

Flocknote Mission Book



The Flocknote Mission Book

For the Flocknote Team

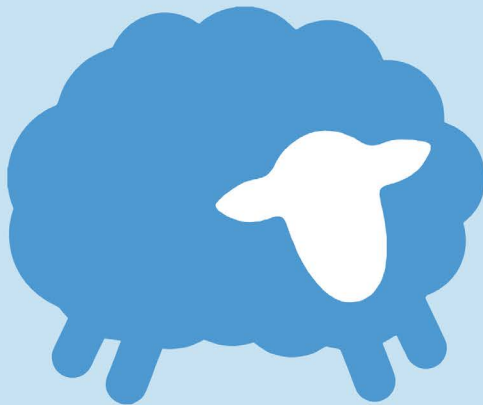
OUR MISSION

A MORE CONNECTED CHURCH

Our dream is for everyone to be more connected to God and His Church. So we make friendly software that helps church leaders better communicate, build relationships, and raise the money they need to create active, thriving communities.



MEET UNO



“What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety–nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it?”

— LUKE 15:4

Uno is that one, lost sheep.

Uno is all around us in the poor and the lonely. In the unloved and the hopeless. In our homes and pews. In our neighbor and our coworker. In everyone we meet, including in that lovely face you see in the mirror.

At Flocknote, Uno is why we're on a mission to build a more connected Church, helping build communities where everyone finds great peace and joy in Jesus.

Dear Flocknote team,

It is one of the great blessings of my life to work alongside you to build a more connected Church. When our work here is finished, we will be judged on how we cared for each other and all those the Lord gave us to serve along the way. And what will matter is the extent to which we allowed God to accomplish His work through us and all who rely on Flocknote.

Since it is only by God's grace that any such work is ever accomplished, it is our task, then, to most fully cooperate with His grace. That is, we must live lives of heroic virtue, both as individuals and as a company. A virtue is any habitual and firm disposition to do the Good. In practicing virtues, however imperfectly, we become them and are transformed by them into something God can better use for His purpose.

Virtue, says Josef Pieper, is the "utmost of what a man can be; it is the realization of the human capacity for being." Virtue makes us more fully alive, with supernatural virtue (faith, hope, and love) making us supernaturally alive. Living a life of virtue is the greatest glory we can give to God ("The glory of God is a human being fully alive." –St. Irenaeus).

And just as this is true for each of us individually—it is also true for us as a team and as a company. By practicing and governing ourselves by virtue, we will ensure that Flocknote also brings glory to God, being the utmost that it can be.

To do this together, it's helpful to identify what unique shape the practice of virtue will take here at Flocknote. What makes our work particularly "Flocknotey?"

One significant factor is our distinctive relationship with every other person on the team.

Our teammates at Flocknote are not merely nearby laborers in the same field. First, and most importantly, we are brothers and sisters in Christ (and I hope, in time, friends, too). Second, we are co-owners of Flocknote. All of that makes this a fundamentally different and rare kind of workplace, giving us a special responsibility for both our work and each other, as well as an exciting share in the long term fruits of our labor.

Along with that, it is the particular mission and specific principles we cling to which most directly shape our work and keep it rooted in its true purpose. Thus, it is my great hope that as we forge ahead together, with the loving and yet unknown plans God has for us, we commit to living lives of heroic virtue and habitually turn to this book—its mission and principles—to guide us each and every day; as individuals, in our relationships as a team, in shaping Flocknote, and, finally, in how we engage all those we serve through our work.

Ad Caelum Una,

Matthew Warner

Founder



10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As we grow in virtue together, may these principles guide us in establishing the unique character of our work.

