



St. John Bosco  
1815-1888

### Sacred Scripture:

“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God...Pay respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.”

*Romans 13:1, 7*

### Respect for self and others:

“Do you not realize that you are a temple of God with the Spirit of God living in you?”

*1 Corinthians 3:16*

### Remember this:

Because indeed, we are a temple of the Holy Spirit, we should never unduly submit our personal respect to a person in “unlawful” authority, an individual who is abusing his/her position of authority to disrespect another person.

# VIRTUE OF THE MONTH

# RESPECT

### Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains in a special relationship with the Creator, Who is its sole end” (CCC 2258). “Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception” (CCC 1814). “Respect for life” is directly related to “respect for the dignity of persons” (CCC 2259, 2284). “The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God...If man exists, it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his Creator” (CCC 27).

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

Each person is unique, unrepeatable, and has inherent dignity from God. Further, each person has a unique role in God’s plan. Therefore, each person is to be shown respect, even if the individual is impaired in some way. Having respect toward another person means that we show him honor and esteem because he is a child of God who deserves consideration and regard.

- The virtue of respect has a hierarchy. Complete respect is to begin in our relationship with God in obeying His commands and responding to His desire that we spend time with Him in prayer each day.
- Secondly, we are to respect ourselves, maintaining a proper balance in all matters.
- God has given us our parents and so we are to respect them. This is followed by a special respect for priests, religious, teachers, law enforcement officers, elders, siblings, relatives, bosses, fellow employees, neighbors and those in authority.
- We are to show respect for our neighbor and his conscience through charity. Everyone should look upon his neighbor (without any exception) as ‘another self’ above all protecting his life and keeping in mind what is necessary for living it with dignity. (CCC 1931)
- Respecting others will always pertain to respecting their feelings and should involve meekness, benevolence, courtesy and tact toward them.

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

- Due to the effects of Original Sin, we are inclined toward selfishness and pride. Therefore, we have to develop the virtue of respect. If a child is not taught how to respect parents and those in authority, he will neither respect God, himself, nor anyone else.
- We must respect the soul and body of each person, thereby avoiding the possibility of inducing others to do evil. If we sin against someone or cause him to sin, we wound his conscience and we sin against Christ because each person is created in the image of God. (cf. 1 Corinthians 8:12).
- The virtue of respect insists that people have a right to hear the truth in a respectful manner after thoughtful and prayerful consideration.
- We respect ourselves and others by taking care of *physical health* and avoiding every kind of excess. Also to be avoided are the use of illicit drugs which cause very serious damage, as well as the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco and medicine (*Compendium*, question 474).

*“So great a dedication of himself to the young, in the midst of difficulties sometimes of an extreme nature, John Bosco attained, because of a singular and intense charity, an interior vitality that united in him an inseparable love of God and love of his neighbor. In this way he was able to establish a synthesis between evangelizing activity and educational work.”*

**IUVENUM PATRIS  
HIS HOLINESS  
POPE JOHN PAUL II  
January 31, 1988**



St. John Bosco’s vision of the Church, represented by the ship, being attacked by enemies of the faith. A great Pope is raised up by God who steers the Church safely away from the enemy by way of two columns: devotion to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and to Mary, Mother of God.

## Respect Saint John Bosco



### FAST FACTS

#### *Also Known As:*

Don Bosco  
Patron of boys  
Patron of editors  
Patron of youth  
Patron of schoolchildren  
Patron of apprentices  
Patron of laborers  
Patron of stage magicians  
Patron of illusionists

#### **Feast Day:**

January 31

### *His Life*

- John Bosco was born in 1815 in northern Italy to a family of peasant farmers.
- During his youth, John Bosco would perform tightrope walking, acrobatics, juggling and magic tricks to attract the young. He then held religious services in which they first prayed and then played.
- When John was 9, he had a dream involving unruly children in which he tried to stop their fighting with his own fists, but failed. Jesus appeared in the dream and said the way for John to help them was by being kind and teaching the boys to hate sin and love purity. The Virgin Mary then appeared and changed the children from wild beasts to lambs – telling John he must do the same. This dream was to have a significant influence on his call to work with children for the rest of his life.
- John continued his education, using his brilliant mind and kind heart to teach children. Ordained at age 26, he was referred to as Don (Italian for father) Bosco.
- Shortly after his ordination, he gathered a group of boys who were living on the streets without care and supervision due to the industrial revolution and wars in Italy. Don Bosco provided “festive oratory” services where he taught the boys using his educational method that relied on reason, religion, and kindness.
- Don Bosco practiced ‘preventive education’ to prevent evils by teaching virtue, along with a sense of duty and personal responsibility. The oratory began in 1841 with a group of 9 boys gathering at night for evening classes. He treated his boys with respect, giving them personal attention, encouragement, and affirming love. He was patient and gentle with the students. His motto was “Give me souls; take away the rest.”
- With his mother, Don Bosco opened a boarding house for 40 boys which became the first Salesian Home. In this home, Don Bosco opened workshops to train apprentices as shoemakers, tailors, printers, carpenters, and mechanics. He also prepared boys for the priesthood. By 1856, Father John Bosco was caring for 550 boys.
- In 1869, 50 priests and teachers, who were helping Don Bosco with his Oratory, formed the Salesian Order. Today there are over 40,000 Salesian priests, brothers, and sisters staffing technical schools, nurseries, orphanages, clinics and hospitals across the world.

