



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: Put On the Armor of Prayer
Part VI: Prayer With Family



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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]

Helen is a lay-Dominican and has a love for music ministry. The Dominicans, I must 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 mispronounce whatever I can. It is simply my test to see if the panel is paying attention. Anyway, 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.

Dear Lord, we also lift up the prayers in our prayer basket. You know what is written on each one and you know the hearts of those who offer their thanks and praise and their petitions for the blessings of Your great mercy. We pray especially, dear Lord, for our good shepherds. We pray You will protect them and increase their numbers so that through them, we may hear Your Holy Truth.

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

If you would like to add your prayers to our prayer basket, send us an email at armoroffaithradio@gmail.com. Please include the word “prayer” in the subject line so that we will give it priority and capture it for our prayer basket. Just so you know, Sharon and I lift up our prayers with those in the Armor of Faith Radio prayer basket during our daily prayers.

We would also like to ask for your assistance to help share our discussions. If you find an episode or series, which caused you to take a moment and think and you would like to share with family or friends, you only need to copy the URL of the show to which you are listening – you know, the string of whatever in the address box of your browser - and drop it into an email or share it through social media. You can also share our shows through conversation. If you do not remember the URL, simply tell them to enter, “Armor of Faith Radio” in a search engine. All of our shows are available on demand and the topic summaries for each show can be found at <https://wcatradio.com/armoroffaithstudyguides/>. You can also use a search engine to find them by entering, “Armor of Faith Radio Study Guides.”

Faith Event Announcements:

We would like to remind you that 40 Days for Life is kicking off a new prayer rally campaign that will be conducted from 25 Sep 2019 through 3 Nov 2019.

In Colorado Springs, Colorado, the 40 Days for Life campaign kick off will be conducted on Tuesday, 24 Sep 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Centennial Sidewalk near Planned Parenthood, 3480 Centennial Blvd. Attendees are asked to be respectful of private property in the area and walk over to Centennial sidewalk right of way. The guest speaker will be Carrie Yvette Fischer, who is an abortion survivor.

If you would like more information about 40 Days for Life prayer vigils in your area, visit <https://www.40daysforlife.com/>. Look for the “Find a 40 Days for Life Vigil” button, and at the search page, enter your city or state. You can also sign up for prayer vigils near your location.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Things We Use for Mass – Sacred Vessels Continued

We have had two weeks of the “shiny things” segments on Sacred Vessels. Now let us move on to the not so shiny and perhaps lesser noticed vessels needed for celebrating the Eucharist. Today's topics are considered vessels, even though they are not made of metals. Let's look into the linen that is used during the Mass, the altar cloth, the purificator, the corporal, the pall, and the chalice veil.

The Altar Cloth

Beginning in the 4th century, a custom came about that the altar table was to be covered by a linen cloth. By the 7th century, this custom became the law of the church. All altar tables are to be covered by this cloth. Actually, the law is that the table is to be covered by three cloths. This is to protect the altar from any accidental spillage of the Precious Blood. The law is so ingrained into the rubrics of the Church that if this requirement is not followed, it constitutes as a venial

sin. The only exception would be in the case of an emergency where a death has occurred and a Mass needs to be said and linen are not available.

The Purificator

The Catholic Dictionary states that the purificator is:

A small piece of white linen, marked with a cross in the center, used by the priest in the celebration of Mass. It is folded in three layers and used by the priest to purify his fingers and the chalice and paten after Holy Communion.

The Corporal

Also from the Catholic Dictionary we learn that the corporal is:

A square white linen cloth on which the Host and Chalice are placed during Mass. When not in use it may be kept in a burse. It is also used under the monstrance at Benediction or under the Blessed Sacrament at any time.

The word corporal comes from the Latin word *corporalis* and means body.

The Pall

The Pall has several meanings. According to the Catholic Dictionary the Pall is:

A sacred covering. Most commonly, a pall is the stiff square cardboard covered with linen, spread over the top of the chalice at Mass; also a clothe covering, ornamented or plain, placed over the coffin at funeral Masses....

Interesting that the one name is used for different uses. The dictionary had several other uses for the word "pall," but for this discussion, it is the cloth that covers the chalice; the covering.

