

Good Morning All,

Please note due to staffing issues, the monthly Knights of Columbus sale at the Jockey Lot will take place on May 8th --- so there is still time to clean out those closets!

A video of Patriotism by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen: [Patriotism | Bishop Fulton J. Sheen - YouTube](#)

1. Today's Readings: [Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Easter | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: Patriotism is a great virtue. To be a patriot is to love one's fatherland. This means that it is to love the land of the people that sired you. Patriotism is a natural overflow of the virtue of piety — that is, the virtue of the home. As piety would have us rendering what is due in justice to parents and other family members, patriotism would have us render the same to our nation, its government, and our fellow citizens. Both of these are a matter of justice, for the virtues of piety and patriotism are parts of that cardinal virtue. (Catholicism.org)

3. Quotes of the Day:

~ "My acceptance of the universe is not optimism, it is more like patriotism. It is a matter of primary loyalty. The world is not a lodging-house at Brighton, which we are to leave because it is miserable. It is the fortress of our family, with the flag flying on the turret, and the more miserable it is the less we should leave it. The point is not that this world is too sad to love or too glad not to love; the point is that when you do love a thing, its gladness is a reason for loving it, and its sadness a reason for loving it more. All optimistic thoughts about England and all pessimistic thoughts about her are alike reasons for the English patriot. Similarly, optimism and pessimism are alike arguments for the cosmic patriot. . . . People first paid honour to a spot and afterwards gained glory for it. Men did not love Rome because she was great. She was great because they had loved her." *G.K. Chesterton*

~ "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." *James Madison*

***St. Joseph, Pray for Us!***

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## **The Virtue Of Patriotism**

### **The Virtue of Justice**

Before we can begin to understand patriotism as a virtue, we have to first look to the broader virtue of piety. And before we can begin to understand piety, we have to understand the broader cardinal virtue of justice. The word “cardinal” comes from the Latin word meaning “hinge” and, so, a cardinal virtue is a virtue upon which all the subordinate virtues hinge. These are prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude.

Justice exists between beings that can act morally towards one another. As a virtue, it regulates the way that human beings operate and interact. Justice uses things that exist outside of ourselves to move others to the good. This interaction of seeking justice can take place between individuals or between an individual and his greater community. Generally, all people of good will, motivated by justice, seek the common good of every person. The Christian, of course, knows that the common good must always direct a person or a community to the greatest good: God.

St. Thomas Aquinas in the Second Part of the Second Part of the Summa Theologiae, Question 58, Article 11 defines justice in this way, “the proper act of justice is nothing else than to render to each one his own.”

When we are dealing with human beings, justice thus requires that all persons are treated with equal respect and dignity. Every single human person, regardless of circumstance, sex, race, nationality, culture, or any other characteristic, are made in the image and likeness of Almighty God. We are all sinners, and so even the worst sinners, are worthy of being treated justly. This fundamental identity is part of our nature as human creatures. Therefore, justice dictates that we treat one another in accord with this reality.

### **The Virtue of Piety**

Let us drill now further into the virtue of justice. Mercy is a virtue underneath the umbrella of justice. In fact, justice without mercy is not justice at all. Mercy is love, given first by God, by which we reach into the need and brokenness of others to offer

them spiritual and corporal aid. We offer this aid because of the command of Jesus Christ to serve the least of our brethren but also because justice dictates it.

Another virtue underneath the umbrella of justice is piety. Here we have to make a distinction. The Gift of the Holy Spirit of Piety is to recognize our total reliance on God and to come before His majesty with humility, trust, and love. The virtue of piety works in tandem with this gift. St. Thomas Aquinas refers back to the Roman statesman Cicero's definition of piety: "it is by piety that we do our duty towards our kindred and well-wishers of our country and render them faithful service."

Piety recognizes that God is the primary source of both life and government. We enter the world by way of the family into a society that is governed. Therefore, we know that God sustains the propagation of the human race and the rightful authorities that require our obedience. Secondly, we receive our own being from our parents and we receive government from our country. St. Thomas Aquinas teaches very clearly that, after God, we chiefly own our lives and well-being to our parents and our country.

Piety means giving honor to our parents and, by extension, our entire family, and to give honor to our country which includes our fellow-citizens and allies of our country.

### **The Virtue of Patriotism**

If we drill deeper into justice and then into piety, we see two main branches: 1) our extended family and local community and 2) our fellow countrymen and friends of our country. Of course, these cannot be separated. They are inexorably linked.

However, if we focus on the second of these two, we finally arrive at the virtue of patriotism. The power of the State is granted by God, but this power does not allow the State to make or enforce laws and orders that violate the natural rights of its subjects. If the State is not infringing upon these natural freedoms, then the citizenry is obliged to act in obedience to the legitimate authority.

It is impossible to be a patriot without freedom. Civil allegiance, generally speaking, is the virtue of patriotism combined with the virtue of obedience. Allegiance requires that the citizen be free to give his service to the State. Otherwise, he is no patriot at all, but is living under oppression.

Patriotism means having a reasonable love and esteem for one's own country. This is externalized by showing honor and respect to the rulers of the State, whoever they may be. To be sure, it is possible and even healthy to honor and respect a leader while also disagreeing on key policies and ideas.

Patriotism means to observe which laws of the State are in accord with Catholic social teaching and the doctrines of faith and morals and which are opposed to the truth and to the Catholic Faith. Citizens are not compelled by patriotism to fully unjust laws. Rather, it is the patriotic thing to correct error and bring the laws into accord with the fullness of the truth in Jesus Christ.

Patriotism means a willingness to lay down one's life for their country. Of course, this literally takes flesh when we understand that the virtue of piety, and therefore justice, refers to our entire family, our friends, and our fellow countrymen and allies. Some pay the greatest price by dying in the service of their country in the military. Others lay down their lives for their country day by day in the normal service of their duty to their family, their work, their community, and the poor and marginalized.

Patriotism has a just consciousness of the past and a balanced pride in national identity. However, we must not conflate the virtue of patriotism with a blind, senseless, and unreasonable form of nationalism. There are those who see their country as having no past sins. This view is unreasonable because the only perfect society is the Church Triumphant in Heaven. However, we must also not go to the other extreme of historical revisionism which seeks to emphasize the injustice of the past while forgetting the good.

### **How to Grow in the Virtue of Patriotism**

Three brief suggestions to grow in the virtue of patriotism....

The next time a national holiday comes around, learn about it. Do not take for granted that you know what is being celebrated. Really dive in to the day. When did it begin and why? Is it really what everyone thinks it is? Is it worth remembering? Is it worth celebrating? Know the answers to these questions.

## Parish Office Communication

Practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Seek to serve your fellow countrymen, to the greater glory of God. Catholicism and patriotism go hand in hand when it comes to serving our neighbor in love.

Out of an authentic zeal for the ultimate good of the human beings God has providentially placed around you, lead souls to Christ. Learn about the Faith so that you can be ready to give an account for the hope that you have in Jesus Christ. Sharing the Faith is always for the good of the whole nation. This, of course, begins right at home. As St. John Paul II said in a homily in Perth, Australia in 1986, "As the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes the whole world in which we live.

*Source: Catholic-link.org by Will Wright*