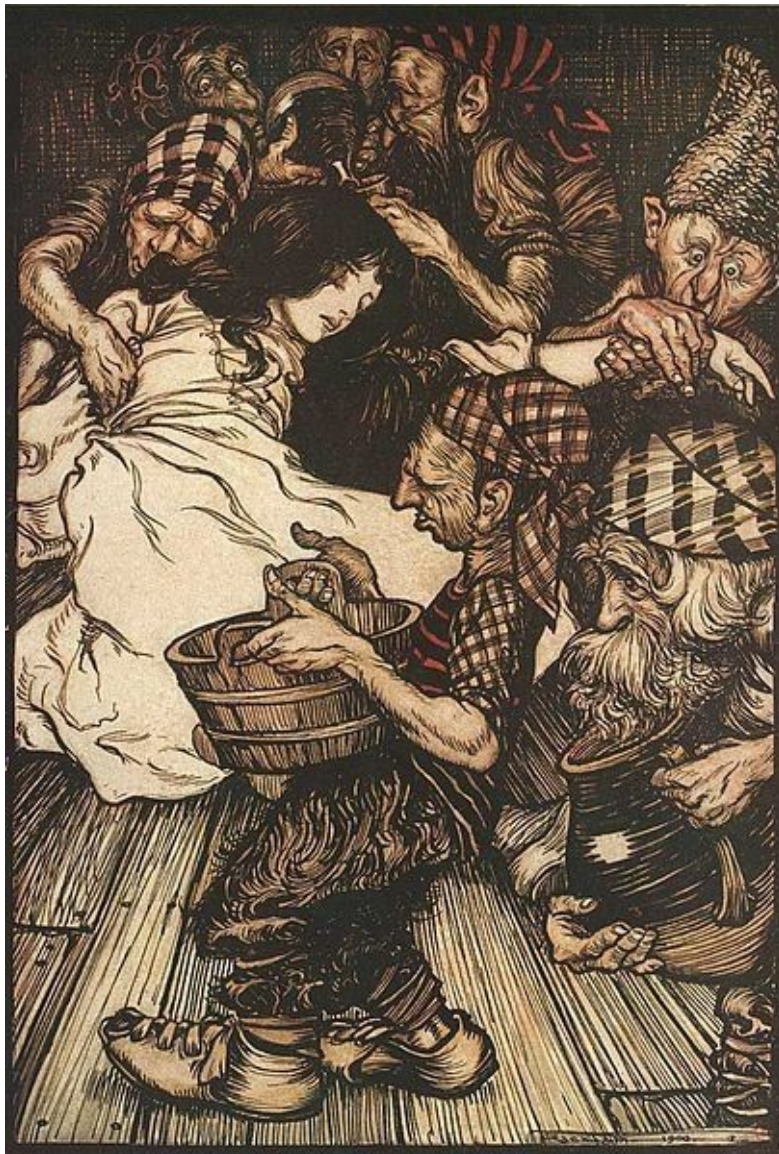
"What are you making?" asked his father.

"Oh, I'm making a little trough for you and mother to eat from when I'm big."

The man and the woman looked at one another and then began to cry. They immediately brought the old grandfather to the table, and always let him eat there from then on. And if he spilled a little, they did not say a thing.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did the son and his wife fail to show to the old father? (Justice, specifically piety.)
2. Why did the little boy make a little wooden trough for his parents to eat out of when he gets big? (His parents failed to teach him the virtue of piety by failing to show piety to their own father.)
3. What are some of the challenges many older people face?
4. How can we help older people with those challenges?
5. What are some of the good things about being old?
6. What do you think your life will be like when you're old? What do you *want* it to be like?
7. What are ways we can show piety to our parents and grandparents?
8. How can we show piety to our other family members?
9. How can we show piety to the people of our country?
10. How can we show piety to God?



Justice : Affability

Snow-White

The Brothers Grimm

Once upon a time in midwinter, when the snowflakes were falling like feathers from heaven, a queen sat sewing at her window, which had a frame of black ebony wood. As she sewed she looked up at the snow and pricked her finger with her needle. Three drops of blood fell into the snow. The red on the white looked so beautiful that she thought to herself, "If only I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood in this frame."

Soon afterward she had a little daughter who was as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as ebony wood, and therefore they called her Little Snow-White. And as soon as the child was born, the queen died.

