

“Virtues to Live by”

FAITH

Before You Begin – An overview for teachers

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

I welcome miracles.
I believe in great possibilities.
I have faith in my destiny.
I release fear and worry.
My heart knows what is true.
I trust in the journey of life.”

Linda Kavelin Popov

Definition

FAITH – is to trust. Faith helps us grow in friendship with Jesus and his friendship helps us become the best we can be by trusting in him so we can become more like him. Growing in friendship with Jesus means learning to trust him and knowing that he is always with us. Faith is always open to new things because if you have faith you are a trusting person.

A person of faith believes in God and all that God has done. But faith is not simply a belief that something is true, it is a way of living. We are called not only to keep the faith but to live a faithful life filled with hope and love.

Virtue to Live By

I know that faith is a gift from God

Faith helps me grow in friendship with Jesus

I show my faith by living my life filled with hope and love

Biblical sources

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” (Isaiah 43:19)

“Jesus paid no attention to what they said, but told him, “Do not be afraid, only believe.” (Mark 5:36)

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew 5:3)

"On one occasion, while Jesus was standing by the Lake with the crowd pressing in on Him to hear the word of God, He saw two boats at the edge of the lake. The fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. Jesus got into the boat belonging to Simon and asked him to put out a little from shore. And sitting down, He taught the people from the boat. When Jesus had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." "Master," Simon replied, "we have worked through the night without catching anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to tear. So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees. "Go away from me, Lord," he said, "for I am a sinful man." For he and his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were his partners James and John, the sons of Zebedee. "Do not be afraid," Jesus said to Simon, "from now on you will catch people." And when they had brought their boats ashore, they left everything and followed Him." (Luke 5:1-11)

"For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7)

"It is with your heart that you believe..." (Romans 10:10)

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

"... faith working through love." (Galatians 5:6)

"And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith." (Matthew 21:22)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'" (Matthew 25:23)

"Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers." (3 John 1:5)

Catholic sources

"I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand." (St. Anselm, *Proslogium*)

"... it is the things believed not the act of believing them that is peculiar to religion." (Blessed John Henry Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, 1, p. 191)

"Trust and trust alone should lead us to love." (St. Therese of Lisieux, *Collected Letters*)

"Faith is the radical trust that home has always been there and always will be there." (Henri J. M. Nouwen)

"The history ... of our families, of our communities, the concrete history we build each day in our schools is never "completed", never exhausts its possibilities. On the contrary, it is always open to what is new, to what has not been taken into account until now. Though it may seem impossible, it is definitely not so because the horizon of new possibilities is rooted in the creative power and love of God." (Pope Francis)

Other sources

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen. Not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." (C. S. Lewis)

"Faith is not an easy virtue but in the broad world of [our] total voyage through time to eternity, faith is not only a gracious companion, but an essential guide." (Theodore Hesburgh, *The Way*)

Why Practise Faith?

Faith is about placing our trust in God or Jesus. There are many examples in the gospels when Jesus told people not to give up especially when they thought something was impossible or because they were afraid. Jesus asked them to have faith. Faith is a gift that comes from knowing and living what you believe no matter what happens. Our friendship with Jesus needs to deepen if our faith is to grow. If we are faithful this will show itself by a life filled with trust, hope and love.

How do we Practise Faith?

A good way to practise faith is to place our trust in God and Jesus through deepening our friendship with God. We can do this by spending time with God in moments of quiet and prayer. It is also important to realise that our faith grows when it is tested. Faith gets stronger when what you believe is tested by other people and things that happen in life and you find that you still believe because your faith is rooted in God and Jesus. When you are faithful you make promises to others and keep them. You can perform a role or do a job as best you can.

Key Words:

Faith, faithful, faithfulness, trust, God, Jesus,

Signs of living the virtue of faith:

I know God loves me and I trust God to take care of me

I ask God to guide in my life

I spend time with God in moments of quiet and prayer

I share my belief in God with others

My words and actions show my faith in God's love

Reflection Questions:

When do you show faith in your life?

How can you stop worrying too much and have faith instead?

How often do you say one thing and do another? How can you become more faithful?

Quotes:

"Jesus said, 'With God all things are possible' (Matthew 19:26)

"Do not be afraid; only have faith." (Mark 5:36)

"And now here is my secret, a very simple secret; it is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye." (Antoine De Saint-Exupery)

"I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves, and re-creates. That informing spirit or power is God." (Mahatma Gandhi)