

Fortitude Prayer Service

Opening Prayer: God of courage, may we always seek to do what is right, no matter what others say or think. May we face our fears knowing that you are by our side. May we honestly try to be the best we can be, each and every day. We know that we may not always be brave, but with your gift of fortitude, may we be always willing to try new things as we follow Jesus, Your Son, our model of courage. AMEN

First Reading—1 Samuel 17: 1-54 (adapted from the book of Samuel)

There once were two warring nations: the Israelites and the Philistines. They had been fighting for a very long time. In the camp of the Philistines was a giant named Goliath. Goliath was mean. He was over 3 metres tall and wore a bronze helmet and carried a bronze javelin over his shoulder. His spear was as thick as his arm. His shield was so large that he had another soldier carry it in front of him when he went into battle. Goliath shouted at the Israelites, "Choose one of your men to fight me! If he wins (which is unlikely), we Philistines will be your slaves, but if I win, you will be our slaves. I dare you to pick someone!" King Saul of the Israelites was terrified of Goliath. He and his soldiers shook with fear. In Bethlehem, there lived a boy named David who was the youngest of eight sons born to a man named Jesse. While his older brothers had gone to fight in the war with the Israelites and King Saul, David stayed in Bethlehem and look after his father's sheep. One day Jesse said to David, "Take these loaves of bread and roasted grains to your brothers at the war front. Take this cheese to the commanding officer. Find out if your brothers are doing all right. There has been news of a terrible giant attacking the Israelites. So the next morning, David set out for King Saul's camp, taking the food as his father had told him. When he got there, he saw the Israelites and the Philistines lining up for another battle. He left the food with the officer in charge of the supplies and went to find his brothers. While he was talking to them, the giant Goliath came forward and attacked the Israelites as he had done before. When the Israelites saw him, they ran away in fear. King Saul, dismayed by what he saw, decided to offer a big reward to the man who beat Goliath. David's eldest brother noticed that David had been listening. He got angry with David and said, "What are you still doing here? Go home and look after the sheep! It's too dangerous for you here! Go home!" David moved away but he didn't leave. He noticed that nobody was taking the king up on his offer. So he went to the King and declared, "Your Majesty, let me fight Goliath!" The King replied, "But you are just a boy! What could you do?" David said, "I look after my father's sheep. Every time a lion or a bear comes, I protect the sheep and get rid of the beasts. If I can do that to lions and bears, I can do this to Goliath. The Lord has saved me from lions and bears. The Lord will give courage to fight the Philistine. I'm not afraid! I will fight Goliath!" So King Saul decided to let David fight Goliath. He gave him his own armour and his bronze helmet to wear, too. David tried to put on the King's sword over the armour but he had trouble walking because he wasn't used to wearing an armour. Finally David said, "I can't fight in this stuff! I'm not used to it!" So he took it all off. All he had was his shepherd's stick. He bent down and picked up five stones from the ground and got his slingshot ready. The he set out to meet Goliath. Goliath started to walk towards David. When the giant got a good look at him and saw that he was only a boy, he began to laugh. "What's that stick for?" he asked. "Do you think I am a dog who wants to play fetch? Come on, then, I will feed your body to the animals and birds to eat!" David answered, "You are coming against me with an armour and a sword, but I come against you with God on my side. Today God gives me courage and strength to defeat you. Everyone will see that the Lord does not need spears or swords to save his people." They met on the battlefield. Goliath started to run towards David with his weapons out-stretched. David reached into his bag and took out one stone. He put it in his slingshot and fired. The stone hit Goliath right in the middle of his forehead. Goliath fell face downward on the ground. David had beaten Goliath. The war was over.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 91: 9-16

Response: The Lord is my refuge

Second Reading—Acts 27: 13-26

Gospel Reading—Matthew 14: 22-33

Universal Prayers:

Response: God, give us courage

- In the classroom, when we work and play with those who might not be our friends
- When we are doing what we know is right, even though others are not
- In the school yard, when we need to keep the peace
- When we make mistakes and we are sorry
- When we're trying something new
- When we are scared

Closing Prayer: Gracious God, be with us always, especially during difficult times. Protect us and be our refuge. Guide us and lead us as you have promised. Shelter us. Surround us in your constant love. Inspire us to follow Jesus with courage. Amen.

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WHAT'S INSIDE:



-Prayer Centre ideas
-Scripture Readings of Fortitude
-Building fortitude in home and school
-Fortitude Prayer
-Different ways to pray
-PAGE 2



-Links to Catholic Graduate Expectations
-Profiles of Fortitude
-Resources to support Fortitude
PAGE 3



-Fortitude Prayer Service
PAGE 4

Northeastern Catholic District School Board

Growing our Faith through virtues

MARCH & APRIL
VIRTUE: FORTITUDE

The Importance of Fortitude:

Fortitude is one of the four cardinal virtues. It is commonly called courage; however, it is different from what we often think of. Fortitude is always reasoned and reasonable. The cardinal virtue of fortitude involves practicing what is good and just when it is difficult or even dangerous. A person of fortitude practices patience when meeting obstacles. They do what is right, even when others criticize them.

Fortitude allows us to overcome our fear and remain resilient in the face of obstacles. Prudence and justice are the virtues through which we decide what needs to be done; fortitude gives us the strength to do it.

As Catholics we look to Jesus as our model. He always did what was right, even when it cost Him his life. Practicing fortitude is challenging, but it brings deep peace that comes from knowing we have done the right thing.