### *How is Saint John Bosco a model of respect?*

- St. John Bosco looked under the dirt, the rags, and the uncouth language of the street children to recognize their dignity as children of God.
- Based on this recognition, the boys were treated with kindness, gentleness, and affirming love which were part of the pedagogy of St. John’s oratories.
- Respect for the dignity and individual worth of each child helped to create the child’s feeling of personal adequacy and self-esteem. By making himself always available, St. John Bosco established a unique rapport with his boys, never failing to use reasonable discipline when correcting them was necessary.
- The dignity of the human body was encouraged by St. John Bosco through personal cleanliness, purity, modesty and good manners.
- One of his greatest desires was for his boys to go to Confession and be strengthened by the great graces of the Sacrament.

# Activities to Foster the Growth of the Virtue of Respect

---

- Pray this prayer each morning, asking for the grace to grow in the virtue of respect.  
O Saint John Bosco, father and teacher of youth, you labored so much for the salvation of souls. Help us to respect ourselves and each person as a child of God. Be our guide in seeking the good of our souls and the salvation of our neighbor. Teach us to love Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Mary Mother of Christ and our Mother, and our Holy Father the Pope. And obtain for us from God, the grace of a happy death, so that we may all be gathered together with you in Heaven.
- How is the virtue of respect based upon the dignity of the human person? Discuss the enclosed handout on Our God-given Dignity.
- Make a list of the words from page one that describes the virtue of respect.
- Define the words courtesy, meekness, tact, consideration, and benevolence. Give examples of each.
- Why are we to show respect for parents? (See CCC 2196- 2200, 2214-2219, 2227)
- How do we show disrespect toward parents and thereby sin against them?
- How are we to show respect for family members, friends, neighbors, as well as any person? How is bullying disrespectful? (CCC 2206, 2212, 2219-2220)
- Reflect on a way that you have failed to be respectful. What could you have done differently? How can the Sacrament of Reconciliation help you?
- Name some people from the Bible who lived out the virtue of parental respect. Examples:  
*Ruth* 1:15-18 Ruth respects and honors her mother-in-law.  
*Tobit* 4:3-4 Tobit asks that Tobiah respect his mother.  
*Luke* 2:41-52 Jesus' response to Joseph and Mary at the finding in the Temple,  
*Mark* 1:29-31 Peter asked Jesus to heal his mother-in-law.
- As a class, read a book about a saint and report to the class how this person lived out the virtue of respect. Examples: St. Martin de Porres, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Pope John Paul II, St. Gianna Beretta Molla, Pope Benedict XVI
- Think of someone who lives out the virtue of respect. What does this person say or do that indicates that he/she is respectful of God, self, and others.
- Why are fears, prejudices, and attitudes of pride and selfishness contrary to the virtue of respect? Fears, prejudices, and attitudes of pride and selfishness, which obstruct the establishment of truly fraternal societies, will cease only through the respect and charity that finds in every man 'a neighbor,' a brother. (CCC 1931)
- How are we to respect the souls of others? (See CCC 2284-2287)
- What do we do to show respect for our health? (See CCC 2288-2291)
- How do we show respect for a person's name? (See CCC 2158)

**“Respect for parents (*filial piety*) derives from *gratitude* toward those who, by the gift of life, their love and their work have brought their children into the world and enabled to grow in stature, wisdom and grace...**

