



**Northeastern Catholic District School Board**  
SERVING THE COCHRANE AND TIMISKAMING DISTRICTS OF ONTARIO

**Virtue Education Newsletter—January 2014**

## **Celebrating Fortitude in our Classrooms**

### **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.



*“Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person.”*

*- Blessed Mother Teresa*

## FORTITUDE ON YOUTUBE

Before viewing with your classroom, please ensure that these clips are appropriate for the age group that you teach.

- **Courage Is (Song)**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXrWRM0E6YA>

- **Tiananmen Square Story**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nasrxel-T\\_E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nasrxel-T_E)

- **Commercial on a brother's love for his sister**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTpaABPUMWY&feature=relmfu>

- **Veggie Tale video on doing the right thing**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-3-2QYP-G0>

## Developing Character Through Fortitude

### The Goals of the virtue are:

- 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

### Exemplifying Fortitude means:

- Behaving in a "good" and "just" manner in challenging situations
- Standing up respectfully when something wrong is being done
- Resisting temptation and doing the right thing
- Facing obstacles with patience and determination
- Living in a life that pleases God
- Being able to do the right thing and to say "yes" and "no" bravely

## Prayer Center Ideas for Fortitude

- At your prayer center display the following quote: "I strive to build a welcoming community and defend my neighbour's dignity, even when others do not."
- Create your monthly "Y" chart—what does fortitude look like, sound like and feel like.
- Display the Prayer for Fortitude at your prayer center and have students discuss what this prayer means to them.
- Display your Prayer Picture (see page 4) and the prayers created from the pictures
- Display media images like the ones shown here and discuss: what is the intended message in these images? How do they relate to fortitude?



## Fostering the Virtue of 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, on their own initiatives, activities that will improve themselves and 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 faced with at home, school and with their friends. Give them strategies and the 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 that the consumer society pushes at me.
- I try not to change my beliefs about important things even when my friends disagree.
- I am able to do the right thing and to say "yes" and "no" bravely to my friends.

*"I strive to build a welcoming community and defend my neighbour's dignity, even when others do not."*

#### Scriptural References for Fortitude

##### 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 Sam 17:45-48



## Fortitude Prayer

Father in Heaven,  
Thank you for  
Creating me unique  
And in Your image.  
Thank you for  
Giving me the ability  
To Think Individually,  
To stand up for what is right,  
And not to give in to peer pressure.  
Give me courage to chose the right path,  
Even if this means being completely alone.  
Help me to stand firm without fear  
And forever let me be at peace with myself.  
Amen



### ***Different Ways to Pray***

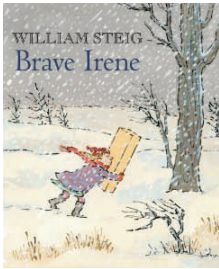
#### ***Witness Shoes:***

*Have an assortment of shoes or pictures of shoes (e.g. 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."]*

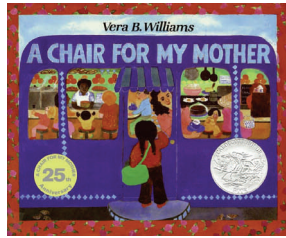
#### ***Picture Praying:***

*Show a student 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 center.*

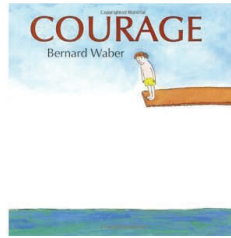
# Fortitude Read-Alouds



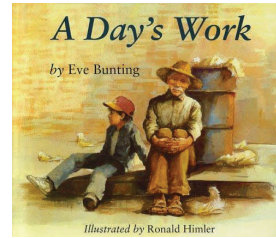
Brave Irene  
William Steig



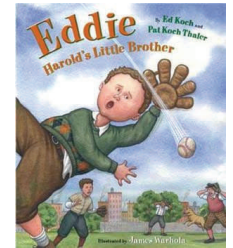
A Chair For My Mother  
Very Williams



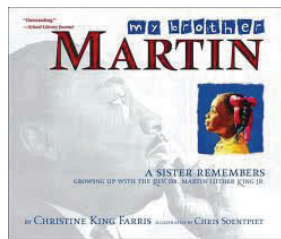
Courage  
Bernard Waber



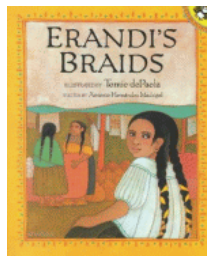
A Day's Work  
Eve Bunting



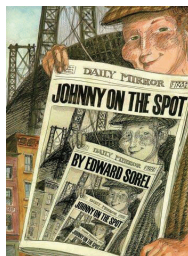
Eddie, Harold's Little Brother  
Ed Koch



