

ATCRE+
Association of Teachers of
Catholic Religious Education

Formation in virtues

educating the whole
person

ACTRE Conference 7th October
2020

Online 5pm-5.30pm

formation
in virtues
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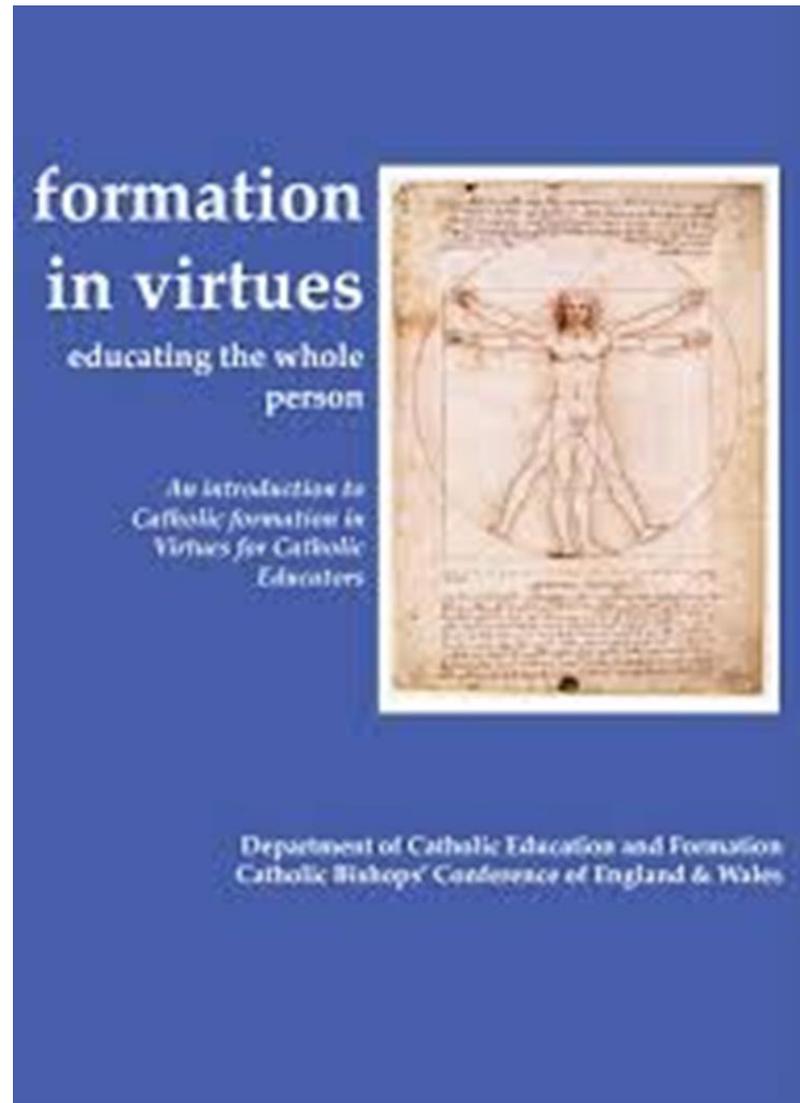
An Introduction to
Catholic formation in
Virtues for Catholic
Educators



Department of Catholic Education and Formation
Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales

