



## ***The Armor of Faith***

### **Topic Summary: Faith, Family, and Social Issues** ***Part VI: Family Prayer and Catechesis – Magnificat***



***Magnificat – James Tissot***  
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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 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 there is always an answer waiting for a question. 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 are also joined today with special guest panelists Father Sebastian White, O.P., who is the Editor in Chief for *Magnificat*; and John Sacco, who is a Manager for Marketing and Communications, also with *Magnificat*.

As I am sure most of our listeners know, “*Magnificat* is a monthly publication designed for daily use, to encourage both liturgical and personal prayer. It can be used to follow daily Mass and can also be read at home or wherever you find yourself for personal or family prayer.” (*Magnificat*) From my personal perspective, *Magnificat* is the premiere aide for devotional and spiritual prayer as well as a resource which exposes us to a broad spectrum of historical writings reflecting upon the history of the church, the lives of the saints, and most importantly, our relationship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Father Sebastian, John, we are very happy to have you with us today, and welcome to our panel.

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 discuss that which You ask of the children of Your creation. 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, today, for Carol. We pray Your healing hand will rest upon her, as well as Your hand of comfort; that you will guide the hearts and hands of her care givers, and that Your hand of comfort will rest upon all who love and care for her.

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](mailto: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.

If you haven't discovered, yet, you can also listen to Armor of Faith Radio on demand and on the go using your smartphone. In addition to [wcatradio.com/armoroffaith](http://wcatradio.com/armoroffaith), we are available through a number of streaming services, such as iHeart Radio, Spreaker, iTunes, and CastBox, among others. Simply search for “Armor of Faith Radio” and select the episode you desire. We will be happy to keep you company wherever you are and wherever you are waiting.

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. Several of the streaming services through which we are available on demand also have share options, so please help us to spread the good news of our faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Faith Event Announcements:**

If you have been out and about on social media, you probably noticed headlines to the effect of “Four Exorcists Urge Day of Fasting, Prayer and Reparation Dec. 6.” (Dail) According to the *National Catholic Register*, the priests stated they are asking for this, “for the purpose of driving out any diabolic influence within the Church that has been gained as a result of recent events.” (Dail) While the statement specifically references the Amazon Synod controversies, we can probably pick from any number of recent events which are cause for concern of the faithful.

The priests also stated, “These events bring home the reality that we are in spiritual warfare, and that warfare is happening with the Church itself.” (Dail) The reality is that the church has been under attack from the moment Christ said to Peter, “*And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.*” (Matthew 16:18)

No matter where we may fall concerning our political perceptions, we must also remember to what we are called as we are reminded in 1 Peter 3:8-9, “*Finally, all of you, be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another, compassionate, humble. 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.*”

As you may remember during our series, “Put on the Armor of Prayer,” (see episodes 107 through 115), we pointed out that a blessing is an invocation of God's power and care. (cf. CCC: pg 868), so when we pray for a blessing upon the church and one another, we should take comfort that we are asking for God's power and care. Whether we ask a blessing for a loved one or someone who does not like us very much, a prayer for God's blessing always calls for a positive end.

As we face the divisions of our day, you have heard me mention before, it is not a matter of whether the right or left are right or wrong, it is a matter of whether we understand what God asks of us.

Towards this end, we invite you to participate in this First Friday prayer because we all need the help of our Lord to achieve to what we are called in 1 Peter 3:8-9, and we must also keep in mind the pleas of Our Blessed Mother as she calls us to the Sacred Heart of her Son, as well as prayer, fasting, and penance so we may receive the wonderful graces offered through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

If you would like to learn more about this call to prayer, fasting and reparation; you can find a link to the article in the Discussion References section of the topic summary for this show. You can access the topic summaries via <https://wcatradio.com/armoroffaithstudyguides>. Remember to select episode 121.

If you happen to be listening to this episode via one of our on-demand channels, and the date of the event has already passed, it is not too late. We ask you to consider joining in prayer; seeking unity of all within His Holy Church in the manner in which God asks of us, and in reparation and penance for the ways we have offended God. You can join during the next First Friday, or if that is not possible, perhaps a First Saturday. No matter the day, time, or place; let us remember what we are told in CCC: 2691, “The choice of a favorable place is not a matter of indifference for true prayer.” No matter our concern, we should all keep in prayer petitions for God's help towards building the unity of our Church along with our prayers of sorrow and penance for our sins.

## Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Today we begin discussion on the first Sacrament of Initiation. Baptism. What do we know about this sacrament? Why do we do it? Is this necessary for salvation? How did it come about?

According to CCC: 1213:

(CCC: 1213)

Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (*vitae spiritualis ianua*), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments.

Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word."

To baptize means to plunge or immerse into water. Recall the story of John the Baptist and of how he was the one to come before Christ. John announced the coming of Jesus' ministry as he Baptized people in the River Jordan. Baptism was to free the person from generational sin and to restore life eternal. This act was so important to Christ that he approached John so that he too might be baptized, even though He Himself was never stained by sin.

