

# KNOW YOUR FAITH

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Saint Sophia and her three daughters Faith, Hope, and Love

This issue of ByziKids highlights a saint named Sophia and her three daughters, Faith, Hope, and Love in time for their feast on September 17th. You might notice that Sophia believed so strongly in acquiring holy virtues that she named her girls after those St. Paul mentioned in his first letter to the Corinthians.

*1 Corinthians 13:13* And now abide **faith, hope, love**, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

## So, what is a Virtue?

A virtue is a good habit or trait that can be cultivated to help us become the way God wants us to be. Faith, Hope, and Love (sometimes called Charity) are only three virtues.

Virtues are also called Fruits of the Spirit because when a person loves the Holy Spirit and strives to please Him, these traits become good habits that take root in your soul and grow like fruit!

Scripture encourages us to gather as many virtues as possible during our lifetime!

*Galatians 6:9* And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

*Philippians 4:8* Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence, and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

## But how can we gather virtues, and how do we help them grow?

First of all, you need to take some time to think about virtue. What are some good and holy traits that your soul needs to cultivate? Let's make a list of some of them so you can start to identify the virtues you want to gather and understand precisely what each of them means, and then we can note the ways we can practice them.

Like any habit, virtues take root in a soul when their actions are practiced and repeated. If you want to be filled with hope, you need to practice being hopeful, especially when it looks like nothing good is coming your way!

## But where do we start?

We already know about the three Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love. We can add the virtue of Wisdom...did you know that the mother of these three virtues is Wisdom? (*Sophia means Wisdom in Greek!*)

**Wisdom:** The Bible says you simply have to pray to God and ask for wisdom!

*James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.*

**Faith:** When you have faith, you believe the word of God simply because He said so.

*Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

*Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith, it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

*Romans 1:17 For in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

**Hope:** Knowing that God wants what is good for us can help us to hope for good things even when things look like they may not work out too well for us.

*Romans 8:24-25 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope.*

*For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*

**Love:** St. Paul tells us this virtue is the greatest one of all. Love is wanting the best for someone, just as God wants the best for them. We are called to love even those who don't love us in return!

*1 Corinthians 13:13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

We can add the four **Cardinal Virtues!** The word Cardinal means Hinge, so they act as a hinge for all the other virtues to connect! Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude. Let's see what Scripture tells us about these.

**Prudence:** When people are prudent, they don't act impulsively but think before doing things. They try to make the most sensible decisions.

*Proverbs 14:15 The naive believes everything, but the sensible man considers his steps.*

**Justice:** When you decide to play by the rules and always act fairly toward others, you practice the virtue of Justice!

*Leviticus 19:15 Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.*

**Temperance:** Having even control of your emotions means you have the virtue of temperance. Disciplining yourself and keeping yourself from tantrums and foolishness is a virtue!

*Titus 1:8 But hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.*

**Fortitude:** Fortitude is the ability to keep going when the going gets rough.

*Deuteronomy 31:6. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God, goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.*

O holy Saint Sophia, mother and protector of the Christian faith, pray for us who are struggling to defend our faith. Just as you led your daughters to the crowns of martyrdom, help us bear our crosses. Blessed Saints, Faith, Hope, and Love, intercede for us that we may attain even a sliver of your courage and youthful wisdom. Saints Sophia, Faith, Hope, and Love, please intercede for us. Amen.