



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: The Rosary
Part V: The Sorrowful Mysteries



Agony in the Garden
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 always mention, are also known as the Order of Preachers. Sharon is still our token cradle Catholic on the team, and, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because questions make the world go round. I don't know if that is really true, but it sounded good, didn't it? To answer my questions, correct my pronunciation, and make sure I know which century I am talking about 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 for Frank, Barbara, and Ted as they recover from surgery. We pray, dear Lord, that Your healing hand will rest upon them, as well as Your hand of comfort; that You will

guide the hearts and hands of their care givers, and that Your hand of comfort shall also rest upon all who love and care for them.

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.

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, 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:

Kansas Statewide Day of Prayer: Archbishop Naumann and the bishops of Kansas are requesting all Catholics and people of good will to observe a STATEWIDE DAY OF PRAYER today, 6 Feb 2020, for the passage of the “Value Them Both” legislation in the Kansas House of Representatives, authorizing language for an amendment to the Kansas Constitution. The legislation was previously passed by the Kansas Senate.

The “Value Them Both” Constitutional Amendment initiative seeks to return to Kansas citizens, through their elected officials, the authority to determine public policy and to protect both women and preborn babies in the Great State of Kansas. At present, these decisions have been commandeered by unelected judges of the Kansas Supreme Court in actions which threaten both representative government and the protection of human life.

In addition to offering your daily rosary today for passage of this amendment legislation, please join together in offering additional prayers, abstinence and fasting, participation at Holy Mass, and Eucharistic adoration. We also invoke the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe for passage of this amendment legislation. In your prayers today, please also include the following intercession:

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Unborn,
we implore your powerful intercession at this most critical time.
Now that the Kansas Supreme Court has removed lifesaving protections
for the unborn and mothers in crisis,

we humbly ask that you strengthen our efforts
to secure an amendment to reverse this decision and defend
the sanctity of life in our state. Amen.

Even if you are not a resident of the state of Kansas, we still ask for your prayer support. If you are listening on demand, we know the date has passed, but the battle has not ceased, so adding the State of Kansas to your prayers, as well as all who are working to end abortion, is greatly appreciated.

40 Days for Life: The 40 Days for Life 2020 Spring Campaign is coming. This year, the campaign will be conducted from 26 Feb through 5 Apr 2020. We invite you to go to visit the 40 Days for Life website at: <https://www.40daysforlife.com/> to learn about preparations for this Spring's campaign. We also invite our listeners to discern how you can help defend life. Even if you are not able to come to the sidewalk, prayer is powerful and always necessary.

If you would like to learn more about training for sidewalk advocates, check your local 40 Days for Life web site. The national web site, <https://www.40daysforlife.com/>, can help you find an organization near you.

For those who are in the Diocese of Colorado Springs, Sidewalk Advocacy training will be held on Saturday, 15 Feb 2020, from Noon to 5pm at St. Patrick Catholic Church, downstairs in the McGivney room (6455 Brook Park Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80918). For more information, you can contact the Program Director, Julie Bailey at julie@baileypeople.com for more info.

Just so you know, attending the training does not incur an obligation to go out on the sidewalk, but it does provide information about the program and presents the tools and information which helps Sidewalk Advocates and Prayer Partners to do this important work.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Sacraments of Initiation – Part XIII

Now that we know what Eucharist is, let us explore how we receive it. As I am sure you are well aware, the words, Eucharist and Communion are interchangeable, so don't be confused. I often use both names in teaching so that all will be well familiar with these terms which really mean the same.

A child about the age of 7 and enrolled in religious formation classes will learn all about this wonderful sacrament during the year. About May, the children in these classes will follow the tradition of their church and formally receive their First Holy Communion as a group. There will be a procession of these children and they will fill the first several pews. The children are normally dressed in beautiful formal attire. The girls will wear white dresses with veils and the boys will wear suits with ties. During the Liturgy of the Eucharist, they will process toward the priest and will receive Communion under both species of bread and wine. Following Mass, there is usually a big festive reception. This is a very big rite of passage for these children as they grow in their faith.

