



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: Divine Mercy
Part VII: The Novena



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 with 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 they left the simple things for me to do, because, if I overheard them correctly, I'm pretty simple. To answer my questions, correct my pronunciation, and make sure I know which century I am talking about 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 continue to pray, dear Lord, for your assistance in ending the pandemic, that Your healing hand rest upon all the sick and afflicted, that You will guide the hearts and hands of the problem solvers and care givers, and that we may once more open the doors to Your parishes so we may

once more come together in community, we may once more come to adore You, and we may once more celebrate and receive You as You instructed us at the Paschal Supper.

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 listen to us on any device where you can connect to the Internet, including 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 your assistance in evangelization. By sharing the URL for our show, you can help us spread knowledge of our faith. All you need to do is share the URL, wcatradio.com/armoroffaith via email or social media and tell family and friends as well. Several of the streaming services through which we are available on demand also have share options, so we invite you to join the evangelization and help us spread the good news of the Gospel and our faith in Jesus Christ. You can also help us by selecting the follow or subscribe option associated with the service through which you listen to our show.

Current Day Commentary:

With all the turmoil of the pandemic, we decided to replace our Faith Events Announcements section with a Current Day Commentary. We will still use this section to announce events as they are brought to our attention, but, with the pandemic response, it appears a majority of conferences, retreats, or similar events are being canceled until further notice. If you do have news and would like us to make an announcement, simply send us an email to armoroffaithradio@gmail.com with the details and a point of contact should we need to clarify anything.

Our intention is to not get too political in the Current Day Commentary, but we must also recognize that in living our faith, it impossible to ignore politics and ideologies as they make demands upon us. Our intention here is to talk about living our faith in the face of our modern day and the forces which do not always look kindly upon what God asks of us. As we face these issues and the forces which stand in persecution of our faith, we must always remember 1 Peter 3:8-17, which tells us:

8 Finally, all of you, be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another, compassionate, humble. 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. 10 For:

“Whoever would love life

*and see good days
must keep the tongue from evil
and the lips from speaking deceit,
11 must turn from evil and do good,
seek peace and follow after it.
12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous
and his ears turned to their prayer,
but the face of the Lord is against evildoers.”*

13 Now who is going to harm you if you are enthusiastic for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, blessed are you. Do not be afraid or terrified with fear of them, 15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, 16 but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame. 17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be the will of God, than for doing evil.

As we engage in our day, we must remind ourselves of the importance of our conduct and how we are perceived in both word and deed. As we navigate our daily relationships, it is important we work to increase our knowledge or our faith as we maintain awareness of current events, but we must also be wary of our information sources. It is clear that a good portion of our media do not exist to keep us informed of truth, rather, they are paid to manipulate us according to political narratives so we will lend our power to the ideologies of their puppet masters.

One important premise of our show is that if we do not know our faith, we leave ourselves vulnerable to the one who would take it from us. Perhaps another way to say that is when we do not know our faith, we make it easier for the evil one to deceive us away from what God asks of us. The more we know our faith and endeavor to understand what God asks of us, the better equipped we are to help to accomplish His will. Let us, then, always ask in prayer for our Lord to lead us in how we may use the gifts and talents He placed in us so that His will is done.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Spring IV:

Here we go continuing with the Spring Cleaning of our souls. Moving on to the Second Commandment.

The Second Commandment

(Exodus 29:2-17)

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

(Deuteronomy 5:6-21)

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

The tradition which we teach today:

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

All three of these tell us the same thing. Don't use God's name to swear, to curse, or to harm others. So let us look at some questions we might consider as we examine our consciences.

1. Have my words been used to down grade God, the Church or my neighbor?
2. Have I used God's name in vain by way of profanity?
3. Have I harmed priests or others consecrated to God?
4. Have I sworn by God's name (taken an oath) either falsely or carelessly?
5. Have I complained against God (blasphemy)?
6. Have I broken any private vows?
7. Have I blamed God for my failings?
8. Do I use God's name carelessly, in anger, or in surprise?
9. Have I wished evil upon anyone or anything?

The Third Commandment

(Exodus 29 2-17)

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

(Deuteronomy 5:6-21)

Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

The tradition that we teach today:

Remember to keep holy the LORD'S Day.

Again, over the years this commandment has been shortened up for the sake of being able to repeat it easily. So let us look at questions that will help us understand the full meaning of this commandment.

1. Do I go to Mass every Sunday (or on Saturday for the Sunday Vigil)?
2. Do I go to Mass on Holy Days of Obligation (I like to call this Holy Days of Opportunity)? The Holy Days would be: January 1 – The Feast of Mary, the Mother of God; Ascension Thursday, 40 days after Easter Sunday; August 15 – The Assumption of Mary into Heaven; November 1 – All Saints Day; December 8 – The Feast of the Immaculate Conception; December 25 – Christmas.
3. Do I avoid, when possible, work that impedes worship to God?
4. Do I enjoy proper relaxation of mind and body on Sundays?

5. Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
6. Do I take my children to Mass?
7. Am I providing proper instruction of the Faith to my children?
8. Have I tried to observe Sunday as a family day and a day of rest?
9. Do I do needless work on Sunday?
10. Have I followed the Church rule of not eating for one hour before receiving Communion?
11. Have I knowingly eaten meat on a day designated as a day of fasting?
12. Have I shown disrespect by leaving Mass early, not paying attention or not joining in the prayers?
13. Have I been stingy in my support for the Church?
14. Do I give of my time & talent in ministry and charity?
15. Have I committed a sacrilege of the Blessed Sacrament (thrown Him away; brought Him home; treated Him without respect)?
16. Have I received any sacrament being in the state of mortal sin?

For such a short command, we sure have a lot to think about. The first three commandments are the ones which address how we are to show God our love and respect. Next time we will start the commandments which tell us how to love and respect our neighbors.

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 , 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 146.

Discussion:

As we closed our discussion last time, I mentioned that some who regularly say the Divine Mercy chaplet would point out to us that it appears that a couple of prayers are missing from our discussion compared to what we normally find in various pamphlets which present how to pray the chaplet. Indeed, there are optional prayers before and after the prayers Jesus taught Saint Faustina, but these prayers were written by Saint Faustina as she conversed with Jesus. On 10 Oct 1937, our Lord told Saint Faustina that she was holding something back from Him, her misery. (Diary, 1318) In the next paragraph, Saint Faustina wrote:

(Diary, 1319)

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.

This is usually included in Divine Mercy pamphlets as an optional opening prayer.

On 12 Feb 1937, after writing a litany of Divine Mercy considerations, Saint Faustina wrote:

(Diary, 950)

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.

This is usually included in Divine Mercy pamphlets as the closing prayer, followed by saying three times, “*Jesus, I trust in you.*” If we remember, these were the words Jesus wanted as the signature to the image. (Diary, 47) Saint Faustina writes this phrase in several places within her diary, as an opening before writing, as part of chart of inner control of the soul, (Diary, 162) just before an examination of self, (Diary, 861) as part of a litany, (Diary, 949) and just before her conversation with Jesus as to the Divine Mercy Novena. (Diary, 1209)

Today, we will turn our attention to the Divine Mercy Novena. As we progress through the diary of Saint Faustina, we might observe that Saint Faustina routinely turned to novenas and that Jesus also asked her to pray a novena for her country. (Diary, 33)

(Question 1: Most Catholics are aware of novenas and many pray novenas on a regular basis. Our daughter used to pray several at a time for various intentions for the blessings of family, friends, acquaintances, and even strangers. While we may be familiar with the term novena, sometimes it is good to revisit the basics to enable fullness of our understanding. **So, what exactly is a novena and what purpose might they serve?)**

- Nine day public or private **devotion** to receive graces
- Recommended by ecclesiastical authority, but not mentioned in the Catechism
- Origin not entirely clear
 - ➔ Nine day practice of mourning (from Greek and Roman culture)
 - ➔ Reflection of nine months of Jesus in the womb
 - ➔ Reflection of nine days of prayer by the disciples between the Ascension and Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5, 13-14)
- Four typical kinds of novenas
 - ➔ Mourning of the dead
 - ➔ Preparation (for example preparation for Christmas)
 - ➔ Prayer for petitions/intentions
 - ➔ Indulgences/reparations/penance
(Catholic Encyclopedia)

Sometimes when Saint Faustina mentioned novenas, she also mentioned of what they consisted. For example:

(Diary, 59)

On one occasion I heard these words in my soul. *Make a novena for your country. This novena will consist of the recitation of the Litany of the Saints.*

(Diary, 330)

Once, the confessor told me to pray for this intention, and I began a novena to the Mother of God. *This novena consisted in the prayer, "Hail, Holy Queen,"* recited nine times.

(Diary, 364)

Once I was asked to pray for a certain soul. I decided at once to make a novena to the Merciful Lord to *which I added a mortification*;

(Diary, 365)

My spiritual director replaced it with an *interior mortification*; namely, throughout Holy Mass I was to *meditate* on why the Lord Jesus had submitted to being baptized. The meditation was no mortification for me, for *thinking about God is a delight and not mortification*; but there was a mortification of the will in that I was not doing [simply] what I like, but what I was told to *do*, and it is in this that *interior mortification* consists. When I left the confessional and started to recite my penance, I heard these words: *I have granted the grace you asked for on behalf of that soul, but not because of the mortification you chose for yourself, but because of the act of complete obedience to My representative did I grant grace to that soul for whom you interceded and begged mercy. Know that when you mortify your own self-will, then Mine reigns within you.*

(Diary, 796)

The Lord told me to *say this chaplet* for nine days before the Feast of Mercy. It is to begin on Good Friday. *By this novena, I will grant every possible grace to souls.*

(Diary, 851)

Today I have started a novena to The Divine Mercy. That is, *I place myself in spirit before the image and recite the chaplet* which the Lord has taught me.

