

UNIT 4:

Tent Ropes.

The Improper Use of My Freedom.

SIN



11th Grade.

Sin is the disorder and chaos in my life.

Sin, wounded love.

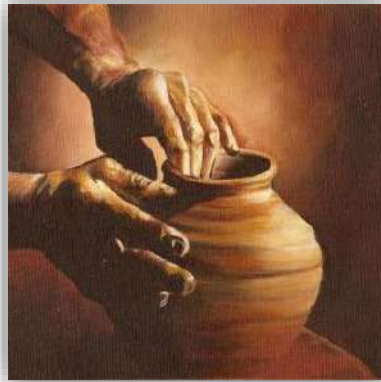
**These wounds can be healed. I just have to use the
right means.**

The weapons against sin: grace and the virtues.

4. Tightening the Ropes: The Virtues

“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things”

Ph 4:8.



El alfarero. Raquel Guzmán.

Discovering that the virtues are good habits and abilities that dispose the person to do what is good. Learning to use the virtues as weapons against sin.

This unit begins by presenting the movie *Batman Begins*, which shows a superhero who must be prepared to fight against evil using his weapons. Ask the youth whether in our lives there is some sort of weapon to protect us, to prepare us for our everyday battles and to help us in those moments when, as we have seen, we put our freedom to the test, knowing that it is not always easy.

ACTIVITY 1: Present the photos of three figures: Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Oskar Schlinder. Organize the students into groups and invite them to investigate the lives of these figures, picking out four characteristics that made their lives into a model for others. Some ideas that might arise are: courage, integrity, peace, austerity, witness, generosity, love, unselfishness, charity, self-giving, sacrifice, simplicity...



These are people with proven virtues who gave their lives to others in spite of the dangers, sacrifices and suffering that this caused them.

ACTIVITY 2: Ask the youth to think about and write down the names and qualities of three more virtuous people.

Man of them will choose famous people (saints, athletes, etc.) but did anyone name “regular” people like, for example, their grandfather, a friend or a fireman, policeman or doctor?

We are surrounded by virtuous people that pass by unobserved, precisely because many times virtue is found in what is small, in what is hidden, in what no one sees.

Sometimes we think that the virtues are just something for saints, heroes, or superheroes.

We are used to seeing movies about superheroes at the theater or on TV: *Superman*, *Batman*, the *Incredible Hulk*, *Captain America* or the *Fantastic 4*.

They are extraordinary beings that possess exceptional qualities, who are able to give their lives at the service of justice and the common good.

Make them realize that the virtues are not something just for superheroes or superior people, but that they are something for everyone, for you and for me.

Invite the youth to arm themselves with all of these virtues, understanding that now it is their turn to become protagonists of the story.



ACTIVITIES 3 and 4: In this activity, show the youth a picture of Olympic athlete Arthur Nabarrete Zanetti, who was born in Sao Paulo on April 16, 1990.

He is a gymnast who won the gold medal in gymnastic rings at the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Ask the youth how they think he was able to become the number one athlete in this event.

Ask them whether, in their opinion, the virtuous person (like athletes) is born or is made. Make them contemplate whether the virtues are simply inherited (and so we are either born with or without them), or whether they can be learned and practiced.

If the virtues are necessary weapons in life, each one of us is responsible for seeking them out and working to make them ours.



The virtues are dispositions and good habits that dispose me to do what is good.

They allow me not only to perform good acts, but also to give the best of myself. With all of my sensitive efforts I seek out the good, and I choose it through concrete actions (St. Gregory of Nyssa).

Human virtues are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our actions, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in leading a morally good life.

The virtues can be defined as strategies for love.

ACTIVITY 5: Now that they know that the virtues are necessary weapons and that each one of us is responsible for seeking them out and exercising them in order to make them ours, we are going to pin down what we are talking about.


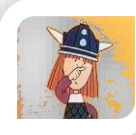
Remind them of how the cardinal virtues are like the heart and origin of the rest of the human virtues.



If *Marvel* created the *FANTASTIC 4*, we too count on 4 fantastic Virtues, on which the rest of the human virtues are built:

The Cardinal Virtues:

- Prudence
- Justice
- Temperance
- Fortitude

Present them with a chart with the characteristics of each virtue, and ask them to work in small groups try to define the meaning of each virtue in their own words.

VIRTUES		?	CHARACTERISTICS
1	 JUSTICE		Firm and constant will to give what is due.
			Habitual uprightness of thought and conduct with our neighbor.
			Puts order and integrity into our relationships with God and neighbor.
2	 PRUDENCE		Discern the good and choose good means to attain it.
			Guides other virtues, setting rule and measure.
			It is the cause, root, mother measure, example, guide and reason of the moral virtues.