As stated in CCC 1224:

(CCC: 1224)

Our Lord voluntarily submitted himself to the baptism of St. John, intended for sinners, in order to "fulfill all righteousness." Jesus' gesture is a manifestation of his self-emptying. The Spirit who had hovered over the waters of the first creation descended then on the Christ as a prelude of the new creation, and the Father revealed Jesus as his "beloved Son."

That was at the very beginning of His ministry. Jesus deemed this act to be of such importance that he told his Apostles to Baptize as we are told in Matthew 28:19:

(Matthew 29:19)

*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

Baptism was to be done as Jesus said, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and with using water as the manner of cleansing away sin. This formula has been part of the Catholic Church since its very beginning. Baptism was the opening of the door for one to become a Catholic/Christian. No forms to fill out, no two picture identifications to prove who they were and no payments to be made. Only the desire to be Christian and to be willing to continue learning about, following, and loving Jesus, was required to be Baptized.

When the Apostles began their ministries, they traveled in patterns. Patterns that were to take them to different lands and tribes where they would teach, convert, and Baptize. When they had accomplished the task for one nation, they moved on to another. I think of this as moving in

circles for they would work one community, move to another and then another and then another. Eventually they would return to continue the process of educating the new Christians.

Since their mode of transportation was to walk, it took many years for them to actually reach the various tribes before returning to ones they had already converted. Due to cultural customs of the times, the Apostles were not allowed to mingle with the families, so they instructed the fathers, the heads of the families. While the Apostle was away to care for other tribes and nations, the father would teach his family about Jesus. When the Apostle did return, he baptized entire families, babies included. Thus began the tradition of which Catholics continue to this day. We baptize babies so that they may also be freed from *original sin* and brought into the light of Christ.

Original Sin is that generational sin we all inherited because of the sins of Adam and Eve. Remember the story of Eve being tempted by the devil to eat an apple of the one tree in the garden of which God told them to not eat? They bowed down to temptation, ate, and were then banned from Eden. This sin has been passed on to each of us from that time. Baptism is the Sacrament that removes this sin from us and allows us to cross the bridge from darkness into light---from sin into holiness.

So much to talk about and so little time. We will continue this Baptismal journey next week and look at other Scripture passages that explain more fully the history of Baptism and why it is so important to our lives.

Have a blessed week All. Remember, you are loved dearly by God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit and yes, by us as well.

If you would like to learn more about the Sacrament of Baptism, 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 121.

## **Discussion:**

As we concluded our last discussion, I mentioned that the education and encouragement of our youth is what enables them to make a better world. We also discussed that parents have the primary responsibility for providing that education and encouragement for our children, but it is a task which can be quite overwhelming, especially with all of the distractions of the world.

While some parents may have the resources to vet and select the institution which will best assist them, most must rely upon secular institutions which are motivated more by political agendas rather than what is best, right, and just for the souls of our children. Parents are the first line of defense for those souls and they must be aware and learn themselves if they are to so teach their children and supervise what their children receive through other channels.

The art is imprecise and will require many adjustments along the way to adapt to the uniqueness of each child and their experiences in the world. Parents are also left with the difficult task of vetting the assistance available and helping their children comprehend light and truth within a

sea of competing values and nuances of politics. This task has become even more difficult in the politically charged world of our day as amplified by numerous media channels.

The first and most important step in caring for the gift God has given us through our children is love along with communication of that love. If we endeavor to understand the meaning and purpose of God's design and ask God to help us in carrying out the responsibilities we have for the raising of our youth, then, we may be better prepared when He asks us, "What did you do with the gifts I gave you?"

Towards that end, we are going to turn our discussion today to domestic catechesis. Of course, our local parishes provide various, age appropriate religious formation programs, but to truly enable our children to learn and incorporate into their lives that which God asks of us requires parental engagement. One enabler to such engagement are resources which help parents explain not just what we do as Catholics in the worship of our Lord, but also why.

We invited Father Sebastian and John to join us today, because we believe *Magnificat* has some excellent resources which can assist parents as they endeavor to teach their children as well as enable them to bring the fullness of the Catholic faith into their homes.

**(Question 1:** As I mentioned during our introduction, I believe *Magnificat* is the premiere aide for devotional and spiritual prayer, but I also know there is more available. What products does *Magnificat* produce which families may use to help our youth learn about their Catholic faith?)

- Monthly *Magnificat* magazine
  - ➔ Editorials
  - ➔ Blessings
  - ➔ Hymns
  - ➔ Prayers
  - ➔ Daily Mass prayers and readings
  - ➔ Meditations
  - ➔ Essays and historical writings
  - ➔ Art
- Weekly *MagnifiKid* magazine
- Seasonal and Devotional Companions

**(Question 2:** As I browse the *Magnificat* web site, it is clear you have a thought of "family" in mind. What recommendations do you have which parents might consider which may help encourage their children to learn about their faith?)

