

# *Virtue of the Month*

## *May*

“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 May is Trust.**



## Virtue of Trust

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## Definition

Trust is a firm belief or confidence in a person or Being. Trust is Faith, faith in someone or something bigger or wiser than ourselves.

Trust is the giving of oneself in total reliance to another for safekeeping and guidance.

And so, when we put our trust in God through our Savior Jesus Christ we are in essence handing over our lives with unquestioning belief and hope, without fear of the outcome because we know what we entrust is in capable Hands. We have faith that God will give us what we need.

(Taken from In God We Trust by Kathy Bernard: www.catholicvu.com)

## Catechism of the Catholic Church Quotes

"The sum of your word is truth; and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever."<sup>30</sup> "and now, O LORD God, you are God, and your words are true";<sup>31</sup> this is why God's promises always come true.<sup>32</sup> God is Truth itself, whose words cannot deceive. This is why one can abandon oneself in full trust to the truth and faithfulness of his word in all things. the beginning of sin and of man's fall was due to a lie of the tempter who induced doubt of God's word, kindness and faithfulness.

CCC 215

Man, tempted by the devil, let his trust in his Creator die in his heart and, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. This is what man's first sin consisted of.<sup>278</sup> All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness.

CCC 397

Simple and faithful trust, humble and joyous assurance are the proper dispositions for one who prays the Our Father

CCC 2797

## Scripture Quotes

*Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.*

~Psalm 9:10

*For with God, nothing is impossible.*

~Luke 1:37

*Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.*

~Luke 16:10

*Trust in God with your whole heart, and lean not on your own understanding.*

*Proverbs 3:5*

*For you are my hope oh Lord, my trust oh God, from my youth.*

~ Psalm 71:

## Other Quotes

"O Mary, I put my trust in you; in this hope I live and this hope I long to die, saying over and over: '*Unica spes mea Jesus, et post Jesum virgo Maria*' - My only hope is Jesus, and after Jesus, Mary."

~St Alphonsus

There are three main elements of faith, which harmoniously work together in a believer: trust, assent and obedience.

~ Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted

Jesus' silence is a profound and steadfast trust in God and a testimony of unreserved goodness.

~St. John of the Cross

O Lord, behold here before you a soul who exists in this world ... to forgive us, do not look upon our sins, but upon the trust which (58) we place in your infinite goodness.

~St. Faustina

Let nothing trouble you. Let nothing frighten you. All things are passing. God never changes. Patience obtains all things. He who possesses God lacks nothing. God alone suffices.

~ St. Theresa of Avila

## Prayer for the Virtue of Trust



My trust is in sweet Jesus: He is my passport to heaven! I place my life in His gentle hands; He will guide me along the rainbow. My blind trust is His to guide, May my soul reflect His light. I look around and see Jesus' help; I know He is worthy of my trust. Sweet Jesus, remain by my side, never letting my trust be shaken! May I learn to share my trust with others, So Jesus will be known to all!

## *Saints and How They Lived the Virtue of: Trust*

**Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska**



Saint Faustina was born Helena Kowalska in a small village west of Lodz, [Poland](#) on August 25, 1905. She was the third of ten children. When she was almost twenty, she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, whose members devote themselves to the care and [education](#) of troubled young women. The following year she received her religious [habit](#) and was given the name Sister Maria Faustina, to which she added, "of the Most Blessed Sacrament", as was permitted by her congregation's custom. In the 1930's, Sister Faustina received from the [Lord](#) a message of mercy that she was told to spread throughout the world. She was asked to become the [apostle](#) and secretary of God's mercy, a model of how to be merciful to others, and an instrument for reemphasizing God's plan of mercy for the world. It was not a glamorous prospect.

Her entire life, in imitation of Christ's, was to be a [sacrifice](#) - a [life](#) lived for others. At the Divine Lord's request, she willingly offered her personal sufferings in union with Him to atone for the sins of others; in her daily [life](#) she was to become a doer of mercy, bringing joy and peace to others, and by writing about God's mercy, she was to encourage others to trust in Him and thus prepare the world for His coming again. Her special devotion to [Mary](#) Immaculate and to the [sacraments](#) of [Eucharist](#) and [Reconciliation](#) gave her the [strength](#) to bear all her sufferings as an offering to [God](#) on behalf of the Church and those in special need, especially great sinners and the dying.

