

Mary's Fortitude

• Fortitude is that indomitable virtue which surmounts all the obstacles that beset the use of the means, chosen by prudence, and the attainment of the end, striven for by justice, both of these being regulated by temperance. From fortitude are derived the virtues of magnanimity, patience and perseverance.

I. MARY'S MAGNANIMITY

Magnanimity is fortitude in performing great and noble deeds. God enlarges our hearts to accept whatever He wills to give us. Nowhere is this enlargement greater than in the heart and soul of Mary.

II. MARY'S PATIENCE

Patience is fortitude in the endurance of evil. After Jesus Himself, the most perfect exemplar of patience is Mary. Mary had to live in the world, but was able to resist contamination by it.

III. MARY'S PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance is fortitude in well-doing and long-suffering until the end. Mary could claim: "Neither

death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth nor any other creature shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, Our Lord."



• The structure underpinning Mary's virtues in relation to herself is that of the four Cardinal Virtues – Justice, Prudence, Temperance and Fortitude.

• Meditation on the virtues of the Mother of God leads us of necessity to infer that Mary is an exemplar of perfect sanctity reflecting resplendent completeness of virtue and beauty.

• God has given us Mary, a human being like ourselves, as a model which we might attainably copy as a means of how to love and serve our Creator.



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The Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary (part III)



**Mary's Virtues
in relation to herself**

Mary's Justice

- The three most precious fruits of the Virtue of Justice are simplicity, humility and gratitude.

I. MARY'S SIMPLICITY

Simplicity is the sincere love of the pure and simple truth. Our Lord saw this in His mother while He was growing up, and in later life thanked God for having revealed unto little ones those things which were hidden even from wise and prudent adults.

II. MARY'S HUMILITY

Humility is the honest confession of one's own nothingness. "I am the handmaid of the Lord" said Mary. The perfection of humility lies in rejoicing in that state of nothingness so that all glory may be rendered to Him alone who is great and worthy of honour.

III. MARY'S HUMILITY

Gratitude is the loving acknowledgment of benefits received. The first and ordinary sign of gratitude is the giving of thanks, and Mary's whole life was spent in acts of thanksgiving and love.



Mary's Prudence

- Prudence is a certain sagacity which enables charity to discern what should be done or left undone, said or not said. Rightly is Mary known as: "Our Lady of Good Counsel" for she could never give bad advice.

I. MARY'S SILENCE

It could be said that silence is the language of meditative souls that continually hold converse with God. While we speak to God, He is silent. When we are still, He speaks and raises us to those super-natural thoughts which are granted only in solitude and silence. No wonder Mary spent so much time in silence.

II. MARY'S WORDS

The Gospels mention only seven occasions during which Mary did speak: The Annunciation, her *fiat*, twice in uttering the *Magnificat*, at the finding of Jesus in the Temple and twice at Cana. What she said was pleasing to God, meritorious to herself and edifying to the listener.



Mary's Temperance

- Temperance restrains the inordinate cravings of the faculty of desire. None of Mary's cravings were inordinate; she had only well-ordered instincts which drew her to the true, the good and the beautiful in all things.

I. MARY'S POVERTY

With her love for God, Mary had no need of anything else. Through no fault of her own, she experienced poverty in its full breadth, but she made a virtue of it: "He hath filled the hungry with good things, the rich He hath sent empty away."

II. MARY'S VIRGIN CHASTITY

Virginitly, the crowning perfection of chastity, is a virtue angelic rather than human. There is no state so exalted that virginity is not higher. Mary was unique in being both virgin and mother.

III. MARY'S MODESTY

Modesty and temperance are two aspects of one and the same virtue. Whilst temperance controls the interior movements of the mind and will, modesty directs the actions and deportment of the outer man. Mary watched her Son as He grew up, and modelled herself on His kindness and consideration in all things.

