



The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: Prayer and the Holy Spirit – Part II



Morning Prayer
Public Domain

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]

Our panelists provide support and catechesis for religious formation at St. Philip Benizi Catholic Mission in Cedaredge CO. Our panelists are also in the process of discernment and study to become lay Dominicans who are also known as the Order of Preachers. So, welcome to our panelists as well as our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

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.

As we begin today, I would like to take an opportunity to remind our listeners that we have an email address where you can write us with your thoughts, your feedback, your topic suggestions, and your questions. The email is armoroffaithradio@gmail.com We cannot promise to answer every email we receive, but we will certainly use them as we plan and prepare our shows. We encourage you to drop us a line, say hello, and also share with us your thoughts and prayers.

Discussion Opening: Last week we examined what prayer is and whether God hears them. We spoke of prayer as a form of communication with God and that sometimes the answers we receive are not as we expect. We noted that even the only begotten Son of God raised His petitions to our Father in

heaven, but that Jesus was also obedient and subordinated His will to that of His Heavenly Father. We discussed that we must trust in what God allows, for He is able to see in many ways that which we are not capable; therefore, we must trust that what He allows is for a greater good across heaven and earth and the continuation of the generations. We may not understand in the moment, but if we look back at our lives, we can see His fingerprints. We might also be able to see our resistance to what God asks of us as revealed by our choices.

Today, we will discuss how we approach our prayer life. Some follow the Liturgy of the Hours. Some of us set aside a special time each day. Some of us may use the Rosary to focus our prayer, while others may use prayer books, devotionals, or scripture. Some of us focus our prayer before or after Mass and/or Adoration. Some of us pray as we are able to find a quiet moment, while still others may pray only in the face of crisis or when overwhelmed by feelings of hopelessness. In other words, instead of reaching out to God as our first resort, some of us are conditioned, for various reasons, to only reach out to God as a last resort.

(Question: Keeping these thoughts in mind, let's turn to our panel and ask the question, **when should we pray?)**

The Church "forcefully and specially exhorts all the Christian faithful . . . to learn 'the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ' (Phil 3:8) by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures. . . . Let them remember, however, that **prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that a dialogue takes place between God and man. For 'we speak to him when we pray; we listen to him when we read the divine oracles.'**" (CCC: 2653)

(Question: **Why should we pray as we read and reflect upon His Word?)**

In the sacramental liturgy of the Church, the mission of Christ and of the Holy Spirit proclaims, makes present, and communicates the mystery of salvation, which is continued in the heart that prays. The spiritual writers sometimes compare the heart to an altar. **Prayer internalizes and assimilates the liturgy during and after its celebration. Even when it is lived out "in secret," prayer is always prayer of the Church; it is a communion with the Holy Trinity.** (CCC: 2655)

(Question: We sometimes think of prayer as something personal or private. **Is there a difference between our personal intentions and communal prayer?)**

Rejoice always. **Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks,** for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. **Do not quench the Spirit.** (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19)

(Question: Saint Paul instructed the Thessalonians that we should pray without ceasing, but if we take a look at our typical day, it is pretty easy to see that we have many things to do in our lives. We must search for our sustenance, we must take care of our hygiene, we are called to help the less fortunate, we are called to serve in ministry to others, we have the work of our vocations, we have our hobbies, perhaps we might have a little time to relax, and, of course, some of us have a periodic desire to sleep. **So, where do we have the opportunity to "pray without ceasing?"**

(Question: **Do we remember to give thanks in all circumstances and why should we?)**

The *Christian family* is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the "domestic church" where God's children learn to pray "as the Church" and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church's living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit. (CCC: 2685)

(Question: When we have children, the time available to us changes dramatically. Our focus often shifts, as it should, to the needs and raising of our children while we must also address our careers so we can make an income and provide for our family. As we consider the time available to us, what are our priorities and opportunities to experience daily family prayer?)

(Question: As we engage our children in daily family prayer, how can we help them to understand what it is, what its purpose is, and how can we encourage them so that they see it as a blessing?)

(Question: As we seek to encourage daily family prayer, what objections might we expect from various members of our family and how might we address those objections?)

The *catechesis* of children, young people, and adults aims at teaching them to meditate on The Word of God in personal prayer, practicing it in liturgical prayer, and internalizing it at all times in order to bear fruit in a new life. Catechesis is also a time for the discernment and education of popular piety. The memorization of basic prayers offers an essential support to the life of prayer, but it is important to help learners savor their meaning. (CCC: 2688)

(Question: We see in this article of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, that we have a variety of opportunities to pray, such as during the liturgy, internally during the course of our day, during discernment as well as during education. We are also encouraged to memorize basic prayers. What are some of these prayers and how might we help our children to learn and memorize them?)

Quotes:

“Man has a noble task: That of prayer and love. To pray and love, that is the happiness of man on earth.” - St. Jean Marie Baptiste Vianney

“Prayer is the place of refuge for every worry, a foundation for cheerfulness, a source of constant happiness, a protection against sadness.” - St. John Chrysostom

“Prayer is the inner bath of love into which the soul plunges itself.” - St. Jean Marie Baptiste Vianney

“Virtues are formed by prayer. Prayer preserves temperance. Prayer suppresses anger. Prayer prevents emotions of pride and envy. Prayer draws into the soul the Holy Spirit, and raises man to Heaven.” - St. Ephraem of Syria

“We set forth our petitions before God, not in order to make known to Him our needs and desires, but rather so that we ourselves may realize that in these things it is necessary to turn to God for help.” - St. Thomas Aquinas

Final Thoughts: During our discussion today, the primary question was, “When should we pray?” The ultimate answer of scripture is to pray without ceasing as Saint Paul instructed the Thessalonians. (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Our discussion included the importance of daily family prayer and the ways we may help our children, grandchildren, and, perhaps, great-grandchildren, to develop their own prayer life and appreciation for prayer. We also discussed some of the activities in our lives which may distract us from prayer, but we must remember, we do have choices as to how we assess and address our priorities.

The ultimate question for us as we plan our daily lives is, “What time will we make for prayer?” We might also ask, will we seek its peace? Will we seek to share its blessings? Will we use it to assist us in discernment? Will we allow it to help us as we navigate our daily path? Will we remember to give thanks in all circumstances? (1 Thessalonians 5:18) Most importantly, will we use prayer to help deepen our relationship with God?

Wrap Up: Well, it is amazing at how quickly an hour can go. We hope you will be able to join us next week as continue our discussion concerning prayer and the Holy Spirit.

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: Prayer and the Holy Spirit – Part III.