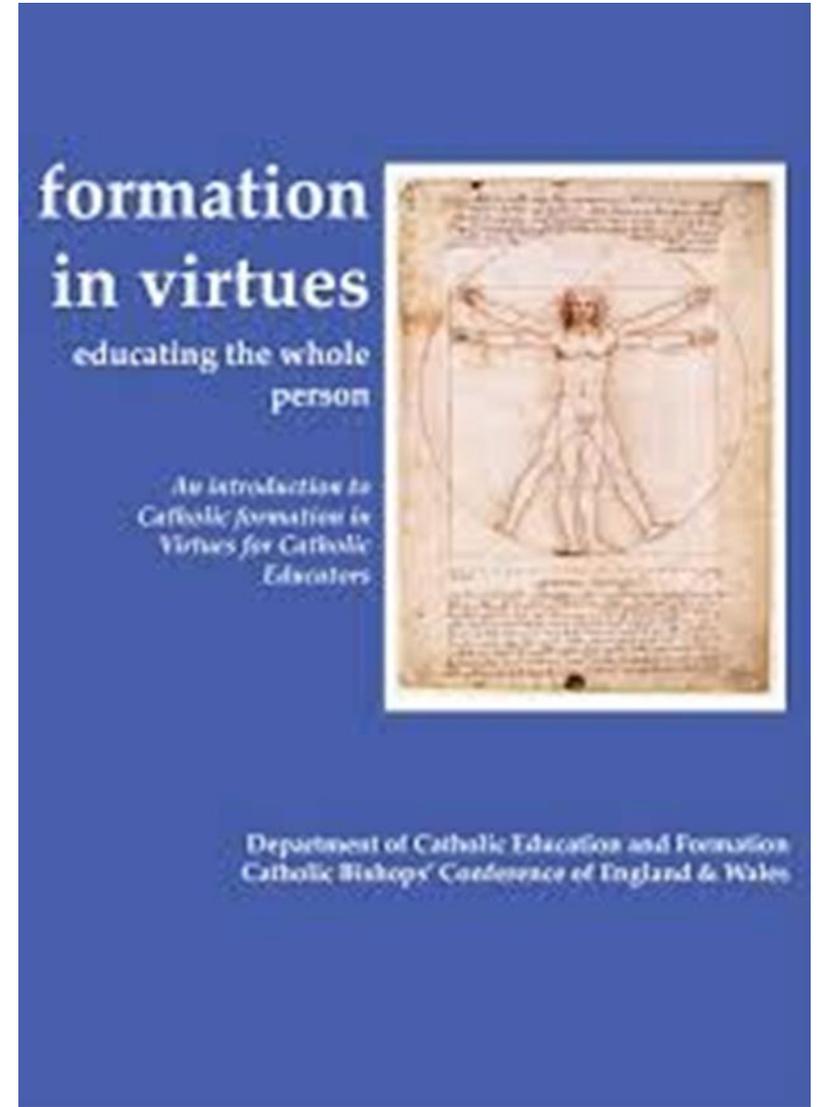
A summary document from the Bishops' Conference that gives an overview of the 7 virtues that are constitutive of the human person.

It uses brief excerpts from the writing of St. John Henry Newman (feast day 9th October) to orientate the outline of each virtue as well as the frescos on the 7 virtues and vices of Giotto in Padua, Italy.



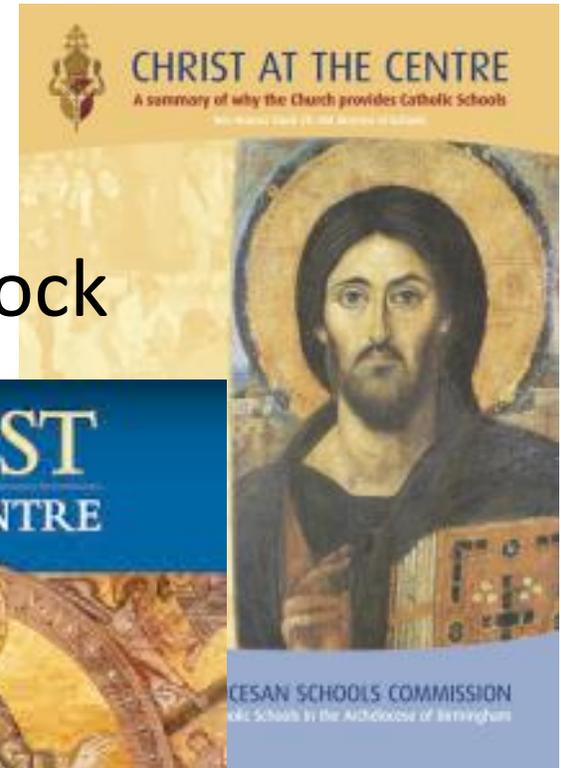
Formation in virtues

- Highlight some aspects of the document and some practical applications for the Catholic school.
- But I will begin with a couple of comments:

