

Fortitude



27th Sun OT

28th Sun OT

29th Sun OT

30th Sun OT

31st Sun OT

Your Guide to Mentorship

FORTITUDE: 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time



✉ program@fidelisonline.org



[Resources Folder](#)
2023-2024

LESSON

The fortitudinous woman perseveres in living her faith.

Written by: **Destiny Campa Meza**



VIRTUE DEFINITION

Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions (CCC 1808).

MENTORING TIP

Being a spiritual mentor comes with a lot of responsibility and expectations. Remember to treat yourself with grace and compassion. Focus on the positive things you bring to Fidelis nights, not on the challenges and difficulties.

THE KING'S MESSAGE

Remember the King's Message should be F.A.S.T. (Faithful, Authentic, Short, Tied in.)

- Did you see how? — Summarize the clip in your own words after reading the **CLIP REVIEW** portion of the email.
- That's a lot like... — Connect the clip to the Virtue in your own words after reading the **CONNECT** portion of the email.
- This is for you because... — Commission the girls to live this virtue in their lives in simple, practical ways and in your own words after reading the **COMMISSION** portion of the email.

RESOURCES

- ▶ Video: Fr. James Brent: "[Fortitude \(Aquinas 101\)](#)"
- 🌐 Article: *Blessed is She*, "[Fortitude and Falling](#)"

Clip: I Still Believe

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INTRO VIDEO



DISCLAIMER

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CLIP REVIEW

In this clip, we see Jeremy Camp, an aspiring Christian musician mourning the loss of his young wife, Melissa. Upon breaking his guitar, he finds a note that Melissa wrote while sick with cancer in the hospital. Melissa knew she was gravely ill and wanted to comfort Jeremy. She states, "In one story, God grants healing. Miracles do happen. Yet to another, His call is to suffer and even die." She recognizes the value in both callings and says that she is blessed to have experienced both at different times. She says that God is worth trusting, even when we can't see. The latter part of the clip shows Jeremy on stage a few years later, sharing how he has been inspired by Melissa's perseverance in faith. He also introduces his new song: "[I Still Believe.](#)"

CONNECTION

The fortitudinous woman perseveres in living her faith. Melissa did just that. She had difficult moments. She felt fear. She felt sadness at the thought of being separated from her new husband. She might have even questioned her faith, but she never stopped persevering in living her faith. She trusted God and honored Him until the very end. In choosing to accept whatever Jesus had planned for her, she found peace beyond understanding. Her faith inspired all of the people close to her, namely her husband, Jeremy. Grappling with grief, he was able to persevere in His faith and calling because he was so inspired by the fortitude Melissa displayed. He was then able to share her faith with millions as he continued to glorify God in his successful music career. ©2023 Fidelis, Inc.

COMMISSION

We pray for health in body, mind, and spirit, but sometimes the Lord allows suffering for an ultimate good that we just don't understand. It takes great fortitude in moments of suffering to persevere in our faith. Whether you are questioning your faith because you yourself are suffering or because you are grieving the suffering of another, it is important to place your faith firmly in Jesus. Jesus is our firm foundation and in the middle of the inevitable storms of life, He offers us shelter and peace. We might not understand, but God is still worthy of our trust. Ask Our Lord to grant you fortitude, that you would trust Him when the temptation to doubt is present.

SMALL GROUP COMMENTARY

In Matthew 24:13, Jesus says: "The one who perseveres to the end will be saved." This verse comes after His disciples are asking questions about the "last days" before Jesus will come again. The gift of salvation is not something that we can earn, it is a free gift that Jesus purchased for us on the cross at Calvary. Yet, there is some work to be done on our part to hold on to that free gift; we must persevere in faith. The Catholic Church considers "the last days" to have begun after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Matthew 24:13 is relevant to every Christian that desires Heaven because we are living in *our* last days. We are finite beings and we have an allotted amount of time on this Earth. Jesus wants us to use that time well, persevering in our faith by participating in the Sacraments and living out our vocations to the best of our abilities. Sacred Scripture states that it is wise to number our days and always have the Lord at the front of our minds.