If a person is entering the Church through RCIA (Right of Christian Initiation for Adults), the reception of First Holy Communion will happen during the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday. This Mass is always the longest of the whole year and is filled with sacraments and blessings. After Baptism and Confirmation, these candidates will approach the altar as a group, to be the first that evening to receive Jesus for the very first time. This is a glorious night.

So how does a person receive Eucharist?

In preparing for reception of Holy Communion, the recipient must know that there are two ways of doing this. The first is the traditional way of receiving the body of Christ on the tongue. The second way is what came from Vatican II, and that is to be handed the body of Christ onto your hand and then you place it into your mouth.

Let's review both.

In either situation, you walk from your seat to the place where the priest is standing. As you leave the pew, your posture should be most reverent. After all, you are getting ready to receive Jesus Christ, body, blood, soul and divinity. You are to walk with hands folded, focusing on Jesus. This is not the time to fix your hair, touch the person in front of you, or greet other people as you approach the reception of Eucharist.

When you arrive at the priest or the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, you will hear the words, "The body of Christ". You answer, "Amen." This Amen is your proclamation that you believe this is Jesus.

In following the Traditional Rite, you will open your mouth, extend your tongue so that the person can easily place the host on your tongue. Stick it out there so that the person does not have to reach into your mouth. Once the host is placed on your tongue, close your mouth and allow it to dissolve, and swallow it. Make the sign of the cross. At this time you should be thinking of the sacrifice that Jesus made so that you can be receiving Him.

In following the post Vatican II method, the reception on the hand, you approach the priest in the same fashion. When the words, "the body of Christ" are spoken, you present your hands to receive. You do not take the host from the minister. Present your hands to receive the Eucharist. Take your dominant hand and hold it open flat, palm up. Place your non dominant hand open flat, palm up and place it on top of the other hand. This forms a secure place of protection for the host. Once you say, "Amen" and declare yourself a believer, the minister will place the host onto your top hand. Now you take your dominant hand from under your top hand, pick up the host and place it into your mouth. Let it dissolve and swallow. Make the sign of the cross.

If your church does not give both species of Communion, meaning, that both the body and blood of Christ are shared, then you will simply return to your seat and continue to think about Jesus and your relationship with Him.

If your church does give both the body and blood of Christ, you will walk from the minister who just gave you the body, to the minister who is holding the chalice. This person will say, "the blood of Christ" and again, you will say, "Amen" to acknowledge that you still believe this

to be Jesus. The chalice will be held out and you will carefully take it with both hands. Lift the chalice to your lips and take a tiny sip. You only need a tiny bit to actually receive Jesus' blood. Return the chalice to the minister, make the sign of the cross again and return to your seat. Again, this is a moment of intimate time with Jesus. Focus on how much He loves you.

When our grandson made his First Holy Communion, he loudly proclaimed in church that he had “Won the prize!” He was so very excited. I hope and pray that we may all know and believe that when we go to receive Holy Communion, or Eucharist, we are truly receiving the prize and always have the same joy as if this was the very first time.

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 how we receive the Eucharist, 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 132.

Discussion:

Last time, we galloped through the mysteries known as the Luminous Mysteries. The metaphor of light which Saint John Paul II used to describe these mysteries reminds us of that which allows us sight, the ability to see (not just a blur, but clearly). Of course, such vision is dependent upon our willingness to accept the Word of the Lord and to allow the Word to be our light along the journey to His kingdom.

As we pray the chaplet of the Luminous Mysteries, we should also ask ourselves what the Light illuminates for us? Questions we might reflect upon as we pray might include:

- What is illuminated to us by the Baptism of our Lord?
- What is illuminated to us by the miracle at Cana?
- What is illuminated to us by the proclamation of the kingdom of the Lord?
- What is illuminated to us by the transfiguration of Christ?
- What is illuminated to us by the Eucharist?

As we pray, we should also ask that the Holy Spirit enable us to see, not just with the eyes of our head, but more importantly, the eyes of our heart. As we meditate on the meaning of these answers to our lives, we prepare ourselves to open our hearts and minds to the next set of mysteries we shall discuss, the Sorrowful Mysteries.