She wrote and suffered in secret, with only her spiritual director and some of her superiors aware that anything special was taking place in her life. After her death from tuberculosis in 1938, even her closest associates were amazed as they began to discover what great sufferings and deep

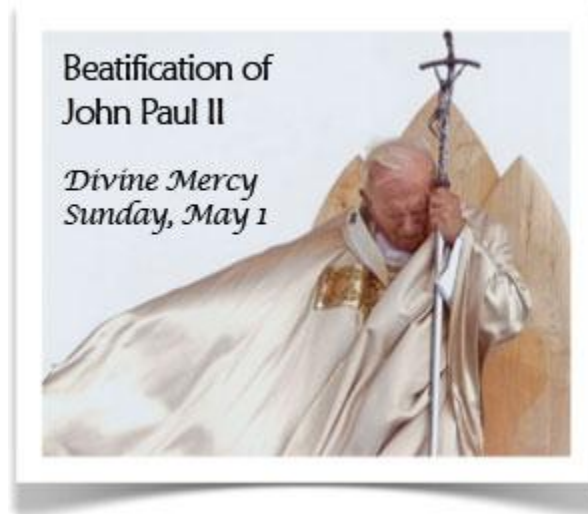
mystical experiences had been given to this Sister of theirs, who had always been so cheerful and humble. She had taken deeply into her heart, God's gospel command to "be merciful even as your heavenly Father is merciful" as well as her confessor's directive that she should act in such a way that everyone who came in contact with her would go away joyful. The message of mercy that Sister Faustina received is now being spread throughout the world; her diary, [Divine Mercy](#) in my Soul, has become the handbook for devotion to the Divine Mercy.

Today, we continue to rely on Saint Faustina as a constant reminder of the message to trust in Jesus' endless mercy, and to live life mercifully toward others. We also turn to her in prayer and request her intercession to our merciful Savior on our behalf. At the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy, we include the following in our 3 o'clock prayers:

**Saint Faustina,**

You told us that your mission would continue after your death and that you would not forget us. Our Lord also granted you a great privilege, telling you to "distribute graces as you will, to who you will, and when you will." Relying on this, we ask your intercession for the graces we need, especially for the intentions just mentioned. Help us, above all, to trust in Jesus as you did and thus to glorify His mercy every moment of our lives.

Amen



## Scripture Passages on Respect For Entering into notebooks and Discussing



### Scripture passages

Stories from the New Testament that you could use with your children:

“Love of Enemies” Luke 6:27 – 36; Matthew 5:43-48

#### **Matthew 5:43-48**

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

“Parable of the Good Samaritan” Luke 10:29 – 37; Who gave of himself and respected the needs of the hurt traveller and helped him.

“Mutual Love” Romans 12: 9 – 21; Reminds us to show love and respect in every situation.

**Respect life** in simple ways, in everyday occurrences: Speaking nicely to others, obey their parents, elders, and people in charge of them, offering to help others, using manners, practicing patience, and the list can go on.

Manners are minor morals. They are the everyday ways we **respect** other people and interact positively with others.

Saying please when we'd like something, thanking people (waitresses and clerks, for example) when they do us a service, holding a door for the person behind us, not talking in movie theaters, turning off our cell phones when we're in a group setting, covering our mouth when we yawn or cough, using language that doesn't offend -- all these are small but meaningful ways of trying to make life a little more pleasant for the people around us.

**Respect** is self-giving. It is being considerate and courteous to those around us.

**Respect for life.** The Fifth Commandment—“You shall not kill”—“calls us to foster the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social well-being of self and others” (USCCA, p. 389). We must value and support all life. How can we promote respect for life? This starts with respecting and valuing our own lives as gifts from God.