<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> 	<p>FORTITUDE</p>	<p>Ensures firmness and constancy in difficulties.</p> <p>Enables us to conquer fear of suffering and death.</p> <p>Makes possible faithfulness to the good when it is especially costly or dangerous.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> 	<p>TEMPERANCE</p>	<p>Moderates the attraction of sensitive pleasures that separate us from the good.</p> <p>Teaches us to moderate our impulses.</p> <p>Fosters self-mastery and internal balance.</p>

ACTIVITY 6: Keep the students in the same groups. In this activity they will have to imagine real situations from their lives and decide what behaviors they will need to do in order to develop certain virtues.

It is important that the students be very concrete with the examples that they come up with for this activity, so that they can make the virtues their own and, in this way, become aware that every day we are either practicing virtue or not.

VIRTUES	SCENARIOS	TASKS
<p>PRUDENCE</p>	<p>Faced with the possibility of going out with friends who drink and smoke, you finally decide to go watch a movie at another friend's house...</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflect on what is most opportune in every moment. 2. 3.
<p>JUSTICE</p>	<p>On a school day, two students, Josh and Matthew, arrive late to their first period and both get into trouble. Josh overslept because he was playing PlayStation until late at night. Matthew, upon crossing the street to get to the school, saw an elderly woman fall and helped her get up, picked up her cane, and called an ambulance because she had a cut on her head.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help those who are in need, in spite of possible detriments it might cause me. 2. Avoid doing what is unnecessary, even if it doesn't have immediate bad consequences. 3.

<p style="text-align: center;">TEMPERANCE</p>	<p>I get home starving, sit at the table and start to eat before the rest of my family sits down.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know how to wait to eat until everyone is seated. 2. Know how to say "no" or "wait" to a craving. 3.
<p style="text-align: center;">FORTITUDE</p>	<p>I haven't studied enough for my test and my classmate who knows the test questions encourages me to switch tests with him.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overcome the temptation to cheat on a test. 2. 3.

Reflect with them about how they can not only live out these 4 virtues, but rather that their lives can be full of virtues that, in the majority of cases, are set against negative behaviors and sin.

Remember: the fight between good and evil.

Who do I want to listen to?



ACTIVITY 7: We will now introduce the theological virtues using a story.

The story recounts how the first Arab who wanted to cross the desert finds a venerable old man in a cave who gives him three precious stones to accompany him along his journey so that he can reach the end. Thanks to the stones, he is able to overcome different difficulties, and he understands that without them he never would have been able to attain his goal.



The story is a metaphor for how man has to walk the path of his life alone since each person's journey is unique, and for this reason there are three virtues that illuminate us so that we can reach our goal: Faith, Hope and Charity.

Help the youth to reflect, also in a personal way, on their own path of life. Who do they trust in? How is their path? What supports do they have?

Lastly, ask them to look up the beginning of Chapter 13 of the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, the Hymn of Charity, in which the Apostle invites us to seek charity above all things, as the source of all the other virtues.

I acquire the moral virtues with human efforts.

Virtue is a value that I make my own through concrete efforts. Only through the practice and exercise of virtue can I assimilate virtues and make them my own.

- × *Prudence* has for its object order in its totality; it seeks the good, correct and opportune in general.**
- × *Justice* has for its object the order toward others, giving to each person what pertains to him/her.**
- × *Fortitude* has for its object seeking the good in spite of oneself (tiredness, fear, embarrassment).**
- × *Temperance* has for its object obtaining order within oneself, within my own "I".**

I must look at sin as certain concrete behaviors or actions that distance me from people (so many times from those whom I love most), from God and from myself. In addition to having negative consequences for others, sin sinks me into a mediocre existence, filling my life, in the end, with a profound sadness and lack of meaning.

The theological virtues have to do directly with God. They are faith, hope and charity. The moral virtues form my features, they configure my manner of being and living; and the theological virtues form my personal attitude on the path toward God.

The good news is that the virtues are also a GIFT, a present: FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY help us encounter the GIFT (with a capital "G"), the most VIRTUOUS one, the HOLY of holies, the most powerful superhero: JESUS CHRIST.

TIMING AND MATERIALS

This lesson is designed for students in the 11th grade, to be imparted in two sessions.

ACTIVITY	TIME (minutes)	MATERIALS
Activity 1: Research and personal reflection.	20	Computer or encyclopedias for research.
Activ. 2: Personal reflection.	15	Worksheet.
Activ. 3 and 4: Personal reflection.	15	Worksheet. Athlete.
Activ. 5: Group work.	15	Cardinal Virtues chart.
Activ. 6: Group work.	15	Real scenarios about virtues.
Activ. 7.	20	Story and questions about the theological virtues.