Looking back for a moment, I mentioned that during our last two episodes, we rushed through the Joyful and Luminous mysteries and reflected briefly upon the scripture which opens the door to our journey of understanding. We also pointed to the threads from the Old Testament to the New and how we might use the footnotes or a proper concordance to help us follow those threads. Within those two brief hours, we barely scratched the surface of what we might find within the meditation and contemplation of these mysteries.

We should remember, the Rosary initially came to us as people sought a means to reflect upon the Gospel in a similar fashion as the monks who recited the Psalms. It was initially passed from person to person through an oral tradition when education and the ability to read was relatively sparse.

In our modern times, we have a number of aids available to us, but even more importantly, many of us are blessed with the ability to read the scripture and follow its threads. By praying the Rosary, we share with God, one another, and ourselves, our understanding of the mysteries and their meaning, not just to our daily life and how we might grow, but also our spiritual life. Hopefully, our reflection and contemplation will lead us to understanding what was done for us so we might have the opportunity to enter into His kingdom, where love is shared by all, where there is no pain or affliction, and where evil is not allowed to follow.

I must confess, my learning the Rosary came over a number of years. Looking back, I wish I had the same appreciation for it while my children were growing as I have for it now. There were a number of obstacles which separated me from the Rosary, and therefore, its blessings as well. By the way, have I ever mentioned that a “blessing” is an invocation of God's power and care? If I haven't, I just want to point that out.

The first obstacle were the criticisms which I had learned before I became Catholic. Looking from the outside, it was easy to accept the criticisms and they effectively warned me away so I would not discover what was truly on the inside of the prayers and the blessings of the meditation and contemplation upon the mysteries of the Rosary. But then, I became Catholic. There is no escaping the Rosary when you surround yourself with loving Catholics, but I had another excuse after the first fence of Satan failed to keep from the Rosary, and that was vanity.

I didn't know the prayers. While there are any number of cards, pamphlets, and booklets to assist with praying the Rosary, learning the prayers and sequence of the mysteries was intimidating to me, not to mention that I am really poor at memorization. It was my vanity which caused me to shy away and avoid what the Rosary might unlock within my heart.

I was too vain to use a prayer aid until the first time I was asked to lead a Rosary; and this was not with just a small group, but with our Parish before Mass. How I failed to excuse myself from that moment, I'm not sure. So, I printed out a copy of the Rosary I found on the Internet, but I failed to notice a typo. I didn't notice a missing letter “e” from what I pronounced as the “firs of hell,” during the Fatima prayer. “Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins. Save us from the 'firs” of hell.....” I remember that my daughter came up to me afterwards and remarked, that is the first time she heard me speak with a Southern accent. I looked at her quizzically, “Firs of hell, Dad? Really?”

Yes, as time went on, there were various occasions where I prayed the Rosary with others, but I missed the point. I focused more on prayer memorization than to what they drew my heart. When did that change? I cannot point to any one moment. As I worked to memorize the prayers and the mysteries, so I didn't embarrass myself while following along with a group, I had still not realized the blessings to which the Rosary draws us. By the way, have I mentioned that a blessing is an invocation of God's power and care? I apologize if I haven't.

Anyway, if our goal is to say the prayers without mistake, then, we miss the point as I did. Indeed, it is not until we learn how to allow the mysteries to flow through our hearts, our minds, and our souls; do we begin to understand the power of the Rosary to our hearts and how it assists us to understand God's love for the world, a lowly handmaid's love for our God, a mother's love for her Son, along with the sacrifice the only begotten Son of God made as demonstration of His love for us; the children of our Heavenly Father's creation. Remember when Jesus said, as we are told in John 15:13:

(John 15:13)

13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

The day eventually came that I moved on from the focus of reciting the prayers to allowing the prayers and the mysteries to flow through me. I can't remember when that day was. It was a slow process. Perhaps it began the first time I prayed the Rosary alone. Yes, I used a prayer aid, but, my own thoughts began to form in reflection of the mysteries. It was no longer about memorization or recitation, it was now, truly, about praying and allowing the Gospel to flow through me.