The Chalice Veil

The chalice veil is to be used to cover the chalice. We often think of this as decoration but its significance is really much deeper than mere decoration. The veil actually goes back to ancient Scripture. Exodus and Hebrews have references to a veil that separates the Holy of Holies. The chalice veil represents the separation between us and God. It serves to remind us of how lowly we are and not worthy of the greatness of God.

Hebrews 9:2-4 says:

(Hebrews 9:2-4)

For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lamp stand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant

covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant .

If you would like to learn more about the Sacred Vessels used during the Mass, we invite you to follow the links in the reference section of the topic summary for this show. You can obtain the topic summary by visiting <https://wcatradio.com/armoroffaithstudyguides/> and look for episode 112.

Discussion:

During the course of our discussion, last time, we noted the many distractions to our prayer life as well as means by which we may commit to and protect our time for prayer. We also mentioned that while we may have many opportunities for joining in prayer during Mass, faith formation, or faith fellowship, we must also consider our private prayer life. It is a means by which we may allow God to take us aside and speak to us alone. It is an opportunity to allow God to bring peace to our heart as He listens to how we reflect on our experience, thoughts, and decisions.

If we feel like He is not there, that He is not answering, we might ask ourselves, are we observing? It may take time, at least in our perception of time, before we recognize an answer, but we must trust, God hears and answers every prayer. When we do not perceive an answer, it could be because we are looking in the wrong places or simply not listening. If we are observant, we shall see. If we open our hearts, we shall hear.

If we allow, prayer can bring us peace. As we converse with God, He will help us navigate what we consider to be our problems, but let us also allow Him to lead us to the purpose for which He created us and the work He desires that we perform. Let us allow Him to lead us to how we may use what He has created in us so that we may help accomplish His will and so we might fulfill the purpose for which He created us.

Today, we are going to discuss the first step beyond our private, personal prayer, and that is prayer with family. We are told in Matthew 18:20,

(Matthew 18:20)

“20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Let's think about this a moment. We have the opportunity to bring Jesus into the midst of our family by simply gathering together in His name. Even if there are no children, a husband and wife are two, even though, they become one flesh through the Holy Sacrament of Marriage. So, husband and wife can bring Christ within their midst by gathering in His name. All the better, if there are children, for we can bring His love to them by gathering in His name and bringing His love into our midst. And, if He is in our midst, would it not be a great opportunity to talk with Him....as a family...opening our hearts to Him....sharing our love with Him?

Unfortunately, while recognizing the importance of prayer, it appears that many Catholic families in the United States do not regularly avail themselves of the opportunity to join together in prayer and share time with Christ within their midst. According to a 2015 study conducted by The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), “Most parents, 76 percent, say they more often pray by themselves than with family members.” The study goes on to report that only “seven percent say they more often pray with family members than alone and 17 percent pray alone and with family about equally.” The report continues, “Parents who pray more alone most often say that they choose to do so because this is what they prefer (24 percent) or because of timing and scheduling conflicts that prevent them from praying with others (21 percent).” (Gray, pgs 5-6)

(Question 1: While these statistics do not tell us the percentage of Catholic families which regularly pray together, we can make some assumptions that many families miss this opportunity. **What are some of the challenges which may prevent families from joining together in prayer?)**

- Parents did not experience the tradition during their own childhood
- Busy schedules (prayer not seen as a priority?)
- Not sure how to engage small children
- Small children are fidgety, older children have places to go
- Children don't understand the blessings of prayer → It's boring (meaning I don't understand its meaning or value)
- Parents may not equally view the value of prayer (unevenly yoked in faith)
- Parents may not have their own appreciation of prayer or how to pray

(Deuteronomy 11:18-19)

*18 Therefore, take these words of mine into your heart and soul. Bind them on your arm as a sign, and let them be as a pendant on your forehead. 19 **Teach them to your children, speaking of them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up,...***

(Proverbs 22:6)

*Train the young in the way they should go; **even when old, they will not swerve from it.***

(Ephesians 6:4)

*4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but **bring them up with the training and instruction of the Lord.***

(CCC: 2685) **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.

(Question 2: As we review both scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we observe the responsibility for parents to teach their children the ways of the Lord. If parents do not teach their children to pray, what are the consequences for the family and subsequent generations?)