- 1. THY WILL BE DONE** - Are we completely giving ourselves over to God's will? And embracing the high adventure of His plan, over our plan, wherever that may lead? Do we relentlessly turn to and rely on prayer for everything?
- 2. LOVE OUR PEOPLE** - Are we loving our people above all else and as if they are Jesus in disguise? Are we detached from things, money, power, honor, and comfort, so we are free to love people most fully? Are we helping each person take one step closer to reaching their own dreams in this world and becoming a saint in the next?
- 3. DELIGHT and SURPRISE** - Are we doing everything that is expected of us...plus more? And delivering joyful, radical service that delights and surprises?
- 4. KEEP IT SIMPLE** - Do we relentlessly simplify our processes and solutions, so our product and organization stays "lean and mean," rather than cluttered or slowed by the unimportant? Are we continually asking, "What would this look like if it were simple?"
- 5. RADICAL FOCUS** - Do we know who we are? Are we focused on the mission? Are we radically present in our work? Are we willing to give up everything non-essential? Are we able to cut through the distractions, noise, and busyness and just do the hard work that really matters?
- 6. GIVE MY BEST** - Am I being a good steward of God's gifts, working hard, taking initiative, and always giving my best?
- 7. CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT** - Is this making us better versions of ourselves? Are we committed to excellence, personal accountability, understanding the why, and getting better at our craft every single day? Are we more virtuous and effective today than we were yesterday?
- 8. BE GENEROUS** - Are we generous with our gratitude, time, patience, mercy, forgiveness, optimism, and kindness? When in doubt, be generous.
- 9. GREATER THAN THE SUM** - "I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot. Together we can do great things."
— Saint (Mother) Teresa
- 10. LEAVE ROOM** - Work is a means to an end, not an end itself, and should not be all-consuming. Is our work sanctifying us and benefiting others? Is it nourishing our families, rather than competing with them? Is it enabling and supporting leisure and a rich contemplative life, with plenty of room for silence, prayer, worship and life's higher things?

GOVERNING VIRTUES

“Take good care of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; For wealth does not last forever, nor even a crown from age to age.”

— PROVERBS 27:23-24



GRATITUDE

Gratitude has been called (by Peter Kreeft) the “mother of all virtues” because of its unique ability to give birth to other virtues. Even merely upon realizing “I’m alive,” the immediately prudent thing, the most natural reverence, the first basic act of justice, is to give thanks. Gratitude helps us understand the truth about ourselves (humility) by first helping us understand a more fundamental truth about everything (that all is gift). Once thankful for my wooden table, soon also thankful for the woods, then the Sun, and then the cosmic hymn which summoned it all forth. All that is left after that is to find the *Someone to thank*. And even if we’re not sure whom to thank yet, the mere expression of gratitude is itself an embryonic act of faith. Gratitude is a kind of primordial virtue that cracks open the heart and then leads that opened heart upward toward God.

That crack also runs deep and downward into the heart. Much more than just an outward expression of appreciation, gratitude is a disposition and a habit of the heart that changes how we see and experience every thing, every moment, every interaction, every person. It reorients the will, shifting our focus from what is lacking in our lives to what is already generously provided.

In the process, it reveals our otherwise ordinary surroundings to be rife with providence and grace, evoking awe and wonder. Even our trials and suffering get reshaped into opportunities for sanctification (i.e. further growth in virtue).

It is no coincidence that Jesus puts gratitude (eucharisteō=to give thanks) at the heart of the Last Supper and asks us to “do this in memory of Me.” And that the early Christians then kept this great mystery at the heart of their worship, even calling it the “Eucharist” (thanksgiving).

The grateful heart is the posture of the wise, a gentle and persistent recognition that we are always in an Other’s debt—a debt that cannot be repaid, only forgiven. Yet we rejoice! Because this debt *has* been repaid and this forgiveness offered, through the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. We have but to accept it with a grateful heart. For this, and for all things, let us give thanks (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

“I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder.”

— G. K. CHESTERTON

HUMILITY

"Humility, from the Latin humus (earth), is getting in touch with reality directly, being close to the ground, seeing things as they are," Bishop Barron explains. This is why Thomas Aquinas famously says "humilitas est veritas" (humility is truth). It is the truth about ourselves, that God is all and I am nothing (without Him). This truth—this humus—gives every other virtue a place to stick, to grab hold, to persist, to take root, and then spring forth.