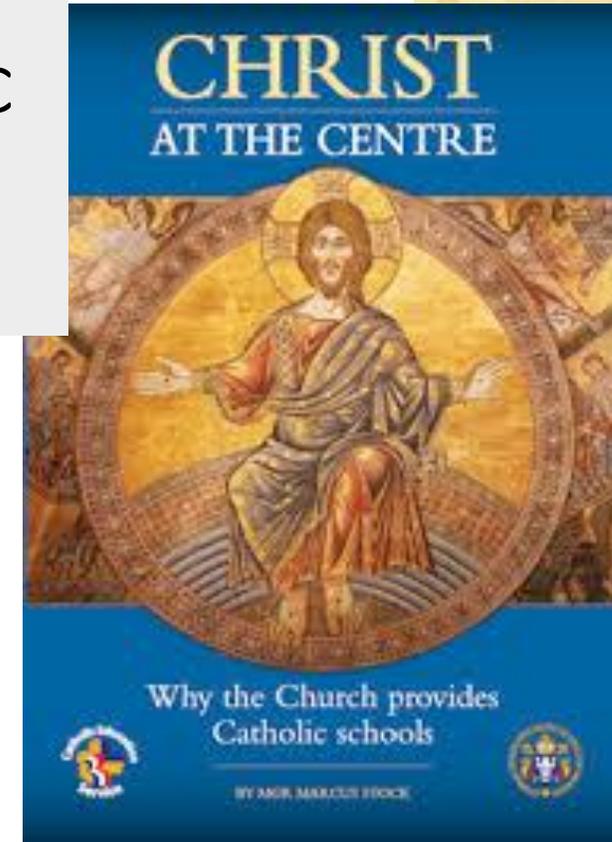


The pursuit of virtues, rather than gospel values, is becoming the central preoccupation for ethos in Catholic schools and colleges.

Marcus Stock



2005



2013

CATHOLIC CHARACTER EDUCATION

Growing in the virtues and celebrating human flourishing in Catholic schools

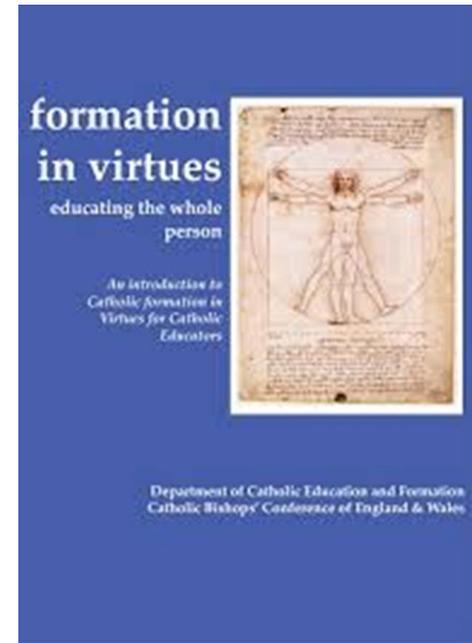


Christopher Devanny
2018



Let's turn to the document...

*And so, Catholic schools, whatever the differences in their individually expressed 'Mission Statements' - all **have the person of Christ at their core, because Christ is at the core of every person that makes up the school community... The Church believes that the human vocation is to recover and develop in every person their likeness to Christ... this search for the fullness of truth and for the good is undertaken in companionship with Christ, whom it acknowledges as the 'Way', as well as 'Truth' and 'Life' itself.***



Christ is
the
beginning
and the
end

The human vocation is not simply to develop but *recover their likeness to Christ* - a deliberate reminder that Christianity isn't just a civic good, it is a *discipleship in salvation*.

Therefore alongside the emphasis on positive qualities of character called **virtues** there is also, in the document, an emphasis on our ability to recognise **deficiencies in virtue**, both in others and not least in ourselves