This does not mean that we live in fear of death or a constant awareness of time slipping away. On the contrary, an awareness of our finite nature should bring great joy--it should give us the courage to face suffering and the hope that we will be united with Jesus in Heaven. Having the Lord continually on our minds helps us to live our lives in a way that honors Him, and fortitude helps us to firmly resolve to do that, despite challenges and setbacks.

In the face of challenges, the temptation to doubt our faith often arises. The virtue of fortitude, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, enables us to push forward, toward whatever end the Lord sees fit. In pursuing our faith to the very end, we will be rewarded the crown of salvation and hopefully, by persevering in living our faith, we will encourage others to do the same.



*"Jesus said, 'In the world you have tribulation;
but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.'"*

John 16:33



Your Guide to Mentorship

FORTITUDE: 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time



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2023-2024](#)

LESSON

The fortitudinous woman draws strength from Jesus Christ.

Written by: **Michaela Reyes**



VIRTUE DEFINITION

Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions (CCC 1808).

MENTORING TIP

Mother Theresa said that "God speaks in the silence of the heart. Listening is the beginning of prayer." Being a good listener is essential to walking with our Fidelis Sisters in their faith journeys.

THE KING'S MESSAGE

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- This is for you because... — Commission the girls to live this virtue in their lives in simple, practical ways and in your own words after reading the **COMMISSION** portion of the email.

RESOURCES

- ▶ Video: Lisa Cotter: "[How to Suffer Well](#)"
- 🌐 Article: *Blessed is She*, "[God's Unwearying Help](#)"

Clip: Life of Pi

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INTRO VIDEO



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CLIP REVIEW

Pi is a 16-year-old boy who is moving from India to Canada with his parents, brother, and several animals from their family zoo. On the journey, the boat unexpectedly sinks, killing almost all the people and the animals, including Pi's family. Pi soon finds himself floating alone in a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. After being on the raft for 227 days, Pi bonds with Richard Parker as his only "friend". His duty to keep the tiger fed and watered gives him reason and purpose to live. During a storm, Richard Parker is almost lost overboard and drowned. In his agony, Pi screams to God, feeling he cannot endure any more suffering. He yells: "I surrender!" He realizes that he was never in control of his situation or the storm.

CONNECTION

In the scene that follows the one above, Pi cries out to heaven and to his parents. He tells them that he is ready to see them. Furthermore, he thanks God for his life. Soon after, he is rescued.

In our own lives, we search for answers, we search for friendships, we search for validation, we search for comfort, we search for help -- we are always searching! Many times we try to do things on our own, with our ideas or our strength and determination. We seek out advice from a friend or an expert, not thinking to ask Jesus for His wisdom and strength. Our human tendency is to reach toward what we can see, hear, and touch.

COMMISSION

In this clip, we can look to and learn from Pi. It's when he finally surrenders to God that the calm surrounds him. God was waiting for him to surrender and to trust the plan He had for Pi's life.

Remember that when the waves are so high, the sky so dark, your heartache so painful, God is there with you. He allows the suffering because He wants us to turn to Him and to be close to Him.

SMALL GROUP COMMENTARY

Losing family members like Pi did in this movie is one of the most difficult things a person can go through. I lost someone very close to me 10 years ago. Not a day goes by that I don't think of him. Many times, in my humanity, I question why God allowed this to happen. Why does He allow such suffering?

Initially, it wasn't easy to see the answer. My faith hadn't developed to such a point. These days, I know that God has a unique plan for each of us. He knows our heart. He knows all the good he placed within us and gives us the opportunity to bring that goodness to fruition. We honor God by serving those around us. We take our heartache to the cross, lay it at the feet of Jesus, and ask him to mend our heart, and he does it WITH us, not FOR us. When we cooperate with God's plan and unite our suffering with His, we truly become the hands and feet of Christ.

Our experiences - the good, the bad, even the ugly - transform us into living Christ-like compassion that we share with others. Is it always easy? Of course not! So, like water drawn from a well, we return to God again and again to sustain us. We only need to ask and like the perfect loving father he is, God provides all we need. The fortitudinous woman draws her strength from Jesus Christ.



Your Guide to Mentorship

FORTITUDE: 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time



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2023-2024

LESSON

*The fortitudinous woman endures
for the reward of God Himself.*

Written by: **Miriam Barry**



VIRTUE DEFINITION

Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions (CCC 1808).

MENTORING TIP

Lead your Fidelis Night with a spirit of hope and optimism. Many of our Fidelis Sisters might struggle opening themselves up to new experiences with new people.

THE KING'S MESSAGE

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RESOURCES

- ▶ Video: Bobby Angel: "[What's So Great about Fortitude?](#)"
- 🌐 Article: *From the Abbey*, "[Supernatural Moral Virtues: Fortitude](#)"

Clip: Mulan

WATCH

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INTRO VIDEO



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CLIP REVIEW

In the Disney film, *Mulan*, the title character enlists in the Chinese army in order to spare her aging father from having to fulfill the family's military obligation. This scene follows Mulan and her fellow soldiers from the time they arrive at the military camp until they become well-trained members of the army. She and the others display fortitude in striving over a long period of time to become strong and competent soldiers. Mulan ends up answering the challenge Shang posed to the group at the beginning of training and thus shows how her faithful and courageous hard work has paid off.

CONNECTION

With persistence and daily work, even what at first seems impossible becomes doable for Mulan and her regiment. Mulan is dedicated to her task of becoming a worthy soldier so that she will be allowed to stay in the Chinese army and fight in place of her father, and this motive helps her to press on with courage, vigor, and purpose amidst daunting odds. By practicing tirelessly and putting in work day in and day out, Mulan and the other soldiers learn new skills and develop fortitude by sticking to their military tasks and routines.

The lesson that Shang gives his soldiers on their first day of training as part of his challenge to retrieve the arrow from the top of the wooden pole is key to their whole experience in the army; success requires the two qualities symbolized by the golden weights: discipline and strength.

Yao tries to climb up the pole hastily, hoping to cover the distance in a “fast and furious” manner before his strength inevitably runs out. This tactic fails since he does not have the endurance or the muscle to reach the top of the pole. Instead, “slow and steady wins the race” as we can see when Mulan, after much previous training and with a few failed attempts and backslides, strains to work her way upwards step-by-step and at last reaches the arrow.

The same is true in running the race of life: we must have fortitude to exert effort and to try and keep on trying when we are tired or when we stumble and fall. Maintaining this discipline of ourselves and putting forward our strength can be hard when we begin to lose hope, but we can always get back up again.

COMMISSION

In this scene, Mulan falls behind the rest of the group, and her general gives up on her and tells her to quit. This incident, however, motivates her to work even harder at being a good soldier, and she rises from her failure with a more determined attitude than before, thereby transforming her weakness into strength. Mulan is very driven to succeed, because she wants to avoid being sent home from the army. (This would mean disappointing Shang, bringing social dishonor on her family name, and bearing the personal shame of having failed out of the military.) She thus remains focused on the task at hand and works with patience and courage to attain the goal, a feat which shows both her physical strength and her mental discipline. To her, the reward of the arrow and of all that that victory represents, is worth the difficulty of the climb.

With the example and guidance of Shang, Mulan and her fellow soldiers little by little improve in their military ability and over time become excellent fighters who successfully complete their tasks. Shang paves the way by demonstrating his own skills and by giving them constant opportunities to work at becoming better soldiers. When they fail or feel weak, they look to him as the model of what a soldier should do and what they need to do to succeed in their missions. In a similar way, we have Jesus as our perfect and divine model of how to live, and we can look to Him for strength and inspiration when we are tempted or uncertain. Christians are very truly soldiers of Christ in the spiritual warfare that is fought on earth in our everyday lives, and He as our captain will lead and guide us in the fight against Satan, sin, and evil.



SMALL GROUP COMMENTARY

Fortitude, as well as being one of the four cardinal (or “human”) virtues, is a gift of the Holy Spirit. God blesses Christians with these seven gifts to “complete and perfect the virtues” they already possess and help us to more easily and completely follow His inspiration and the Spirit’s promptings (CCC 1831). Practicing fortitude easily overlaps with other virtues; it involves being patient and perseverant during difficult periods and requires both a type of moral courage and a grounding in faith in order to push through those tough times. Being fortitudinous means setting your “eyes on the prize” of holiness and retaining your commitment to that goal, and to working towards that goal, amidst challenges.

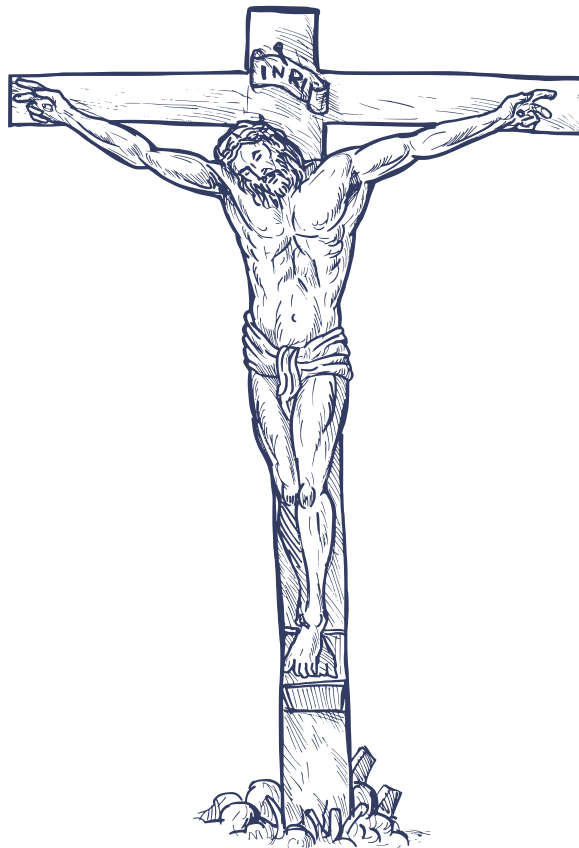
We are given the chance to exercise fortitude whenever we face an obstacle to our resolve to pursue goodness: in other words, when we are tempted to choose something sinful or harmful to our souls rather than something morally upright. Often we cave to these temptations out of fear, laziness, or despair, but if we instead fix our minds and hearts on what is good and most of all on God, Who is goodness itself, we will be strengthened not to give in to these temptations and give up on striving for virtue. When we call on the Lord, He will supply us with the grace to endure whatever temptation we are experiencing and conquer it. In his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul encourages us that, “No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tempted beyond your strength; but with the trial He will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it” (1 Cor 10:13). God is mightier than all evil and every habit of sin, and His gift of fortitude is one of the ways by which we can conquer the fears, temptations, weaknesses, and other hindrances which try to keep us from growing in sanctity. Using fortitude, we can stay strong despite hardships and even grow stronger precisely because of them.

In times of emotional or physical pain, spiritual dryness in prayer, intense fear or anxiety, or other personal trials it can be extremely difficult to remember why we resolved to follow Christ and live a holy life, and in these moments of struggle we may not want to keep the promise we made to God and ourselves but instead do what is easier or less painful. Writing to the Hebrews, Paul again challenges us to “persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith” (Heb 12:1-2). The apostle reminds us that the motivating reward of the “race” of a virtuous life is Christ Himself, the best prize on which to fix our eyes, one which is eternal and more glorious than we can imagine. If we attain Heaven, we will live in perfect happiness with God forever.



Paul continues with more advice and presents Christ not only as the goal but as a model of fortitude: “For the sake of the joy that lay before Him He endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken His seat at the right of the throne of God. Consider how He endured such opposition from sinners, in order that you may not grow weary and lose heart. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood” (Heb 12:2-4). Jesus Himself has set us an example of holiness in suffering, and we are called to do likewise as His followers.

The countless martyrs did just what St. Paul describes at the close of this passage: kept their focus on God and resisted sin to the very point of shedding their blood for Him. They did not lose heart, because their hearts were centered on Him and the sacrifice that He had made for love of them and for their salvation. Although most of us will probably not have to endure torture or physical martyrdom, we can cultivate the same deep love for Jesus and unite our everyday sufferings and obstacles to His passion and death by offering them to Him.



Your Guide to Mentorship

FORTITUDE: 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time



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2023-2024](#)

LESSON

*The fortitudinous woman endures
for love.*

Written by: **Destiny Campa Meza**



VIRTUE DEFINITION

Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions (CCC 1808).

MENTORING TIP

Be dependable. Showing up not only shows reliability, but also builds trust. Do your best to be on time and attend Fidelis nights consistently. Fidelis Sisters can't form a strong bond with mentors if Fidelis nights are inconsistent.

THE KING'S MESSAGE

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RESOURCES

- ▶ Video: Fr. Mike Schmitz: "[Why Love Is More than a Feeling](#)"
- 🌐 Article: *Blessed is She*, "[Meeting Jesus at the Cross and Enduring in Love](#)"

Clip: The Super Mario Bros. Movie

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INTRO VIDEO



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CLIP REVIEW

While working underground to fix a water main, Brooklyn plumbers and brothers, Mario and Luigi, are transported through a mysterious pipe to a magical new world. But when the siblings are separated, an epic adventure begins. Mario is transported to the beautiful Mushroom Kingdom, while Luigi is transported to the Dark Land where he is quickly captured and imprisoned by the villain Bowser.

With the help of his new friend Toad, Mario makes his way to Princess Peach to acquire her help in saving Luigi. Meanwhile, the evil Bowser has found a powerful star that he can use to take over the world and destroy the Mushroom Kingdom. Peach bravely sets out with Mario to protect her beloved Toads at all costs.

CONNECTION

Mario has always been his brother's protector. They have a close bond; Mario sets out on an unstoppable mission to save his brother without a thought for his own safety. In finding Peach and demanding her help, he is firm and brave. Throughout the movie, Mario faces countless challenges and hardships which he endures for love of his brother, Luigi.

Similarly, Peach is motivated for love of her toads. Peach doesn't know where she came from, but she does remember how the toads loved her and welcomed her, eventually making her their queen.

While the success of her mission to save the Mushroom Kingdom from Bowser seems impossible, Peach acts with courage, leading the charge to protect her toads and doing whatever is necessary to achieve her goal.

COMMISSION

We can all learn from Mario and Princess Peach. It can be difficult when you are staring down a seemingly impossible situation, especially when it involves someone you love. It can be tempting to pull back and protect yourself. The characters in our clip today were all in for love. They acted with great courage and determination and endured until the end. They were both motivated by the love of others. This sort of self-sacrificing love should motivate us to endure hardships in our daily lives. Whether it be enduring temptation or a season of suffering, the fortitudinous woman endures for love of God and the people around her. Reframing suffering in this way can lend us the grace to persevere when we reach the end of ourselves.

SMALL GROUP COMMENTARY

The Bible tells us many times that God's love for creation endures forever (Psalm 136). Jesus Himself tells us that we are expected to love one another with this same sort of selfless love. In fact, He says that we will be identified as children of the Father by the way that we love one another (John 13:35). Love is not a feeling. It is a commitment to service and sacrifice.

When we love God, we seek to know Him and we endure in our walk with Him. When we love others, we endure the trials and challenges of life for their good. A new mother endures pregnancy, childbirth, nursing, sleepless nights, and so much more for love of her precious new baby. Spouses endure the daily hardships of life --as well as the major hurdles-- for love of one another and the sacramental bond they share in holy matrimony. The fortitudinous woman identifies love as a reason and source of strength to endure.

Much like Peach and Mario, we must choose to prioritize love in our lives. St. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13:13: "Three things will last forever--faith, hope, and love--and the greatest of these is love." All human beings will face challenges and suffering in this life. We set ourselves aside as followers of Christ when we choose love as our motivation for enduring until the end. Jesus endured the brutality of His Passion for love of each one of us. He gathered strength in that love and persevered despite the most unimaginable suffering. We too must choose to pick up our crosses and reciprocate the self-sacrificing love of Jesus.