**FEAST DAY**  
**Our Lady of Fatima: May 13**



**Fatima, Portugal “Our Lady of Fatima”**

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, appeared 6 times to 3 shepherd children; Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta; between May 13 and October 13, 1917. She came to the little village of Fatima which had remained faithful to the Catholic Church during the recent persecutions by the government. Our Lady came with a message from God to every man, woman, and child of our century. Our Lady of Fatima promised that the whole world would be in peace, and that many souls would go to Heaven if Her requests were listened to and obeyed. She told us that war is a punishment for sin; that God would punish the world for its sins in our time by means of war, hunger, persecution of the Church and persecution of the Holy Father, the Pope, unless we listened to and obeyed the command of God. At Fatima, Pope John Paul II said on May 13; “the message of Fatima is more relevant and more urgent ” then when Our Lady first appeared. The message is an anguished appeal of our Heavenly Mother, Who sees us in great danger and Who comes to offer Her help and advice. Her message is also a prophesy, a clear indication of what was about to transpire in the 20th century, and what is still going to happen infallibly in the near future, depending on our response to Her requests.

# The Story of Fatima

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, appeared six times to three shepherd children ("The Three Seers") near the town of Fatima, Portugal between May 13 and October 13, 1917. Appearing to the children, the Blessed Virgin told them that She had been sent by God with a message for every man, woman and child living in our century. Coming at a time when civilization was torn asunder by war and bloody violence, She promised that Heaven would grant peace to all the world if Her requests for prayer, reparation and consecration were heard and obeyed.



***"If My requests are granted ...  
there will be peace"***

Our Lady of Fatima explained to the children that war is a punishment for sin and warned that God would further castigate the world for its disobedience to His Will by means of war, hunger and the persecution of the Church, the Holy Father and the Catholic Faithful. God's Mother prophesied that Russia would be God's chosen "instrument of chastisement," spreading the "errors" of atheism and materialism across the earth, fomenting wars, annihilating nations and persecuting the Faithful everywhere.

***"If My requests are not granted,  
Russia will spread its errors  
throughout the world, raising up  
wars and persecutions against the Church. The good will be  
martyred, the Holy Father will suffer much and various  
nations will be annihilated."***

In all Her appearances at Fatima, the Blessed Mother repeatedly emphasized the necessity of praying the Rosary daily, of wearing the [Brown Scapular](#) of Mount Carmel and of performing acts of reparation and sacrifice. To prevent the terrible chastisement at the hands of Russia and to convert "that poor nation", Our Lady requested the solemn public Consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart by the Pope and all the Catholic bishops of the world. She also asked that the Faithful practice a new devotion of reparation on the first Saturday of five consecutive months ("[The Five First Saturdays](#)")

### *Hannah's Bike Ride: A story of "trust"*

It was a beautiful, sunny Saturday. Hannah and her brother, Joey, ate lunch quickly because their parents had promised to take them on a bike ride that afternoon. Hannah had been riding without her training wheels for a couple of days and was excited to go on a real bike ride like her big brother. She felt like such a big kid when she zoomed around on her bike with no training wheels.

Hannah ran into the garage and put on her bike helmet. She waited for what felt like forever for the rest of her family to come out to get their bikes. Finally everyone was ready and Hannah's family started off on their ride. They rode around their neighborhood and were having a great time. Smiling and laughing, Hannah was doing a great job! She was following her dad and had no trouble pedaling her bike up the the small hills they rode on. She was having a blast!

The family began to turn the corner and head for home. As soon as she was around the corner, Hannah used her brakes and then put her feet on the ground, stopping her bike as fast as she could. She looked in front of her and saw that she was at the top of a hill... a long hill that looked like it went on forever! Her eyes got huge and she began to feel very small. Hannah's mom, dad and Joey kept riding and were halfway down the hill before her mom noticed she wasn't with them anymore.

Hannah's mom rode back up the hill to Hannah and stopped alongside her.

"What's wrong Hannah?" her mom asked.

"I'm not going down that hill. I think I want to walk my bike down," Hannah sad. Her eyes were filling up with tears and her hands started shaking a little bit. She was scared.

"But Hannah you know how to ride and you know how to use your brakes. You'll be fine!" her mom said.

Hannah sat on her bike and shook her head. There was no way she was going to go down that hill riding her bike.

