



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: What Does God Ask of Us?
Part VI: Adoration



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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, cause that is the one thing I learned how to do when I was two. To answer my questions and correct my pronunciation of biblical names 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:

During our last discussion, we mentioned that prayer is a conversation with God. As with any relationship, time together is important to the quality and blessings which may be shared and to maintain a strong bond. God calls to us and is ready to hear our prayer at any time and at any place. The choice as to the time we spend with Him, He has left to us.

As I mentioned, some people may be like I was, praying only in desperation. For a long period of my life, I didn't really know how to pray or what to pray other than the occasional cry for help. God is certainly there for us when we do cry out, but He also wants to hear our joys, our questions, our thoughts for our future. He also wants to give His love and receive ours in return. These are all things we can do through prayer.

Just as time and practice was required for us to learn how to communicate with those who surround us, we cannot learn how to communicate with God if we do not spend time with Him. It may feel uncomfortable at first, but as we allow ourselves to grow in prayer, we will eventually find that we become more uncomfortable when we do not allow ourselves the time to spend in prayer.

Note, I said, "...when we do not allow ourselves." While there are many demands upon our day, if we look, there is always time to pray. It does not take that long to say, "Dear Lord, I love You." If there is nothing else we have to say for the day, that short prayer speaks volumes.

Today, we are going to talk about a special place for our prayer and that is during **adoration** of our Lord and Savior in the Blessed Sacrament. Though it should be a priority for us, it appears to be a fading practice. Those, however, who awaken to it, find **adoration** to be a special time and an opportunity to allow Jesus to speak to our hearts.

(Question 1: We know the word and I am sure many of our listeners spend time in **adoration** and receive its blessings, but lets take a moment to reflect upon what it is and what it means. So, let's start by asking, what is **adoration** and why would God ask us to spend time in **adoration** of His only begotten Son?)

(CCC: 2096) **Adoration** is the first act of the virtue of religion. To **adore** God is to acknowledge him as God, as the Creator and Savior, the Lord and Master of everything that exists, as infinite and merciful Love. "You shall **worship** the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve," says Jesus, citing *Deuteronomy*.

(Deuteronomy 6:13)

13 The LORD, your God, shall you fear; him shall you serve [worship], and by his name shall you swear.

(CCC: 2628) **Adoration** is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil. **Adoration** is homage of the spirit to the "King of Glory," respectful silence in the presence of the "ever greater" God. **Adoration** of the thrice-holy and sovereign God of love blends with humility and gives assurance to our supplications.

(CCC: 333) From the Incarnation to the Ascension, the life of the Word incarnate is surrounded by the adoration and service of angels. When God "brings the firstborn into the world, he says: 'Let all God's angels worship him.'" Their song of praise at the birth of Christ has not ceased resounding in the Church's praise: "Glory to God in the highest!" They protect Jesus in his infancy, serve him in the desert, strengthen him in his agony in the garden, when he could have been saved by them from the hands of his

enemies as Israel had been. Again, it is the angels who “evangelize” by proclaiming the Good News of Christ’s Incarnation and Resurrection. They will be present at Christ’s return, which they will announce, to serve at his judgment.

(Hebrews 1:5-6)

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say:

“You are my son; *this day I have begotten you*”?

Or again:

“I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me”?

6 And again, *when he leads the first-born into the world*, he says:

“*Let all the angels of God worship him.*”

(Question 2: When Christ was brought into the world, the angels rejoiced. Who else came to **worship** Him while He was in swaddling clothes? What might we reflect about their story and what drew them to the child Jesus?)

