

“Virtues to Live by”

SERVICE

Before You Begin – An overview for teachers

“Each of you should use the gifts God has given you to serve others.” (1 Peter 4:10)

I seek opportunities to care for others.
Love leads me to service.
I am a giver.
What really matters is that I serve.
I find joy in service.
My work is worship.
Sacred Moments L. K. Popov

Definition

SERVICE – You put other people’s needs before your own. You want to make a difference to their lives. You look for ways to help others and do not wait to be asked. You put your heart and soul into your work. You notice that other people have things to offer and help them to make a real contribution.

Virtue to Live By

I look for ways to help others without being asked.

I give my time to serve willingly.

I encourage others to use their gifts to serve

By serving others I share God’s love.

Biblical sources

“God will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.” (Hebrews 6:10)

“Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. And my Father will honour anyone who serves me.” (John 12:26)

“The greatest among you must be your servant.” (Matthew 23:11)

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people.” (Mark 10:45)

"Each of you should use the gifts God has given you to serve others." (1 Peter 4:10)

"Do to others as you would have them do to you." (Matthew 7:12)

Parable of the Final Judgement (Matthew 25:31-46)

Church Teaching

"Promoting the dignity of every person, the most precious possession of men and women, is the essential task, in a certain sense, the central and unifying task of the service which the Church, and the lay faithful in her, are called to render to the human family." (*The Social Doctrine of the Church*, 522)

"Charity inspires a life of self-giving: 'whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it.' (*The Social Doctrine of the Church*, 583)

"Social teaching is not limited to a collection of official, mainly papal, texts. It is an oral tradition as well as a written one, and it is a lived and living tradition. Many Catholics whose lives are dedicated to the service and welfare of others make this teaching present by their very activity, even if they have never read a social encyclical." (*The Common Good and the Catholic Church*, 26, Bishops' Conference 1996)

"Christian teaching that the service of others is of greater value than the service of self is sure to seem at odds with the ethos of a capitalist economy." (*The Common Good and the Catholic Church*, 79, Bishops' Conference 1996)

Catholic sources

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
(St. Teresa of Avila)

"The fruit of love is service. The fruit of service is peace." (St Teresa of Calcutta)

"There is nothing small in the service of God." (St. Francis de Sales)

"Do not shut yourselves in your small world, but be open to others, especially the poorest and neediest, to work to improve the world in which we live. Be men and women for others, real champions in the service of others." (Pope Francis)

Other sources

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is: 'What are you doing for others?'" (Martin Luther King)

"I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy." (Rabindranath Tagore)

Why Practise Service?

Service is a central aspect of the virtue of love. When you love, you are self-giving; you go out of yourself, using your gifts to help and support others. Jesus, God's Son, calls us to serve one another because it is through self-giving service that we show our love for God and our neighbour. Recognising that we are called to serve means that we can live with purpose and put our heart and soul into all we do.

How do we Practise Service?

You notice the different needs of people and then do something positive to help them. You are not self-seeking or driven by self-interest. You commit to something and do it to the best of your ability using your gifts for the benefit of others. You seek to make a difference in your community through your sensitivity to people's needs, your positive attitude and your work. You serve God's creation by seeking to live sustainably, refusing to waste things and seeking to reduce your own negative impact on the planet.

Key Words: service,

Signs of living the virtue of service:

I think of the needs of others and how I can help.

I am willing to give my time to serve others.

I know there are different ways to serve.

I know that service can bring joy to myself and others.

When I serve I discover my gifts.

I serve with enthusiasm

Reflection Questions: