

# *Virtue of the Month*

## *April*

“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” Phil 4:8

### **Growing Together in Virtue!**

This year at St. Peter School, preschoolers through 8th grade are "**Growing Together in Virtue!**" Each month throughout the school year every student in every grade is learning about a specific virtue and is being guided by teachers in the understanding and practice of the virtue. Instilling virtue isn't easy, and takes prayer, discipline, and encouragement, not only at school but even more importantly at home. We pray that through God's grace, we all grow closer to God as we work to cultivate virtue in the hearts of our children.

**What are virtues?** Virtues are firm habits to do what is right and good. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that “a virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best himself.” (CCC 1803). Virtues open us up to a good and meaningful life. They guide us to live morally, control our emotions and avoid what is sinful. In doing so, virtues help us become “fully human” and tap into the rich potential given to us by God. Virtues are connected to our conscience. The conscience is where we recognize the moral quality of each and every action. It is our most secret core - the place where we are alone with God, able to hear His voice. Virtues help us „form“ our conscience so that we clearly hear what God is saying and competently carry out what is right, good, true and beautiful. As a parent, what do you think is the most important part of virtue training? Is it understanding the virtues and knowing what each means? Is it explaining each virtue to your children and then monitoring the development in their lives? Or, is it selecting one or two virtues to „showcase“ in your own life? As is the case with any habit, developing a virtuous life is a lifelong process. It takes a great deal of time and energy to become skilled at choosing what is right. Be assured that virtuous competence is worth the effort it takes. Parents that commit to this long and exacting work will enjoy fulfilling relationships and finds contentment in family life.

(from [http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministry\\_resources/family\\_life/parentsplace/virtues.htm](http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/ministry_resources/family_life/parentsplace/virtues.htm))

The virtue for the month of April is **Perseverance.**



# Perseverance



## Definition

**Perseverance** is: being purposeful and steadfast. It is sticking to something, staying committed, no matter how long it takes or what obstacles appear to stop you.

**Perseverance** is: not giving up in achieving a project or goal.

The vices opposed to perseverance are laziness, stubbornness, and inconstancy. Inconstancy is found...in people who give up their plan at the first sign of difficulty or who change their mind easily and frequently, just for the sake of change.

## Catechism of the Catholic Church Quotes

The moral virtues grow through education, deliberate acts, and perseverance in struggle. Devine grace purifies and elevates them. CCC 1839

... To live, grow, and persevere in the faith until the end we must nourish it with the word of God; we must beg the Lord to increase our faith; it must be working through charity, abounding in hope, and rooted in the faith of the Church.

CCC162

...the battle of prayer is that of humble, trusting, and persevering love. CCC 2742

## Scripture Quotes

Indeed we call blessed those who have persevered. ~James 5:11

He that shall persevere unto the end, shall be saved. ~Matthew 10:22

“Let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus...”

Hebrews 12:1

With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the spirit. To the end, be watchful with all perseverance and supplication ...

Ephesians 6:18

### **Other Quotes**

Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know you, a heart to seek you, wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing to you, faithful perseverance in waiting for you, and a hope of finally embracing you.

~St. Thomas Aquinas

"O eternal God, grant me the virtue of perseverance; without it, no one can please You nor be acceptable to You. This virtue brings to the soul an abundance of charity and the fruit of every effort. Oh! how happy I should be, Lord, if You would give me this virtue, because even here on earth it will make me enjoy a pledge of eternal life. But your light reveals to me that I cannot attain it unless I suffer much, because this life cannot be lived without suffering. He who would escape suffering would deprive himself of holy perseverance."

~St. Catherine of Siena

*All saints began their conversions by prayer and through prayer they persevered.*

~St. John Vianney

*Without obedience, there is little hope of acquiring perseverance.*

~Dr. David Isaacs

*Learn to be a good loser. Never be discouraged when things don't work out - keep at it!*

~Thomas Edison

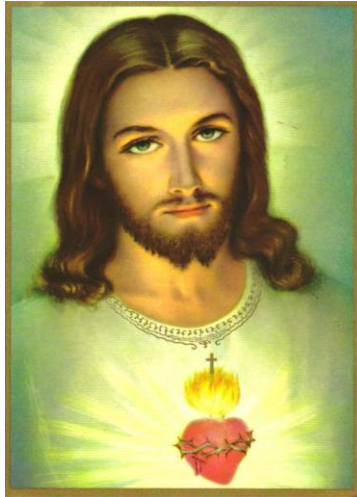
*Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them - every day begin the task anew.*

~ St. Francis de Sales

Defeat is simply a signal to press onward.

~Helen Keller

## Prayer to Persevere



Sacred Heart of Jesus today I wish to live in You, in Your grace, in which I desire at all costs to persevere. Keep me from sin and strengthen my will by helping me to keep watch over my senses, my imagination, and my heart. Help me to correct my faults which are the source of sin. I beg You to do this, O Jesus, through Mary, Your Immaculate Mother.