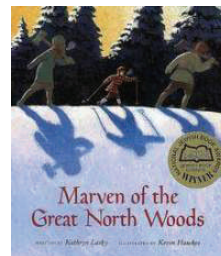
My Brother Martin  
Christine King Farris



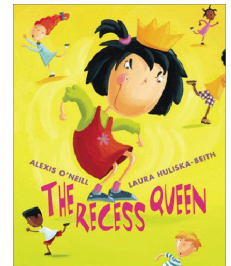
Erandi's Braids  
Tomie dePoala



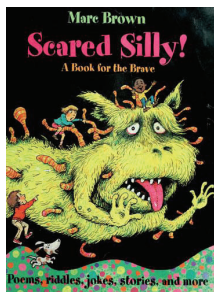
Johnny on the Spot  
Edward Sorel



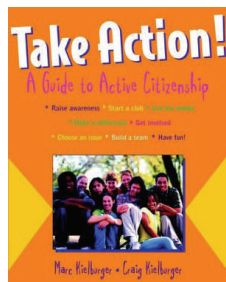
Marven of the Great North Woods  
Kathryn Lasky



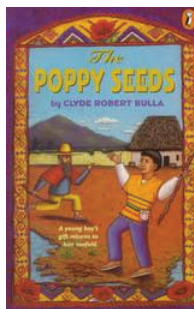
The Recess Queen  
Alexis O'Neil



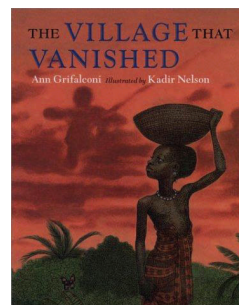
Scared Silly!  
Marc Brown



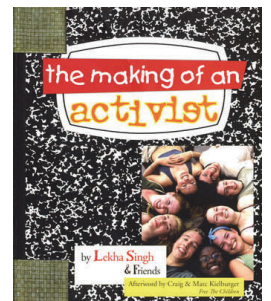
Take Action—A Guide to Active Citizenship  
Marc Kielburger



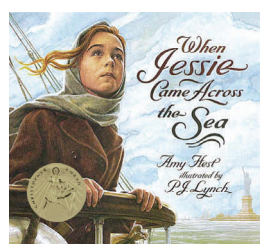
The Poppy Seeds  
Clyde Robert Bulla



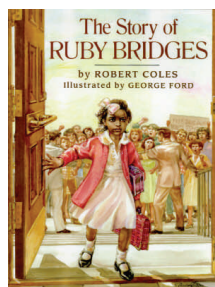
The Village that Vanished  
Ann Grifalconi



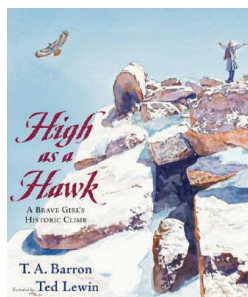
The Making of an Activist  
Lekha Singh



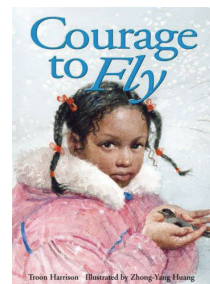
When Jessie Came Across the Sea  
Amy Hest



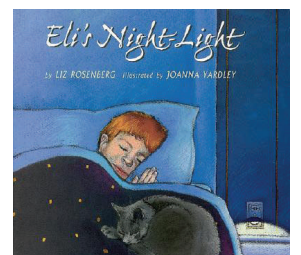
The Story of Ruby Bridges  
Robert Coles



High as a Hawk  
T. A. Barron



Courage to Fly  
Troon Harrison



Eli's Night Light  
Marc Brown

## Choices

God,

What I hear and what I see affects what I do and who I am.

Sometimes media turns my thoughts away from you.

Sometimes, images I see make me think that in order to be cool, I must fit into the mold that the media place in front of me.

When I dwell on messages that disrespect people, I can no longer see your light.

Help me to find music that builds up instead of tearing down.

Help me to change channels when a show comes on that I know I shouldn't watch.

Make me your messenger:

Help me talk to my friends about what we watch and listen to.

Help me to stand up for others and be true to my beliefs.

There is no need to hide behind pictures and words that keep us from being our best selves.

