



FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
MARCH  
*Self Control ~ continence*

“We are blessed with free will and with that freedom comes an enormous responsibility. Although this will is endowed to us, it is not ours alone to do with as we please. We are called to do what the Lord wills to be done and not act impulsively on our personal desires.”

*“For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice,  
but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.”*

2 TIMOTHY 1.7



**THEORY OF ACTION**

*“If we teach and model moderation,  
then our students will learn responsibility and self control through our example.”*



Peterborough Victoria  
Northumberland and Clarington  
Catholic District School Board

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## Daily Prayers

1

Heavenly Father,

This month we celebrate the Fruit of the Holy Spirit called self-control. Today we pray for restraint. Help us to resist temptation when we are feeling weak, and replace our bad habits with good deeds. We ask this through Jesus' name. Amen.

2

Dear God,

Help us to develop strong self esteem that is rooted in the realization that we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus. Amen.

3

Lord,

I pray that the fruit of self-control will grow in me like a tree of strength. I pray that I will control what I say and do and make them subject to Your spirit. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

4

Heavenly Father,

Self control does not come easy to us. Please forgive us for the times that we have said and done things rashly. May we always be strong and courageous in our character and in our actions. Amen.

5

Gracious God,

We pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit: faithfulness, charity, peace, patience, generosity, kindness, joy, gentleness, modesty, chastity, goodness, and self control. May we always feel the presence of the Holy Spirit directing and guiding us. May we use the gifts that the Spirit offers to help others who struggle, and may we do all of this in love and service to You. Amen.

6

Heavenly Father,

Sometimes I'm good, but I can be mad. Sometimes I'm happy, sometimes I'm sad. I can be helpful, I can be mean. Sometimes I'm somewhere In between. Help me to do what I know I should do. Help me to choose to be good like You. Amen.

7

Dear God,

Thank you for the gift of speech. Our words can teach and comfort, but they can also wound. Help us to think before we speak to remember that, when we speak, we are spreading Your love. Bless our words and our thoughts today and remind us of the feelings our words can cause. Amen.

8

Dear Jesus,

Life seems so busy sometimes, and I need Your guidance to always do the right thing. It is not important that I am always right, but it is important that I am always fair so that I remember to treat people justly. Amen.

9

Dear God,  
Your Word teaches that when we truly experience Your saving grace we find the power to say no to wasteful passions and to live self-controlled and productive lives. Lord, help us to become self controlled. Please promise to live powerfully through us so that we might love you and serve others. Lord, show us how to build the walls of self-control and restraint around our lives. Amen.

10

Dear Jesus,  
Much is expected of us by so many – our parents, our priest, our teachers, and our friends. It is important to succeed at school, to be kind to family and friends, to act in acceptable ways. We are responsible for the decisions we make, the friends we chose, and the actions we take. Help us, Jesus, to deal sensibly with the decisions we make each day. Amen.

11

Heavenly Father,  
We pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit: faithfulness, charity, peace, patience, generosity, kindness, joy, gentleness, modesty, chastity, goodness, and self control. We know that these fruits are life's greatest blessings. May we use these blessings to help others find faith in Your Word. Amen.

12

Lord,  
Teach us to put into action our better impulses, to be straightforward and unafraid. Grant that we may realize that it is the little things of life that create differences, that in the big things of life, we are as one. Amen.

13

Gracious God,  
God be in my head and in my understanding; God be in my eyes, and in my looking; God be in my mouth, and in my speaking; God be in my heart, and in my thinking. Amen.

14

Dear God,  
Help me to be calm; and be in control. Help me to understand others and to treat them the way I want to be treated. Amen.

15

Heavenly Father,  
Help me be the best person I can be. Help me to listen to You and to my heart. Let me be a source of happiness for others. Help me to understand the value of self-control. Amen.

16

Lord,  
I know that uphill climbs must be faced. Help me to keep on Your path when the climb is steep. Remind me of Your constant help and protection as I face these trials in my life. Help me to provide protection for those who cannot protect themselves. Help me to put my own feelings aside and to put the feelings of others first. Amen.

17

**Did You Know?** Today is St. Patrick's Day. St. Patrick is known as the Apostle of Ireland. He preached the Gospel to the people of Ireland and is remembered for using the shamrock, a 3 leafed plant, to illustrate the Trinity, three persons in one God.

In our prayer today, we remember the words of St. Patrick when he said,

**Prayer of St. Patrick**

Christ behind me, Christ in me,  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down  
Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every many who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me.

