

Men of Virtue

R O S A R Y



ZEAL



COURAGE



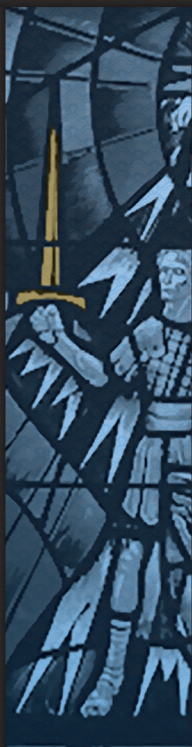
GALLANTRY



HUMILITY



LOYALTY



Jesus Christ, eternal son of God the Father, became one of us when Mary of Nazareth accepted him as her son, true man, flesh and blood. As Catholic men, we profess Jesus Christ is the perfect man, and therefore offers us the perfect model to live our lives, to answer God's call. May these virtues of Jesus Christ illuminate the path forward for you, and may we honor one another by devoting our lives, through Our Blessed Mother Mary, to the fulfillment of Christ's mission for each of us as men.

THE
FIRST
VIRTUE

ZEAL

Jesus Drives the Money Changers from the Temple

*"My house shall be a house of prayer, but
you are making it a den of thieves."*

MATTHEW 21:13



Jesus arrives in Jerusalem, riding on a donkey, the city pulsing and roused by the arrival of the prophet from Nazareth. The crowds spread cloaks and palms on the road and cry out "*Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.*" (Matthew 21:9). To the bystander, and even to the twelve disciples, it would appear that Jesus has achieved his triumphal moment, in fulfillment of sacred scripture. Here is the Messiah, the Son of David, coming to claim Jerusalem as his own! But Jesus—as we now know—is coming as the Son of Man with his own Passion less than a week away. He proceeds to the temple, where custom has run amok; the people forced to exchange Roman money for temple money at an arbitrary rate, and then

*Be watchful, stand firm in the faith,
act like men, be strong.*

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

*As iron sharpens iron,
so one man sharpens another.*

PROVERBS 27:17

**Blessed is the zealous man, he who has given
his life to something greater than himself.**

forced to buy animals or doves at a high price. The temple priests have created a lucrative monopoly for themselves, making a mockery of the sacrificial system. Jesus drives the moneychangers from the temple and rebukes the temple authorities on the eve of Passover. The one true sacrifice—Jesus Christ—demonstrates the importance of zeal—great energy and passion in the pursuit of an objective greater than himself—in this case, fulfilling God’s plan for saving all of Mankind. “*Zeal for your house will consume me.*” (John 2:17).

✠ Inspiration ✠

SAINT PAUL, originally known as Saul of Tarsus, was a Roman citizen and a Pharisee. He was converted on the road to Damascus and eventually baptized, taking the name of Paul. He traveled the world, to Arabia, Cypress, Asia Minor, and throughout Europe. He preached the gospel ceaselessly—often at risk to his own life—and is arguably the single greatest influence on the growth and development of the church since the first century. His writings form much of the New Testament, and inspire us to give our lives to something greater than ourselves:

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

—PHILIPPIANS 4:13

COURAGE

Jesus Stands Up to the Pharisees

*"Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar
and to God what belongs to God."*

MARK 12:17



At the time of Jesus, the Ten Commandments had been protracted into 613 *Mitzvot* (rules), and the Pharisees—the high priests, legal scholars, and judges—governed the Jewish people according to a strict interpretation of Mosaic Law. They believe in a Davidic King, as opposed to a Divine King, and assume that he will be the ruler of Israel the Jewish nation, not a friend to Gentiles and sinners. Jesus violates many of their laws by mixing frequently with tax collectors and sinners; by eating with ceremonially unclean hands; by healing people on the Sabbath. Most egregiously, Jesus forgives people's sins, which in the eyes of the Pharisees is a power reserved for God only, and therefore considered blasphemy. Jesus openly criticizes the Pharisees for their self-righteousness and spiritual blindness, and as such, is viewed as a threat to their power and authority. Because of this, they continually plot to force him into compromising situations, to brand him as deceptive and imposturous, and therefore discredit him in front of his growing throng of followers. When they confront Jesus to inquire as to his opinion on taxes, they intend to trap him in his words. If Jesus indicates it is appropriate to pay taxes to Caesar, he will be despised by his followers who

Blessed is the courageous man, he who is unafraid to speak truth to power.

are enraged and exasperated with the brutal occupation and oppression of the Romans; on the other hand, if Jesus declares it is wrong to pay taxes, he will be openly defying Roman rule, and King Herod (the Roman-installed leader of Judea) will have him arrested. Providentially, Jesus stands up to the Pharisees—*“Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.”* (Mark 12:17) In doing so, Jesus demonstrates the separation of one’s obligations to God and to the authorities of this world, showing his followers how they can be part of this world, but not necessarily of it.