Hannah's dad rode back up the hill and joined Hannah and her mom. He saw the tears in Hannah's eyes and he could tell that she was scared. "What's going on?" he asked.

"That hill is too steep, Daddy. I don't want to go down it," Hannah said.

"But Hannah, you are doing so well on your bike. We're almost home. I know you can do it! Just use your brakes like I taught you," Hannah's dad said.

Tears started rolling down Hannah's face. What if she went too fast? She thought. What if she crashed because she couldn't brake and stop her bike? She felt like she was too scared to move.

Hannah's mom got off of her bike and came and stood next to Hannah. "Hannah, we know that you can do this. We wouldn't make you do something that you weren't ready to do. How about I stand next to you and keep my hand on the seat of your bike? I won't let you fall."

Hannah's hands were still shaking, tears were still in her eyes, and she was still scared. "But," she thought, "I know that my mom won't let me fall. She is bigger and stronger than me and I know she doesn't want me to get hurt. "

Hannah's mom knelt beside Hannah and wiped away the tears on her cheeks. "You know that I love you and that you can trust me Hannah. How about we ride down to that tree and stop?" She pointed to a tree a little ways away.

Hannah looked at her mom, then she looked at the tree. She was still scared, but she trusted her mom and after a minute Hannah nodded her head.

Hannah's mom put her hand on the bike seat. Hannah put her feet on the pedals and started down the hill. She wobbled a little as she pedaled, but after a few seconds she was by the tree her mom had pointed at. She braked just like her dad had taught her and stopped right next to it. Hannah could hear her dad cheering from the top of the hill and Joey cheering from the bottom of the hill. She had done it!

"Hannah I am so proud of you!" said her mom. "You trusted me and knew that I wouldn't let you fall. Let's see if we can make it the rest of the way down the hill together." Hannah smiled up at her mom; she wasn't crying or shaking anymore. In fact, she was starting to have fun again!

Hannah made it down the hill and even did part of it without her mom running beside her. A few minutes later they were back home. The family sat down under a shade tree in their front yard and Hannah's mom brought out some popsicles for everyone.

While Hannah and her family ate the ice-cold popsicles, they talked about their bike ride and how Hannah had made it down the hill. While Hannah was talking about how scared she had been, her dad said, "Hannah, what happened today reminds me of how the Bible tells us we are supposed to trust and love Jesus. You had to trust your mom and you could do that because you love her. Even though you were afraid, you knew she wasn't going to let you get hurt and that she wouldn't make you do something you weren't ready to do.

"Jesus wants us to show Him how much we love Him by choosing to obey Him even when we are afraid. Just like when you chose to show your mom you loved her and trusted her by riding down the hill. There is a verse in Psalms that says that if we believe in God He will hold our hand so that we won't fall, (Ps. 37:23-24). Another verse in Joshua says that we don't need to be afraid because God is with us wherever we go, (Josh. 1:9). He will help us to do whatever he is asking us to do."

Joey giggled and said, "So it's kind of like Jesus is running alongside us and holding the seat of our bikes as we ride along and live our lives?"

"That's one way to think of it Joey," said their mom. "There are other verses in the Bible that says that God will never leave us or give up on us. (Duet. 31, Heb 13) But it also means that when we are scared and don't want to do something we need to do, that we need to show Jesus we love Him by trusting that He is there with us and doing what He wants us to do."

"Alright, who wants another popsicle?" their dad said. "Me, Me, Me!!" shouted Hannah and Joey.

**Teachers use:**

**SUGGESTED COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:**

Review how Hannah was able to make it down the hill on her bike. (She could trust her mom because she loved her mom.)

Discuss how Hannah was trusting her mom with a small part of the hill at first, she eventually was able to trust her with more of the hill. The more we trust Jesus with the little things, it is easier to trust Him with the big things.

Have the children come up with both small and big situations in which they can love Jesus even when they are afraid.

If appropriate, acknowledge that bad things do happen, our trust is not in circumstances to be perfect, but in Jesus who loves us and knows what is best for our lives and for His will.

