

Theology on Tap 2017

What is a virtue?

Catholic Catechism: “a habitual and firm disposition to do the good.”

Wikipedia: “Traits or qualities which dispose one to conduct oneself in a morally good manner.”

The Cloud of Unknowing: (mid 14th C):

“...virtue is naught else but an ordained and a measured affection, plainly directed at God for Himself. For why? He in Himself is the pure cause of all virtues: insomuch, that if any other cause mingled with Him, yea, although He be the Chief, yet that virtue is then imperfect. As thus by example may be seen in one virtue or two instead of all the other; and well may these two virtues be meekness and charity. For whoso might get these two clearly, him needeth no more: for why, he hath all.”

MacIntyer, pp. 183-185

In Homer:

“A virtue is a quality which enables an individual to discharge his or her social role.”

In Aristotle:

“...the a virtue is a quality which enables an individual to move towards the achievement of the specifically human *telos*.”

In the New Testament:

“...the means to the end which is human incorporation in the divine kingdom of the age to come.”

In Jane Austen: a combination of the above three

For Benjamin Franklin:

“The end to which the cultivations of the virtues ministers is happiness: success, prosperity, heaven.”

On chastity: ‘Rarely use venery but for health or offspring- never to dullness, weakness or the injury of your own or another person’s peace or reputation.’

(The failure of) the Enlightenment project to rationally justify morality

Utilitarianism

Sovereignty of the individual

Controlling the moral

Dismantling the tradition

Conceptual Incommensurability

Failure to recognize ‘internal goods’

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MacIntyre's three necessities:

The untutored man: there was consensus among the ancients that refinement broadened the soul, ennobled a person, and at the very least, that we all ought to learn to behave to fulfill what our social position asks of us.

What man could be: This is what moral traditions provide for, and this is what we have lost. Modern technological society values freedom above all else, so society is no longer receiving instruction in what freedom is for. We keep vestiges of this knowledge in our language, but the system has collapsed.

The reason to apprehend: our created intelligence that we may and do apply freely. For example:
-considering the narrative of one's life
-constructing the self

Teleology (Wikipedia)

Teleology is the philosophical attempt to describe things in terms of their apparent purpose, directive principle, or goal. A purpose that is imposed

Teleology in biology: the use of the language of goal-directedness in accounts of evolutionary adaptation,

Teleological argument: also known as the argument from design, or intelligent design argument is an argument for the existence

Eucharistic Prayer Number 6:

“Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendour of your radiance.”

Eucharistic Prayer Number 3 (RC):

“You are indeed Holy, O Lord,
and all you have created rightly gives you praise,
for through your Son our Lord Jesus Christ,
by the power and working of the Holy Spirit,
you give life to all things and make them holy,
and you never cease to gather a people to yourself,
so that from the rising of the sun to its setting
a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name.”

The Medieval Canon of Principle Virtues: The Catholic Virtues

The Cardinal or Natural Virtues

Wisdom of Solomon, 4 Maccabees

Encompasses all the virtues of which humans are capable

	St. Augustine	Comment	Attributes	Arena Chapel
<p>Justice <i>Righteousness</i></p>	<p>“Love serving only the loved object, and therefore ruling rightly.”</p>	<p>Following God’s will</p>	<p>Sword, balance & scales, crown, scenes of prosperity</p>	<p>Larger & center Royal crown Hunting Frieze Prosperity</p>
<p>Prudence <i>right judgement intelligence wisdom</i></p>	<p>“Prudence is love distinguishing with sagacity between what hinders it and what helps it.”</p>	<p>W: The ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason.</p>	<p>Book, scroll, mirror</p>	<p>Mace = authority Shield = faith, appropriate actions Mirror = Second face (Socrates?) Compass & History of the World</p>
<p>Fortitude <i>courage forbearance</i></p>	<p>“Love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object.”</p>	<p>Trust in God Rejecting temptation “Constancy and firmness inherent to doing the good, inc. sustaining mortal danger”</p>	<p>Armour, club, lion, palm, tower, yoke, broken column</p>	<p>Lion shield = generosity of heart Iron Bar</p>
<p>Temperance <i>self control chastity restraint abstention</i></p>	<p>“Love giving itself entirely to that which is loved.”</p>	<p>Poorness of spirit “Temperance never uses weapons to win hearts nor force to secure good works.”</p>	<p>Wheel, bridle & reins, vegetables, fish, cup, water & wine together, pouring into a cup</p>	<p>Sword bound in knots</p>

The Medieval Canon of Principle Virtues: The Catholic Virtues

The Theological or Supernatural Virtues

1 Corinthians

The first 3 rungs on Jacob's ladder

Aquinas: "They are the theological virtues because they have God for their object, both insofar as by them we are properly directed to Him, & because they are infused into our souls by God alone, and also, finally, because we come to know of them only by Divine Revelation in the Sacred Scriptures."

	Catholic Encyclopedia	Comment	Attributes	Arena Chapel
Faith	"The virtue by which the intellect, by a movement of the will, assents to the supernatural truths of Revelation, not on the motive of intrinsic evidence, but on the sole ground of the infallible authority of God revealing."	Adherence to God's testimony	Shield	Heiratic pose Crushed idol beneath cross Torn Garments Scroll: revealed truths Key Tablets: Occult & "judicial astrology"
Hope	"...affects the will; by which one trusts, with confidence grounded on the Divine assistance, to attain life everlasting."		Helmet (of salvation)	Wings Reaching for heavenly crown
Charity <i>love</i> fecundity generosity happiness	"This grace inclines the human will to cherish God for His own sake above all things, and man for the sake of God."	A friendship of Man with God "To wish God all honour, and glory & every good, & to endeavour, as far as one can, to obtain it for Him."	Breastplate (of righteousness)	Garland = earthly happiness Being handed a purse by God = Providence Bags of money: for the needy

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Text: Guroian, Vigen. *Tending the heart of Virtues: How Classic Stories Awaken a Child's Moral Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Terms for discussion:

eth·ics: principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity.

"medical ethics also enter into the question"

synonyms: moral code, morals, morality, values, rights and wrongs, principles, ideals, standards (of behaviour), value system, virtues, dictates of conscience

"your so-called newspaper is clearly not burdened by a sense of ethics"

2.

the branch of knowledge that deals with moral principles. The field of ethics (or moral philosophy) involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behaviour.

Virtues: "...are those traits of character that enable persons to use their freedom in morally responsible ways." (p. 19)

Character: "The Greek word for character literally means an *impression*. Character is defined by its orientation, consistency, and constancy." (p. 20)

Moral Tradition: "Moral tradition is about being responsive and responsible toward other people." (p. 19)

Moral imagination: "This will spur her imagination to translate these experiences and images into the constitutive elements of self-identity and into metaphors she will use to interpret her own world." (p. 26)

Building character: training in the ability to distinguish what is true and what is not. Fairy Tales "...increase [one's] capability of moving about in [the] world with moral intent." (p. 26)

Freedom: "Moral and moral behaviour is freedom enacted for good or ill." (p. 20)

Values: (p 27)

For further discussion:

What are some other moral traditions active in our society?

Compare and contrast ethics and spirituality as starting points for a discussion of the virtues.

How is freedom transcendent?

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Romans 5:1-5

King James Version (KJV)

5 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

²By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

³And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

⁴And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

⁵And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Romans 5:1-5

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Results of Justification

5 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we^(a) have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access^(b) to this grace in which we stand; and we^(c) boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we^(d) also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.