

# HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION

## Prudence



**Virtue of the Month:**  
*Prudence*

**Saintly Exemplar:**  
*Saint Thomas Aquinas*



Window: Blessed Sacrament Parish,  
La Crosse, WI.

### Sacred Scripture:

“The wisdom of a prudent man is to discern his way, but the folly of fools is deceiving.”  
*Proverbs 14:8*

“A fool despises his father’s instruction, but he who heeds admonition is prudent.”  
*Proverbs 15:5*

### Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“*Prudence* is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; ‘the prudent man looks where he is going.’ Prudence is ‘right reason in action,’ writes Saint Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle. It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity or dissimulation. It is called the charioteer of the virtues; it guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of conscience. The prudent man determines and directs his conduct in accordance with this judgment. With the help of this virtue we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid” (CCC 1806).

### *What is the virtue of prudence?*

Prudence is right judgment. The natural virtue of prudence is about making right decisions from a purely natural perspective and the supernatural virtue of prudence is about making good decisions in accordance with God’s will, which is the very best for me, that will benefit me now *and* eternally.

- The natural virtue of prudence is basically common sense in sound judgment regarding practical matters. It assists people to arrange their lives and activities in order to achieve the goal of a happy life. It is naturally prudent to look both ways before crossing the street.
- The supernatural virtue of prudence makes us order our activities, desires, resources, and behavior in accordance with the Gospel so that we may come to eternal life. The Church reminds us that we must use supernatural prudence and courage when we are faced with evil. We can do many things that are imprudent from a worldly perspective but which are prudent for eternal life. The martyrs are celebrated for their living witness of supernatural prudence—they gave up their natural life for Jesus’ sake. An example involved those Christians who protected Jews from death camps.

### *Why do we need the virtue of prudence?*

- Prudence helps the intellect to see the right thing to do and to choose the right means for achieving it. Choosing wisely involves taking good counsel while obtaining knowledge from the past and present.
- Prudence entails the application of good moral principles to particular cases allowing us to know what to seek and what to avoid.
- Prudence is necessary in order to seek the common good for all.
- Prudence helps us to see what aids our salvation and what hinders our progress. Supernatural prudence may entail a certain degree of discomfort or even risk of the things that we cherish. We seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness by following the Gospel teachings and the example of Christ.
- Prudence aids us in not going along with evil in the event that we do not know what to do or because we are afraid of the consequences of opposition to the prevailing point of view. Our task is to ask for and cooperate with God’s grace in developing prudence and allowing God to perfect it in us.

## Suggestions for fostering the growth of prudence at home:

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- **Pray together as a family** and ask for an increase in the virtue of prudence.  
Morning: Morning Offering      Before meal prayer      Ask Jesus for the help you need  
Evening: Act of Contrition      Attend Sunday Mass      Pray a decade of the Rosary
- **Read a Scripture passage about prudence** and pick a word or phrase that stood out for you.  
*Proverbs 2*      *Proverbs 4*      *Proverbs 8*      *Proverbs 16*
- **Teach your children how to make good judgments**, thereby developing the virtue of prudence. This will include seeking good counsel, studying the Catholic Faith, and growing strong in God's grace through daily prayer and reception of the Sacraments.
- **Make a list of the words that describe prudence.** (See page one) Name positive role models who exemplify the virtue of prudence.
- **Discuss television programs** that you watch where the virtue of prudence is practiced? Discuss how specific programs portray characters who practice poor judgment.
- **Name and read about other saints** that model the virtue of prudence.  
Examples: St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Benedict, St. Charles Borromeo. [www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org).
- **Pray briefly with a Scripture passage** using the "Praying with Scripture" prayer worksheet.  
*Matthew 7:24-29*      The wise man builds his house on the Rock, Who is Christ.  
*Acts 6:1-7*      The appointment of assistants who are spiritual and prudent.
- **Take note of the people in your area who are in need.** Decide the right thing(s) to do and choose the best means for achieving it. Examples:  
Contribute to food & clothing drives      Visit people in a nursing home  
Give toys to orphanages and family service agencies      Tutor someone who needs help

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## Prudence

# Saint Thomas Aquinas

### FAST FACTS

#### Also Known As:

Doctor of the Church  
The Angelic Doctor  
The Dumb Ox  
The Universal Teacher  
Patron Saint of Catholic Schools  
Patron Saint of academics  
Patron Saint of scholars  
Patron Saint of students  
Patron Saint of theologians  
Patron Saint of universities

#### Feast Day:

January 28



### Prayer to Saint Thomas Aquinas

O Blessed Thomas,  
Patron of Schools,  
obtain for us from God  
an invincible faith,  
a burning charity,  
a chaste life,  
and true knowledge,  
Through Christ Our Lord.  
Amen.