

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost XII The Seven Pillars of Wisdom

The title comes from the Book of Proverbs, 9:1: “Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars” (KJV). Prior to the First World War, T.E. Lawrence had begun work on a scholarly book about seven great cities of the Middle East, to be titled



Seven Pillars of Wisdom. When war broke out, it was still incomplete and Lawrence stated that he ultimately destroyed the manuscript.

Later, during the Arab Revolt of 1917–18, Lawrence based his operations in Wadi Rum (now a part of Jordan), and one of the more impressive rock formations in the area was named by Lawrence “The Seven Pillars of Wisdom”. In the end, Lawrence decided to use this evocative title for the memoirs he penned in the aftermath of the war. This informative book is still read with interest by those who cherish history.

Biblical Seven Pillars based on Faith Hope and Love (Theological Virtues) and the Cardinal Virtues.

Faith that looks at received contours of Belief and embraces them as true and sustaining experiences.

Hope that is grounded in an absolute assurance that beyond all our steps into the unknown, a luminous Presence draws near to protect and transform us.

Love that moves through our imitations of love to transfigure them into an identity that is never lost. That is, our deepest loves connected to the love of God.

Wisdom that sees all aspects of life-situations and chooses the life-sustaining ones that promote sanity, grace, and the silence within that speaks louder than words. Wisdom is to be found in the house of God on earth and in heaven.

Justice that is ex-centric, not self-centric, reaching a world circle of needful hearts.

Prudence and Counsel. Forethought and Acting based on convictions and embracing all that enables fulfilment, peace, and the realized dream of a better world.

Fortitude that is aligned to **Understanding** the ways of humanity and the Way of God. **Patience** that sees the end of the story, not just the journey. **Temperance** that is held between extremes to facilitate the avoidance of destructive fanaticisms on the way.

St. Ambrose (330s-397 AD) was the first to use the expression “cardinal virtues.” “**And we know that there are four cardinal virtues temperance, justice, prudence, fortitude.**” (Commentary on Luke, V, 62)

St. Augustine, discussing the four Cardinal Virtues, described them: “**For these four virtues (would that all felt their influence in their minds as they have their names in their mouths!), I should have no hesitation in defining them: that temperance is love giving itself entirely to that which is loved; fortitude is love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object; justice is love serving only the loved object, and therefore ruling rightly; prudence is love distinguishing with sagacity between what hinders it and what helps it.**”

It is a great compliment when someone remarks, “This is a very wise person.” “We interpret this to mean that the person is intelligent, careful, farsighted, and has good judgment. All are very desirable traits to possess.”

Let us enter The House of Wisdom and walk around the Seven Pillars, noting what is inscribed on them: the descriptions of the best outcomes of human relationships.

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

August 23, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel.

August 25, Saturday.

- The Potter’s Way Workshop.

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS:

- Joshua 24:1-2a,14-25
 - Psalm 16
- Ephesians 5:21-33
 - John 6:60-69