



***The Armor of Faith***  
**Topic Summary: Spiritual Warfare**  
***Part I: Situation***



*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 was our only cradle Catholic on the team, but now we are also joined by Donna Mae who is the artist who sculpted the statue of Our Lady of America which was carried by our youth and blessed by Saint John Paul II at the 1993 World Youth Day. We had such a fun time with Donna Mae during our series, Our Lady of America, that we decided to ask her to become a regular panel member. Of course, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because our panel would get rather bored if I didn't. 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.

Dear Lord, we continue to pray for peace in our day. We pray You will guide the faithful so they may understand how they may touch the hearts which surround them so that every heart may open towards You so You may fill them with Your love and guide them in the blessings 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](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 listen to us on any device where you can connect to the Internet, including 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 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](http://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:**

Today, in our Current Day Commentary, I am going to talk about history. If we are to understand how we are where we are at, we must review history. Before we go there, though, I must warn everyone, our history is polluted with misinformation, disinformation, myths, and lies. This presents just a tad bit of challenge to us, which is: How are we to discern truth from the accounts of those who do not accurately report events, but report them through the lens of political agendas, or worse, distort them for purposes of political manipulation of the people? This is not just the challenge for historians to get history right, but for the average person to understand what is good, what is bad, and what is truth.

Our history documents the good and the bad of the past. The good, we should endeavor to continue, but the bad we must seek to eradicate or at least mitigate and prevent. If we do not understand the truth of history, we may be steered to the wrong choices.

This is why the power brokers seek to control the narrative of history; and if they cannot control it, then, they want to eradicate it. The power brokers also want to control the narrative of history as a means to support their ideological and political agendas. One means by which they do this is through propagandists posing as journalists or historians.

Propagandists posing as journalists present the first challenge, for they do not report events as they actually happen, but report them, and spin them, to support a political narrative. If truth

supports the political narrative, all the better; but they do not let truth get in the way. If they can use truth to support the lie, fine, but what is most important to the propagandists is not the truth, but the political objective. Unfortunately, the seeds they plant can flow through many generations.

During our series, “The Study and Discernment of Scripture,” episodes 39 – 45, which you can listen to on-demand, we discuss the importance of understanding the context of history so we may understand the full context of scripture. It is the same for comprehending the context of what has led to our modern day.

During our series, “By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them,” episodes 57 – 58, we also provided examples of politically doctored accounts of history which continue to pollute our historical record. and therefore, our understanding of the context of what has led us to our day. The intelligence agencies of the former Soviet Union and their satellites have sown many errors into our historical record, fulfilling the warning of Our Blessed Mother at Fatima, that Russia would spread her errors to the world. We are now dealing with those errors in our media, our academia, our politics, our streets, and within our Church. Those errors are yielding the day prophesied in Isaiah,

(Isaiah 5:20-24)

20 Ah! **Those who call evil good, and good evil,**  
who change darkness to light, and light into darkness,  
who change bitter to sweet, and sweet into bitter!

21 Ah! **Those who are wise in their own eyes,**  
**prudent in their own view!**

22 Ah! Those who are champions at drinking wine,  
masters at mixing drink!

23 Those who acquit the guilty for bribes,  
and **deprive the innocent of justice!**

24 Therefore, as the tongue of fire licks up stubble,  
as dry grass shrivels in the flame,  
Their root shall rot  
and their blossom scatter like dust;

**For they have rejected the instruction of the LORD of hosts,**  
**and scorned the word of the Holy One of Israel.**

Why is it important to have an accurate understanding of the context of history? We cannot make good decisions about moving forward if we do not have the full and truthful context of what has happened before us.

The reason our current main stream media buries truth under political context is because they are paid to manipulate the people. We must recognize, we no longer have journalists (or if we do, they are few), we have political strategists, also known as propagandists. Their job is not truth. Their job is manipulation.

Unfortunately, without the service of an honest journalist, we must discern the truth of dialy events for ourselves. This requires time, effort, and skills the average person does not have to

devote to obtain the truthful context of history. We might say, “Let us turn to the historian, then.” Unfortunately, the political bias of historians are also going the way of journalists.

It becomes important, then, that we choose our sources wisely. We must consider their track record. We must also consider the bias of their critics and the clues they leave within their writings which can sometimes reveal their deceit and hypocrisy.

I say this, because, if we are to understand the choices before us, we must understand the true context of the events which have led us to this point. It is not just true for the political battle in progress, but more importantly, the spiritual battle; and we must recognize, one influences the other. We must make no mistake, the political battle is but one battlefield of the spiritual war. We must seek to know the truth of our history if we are to understand our modern day and the next step we must take to stand firm and strong in the face of the evil day. (cf. Ephesians 6:10-17)

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

### ***Saints – Part V:***

Today we will continue with learning about American Saints and discovering what it was that propelled them to sainthood. My original thoughts were to cover at least two saints a week, however, as I began looking into these heroic lives, I discovered that their stories are so fascinating that it requires an entire segment to share about who they were, what they did, and why they were declared saints. So, for the foreseeable future, the segments of *Why Catholics do What We Do*, will be dedicated to studying the lives of American Saints.

