

Literature Resources and Excerpts on Courage

These resources focus on the courage to change.

- **An Excerpt from *The Sacred Art of Fasting: Preparing to Practice* by Thomas Ryan**

Thomas Ryan explores the uses of fasting for health and as a spiritual practice. In this excerpt on devotion, he suggests ways to fast for those who because of health, age, or life circumstances cannot fast in the traditional sense of abstaining from food and drink. He notes that even for those who are able to fast, these alternate forms can supplement a regular, traditional fast day or replace a day of fast.

Fast with Your Eyes

- Watch less TV and video; reflect more on your life through keeping a journal.
- Become informed about the causes of hunger in the world."

"Fast with Your Ears

- Listen less to the radio, CDs, cassettes; listen more to your own inner heart and spirit.
- Be attentive to the words of others.
- Listen to and let yourself be challenged by the words expressed in the scriptures."

"Fast with Your Mouth

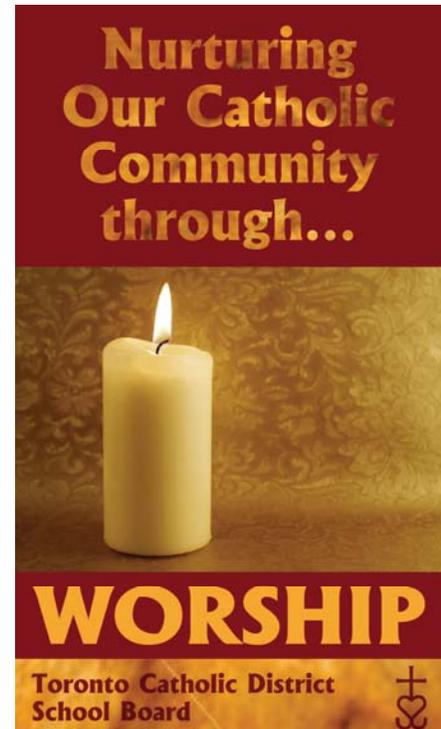
- Take just one helping of the food that is served.
- Eat fewer sweets and processed foods, but appreciate more simple food and drink like water and good bread.

"Fast with Your Hands

- Back off from things that agitate you.
- Take time to just sit and reflect, to rest and observe.
- Make time in your schedule to put your hands together in prayer.
- Share from your own goods with those who have less."

"Fast with Your Feet

- Become more attuned to the modern compulsion to be always on the go; resist the impulse.
- Offer yourself a daily quiet half-hour of reading that nourishes your spirit.



- Learn quiet sitting in meditation.
- Make more time to welcome others to your home."

"Fast with Your Body

- Attach less importance to external fashion and makeup.
- Reclaim your natural hair and skin color.
- When eating, practice stopping when you've had enough, rather than continuing to eat until you feel full."

"Fast from Anger, Resentment, Bitterness

- Get to the bottom of why you're angry or resentful: What's the hidden demand underneath?
- Do the hard work of talking it through with the other, of expressing clearly what it is you are asking for.
- Pray for the grace of forgiving those who have hurt you."

"Fast from Judging Others

- Unhook from conversations in which others are being disparaged, or contribute something positive to balance the negative things that are being said."

"Fast from Complaining

- When you're feeling inclined to complain, stop and look at all you are blessed with and give thanks instead."

"Fast from the Presence of Your Children

- When you feel their absence, find some meaning in the emptiness and the silence.
- Choose life for them by supporting them graciously as they strike out to make their own marks in the world.
- Choose life for yourself by turning to and embracing new possibilities for living, growing, and loving."

"Fast from Glossing Over Your Losses Too Quickly

- Allow yourself to feel the emptiness, the ache, the absence.
- Take the time to do the inner work of grieving.
- Resist the quick but superficial emotional fix, the easy fill-in.
- Risk listening in the silence to the soft voice of inner wisdom."

"Fast from the Intimacy of a Spouse or Friend during a Temporary Absence

- Leave the heart space vacant and let your longing turn you toward God.
- Refresh your realization in the time of absence that relationship is life's blue-ribbon experience, that of this 'food' we are meant to eat, and that without it we die.

• Let your desire for the presence of the other, teach you that we were made for communion, and 'our hearts are restless, Lord, until they rest in Thee.' "

- [Oscar Romero and the Communion of Saints](#)
Scott Wright
Richly illustrated biography of the prophet and martyr Oscar Romero.
Oscar Romero and the Communion of Saints
Scott Wright
ISBN: 9781570758393
- [How Not To Be Afraid of Your Own Life](#)
Susan Piver
A thoughtful and pragmatic anatomy of fear and the power of meditation and other spiritual practices to deal with it.
- [Etty Hillesum](#)
Etty Hillesum, Annemarie S. Kidder
The ecumenical mysticism of Holocaust victim Etty Hillesum whose diaries charted her spiritual course.
- [Conquering Fear](#)
Harold S. Kushner
A mature spiritual perspective on coping with the many fears of life.

Film Resources for the Virtue of Courage

- [Lemon Tree \(Etz Limon\)](#)
Eran Riklis
An important movie about the healing power of empathy in the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- [Milk](#)
Dustin Lance Black
The original screenplay for the acclaimed film Milk and other supplemental material.
- [Trouble the Water](#)
Tia Lessin, Carl Deal
A riveting documentary about some African-American survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

- [Sophie Scholl: The Final Days](#)
Marc Rothemund
A compelling and deftly acted portrait of a female freedom fighter against the Nazi war machine in 1943 Germany.
- [Mulan](#)
Barry Cook, Tony Bancroft
An animated feature that heralds the ancient Confucian virtues of family honor, respect for elders, and devotion to country.