But remember, humility is not just thinking less of one's self, it is thinking of yourself as you really are. It is honest authenticity. And since our team members are smart, goofy, charming, compassionate, imperfect, funny, friendly, creative, and pleasantly merry little creatures...then most certainly Flocknote's personality will be all of those things as well (that is, if we are being authentic).

Authenticity (true humility) turns otherwise ordinary personalities into irresistible magnets. In a noisy, broken world full of so many things pretending to be something they're not, we all quite naturally long to grab hold of something stable and real.

It is in such stability that vulnerability, trust, and friendship flourish. Only then can we begin to find out what each of us is truly capable of and further explore the mystery of being greater than the sum of our parts.

We hunger for authenticity. We crave real people to build real relationships. And we thirst for real, authentic partners (like Flocknote) to work together with to accomplish our shared mission.

Only once we can see things the way they really are—that is, once we are humble—can we fully enter into the fantastical and magical world of reality. Then the exhilarating adventure of meaningful work can begin.

"All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time."

— 1 PETER 5:5-6



VERACITY

Veracity is habitual truthfulness in all things, both word and deed. It means doing what is right even when nobody is looking. It means being truthful with each other, those we serve, and ourselves.

Unfortunately, people are used to being let down by others, especially companies they do business with. They almost expect companies to act selfishly, cutting corners anywhere they can to serve their own interests. So much so that they are almost surprised when a company simply does what it says it's going to do. By being honest and transparent, we pave the way for meaningful, trustworthy relationships with everyone we work with. Our "yes" must mean yes (and our "no," no.)

There will never be a time when the right decision involves compromising our integrity in even the smallest of ways.

“If we say, “We have fellowship with Him,” while we continue to walk in darkness, we lie and do not act in truth.”

— 1 JOHN 1:6



PATIENCE

Most of us are very used to getting what we want and getting it right now. The great danger then is that we lose the necessary discipline to delay gratification—to wait. Yet learning to wait does not mean waiting to start.

We must be doers who get to work immediately and then patiently stick to the task at hand, once discerned, until the goal is reached. In many ways, this is the simple secret to all final success. God wins in the end (indeed He already has), but we must not insist He does it our way and on our time.

God's plan is, indeed, to prosper us. Our job is simply to not give up before it happens. A patient person simply allows God the space (in time as it were) to work according to God's time, rather than our own.

Both in building our company and in helping churches build their communities, we must all remember that the things most worth doing take time and perseverance.

For as Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin says, we must “always trust in the slow work of God”—and not “try to be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will)” will make of us tomorrow.

“Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instead set about remedying them—every day begin the task anew.”

— ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



COURAGE


Every day, God invites us to co-create His Kingdom with Him—the ultimate aim of all our work. It is one of the great privileges (and responsibilities) of being human.

As such, we must have the courage to think outside the box, to continually stretch ourselves to go further, and to lay everything on the line for Him. In fact, He calls on us daily to lead the way (in our own way), inspiring our families, teammates, and the churches we serve. This takes great courage—fortitude.

But we also need courage to aid in exercising all other virtues. That is why C.S. Lewis said, “Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.”

To be courageous requires the discomfort of vulnerability. To be brave, says Josef Pieper, means, “to be ready to sustain a wound.” And that’s not only to say our body may be harmed when we have the courage to help someone in danger, but also that our ego may be wounded when we dare to love or to suggest a new idea or we put our hard work on display to be judged by others.

It’s easy—and requires little courage—to criticize others. But to create something new. To do something bold. Something that might not work. Something that just might change the world. Something that others will undoubtedly criticize. This is the courageous life we are called to live.



“I mean, what worry-warts we are! We worry instead of saying, ‘He’s watching me. He sees me and He loves me.’ That’s why He says, ‘Take courage! It is I, do not be afraid.’”

— MOTHER ANGELICA

JUSTICE

Justice is giving others what they're due. We owe our Flocknote customers what they signed up to receive—which includes great service, continual improvement and our commitment to act in their best interest.

As Flocknote team members, we owe each other excellence in executing our own tasks and assistance to team members in completing theirs. Parents owe their children unconditional love, as well as education and training in faith and morals. Each owes honor to their mother and father. We owe respect to other people's property. We owe the truth to those entitled to it. We owe assistance to those who have been wronged. We owe reverence and respect to all human life, no matter how small or how able. We owe proper care to all of creation. We owe all those we interact with an honest and sincere relationship.