(Question 1: So, this is the part of the show where I get to put the panel on the spot. Before we start discussing the Sorrowful Mysteries, I want to take a step back a moment. **How did the Rosary come into your life and how did its presence come alive for you?**)

(Question 2: So, Sharon pinged me after each of our last two episodes for moving too fast through the mysteries. Of course, now that I pointed that out, I should point out that we pray a chaplet of mysteries in about 15 minutes. **So, one might wonder, how is it we cannot fully cover their meaning to us within the span of a one hour discussion?**)

- The scripture is just the surface; the point of departure
 - The meaning is found within our prayer of reflection and contemplation
 - Each time we pray the Rosary, different facets of the mysteries touch our heart
 - As we share with others, even more facets are opened to us
 - Especially in times of distress, the mysteries touch our perspective
 - As we study the associated scripture and threads reaching from the Old Testament to the New, we are drawn closer to what God desires for us
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(Question 3: The first mystery of the Sorrowful Mysteries is commonly referred to as the “The Agony in the Garden” **To what does this refer and what might we reflect upon about that moment?**)

(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.”

The Sorrowful Mysteries was the first chaplet of mysteries I learned. After awhile, I began my reflection with a simple prayer.

Dear Lord, You asked Your disciples to accompany You as You prayed in the garden, but they fell asleep, leaving You to pray alone. We too, fall asleep through our sin. We lift up our hearts in sorrow for the ways we have added to Your agony.

As we reflect on this moment, there are also questions we might have for ourselves:

- In what ways does Jesus ask us to assist Him?
- In what ways do we fall asleep and fail Him?
- In what ways do we betray Him?
- In what ways may we ask for His forgiveness?
- In what ways might we repent from our failures?
- In what ways might we endeavor to keep watch and stand firm against the tactics of the evil one?
- In what ways might we encourage one another to be alert and lift up our hearts?
- In what ways might we atone for the ways we have added to the agony of our Lord?
- In what ways might we take on the difficult tasks of our faith?
- What does God ask of us and how might we do His will?

Of course, we should remember, we only have 15 minutes to reflect upon and answer the questions we just mentioned – and I am sure we can add many more if we take the time to reflect further – but, wait, if we do the math, we really only have 3 minutes per mystery, because within those 15 minutes of prayer we have five mysteries upon which to reflect and contemplate. So, that is fifteen, divided by five, which equals three – well, really less than that when we consider the time for the Apostle's Creed and the prayers surrounding the mysteries. So, let's say, we have perhaps an average of two minutes to reflect upon and contemplate each mystery.

(**Question 4:** So, that seems like an awful lot of ground to cover in just two minutes or so, per mystery. **How might we accomplish that?)**

- It is not about only one sitting of prayer
- The more we pray, the more time we have to reflect and contemplate
- Allow the Holy Spirit to guide our heart as we pray → to what does He guide us?
- Slow down, it's OK if our prayer takes longer than 15 minutes
- Speed prayer is better than no prayer, but we should savor our time with God
- The more we pray, the more we let the mysteries flow through us
- The more we let the mysteries flow through us, the more they will reveal to us
- The more we allow the mysteries to flow through us, the more they will influence us
- The more we allow the mysteries to flow through us, the more they will lead us
- The more we allow the mysteries to flow through us, the more they will help us comprehend God's love for us and that which God asks of us

(**Question 5:** The second mystery of the Sorrowful Mysteries is commonly referred to as the “The Scourging at the Pillar.” **To what does this refer and what might we reflect upon about that moment?)**

(Matthew 27:20-26)

*20 The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas **but to destroy Jesus**. 21 The governor said to them in reply, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” They answered, “Barabbas!” 22 Pilate said to them, “**Then what shall I do with Jesus called Messiah?**” They all said, “**Let him be crucified!**” 23 But he said, “**Why? What evil has he done?**” They only shouted the louder, “Let him be crucified!” 24 When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, **he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood. Look to it yourselves.**” 25 And the whole people said in reply, “**His blood be upon us and upon our children.**” 26 Then he released Barabbas to them, but **after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.***

In similar fashion as I related about the first sorrowful mystery, I started to begin my reflection with another simple prayer:

Dear Lord, the excruciating pain which was brought upon You, was not from the whips but from the sins of the whole world, across all of the generations, which strikes at You. We lift up our hearts in sorrow for the ways we have added to Your agony.