- Discovering what God's love means to us
- Discovering the wisdom of God's Holy Word
- Discovering the importance of prayer
- Discovering the lives of the saints, religious, and faithful
- Discovering the importance of history to understanding our modern day
- Discovering what God asks of us and how we may help accomplish His will

**(Question 3:** Of course, as we engage the many demands upon our time, it is nice to have reliable references to assist us. Of course, it is one thing to have a good reference, but sometimes we need to reflect on the various ways we might be able to use it. What are some suggestions you might have for parents as to how they may incorporate *Magnificat* products into daily prayer and family catechesis?)

- Family prayer time
- Preparation for Mass
- Conversation after Mass
- Play time (Bible stories, games, and coloring pages)
- Conversations about the lives of the saints and doctors of the church
- Power of question → What do you see in the pictures?

**(Question 4:** As we endeavor to educate our children, there are a number of competitors for the attention of our children. We can also expect that there are those who will challenge our children and tempt them to values which are in opposition to what God asks of us. What advice do you have for parents as parents endeavor to help their children live their faith while navigating a secular world?)

- I read in a magazine
- I saw on TV
- I saw online
- My teacher tells me
- The kids say

**(Question 5:** Of course, for parents to teach, they must first learn. What resources, beyond the *Magnificat* magazine, do you have to enable parents to learn more about their Catholic faith so they are better able to teach their children?)

- Books via the Bookstore
- Liturgical References
- Children's Books (reflect on age appropriate conversation)
  - ➔ Companions
  - ➔ Coloring Books
  - ➔ Children's Missal

**(Question 6:** So, we have talked about a number of resources which you produce. By what means can parents access *Magnificat* resources?)

<https://us.magnificat.net/>

## Quotes:

– *Pope Pius XI*

It is necessary not only that religious instruction be given to the young at certain fixed times, but also that every other subject taught, be permeated with Christian piety. If this is wanting, if this sacred atmosphere does not pervade and warm the hearts of masters and scholars alike, little good can be expected from any kind of learning, and considerable harm will often be the consequence.

– *Saint John Paul II*

[I]t cannot be forgotten that the most basic element, so basic that it qualifies the educational role of parents, is parental love, which finds fulfillment in the task of education as it completes and perfects its service of life: as well as being a source, the parents' love is also the animating principle and therefore the norm inspiring and guiding all concrete educational activity, enriching it with the values of kindness, constancy, goodness, service, disinterestedness and self-sacrifice that are the most precious fruit of love.

– *Saint John Chrysostom*

Let everything take second place to our care of our children, our bringing them up to the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

## Final Thoughts:

We have all heard the cliché, “knowledge is power.” The reason for this is that knowledge enables our understanding as well as our ability to make good choices. The opposite, of course, is that what we do not know can hurt us. We must also remember, our choices are not just about living in this world, but also preparing for what comes after. It is for this reason that I often comment that those who do not know their faith leave themselves vulnerable to the one who would take it from them.

We should reflect upon this very heavily as we consider the education and faith formation of our children. They have much to learn in the world, not only so they may assume their role in adulthood, but also in preparation for what comes after. At first, we are there to walk with them and to help to defend them, but we must also prepare them for the day they will have to make decisions on their own. If we prepare them with a proper understanding of our faith and what God asks of us, they will make better decisions as opposed to approaching the world, as well as eternity, in ignorance.

Some would tell us that to respect each child's individuality, parents must allow their children to decide what they want for themselves. Of course, this is the same objective of the serpent when he told Eve, “*You certainly will not die.*” (cf Genesis 3:4) It was the objective of the serpent to separate Eve from her Creator and he did so through deception. If we know our faith, and we help our children develop the same knowledge, we make it harder for the evil one to deceive us. If we know our faith, we enable ourselves to live to its fullness, to receive its blessings, and to accomplish what God asks of us.



Let us reflect upon this as to its meaning to our children. As we help our children to learn about their faith, we also enable them to put on its armor as a blessing of their soul. We enable them to make good decisions which also enables good relationships, not just with one another, but most importantly, their relationship with God.

**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 engaging the family in ministry.

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, Family, and Social Issues – Part VII: Engaging Family in Ministry

### **Why Catholics Do What We Do References:**

Catechism of the Catholic Church; (15 Aug 1997); “The Sacrament Of Baptism;” Vatican;  
[http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc\\_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a1.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a1.htm)

### **Discussion References:**

Dail, Bree A.; (11 Nov 2019); “Four Exorcists Urge Day of Fasting, Prayer and Reparation Dec. 6;” *National Catholic Register*; <http://www.ncregister.com/blog/breedail/four-exorcists-urge-day-of-fasting-prayer-and-reparation-dec.-6>

Magnificat; (accessed 19 Nov 2019); “Discover Magnificat;” Magnificat, Yonkers, NY;  
<https://us.magnificat.net/home/discover>

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>

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