

The Roman Virtues

The Personal Virtues

These are the qualities of life to which every Citizen (and, ideally, everyone else) should aspire. They are the heart of the *Via Romana* — the Roman Way — and are thought to be those qualities which gave the Roman Republic the moral strength to conquer and civilize the world. Today, they are the rods against which we can measure our own behavior and character, and we can strive to better understand and practice them in our everyday lives.

Auctoritas: "Spiritual Authority" The sense of one's social standing, built up through experience, *Pietas*, and *Industria*.

Comitas: "Humor" Ease of manner, courtesy, openness, and friendliness.

Clementia: "Mercy" Mildness and gentleness.

Dignitas: "Dignity" A sense of self-worth, personal pride.

Firmitas: "Tenacity" Strength of mind, the ability to stick to one's purpose.

Frugalitas: "Frugality" Economy and simplicity of style, without being miserly.

Gravitas: "Gravity" A sense of the importance of the matter at hand, responsibility and earnestness.

Honestas: "Respectability" The image that one presents as a respectable member of society.

Humanitas: "Humanity" Refinement, civilization, learning, and being cultured.

Industria: "Industriousness" Hard work.

Pietas: "Dutifulness" More than religious piety; a respect for the natural order socially, politically, and religiously. Includes the ideas of patriotism and devotion to others.

Prudentia: "Prudence" Foresight, wisdom, and personal discretion.

Salubritas: "Wholesomeness" Health and cleanliness.

Severitas: "Sternness" Gravity, self-control.

Veritas: "Truthfulness" Honesty in dealing with others.

The Public Virtues

In addition to the private virtues which were aspired to by individuals, Roman culture also strived to uphold Virtues which were shared by all of society in common. Note that some of the virtues to which individuals were expected to aspire are also public virtues to be sought by society as a whole. These virtues were often expressed by minting them on coinage; in this way, their message would be shared by all the Classical world. In many cases, these Virtues were personified as deities.

Abundantia: "Abundance, Plenty" The ideal of there being enough food and prosperity for all segments of society.

Aequitas: "Equity" Fair dealing both within government and among the people.

Bonus Eventus: "Good fortune" Rememberance of important positive events.

Clementia: "Clemency" Mercy, shown to other nations.

Concordia: "Concord" Harmony among the Roman people, and also between Rome and other nations.

Felicitas: "Happiness, prosperity" A celebration of the best aspects of Roman society.

Fides: "Confidence" Good faith in all commercial and governmental dealings.

Fortuna: "Fortune" An acknowledgement of positive events.

Genius: "Spirit of Rome" Acknowledgement of the combined spirit of Rome, and its people.

Hilaritas: "Mirth, rejoicing" An expression of happy times.

Iustitia: "Justice" As expressed by sensible laws and governance.

Laetitia: "Joy, Gladness" The celebration of thanksgiving, often of the resolution of crisis.

Liberalitas: "Liberality" Generous giving.

Libertas: "Freedom" A Virtue which has been subsequently aspired to by all cultures.

Nobilitas: "Nobility" Noble action within the public sphere.

Ops: "Wealth" Acknowledgement of the prosperity of the Roman world.

Patientia: "Endurance, Patience" The ability to weather storms and crisis.

Pax: "Peace" A celebration of peace among society and between nations.

Pietas: "Piety, Dutifulness" People paying honor to the gods.

Providentia: "Providence, Fortethought" The ability of Roman society to survive trials and manifest a greater destiny.

Pudicitia: "Modesty, Chastity." A public expression which belies the accusation of "moral corruptness" in ancient Rome.

Salus: "Safety" Concern for public health and welfare.

Securitas: "Confidence, Security" Brought by peace and efficient governance.

Spes: "Hope" Especially during times of difficulty.

Uberitas: "Fertility" Particularly concerning agriculture.

Virtus: "Courage" Especially of leaders within society and government.