**Prière de saint Patrick**

Le Christ avec moi,  
Le Christ devant moi,  
Le Christ derrière moi,  
Le Christ en moi,  
Le Christ au-dessus de moi,  
Le Christ au-dessous de moi,  
Le Christ à ma droite,  
Le Christ à ma gauche,  
Le Christ en largeur,  
Le Christ en longueur,  
Le Christ en hauteur,  
Le Christ dans le coeur de tout homme qui pense à moi,  
Le Christ dans tout oeil qui me voit,  
Le Christ dans toute oreille qui m'écoute. Amen.

18

Heavenly Father,  
Thank you for the gift of free will. Thank you for the gift of enlightenment. Thank you for the gift of self control. May I use these gifts to do your will and make good decisions. May I make You proud of the compassionate choices that I make each and every day. Amen.

19

**Did You Know?** Today is the Solemnity of St. Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. St. Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster father of Jesus, was probably born in Bethlehem and probably died in Nazareth. Most of what we know about St. Joseph comes from the beginning of Matthew's Gospel. No words of St. Joseph are recorded in any Gospels. He is known as the Patron of the Universal Church and is the Patron Saint of Canada.

Dear Jesus,  
Life seems busy sometimes and I need Your guidance to always do the right thing. St. Joseph helped you when you were growing up by guiding you and sharing his love and knowledge with you. Please help me to feel your loving presence around me especially when I am feeling overwhelmed. Amen.

20

Heavenly Father,  
Help me to keep my eyes focused on Jesus, keep my feet on the right path and keep my heart desiring what is good. Help me to know and recognize Your call, and help me make the right choice. Amen.

21

Dear God,  
Teach me always to do my best, to never give up and to be patient with others who are struggling to do their best. Help me to be supportive and to put my personal needs aside. Teach me not to look for self satisfaction, but to look for the good in helping others. Amen.

22

Jesus,  
You give us the grace we need to follow You. Help us not to be selfish or unkind. Remind us to reflect on our actions and to learn from our mistakes. Open us to Your love and give us the strength to make the right choices. Amen.

23

Jesus,  
Remind us that there is a better way to live each day of our lives. Give us the strength to put our selfish needs aside and to put others before our own wants. Show us to be kinder to one another as we go about dealing with the challenges of our own lives. Amen.

24

Lord,  
Today we think about the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. You promised to send us the Spirit to guide us on our journey through life. May we use our fruit of self-control in our lives, and may the Holy Spirit continue to provide us with direction and guidance. Amen.

25

Heavenly Father,  
Thank you for helping us to make good choices. You help us get through bad times and You never stop believing in us even when we are unkind, unjust or unloving. Please help us to be like You in everything we think and do. Amen.

**26**

Dear Jesus,

We pray today for people who have to make difficult decisions. It takes courage to do what is right. We pray that we may show self-control and inner strength when we are trying to make our own choices. Amen.

**27**

Dear God,

You have blessed us with the gift of free will. Help us to find inner strength and sound judgment so we will do, think, and say the things that are pleasing to God. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**28**

God,

Thank you for all the gifts you have given us. Thank you for the love You showed in giving us Your son. May we always know that You are there for us. Help us to turn to You, lean on You, talk to You, and strive to be one with You. Amen.

**29**

Lord,

We recognize that our bodies are temples of Your spirit. Help us to nourish our bodies with things that will help it to grow and be strong, so that we might be a better reflection of Your love to the world. Amen.

**30**

Dear God,

It is time for me to look within my heart and soul. I pray that You help me control myself when I feel angry or mean. Help me to choose right, and to think about the things that I am going to say and do. With Your love I know I can make the right choices. Amen.

**31**

Father,

As we reflect on this month, we remember the importance of self control. Let us pray for the fruit of self-control so that we will resist temptation to cause harm to ourselves or to others around us, and help us to think things through and do what is best for everyone. Amen.

# Prayer Service / Non Eucharistic Liturgy



## Opening Prayer

Dear Lord

Let us take a moment of silence to reflect on our day. Have we tried to be the best person we can be? Have we reacted in anger to our classmates, friends, or family? Did we think before we spoke? Did we follow the crowd or did we make our own decisions? Friends we gather now in God's presence to ask God to forgive us for our mistakes and to rejoice in the good decisions we have made. Lord, through the fruit of self control, may You always help us to start again and think before we act.

Amen.