A year later the king took himself another wife. She was a beautiful woman, but she was proud and arrogant, and she could not stand it if anyone might surpass her in beauty. She had a magic mirror. Every morning she stood before it, looked at herself, and said:

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who in this land is fairest of all?

To this the mirror answered:

You, my queen, are fairest of all.

Then she was satisfied, for she knew that the mirror spoke the truth.

Snow-White grew up and became ever more beautiful. When she was seven years old she was as beautiful as the light of day, even more beautiful than the queen herself.

One day when the queen asked her mirror:

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who in this land is fairest of all?

It answered:

You, my queen, are fair; it is true.
But Snow-White is a thousand times fairer than you.

The queen took fright and turned yellow and green with envy. From that hour on whenever she looked at Snow-White her heart turned over inside her body, so great was her hatred for the girl. The envy and pride grew ever greater, like a weed in her heart, until she had no peace day and night.

Then she summoned a huntsman and said to him, "Take Snow-White out into the woods. I never want to see her again. Kill her, and as proof that she is dead bring her lungs and her liver back to me."

The huntsman obeyed and took Snow-White into the woods. He took out his hunting knife and was about to stab it into her innocent heart when she began to cry, saying, "Oh, dear huntsman, let me live. I will run into the wild woods and never come back."

Because she was so beautiful the huntsman took pity on her, and he said, "Run away, you poor child."

He thought, "The wild animals will soon devour you anyway," but still it was as if a stone had fallen from his heart, for he would not have to kill her.

Just then a young boar came running by. He killed it, cut out its lungs and liver, and took them back to the queen as proof of Snow-White's death. The cook had to boil them with salt, and the wicked woman ate them, supposing that she had eaten Snow-White's lungs and liver.

The poor child was now all alone in the great forest, and she was so afraid that she just looked at all the leaves on the trees and did not know what to do. Then she began to run. She ran over sharp stones and through thorns, and wild animals jumped at her, but they did her no harm. She ran as far as her feet could carry her, and just as evening was about to fall she saw a little house and went inside in order to rest.

Inside the house everything was small, but so neat and clean that no one could say otherwise. There was a little table with a white tablecloth and seven little plates, and each plate had a spoon, and there were seven knives and forks and seven mugs as well. Against the wall there were seven little beds, all standing in a row and covered with snow-white sheets.

Because she was so hungry and thirsty Snow-White ate a few vegetables and a little bread from each little plate, and from each mug she drank a drop of wine. Afterward, because she was so tired, she lay down on a bed, but none of them felt right -- one was too long, the other too short -- until finally the seventh one was just right. She remained lying in it, entrusted herself to God, and fell asleep.

After dark the masters of the house returned home. They were the seven dwarfs who picked and dug for ore in the mountains. They lit their seven candles, and as soon as it was light in their house they saw that someone had been there, for not everything was in the same order as they had left it.

The first one said, "Who has been sitting in my chair?"

The second one, "Who has been eating from my plate?"

The third one, "Who has been eating my bread?"

The fourth one, "Who has been eating my vegetables?"

The fifth one, "Who has been sticking with my fork?"

The sixth one, "Who has been cutting with my knife?"

The seventh one, "Who has been drinking from my mug?"

Then the first one saw that there was a little imprint in his bed, and said, "Who stepped on my bed?"

The others came running up and shouted, "Someone has been lying in mine as well."

But the seventh one, looking at his bed, found Snow-White lying there asleep. The seven dwarfs all came running up, and they cried out with amazement. They fetched their seven candles and shone the light on Snow-White. "Oh good heaven! Oh good heaven!" they cried. "This child is so beautiful!"

They were so happy, that they did not wake her up, but let her continue to sleep there in the bed. The seventh dwarf had to sleep with his companions, one hour with each one, and then the night was done.

The next morning Snow-White woke up, and when she saw the seven dwarfs she was frightened. But they were friendly and asked, "What is your name?"

"My name is Snow-White," she answered.

"How did you find your way to our house?" the dwarfs asked further.

Then she told them that her stepmother had tried to kill her, that the huntsman had spared her life, and that she had run the entire day, finally coming to their house.

The dwarfs said, "If you will keep house for us, and cook, make beds, wash, sew, and knit, and keep everything clean and orderly, then you can stay with us, and you shall have everything that you want."