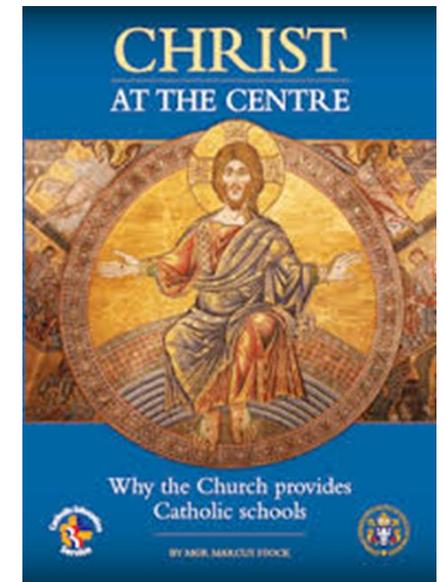
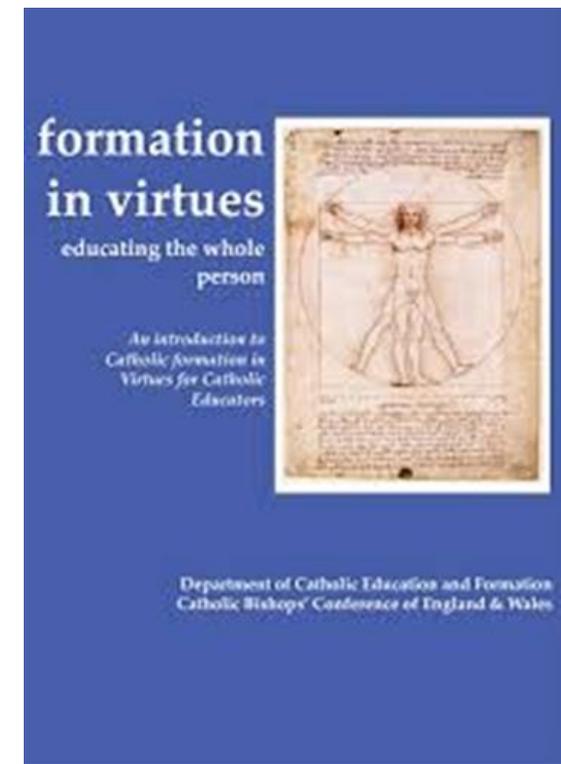
The Vices



The Christ centred origin is crucial, but at the same time, the document is *philosophical rather than theological in nature*.

i.e. not concerned with 'gospel values' or the beatitudes as in *Christ at the Centre* which is more theological in intention.

What the relationship is between gospel values and virtues is an important question that I shall leave to one side – perhaps there is a question here.



Formation in the Virtues begins with the four cardinal virtues from the classical tradition rooted in Plato and Aristotle,

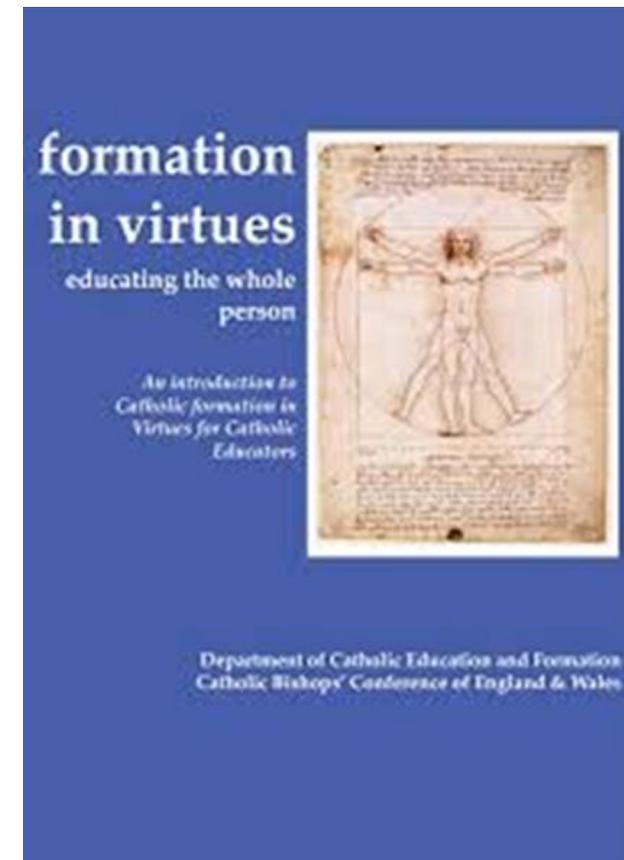
(prudence, temperance, justice, fortitude)

before outlining the three theological virtues

(Faith, Hope & Charity).

I suggest that work in schools on the virtues needs to root all the virtues in scripture.

<https://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Virtues-for-Catholic-Schools.pdf>



The document rightly suggests that the 7 virtues are a framework around which all other virtues are grouped.

I suggest that schools unpack the definition of each virtue and this unpacking will suggest other virtues that are equivalents or aspects of the central virtue.

