



## *Tidings and Treasures - March, 2022*

Dear PVEC Community,

You exercise regularly and watch what you eat — you try to maintain your health. You are socially active, relatively free of worry, you buy some “creature comforts” — you try to maintain your happiness. Yet, despite your efforts to maintain health and happiness, you still feel like something is missing. You are out of balance; something isn’t right.

Why? Because we are more than just our physical bodies and our possessions. We have souls. We have a supernatural, spiritual component to our entire being. Most of us neglect our holiness. We forget to feed our souls. We take our relationship with God for granted or worse, we don’t think about it at all. We are out of balance.

Most people probably don’t think of Lent as a gift. But it is! It’s our opportunity to put our lives back into balance — to recalibrate our holiness. Lent is our time to be more intentional with our prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It is time to detach ourselves from worldly pleasures and develop our spiritual muscles. It is time to empty ourselves of our self-interests and allow room for the Holy Spirit to operate in our lives.

How do we do this? By reducing vice and increasing virtue. For each of the seven deadly sins (vices) there is a corresponding virtue to overcome them.

**Humility overcomes pride** — this is the big one. Most of our sins are based in pride. Pride is called the “devil’s sin” because Satan wanted to make himself a god before God. Humility is central to being a disciple of Jesus; it’s putting God’s will before my own self-interests.

**Charity overcomes greed** — more things doesn’t equate to more happiness. In fact, it’s the opposite. The most joyful people are also the most generous. Charity exhibits selflessness, greed exhibits selfishness.

**Chastity overcomes lust** — our bodies are temples for the Holy Spirit. In our highly sexualized culture, develop chastity to overcome lustful desires and our wandering eyes.

**Kindness overcomes envy** — good stewards are grateful for all the gifts they have been given. Kindness means that I am happy for the gifts that God has given other people. Stop comparing yourself to others and be thankful for what you have been given.

**Temperance overcomes gluttony** — many people “give up” eating or drinking certain foods or beverages during Lent. Temperance or moderation helps control our appetite.

**Patience overcomes wrath** — St. James tells us to “be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God.” Do you want to develop patience? Start by praying for people that make you angry.

**Diligence overcomes sloth** — as stewards, we are called to nurture, develop and share our gifts. Cultivate diligence or a strong work ethic to overcome laziness or sloth.

We are made in God’s image. We are sons and daughters of God. We were made to be in union with Him, not separated from Him.

Just like maintaining your health and happiness, holiness requires an intentional, daily commitment; it requires me to change. Let’s use this Lent to get our lives back into balance — health, happiness and holiness! Exercise virtue and eliminate vice. Experience the peace and joy that God desires for you here on earth.

Blessings, Donna