"Yes," said Snow-White, "with all my heart."

So she kept house for them. Every morning they went into the mountains looking for ore and gold, and in the evening when they came back home their meal had to be ready. During the day the girl was alone.

The good dwarfs warned her, saying, "Be careful about your stepmother. She will soon know that you are here. Do not let anyone in."

Now the queen, believing that she had eaten Snow-White's lungs and liver, could only think that she was again the first and the most beautiful woman of all. She stepped before her mirror and said:

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who in this land is fairest of all?

It answered:

You, my queen, are fair; it is true.
But Snow-White, beyond the mountains
With the seven dwarfs,
Is still a thousand times fairer than you.

This startled the queen, for she knew that the mirror did not lie, and she realized that the huntsman had deceived her, and that Snow-White was still alive. Then she thought, and thought again, how she could kill Snow-White, for as long as long as she was not the most beautiful woman in the entire land her envy would give her no rest.

At last she thought of something. Coloring her face, she disguised herself as an old peddler woman, so that no one would recognize her. In this disguise she went to the house of the seven dwarfs. Knocking on the door she called out, "Beautiful wares for sale, for sale!"

Snow-White peered out the window and said, "Good day, dear woman, what do you have for sale?"

"Good wares, beautiful wares," she answered. "Bodice laces in all colors." And she took out one that was braided from colorful silk. "Would you like this one?"

"I can let that honest woman in," thought Snow-White, then unbolted the door and bought the pretty bodice lace.

"Child," said the old woman, "how you look! Come, let me lace you up properly."

The unsuspecting Snow-White stood before her and let her do up the new lace, but the old woman pulled so quickly and so hard that Snow-White could not breathe.

"You used to be the most beautiful one," said the old woman, and hurried away.

Not long afterward, in the evening time, the seven dwarfs came home. How terrified they were when they saw their dear Snow-White lying on the ground, not moving at all, as though she were dead. They lifted her up, and, seeing that she was too tightly laced, they cut the lace in two. Then she began to breathe a little, and little by little she came back to life.

When the dwarfs heard what had happened they said, "The old peddler woman was no one else but the godless queen. Take care and let no one in when we are not with you."

When the wicked woman returned home she went to her mirror and asked:

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who in this land is fairest of all?

The mirror answered once again:

You, my queen, are fair; it is true.
But Snow-White, beyond the mountains
With the seven dwarfs,
Is still a thousand times fairer than you.

When she heard that, all her blood ran to her heart because she knew that Snow-White had come back to life.

"This time," she said, "I shall think of something that will destroy you."

Then with the art of witchcraft, which she understood, she made a poisoned comb. Then she disguised herself, taking the form of a different old woman. Thus she went across the seven mountains to the seven dwarfs, knocked on the door, and called out, "Good wares for sale, for sale!"

Snow-White looked out and said, "Go on your way. I am not allowed to let anyone in."

"You surely may take a look," said the old woman, pulling out the poisoned comb and holding it up. The child liked it so much that she let herself be deceived, and she opened the door.

After they had agreed on the purchase, the old woman said, "Now let me comb your hair properly."

She had barely stuck the comb into Snow-White's hair when the poison took effect, and the girl fell down unconscious.

"You specimen of beauty," said the wicked woman, "now you are finished." And she walked away.

Fortunately it was almost evening, and the seven dwarfs came home. When they saw Snow-White lying on the ground as if she were dead, they immediately suspected her stepmother. They examined her and found the poisoned comb. They had scarcely pulled it out when Snow-White came to herself again and told them what had happened. Once again they warned her to be on guard and not to open the door for anyone.

Back at home the queen stepped before her mirror and said:

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who in this land is fairest of all?

The mirror answered:

You, my queen, are fair; it is true.
But Snow-White, beyond the mountains
With the seven dwarfs,
Is still a thousand times fairer than you.

When the queen heard the mirror saying this, she shook and trembled with anger, "Snow-White shall die," she shouted, "if it costs me my life!"

Then she went into her most secret room -- no one else was allowed inside -- and she made a poisoned, poisoned apple. From the outside it was beautiful, white with red cheeks, and anyone who saw it would want it. But anyone who might eat a little piece of it would die. Then, coloring her face, she disguised herself as a peasant woman, and thus went across the seven mountains to the seven dwarfs. She knocked on the door.

