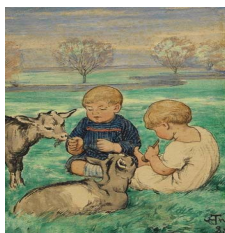




The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: Faith, Family, and Social Issues

Part II: Coming Home Catholic



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]

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 because questions help us to identify the blanks we must fill in. I'll let you ponder that one for awhile. 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.

We also have a special guest today, Hudson Byblow.

Hudson is a well-known speaker and author who discusses his experiences while growing-up along with some of the most difficult topics which face today's Catholic youth as they navigate their personal development and faith formation. Hudson has spoken at conferences world wide and serves organizations such as Catholic Answers, Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO), Life Teen, school boards, college missionary groups, Catholic University centers and dioceses across North America.

Hudson, we are very happy to have you on our panel today.

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.

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 and drop it into an email or share it through social media.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Things We Use for Mass – Clerical Attire

The question is, “why do priests have to wear different clothes from the rest of us?” Good question.

Daily Attire

In our society, today, we associate various jobs and people by how we see them. In all vocations of life there are requirements such as, education, training, experience, and yes, clothing as well. For example, when you see a person wearing a black robe in a court house, you know they are a judge. In a hospital, you see people wearing white coats, or pants and shirts which are called scrubs and this tells you they are doctors, nurses, or someone else from the medical world; or what about when you see someone wearing a police or fireman or military uniform? Of course you know who they are. Without these identifiers, we might not know who is who.

The same for priests. When a priest is “off duty” so to speak, he can be recognized by the street clothes he wears. This would be a shirt with a Roman collar. Or if he is doing something official, but not necessarily sacred, he might be wearing a suit with a clerical shirt. Normally this entire ensemble is black. This is known as his working uniform. Another form of street clothes a priest might wear is a cassock or soutane. This is a black gown that is floor length and buttons up the entire front. We don't see this very often in the United States, but it sure is popular in Italy.

Liturgical Vestments

Since the beginning of religious beliefs, there has been some fashion of vestment. The word “vestment,” comes from the Latin root *vestire*, which translates to vest or as we have come to know it, clothing. We can look back into the Old Testament and see that clerical figures wore vestments to distinguish themselves from the laity. In my reading, I have come across several writers who make the claim that the vestments that our priests today wear are not because of the tradition of the Jewish leaders. They further claim that Jesus never set a standard for the Apostles to wear. They simply wore the traditional robes of the time. It was many years after the Apostles that popes began to call for clergy to dress apart from the laity and then began to work on clothing for Liturgical purposes. Over all these many years, the specific pieces of the vestment have gone through changes and today's priests do dress differently from those of their predecessors. However, the concepts have remained the same since the beginning of this vestment age.

Priests wear liturgical vestments whenever they are in spiritual or sacred service. This means they are doing God's work. Celebrating the Mass is the most important job a priest has and for this the Church requires him to wear liturgical vestments. It is believed that most people need to have their attention captured in order to bring them into the Mass. The pomp and circumstance of liturgical vestments is certainly a nice way to start this off. Another purpose for the liturgical vestments is so that others may respect and obey the priest in as much as they need to for religious reasons. The vesting is also to remind the priest of the weight of his duties and make him be ever mindful of his calling to be a mediator between God and His people. In celebrating blessings, sacraments, processions, confessions, or any other of the many duties of the priest, you will find that he wears the vestments as a sign of his honoring God and caring for the people.

Vestments fall into that category of being a sacramental. This means that they are blessed and set aside for special religious occasions.

Today we addressed the history and purpose of vestments. Next time we will dig into the different articles of clothing that make up the vestments and who wears them---the priest, the deacon, the bishop and the Pope.

If you would like to learn more about Clerical Attire and Liturgical Vestments 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 117.

Discussion:

Before we begin our discussion today, I should point out that we may talk about issues that are not suitable for young ears. If you are listening with young children around, we recommend you find a time where you can listen without little ears listening so that you can process our discussion and consider its meaning in relation to what you want to teach your children and when you believe the topic is appropriate for them. You can always listen on demand. Just remember to look for episode 117.

As I mentioned earlier, we have a special guest today, Hudson Byblow. I met Hudson at the Midwest Catholic Family Conference conducted during August in Wichita, Kansas. It was a wonderful conference with some very powerful speakers, among which was Hudson. His was actually the last presentation to which I listened, but as I reviewed my notebook, I noticed that I ended up taking the most notes during his talk, with the only exception being Father McManus' talk on "Spiritual Warfare," but only by a half a page, which might be telling in its own way.

Part of the reason Hudson's talk captured so much of my attention is that at the time, we were just finishing up our series concerning *Humanae Vitae*, and if you remember, we did a couple of episodes concerning what I call the "values grooming" of our children. What I mean by "values grooming" is the formal influence upon a person, by another person, mentor, or organization; which is designed to influence an individual's values development and the values to which they subscribe. "Values grooming" can be done for positive effect or to plant seeds of corruption. My grave concern are the forces, currently in play today, which target the values development of our children and which corrupt their innocence and leave them with scars which will follow them into adulthood.

Another part of the reason Hudson's talk captured so much of my attention is that he related a number of events from his developmental years which I recognized from my own youth and my own identity development. While we did not walk the exact same path, due to a variety of variables, there were similar events, with which I readily empathized, that took my own development in directions which yielded a confused and heavily secular values set, which was also quite inconsistent with what God asks of us.

Finally, as I listened to Hudson, he related how he was influenced by his experiences in the world, but it was his Catholic faith which brought him to truth. His talk reinforced my personal belief that we are not "born this way," such that we are helpless in terms of our behavior, rather, we are born with the gifts and talents God created within us. To give meaning to the purpose to which we put them, God gave us freewill to either accept His design or reject it. Our behavior is both learned as well as a choice. We must recognize that the values by which we make our choices are influenced by our environment and our experiences.