<https://www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Virtues-for-Catholic-Schools.pdf>

Let's unpack a little more of the document:

“So the search for the good is *a moral enterprise*, in which the school community ought to provide *opportunities not only to ‘do the good’*, but provide *an education in the virtues* for there to be any disposition towards the good that could be both ‘firm’ and ‘habitual’. *Habits make us who we are*. The *educational challenge is to find ways that this enterprise can be imaginatively and engagingly undertaken in our schools...*”

Moral enterprise - the Church has always understood education as a moral enterprise, it cannot be other, if we are about the formation of the human person.

Religious education for Catholic teachers is also a partner in moral education; it cannot be otherwise even in a knowledge rich curriculum because knowledge does not exist simply for its reproduction, but reaches its end in application; “***as a call to serve and to be responsible for others***” (The Catholic School, 1977: 56).

Is this moral enterprise only applicable to the children and young people we teach?

Do the virtues not apply to school leaders, teachers and all other staff?



“Moral agency ... concerns the dual, but interrelated, commitment of the teacher to be both a moral person and a moral educator and, by means of combining the two, an inevitable exemplar and a model of virtuous conduct and attitude.”

(Campbell 2003, in *Teaching Character and Virtue in Schools*, J. Arthur, K. Kristjansson, T. Harrison, 2016)

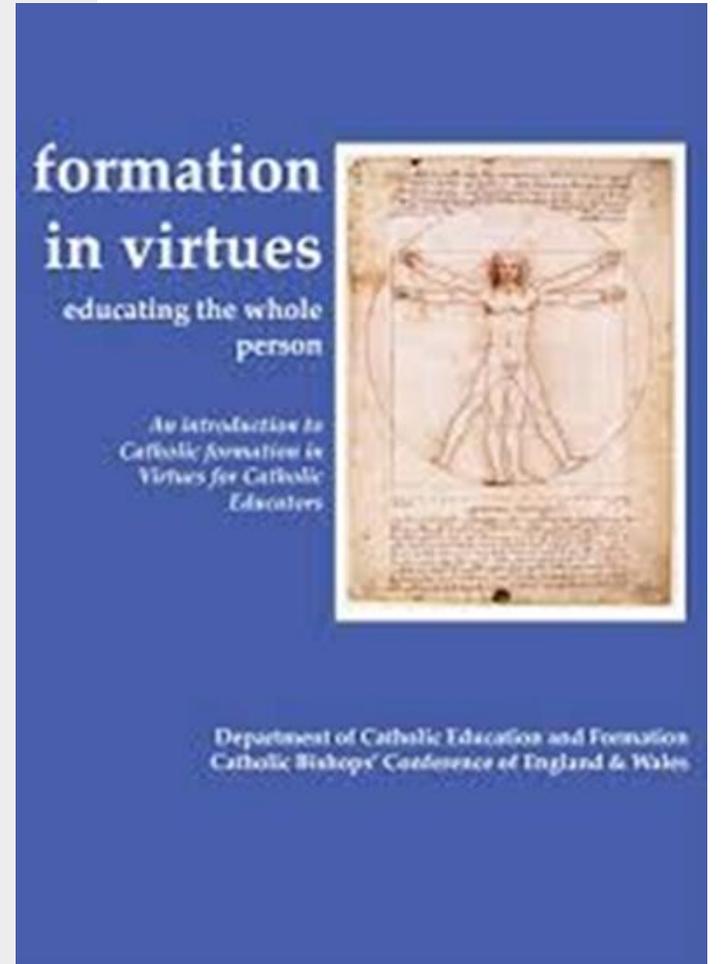
“To teach means not only to impart what we know, but also to reveal who we are by *living what we believe*. It is this latter lesson which tends to last the longest.”

Speech to Catholic Educators, Newfoundland Canada, St. Pope John Paul II, 1984.

So the search for the good is *a moral enterprise*, in which the school community ought to provide *opportunities not only to 'do the good'*, but provide *an education in the virtues* for there to be any disposition towards the good that could be both 'firm' and 'habitual'. *Habits make us who we are*. The *educational challenge is to find ways that this enterprise can be imaginatively and engagingly undertaken in our schools...*"

An *Education in the virtues* and habits— in what does this consist?

The present document requires supplementing here.