Finally, we owe God our worship, devotion and sabbath. We owe Him perpetual gratitude for everything good in our lives. We owe Him our absolute best every day. We owe Him our lives.

Let us, therefore, at the very least, give what we owe.

“Well, Michael...I underestimated you.”



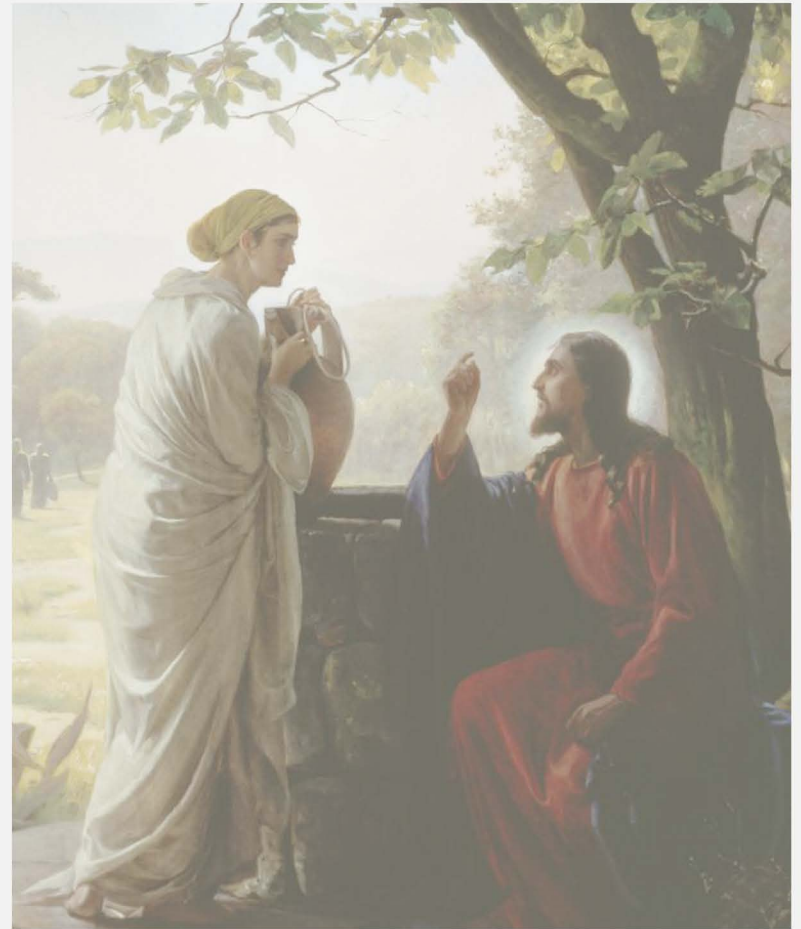
“Yeah, well, maybe next time...you will estimate me.”

WISDOM

Wisdom (or prudence) is "right reason in action," writes St. Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle. It is the perfection of the intellect and necessary for good judgment.

If we are to move in the right direction, we need wisdom and must commit to growing in wisdom every day. This means a commitment to continual self-improvement and learning. It means lots of prayer, listening more than we talk, asking lots of questions, and seeking out silence and time to reflect on a frequent basis.

We are a company of eager learners, humble enough to sit at the feet of the Teacher and be good disciples —wise enough to learn from our mistakes and to stick with the Shepherd no matter what.



***“A wise person is hungry for knowledge,
while the fool feeds on trash.”***

— PROVERBS 15:14

TEMPERANCE

If all other virtues are a flowing river, temperance is the river bank.

Temperance keeps these many goods flowing within the right boundaries so that they work together toward their proper end. God's blessings upon all of us are overwhelming and ubiquitous. And, thanks be to God, Flocknote continues to be blessed in countless ways. But even a good thing, especially success, can become a distraction or obstruction to holiness. Temperance protects against this, keeping us from excess and helping us balance the many legitimate goods against what can become an inordinate desire for them.