(Question 1: Hudson, one of the things I remember from your talk were a variety of events which generated some confusion during the course of your personal development. Can you tell us a little about this time of your life and the influence on your perceptions of yourself?)

- Life forming experiences through the incomplete lens of a child
- Learned to be second place because older brother always won
- Self concept of not being good at being a male
- To avoid boy things, hung out with the girls - girl things were not threatening
- Bullying and building of walls by which to cope
- Pornography exposure
- Craving love in a confusing world
- Molestation

(Question 2: During your talk, you mentioned that the brain is partially formed as a result of our choices, thoughts, and behavior. You also stated, “Our choices matter because our choices form our environment.” Can you expound on these statements a little and can you also comment on concerns we might have when someone else manipulates our environment for the purpose of grooming our values, especially the values of our children?)

- Our values system influences our choices and behaviors
- We are not always aware of the means by which our values are influenced
- Children are vulnerable to fads, new interests, and they explore boundaries
- Values grooming is not about concept awareness, it is about norms acceptance
- Values grooming is not inherently bad – the concern comes from the purpose for which it is employed

If you would like to learn more about “values grooming” and its meaning to the development of our generations, we recommend you listen to our series concerning “By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them,” “The Battle for our Children,” and “*Humanae Vitae*.” Specifically, we recommend episodes 59, 60, 66, 104 and 105.

(Question 3: During your talk, you mentioned the parable of “the wolf which wins is the wolf we feed.” Tell us a little about the meaning of this parable in relation to our personal development and what can help us to evaluate our choices as well as recognize the wolf we feed?)

(Question 4: You mentioned the role of culture to our personal development. Can you talk about the cultural influences you recognized and do you feel there was a time where your values were groomed by a person, group, or institution such that it took you in a negative direction?)

(Question 5: During the course of your talk, you mentioned labels and how they may be used to box us in. Can you relate how you found labels attached to you and how it influenced your thinking about your personal identity?)

(Question 6: As your personal perception of your identity developed, there was something there which caused you to rethink your desires as well as the personal identity which you perceived and accepted. Can you relate what that was and how did it open the door to reflection on what God asks of us?)

Well, our time is quickly coming to an end, but we still have a lot more to talk about with Hudson, so we hope you will be able to join us next time as we bring Hudson back so that we can continue to discuss the formation of personal identity along with the importance of family, a father's blessing, and a faith community exemplified by loving arms as opposed to judgmental mouths.

Quotes:

– *Hudson Byblow*

Our choices cannot be of zero effect.

– *Congregation For Catholic Education - “Male and Female He Created Them”*

It is becoming increasingly clear that we are now facing with what might accurately be called an educational crisis, especially in the field of affectivity and sexuality. In many places, curricula are being planned and implemented which “allegedly convey a neutral conception of the person and of life, yet in fact reflect an anthropology opposed to faith and to right reason” The disorientation regarding anthropology which is a widespread feature of our cultural landscape has undoubtedly helped to destabilize the family as an institution, bringing with it a tendency to cancel out the differences between men and women, presenting them instead as merely the product of historical and cultural conditioning.

– *Congregation For Catholic Education - “Male and Female He Created Them”*

[A] position held in common is the need to educate children and young people to respect every person in their particularity and difference, so that no one should suffer bullying, violence, insults or unjust discrimination based on their specific characteristics (such as special needs, race, religion, sexual tendencies, etc.). Essentially, this involves educating for active and responsible citizenship, which is marked by the ability to welcome all legitimate expressions of human personhood with respect.

– *St. Augustine*

This is the very perfection of a man, to find out his own imperfections.

– *St. Catherine of Sienna*

If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world ablaze!

Final Thoughts:

Whether we recognize it or not, we are in a constant state of the formation of self. Who we are is influenced by a vast number of variables, many over which we have no control, but we must also recognize the role of our personal choices as well. The ultimate question, though, is will we discover who God made us to be and the purpose for which He created us, or will we fall victim to the values of the world and what we perceive to be our personal desires?

As adults, we must maintain awareness of the influences upon us as well as what God asks of us. Children, however, begin their perceptions of the world as blank slates. They are like sponges with many lessons to learn as they navigate the environment which surrounds them. During our formative years, there is a considerable amount we do not comprehend because the foundations of what defines us are in the process of maturation.

The perception of our personal identity is partially influenced by our physical being, but it is also influenced by the perceptions and values of those who surround us, the feedback we receive to our interactions, our formal education through various institutions, and our informal education through family, friends, as well as strangers. And there, with His “*light, silent sound,*” is God, asking us to accept His design and the purpose for which He created us. Just as Our Blessed Mother gave her “yes,” God desires us to give our “yes” as well.

To give our choice meaning, our Creator gave us freewill. The challenge before each of us, then, is will we discover the real identity which God desires for us or will we fall victim to the many ways the evil one endeavors to confuse, distract, and separate us from what God asks of us as well as the purpose to which He dedicated us; a dedication He made even before He allowed our formation in the womb? (cf. Jeremiah 1:5)

Next time we will discuss this question as well as assess the justification that some present, which is, “God made me this way.” As we engage the environment in which our children learn and grow, we must also remember the behavior to which we are called as we are reminded in 1 Peter 3:9: “*Do not return evil for evil, or insult for insult; but, on the contrary, a blessing, because to this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing.*” Remember, when we ask for God's blessings upon another, it is an invocation of God's power and care.

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 how we may effectively engage the issues related to the acceptance of God's design.

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: Faith, Faith, and Social Issues - Part III: Assisting Acceptance of God's Design

Why Catholics Do What We Do References:

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