As we reflect on this moment, there are more questions we might have for ourselves:

- In what ways have we enabled injustice?
- In what ways have we demanded the world over the blessings of our Lord?

- In what ways do we turn to the unrighteous as our example?
 - In what ways do we follow the crowd rather than God?
 - In what ways do we strike at our Lord through our sin?
 - In what ways might we turn from the rages of the crowd to trust in our Lord?
 - In what ways may we repent and cry out for His forgiveness?
 - In what ways may we turn our endeavors to support what is right and just?
 - In what ways may we encourage one another to what is right and just?
 - In what ways may we atone for the ways we have added to His agony?
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(Question 6: So far, I think we made the point that praying the Rosary is so much more than repetitious prayers. Today, we opened the door to only two of the Sorrowful Mysteries, and even then, we presented more questions than we answered. So, let's take a moment and ask ourselves, what does this reveal to us about the Rosary?)

- It is not empty, repetitive prayer (Matthew 6:7)
- It provides an opportunity for reflection, meditation, and contemplation upon the life, passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord
- It is an opportunity to allow the Gospels to speak to our hearts
- It is an opportunity to examine our hearts
- It is an opportunity to ask the Mother of our Lord and Savior to be an advocate for us with her Son, the King of kings, and Lord of lords (cf. Revelation 17:14)
- It is an opportunity to allow the Holy Spirit to guide our understanding
- It is an opportunity to reflect on how we may better serve God
- It is an opportunity to reflect on ways we may seek His forgiveness
- It is an opportunity to reflect on ways we may help accomplish His will as we care and do for one another

Quotes:

– *Pope Leo XIII*

The rosary is the most excellent form of prayer and the most efficacious means of attaining eternal life. It is the remedy for all our evils, the root of all our blessings. There is no more excellent way of praying.

– *Pope Leo XIII*

The rosary, if rightly considered, will be found to have in itself special virtues, whether for producing and continuing a state of recollection, or for touching the conscience for its healing, or for lifting up the soul.

– *Pope Leo XIII*

Let all the children of Saint Dominic rise up for the fight and let them, like mighty warriors, be prepared to use in the battle the weapons with which their blessed Father, with so much foresight, armed them. This is what they have to do: Let them plant everywhere the rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary; let them propagate and cultivate it with fervor; through their assiduous

care may the nations be enrolled in these holy militias where the ensigns of the rosary shine; may the faithful learn to avail themselves of this weapon, to use it frequently; may they be instructed in the benefits, graces, and privileges of this devotion.

Final Thoughts:

You may have noticed we only got through two of the five Sorrowful Mysteries today. I decided to take Sharon's advice and slow down a little, but, we still galloped through just the two.

During my journey to the Rosary, it was the Sorrowful Mysteries I learned first. I'm not sure why, but when I began to pray the Rosary alone, it was the chaplet which touched my heart the most. These Mysteries were about the sacrifice made for my sins. I gravitated to these mysteries before I understood how to reflect, meditate, and contemplate the mysteries, but then, just proclaiming the Sorrowful Mysteries touches the sorrows within our heart, so, perhaps that is why I started there.

I must also confess that I resisted the Rosary for the longest time. I did not comprehend that it was not about the numbers of prayers said, but the meaning within them and to where they guided the heart. After I came to understand how the Rosary leads the heart, I came to realize of what I had robbed my heart by my resistance.

Now, the Rosary leads my heart through the joy of the coming of our Lord, the light He brings to the world, the sorrow of His betrayal along with the sacrifice He made for our sins, and the glory of the path He made for us when He conquered death. As we meditate upon and contemplate these mysteries, we open our hearts to our Lord.

I learned it is a matter of choice to memorize the prayers and make time in the day to pray. The investment in learning the prayers and examining the scripture associated with each mystery, along with the threads from the Old Testament to the New is paid back many, many fold as we allow the Rosary to bring us to the Sacred Heart of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we continue our discussion concerning the Sorrowful Mysteries.

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to share the blessings of our trust and faith in You. 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: The Rosary – Part VI: The Sorrowful Mysteries Continued

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