Your Guide to Mentorship

FORTITUDE: 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time



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2023-2024](#)

LESSON

*The fortitudinous woman completes
the work proper to her.*

Written by: Mary Margaret Lewis



VIRTUE DEFINITION

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MENTORING TIP

Show empathy. Showing genuine interest and concern for our Fidelis Sisters' thoughts and feelings helps them to feel safe, connected, and more likely to take to heart what they are learning at your Fidelis Nights.

THE KING'S MESSAGE

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RESOURCES

- ▶ Video: Fr. Mike Schmitz: "[Take Courage!](#)"
- 🌐 Article: *Aleteia*, "[Prayer for the strength to be faithful to your vocation in daily life](#)"

Clip: American Girl Molly Movie

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INTRO VIDEO



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CLIP REVIEW

This clip features Molly McIntire, an American girl living through World War II. Molly's life has been turned upside down due to the war. Her father, a doctor, goes to the front lines to treat wounded soldiers and her mother takes a factory job. In this scene, Molly's favorite aunt has just arrived to stay with them for several months. The two of them go out for a soda and Molly's aunt reveals to her that she is leaving sooner to join the Air Force. Molly is upset that she is leaving them and runs out of the diner. Her aunt finds her in the park and explains to her the importance of doing one's part to end the war. After her aunt leaves, Molly is even more determined to do her part by practicing for the upcoming show at school.

CONNECTION

It takes courage to do one's part. Molly's father leaves his family to serve the wounded on the front lines because he knows that is his duty as a doctor, even though he may never see his family again. Her mother steps outside her comfortable home and takes a job at a mechanical factory to aid in the war effort, even though it means she misses out on time with her children during the day. Molly's aunt joins the Air Force as a pilot and risks her life for her country. All of these things required great fortitude. Molly also exhibits fortitude, just in a much smaller way. She knows that she is too young to join the army or get a factory job.

Instead, she focuses on what she can do: put forth her best effort towards the school show. As she says, “we can’t just wait for the next guy to do something.” Everyone has a job to do to bring about an end to the war, even nine-year-old Molly.

COMMISSION

We all have a job that God has placed in front of us. For some, that may be to leave his or her family and join the religious life or the military. For others, that may be to clean his or her room. Both are not easy and require great courage. As Mother Teresa once said, “Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.” Whatever work God has placed before you, you can complete it with a good attitude and your best effort. Oftentimes, this requires us to grow in fortitude, especially if it is something we would rather not do, like cleaning the kitchen.

Little by little, your fortitude will increase and you will be able to accomplish greater and greater works for the glory of God.

This week, take some time to reflect on ways that you can start or continue practicing fortitude. Think about the duties that you have in your life. Where are some areas that you are lacking in effort or completion? This may be as simple as folding the pile of clothes in the corner of your room or as difficult as filling out job applications. Whatever it is, complete it with your best effort and your best attitude.

SMALL GROUP COMMENTARY

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that “The vocation of the laity consists in seeking the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will (898). In this life, God calls each and every one of us to a vocation. Marriage, motherhood, religious life. These are all examples of adult vocations, but the young are also called to serve the Lord in their vocation. Students ought to give their best in their studies and behave with their Christian morals always in mind. We should all honor our parents. You can do this by completing the chores and duties that have been assigned to you.

While all of these tasks might seem mundane and insignificant, St. Paul states in Colossians 3:23 “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.” It can be so hard to do this. It is tempting to be distracted by our flesh and also by the ways of the world. It can even be tempting to take our eyes off of our vocation when we struggle with anxiety and experience hardship. We must remember that the Lord has called each woman to the work proper to her.



It takes fortitude to keep our eyes on Jesus and prioritize our relationship with Him as well as the work that has been assigned to us. We honor God when we trust Him with childlike faith and keep our eyes (and hands) on the work He is asking us to do. We must choose to continue living a devout life when the temptation to sin arises. We must choose not to be worried and distracted when we experience hardship. We must be faithful servants to the Lord and complete the race set before us.