**RELATED BIBLE STORIES:**

Peter- denied Christ three times in the courtyard and learned to trust through failing to trust

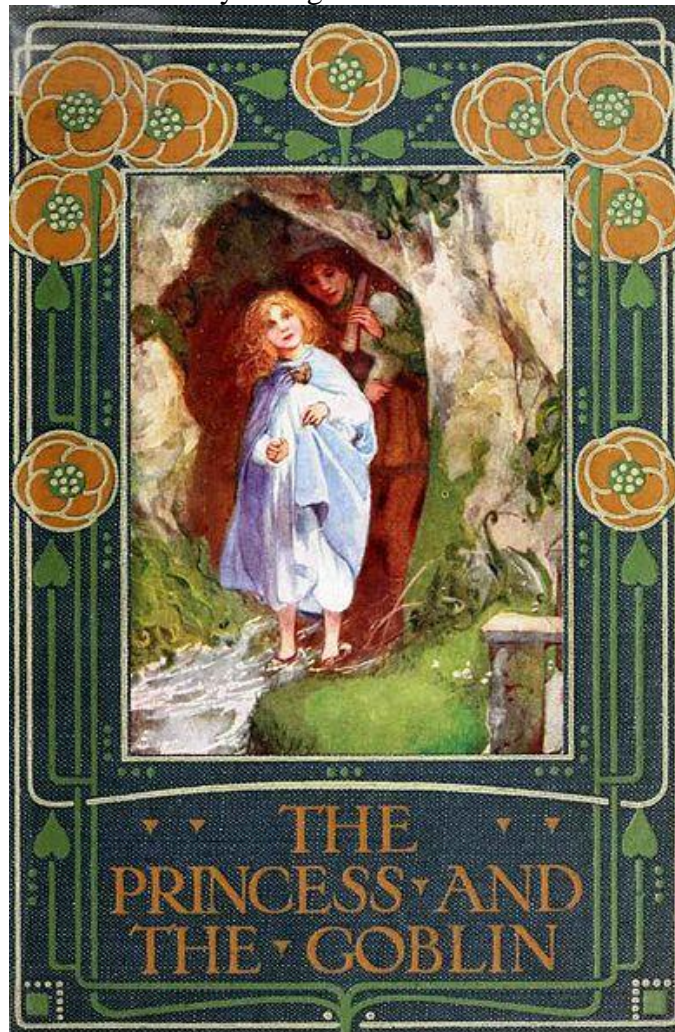
Daniel- exemplified his unwavering trust in God facing the fiery furnace and then the lion's den

**RELATED SCRIPTURE:**

Mark 12:30- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.

## The Princess and the Goblin

By George MacDonald



Some people say that the true test of character comes when we are in emergency situations. Curdie never lost his concern for his parent's well-being and safety, showing loyalty to them in a desperate situation. He also acted unselfishly, taking care of the king, Irene, friends, and even the horses. At the end of this chapter from the Princess and the Goblin, the King commanded his servants to mind whatever Curdie should say to them. Because of Curdie's loyalty, he could fully trust Curdie. (from Everyday Graces by Karen Santorum)

*Trust is the giving of oneself in total reliance to another for safekeeping and guidance. And so, when we put our trust in God through our Savior Jesus Christ we are in essence handing over our lives with unquestioning belief and hope, without fear of the outcome because we know what we entrust is in capable Hands. We have faith that God will give us what we need.*

## **Examination of Conscience for Trust**

*The Invocation of the name of Jesus is a form of prayer when said with devout and frequent repetition moves the heart and soul to embrace and trust all Jesus reveals.*

*Pray one each day, repeating it throughout the day, to understand the revealed truth, and trust in it.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you...*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you are the One the Father sent.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you are faithful to your promises.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you are the friend who lays down his life for his friends.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you alone have the words of eternal life.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you are the God Shepherd calling me by name.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you are rich in mercy.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you gave your life for us.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you are the vine that enables me to bear fruit.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you have called me to be an apostle of your Kingdom.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you are the light shining on our pilgrim journey to the Father.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because you went to prepare us a place in the Father's house.*

*Lord Jesus, I trust in you because (complete and make it your own prayer...)*