## ***Saints of Perseverance***

### *Mother Theodore Guerin a Saint of the Catholic Church,*

Born in France, Mother Guerin entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence in 1823, and worked as a teacher. In 1839, her superiors asked her to found a new community in the United States. She and five other sisters arrived at a simple log-cabin chapel in the heart of the forest at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana.

She and her community persevered despite fires, crop failures, prejudice against Catholic women religious, misunderstandings and separation from their original religious congregation. She once told her sisters, "Have confidence in the Providence that so far has never failed us. The way is not yet clear. Grope along slowly. Do not press matters; be patient, be trustful." Another time, she asked, "With Jesus, what shall we have to fear?"

With great trust in Divine Providence, Mother Theodore overcame many challenges and persevered in the work that the Lord had called her to do. By the time of her death in 1856, the Sisters were running schools and orphanages throughout the state of Indiana.

"How much good has been accomplished by the Sisters of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods! How much more good they will be able to do if they remain faithful to their holy vocation!" (Pope Benedict, quoting the new saint).

Mother Theodore Guerin is a beautiful spiritual figure and a model of Christian life. She was always available for the missions upon which the Church sent her; she found strength and courage for this work in the Eucharist, in prayer and in an infinite confidence in Divine Providence. Her interior strength propelled her to pay particular attention to the poor, especially to children.

"Mother Theodore once said that we are not asked to do all of God's work in this world, just the work we can do," Angela White, 42, from Indianapolis told The Associated Press, "and I think this is exactly what we have to do."

She is buried in the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, and was beatified in 1998. Eight years later she was canonized.

To become a saint, it is not enough to be courageous and patient and to practice the other virtues for a few days or a few months, or even for a few years. We must *persevere* in these dispositions to the end of our life, never yielding to fatigue, discouragement or laxity.

(Catholic pages.com)

**Scripture Passages on Perseverance**  
**For Entering into notebooks and Discussing**



**The Blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52)**

...Now we have to learn a lesson from Bartimaeus, though, and that is his perseverance in calling out to the Lord. Even when people told him to be silent and they tried to get him out of the way, he called out even louder asking the Lord to have mercy upon him. We have to have that same sort of perseverance in prayer, to seek the Lord, to wait upon His Will. We might be asking for the right thing in prayer, but it may not be the right time. All things will happen in God's time and according to His Will. We simply need to persevere, to keep crying out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!" And He will. He is all-merciful. He is all-loving. He allows difficult things to happen in our lives, as we have seen many times, but He always brings a great good out of them. His mercy is demonstrated in our lives over and over and over again. So we simply need to have the kind of faith that Bartimaeus had, the faith that one does need eyes to be able to see. Even the blind can know that God simply spoke and it came to be. The blind can know that the Eucharist is Jesus and that their sins are forgiven because there is nothing that needs to be seen with the eyes of the body, only with the eyes of the soul.

*homily by Father Robert Altier*

**Questions for contemplation & discussion:**

**In a time of great challenge, perseverance becomes a valuable virtue...**

As a teen, what are some challenges you are currently facing?

What are your plans to overcome these challenge(s)?

Do you believe if you ignore your challenges they will simply go away?

## **Perseverance allows you to move through adversity...**

In reality "adversity" chisels character within you. Learning to endure hardships is known as perseverance. Perseverance reveals our character (or the lack of it) and what is required to make it to the other side.

What character qualities (virtues) do you lack?

Do you have examples in your life of a family member, a neighbor or friend who went through a big challenge, what were some qualities you saw in them?

What does this saying mean to you: "When things get tough, the tough get going."

Life Coaching For Teens: Section II - Virtue 8 - Perseverance  
By [Joel Garcia](#)

## ***Persevering in Serving God***

Read Acts 5:12-42.

Questions for discussion

1. Why were the apostles arrested?
2. What happened to them after they were arrested?
3. What did God do?
4. Why did the apostles start preaching again?
5. How did God protect the men who persevered in preaching?
6. How did Peter and the other apostles respond to the fact that they were punished for preaching the gospel?

Read Mathew 15:21-28

In the Gospel of St. Matthew there is a moving example of perseverance. A Canaanite mother come to Jesus asking for a cure for her daughter who was possessed by a demon. The disciples wanted Jesus to get rid of her because she was causing a ruckus trying to get His attention. When she finally was able to

speak to Jesus about her problem, He told her, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The woman, not put off, begs, "Lord, help me." Jesus tests her perseverance further by saying, "It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." Here is this poor, heartbroken woman begging for help yet her efforts seem to meet only with insults. A person of little or no perseverance would probably have left in a huff, but not this mother. She counters with, "Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters." This humble woman gave such a powerful example of perseverance that it left such a profound impression on the crowd that it is depicted in two Gospels, the Gospel of St. Matthew and St. Mark. Jesus used this mother to teach His listeners the importance of the virtue of perseverance. Then he rewarded her richly by saying, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And the woman's daughter was healed from that hour.

