

Lyceum 142 – April 9, 2026, a forum to Think, Discuss, Share, and Learn from one another. Your input is welcomed - Iron sharpens iron.

Neighborhood “The 1826, in Connecticut, a farmer named Josiah Holbrook started a school for ‘the general diffusion of knowledge and raising the moral and intellectual taste’ of Americans. In those days, the opportunities for higher education were limited to those venerable old universities that had long served the upper crust. Holbrook’s vision was to make learning – practical, liberal, and humane – available to working people of all kinds. He named his school the Lyceum, after the garden where Aristotle once taught his students philosophy.... We need to go deeper than the superficial fights that characterize public life. We need to return to the first principles and meet each other there as human beings.”– Nathan Beacom, Plough Magazine, Autumn 2023, p. 9.

If Ethics is about insight and habit, wisdom, and virtue, then we need to ask what the virtues of human life are. Let us consider Aristotle the first authoritative codifier of the virtues of the ancient world.

The world of ancient Greece viewed the following qualities as necessary for people to live well together and to live an ethical life. Virtue ethics for Aristotle is living the middle ground between extremes. A good person is an individual grounded in wisdom and virtue. Morality is a skilled behavior, a bit more like art than science.

A human being is a multifaceted creature with many virtues, or character strengths, personal properties that promote inner moral health and outer social harmony. The point is not so much to produce an exhaustive listing of the virtues as it is to understand the root nature of all these qualities.

In unison with the Sacred Scriptures, they are all meant to be moral guidelines that guide and help us in living well together, in making a positive difference in this life, in becoming the best person that we can be, and following in the footsteps of Jesus. They are all attitudes, habits, or dispositions of character conducive to living a meaningful and happy life in the best and most profound way possible. They are part of the good life. They are the stuff that matters giving us peace of mind, happiness of heart, and a harmonious relationship with the indwelling of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. -Roger J. Vanden Busch.

Virtuous deeds that are genuine and authentic.

In a world where haste, selfishness, and appearances seem to dominate, finding a good person feels like a real gift. We are not talking about someone perfect, because nobody is, but about those souls who, through their gestures, attitudes, and way of relating, transmit authenticity and kindness without needing words.

Good people can be recognized by what they radiate: peace, respect, and a sincere desire to bring light into the lives of others. They don't need to show off their virtues because their actions speak louder than words. Below, you will find traits that good people have and that will help you identify them clearly. -rvb.

1. Genuine empathy.

Good people truly feel the pain and joy of others. They don't just say "I understand you;" they put themselves in someone else's shoes and act with compassion. That ability to emotionally connect is what makes them unique and memorable in every space they inhabit.

Instead of judging or dismissing emotions, they create a safe environment where others can share what they feel. This type of empathy builds stronger relationships because it shows that they not only listen but also care deeply about the well-being of those around them.

2. Humility in their attitude.

They don't seek recognition or brag about what they have. A good person remains grounded, grateful, and aware that someone's worth is not measured by material possessions but by how they treat others. Humility keeps them approachable and genuine.

Even when they achieve success, they don't let it define them. Instead, they treat everyone with the same respect, showing that their true greatness lies in their ability to stay authentic and free of arrogance.

3. Attentive listening.

Good people don't interrupt, judge, or minimize what others are saying. They listen with patience and presence, allowing others to feel valued and understood. This ability makes conversations more meaningful and supportive.

Through attentive listening, they offer comfort and validation. It is not about finding immediate solutions but about giving others the gift of being heard, which is something increasingly rare and precious in today's world.

4. Respect for everyone.

Good people don't make distinctions based on job titles, age, or social status. They treat everyone with dignity, from the waiter to the CEO, from the child to the elderly. For them, every life deserves kindness and consideration.

Their respect goes beyond polite manners; it reflects a deep belief in equality. This attitude helps them build strong, positive connections that are not based on power or position but on mutual humanity.

5. Honesty without cruelty.

Truth, when it comes to a good person, they never cut like a weapon. They know how to express themselves honestly without unnecessarily hurting others, choosing words that clarify instead of destroying. Their honesty is rooted in respect.

This way of communicating creates trust. Others know they will hear the truth, but also that it will be delivered with empathy and tact, which makes their words much easier to accept and appreciate.

6. Generosity without expecting anything in return.

Giving without expecting something back is one of the clearest signs of genuine kindness. It may be time, attention, or support—they give because it feels right, not because they are looking for rewards.

This type of generosity strengthens relationships because it shows that their actions are pure and authentic. Others feel safe knowing that the support they receive is not conditional but sincere.

7. Patience in challenging times.

Good people don't react with immediate anger or hostility. They take a deep breath, wait, and remain calm, even in adversity. Patience is not weakness—it's a strength that allows them to navigate challenges with grace.

By staying calm, they create stability around them. Their patience often becomes a source of comfort for others, who find reassurance in their composed presence during stressful situations.

8. Gratitude.

They express gratitude for what others do, no matter how small it seems. Good people don't take things for granted; they appreciate every effort and every gesture of kindness. Gratitude is part of their daily outlook.

This attitude makes them happier and more resilient. By focusing on what they have instead of what they lack, they radiate positivity and remind others to celebrate the trivial things.

9. Ability to forgive.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or justifying harmful behavior. For good people, it means choosing not to carry resentment. They understand that forgiveness is more about inner peace than about excusing someone else's mistakes.

By forgiving, they release emotional burdens and open the door to healing. This ability allows them to move forward with lightness, avoiding the bitterness that often comes with holding grudges.

10. Consistency between words and actions.

Good people are not full of contradictions. Their words align with their actions, which makes them trustworthy. When they say something, they follow through, showing integrity in every aspect of life.

This coherence builds credibility over time. Others know they can rely on them, which is one of the most valuable traits in any relationship—whether personal or professional.

11. Joy that uplifts others.

Their happiness is not forced or fake; it comes from appreciating life as it is. This genuine joy has the power to uplift everyone around them, creating a more positive atmosphere.

Instead of spreading negativity, they inspire hope and optimism. Their lighthearted spirit is a reminder that joy can be found even in small, simple moments.

12. Solidarity with those in need.

Good people don't stay indifferent in the face of suffering. If they can help, they do—whether through small acts of kindness or bigger gestures. Their solidarity shows that they genuinely care about the struggles of others.

Their willingness to support others often inspires more generosity. By extending a helping hand, they remind everyone that kindness is a force that multiplies when shared.

13. Attention to details.

They notice what others need, often before being asked. Whether it's a thoughtful message, a comforting call, or a small gesture, good people make others feel cared for and less alone.

These details may seem small, but they create deep emotional connections. They show attentiveness and reinforce the idea that the other person matters and is truly seen.

14. Authenticity always.

Good people don't pretend to be someone they're not just to fit in. They show themselves as they are, with strengths and flaws, and honesty makes them trustworthy.

Authenticity builds relationships based on truth rather than appearances. By being real, they encourage others to feel comfortable being themselves as well.

15. Love for life.

Their kindness is not limited to people, it extends to animals, nature, and the environment. They demonstrate respect for all forms of life, driven by a genuine sense of care and responsibility.

This love for life reflects a deep awareness of the interconnectedness of everything. It makes them protectors of balance, reminding others that caring for the world is also an act of love. -Internet.

If possible, consider attending a presentation, “The Good is Always Useful: Newman and the Liberal Arts Today” by Andrew Meszaros, St. John Henry Newman Chair, Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum); Wednesday, April 22, 7 p.m., Webb Theatre, Abbot Pennings Hall of Fine Arts St. Norbert College, Kileen Chair of Theology and Philosophy.

“In Victorian England, the liberal arts were criticized for their lack of utility. The same criticism takes on a radically different shape today because of the socio-economic changes that have occurred over the last 150 years. While Newman’s university was quite different to contemporary universities, in this lecture Andrew Mesaros asks: What can Newman teach us about educations in the current cultural moment that is marked by the rise of AI and an impoverished and polarized civil discourse?” -SNC.