

A note from Father Patrick Curley....

Last weekend, I gave a homily that addressed how, and possibly why, people dress the way they do in church. I felt God wanted me to say what I said. That stated, I found myself a bit panicked before the 4pm Vigil Mass. I kept waiting for God to say "don't say it." I didn't want to embarrass or hurt anyone either. Anyway, I gave the homily in a rather weak, apologetic manner. Afterwards, a lady was thrilled I gave it, but told me "don't be apologetic, it needed to be said." That night, not feeling great about sort of wimping out, I kept praying to the Lord and the Blessed Mother for guidance. Basically, I was looking for an excuse not to give that particular homily. Simultaneously, I was reading "*Unearthing Your Ten Talents: A Thomistic Guide to Spiritual Growth*." The author, Kevin Vost, PSY.D., was discussing Aristotle's remarks on The Ideal Man. He wrote how he has found Aristotle's remarks very helpful in his life. I was familiar with what Aristotle wrote and I've read them periodically for years. The author makes a convincing argument that they aren't just pagan virtues but Christian virtues as well. Although some might disagree, I've always felt that way myself. That stated, I knew my prayer was answered. I read The Ideal Man prayerful that night on my knees and heard God say to me, "now give the homily again at the 12pm mass, but this time, give it like a man." I did so in a confident manner because I knew it was inspired by God. Below are Aristotle's remarks on The Ideal Man. I think it's good for both sexes, for all ages. I suggest having teenage sons memorize it.

"He does not expose himself needlessly to danger, since there are few things for which he cares sufficiently; but he is willing, in great crises, to give even his life, --knowing that under certain conditions it is not worthwhile to live (i.e. martyrdom). He is of disposition to do men service, though he is ashamed to have a service done to him. To confer a kindness is a mark of superiority; to receive one is a mark of subordination... He does not take part in public displays... He is open in his dislikes and preferences; he talks and acts frankly, because of his contempt for men and things... He is never fired with admiration, since there is nothing great in his eyes. He cannot live in complaisance with others, except it be a friend; complaisance is the characteristic of a slave... He never feels malice, and always forgets and passes over injuries... He is not fond of talking... It is no concern of his that he should be praised, or that others should be blamed. He does not speak evil of others, even of his enemies, unless it is to themselves. His carriage is sedate, his voice deep, his speech measured; he is not given to hurry, for he is concerned about only a few things; he is not prone to vehemence, for he thinks nothing very important. A shrill voice and hasty steps come to a man through care... He bears the accidents of life with dignity and grace, making the best of his circumstances, like a skillful general who marshals his limited forces with all the strategy of war... He is his own best friend, and takes delight in privacy whereas the man of no virtue or ability is his own worst enemy, and is afraid of solitude."

-Excerpted from "The Story of Philosophy" by Will Durant