

November

PRAYER:

Act of Faith

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH:

Stewardship: Returning to God the first fruits of your time, talent, and treasure

In centuries past, when a ruler or other powerful leader had to be absent, the person appointed as *steward* exercised the power and authority to govern all the material possessions of the master. The greater the possessions of the owner, the greater the responsibility of the steward. Each of our lives—our very existence—is a gift from God. When we die, we must render an account to the Lord for all we have done with His gifts to us and return to the possession of the King the treasure we carry in “earthen vessels” (2 Corinthians 4:7).

“Who, then, is the faithful and prudent servant, whom the master has put in charge of his household to distribute to them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on his arrival finds doing so. Amen, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property” (Matthew 24:45-47).

SAINT OF THE MONTH:

Saint Joseph Moscati

(1880–1927, Italy)

Feast: November 16

Giuseppe Mario (Joseph) Moscati entered the world on the 12th of July, 1880, at Benevento, Italy, the son of a father who practiced law and served as a local judge and a mother whose family were members of the Italian nobility. Along with his parents and his eight brothers and sisters, young Joseph moved to Naples, Italy, and would spend much of the rest of his life in that area, becoming acquainted with two other Italians who would also be venerated for their holiness of life: Blessed Bartolo Longo and Saint Catarina Volpicelli.

When his brother Alberto was seriously injured in a military accident, Joseph observed the excellent medical care he received and resolved to pursue medicine as his profession, receiving his MD from the University of Naples in 1903. A man of deep faith who took a private vow of chastity and attended Mass daily, Dr. Moscati quickly won a reputation as a dedicated and compassionate physician.

He was instrumental in the successful evacuation of a hospital destroyed by a volcano, in researching and developing measures to halt the spread of cholera, and in being one of the



Saint Joseph Moscati, 1923

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first physicians in his area to use insulin in the treatment of diabetes. Dr. Moscati also directed a local school and received his license to teach clinical medicine.

Saint Joseph Moscati saw his chief medical responsibility as contributing to the alleviation of suffering. Many times his ability to heal his patients involved their own faith and reception of the sacraments. He never charged the poor for his services, often tucking some money in the prescriptions he gave them. Miraculous cures were even attributed to his treatment of patients while he was still living, and after his sudden but peaceful death on April 12, 1927, prayers asking for his intercession were granted many times.

Saint Joseph Moscati was canonized in 1987, after the mother of a young man cured of leukemia claimed a man in a white coat appeared in a dream to tell her that her son would live—and then identified the man from a photograph as Dr. Joseph Moscati.

DISCUSSION:

1. What is the difference between stewardship, generosity, and justice?
2. Does everyone have to give up wealth and family in order to be a good steward?
3. How does faith help us to practice the virtue of stewardship?

HOME PROJECT: Due November _____

PRAYER:

V. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your spirit and they shall be created

R. *and You shall renew the face of the earth.*

V. Let us pray.

R. *R. O God, Who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant us through the same Spirit a love and relish for what is right and just and a constant enjoyment of His consolations. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Read and reflect on Luke 21:1-4.

VIRTUE ACTIVITY:

Saint Joseph Moscati was a doctor who devoted his career to serving the poor. Think of different school subjects or extracurricular activities where you or your friends show talent. What are some careers in which those talents could be used? How could you use each career to serve God? Discuss with your friends and fill in the chart on the next page.

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<i>Talent</i>	<i>Possible Career</i>	<i>Way to Serve</i>
Math/Science	Chemist	Evaluate clean water sources in underdeveloped areas
	Architect	Volunteer to design churches or develop economical housing
	Doctor	Work one day a week in a free clinic; missionary

PRAYER:

Saint Joseph Moscati, you could have been a wealthy doctor, husband, and father, and volunteered to serve the poor on weekends. Instead, you chose to give your entire life and career to God. Help us to offer all that we do every day as a gift to God. Amen. Saint Joseph Moscati, pray for us.

SAINT ACTIVITY:

Write some "prescriptions" for virtue. Look at the list of virtues for all three years of VIP and brainstorm creative ideas with a small group. What pill-sized objects could you put in a medicine bottle for each virtue? (Example: "Prescription for Stewardship" could be a bottle filled with dimes with a label that says, "Put two in the poor box each morning and evening after spending a few minutes of prayer in Church." Or "Diligence Medicine" could be a bottle filled with your favorite candy, with a label that says "Take small doses no more than once per week, after finishing the most difficult work.")

Bring in empty medicine bottles and use blank nametag-sized labels to decorate with your prescriptions.



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Additionally, several charities collect empty medicine bottles for the use of doctors who visit the poorest areas. Look to see if there is a charity like this near you, and set a goal for how many bottles your class should collect

PRAYER:

Pray the Fourth Joyful Mystery of the Rosary, the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple. Reflect on how Joseph and Mary gave their first born Son to God. If even the Holy Family did this, what is expected of us?

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

REVIEW:

1. What is stewardship?
2. Who is Saint Joseph Moscati?

GROWTH IN STEWARDSHIP:

1. Who cooperated with you on your stewardship project?
2. What did you try and how did it go? Did it help you to grow in stewardship?
3. What more could you do in this area?

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