



Virtue of the Month:
Hope

Saintly Exemplar:
Saint John Vianney



1786-1859

Painting: Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, ILL.

Sacred Scripture:

“For You O Lord
are my Hope...
my trust is in You.
Psalm 146:5

“I know the plans I have
for you says the Lord,
to give you a future
and a hope.”

Jeremiah 29:11

HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION

Hope

Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“Hope is the *theological* virtue by which we desire the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ’s promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. ‘The Holy Spirit...He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by His grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life’” (CCC 1817). *Note: Theological means that this gift comes from God and leads us back to God. A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. Supernatural means it is above our nature.*

What is the supernatural virtue of hope?

The virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of every person; it takes up the hopes that inspire our activities and purifies them so as to order them to the Kingdom of Heaven. We receive the supernatural gift of hope from God in Baptism.

- The supernatural virtue of hope allows the possibility for Christians to trust in God. This grace is a gift of God, infused by Him.
- Hope has to do with things that seem difficult or impossible to receive, such as salvation. (See *John 11:25-26*)
- The gift of hope given by God never disappoints (cf. *Romans 5:5*).
- Hope tells us that God, Who promised us eternal salvation, will also give us the graces that we need for the journey to Heaven. He is faithful to His word, so we can put our trust in Him.
- Faith assists us to hope in God and His promise that He will always remain with us. Hope sustains us at all times, especially when feelings of discouragement or abandonment seem to overwhelm us.
- In addition, hope *keeps* us from discouragement.
- Hope opens up our heart in expectation of future blessings and eternal beatitude.
- Buoyed up by hope, we are preserved from turning inward in selfishness and led to the happiness that flows from charity.

Why do we need the supernatural virtue of hope?

- God is almighty, merciful and good. The supernatural gift of hope helps us to trust in God’s promises, opening our heart to His mercy.
- Hope ensures the desire written on our heart by God to attain the glory of Heaven promised by God to those who love Him and do His will. We trust that God will give the grace we need to attain it.
- Hope leads us to persevere in prayer, even when all reason for hope seems absent. (cf. *Romans 4:18-21*)
- Hope offers to us joy and courage which sustains us in times of trial.
- Hope allows us to live, grow and persevere in faith.
- When we need the gift of hope, the most important thing we can do is ask for it: “The Lord hears the cry of the poor” (*Psalm 34:6*).

Suggestions for fostering the growth of the virtue of hope at home

- **Read a Scripture passage about hope.** Re-read it and choose a word or phrase that stood out.
Psalm 62:1-8 Wisdom 1:16 –3:4 Jeremiah 29:11-13 Matthew 12:15-21
Romans 5:1-5 Romans 8:20-30 Romans 15:4-13 Ephesians 1:11-23
- **Who are some positive role models** who exemplify the virtue of hope through a life of prayer and action? St. Jude, patron of hopeless causes, Solanus Casey, Pope John Paul II,
- **Talk about a TV program** that you watch where the virtue of hope is practiced? Example: A character in the program never gives up despite difficult circumstances. Discuss how specific programs present obstacles to the virtue of hope. Example: A program that presents the message that if you do not own this brand of “tennis shoes” or some other possession then you are not good and have no worth.
- **Name and read about other saints**, in addition to St. John Vianney that model the virtue of hope. St. Teresa Benedicta, St. Josephine of Bakhita, St. Padre Pio, who said “Pray, Hope, Don’t’ Worry.”
- **Discuss what it means to have hope in the future.** e.g. You have a vision for the future based upon the fact that God has a plan for your life, that things will be better than what you are experiencing now.
- God forgives our sins and heals and strengthens us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. **How does this help your family to live the virtue of hope?**
- **What do you do when there appears to be no hope?** Pray for hope. Go to a parent or trusted Christian person regarding your thoughts and feelings.
- **How can we grow in our trust of God’s love** and His plan for our life? e.g. Pray, read Scripture, receive the Sacraments, reach out to others, be part of Christian fellowship.

Man of Hope

Saint John Vianney

FAST FACTS

Also Known As

Patron Saint of Priests

Patron Saint of Confessors

Feast Day:

August 4

As the reputation of this holy man of God spread, pilgrims began to seek him out, sometimes waiting days for him to hear their confession, heal their illnesses, and speak directly to their deepest needs.



Statue: Holy Cross Diocesan Center, La Crosse, WI.

Prayer to St. John Vianney

Dear Saint John Vianney,
your childhood dream was to be a Priest,
to win souls for God.
You endured years of toil and humiliation
to attain the Priesthood.
You became a priest truly after God's own heart,
outstanding in humility and poverty;
prayer and mortification.
Totally devoted to the service of God's people.
The Church has exalted you as model
and patron saint of all parish Priests,
trusting that your example and prayers
will help them to live up
to the high dignity of their vocation
to be faithful servants of God's people,
to be perfect imitators of Christ the Savior
Who came not to be served but to serve,
to give His Life in ransom for many.

Pray that God may give to His Church today
many more priests after His own Heart.
Pray for all the priests under your patronage,
that they may be worthy representatives
of Christ the Good Shepherd.
May they wholeheartedly devote themselves
to prayer and penance;
be examples of humility and poverty;
shining models of holiness;
tireless and powerful preachers of the Word of God;
zealous dispensers of God's Grace in the
Sacraments.
May their loving devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist
and to Mary His Mother
be the Twin Fountains of fruitfulness for their
ministry. Amen.