“States of character arise out of like activities. This is why the activities we exhibit must be of a certain kind; it is because the states of character correspond to the differences between these. **It makes no small difference, then, whether we form habits of one kind or of another from our very youth; it makes a very great difference, or rather all the difference”** (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle).

So, according to Aristotle, *“we are what we repeatedly do.”*

It's important to note that *habits* here are not to be understood in the modern sense of unthinking or mindless repetition. The Greek word is *hexis* and the Latin *habitus*: they refer to a *dynamic activity*.

Take the example of the virtue of honesty which is an aspect of justice....

Education in the virtues:

While with Aristotle we can say ...

“Our examination is not to know what virtue is, but to become good.”

Virtue literacy is essential

Components of Virtue

A Virtue Perception

Noticing situations involving or standing in need of the virtues

B Virtue Knowledge and Understanding

Understanding the meaning of the virtue term and why the virtue is important, individually and as part of a well-rounded, flourishing life of overall virtue, and being able to apply the virtue to episodes of one's own and others' lives

C Virtue Emotion

Feeling the right virtue-relevant emotion in the right situation in the right way

D Virtue Identity

Understanding oneself as strongly committed to the virtues

E Virtue Motivation

Having a strong desire to act on the virtues

F Virtue Reasoning

Discernment and deliberative action about virtues, including in situations where virtues conflict or collide

G Virtue Action and Practice

Doing the right thing in the right way

Progression in the Promotion of the Virtues

- Caught
- Taught
- Sought



Virtues can be...

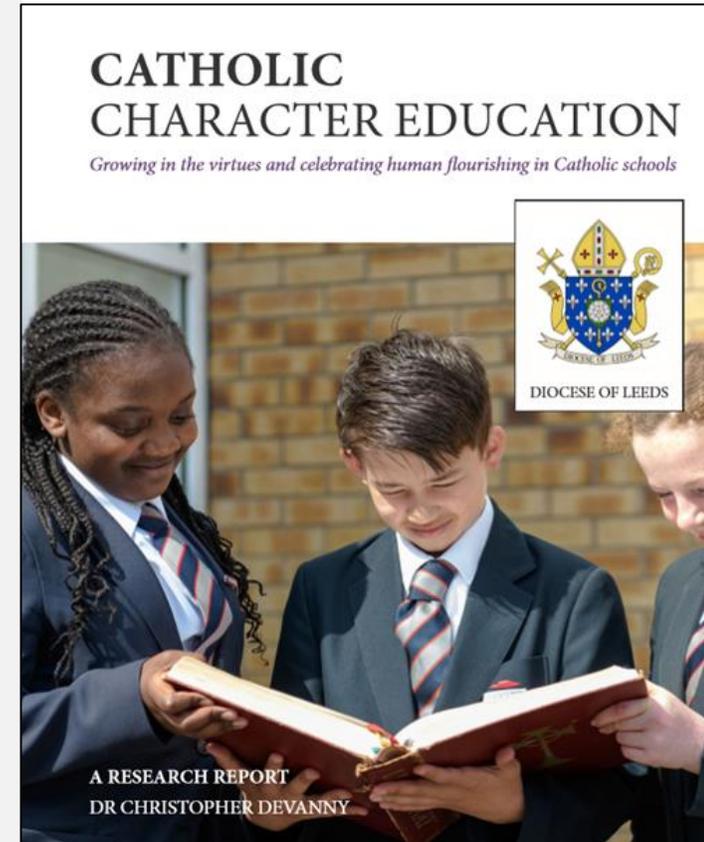
Caught: the school community of both staff and students provide the example, culture, and inspirational influence in a positive ethos that motivates and promotes character development.

Taught: the school provides educational experiences in and out of the classroom that equip students with the language, knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes that enable character development.

Sought: the school provides varied opportunities that generate the formation of personal habits and character commitments. These help students over time to seek, desire and freely pursue their character development.

Key Findings from CCE, 2018

“Character education in the vast majority of schools was found to be implicit – a matter of character caught – not explicit – character taught”



Mission Statement:

“We, with Saint Joseph follow the example of Jesus by growing in gratitude, humility, courage and service.”