Fortitude is visible in our Catholic schools when we witness people defending truth and kindness especially during challenging situations. Students who do not cheat when the opportunity presents itself, who are capable of saying no to their friends who pressure them and students who stand up for others and do not participate in teasing or bullying are students who are displaying the virtue of fortitude.

DEVELOPING CHARACTER THROUGH FORTITUDE

The goal of this virtue:

- To help our students develop strength of character in times of adversity
- To base our actions on defending truth and justice
- To help our students face problems and obstacles
- To develop our students self-esteem to be able to overcome peer pressure.
- Standing up respectfully when something wrong is being done
- Facing obstacles with patience and determination
- Living a life that pleases God

"Do not wait for leaders; do it along, person to person" Mother Teresa

Scripture readings:

- David speaks to Solomon
1 Chronicles 28:20
- Jesus Walks on the Water
Matthew 14: 22-23
- The Storm at Sea
Acts 27: 21-26
- Love and Fortitude
1 Corinthians 13: 4-7
- David's Fortitude Before Goliath
1 Samuel 17: 45-48

PRAYER CENTRE IDEAS FOR FORTITUDE



- At your prayer centre display the following quote "I strive to build a welcoming community and defend my neighbor's dignity, even when others do not"
- Create a Y chart—what does fortitude look like, sound like, feel like
- Display the Prayer of Fortitude at your prayer centre and have students discuss what it means to them
- Display media images and discuss the intended message in the image. How do they relate to fortitude?

BUILDING FORTITUDE IN OUR HOMES AND SCHOOLS

In order to assist our children in practicing what is good and just, we need to provide them with opportunities to do things that require an effort and model situations that allow them to take a stand. Parents, guardians, loved ones and teachers must never forget that they are models to their children. If we are living a life of fortitude, our children will learn by our example.

- Encourage your child to undertake activities that will improve themselves or others

- Foster in your child, the ability to take up a position, to look out for one another, to protect a classmate, and defend another person's dignity even when others do not
- Discuss with your child, the struggles they are facing at home, school and with their friends. Give them strategies and language needed to say "yes" and "no" bravely to others.



A Self-examination on the virtue of Fortitude

- I focus on what is good for others even if it takes an effort or I have to suffer for having done so
- I make every effort to carry out everyday chores carefully and lovingly
- I resist temptations
- I try not to change my beliefs about important things even when my friends disagree
- I can say "yes" and "no" bravely to my friends

Different Ways to Pray

WITNESS SHOES: Have an assortment of shoes or pictures of shoes (ex. Gym shoes, dance shoes, skates, soccer shoes, sandals, winter boots). Have the students work with a partner and chose a shoe and write a short prayer asking for God's help in following Jesus where the shoes might be worn (i.e. "Dear God, help me to always remember to take turns on the playground" "Help me to remember Jesus when I'm playing hockey and to play fair and encourage my teammates").

PICTURE PRAYING: Show students a picture from a magazine, the internet or a newspaper. Invite them to reflect on it. What is happening? What might the people be feeling? What does it remind them of in their own lives? Invite them to write a quick prayer based on their thoughts and feelings that were evoked from the picture. Display the picture and prayers at your prayer centre.



Profiles of Fortitude

Display images of people who exemplify the virtue of fortitude (Craig & Marc Kielburger, Mother Teresa, Terry Fox, etc.)



- Have the students identify acts of courage and fortitude performed by people in the news or by people in the community
- Have students bring in articles from magazines and newspapers or pictures that depict courage.
- Have students find quotes on fortitude and courage. Display at your prayer centre

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How does the media pull us away from being our best self? Away from Christ?
2. Does it take fortitude to resist the pressures of media?
3. What does it mean to have principles? How much are you willing to risk for your beliefs?
4. What do you think stops people from taking a stand against something they know is wrong?
5. How do you feel about yourself when you stand up for others or for what is right?

Resources to support fortitude

Brave Irene. Author: William Steig

A Chair For My Mother. Author: Very Williams

Courage. Author: Bernard Waber

A Day's Work. Author: Eve Bunting

Eddie, Harold's Little Brother. Author: Ed Koch

My Brother Martin. Author: Christine King Farris

Erandi's Braids. Author: Tomie dePoala

Johnny on the Spot. Author: Edward Sorel

Marven of the Great North Woods. Author: Kathryn Lasky



The Recess Queen. Author: Alexis O'Neil

Scared Silly! Author: Marc Brown

Take Action—A Guide to Active Citizenship. Author: Marc & Craig Kielburger

The Poppy Seeds. Author: Clyde Roberta Bulla

The Village That Vanished. Author: Ann Grifalconi

The Making of an Activist. Author: Lehka Singh

When Jessie Came Across the Sea. Author: Amy Hest

The Story of Ruby Bridges. Author: Robert Coles

High as a Hawk. Author: TA Barron

Courage to Fly. Author: Troon Harrison

Eli's Night Light. Author: Marc Brown

5

Links to Catholic Graduate Expectations

A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community

Actively reflects on God's Word as communicated through the Hebrew and Christian scriptures

Seeks intimacy with God and celebrate communion with God, others and creation through prayer and worship

An Effective Communicator

Listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of Gospel Values

A Collaborative Contributor

Finds meaning, dignity, fulfillment and vocation in work which contributes to the common good

Respects the rights and responsibilities of self and others

A Reflective and Creative Thinker

Recognizes there is more grace in our work than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges

A Caring Family Member

Relates to family members in a loving, compassionate and respectful manner