**Filial respect is shown by true docility and *obedience*.”**

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church 2215-2216)*

- Using the “Praying with Scripture” prayer worksheet, take ten minutes to pray with a Scripture passage that is related to respect.
  - Luke 2:41-52* Jesus, the Son of God, respected and submitted Himself to parental authority
  - Luke 10:29-37* The story of the Good Samaritan
  - Mark 10:46-52* Jesus shows respect for the blind man Bartimaeus in responding to his cries for help
- Each week, memorize a Scripture passage that relates to respect. Examples:
  - Proverbs 13:1* “A wise son hears his father’s instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.”
  - Sirach 3:2-6* Respect for parents – “Whoever honors his father atones for sins...”
  - Sirach 3:12-13, 16* Respect for parents – “Help your father in his old age...”
  - Sirach 7:27-28* Respect for parents – “Through your parents you were born...”
  - Proverbs 1:8* “Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and reject not your mother’s teaching.”
  - Proverbs 6:20-22* Filial respect is shown by true docility and obedience.
- How do we show respect for the reputation of persons? (See CCC 2477-2478, 2507) How do you establish a ‘good reputation’? How do you fix a reputation that has been damaged?
- How do we show respect for ourselves and others through dressing modestly? (CCC 2524, 2521, 2526)
- What is our responsibility to have respect for the truth? (See CCC 2488-2494)
- What are the effects of living the virtue of respect? (CCC 2219)
- Discuss these practical tips which show respect. Give an example of each:
  - Speak kindly
  - Refrain from idle complaints
  - Don’t speak ill of others
  - Pay attention
  - Listen
  - Rediscover silence
  - Be inclusive
  - Acknowledge others
  - Respect other’s opinions
  - Respect even a subtle “No”
- How do civil authorities show respect for each person? (See CCC 2235, 2238) How did our founding fathers try to ensure respect for all people? “Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature” (CCC 1930, 1907, 1929-1933, 1944). What are these rights?
- How are we to show respect for the dying? (CCC 2299)
- How are we to show respect for the dead? (See CCC 2300-2301)
- How are we called to have respect for the goods of others? (CCC 2407-2414, the Seventh Commandment)
- How are we called to have respect for creation, such as animals, the earth, the sky? What is the balance that is called for between loving human persons and loving animals? (See CCC 2414-2418)
- In what ways can science and technology be used to enhance the dignity of life? Examples: Heart transplant, camera, internet. How can science and technology be an affront to the dignity of the human person, his good, and in conformity with the plan and the will of God? (See CCC 2292-2296)
- How do torture, kidnapping, abuse and terrorism violate the respect due a person? (CCC 2297-2298)

## Helpful Information on the Virtue of Respect

---

- We are to show respect for parents.
  - 1) “Parents, no matter what age or personal qualities/defects, will always be their children’s superiors. The respect we have for our parents must be based upon love, justice, and gratitude. Why? Because our parents brought us into this world, cared for and educated us. While we can never repay our parents, we can make life more pleasant for them through our respect and love. This virtue in fact helps us to live the fourth commandment.” (*Raise Happy Children, Teach Them Joy!*, Mary Ann Budnick, R.B. Media).
  - 2) As young adults mature and move away from home, they still have a responsibility to listen to the advice of their parents, consider their corrections, anticipate their needs and provide for their assistance as they grow old. Parents are to be supported when they are ill, lonely, or upset. In summary, respect is always owed to parents. “This respect has its roots in the fear of God, one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 2217-2219).
  - 3) Loving and honoring a person with respect includes forgiveness. Obeying the Fourth Commandment, “Honor your father and mother”, includes forgiveness toward parents, who at times, will fall short. Only God is able to love us unconditionally as each person lives with the effects of original sin. Therefore, no parent is able to love their children perfectly as God does. (See CCC 2227)
  - 4) We lack the virtue of respect toward parents when we hurt them in any way, such as causing them sorrow or to worry, ignoring them, manipulating them out of selfishness rather than always seeking their good. Children sin against the respect they owe their parents by speaking unkindly to or about them, by striking or insulting them, and being ashamed of them. In addition to disrespect and unkindness, we can also sin against parents through neglect of their needs.
- We need to have great respect for parents and brothers and sisters in the family unit but we also are to respect neighbors because each person is a child of God with inherent dignity. (CCC 2206, 2212, 2219-2220) “The person who has respect for others, refrains from acting so as not to harm, and indeed so as to benefit, himself and others, according to their rights, status, and circumstances” (*Character Building*, Dr. David Isaacs).
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation strengthens us to live out the virtue of respect. The assistance God provides in the Sacrament of Confession is something that has to be experienced more than understood intellectually. The graces received from the Sacrament include forgiveness of the sin against respect, the strength to be more respectful, recognition of the situations when you are sinning against respect and the grace to avoid being disrespectful. In preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, challenge the students to reflect on a way in which they have specifically failed to live out this virtue. Following this reflection, encourage them to acknowledge this sin by confessing to a priest in Sacramental Confession and notice the strengthening that has taken place in their heart.
- “Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature” (CCC 1930, 1907, 1929-1933, 1944). What are these rights? These rights are life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, the opportunity to fulfill a vocation, the right to formation of conscience, the right of safeguarding privacy, and the right of freedom of religion.