(Diary, 1041)

The novena *consists of an hour of adoration* before the Blessed Sacrament.

(Question 2: As we review these different examples, we might notice different forms of devotion. *What does this tell us about the nature of what a novena may consist?)*

- Prayer
- Meditation/Contemplation
- Acts of Mortification/Penance/Abstinence/Fasting
- Interior Mortification/Penance
- Adoration
- Hour of Mercy/Holy Hour
- Ect.

On 26 March 1937, Saint Faustina wrote:

(Diary, 1059)

Jesus is commanding me to make a novena before the Feast of Mercy, and today I am to begin it for the conversion of the whole world and for the recognition of The Divine Mercy.... so that every soul will praise My goodness. I desire trust from My creatures. Encourage souls to place great trust in My fathomless mercy. Let the weak, sinful souls have no fear to approach Me, for even if it had more sins than there are grains of sand in the world, all would be drowned in the unmeasurable depths of My mercy.

Later, on 10 Aug 1937, Saint Faustina wrote:

(Diary, 1209)

Jesus, I trust in You.

Novena to The Divine Mercy

Which Jesus instructed me to write down and make before the Feast of Mercy. It begins on Good Friday.

I desire that during these nine days you bring souls to the fountain of My mercy, that they may draw therefrom strength and refreshment and whatever grace they need in the hardships of life, and especially at the hour of death.

On each day you will bring to My Heart a different group of souls, and you will immerse them in this ocean of My mercy, and I will bring all these souls into the house of My Father. You will do this in this life and in the next. I will deny nothing to any soul whom you will bring to the fount of My mercy. On each day you will beg My Father, on the strength of My bitter Passion, for graces for these souls.

I answered, "Jesus, I do not know how to make this novena or which souls to bring first into Your Most Compassionate heart." Jesus replied that He would tell me which souls to bring each day into His Heart.

(Question 3: "Make a novena," Jesus tells Saint Faustina. Now, we already had several examples where Saint Faustina made novenas for various intentions, but here she says, "I do not know how or which...." In what ways might we relate to the feeling of Saint Faustina, even in relation to things in which we are experienced? What keeps us from moving forward with assisting the will of God?)

- Lack of self confidence/doubt in self
- Insecurity of what is good enough (perceptions of perfection inhibiting action)
- Insecurity of knowing our faith

- Insecurity of what is acceptable to God
- Insecurity that God will not help us

“Jesus replied that **He would tell me** which souls to bring each day into His Heart.”

The following is the list of souls Jesus told Saint Faustina to include in the novena so they may be immersed in the ocean of our Lord's Mercy. (Diary, 1209 - 1230)

- **Day One:** *Today, bring to Me **all mankind, especially all sinners**, and immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. In this way you will console Me in the bitter grief into which the loss of souls plunges Me.*
- **Day Two:** *Today bring to me the **souls of priests and religious**, and immerse them in My unfathomable mercy. It was they who gave Me the strength to endure My bitter Passion. Through them, as through channels, My mercy flows out upon mankind.*
- **Day Three:** *Today bring to Me all **devout and faithful souls**, and immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. These souls brought Me consolation on the Way of the Cross. They were that drop of consolation in the midst of an ocean of bitterness.*
- **Day Four:** *Today bring to Me the **pagans and those who do not yet know Me**. I was thinking also of them during My bitter Passion, and their future zeal comforted My Heart. Immerse them in the ocean of My mercy.*
- **Day Five:** *Today bring to Me the souls of **heretics and schismatics**, and immerse them in the ocean of My mercy. During My bitter Passion they tore at My Body and Heart; that is, My Church. As they return to unity with the Church, My wounds heal, and in this way they alleviate My Passion.*
- **Day Six:** *Today bring to me the **mEEK and humble souls and the souls of little children**, and immerse them in My mercy. These souls most closely resemble My Heart. They strengthened Me during My bitter agony. I saw them as earthly Angels, who would keep vigil at My altars. I pour out upon them whole torrents of grace. Only the humble soul is able to receive My grace. I favor humble souls with My confidence.*
- **Day Seven:** *Today bring to me the **souls who especially venerate and glorify My mercy**, and immerse them in My mercy. These souls sorrowed most over My Passion and entered most deeply into My Spirit. They are living images of My Compassionate heart. These souls will shine with a special brightness in the next life. Not one of them will go into the fire of hell. I shall particularly defend each one of them at the hour of death.*
- **Day Eight:** *Today bring to Me the **souls who are in the prison of Purgatory**, and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy. Let the torrents of My Blood cool down their scorching flames. All these souls are greatly loved by Me. They are making retribution to My justice. It is in your power to bring them relief. Draw all the indulgences from the treasury of My Church and offer them on their behalf. Oh, if you only knew the torments they suffer, you would continually offer for them the alms of the spirit and pay off their debt to My justice.*

