



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: Divine Mercy
Part VIII: Spreading the Devotion



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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 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 answers lie in waiting for questions. I don't know exactly what that means, so I will just let everyone ponder that for awhile. Anyway, 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 pray especially today for Pam, Rebecca, and Jared. We pray, dear Lord, for Your healing hand to 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 rest upon all who love and care them.

We also pray, dear Lord, that You will help hearts and souls see through and turn away from the disruptions, deceptions, and designs of the evil one. We pray You will touch all hearts so Your Holy Truth will guide us in how we may live according to Your Holy Word of love.

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 to help us share the good news of our Lord. By sharing the URL for our show, you can help us spread the knowledge and blessings 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:

As we progress towards the summer months, some parishes are beginning to open their doors, although, with heavy government restrictions. We were blessed last weekend to obtain reservations at a parish a couple of small towns away from us. Government social distancing orders were respected, but the ten person limit seems excessive. Why, because those who live in the same household gain nothing by extreme social distancing during worship while driving to and from home in the same car. Governments should consider relaxing their religious worship restrictions so the Mass is not restricted to just one or two households, unless the real objective is to effectively keep the people away from their parishes.

More people can come together in worship if we consider social distancing guidelines based on household where people are already exposed to one another. In other words, a household may sit together, but social distance from other household units. We should note, when politics are in play, the quality of problem solving suffers.

For those of us who are not lucky enough to obtain a reservation to attend Mass, we must not let our faith suffer. We can still pray as families and should at least attend an online Mass so we may be recharged by the Liturgy of the Word and so we may receive the Spiritual Communion which the Holy Spirit will deliver to our hearts.

While we adjust to the government restrictions upon the exercise of our faith, we must not neglect the collection basket, for it provides resources necessary for ministry. Parishes must still pay for mortgages, utilities, and other ongoing expenses. While social distancing obstructs our direct observation of ministry, there is still a lot of work and resource required to enable the spiritual mission of our parishes. If we financially neglect our parishes during this time of crisis, we may find them no longer there for us when conditions change, so, if it is within your means, please send your parish a gift, even if you are unable to obtain a reservation to attend Mass.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Spring – Part V:

Back to Spring Cleaning of our souls. Today we begin the seven commandments which teach us about how we are to treat our friends, family and neighbors.

The Fourth Commandment

(Exodus 20:12)

Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

(Deuteronomy 5:16)

Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord, your God, has commanded you, that you may have a long life and that you may prosper in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

Today's traditional teaching:

Honor your father and your mother.

Pretty clear from all thee readings that we are to honor our father and mother. This commandment, in doing my research, seems to include not only our behavior toward our parents, but our grandparents and other adults as well. This commandment seems to also include how parents are to treat their children. The following questions are for all ages, parents and children alike.

Here are the questions:

- 1) Have I been disobedient to my parents?
- 2) Have I been disrespectful to my parents or neglected them?
- 3) Do I seek to have good communication with my parents?
- 4) Have I dishonored my parents by failing in obedience to others in authority?

- 5) Have I mistreated my spouse or children?
- 6) Have I been disrespectful to my spouse?
- 7) Do I criticize my parents for not having the parenting skills I think they should have?
- 8) Do I neglect the needs of my parents in their old age or in their time of need?
- 9) Have I failed to give my children proper food, clothing, shelter, education, discipline and care?
- 10) Have I taken care to see that my children receive the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion on a regular basis?
- 11) Do I educate my children in ways that are in keeping with my religious beliefs?
- 12) Have I set a bad example for my children by casually missing Mass, neglecting prayer, or ignore my responsibility to ensure my children receive a Catholic education?
- 13) Do I neglect my duties to my spouse and children?
- 14) Does my behavior disturb the peace of my family life?
- 15) Have I prayed with and for my children?
- 16) Have I been a good example of how to live the Catholic Faith for my children?
- 17) Do I neglect to help with household chores?
- 18) Do I cause unnecessary worry and anxiety by my attitude, behavior, moods, etc.?
- 19) Am I disrespectful, impolite, or discourteous toward my family?