(from: Teen Prayers by Teens)

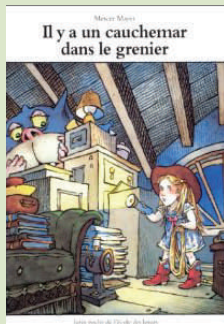
### Profiles of Courage:

- 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. Use these as discussion points.
- Have students find quotes on fortitude and courage. Display at your prayer center

### Discussion Questions

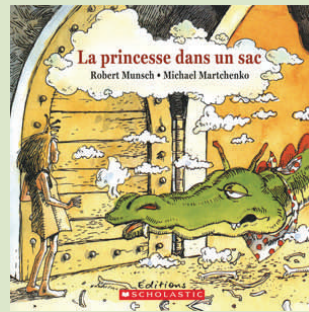
1. How does media pull us away from being our best self? away from Christ?
2. Does it take fortitude to resist the pressures of media?
3. What does it mean to have principles? How much are you willing to risk for your beliefs?
4. What do you think stops people from taking a stand against something they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

## Resources



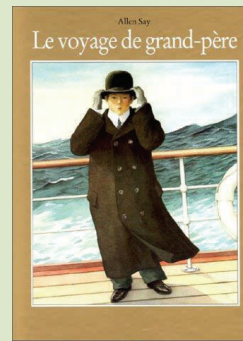
Il y a un cauchemar dans le grenier

Mercy Mayer



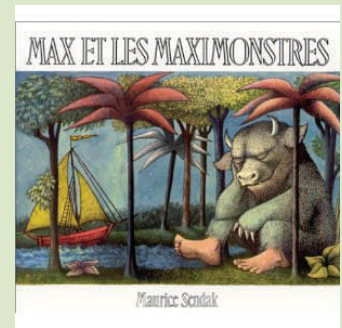
La princesse dans un sac

Robert Munsch



Le voyage de grand-père

Allen Say



Max et les maximonstres

Maurice Sendak



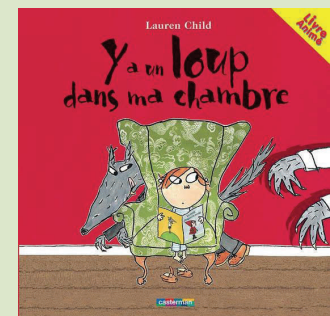
Libérez les enfants!

Libérez les enfants!

Craig Kielburger

Y a un loup dans ma chambre

Lauren Child



*“Qui perd la santé perd beaucoup; Qui perd un ami perd encore plus; Mais celui qui perd le courage perd tout.*

*- Miguel de Cervantès*

Seigneur,  
fais de moi l'instrument de ta paix afin que  
Là où est la haine, que je puisse apporter l'amour.  
Là où est l'offense, que je puisse apporter le pardon.  
Là où est la discorde, que je puisse apporter  
l'harmonie.  
Là où est l'erreur, que je puisse apporter la vérité.  
Là où est le doute, que je puisse apporter la foi.  
Là où est le désespoir, que je puisse apporter  
l'espérance.  
Là où sont les ténèbres, que je puisse apporter la  
lumière.  
Là où est la tristesse, que je puisse apporter la joie.

Seigneur, que je cherche plutôt  
à consoler qu'à être consolé,  
à comprendre qu'à être compris,  
à aimer qu'à être aimé.

Car c'est en se donnant que l'on reçoit,  
c'est en s'oubliant que l'on se trouve,  
c'est en pardonnant qu'on est pardonné,  
c'est en mourant qu'on s'éveille à la vie éternelle.  
Amen.

## Follow Jesus with Fortitude Prayer Service

### Possible Activities....

- Display photographs of people who exemplify the virtue of Fortitude (Craig and Mark Kielburger, Blessed Mother Teresa, Terry Fox)
- Set up the projector to visualize the youtube video "Courage is" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXrWRM0E6YA>

### Introduction:

Loving God, you created all people in your image and likeness. We come together with a grateful heart to celebrate Your love for all of us. Today and for the month of January we will be working on and learning from one another about the virtue of fortitude.

Fortitude is the virtue of practicing what is good and just. It challenges us to overcome our fears and stay true to our beliefs. It asks us to stand up for our neighbours and to include others. We must follow Jesus' example.

### In the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit

Amen

### 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

### Scripture Reading: (adapted from 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.



## Follow Jesus with Fortitude Prayer Service Continued

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. Then 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**

**Litany: God Gives Us Courage**

The response is: "God gives us courage."

In the classroom, when we work and play with those who might not be our friends.

**God Gives us courage**

## Follow Jesus with Fortitude Prayer Service Continued

When we are doing what we know is right, even though others are not,

**God Gives us courage**

In the school yard, when we need to keep the peace,

**God Gives us courage**

When we make mistakes and we are sorry,

**God Gives us courage**

When we're trying something new

**God Gives us courage**

When we are scared,

**God Gives us courage**

Always,

**God Gives us courage**

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

**In the name of the Father and of the Son and  
the Holy Spirit**



Fear not!  
Stand your ground,  
and you will see the victory  
the Lord will win for you today.

Exodus 14:13