Let us not boast in our own accomplishments, but rather be humbled by what God does through us. Let us remain disciplined in stewarding the gifts we've been given. Let us never allow our work, good as it may be, to take away from our marriage, children, family, neighbor or other social responsibilities. And may we be wildly temperate in all things, so that our passions and courage are set free to flow most fully toward their proper end.

***“I’m not superstitious.
But I’m a little–stitious.”***

— MICHAEL SCOTT



FAITH

Faith, of course, is not at all opposed to reason, but is a leap beyond where reason alone can take us. It is the virtue by which the intellect is perfected and which allows us to assent firmly to the supernatural truths of Revelation. Some things simply cannot be understood until you make the leap to believe them. It is faith that makes that leap possible.

Fr. Jacques Philippe explains, "As long as a person who must jump with a parachute does not jump out into the void, he cannot feel that the cords of the parachute will support him, because the parachute has not yet had the chance to open. One must first jump and it is only later that one feels carried. And so it is in the spiritual life: 'God gives in the measure that we expect of Him,' says St. John of the Cross."



“Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, seek not to understand that you may believe, but believe that you may understand.”

— ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

HOPE

Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit (CCC). It is faith directed toward the future with confidence in what is yet to come. To practice this kind of hope, one must be poor of spirit. "To the extent we have riches or place our trust in security and human support," Fr. Philippe says, "we can't really practice hope, which consists in counting on God alone. God sometimes permits us to go through trials, the loss of some of our security, even lamentable falls, in order that we learn in the end to count on nothing but Him and His mercy. Peter is a good example: he had to fall, denying Christ during His Passion, in order to learn not to lean on his own virtues, his own courage, the momentum of human enthusiasm, but only on the love of Jesus."

As a team, we must wake up every day and, again, totally abandon ourselves to Jesus asking Him the simple question, "what do you want to do today, Lord?"

Hope allows us to abandon everything to God. Hope leaps with faith, no matter the ups and downs of life. Hope motivates us to think big, refusing to let our dreams be limited by our own meager ambitions.

Hope gives us the courage of Romans 8:31. Hope lets us say with Mary, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Finally, Hope leads to an indestructible joy which must permeate all we do, as individuals and as Flocknote.



"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

— JEREMIAH 29:11

LOVE

Love, or Charity, is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God (CCC). It is the fulfillment and perfection of all other virtues.

If Flocknote does not love, we have failed. If we, as a team, do not love and support each other (during and outside of work), all other contributions mean nothing. If we do not love every one of our customers for their own sake, no matter how kind or loving they are to us in return, we have gained nothing. If we do not Love, none of these other virtues matter and all of our work here will amount to absolutely nothing.

Love is not only a feeling, but something that acts. When it “ceases to act,” as St. Gregory the Great says, “it ceases to exist.” But wherever it does act, even the mundane and meaningless spring to life. Love turns even the most ordinary tasks into something meaningful for God. Love always overflows into generosity, radical service and a personalism that recognizes Jesus, Himself, in each and every one of the people we serve.



“Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty, but at the love with which we do them.”

— ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

1 Corinthians 13

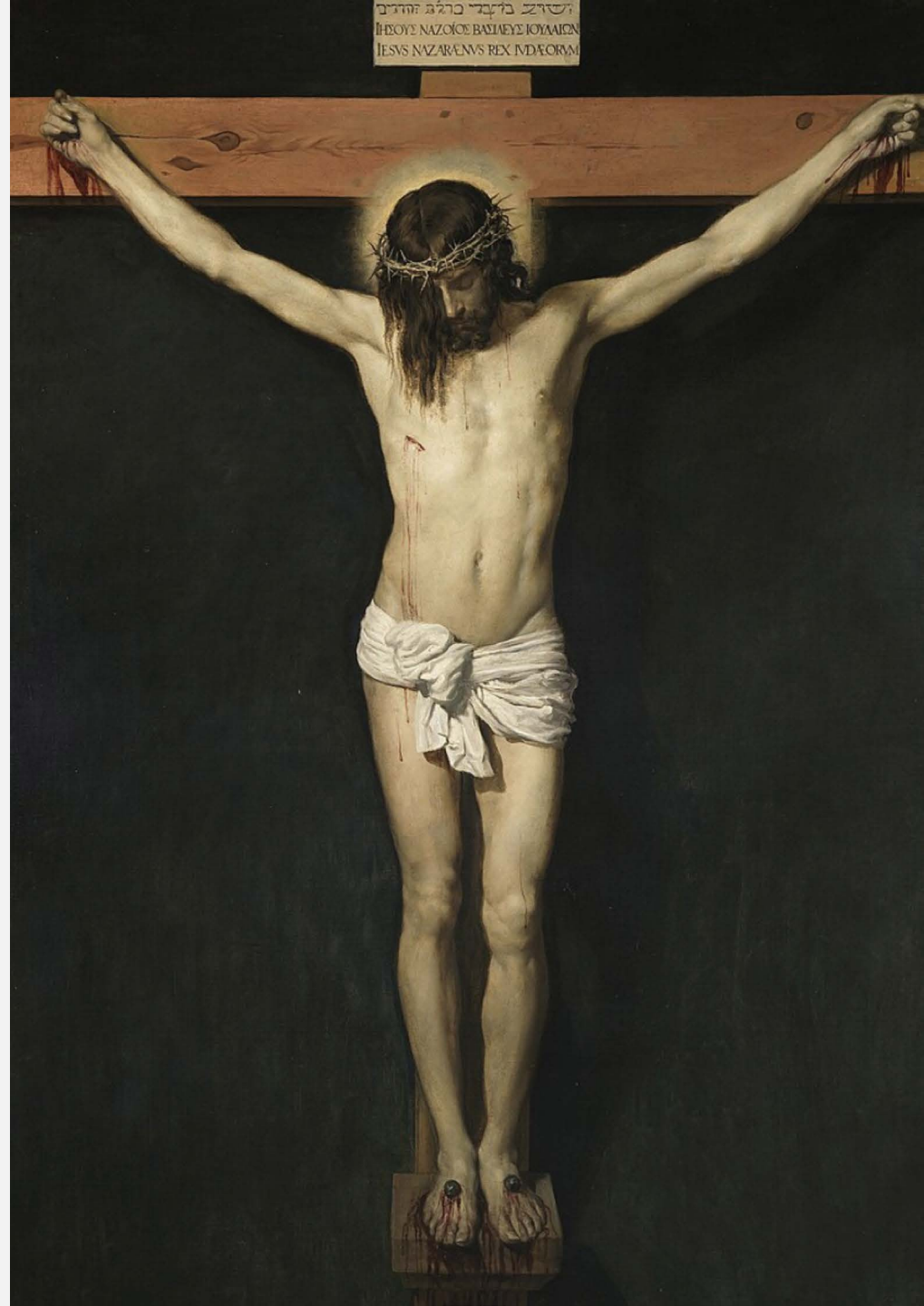
If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing. For we know partially and we prophesy partially, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known.

So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.



TEAM PRAYER

As we begin our work today, Lord, let us put our whole selves at Your service, holding nothing back. We acknowledge Your power over all that will be done, spoken, thought, and decided, and recognize the privilege of being instruments of Your peace and laborers in Your kingdom.

Grant us the wisdom to know Your will, the strength to do Your will, and the courage to use that strength. Make us sensitive to the movements of Your Spirit and to the needs of those around us, recognizing Your providence in every trial and trifle and seeing Jesus in each person we meet.

As we do so, may we faithfully yoke ourselves to You, so that our tasks may be easy and our burdens light, no matter the weight of the difficulties we face.

Fill our hearts with the fire of Your love, that we may faithfully serve You with joy, gratitude, and peace. And may the work we do today sanctify us, glorify You, and bear fruit in eternal life. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

Let us go
in peace,
glorifying
the Lord
by our
lives and
our work.

*“No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the
heart of man conceived, what God has
prepared for those who love Him.”*

— 1 CORINTHIANS 2:9