Snow-White stuck her head out the window and said, "I am not allowed to let anyone in. The dwarfs have forbidden me to do so."

"That is all right with me," answered the peasant woman. "I'll easily get rid of my apples. Here, I'll give you one of them."

"No," said Snow-White, "I cannot accept anything."

"Are you afraid of poison?" asked the old woman. "Look, I'll cut the apple in two. You eat the red half, and I shall eat the white half."

Now the apple had been so artfully made that only the red half was poisoned. Snow-White longed for the beautiful apple, and when she saw that the peasant woman was eating part of it she could no longer resist, and she stuck her hand out and took the poisoned half. She barely had a bite in her mouth when she fell to the ground dead.

The queen looked at her with a gruesome stare, laughed loudly, and said, "White as snow, red as blood, black as ebony wood! This time the dwarfs cannot awaken you."

Back at home she asked her mirror:

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who in this land is fairest of all?

It finally answered:

You, my queen, are fairest of all.

Then her envious heart was at rest, as well as an envious heart can be at rest.

When the dwarfs came home that evening they found Snow-White lying on the ground. She was not breathing at all. She was dead. They lifted her up and looked for something poisonous. They undid her laces. They combed her hair. They washed her with water and wine. But nothing helped. The dear child was dead, and she remained dead. They laid her on a bier, and all seven sat next to her and mourned for her and cried for three days. They were going to bury her, but she still looked as fresh as a living person, and still had her beautiful red cheeks.

They said, "We cannot bury her in the black earth," and they had a transparent glass coffin made, so she could be seen from all sides. They laid her inside, and with golden letters wrote on it her name, and that she was a princess. Then they put the coffin outside on a mountain, and one of them always stayed with it and watched over her. The animals too came and mourned for Snow-white, first an owl, then a raven, and finally a dove.

Snow-White lay there in the coffin a long, long time, and she did not decay, but looked like she was asleep, for she was still as white as snow and as red as blood, and as black-haired as ebony wood.

Now it came to pass that a prince entered these woods and happened onto the dwarfs' house, where he sought shelter for the night. He saw the coffin on the mountain with beautiful Snow-White in it, and he read what was written on it with golden letters.

Then he said to the dwarfs, "Let me have the coffin. I will give you anything you want for it."

But the dwarfs answered, "We will not sell it for all the gold in the world."

Then he said, "Then give it to me, for I cannot live without being able to see Snow-White. I will honor her and respect her as my most cherished one."

As he thus spoke, the good dwarfs felt pity for him and gave him the coffin. The prince had his servants carry it away on their shoulders. But then it happened that one of them stumbled on some brush, and this dislodged from Snow-White's throat the piece of poisoned apple that she had bitten off. Not long afterward she opened her eyes, lifted the lid from her coffin, sat up, and was alive again.

"Good heavens, where am I?" she cried out.

The prince said joyfully, "You are with me." He told her what had happened, and then said, "I love you more than anything else in the world. Come with me to my father's castle. You shall become my wife." Snow-White loved him, and she went with him. Their wedding was planned with great splendor and majesty.

Snow-White's godless stepmother was also invited to the feast. After putting on her beautiful clothes she stepped before her mirror and said:

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who in this land is fairest of all?

The mirror answered:

You, my queen, are fair; it is true.
But the young queen is a thousand times fairer than you.

The wicked woman uttered a curse, and she became so frightened, so frightened, that she did not know what to do. At first she did not want to go to the wedding, but she found no peace. She had to go and see the young queen. When she arrived she recognized Snow-White, and terrorized, she could only stand there without moving.

Then they put a pair of iron shoes into burning coals. They were brought forth with tongs and placed before her. She was forced to step into the red-hot shoes and dance until she fell down dead.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did the dwarfs show to Snow White in opening their home to her, sharing their food, and being hospitable? (affability, an aspect of Justice).
2. What virtue did Snow White show in helping the dwarfs to repay their kindness? (gratitude, an aspect of Justice)

3. What virtues did the Evil Queen lack? (all of them! But she's most infamous for her pride, which shows a lack of humility and modesty -- aspects of Temperance)



Justice : Gratitude

Androcles and the Lion

It happened in the old days at Rome that a slave named Androcles escaped from his master and fled into the forest, and he wandered there for a long time until he was weary and well nigh spent with hunger and despair. Just then he heard a lion near him moaning and groaning and at times roaring terribly. Tired as he was Androcles rose up and rushed away, as he thought, from the lion; but as he made his way through the bushes he stumbled over the root of a tree and fell down lamed, and when he tried to get up there he saw the lion coming towards him, limping on three feet and holding his forepaw in front of him.