- The loss of time where family bonds and bonds with God are strengthened
- Children do not gain an appreciation for the value of prayer
- Lack of experience places children at a disadvantage as to what they shall teach their children
- As the practice of prayer wanes the blessings of prayer become lost
- As the practice of prayer wanes, so does our bond with God (hard to maintain a relationship without communication and the devotion of time)
- If we teach no one to pray, who will pray for us and who will pray for our children? (especially when we consider prayers for the souls in purgatory)

(Question 3: We have many habits and routines in our lives which are dictated partially by our desires and partially by the demands of the world. In what ways might we introduce opportunities for family prayer into our set of routines?)

- Prayer before meals → before or after offering thanks for God's bounty, we might also add the question, "For what else are we thankful today?"
- A quick blessing in the morning before everyone goes their separate ways → remember, a blessing is an invocation of God's power and care

*May the blessing of God be upon you.
The blessing of the Father and the Son.
May the Spirit of God; the Spirit of love;
be with you all your days!* (unknown)

- A quick gathering in the evening to share and give thanks for the blessings of the day and petitions for help to resolve the trials as well as for those in need
- A quick blessing before bed → invoking God's power and care as we sleep
- A prayer of thanks to open or close special occasions and family gatherings
- Color Bible story pictures with young children and talk about the pictures
- Share Bible stories and give thanks for what they teach (before reading say a simple prayer asking the Holy Spirit for wisdom and understanding; after reading, say a simple prayer of thanks for God's great glory, wisdom, and mercy)
- As children grow older, incorporate the daily readings into prayer time (an opportunity to listen for God's instruction)

(Question 4: Children want to be involved with what is going on, but they also have short and wandering attention spans. How might we go about encouraging our children to pray with us?)

- Talk about the time as a special and joyful time to share together with God
- Start with one or two prayers, then, let it grow as the children (and parents) grow

- Let small children sit in our lap as we pray aloud (especially the Rosary)
- Let children color or browse books of faith as the family prays aloud
- Set aside a few minutes (a special time together) to work patiently with children to help them memorize basic prayers (also talk about their meaning and blessing)
- Sing hymns of song and praise to the Lord → singing is a form of prayer
- Encourage children to lead the prayers they memorize and thank them for leading their portion → encourage everyone to lead at some point during prayers
- Gently guide children through mistakes or memory lapses → Remind children that quality prayer is not found in how well a prayer is recited, but on how well we reflect upon its meaning – encourage questions and discussion about meaning
- Work with children on means by which prayer time is protected
- Thank and praise children when they remind us it is time for prayer

(Question 5: While families might begin their prayer life with basic prayers and will hopefully progress to incorporate the Rosary, the family may add to the conversation with God in a variety of ways. **What are some opportunities for families to share with God and one another?)**

- Lifting up thanks and praise for the good and joyful things of the day
- Lifting up our petitions
 - ➔ For the souls which are in purgatory
 - ➔ For the sick and afflicted
 - ➔ For the poor and the hungry
 - ➔ For those who live in fear from crime, corruption, or oppression
 - ➔ For an increase in vocations
 - ➔ For the protection of our good shepherds
 - ➔ For blessings upon those who lead
 - ➔ For blessings upon those who follow
 - ➔ For blessings upon those who do
 - ➔ For blessings upon those who are unable to do
 - ➔ For an increase in faith
 - ➔ For the conversion of souls
 - ➔ For peace in our day and the resolution of conflicts
 - ➔ For wisdom and understanding of what He asks of us
 - ➔ For the Holy Spirit to lead us in our opportunities to help accomplish His will
- Lift up our love for the Lord
- Lift up our thanks and praise for His love

(Question 6: While we are told in the Catechism, “ The choice of a favorable place is not a matter of indifference for true prayer,” (CCC: 2691) having a special place where the family gathers to pray can help focus the attention of those gathered. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “In a Christian family, this kind of little oratory fosters prayer in common.” (CCC:2691) **What might we desire to have in such a place in our home, beyond a place to sit?)**

- Bible(s) (Family editions can become more than a decoration)
- Daily Missal
- Liturgy of the Hours or Christian Prayer
- Devotionals and periodical devotionals
- Common prayers or prayer aids (apps may be used, but hard copies are nice)
- Coloring Books with Bible images
- Children's Bible story books
- Blessed Christian art (memories of faith) and blessed sacramentals
- Candles, especially blessed candles (remember and teach candle safety)

Quotes:

– *Saint Pope John Paul II - Familiaris Consortio*

Family prayer has its own characteristic qualities. It is prayer offered in *common*, husband and wife together, parents and children together...by reason of their dignity and mission, Christian parents have the specific responsibility of educating their children in prayer, introducing them to gradual discovery of the mystery of God and to personal dialogue with Him...

