

REFLECTIONS ON THE VIRTUES OF MOTHER FRANCES STREITEL

PRUDENCE



Prudence



DEFINITION

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. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1806)

Through the virtue of prudence, the Servant of God received the trust of people. By reading the testimonials carefully, it becomes clear that the Servant of God was clothed with the virtue of prudence: she knew how to discern what had to be done in each moment. Her simple life revealed Christian wisdom and common sense. Before she did something, she sought the light from God in personal and communal prayer. She subordinated her insights and plans to wise priests and was always ready to judge people and situations rightly.



TESTIMONIALS ... of the past ...

She was prudent. Her prudence was supernatural and it was apparent in all her actions. (*Msgr. J. Joch*)

... Before she made a decision she always prayed for light from God and asked for prayers. Often she sought the advice of the spiritual director and superiors. (*Sr. M. Johanna Ankenbrand*)

She acted always after serious reflection and prayed so that all would be done in conformity with the will of God. She was always prudent in her counsels, and in her undertakings she asked the Lord in prayer to give her the necessary light. (*Sr. M. Bernarda Hümpfner*)



SOURCES

SACRED SCRIPTURE: Sir. 37:12-15 1 Cor. 2:4

OUR WAY OF LIFE: Articles: #91, 93

WRITINGS OF MOTHER FRANCES

Letters to Fr. J. F. Jordan: Letter 24 (14), March 25, 1883, #1
Letter 47 (33), September 25, 1883, #4
Letter 53 (38), October 20, 1883, #4
Letter 84 (69), January 6, 1884, #2
Letter 89 (74), January 1884, #1
Letter 90 (54), January 28, 1884, #3



REFLECTIONS

COMMUNITY QUESTION:

Do I incorporate the necessary information in my discernment process and then make my decisions in conformity with the values of the Gospel and the Congregation?

PERSONAL QUESTION:

How do I contribute my knowledge, my understanding, and my experiences in the discernment process for the community?



TESTIMONIALS ... of today ...

Whenever I reflect on Mother Frances' life, two thoughts come to my mind:

1. A woman of inner strength, and quiet dignity
2. The gift of the Holy Spirit that "urged her on to seek God's will, and to follow after it".

Like our Blessed Mother, who stood at the foot of the cross of her Son Jesus with such "grace and dignity," to do God's will, Mother Frances showed this same gritt with compassion to do God's will. Both of these thoughts give me the same strength, not all of the time, to discipline myself to do God's will of spreading the "Good News," in my own small way of kindness and compassion to others. Blessings.

Sr. Gabrielle (USA)



In my reflections of Mother Frances I was deeply moved by her contemplative spirit. I was told that frequently she spent several hours in front of the blessed Sacrament praying and contemplating. It was her spirit of prayer and contemplation that gave her the wisdom and strength to found a new Religious Order having both an active and contemplative dimension. Clearly this ever deepening spirit of union with God nourished by an intense life of prayer and contemplation was the source of her energy to accomplish her vision but also accept the final humiliation of being deposed with dignity and grace from her office of General Superior.



Sr. Rita (USA)

“Open explanation is the only means to peace - or to a break”. “Once a certain line has been crossed, it may be too late to make up for what has been missed.” “If you want to heal wounds, you have to see the wounds first.” (Mother Frances to Father Jordan, Letter 100)



These three quotes have always encouraged me to address uncomfortable topics and issues. I was aware that this would and did cause me difficulties and incomprehension. Nevertheless, I followed my conscience. I was encouraged and strengthened by the example of Mother Frances, who did not take the path of least resistance. So I want to continue to live my faithfulness to the charism of my community in her spirit. - Mother Frances’ attitude as a superior, who never insisted on her status or worried about her authority being undermined, is also an impressive role model for me.

Sr. Gudrun Maria (Austria)



I would like to share an aspect of Mother Frances’ life and spiritual journey that significantly influences my life: Mother Frances lived a simple life with the first sisters. They prayed together, looked after the sick people, lived in community also she wanted to live like St. Francis and to serve the very poor people. So, through Mother Frances’ life influencing me to live a simple life in community, to live in poverty for love of God and for the sick and poor people also to share the gifts that God give us.

Post. Neema (Tanzania)



My sharing about Mother Frances.

According to my experience, Mother Frances is a mirror by living our charism. She was a simple woman by living religious life. So by doing the ministries she put God in front and she used simple way to save the poor. And also she showed us how to love the church. So for me really she is true example in my life for searching God and save him.

Sr. Lainess (Tanzania)