✠ Inspiration ✠

SAINT JOHN PAUL II had firsthand experience with the oppression and occupation of brutal and evil regimes, by Nazi Germany, then by the Soviet Union. As a young man growing up in Poland he suffered mightily at the hands of German occupation forces, only to see his beloved homeland liberated at the end of World War II by the equally brutal Communist regime. He dedicated his life to Christ, and rose through the ranks—priest (1946), bishop (1958), archbishop (1964), cardinal (1967), and pope (1978)—to become a beacon of freedom, hope, and promise for the entire world. His trip to Warsaw in 1979 (*“We Want God! We Want God!”*) is widely credited with instigating the formation of Solidarity, which would eventually lead to the downfall of Communism in Eastern Europe.

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

—HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II,
EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION, ORIOLE PARK AT CAMDEN YARDS,
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1995.

GALLANTRY

Jesus Defends the Woman Caught in Adultery

*“Let the one among you who is without sin
be the first to throw a stone at her.”*

JOHN 8:7



Arriving at the temple early in the morning, Jesus sits with his followers, teaching them. At once a woman is brought before him, having been caught in the very act of adultery—a sin punishable by death according to Mosaic Law. Despite the law’s clear instruction that both parties to the sin be put to death, only the woman now stands before Jesus, accused and humiliated. Consider what must have occurred just moments beforehand. The woman was caught *in the act*, which means the men who caught her had witnessed it. How, precisely, they happened to stumble upon the encounter is speculation; however, it is certain they would have watched long enough to gather the evidence needed for their indictment, thereby indulging their own lusts so as to bring a charge of sin against the woman. Jesus admonishes the accusers by reminding them of their own sinfulness, “*Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.*” (John 8:7). Jesus demonstrates God’s mercy and forgiveness and averts her execution. More importantly, we are reminded of

Blessed is the gallant man, he who protects and defends the honor of women.

the true value of a woman, created in the image of God as an equal partner to enable and share in man's spiritual development, not merely an object to satisfy man's physical desires. "*The Lord God said: It is not good for the man to be alone.*" (Genesis 2:18). God created Eve as the crowning of his creation, and every woman is a daughter of God. This gift from God, the gift of a woman—mothers, daughters, wives, and sisters—deserves man's love, honor, and protection.

✠ Inspiration ✠

SAINT JOSEPH was the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster-father of Jesus. The gospel tells us little of Saint Joseph's life, but what we do know provides a model for men to follow. He was caring and compassionate, refusing to expose Mary to scandal, and possible punishment, for an out-of-wedlock pregnancy; he was a man of faith and spiritual strength who trusted in the angel's message to take Mary as his wife; he was a carpenter, a hard-working man who provided food and shelter for his family; he was a man of action, moving his wife and the infant Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath.

"He was chosen by the eternal Father as the trustworthy guardian and protector of his greatest treasures, namely, his divine Son and Mary, Joseph's wife. He carried out this vocation with complete fidelity until at last God called him, saying: 'Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord.'"

—ST. BERNARDINE OF SIENA

HUMILITY

Jesus Urges Humility and Servant Leadership

*“Whoever wishes to be first among you will
be the slave of all.”*

MARK 10:44



Jesus Christ is the Messiah sent to save and redeem mankind. He is also a son, a brother to his disciples, a prophet, and importantly, the founder of the church. Founders are creators, they are organizers; by definition, founders are leaders, confident in their ability to form and unite a disparate group of individuals into a cohesive team. To found the church—to usher in the new covenant for worship and spiritual development—was a mission of unimaginable proportions; Christ knows that if the mission of his church is to be fulfilled, it must spread and grow geographically, it must attract new followers, and it must be durable and resilient to stand the test of time. Christ—with his own Passion quickly approaching—knows that if his church is to expand and flourish beyond 1st century Judea he must inspire his disciples with the confidence to follow him long after he has left the Earth. In this moment, God reveals to mankind that the greatest leaders place the interests of others before their own. As James and John—the “Sons of Thunder”—expose their own selfish intentions by posturing for

Blessed is the **humble** man, he who leads with selflessness, confidence, and composure.

positions of power and glory in Christ's earthly kingdom, it is Christ—self-assured yet humble—who demonstrates true confidence through his example of servant leadership. *“For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* (Mark 10:45).

