



The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: What Does God Ask of Us?

Part VII: Celebrate the Mass



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Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Sister Sara Draney is a Dominican Nun from the Monastery of the Infant Jesus in Lufkin, Texas. Helen is a lay-Dominican and has a love for music ministry. The Dominicans, I should mention, are also known as the Order of Preachers. Sharon is still our token cradle Catholic, and, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions and mangle biblical names. To answer my questions and correct my pronunciation is why we have our panelists, so welcome to our panelists as well as to our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn Your Holy Truth.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

Discussion:

As we concluded our last discussion, I mentioned that some are tempted to believe that adoration is only for those in the religious life or those who are more pious than we, whatever that might mean considering we all suffer from sin. Others might express that they would consider spending time in adoration, but there always seems to be a conflict, something to do,

somewhere else to be. Whatever the excuse we might have, we should take a moment to consider who is the happiest when we are unable to spend time in adoration? The evil one will be ecstatic to help us find an excuse for us to spend time elsewhere, anywhere, but in adoration of our Lord and Savior.

I must admit, the first time I spent time in adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, I was awkward. I didn't really know what to do or think. I didn't feel it was right for me, with all my sins, to be there. I had feelings that I was somehow intruding in a sacred space meant for others. It certainly was not a space meant for me, a wretched sinner.

My life was the life of the Centurion, a soldier; certainly no one anyone would call a religious man. I knew I was not worthy to enter under Jesus' roof, but He still invited me in. In my mind, I felt I should only approach Him from afar. The walls did not shake and thunder did not sound in protest of my presence. Instead, I found a moment of peace. I'm still not worthy to enter under His roof, but He still invites me in. He wants our time. He wants our love. He wants a relationship with us. He is there waiting. The choice as to the time we spend with Him, He has left to us.

Another opportunity we have where we can spend time with our Lord is when we celebrate the Mass. As Catholics, the Mass is a central activity of our faith. We are required to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, but we also have the opportunity to attend daily Mass. Blessed are those who are able to attend daily Mass for in so doing, they are spiritually fed every day.

(Question 1: As I just mentioned, the Mass is a central activity of our faith. Given the Nave is often filled with comfortable seating, aka pews, we might think of it as a spectator space. Why do you think I used the words that “ the Mass is a central activity of our faith?” And before anyone brings this up, I am not talking about Catholic aerobics – stand up, sit down, kneel, etc.)

- We are participants, not spectators
- We are there to worship, not to be entertained
- We are there in community, to reach out to our Lord and Savior
- We are there for prayer
- We are there to be nourished by His Holy Word
- We are there to be nourished by His Body and Blood
- We are there to love and to receive love

(Question 2: We are told within the Ten Commandments that we are to keep the Sabbath Day holy and we often associate that with going to church, but I mentioned earlier, some Catholics go to daily Mass. If the Mass is not simply for the purpose of keeping the Sabbath Day holy, why, then, do we celebrate the Mass?)

(Luke 22:14-20)

14 When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles. 15 He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for, I tell you, I shall not eat it [again] until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” 17 Then he took

a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; 18 for I tell you [that] from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19 Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." 20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

- Thanks and praise for the sacrifice made for us
- Reflect upon the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord
- Reflect upon our sins and how they add to the agony of Jesus
- Reflect upon the mercy and forgiveness which we may receive through Jesus
- To receive the wisdom of His Word
- To receive His nourishment for our soul
- To spend time with the One from whom there is no greater love

(Question 3: With all we just discussed, we might think the children of God's creation would be looking for every opportunity to celebrate the Mass, but instead, Mass attendance is dwindling. What are some of the excuses we have heard as to why Catholics are not availing themselves of this grace?)