(taken from [Raise Happy Children: Teach Them Virtues](#) by Mary Ann Budnik)

## Divine Mercy Sunday Feast Day First: Sunday after Easter (May 1<sup>st</sup>)



Jesus told St. Faustina to have an image painted of Him as he appeared to her once, with one hand next to His Sacred Heart, and with red and white rays emanating from His Heart. The red ray symbolizes His precious blood that saves us, and the white ray symbolizes the waters of Baptism. At the bottom of the page are the words "Jesus, I Trust in You". This image is to be venerated, and the Feast of Divine Mercy is to be celebrated on the Sunday following Easter. It took many years for this devotion to finally be realized, but thanks to Pope John Paul II, it was finally done.

Most everyone reading this page is in full agreement that Jesus is full of Divine Mercy, but that's not the question. The question is what do WE need to do to access this Divine Mercy? Do we just sit around and do nothing, or is there some response required on our part to access it? The answer can be found by reading St. Faustina's Diary. As holy as she was, Jesus told her once that if she died that day, she would receive the equivalent of one day in Purgatory. So what does that mean for us who aren't near as holy as a cloistered nun? It means that we had better get with the program and seek out the Divine Mercy of Jesus today, or there could be many days in Purgatory awaiting us.

St. Faustina left us the Divine Mercy Chaplet, which can be said on a Rosary. It starts out with:

*One Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Apostles Creed.*

Then, on the large beads, instead of the Our Father, we are to recite the following:

*"Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and the Blood, Soul and Divinity, of Your dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins, and those of the whole world."*

On the small beads, instead of the Hail Mary's, we are to recite the following:

*"For the sake of His sorrowful passion, have mercy on us, and on the whole world."*

At the end of the Chaplet, we are to say 3 times the following:

*"Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world."*

(Catholic Bible 101)

# Secretariat

## The Movie Review

The true story of the 1973 Triple Crown winner, arguably the greatest racehorse of all time, comes to the big screen in a film that is both thrilling sports adventure and moving family drama. Secretariat's owner (Diane Lane) is a housewife who returns to her horse farm roots and gambles everything on the big red equine. As she makes her mark in an all-male world, she battles prejudice and the skepticism of her family, but she never loses hope in her dream. At her side are a bossy assistant (Margo Martindale), an even more domineering trainer (John Malkovich) and a gentle-hearted groom (Nelsan Ellis) whose spiritual nature provides a moving undercurrent.

Directed by Randall Wallace, the writer of *Braveheart*, *Pearl Harbor*, and *We Were Soldiers*, *Secretariat* is an incredibly powerful story about courage and perseverance. Its engaging story evokes a sense of joy, the same feelings Tweedy must have felt while watching her "Big Red" run.

USCCB review

*\*Watch the movie and critique the characters for how they live the virtue of perseverance....*

## **The Story of the Hermit Who learns the value of Perseverance**

We all get discouraged about mundane repetitive things we must do in life. Here's a story from the Desert Fathers to help one stay with what grows wearisome.

Who does not say to himself now and then, "What is the use of this! I am only doing what I have already done a thousand times and anyone could do it. It is a waste of time!"

*One of the hermits of old who dwelt in the desert had a cell situated all of seven miles from the water, and it was necessary for him to walk the distance to the river and back each time he replenished his supply. Growing tired of this journey, he said to himself: "What need is there for me to endure this toil? I shall come and live near the water." As he said this, he caught sight of someone who followed behind him, counting his footsteps. He asked, "Who art thou?" and the one behind said, "I am the angel of the Lord, and I am sent to count thy footprints and give thee thy reward." And the monk, when he heard this, set his cell still farther from the water!*

Activity Source: Saints and Our Children, by Mary Reed Newland, P.J. Kenedy & Sons, New York; reprinted by TAN Publishers, 1958 from [www.CatholicCulture.org](http://www.CatholicCulture.org)



## Songs of Perseverance

(Listen on YouTube)

### Gonna Keep On by Whitecross

I'm gonna keep on trustin in God's son.  
Lord I need you.

I'm gonna keep on trustin in God's son.  
Lord I need you.

On a day like today  
I know I need to pray.  
So many lives I've hurt.  
I'm so glad I have your word.

I'm gonna keep on.  
Got my hold on tight.  
I know who I believe in.  
I won't give up the fight.

I'm gonna keep on trustin in God's son.  
Lord I need you.

I'm gonna keep on trustin in God's son.  
Lord I need you.