Well, those are a few examples as to questions we might ask ourselves in relation to the fourth commandment. Our Spring Cleaning will continue next time as we keep learning what these commandments are really asking of us.

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 Spring Cleaning of the Soul and Examination of Conscience, 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 147.

Discussion:

During the course of our last discussion, we noted how novenas may be more than prayer; that 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 to avoid the temptation to approach it in the same fashion of a superstition. Though we may lift up our intentions and petitions, which we pray our Lord will grant, what we really lift up through a novena is our devotion to our Lord.

Through a novena, we ask for God's grace, and if I haven't mentioned this before, we should remember that grace is God's undeserved help. 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, as we expect, or, the answer 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; as I mentioned, 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.

Today, we will conclude our series concerning the Divine Mercy by discussing the call to share the Divine Mercy Devotion.

(Question 1: Before we discuss what we are called to share, let's take a moment to refresh our memories as to what is included in the devotion. What are some examples of the elements of the Divine Mercy Devotion we mentioned during episode 143 that we should consider as we both practice and share?)

- Reflection on what Jesus tells us through Saint Faustina (Faustina's Diary)
- Venerate the Image and reflect on its meaning
- Pray the Chaplet, asking for His Mercy
- Pray during the Hour of Mercy (3pm, the hour when Jesus died on the cross)
- Pray the Litany of Divine Mercy (perhaps in conjunction with the Stations)
- Reflect on the mercy of Jesus (in prayer and meditation)
- Receive the sacrament of reconciliation
- Adoration of our Lord (incorporate the chaplet, novena, and/or litany)
- Pray the Novena (especially beginning on Good Friday)
- Feast of Mercy (Divine Mercy Sunday)
- Be merciful as our Lord is merciful (live the devotion)
- Spread the devotion

(Question 2: So, if we look at Saint Faustina's diary, we might note that the list we just discussed is not found enumerated or in a specific order. **How, then, do we discern how to practice the Divine Mercy devotion?)**

- Read the diary
- Read about the diary
- Devotion pamphlets (keep in mind, pamphlets may only explain one element)
- Join an apostolate or Divine Mercy prayer group
- Ask the Holy Spirit to lead us in our practice

(Matthew 9:13)

“Go and learn the meaning of the words, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.”

In the introduction to Saint Faustina's diary, Rev. Rózycki, a theologian and former teacher of Saint John Paul II, analyzed Saint Faustina's writing and identified five elements of the devotion with specific promises which Jesus attached to them. This list includes:

- The Image of the Merciful Jesus
- The Feast of The Divine Mercy
- The Chaplet of The Divine Mercy
- The Hour of Mercy
- Spreading the honor of The Divine Mercy

(Question 3: Earlier, we discussed twelve elements we might discern from Saint Faustina's diary, but what Rev. Rózycki identified are those where Jesus made specific promises. **What might this reveal to us about the practice of the devotion?)**

- The number of elements in any list partially depends on criteria for inclusion or subdivision
 - While we may produce a list of elements and there may be specific prayers, the devotion is more about substance than procedure
 - The parts may be our guide to the whole, but the parts do not all need to be practiced in the same moment – some may be daily, others once a year
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(Diary, 1572)

As often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it; invoke its omnipotence for the whole world, and particularly for poor sinners; for at that moment mercy was opened wide for every soul. In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world — mercy triumphed over justice.

My daughter, try your best to make the Stations of the Cross in this hour, provided that your duties permit it; and if you are not able to make the Stations of the Cross, then at least step into the chapel for a moment and adore, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, My Heart, which is full of mercy; and should you be unable to step into the chapel, immerse yourself in prayer there where you happen to be, if only for a very brief instant.

(Question 4: We might notice in this paragraph that Jesus asks Saint Faustina to make the Stations of the Cross during the hour of mercy, but also provides alternatives should this not be possible. The effort to spread a devotion usually requires that we are able to define it and outline the practice. If there is not a concise list, set of rules or a formula by which to practice the devotion, how might we explain the devotion to others?)