- Not being fed (entertained enough)
 - ➔ Going to Mass is boring
 - ➔ Homilies are not interesting enough
- Political controversies or scandals of the church
- This was something my parents did, but school/friends tell me its superstition
- Church does not reach out to me
- People are judgmental
- Can't stand cliquish behavior
- Can't miss [name whatever here]
- Self conscious about not knowing prayers or what to do
- Children
 - ➔ It is always such a production to get the kids ready to go to Mass
 - ➔ My children don't want to sit still
 - ➔ Other people's children make too much noise

(Question 4: As we reflect upon the reasons we just discussed, we certainly see some obstacles. The question is, who has the responsibility to overcome these obstacles? What are we really saying when we choose not to attend Mass and to whom are we saying it?)

(Question 5: If we are simply spectators at the Mass, we only need to show up. If we are to participate in the Mass (and I'm not talking about when we are part of the ministries which enable the Mass to happen), what might we do to better prepare for the experience?)

- Prayer
 - ➔ Pray the Rosary

- ➔ Spontaneous Prayer
- ➔ Pray with a prayer book
- ➔ Pray with a prayer journal
- ➔ Pray with a Missal
- Reflection
 - ➔ Readings
 - ➔ God's works within our lives
 - ➔ Another prayer journal opportunity
- Prepare alone, with family, or with a friend or friends

(Question 6: After we experience and our nourished by the Mass, we are dismissed and sent forth to go and serve the Lord. **What might we consider doing following the Mass?)**

- Fellowship
- Prayer
- Reflection
- Put our faith in action
- Live our faith

Quotes:

– *St. Josemaria Escriva*

“The Mass is long,” you say, and I add: “Because your love is short.”

– *Saint John Paul II*

Lord Jesus, Who in the Eucharist make your dwelling among us and become our traveling companion, sustain our Christian communities so that they may be ever more open to listening and accepting your Word. May they draw from the Eucharist a renewed commitment to spreading in society, by the proclamation of your Gospel, the signs and deeds of an attentive and active charity.

– *St. Therese of Lisieux*

Do you realize that Jesus is there in the tabernacle expressly for you - for you alone? He burns with the desire to come into your heart...don't listen to the demon, laugh at him, and go without fear to receive the Jesus of peace and love...

Final Thoughts:

I realize that for the majority of our listeners, our discussion today was mostly preaching to the choir. We probably did not share anything which you already didn't know. Still, there may be someone out there who is curious about Catholicism, might be just learning about Catholicism, working to reconnect with their faith or helping someone grow in the exercise of faith. No matter where we are at in our journey, the Mass is Christ's invitation to all of us so He may feed and nourish our souls.

When we understand that our attendance at Mass is not to fulfill a social obligation, but to be nourished by the One who gives us life and the opportunity for eternal life, as well as to give thanks for the sacrifice made for us, then, we will hopefully discover a desire within ourselves to avail ourselves of all which the Mass offers to us. Let us also consider that the Mass is an opportunity for us to give thanks for all the blessings God gives and the many wonderful ways He works within our lives. We must ask ourselves, if we do not come to Him, if we are unwilling to spend time with Him, what are we telling Him?

If we perceive there are obstacles to our attending Mass, let us reflect upon them and ask, “Is it me or is it the evil one who places these obstacles before me?” In either case, let us ask God to help remove those obstacles so we may receive the fullness of the Lord. As we grow closer to Jesus, the question will change to, “Why would I let anyone or anything deprive me of the blessings of the Mass?”

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we turn our discussion to ministry. Also, if you would like to learn more about the scripture we reflect upon or celebrate during the course of the Mass, we invite you to listen to our Scriptural Walk Through the Mass series. Look for episodes 10 through 15 on our website at <https://wcatradio.com/armoroffaith/>.

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may put on the armor of **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation**, and the **Word** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: What Does God Ask of Us? - Part VIII: Ministry to Others

References:

USCCB; (May 2016); Catechism of the Catholic Church; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; <http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/index.html>

The New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE); (9 Mar 2011); United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; <http://usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/index.cfm>