✠ Inspiration ✠

SAINT IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA was a Spanish knight born to a noble family in the late 15th century. While recovering from wounds suffered in the battle of Pamplona he studied the Bible and the lives of the saints. After receiving a vision of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus, Ignatius experienced a profound spiritual conversion. He became a theologian and founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). As “Father General” of the Jesuits, Ignatius was a model for servant leadership, inspiring his companions to spread the gospel through the creation of schools, colleges, and seminaries across Europe, and eventually the world.

*“Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous; teach me to serve
You as You deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight
and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labor and not to ask for reward save that of knowing
I am doing Your Will.”*

—PRAYER FOR GENEROSITY,
ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

LOYALTY



Jesus Commissions the Disciples

“And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:20

The word commission is derived from the Latin word meaning to entrust. After Jesus rose from the dead, he invited his disciples to meet him in Galilee. When gathered, Jesus commissioned the eleven disciples—the original twelve now reduced by one, due to the betrayal of Judas—to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19). Jesus was indeed sending them forth to spread the gospel. But more importantly, he was handing over his church, and entrusting it to his disciples for all of eternity. “To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.” (Ephesians 3:21). Having spent the prior three years with this band of brothers, Jesus had a deep and intimate understanding of each of them; these were simple men, unsophisticated men—mostly fishermen, and a tax collector, all of them sinners. Still, Jesus chose them. He knew their many weaknesses and limitations. Yet, Jesus relied on them, depended on them to deliver, and to endure. And the promise Jesus made to these disciples at their commission—is the same promise he makes to all men, the simple sinners we are—that he will remain by our side, and will never, ever leave us, no matter the circumstances. “I will never desert you, nor will I

Blessed is the loyal man, upon whom others can rely, depend, and trust.

ever forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5). We, like the disciples before us, are called to be loyal and trustworthy—as husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and co-workers—to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ and carry forward the Good News with great courage, resilience, and selflessness. On this journey, we can take great comfort in Jesus Christ—True God and True Man—being ever-present, unwavering, steadfast, and resolute in his love, grace, and mercy for each of us. “It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.” (John 15:16).

✠ Inspiration ✠

SAINT PETER, the first disciple chosen by Christ, the first disciple to confess Jesus as the Messiah, the first disciple to enter the empty tomb, was ordained by Jesus Christ to become the first Pope—*“Upon this rock I shall build my church.”* (Matthew 16:18). Peter demonstrated his dependability and loyalty as the spokesman for the twelve, and as an indispensable figure in the growth of the early Christian church. Conversely, Peter is remembered as the disciple chided by Jesus on the water, *“You of little faith, why did you doubt?”* (Matthew 14:31), and more egregiously, as the disciple who committed the greatest offense toward Jesus, denying him during his time of greatest need. *“You are not one of this man’s disciples?” “I am not.”* (John 18:17). We learn from Saint Peter that Jesus sees us not as the sinners we are, but as the saints he intends us to be. Even our worst sins and transgressions are forgiven through the mercy of Jesus Christ, and despite our mortal limitations we are all called to greatness.

“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”

—2 PETER 1:3



Brothers: There has never been a greater need for good men.

As husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, friends, and neighbors we are called to “*Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.*” (1 Corinthians 16:13). As men, the clarion call of our lifetime is to protect our families, to build our communities—to lay down our lives!—in order to fulfill our intended role in God’s divine plan. We are called to be spiritual beacons for our families, for our society, for our country.

We are called to illuminate the path forward.

This is no small assignment. Quite the contrary, this is the biggest and most important undertaking of our lives. And as sinners, we’re not equipped for this mission. But fear not; God is with us step by step, for as Saint Paul instructs us, “*where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.*” (Romans 5:20). God’s grace and mercy for men was never more apparent than through the gift of his son, Jesus Christ, true God and true man. Son of Mary, brother to the apostles, leader of men—the Good News!—He walked among us and renewed the face of the earth.

Through Christ, our sins are forgiven, our weaknesses turned to strengths, our apprehension turned to boldness. Through Christ, we are filled with an abundance of love, a firm resolve, the will to carry on. The power to advance against—and overcome!—the darkness. As brothers in Christ we are called as apostles, to challenge each other, to support each other, to carry each other. We are called to lead.

We are called to greatness.

Jesus Christ, eternal son of God the Father, became one of us when Mary of Nazareth accepted him as her son, true man, flesh and blood. As Catholic men, we profess Jesus Christ is the perfect man, and therefore offers us the perfect model to live our lives, to answer God’s call. May these virtues of Jesus Christ illuminate the path forward for you, and may we honor one another by devoting our lives, through Our Blessed Mother Mary, to the fulfillment of Christ’s mission for each of us as men.