Be thankful
Be humble
Be brave
Be giving

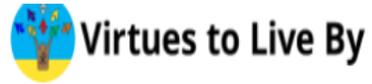


[Welcome to our website](#)

[Class Pages](#)

Welcome to St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School. We are very pleased that you are taking time to find out about our

[RECEPTION](#)



Virtues to Live By

Welcome to "Virtues to Live" By

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." John 10:10

You can access [Autumn](#), [Spring](#) or [Summer](#) digital resources or [order printed resources](#).

This website houses a school resource which seeks to support children's *virtue literacy* and growth in particular virtues or excellences of *character*. See [Key Word List](#).

"Virtues to Live By" enables you to explore each virtue over a three week period (two per half term) to improve the school community's virtue literacy and to deepen understanding and appreciation of the essential role the virtues play in the education of the *whole person* towards *human flourishing*. The virtues chosen are common across cultures and faiths, but are sourced from the Christian tradition. They are linked directly to work in the Diocese of Leeds on the virtues and character education (see companion documents here dioceseofleeds.org.uk/education/re-catholic-life/character-education).

"Virtues to Live By" is a resource created by the Diocese of Leeds with the creative and financial support of the Leeds Diocesan Association of Primary Headteachers.



The chosen virtues are linked to the academic year:

Autumn	Spring	Summer
Respect / Courtesy	Faith	Resilience / Perseverance
Thankfulness	Simplicity	Kindness
Hope	Charity	Honesty
Patience	Forgiveness	Service

"Virtues to Live By" Primary Resource

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham

<https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1610/character-education/teacher-resources>

Lots of help for Secondary colleagues on this website

Jesuit Institute UK, Jesuit Pupil Profile

<http://www.jesuitinstitute.org/Pages/JesuitPupilProfile.htm>



THE
JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

'Virtues and Literature Group', Diocese of Leeds

'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' Curriculum

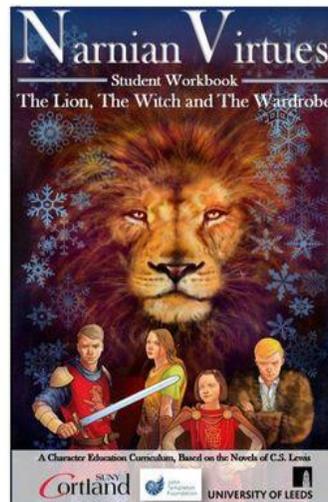


Student Workbook:

- Highlighting virtues and vices from extracts of *LWW*
- Selecting weekly target virtues to work on and conversing with buddies about progress
- Virtue Improvement Plan (choosing two virtues to work on for a whole term)

Character Passport (Home Activities):

- Creating a family mission statement
- Holding a weekly family meeting
- 'What is your Turkish Delight?'
- Watch and discuss the movie



Professor Mark Pike, University of Leeds



**CHARACTER EDUCATION
EVALUATION HANDBOOK
FOR SCHOOLS**

Guidance, approaches and methods for
the self-evaluation of taught and caught
character education provision

**THE
FAMILY
VIRTUES
GUIDE**



Simple Ways to Bring Out the Best
in Our Children and Ourselves

LINDA KAVELIN POPOV
WITH DAN POPOV, Ph.D., and JOHN KAVELIN

**TEACHING
VIRTUE**

THE CONTRIBUTION
OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Edited by Marius Felderhof
and Penny Thompson

BLOOMSBURY

**CATHOLIC
CHARACTER EDUCATION**

Growing in the virtues and celebrating human flourishing in Catholic schools



DIocese of LEEDS



A RESEARCH REPORT
DR CHRISTOPHER DEVANNY

Useful references

Address of the Holy Father Benedict XVI to Pupils, Sports Arena of St Mary's University College Twickenham, 17th September 2010

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Part 3, Section 1, Chapter 1, Article 7 The Virtues

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Framework for Character Education, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham, 2017.

Teaching Character and Virtue in Schools, J. Arthur, K. Kristjansson, T. Harrison, W. Sanderse and D. Wright. Routledge 2016

The Catholic School. Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977

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Further reading:

Aquinas on Virtue: a causal reading. Nicholas Austin SJ, Georgetown University Press, 2017

Back to the Rough Ground: practical wisdom and the lure of technique. Joseph Dunne, Notre Dame University Press, 1997

Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle, Oxford World's Classics, 2009