On a night like tonight  
I wanna do what's right.  
No matter what goes on,  
You are my strength, my song.

Yeah, I'm gonna keep on.  
Got my hold on tight.  
I know who I believe in.  
I won't give up the fight.

I'm gonna keep on.  
Got my hold on tight.  
I know who I believe in.  
I won't give up the fight.

Hear what I say.  
Come on, yeah.

And all the while it seems I've lost  
To risk in me just to count the cost, yeah!

I'm gonna keep on.  
Got my hold on tight.  
I know who I believe in.  
I won't give up the fight.

I'm gonna keep on.  
Got my hold on tight.  
I know who I believe in.  
I won't give up the fight,  
Give up the fight,  
Give up the fight.

Yeah I'm gonna keep on, yeah!

### **John Reuben - Sunshine**

It's one of these moments in life when you feel incapable  
I try to hide but the feelings inside are sort of inescapable  
And everything that I've become suddenly feels replaceable  
Now I'm left in my inadequacy, you get the point  
All my goals seem out of reach and unattainable  
Your thoughts get lost in the shuffle and become unexplainable  
No words to match the emotion that I'm roller coasting on  
Just words of devotion  
Hope that someday soon they'll be gone like that  
Come on now

I know lessons are learned through perseverance and  
I know I grow and I can adhere to this  
It's just hard sometimes to keep yourself a good perspective  
But God controls the hands of time  
And when the time is right I'll be perfected

Even when what lies ahead seems so unbearable  
God's grace is still so remarkable  
Yeah I can face anything  
With the faith that exceeds time and space Give me the strength to change the pace

Cuz I've been burning on energy  
That was meant to be directed differently  
No wonder we find ourselves empty  
Worn out and burned out with how things have turned out  
We've learned how to cope  
But this whole thing is broke down and not working  
Typical earthling searching for a system  
A coping mechanism  
Listen hey  
We're not meant to carry the load  
Or bear these burdens on our own  
I'm tired of living in survival mode  
I'm gonna give it up and let it go

I know lessons are learned through perseverance and  
I know I grow and I can adhere to this  
It's just hard sometimes to keep yourself a good perspective  
But God controls the hands of time

Give me some sunshine  
Give me some sunshine  
Give me some sunshine  
Clear my mind  
And in the meantime  
I know that I'm, I'm gonna, I'm gonna, I'm gonna be just fine  
(x4)

## Examination of Conscience:

*As we continue our journey through Lent, we will focus on one of the Stations of the Cross each day to prepare us in taking up and carrying our own crosses with perseverance and love as Christ did for each of us.*

### How Do I Daily Carry My Cross?

April 4<sup>th</sup> - THE FIRST STATION: Jesus Is Condemned to Death. Today if I am ill-treated or accused falsely will I persevere in goodness; “turn the other cheek” and respond with mercy?

5<sup>th</sup> - THE SECOND STATION: Jesus Takes up His Cross. Today I will persevere in doing for others; putting their needs before my own.

6<sup>th</sup> - THE THIRD STATION: Jesus falls the First Time. Today I will persevere when things seem too difficult for me; to count on the strength from Christ and try again.

7<sup>th</sup> - THE FOURTH STATION: Jesus Meets His Mother. Today I will persevere in obedience; trusting Mary is at my side to support and encourage me to do God’s will.

8<sup>th</sup> - THE FIFTH STATION: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to carry The Cross. Today I will persevere in helping others; “Bearing one another’s burdens, attentive when others need my help.

11<sup>th</sup> - THE SIXTH STATION: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus. Today I will persevere in humble service; showing my gratitude in what I do for others.

12<sup>th</sup> - THE SEVENTH STATION: Jesus Falls the Second time. Today I will persevere in optimism and trust; never giving up and always pushing on.

13<sup>th</sup> – THE EIGHTH STATION: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem. Today I will persevere in being welcoming and including others; being Christ for others.

14<sup>th</sup> - THE NINTH STATION: Jesus Falls the Third Time. Today I will persevere in fighting against temptations that cause me to fall into sin.

15<sup>th</sup> - THE TENTH STATION: Jesus is stripped of His Garments. Today I will persevere in modesty and purity; doing only what is pleasing before God.

18<sup>th</sup> - THE ELEVENTH STATION: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross. Today I will persevere in denying myself privileges and comforts as to grow in compassion for those who live without.

19<sup>th</sup> - THE TWELTH STATION: Jesus Dies on the Cross. Today I will persevere in repentance showing true contrition for my sins; so I can return the love Christ has for me.

20<sup>th</sup> - THE THIRTEENTH STATION: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross. Today I will persevere in truth and honesty; knowing God's ways are always best.

21<sup>st</sup> - THE FOURTENTH STATION: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb. Today I will persevere in prayer; conversation with my Lord, so I can serve Him and others in my thoughts, words and deeds.