

VIRTUES OF OUR VENERATED MOTHER CLAUDINE ECHERNIER- THESE
VIRTUES LEAD THE ROADS TO HAPPINESS

Mrs.Sujatha Ilangovan, Assistant professor in Biochemistry,
Holy Cross College(Autonomous), Tiruchrappalli-620002.

Virtues like Wisdom, Courage, Humanity, Justice, Temperance, and Transcendence are observable characteristics that are valued over time and lead one to achieve excellence, according to Peterson and Seligman. They describe the twenty four identified character strengths as positive characteristics, which are the “distinguishable routes to displaying one or another of the virtues.

It is through using strengths that virtues are exhibited in the world, and exercising them brings about good feelings and gratification.

The best way to show these virtues is to illustrate them through the life of a Saint, and here we present the virtues of our venerated Mother Claudine Echernier. Mother can be aptly called as the FATHER OF VIRTUES. Her inspiration was the Holy Spirit Himself and it is this spirit which kept mother to live a life as exactly as the Holy Rules in everything and always. Her pondering thought was to do the will of the good God in everything. It is these virtues which Mother as imbibed from the Holy Spirit led to the gratification of the Holy Cross.and no doubt virtues form the mission of our congregation. Thus our mission is *to reveal to all people the merciful love of the Father and the liberating power of the Paschal mystery.*

Love of Jesus Christ

Mother loved the Lord with an ardent and generous love mother felt great happiness in receiving the Holy Communion Daily she spent the whole day thanking and preparing for these communions. Mother was never able to understand how people say that the mass was very long, because mother`s recollection in the holy place was so great that she very often passed the whole night in the church failing to have noticed the sacristian closed the doors. Her thoughts, her intentions, her words and her works all were animated by the Spirit of Our Lord. She was like a Ciborium enclosing the Holy Spirit.

Poverty

Mother was detached from everything and practiced the virtue of poverty in all its perfection. Mother never wanted the desire of money to make one neglect their spiritual exercises. Mother wore the slippers discarded by a sister and also a stockings considered rough by another sister. At her death , nothing of hers remained. Mother could never stand superfluity. The choice of furniture, the curtains for the windows worried her. When she visited convents she observed if they practiced poverty

Trust in the lord

Once someone asked for Mother's advice on the art of preserving her health, for which she replied `I leave to God the responsibility of all my actions, contenting myself in obeying Him. In all that happens I see the Divine disposition of God. thus I am at rest always`

The sisters had nothing to worry about, Mother Claudine Echernier makes the good God give the weather she wants.

Mortification

Mother always kept guard against the attachments of the heart. Mother feared to talk too long to her daughters of the Cross who inspired her with confidence, for she feared to speak to them too freely and to satisfy herself too much. Being Superior and already advanced in age, mother still went out to the fields to make hay, or harvesting and for transporting the wood.

Chastity and modesty

Mother spoke forcefully on the needs of making efforts to preserve one's heart pure. Mother always recommended to avoid curiosity and to be reserved in words, for Daughters of the Cross who are modest and who keep silence will save her soul and will not fail to contribute to the salvation of many others. Mother set herself as an example and thought more to the sisters

Humility

Mother esteemed the virtue of humility so necessary for the salvation of the soul that she said in a convent, a girl who is dominated by her pride deserves to go back to the world because there she could surely find more occasions to be humiliated. Mother never criticized other religious communities and she did not allow her daughters to do so.

Zeal

Mother sacrificed herself all her life for procuring the glory of God and the salvation of the souls. Mother has been using up all the slender income towards the expenses of the mission at Chavanod. she thought the sisters that the more we are humble and hidden the greater will be the surprise on the Judgment day.

Amiability

Mother knew how to be all to all. she hurt no one either by actions or by words. even to check her daughters she did not hurt but made them understand things well.

Faith

Mother had the art of seeing God in all things, in events and in everything. Faith was her driving power, her consolation and her driving hope. When she broke her leg she knitted, sitting on her bed, Happy to mend the stockings of the Ministers of the Lord.

Observance of the rules

Mother Foundress observed as exactly as she could the Holy Rules in everything and always. When Mother visited convents, the sisters could not make her accept one dish more at the table than those permitted by the Rule. the day of her visit was a feast for the sisters , but mother told that it is true for you for you break the rule one day ,but as for me I would be failing if all the sisters whom I meet were feasting thus.

Conclusion

Mother Teresa was a woman who demonstrated great acts of mercy in her work and exhibited tremendous modesty and self-control throughout her life. She is a shining example of the virtue of Temperance, which include the strengths of Forgiveness & Mercy, Modesty, Prudence, and Self-control.

It is through using strengths that virtues are exhibited in the world, and exercising them brings about good feelings and gratification. The perfection of a religious consists in the exact observance of the rules, our mother Claudine Echernier was a perfect and Holy person. Strengths are shown through thoughts, feelings and actions which can be developed and increased. Strengths are like muscles, the capability to use any of them is there, some get used more frequently and naturally, others need intention and exercise to build up.

Do you have the strength to be happy? Positive Psychology researchers, Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman co-authors of Character Strengths and Virtues have classified character strengths and virtues in an attempt to establish a consistent language for use in the discussion of measurement and intervention in the science of happiness. I deem it a great privilege to present to you these virtues of mother Claudine Echernier following which would lead us on to the path of happiness.