(Luke 2:8-20)

8 Now there were *shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock.* 9 The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. 10 The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” 13 And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying:

14 “*Glory to God in the highest
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.*”

15 When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “*Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.*” 16 So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. 18 All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. 19 And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. 20 *Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.*

(Matthew 2:1-12)

1 When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, *magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, 2 saying, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.”* 3 When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

6 *'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
since from you shall come a ruler,
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'*"

7 Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." 9 After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. 10 They were overjoyed at seeing the star, 11 and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

(Question 3: As we discussed, the Magi offered to the baby Jesus gifts. **What gifts might we bring to adoration of our Lord and Savior?)**

- Examples of our obedience
- Examples of doing for others
- Expressions of our love
- Our Prayers of thanks and praise
- Our desire to repent from our sins
- Our penance
- Us

(Luke 10:38-42)

38 *As they continued their journey he entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. 39 She had a sister named Mary [who] sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. 40 Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me." 41 The Lord said to her in reply, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. 42 There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her."*

(Question 4: In this passage, we observe two women; one who chooses to sit at the feet of Jesus and the other who set about serving those present. **What message might this have for us as we choose the priorities of our day?)**

(Matthew 26:36-46)

36 *Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37 He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. 38 Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." 39 He advanced*

a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, **not as I will, but as you will.**” 40 When he returned to his disciples **he found them asleep.** He said to Peter, “**So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?**” 41 **Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.**” 42 Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again, “My Father, **if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!**” 43 Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. 44 He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again. 45 Then he returned to his disciples and said to them, “**Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?**” Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. 46 Get up, let us go. **Look, my betrayer is at hand.**”

(Question 5: As we reflect upon this scripture, we observe Jesus asking His disciples to keep watch and to pray, but they fall asleep. Jesus then asks them, “*So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?*” **What meaning might this question have to us?**)

(Question 6: So, let's say we have never been to **adoration** before. We have either been invited by a family member or a friend, or we simply make the decision to seek out time to spend in **adoration** of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. We find an opportunity and we protect our time so we do not face any conflicts. So, now what? **What might we do during our time in adoration?**)

- Remember reverence entering, during, and leaving
- Great time to pray the Rosary
- Read and reflect upon scripture
- Pray the Psalms, the Divine Office, or prayers from a favorite prayer book
- Reflect upon the Apostle's or Nicene Creed
- Pray using a prayer journal
- Pray a litany
- Sing a hymn (of course, consider the focus of others)
- Have a conversation with Jesus
 - ➔ What are our concerns?
 - ➔ What are our plans?
 - ➔ What are our joys?
 - ➔ For what do we need forgiveness?
 - ➔ What does Jesus ask of us?
- Listen with our heart

(Question 7: Adoration is usually a quiet time, unless those present decide to lift up their prayers to Him in the form of a hymn, litany, or praying the Rosary together. Of course, young children are full of energy and can be a disruption. **What should we do if we have children?**)

- Let them know they have an opportunity to visit with Jesus
- Engage them in how to pray
- Bring an age appropriate prayer book or scriptural coloring book
- Consider their attention span (a lessor time in adoration is better than no time)

➤ It's OK to take a break

(John 19:25-27)

25 Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

(Question 8: In this moment, we observe Mary at the foot of the cross, along with others who who witnessed. We do not know the thoughts of Mary, but let us reflect. What are our thoughts of this moment and why do we think Mary was there? How might this touch our heart as we consider spending time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament?)

Quotes:

– *Saint Teresa of Calcutta*

The time you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time you will spend on earth. Each moment that you spend with Jesus will deepen your union with Him and make your soul everlastingly more glorious and beautiful in Heaven, and will help bring about everlasting peace on earth.

When you look at the crucifix, you understand how much Jesus loved you then. When you look at the Sacred Host, you understand how much Jesus loves you now.

– *St Therese of Lisieux*

Heaven for me is hidden in a little Host Where Jesus, my Spouse, is veiled for love. I go to that Divine Furnace to draw out life, and there my Sweet Savior listens to me night and day."

– *St Alphonsus de Liguori*

Good friends find pleasure in one another's company. Let us know pleasure in the company of our best Friend, a Friend who can do everything for us, a friend who loves us beyond measure. Here in the Blessed Sacrament we can talk to him straight from the heart.

Final Thoughts:

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. 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 attend? 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, such an

accomplished sinner, 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, certainly no one anyone would call a religious man. I knew I was not worthy to enter under His 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.

Wrap Up: Speaking of time, at least for this hour, has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we continue our discussion as to what God asks of us as we turn our attention to the Mass.

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 VII: Celebrate the Mass

References:

Catechism of the Catholic Church; (1994); 2nd Edition; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; <http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/index.html>

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