## Old Testament Reading Genesis 2.15-17

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*



## Responsorial Psalm Psalm 40

The response to the psalm is "*Lord help me to do what is right and just.*"

I waited lord for you to hear my prayer  
You listened and you gave me a new song  
A song of praise to you. *R*

Lord your promise is never broken  
Your law is in my heart  
You never fail to comfort me  
Your love always keeps me safe. *R*

Happy are those who trust in the Lord  
Happy are those who do not stray  
You have done wonderful things for us  
And I am happy to do your will. *R*





**Second Reading (Optional)**  
**Romans 8.5-8**

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law – indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*



**Gospel Reading**  
**Luke 4.1-12**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

The Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ.*

## **Universal Prayer**

Response: *Lord, I believe in you; increase my faith.*

For Church leaders, that they may model self-abandonment and adherence to the will of God. *R*

That we will be guided by God's wisdom, corrected by His justice, comforted with His mercy, and protected with His power. *R*

For those who harbour resentment and anger; that they will forgive others as God forgives them. *R*

For our school community, that we will be living witnesses to the beauty of building up our heavenly Father's kingdom through self-mastery. *R*

That we will respect our bodies and those of our neighbours through chaste practices and self-control through God. *R*

## **Optional Activities**

**Meditation Music** – Play meditation music during non-Eucharistic liturgy to set a soothing and tranquil environment of self control.

**Student Illustrations** – Have students draw and present a picture of how they would demonstrate self control in their own life.

## **Closing Prayer**

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a time;  
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
Taking, as He did, this sinful world  
as it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He will make all things right  
if I surrender to His Will;  
That I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with Him  
Forever in the next.  
Amen.

# Catechism of the Catholic Church Reference – Self Control



## CCC #1804

*Human virtues* are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our actions, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in leading a morally good life. The virtuous man is he who freely practices the good.



## CCC #1805

Four virtues play a pivotal role and accordingly are called "cardinal"; all the others are grouped around them. They are: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. "If anyone loves righteousness, [Wisdom's] labors are virtues; for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice, and courage." These virtues are praised under other names in many passages of Scripture.



## CCC #1806

*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." "Keep sane and sober for your prayers." Prudence is "right reason in action," writes St. Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle. It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity or dissimulation. It is called *auriga virtutum* (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 #1807

*Justice* is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. Justice toward God is called the "virtue of religion." Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. The just man, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbor. "You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor." "Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."

 **CCC #1808**

*Fortitude* is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to renounce and sacrifice his life in defense of a just cause. "The Lord is my strength and my song." "In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

 **CCC #1809**

*Temperance* is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will's mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. The temperate person directs the sensitive appetites toward what is good and maintains a healthy discretion: "Do not follow your inclination and strength, walking according to the desires of your heart." Temperance is often praised in the Old Testament: "Do not follow your base desires, but restrain your appetites." In the New Testament it is called "moderation" or "sobriety." We ought "to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world."


## Scriptural References to Self Control

 **Luke 12.8-9**

"If anyone declares publicly that he belongs to me, I will do the same for him before my Father in heaven. But if anyone rejects me publicly, I will reject him before my Father in heaven."

 **Proverbs 25.28**

"Like a city breached, without walls, is one who lacks self-control."

 **Proverbs 16.32**

"One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and one whose temper is controlled than one who captures a city."

 **2 Timothy 1.7**

"For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline."

 **Titus 1.8**

"But he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled."

## Quotes on Self Control



"You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist."

~ Golda Meir



"I know God won't give me anything I can't handle. I just wish he didn't trust me so much."

~ Mother Teresa



"Freedom consists of not doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought."

~ John Paul II



"To have a right to do a thing is not at all the same as to be right in doing it."

~ G.K. Chesterton



"If you are humble nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know what you are."

~ Mother Teresa



"It isn't that they can't see the solution. It is that they can't see the problem."

~ G.K. Chesterton



"People are unrealistic, illogical, and self-centered. Love them anyway."

~ Mother Teresa



"I would rather make mistakes in kindness and compassion than work miracles in unkindness and hardness."

~ Mother Teresa



"I am a spiritual being. After this body is dead, my spirit will soar. I refuse to let what will rot, rule the eternal. I choose self-control. I will be drunk only by joy. I will be impassioned only by my faith. I will be influenced only by God. I will be taught only by Christ. I choose self-control."

~ Max Lucado

# Prayer Table Ideas



## Catholic Symbols:

- o White or purple cloth (depending on liturgical season)
- o Bible
- o Light
- o Crucifix



**7 Grandfather Teachings:** *Gwayakwaadiziwi* – HONESTY: Honesty in facing a situation is to be brave. Always be honest in word and action. Be honest first with yourself and you will more easily be able to be honest with others.



## Symbols:

- o **Sand** – To symbolize tranquility and calm.
- o **Serenity Prayer** – To symbolize our want and our need for making good decisions.
- o **Prayer of St. Francis** – To symbolize our desire to be one of God’s children.
- o **Candy on a Table** – To symbolize temptation and self control to avoid, resisting urges.
- o **Books** – Any book that discusses or presents the topic of “self control”.
- o **The word ‘Moderation’** – To symbolize appropriate choices.