

## MEEKNESS IN THE FAMILY

My Dear Faithful,

This month let us consider the second Beatitude, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land.” The Sacred Heart—abyss of all virtues—explicitly mentions meekness as a virtue that His Sacred Heart exemplifies: “Learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart” (Matt. 11:29). There is no doubt that He wishes us to copy Him in His practice of all the Beatitudes, but meekness must find a special place in our hearts, as it did in His.

Meekness is “the moral virtue which moderates anger and restrains the desire for vengeance.” (*The Christian Life*, by Francis L.B. Cunningham, O.P.) Anger—one of the soul’s eleven passions—is aroused when we must overcome something perceived as evil: an obstacle to our plans; an insult or injustice directed against us; a threat to our possessions, reputation, or loved ones, etc. As daily experience testifies, anger easily overtakes our reason and, lacking this restraint, it soon leads us to strike out against people or situations in an entirely unreasonable way. The virtue of meekness is given to us to help us control the passion of anger. It enables us to keep an even, agreeable mood in all situations. “The beauty of meekness as a virtue consists in a certain evenness, sweetness and gentleness of disposition whereby a person is able to live in peace and equanimity.” (Ibid.)

Perhaps no Saint better exemplifies this virtue as does St. Francis de Sales. By nature, he possessed a quick temper and was prone to anger. Only after a twenty-year struggle was he able to conquer this bad tendency. The victory he won was so complete that he became known for his gentleness, good nature, and kindness. It was St. Francis de Sales who coined the phrase, “A spoonful of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar,” an axiom he employed in his own work as the Bishop of Calvinist Geneva. By his gentleness, he brought thousands of hardened Calvinists back to the Catholic Faith.

Although St. Francis de Sales practiced meekness at all times, one instance sets his meekness in sharp relief. Once, while preaching, two lawyers sent a cleric to the pulpit with a note they had written, full of insulting remarks against the holy bishop, hoping in this way to end his preaching. St. Francis de Sales took the note, carefully read it, and continued his sermon unperturbed. Afterwards, he found the two lawyers and asked them in what way he had offended them, that he might correct it. After they related the cause of their animosity toward him, he assured them that he never intended to cause them any grievance and then knelt before them to ask their forgiveness. They were so bewildered by this heroic meekness, that they in turn asked him for pardon and from that day forward lived on the best terms with this holy prelate.

How happy is the Christian home whose members put into practice meekness like that of St. Francis de Sales. We well know how necessary it is, since countless situations arise in family life which act as catalysts to the explosion of anger: a sharp comment, a sudden inconvenience demanding a change of plans, the monotonous grating caused by the defects of one’s spouse, children, or siblings. Without the evenness of temper given by the virtue of meekness, disquiet, bitterness, resentment, and discord will inevitably be the atmosphere of the home. Meekness acts as the spiritual sprinkler system, putting out the fires of anger before they get out of control and destroy the home.

St. Francis de Sales gives invaluable advice on how to put meekness into practice when anger has been enkindled (Introduction to the Devout Life Part III, Ch. VIII). (1) One must forestall the movements of anger, if possible, or at least cast them aside as quickly as possible, by turning one’s thoughts to something else. (2) In imitation of the Apostles when they saw the sea raging, one must have recourse to God in prayer; He will say to the soul as He did to the sea, “Peace, be still”. (3) During the heat of passion, one must not speak, nor take any action as to the matter in question. (4) One must strive to perform acts of kindness and humility towards the person against whom one is angry, especially in reparation for any angry actions or words.

The role of meekness, however, is not merely negative. Beyond controlling anger, meekness creates a pleasant atmosphere in the home, infusing peace into family life. This tranquility finds its source in the restraint each member exercises over his or her own anger. Meekness, moreover, influences all the interactions within the family, infusing them with charity, respect, and courtesy.

Parents may wonder, though, if the practice of meekness is incompatible with their duty to discipline their children. It must be remembered that since anger is a passion, it is neither good nor evil in itself. As we have seen, anger is evil when it overtakes right reason. When it is used *reasonably*, however, as in the case of discipline, far from being sinful, it is a good and virtuous act. Parents can and must use just anger at times when disciplining their children. Nevertheless, meekness must influence the way discipline is administered. St. Francis de Sales warns those in authority that they are always in danger of finding justifications for an anger which is actually unjust and stems from self-seeking. He also notes that discipline which blends sternness with calm and gentleness is the most effective. While stern and gentle discipline smooths the way for generous compliance, undue displays of anger only add obstacles to it. Meekness will give parents this delicate balance.

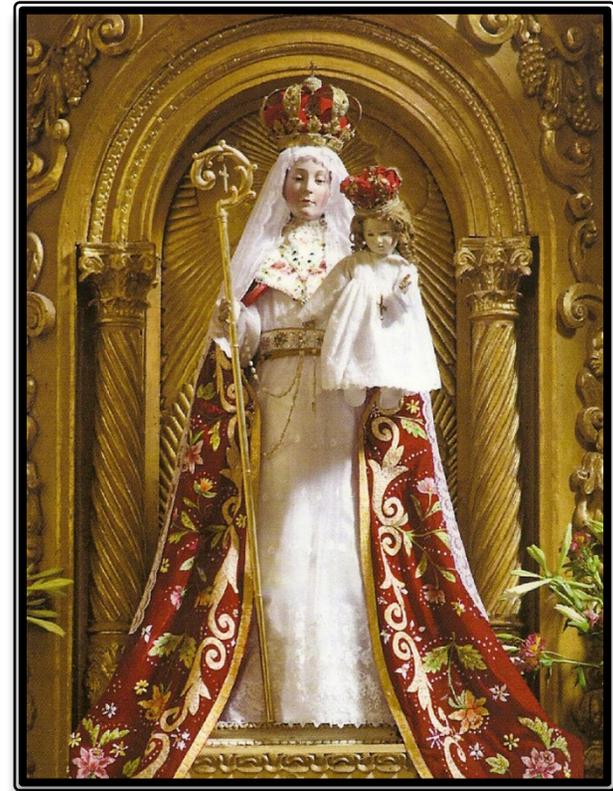
I pray that all your families, after reflecting on the beauty of this virtue of meekness, will put it into practice and thereby taste the joy that Our Lord promises the meek.