Poor Androcles was in despair; he had not strength to rise and run away, and there was the lion coming upon him. But when the great beast came up to him instead of attacking him it kept on moaning and groaning and looking at Androcles, who saw that the lion was holding out his right paw, which was

covered with blood and much swollen. Looking more closely at it Androcles saw a great big thorn pressed into the paw, which was the cause of all the lion's trouble. Plucking up courage he seized hold of the thorn and drew it out of the lion's paw, who roared with pain when the thorn came out, but soon after found such relief from it that he fawned upon Androcles and showed, in every way that he knew, to whom he owed the relief. Instead of eating him up he brought him a young deer that he had slain, and Androcles managed to make a meal from it. For some time the lion continued to bring the game he had killed to Androcles, who became quite fond of the huge beast.

But one day a number of soldiers came marching through the forest and found Androcles, and as he could not explain what he was doing they took him prisoner and brought him back to the town from which he had fled. Here his master soon found him and brought him before the authorities, and he was condemned to death because he had fled from his master. Now it used to be the custom to throw murderers and other criminals to the lions in a huge circus, so that while the criminals were punished the public could enjoy the spectacle of a combat between them and the wild beasts.

So Androcles was condemned to be thrown to the lions, and on the appointed day he was led forth into the Arena and left there alone with only a spear to protect him from the lion. The Emperor was in the royal box that day and gave the signal for the lion to come out and attack Androcles. But when it came out of its cage and got near Androcles, what do you think it did? Instead of jumping upon him it fawned upon him and stroked him with its paw and made no attempt to do him any harm.

It was of course the lion which Androcles had met in the forest. The Emperor, surprised at seeing such a strange behavior in so cruel a beast, summoned Androcles to him and asked him how it happened that this particular lion had lost all its cruelty of disposition. So Androcles told the Emperor all that had happened to him and how the lion was showing its gratitude for his having relieved it of the thorn. Thereupon the Emperor pardoned Androcles and ordered his master to set him free, while the lion was taken back into the forest and let loose to enjoy liberty once more.

Some things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did the lion have? (gratitude)
2. Have you done something for someone and didn't receive gratitude? If so, how did it feel?
3. When was the last time you showed your gratitude to someone? How did you do it?
4. When was the last time you thanked your parents and grandparents for taking such good care of you? What would be some good ways to show them gratitude?
5. When was the last time you showed your gratitude to God?



Justice : Gratitude

The Lion and the Mouse

Aesop

A Lion lay asleep in the forest, his great head resting on his paws. A timid little Mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the Lion's nose. Roused from his nap, the Lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her.

"Spare me!" begged the poor Mouse. "Please let me go and some day I will surely repay you."

The Lion was much amused to think that a Mouse could ever help him. But he was generous and finally let the Mouse go.

Some days later, while stalking his prey in the forest, the Lion was caught in the toils of a hunter's net. Unable to free himself, he filled the forest with his angry roaring. The Mouse knew the voice and quickly found the Lion struggling in the net. Running to one of the great ropes that bound him, she gnawed it until it parted, and soon the Lion was free.

"You laughed when I said I would repay you," said the Mouse. "Now you see that even a Mouse can help a Lion."



Justice : Gratitude

Snow-White and Rose-Red

The Brothers Grimm

There was once a poor widow who lived in a lonely cottage. In front of the cottage was a garden wherein stood two rose-trees, one of which bore white and the other red roses. She had two children who were like the two rose-trees, and one was called Snow-white, and the other Rose-red.

They were as good and happy, as busy and cheerful as ever two children in the world were, only Snow-white was more quiet and gentle than Rose-red. Rose-red liked better to run about in the meadows and fields seeking flowers and catching butterflies; but Snow-white sat at home with her mother, and helped her with her housework, or read to her when there was nothing to do.

