

## **In All Things Moderation**

*By Deacon Tim Sullivan*

The final cardinal virtue is temperance, also called moderation. As the Catechism says, “Temperance is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the mastery of the will over instincts.”

In the Bible, the Book of Sirach and the Book of Wisdom have much to say about temperance. Sirach 18:30,32 tells us: “Go not after your lusts, but keep your desires in check...Have no joy in the pleasures of the moment which bring on poverty redoubled.”

“Wisdom teaches moderation and prudence, justice and fortitude, and nothing in life is more useful for men than these.” Wisdom 8:7

We have to warn our children that, if we over indulge in the pleasures of life, there is a great risk that the pleasures of life will take control over us. Young children are not likely to understand the reality of addiction, so we have to model and teach restraint in ways that they can appreciate.

Particular threats to children these days are materialism and technology. We all know the temptation for children to want and parents to provide the latest toys, fashions and gadgets. Many high school teachers have told me that a great number of their students are addicted to their cell phones. Yet so many adults and children cave in to peer pressure.

Temperance is a great challenge in a country where there is so much pressure to always want more. We have to pray for the grace for ourselves and our children to place reasonable limits on our desires.

*“It is not easy for man, wounded by sin, to maintain moral balance. Christ’s gift of salvation offers us the grace necessary in the pursuit of the virtues. Everyone should always ask for this grace of light and strength, frequent the sacraments, cooperate with the Holy Spirit, and follow his calls to love what is good and shun evil.” Catechism 1811.*