– *Saint Pope John Paul II - Familiaris Consortio*

Family prayer has for its very own object family life itself, which in all its varying circumstances is seen as a call from God and lived as a filial response to His call. Joys and sorrows, hopes and disappointments, births and birthday celebrations, wedding anniversaries of the parents, departures, separations and homecomings, important and far-reaching decisions, the death of those who are dear, etc.-all of these mark God's loving intervention in the family's history. They should be seen as suitable moments for thanksgiving, for petition, for trusting abandonment of the family into the hands of their common Father in heaven. The dignity and responsibility of the Christian family as the domestic Church can be achieved only with God's unceasing aid, which will surely be granted if it is humbly and trustingly petitioned in prayer.

– *Saint Pope John Paul II - Familiaris Consortio*

By reason of their dignity and mission, Christian parents have the specific responsibility of educating their children in prayer, introducing them to gradual discovery of the mystery of God and to personal dialogue with Him: "It is particularly in the Christian family, enriched by the grace and the office of the sacrament of Matrimony, that from the earliest years children should be taught, according to the faith received in Baptism, to have a knowledge of God, to worship Him and to love their neighbor."

Final Thoughts:

I must confess, I was the obstacle to prayer in my house, not that I didn't pray, but I didn't know how to pray with my family. I was the example of the spouse whose faith was not at the same level. Fortunately, my wife conducted prayer time with our children and especially incorporated prayer during the years they home schooled. The bottom line, is that I missed out on an opportunity to share in the depths of faith with my family. I would encourage our listeners not to make the same mistake.

In my early years as a Catholic, I partially resisted the opportunities for prayer because I did not know the common prayers. Of course, that is why we have books of prayer, so you do not have to have them all memorized, so mine was an excuse of vanity. Even during the days I started growing in my personal prayer life, I was still uncertain as to joining in prayer with others. I just didn't have the confidence. Of course, again, that is why we have prayer books, so again, it was an excuse of vanity.

It was not until the final days of my daughter that I began to understand what could have been ours if I knew in the early years of my children what I know now. Still, I was fortunate to have a spouse who taught and encouraged our children in prayer.

Before our daughter received her last surgery, I asked her to accompany me to a side chapel so we could pray. She was carrying her infant daughter. We knelt together, both lifting our hearts in prayer. Her daughter was too little to know or understand, but still, she was there with us in prayer. I hope one day that her daughter will be able to sit or kneel with me to pray. I know her mother will be there in that moment, as well as our Lord and Savior.

The hardest part of the memories of our daughter's last days was the pain she was in from the medication they were using to contain the inflammation of her brain tumor. The affect of the drug kept her in great pain, caused a foggy brain condition which made it difficult for her to communicate, and made her very irritable.

She wanted to go to daily Mass. It was a blessing. Because during the Mass, despite the side effects of the drug, my daughter was at peace. Though she struggled to communicate with us outside the Mass, during the Mass she clearly said the prayers and sang the hymns with her beautiful voice; all blessings of her mother's teaching. As my daughter was at peace, so was I. I thank God for those moments with my daughter. The sad thing is, if I had only understood earlier, I could have had so many more moments.

As people reflect on their lives during their last days, what is on their mind is the time they could have had with family and loved ones. Parents never lament, "If I could only have had more time at work." What they lament is, "I wish I had spent more time with my family."

If I have any advice to parents from my experience, it is this. Spend some time with your family in prayer. It may seem awkward at first, but encourage your children with blessings. Help them to understand that when you pray a blessing upon them, you are asking for God's power and care for them. Maybe you start with only a couple of minutes, but as your children grow, so will the value of this time together.

Remember, as you gather together, Christ will be in your midst. It is a time to lift up your love to Him, but it is also a time where He will walk with your family and nourish your souls. Allow Him to bring peace into your midst. Allow Him to help build the bond of love, not only within your family, but also for the blessing of all who cross your path.

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 prayer in fellowship.

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: Put on the Armor of Prayer – Part VII: Prayer in Fellowship

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