The two children were so fond of one another that they always held each other by the hand when they went out together, and when Snow-white said: 'We will not leave each other,' Rose-red

answered: 'Never so long as we live,' and their mother would add: 'What one has she must share with the other.'

They often ran about the forest alone and gathered red berries, and no beasts did them any harm, but came close to them trustfully. The little hare would eat a cabbage-leaf out of their hands, the roe grazed by their side, the stag leapt merrily by them, and the birds sat still upon the boughs, and sang whatever they knew.

No mishap overtook them; if they had stayed too late in the forest, and night came on, they laid themselves down near one another upon the moss, and slept until morning came, and their mother knew this and did not worry on their account.

Once when they had spent the night in the wood and the dawn had roused them, they saw a beautiful child in a shining white dress sitting near their bed. He got up and looked quite kindly at them, but said nothing and went into the forest. And when they looked round they found that they had been sleeping quite close to a precipice, and would certainly have fallen into it in the darkness if they had gone only a few paces further. And their mother told them that it must have been the angel who watches over good children.

Snow-white and Rose-red kept their mother's little cottage so neat that it was a pleasure to look inside it. In the summer Rose-red took care of the house, and every morning laid a wreath of flowers by her mother's bed before she awoke, in which was a rose from each tree. In the winter Snow-white lit the fire and hung the kettle on the hob. The kettle was of brass and shone like gold, so brightly was it polished. In the evening, when the snowflakes fell, the mother said: 'Go, Snow-white, and bolt the door,' and then they sat round the hearth, and the mother took her spectacles and read aloud out of a large book, and the two girls listened as they sat and spun. And close by them lay a lamb upon the floor, and behind them upon a perch sat a white dove with its head hidden beneath its wings.

One evening, as they were thus sitting comfortably together, someone knocked at the door as if he wished to be let in. The mother said: 'Quick, Rose-red, open the door, it must be a traveller who is seeking shelter.' Rose-red went and pushed back the bolt, thinking that it was a poor man, but it was not; it was a bear that stretched his broad, black head within the door.

Rose-red screamed and sprang back, the lamb bleated, the dove fluttered, and Snow-white hid herself behind her mother's bed. But the bear began to speak and said: 'Do not be afraid, I will do you no harm! I am half-frozen, and only want to warm myself a little beside you.'

'Poor bear,' said the mother, 'lie down by the fire, only take care that you do not burn your coat.' Then she cried: 'Snow-white, Rose-red, come out, the bear will do you no harm, he means well.' So they both came out, and by-and-by the lamb and dove came nearer, and were not afraid of him. The bear said: 'Here, children, knock the snow out of my coat a little'; so they brought the broom and

swept the bear's hide clean; and he stretched himself by the fire and growled contentedly and comfortably. It was not long before they grew quite at home, and played tricks with their clumsy guest. They tugged his hair with their hands, put their feet upon his back and rolled him about, or they took a hazel-switch and beat him, and when he growled they laughed. But the bear took it all in good part, only when they were too rough he called out: 'Leave me alive, children, 'Snow-white, Rose-red, Will you beat your wooer dead?'

When it was bed-time, and the others went to bed, the mother said to the bear: 'You can lie there by the hearth, and then you will be safe from the cold and the bad weather.' As soon as day dawned the two children let him out, and he trotted across the snow into the forest.

Henceforth the bear came every evening at the same time, laid himself down by the hearth, and let the children amuse themselves with him as much as they liked; and they got so used to him that the doors were never fastened until their black friend had arrived.

When spring had come and all outside was green, the bear said one morning to Snow-white: 'Now I must go away, and cannot come back for the whole summer.' 'Where are you going, then, dear bear?' asked Snow-white. 'I must go into the forest and guard my treasures from the wicked dwarfs. In the winter, when the earth is frozen hard, they are obliged to stay below and cannot work their way through; but now, when the sun has thawed and warmed the earth, they break through it, and come out to pry and steal; and what once gets into their hands, and in their caves, does not easily see daylight again.'

Snow-white was quite sorry at his departure, and as she unbolted the door for him, and the bear was hurrying out, he caught against the bolt and a piece of his hairy coat was torn off, and it seemed to Snow-white as if she had seen gold shining through it, but she was not sure about it. The bear ran away quickly, and was soon out of sight behind the trees.