In Christ,  
Fr. Nicholas McManus

# OUR LADY OF GOOD SUCCESS

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Society of St. Pius X  
Traditional Latin Mass



DECEMBER 2021

1460 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East  
Dickinson, ND 58601

**Pastor:** Fr. Nicholas McManus 303-325-7558  
**Coordinator:** Stephan Kershnik 701-690-0317

## MASS SCHEDULE

DATE	FEAST	MASS	CONFESSIONS
Saturday, Dec. 11	St. Damasus	5:00 PM	4:00 PM
<b>Sunday, Dec. 12</b>	<b>Third Sunday of Advent</b>	<b>1:00 PM</b>	<b>12:00 PM</b>
<b>Sunday, Dec. 19</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b>	<b>1:00 PM</b>	<b>12:00 PM</b>
Saturday, Dec. 25	THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD	11:00 AM*	10:00 AM
Sunday, Dec. 26	Sunday in the Octave of Christmas	1:00 PM	12:00 PM
Saturday, Jan. 1	FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION	1:00 PM	12:00 PM
Sunday, Jan. 2	Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus	1:00 PM*	12:00 PM
*High Mass			

## DONATION INFORMATION

To donate by check or money order, please mail your donation to the address below:

*Our Lady of Good Success Church  
P.O. Box 1873  
Dickinson, ND 58602-1873*

You may also donate online by visiting  
[www.olgsdickinson.org/donate](http://www.olgsdickinson.org/donate)  
and clicking on the yellow "Donate" button.

## COLLECTIONS

<b>First Collection</b>	Operating expenses for OLGS.
<b>Second Collections</b>	<i>Please write the purpose of your donation on the memo line on your check</i>
-Sunday, Dec. 5	SSPX Foreign Missions
-Sunday, Dec. 12	St. Isidore's Priory
-Sunday, Dec. 19	OLGS Building Fund

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Upcoming Holy Days of Obligation.** The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, Christmas, December 25, and the Feast of the Circumcision, January 1, are Holy Days of Obligation. Attendance at Mass and refraining from servile work are obligatory under pain of mortal sin on these days. If unable to attend Mass, be sure to sanctify the day by praying the Rosary and reading the propers of the Mass.
- **A Holy Hour** will be held at the church at 6:00 PM on the Wednesday, December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, since there is no Mass that day.
- **Consecration to Our Lady.** Since Mass will not be offered on the Feast the Immaculate Conception, December 8, if any parishioners intend to make/renew the total consecration to Our Lady according to the method of St. Louis de Montfort, Fr. McManus will preside over the ceremony after Mass on Sunday, December 12 (Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe).
- **Days of Fast and Abstinence.** Although no longer binding under pain of mortal sin, the faithful are strongly encouraged to observe the following traditional days of fast and abstinence:
  - December 7, which is a traditional day of fast and complete abstinence in preparation for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.
  - The Winter Ember Days on December 15, 17 and 18. Ember Wednesday and Saturday are traditional days of fast and partial abstinence and Ember Friday of fast and complete abstinence.
- **Poinsettia Donations.** Throughout Advent, donations will be collected for the poinsettias to adorn the Altar for Christmas. Special envelopes can be found in the vestibule for this purpose. These may be placed in the collection basket.
- **Christmas Celebration.** Please join us in the church basement after the Christmas Mass for a celebration in honor of Our Savior's birth! Please bring juice/doughnuts/rolls.
- **Adult Catechism** will be held this month on Sunday, December 12.
- **The Holy Name Society** meeting will be held on Sunday, December 5. Members will receive Holy Communion together and recite their pledge that day. If any men are interested in being inducted into the Holy Name Society on Sunday, January 2, please contact Fr. McManus.
- **Mothers of Lu Prayer** will be recited at the Communion rail after Mass on Sunday, December 19.
- **Servers Practice** will be held on Sunday, December 19 after Mass.
- **The Eucharistic Crusade** will not have a meeting this month. The intention for December is "That the Child Jesus will inspire many vocations".
- **Visiting Priest.** Fr. Patrick McBride will be visiting on Sunday, December 19.
- **Monthly Novena to St. Joseph.** Those participating in the monthly novena to St. Joseph are invited to stay after Mass on Sunday, December 19 to begin this month's novena.
- **Special Collection.** A special collection will be taken on Sunday, December 5 for the SSPX Foreign Missions. The funds collected help all the various missions in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, South America, Mexico, and others to operate their apostolates.
- **End of Year Tax Donations.** Anyone wishing to claim a deduction for charitable donations on their 2021 taxes are reminded that donations should be made prior to December 31.