

## **N**ot many of us think of ourselves as courageous.

At least I don't. We reserve that word for people who go into battle, either actual war or the battles we equate with illness or hardships in life. But did you ever think that being who you are as a Christian person takes enormous courage? When we act as hopeful people we work against a culture of cynicism. We conquer the doubts in our world about the power of God to change our lives for the better. We stand as people of the Gospel message, a message that turns death to life, despair to faith and competition to cooperation.



Fr. David Cinquegrani, C.P.  
Retreat Director

Courage is a gift, and hope is the virtue we need to live courageously.

What is the difference between a GIFT and a VIRTUE? A gift is something given to us, something that comes to us without effort— a virtue is something that we need to practice...over and over again!

According to Saint Thomas Aquinas, practicing the “Theological Virtues” (faith, hope and love) enables us to act on the “Gifts of the Holy Spirit.” **Courage** is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. **Hope**, then, enables us to act with courage as an authentic disciple of Christ. If we had no hope, we could not be courageous. It's as simple as that.



Having the courage to hope means we overcome our fears and are willing to take risks as a follower of Jesus. A person with courage is willing to stand up for what is right in the sight of God, even if it means accepting rejection. The gift of fortitude, another name for courage, allows us the strength of mind that is required in both doing good and facing suffering or evil.

Having the courage to hope means we never give up because we find God in ALL things!

My hope is this...that you will come to Holy Family this year to experience what it means to find God in all things, even in the midst of doubt. A retreat can give us just the right tools to make that discovery, to be aware of God's presence when it is not apparent to us. Our new theme: **The Courage to Hope: Finding God in All Things** is about faith in the power of God and the courage to live that faith. It's about seeing the Divine in the everyday “stuff” of our lives.

Becoming agents of hope in a world of distraction, pessimism, and busyness takes great courage. Together, we will explore how God's presence, hidden in every moment of life, equips us to be courageous and hopeful for ourselves and others.

I look forward to being with you this coming retreat season and to encounter together –**The Courage to Hope!**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Fr. David Cinquegrani, C.P.' The signature is fluid and cursive.

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Retreat Director