- **Day Nine:** Today bring to Me **souls who have become lukewarm**, and immerse them in the abyss of My mercy. These souls wound My Heart most painfully. My soul suffered the most dreadful loathing in the Garden of Olives because of lukewarm souls. They were the reason I cried out: “Father, take this cup away from Me, if it be Your will.” For them, the last hope of salvation is to flee to My mercy.

(Question 5: As we examine the list, we might perceive a spectrum of relationships between these groups of souls and their Savior. **How might we compare and contrast these groups?)**

- It begins with all of us → *bring to Me all mankind, especially all sinners*
- Some souls are of the faithful, others, not so much
- Some gave Jesus strength on the cross, while others added to His agony
- The lukewarm wound His heart most painfully
- He wishes to immerse all into His ocean of Mercy

Quotes:

(Luke 7:36-50) - The Pardon of the Sinful Woman

36 A Pharisee invited him to dine with him, and he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. 37 Now there was a sinful woman in the city who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee. Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment, 38 she stood behind him at his feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment. 39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner.” 40 Jesus said to him in reply, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said. 41 “Two people were in debt to a certain creditor; one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty. 42 Since they were unable to repay the debt, he forgave it for both. Which of them will love him more?” 43 Simon said in reply, “The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven.” He said to him, “You have judged rightly.” 44 Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? When I entered your house, you did not give me water for my feet, but she has bathed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but she has not ceased kissing my feet since the time I entered. 46 You did not anoint my head with oil, but she anointed my feet with ointment. 47 So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.” 48 He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” 49 The others at table said to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” 50 But he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

(Luke 18:9-14) - The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector.

9 He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. 10 “Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.’ 13 But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to

heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.' 14 I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Final Thoughts:

During the course of our discussion, we noted how novenas may be more than prayer, but it may include other forms of devotion as well. There are a variety of novenas presented to us through a variety of sources for a variety of intentions. The one thing we must keep in mind as we incorporate any novena into our faith life is the temptation to approach it in the fashion of a superstition.

Through a novena, we are asking for God's grace. We must also remember, that it is not our will but His will we should seek, therefore, we must be prepared that the answer to our intention may not be immediate, or, may even be, "No."

We must also consider, as we engage a novena, that God may ask in our hearts, what will we do? Yes, He wants to pour out His graces upon us, His undeserved help, but He also wants us to demonstrate our faith through how we live our faith. If we allow, if we listen carefully with our hearts, He will lead us to what we may do to help accomplish His will. As we follow His commandments, we demonstrate our love for Him and open our hearts to Him so He may pour His love into us.

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

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: Divine Mercy – Part VIII: Spreading the Devotion

Why Catholics Do What We Do References:

Beginning Catholic; (2016); "Essential Freedom: Catholic Ten Commandments;"
beginningCatholic.com; <http://www.beginningcatholic.com/catholic-ten-commandments>

EWTN News; (accessed 7 May 2020); "Confession Guide for Adults;" National Catholic Register; https://www.ncregister.com/info/confession_guide_for_adults

Holy See; (15 Aug 1997); [Catechism of the Catholic Church](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/command.htm) (Part Three Section Two); Vatican; https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/command.htm

My Catholic Life; (2020); “Examination of Conscience;” My Catholic Life, Inc;
<https://mycatholic.life/catholic-prayers/examination-of-conscience/>

UMD Newman; (accessed 7 May 2020); “A Detailed Catholic Examination of Conscience, 2nd Edition;” Bulldogcatholic.org; <https://bulldogcatholic.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/a-detailed-catholic-examination-of-conscience-2nd-ed..pdf>

USCCB; (2013); “A Brief Examination of Conscience;” United States Council of Catholic Bishops;
<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/upload/Examination-of-Conscience.pdf>

Discussion References:

Hilgers, J.; (1911); The Catholic Encyclopedia; “Novena;” Robert Appleton Company; New Advent;
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11141b.htm>

The Catholic Encyclopedia; (1911); “Mortification;” Robert Appleton Company; New Advent:
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10578b.htm>

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>

USCCB; (May 2016); Catechism of the Catholic Church; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; <http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/index.html>