- Reflect on the message
 - ➔ What does Jesus desire? → Trust and love
 - ➔ What does Jesus promise? → Mercy and love
 - ➔ What does Jesus want us to understand? → His will, His love, His Mercy, and how we may help others
- What to share is situationally dependent → what is the opportunity?
- What might we do daily, periodically, or only certain times of the year?
 - ➔ Study
 - ➔ Prayers
 - ➔ Meditation/contemplation
 - ➔ Deeds (remember our discussion in episode 144 about Spiritual and Corporal works of mercy)

(Diary, 1074)

When I went for adoration, I heard these words: *My beloved daughter, write down these words, that today My Heart has rested in this convent [the Cracow house]. Tell the world about My mercy and My love. The flames of mercy are burning me. I desire to pour them out upon human souls. Oh, what pain they cause Me when they do not want to accept them!*

My daughter, do whatever is within your power to spread devotion to My mercy. I will make up for what you lack. Tell aching mankind to snuggle close to My merciful Heart, and I will fill it with peace. Tell [all people], My daughter, that I am Love and Mercy itself. When a soul approaches Me with trust, I fill it with such an abundance of graces that it cannot contain them within itself, but radiates them to other souls.

(Question 5: So, as we mentioned, one of the elements of the Divine Mercy Devotion is to spread the devotion. In what ways might we accomplish that?)

- Conversation
- Place pamphlets
- Invite others to participate in elements

- Form devotional groups
- Volunteer in support of Divine Mercy apostolates
- Encourage inclusion of the chaplet and/or litany as part of prayer, Stations of the Cross, and adoration
- Live as an example and always be prepared to give reason for our hope

Quotes:

– *Introduction to Saint Faustina's Diary, pg 11*

The spreading of the honor of The Divine Mercy does not require many words, but always the Christian attitude of faith, of trust in god, and of becoming ever more merciful. In her lifetime St. Faustina gave the example of just such apostolic work.

– *Sister Speranza (contemporary mystic) – When asked about the writings of Saint Faustina*

The writings contain a wonderful teaching, but reading them one must remember that God speaks to philosophers in the language of philosophers and to simple souls in the language of simple ones, and only to these last does He reveal truths hidden from the wise and prudent of this world.

– *Jesus to Saint Faustina (Diary, 1075)*

Souls who spread the honor of My mercy I shield through their entire lives as a tender mother her infant, and at the hour of death I will not be a Judge for them, but the merciful Savior. At that last hour, a soul has nothing with which to defend itself except My mercy. Happy is the soul that during its lifetime immersed itself in the Fountain of Mercy, because justice will have no hold on it.

– *Saint Faustina (Diary, 1083)*

That beautiful soul who is spreading this work of Divine Mercy throughout the world is, by his deep humility, very pleasing to God.

Final Thoughts:

When we talk about the blessings of the fullness of faith, we must reflect on the fact that there is so much to learn and there are so many distractions. We certainly cannot read the Bible in one sitting, much less comprehend all of its wisdom. It is a life long journey, and as with any journey, it begins with the decision to make the first step.

Obviously, with a diary which consists of six notebooks consolidated into a 437 page volume, we are only able to present the highlights here. We hope that during the course of this series, we have stirred your curiosity to learn more through study, meditation, contemplation, and prayer.

According to the Catholic Encyclopedia (New Advent):

When the Church approves private revelations, she declares only that there is nothing in them contrary faith or good morals, and that they may be read without danger or even with profit; no obligation is thereby imposed on the faithful to believe them. (Poulain)

Given this understanding, even though Divine Mercy is an approved apparition, we have no obligation to believe in the writings of Saint Faustina or to practice the devotions outlined within, but we should take a moment and reflect on the blessings we might share through them. As we reflect on the elements of the devotion, we should consider their consistency to what Jesus teaches us in scripture. Let us consider the words of Jesus as we are told in Matthew 9:13:

(Matthew 9:13)

“Go and learn the meaning of the words, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.”

As we reflect on this instruction, we should observe an opportunity through the Divine Mercy Devotion to live what Jesus taught, not only that we should seek His Mercy and Love, but that we are also called to give mercy and love. The most important part of our consideration as to our practice of the devotion is the mercy and love to which we are called.

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 an apparition of our Blessed Mother which is referred to as Our Lady of America.

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: Our Lady of America – Part I: Introduction to the Call

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