A short time afterwards the mother sent her children into the forest to get firewood. There they found a big tree which lay felled on the ground, and close by the trunk something was jumping backwards and forwards in the grass, but they could not make out what it was. When they came nearer they saw a dwarf with an old withered face and a snow-white beard a yard long. The end of the beard was caught in a crevice of the tree, and the little fellow was jumping about like a dog tied to a rope, and did not know what to do.

He glared at the girls with his fiery red eyes and cried: 'Why do you stand there? Can you not come here and help me?' 'What are you up to, little man?' asked Rose-red. 'You stupid, prying goose!' answered the dwarf: 'I was going to split the tree to get a little wood for cooking. The little bit of food that we people get is immediately burnt up with heavy logs; we do not swallow so much as you coarse, greedy folk. I had just driven the wedge safely in, and everything was going as I wished; but the cursed wedge was too smooth and suddenly sprang out, and the tree closed so quickly that I

could not pull out my beautiful white beard; so now it is tight and I cannot get away, and the silly, sleek, milk-faced things laugh! Ugh! how odious you are!’

The children tried very hard, but they could not pull the beard out, it was caught too fast. ‘I will run and fetch someone,’ said Rose-red. ‘You senseless goose!’ snarled the dwarf; ‘why should you fetch someone? You are already two too many for me; can you not think of something better?’ ‘Don’t be impatient,’ said Snow-white, ‘I will help you,’ and she pulled her scissors out of her pocket, and cut off the end of the beard.

As soon as the dwarf felt himself free he laid hold of a bag which lay amongst the roots of the tree, and which was full of gold, and lifted it up, grumbling to himself: ‘Uncouth people, to cut off a piece of my fine beard. Bad luck to you!’ and then he swung the bag upon his back, and went off without even once looking at the children.

Some time afterwards Snow-white and Rose-red went to catch a dish of fish. As they came near the brook they saw something like a large grasshopper jumping towards the water, as if it were going to leap in. They ran to it and found it was the dwarf. ‘Where are you going?’ said Rose-red; ‘you surely don’t want to go into the water?’ ‘I am not such a fool!’ cried the dwarf; ‘don’t you see that the accursed fish wants to pull me in?’ The little man had been sitting there fishing, and unluckily the wind had tangled up his beard with the fishing-line; a moment later a big fish made a bite and the feeble creature had not strength to pull it out; the fish kept the upper hand and pulled the dwarf towards him. He held on to all the reeds and rushes, but it was of little good, for he was forced to follow the movements of the fish, and was in urgent danger of being dragged into the water.

The girls came just in time; they held him fast and tried to free his beard from the line, but all in vain, beard and line were entangled fast together. There was nothing to do but to bring out the scissors and cut the beard, whereby a small part of it was lost. When the dwarf saw that he screamed out: ‘Is that civil, you toadstool, to disfigure a man’s face? Was it not enough to clip off the end of my beard? Now you have cut off the best part of it. I cannot let myself be seen by my people. I wish you had been made to run the soles off your shoes!’ Then he took out a sack of pearls which lay in the rushes, and without another word he dragged it away and disappeared behind a stone.

It happened that soon afterwards the mother sent the two children to the town to buy needles and thread, and laces and ribbons. The road led them across a heath upon which huge pieces of rock lay strewn about. There they noticed a large bird hovering in the air, flying slowly round and round above them; it sank lower and lower, and at last settled near a rock not far away. Immediately they heard a loud, piteous cry. They ran up and saw with horror that the eagle had seized their old acquaintance the dwarf, and was going to carry him off.

The children, full of pity, at once took tight hold of the little man, and pulled against the eagle so long that at last he let his booty go. As soon as the dwarf had recovered from his first fright he cried

with his shrill voice: 'Could you not have done it more carefully! You dragged at my brown coat so that it is all torn and full of holes, you clumsy creatures!' Then he took up a sack full of precious stones, and slipped away again under the rock into his hole. The girls, who by this time were used to his ingratitude, went on their way and did their business in town.

