

Living the Virtues  
St. Bart's Church NYC  
Lent — February 14, 2016  
The Rev. Dr. Robert S. Dannals

"Courage and Perseverance"

I. The Essence of Courage

The power that surges from the heart ("coeur", French for heart) into our wills, leads us beyond thinking and talking, and enables us to do the good and right action when we are concerned that doing it could cost us more than we presently might want to extend.

- A. Courage is at home in the midst of anxiety and fear;  
The virtue of courage requires feeling the right amount of fear.
- B. Hope gives us courage to do what we are afraid to do.
- C. The best of courage enables us to recognize God's presence.

II. The Many Aspects of Courage

- A. Courage causes people to do what they know they have to do.
- B. Human courage comes from a force beyond mere animal instinct and human will.
- C. Courage is acting well at the risk of danger/complexity/pushback.
  - i. David approaching Goliath
  - ii. Neil Armstrong stepping onto the Moon.
  - iii. A child's first trip to the dentist.
  - iv. A whistle-blower in a corporation.
- D. Courage is acting well when troubles/conflict/difficulty are already upon us.
  - i. A parent stepping in front of danger for the sake of the child.
  - ii. A passerby diving into the Central Park Reservoir to save a drowning person.
  - iii. New York firefighters running into the World Trade Center Towers.
  - iv. A fellow student covering a friend during a random school shooting.
- E. The memory of cowardice may be the birth of courage.
- F. We often receive and enact courage by mimicking those before us.
- G. We find more courage in community.
- H. Often courageous people will say they had no choice.

### III. The Essence of Perseverance/Endurance

The ability to remain engaged in a human dimension and reality because we believe by our consistent extension of energy, passion and will, there will be a good, or even better, outcome by our involvement.

- A. The Greek word "ouptomeno", translated in scripture "perseverance" and "endurance" means "stick-to-itiveness"
- B. What Plato referred to as the virtue of "perseverance" he meant "passive courage."

### IV. The Many Aspects of Perseverance and Endurance

- A. We learn perseverance (patience) and endurance by watching other people.
- B. We learn these virtues not by reading about them but by living them, by trying them on like a suit of clothing.
- C. Perseverance and endurance reach beyond reason and rational argument.
- D. These virtues teach us that when we're at the "end of our rope," God is present.