- We are to show respect for the dying by helping them to live their last moments in dignity and peace. This includes surrounding them with prayer and helping them to receive, at the proper time, the Sacraments that help them to meet the living God. (CCC 2299)
- We are to respect all of creation. However, man and woman are the summit of God’s creation because the human person is created in the image of God and has a soul that will live forever. God gave man and woman dominion over all of creation, which means proper stewardship. Stewardship means the orderly use of the goods of creation for the benefit of our existence. However, creation is not to be abused. We need to respect created things and use things properly but the respect that we give to man must never be subservient to the protection of the rest of creation. For example, human life must never be forfeited for the protection of even an endangered species of animals.
- We show respect for ourselves and others through dressing modestly. (See CCC 2524, 2521, 2526) Due to the effects of Original Sin, we can be easily tempted to look upon another person as an object for sexual pleasure rather than a person to be loved. Dressing immodestly can easily tempt others in this direction as it draws the attention of others to focus on one part of the body rather than the person. “Modesty means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden...It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons and their solidarity” (CCC 2521).
- Living out the virtue of respect is hard work but there are many perks. You will have joy-filled relationships; people will enjoy your company; there is harmony in family life; people are likely to treat you with greater respect; you will grow in recognition of the dignity of the human person and true self-esteem as well as selflessness, humility, inner joy, and peace. “Filial respect promotes harmony in all of family life; it also concerns *relationships between brothers and sisters*. Respect toward parents fills the home with light and warmth.” (CCC 2219)



# Additional Resources on the Virtue of Respect

---

## Pre-School through Third Grade

- *Saint Joseph First Book of Saints, Their Life-Story and Example*, Lovasik, Father Lawrence, S.V.D., Catholic Book Publishing Corp, 1986.
- *Saints Tell Their Stories*, Mitchell, Patricia and Lo Cascio, Maria Cristina; The Word Among Us Press, 2009. [www.wordamongus.org](http://www.wordamongus.org).

## Fourth Grade through Eighth Grade

- *Saints for Young Readers for Every Day, Volume 1*, Wallace, Susan Helen, Pauline Books and Media, 1999 (2 pages)
- *St. John (Don) Bosco and St. Dominic Savio*, Beebe, Catherine, Vision Books Series, Ignatius Press, 1955.
- *Saints of the Church: A Teacher's Guide to the Vision Books*, Michael G. Allen, Ignatius Press, 2000.
- *Forty Dreams of St. John Bosco, The Apostle of Youth*, Bacchiarello, Father J., S.D.B., Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1996.
- *Saint of the Day, Lives, Lessons, Feasts*, Foley, Leonard, O.F.M., McCloskey, Pat, O.F.M., St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2009.
- *St. John Bosco: Mission to Love*, DVD, Ignatius Press, 2007.
- *Don Bosco: A Film by Leandro Castellani*. VHS, Salesiana Publishers, 1993.

## Ninth Grade through Twelfth Grade

- *Best-Loved Saints*, Lovasik, Fr. Lawrence G. S.V.D., Catholic Book Publishing Corp., 2007.
- *Saint of the Day, Lives, Lessons, Feasts*, Foley, Leonard, O.F.M., McCloskey, Pat, O.F.M., St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2009.
- *Forty Dreams of St. John Bosco, The Apostle of Youth*, Bacchiarello, Father J., S.D.B., Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1996.
- *St. John (Don) Bosco and St. Dominic Savio*, Beebe, Catherine, Vision Books Series, Ignatius Press, 1955.
- *Saints of the Church: A Teacher's Guide to the Vision Books*, Michael G. Allen, Ignatius Press, 2000.
- *St. John Bosco: Mission to Love*, DVD, Ignatius Press, 2007.
- *Don Bosco: A Film by Leandro Castellani*. VHS, Salesiana Publishers, 1993.
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Further listings under respect, dignity of the human person)
  - Respect owed to God, paragraphs 209, 2101, 2148
  - Respect for God's name, paragraphs 2144, 2148-49
  - Respect for the soul of another, paragraphs 2284-2287
  - Respect for the Commandments, the Law, paragraphs 532, 579, 1986, 2053, 2200
  - Respect for family, paragraphs 2206, 2214-17, 2219, 2228, 2251
  - Respect for human freedom, paragraphs 1738, 1884
  - Respect for human life, paragraphs 2259-83
  - Respect for one's own body, paragraphs 1004
  - Respect of parents for their children, paragraphs 2221-2226, 2228
  - Parents are to respect and encourage their child's vocation, paragraphs 2232-2233
  - Public authority is obliged to respect the fundamental rights of the human person and the conditions for the exercise of his freedom, paragraph 2237.

“Pay to all what is due them...respect to whom respect is due.”

*Romans 13:7*