As they crossed the heath again on their way home they surprised the dwarf, who had emptied out his bag of precious stones in a clean spot, and had not thought that anyone would come there so late. The evening sun shone upon the brilliant stones; they glittered and sparkled with all colours so beautifully that the children stood still and stared at them. 'Why do you stand gaping there?' cried the dwarf, and his ashen-grey face became copper-red with rage. He was still cursing when a loud growling was heard, and a black bear came trotting towards them out of the forest. The dwarf sprang up in a fright, but he could not reach his cave, for the bear was already close. Then in the dread of his heart he cried: 'Dear Mr Bear, spare me, I will give you all my treasures; look, the beautiful jewels lying there! Grant me my life; what do you want with such a slender little fellow as I? you would not feel me between your teeth. Come, take these two wicked girls, they are tender morsels for you, fat as young quails; for mercy's sake eat them!' The bear took no heed of his words, but gave the wicked creature a single blow with his paw, and he did not move again.

The girls had run away, but the bear called to them: 'Snow-white and Rose-red, do not be afraid; wait, I will come with you.' Then they recognized his voice and waited, and when he came up to them suddenly his bearskin fell off, and he stood there a handsome man, clothed all in gold. 'I am a king's son,' he said, 'and I was bewitched by that wicked dwarf, who had stolen my treasures; I have had to run about the forest as a savage bear until I was freed by his death. Now he has got his well-deserved punishment.'

Snow-white was married to him, and Rose-red to his brother, and they divided between them the great treasure which the dwarf had gathered together in his cave. The old mother lived peacefully and happily with her children for many years. She took the two rose-trees with her, and they stood before her window, and every year bore the most beautiful roses, white and red.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did that horrible little dwarf not have? (Gratitude. Snow-white and Rose-red helped him, but he just insulted them. And in spite of that, they helped him again, and again.)
2. In what ways did Snow-white and Rose-red show gratitude to their mother?
3. How did the bear show gratitude to Snow-white and Rose-red?



Justice : Liberty

The Widow's Mite

Mark 12:41-44

This is a story from the Bible, so it's true, unlike some of the fairy tales we've been reading. So pay extra attention! The Bible says:

And Jesus sitting over against the treasury, beheld how the people cast money into the treasury, and many that were rich cast in much.

And there came a certain poor widow, and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing.

And calling his disciples together, he saith to them: Amen I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want cast in all she had, even her whole living.

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What does this story mean?
2. The rich people gave a lot of money, but the widow had very little and, so put in a little. Who gave more of themselves? Who sacrificed more?



Justice : Liberality

The Star Talers¹

The Brothers Grimm

Once upon a time there was a little girl whose father and mother had died, and she was so poor that she no longer had a room to live in, nor a bed to sleep in, and at last she had nothing else but the clothes she was wearing and a little piece of bread in her hand that some charitable soul had given her. She was good and pious, however. And as she was thus forsaken by all the world, she went forth into the country, trusting in dear God.

Then a poor man met her, who said, "Ah, give me something to eat, I am so hungry."

She handed him her entire piece of bread, saying, "May God bless it for you," and went on her way.

Then came a child who moaned and said, "My head is so cold. Give me something to cover it with." So she took off her cap and gave it to the child. And when she had walked a little farther, she met another child who had no jacket and was freezing. So she gave her jacket to that child, and a little farther on one begged for a dress, and she gave her dress away as well. At length she made her way into a forest and it was already dark. Then there came yet another child, and asked for a shift, and the pious girl thought to herself, "It is a dark night and no one can see you. You can very well give your shift away," and she took it off, and gave it away as well.

And thus she stood there, with nothing left at all, when suddenly some stars fell down from heaven, and they were nothing else but hard shining talers, and although she had just given her shift away, she was now wearing a new one which was of the very finest linen. Then she gathered together the money into it, and was rich all the days of her life.

¹ A taler is a German coin used between the 15th and 19th centuries

1. What are the virtues shown by the girl in the story? (the virtue liberality, an aspect of the cardinal virtue of Justice)
2. What are some ways you can practice the virtue of liberality?



Justice : Liberality

The Dog in the Manger

Aesop

A Dog asleep in a manger filled with hay, was awakened by the Cattle, which came in tired and hungry from working in the field. But the Dog would not let them get near the manger, and snarled and snapped as if it were filled with the best of meat and bones, all for himself.

The Cattle looked at the Dog in disgust. "How selfish he is!" said one. "He cannot eat the hay and yet he will not let us eat it who are so hungry for it!"

Things to talk to your children about:

1. What virtue did the dog fail to have? (Liberality. He was selfish and wouldn't even share something he didn't want. He was being petty.)

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