### **Saint Marianne Cope (1838-1918)**

Barbara Koob was born on January 23, 1838. She was born to Peter Koob and his wife, Barbara Witzembacher Koob in SE Hessen, West Germany. When Baby Barbara was only a year old, she and her parents moved to the United States. As they processed into their new home, their last name was changed to Cope. The family settled into a house in Utica, New York and continued the work they already knew as farmers. They became members of St. Joseph's Parish and Barbara and all her siblings attended school there.

She felt the call to religious life early in her growing up, but this dream was put on hold for almost a decade as she was needed to help support her family. Her father had taken ill, so after completing the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, she went to work in a factory.

At the still young age of 24, Barbara joined the Sisters of St. Francis in Syracuse, New York. She received her habit on November 19, 1862 and at that time she became “Sister Marianne.” A year later she would make her religious profession and then became a teacher in several elementary schools in New York State. Since teaching is what she desired to do, one can imagine how happy she must have been with this assignment.

Soon her life would take on changes. She was appointed to various administrative positions which took her out of the classroom. She missed the teaching, but her new challenges also

brought about great satisfaction for her. In the 1860s she was one of the governing members of her religious community and because of this, she helped to establish the first two hospitals in central New York.

The 1870s brought her into nursing. She became the nurse-administrator and served as the head administrator for six years. She had excellent people skills and was also very intelligent. She used her gifts in her position to demonstrate her energy and motivation to serve God alone.

Mother Marianne was not only intelligent, devoted to God and the people, but she was also very compassionate. She was criticized because she reached out to patients who were considered “outcasts” such as alcoholics and drug addicts. While being criticized for some of her actions, she was also well known and loved for her kindness, wisdom, and practicality.

Mother Marianne's reputation spread far and wide. In 1883, a Catholic priest wrote her a letter and asked for her help in care of the hospitals and the patients with leprosy in the Hawaiian Islands. Mother Marianne eagerly accepted the challenge. She responded to the priest's letter with, “I am hungry for the work and I wish with all my heart to be one of the chosen ones, whose privilege it will be to sacrifice themselves for the salvation of the souls of the poor Islanders...I am not afraid of any disease, hence, it would be my greatest delight even to minister to the abandoned “lepers”.

In 1883, Mother Marianne and six Sisters of St. Francis reached Honolulu. Their task was to manage a hospital on Oahu and received patients with Hansen's disease who came from the different islands. They began cleaning the facilities and caring for the 200 patients. Very soon they had upgraded the living conditions and care of the patients.

With things running smoothly for the hospital and the patients, another problem surfaced. The patients had children who were healthy and no where to live. The Islanders refused to take care of the children as they would have been exposed to the disease of their parents. The Sisters founded the Kapi'olani Home. This home was on the grounds of the hospital and there the Sisters would care for the children.

Mother Marianne was to meet Father Damien de Veuster – we know him today as Saint Damien, the Apostle to the Lepers. Fr. Damien had already been tending to the care of the patients for some time, yet, was still healthy. Two years later he would be diagnosed with Hansen's disease (the clinical name for leprosy). Upon being diagnosed, he became an unwelcomed visitor to all the leaders of church and government in Honolulu. It was at this time that Mother began to be the sole care giver for Fr. Damien.

In 1887 a new government came into Hawaii and the officials decided that the Oahu Hospital and receiving station were not necessary and moved to close them. Now, where were the patients going to get care? Where were they to live? Mother Marianne heard the plea for help and cheerfully agreed to move to the Kalaupapa Peninsula which was a settlement for exiles. Mother and her Sisters relocated to the new hospital on the island of Molokai. Fr. Damien was ill at this time and was most concerned about the patients in the Boy's Home he had founded. Mother, in keeping with her character, assured the ailing priest that she would care for the boys.

Mother Marianne and her Sister companions worked tirelessly to care for all the children between the two homes. Mother's people skills kept everyone going. She inspired in the children, the Sisters and Father Damien with great optimism, hope and trust in God. For the Sisters, she inspired them to not have fear of getting leprosy.

Moving around the Hawaiian islands made this region her home. She was never able to return to her childhood home of New York. On August 9, 1918 she died of natural causes and is buried on the island where she loved and cared for soo many of God's children.

The Diocese of Honolulu published this account of Mother Marianne's path to sainthood:

The Sisters of St. Francis began collecting materials soon after Mother Marianne's death for her eventual canonization.

- October 24, 2003, theologians, cardinals and bishops at the Congregation for the Causes of Saints declared her heroically virtuous.
- April 19, 2004, Pope John Paul II issued the decree officially naming her Venerable.
- December 20, 2004, after receiving the unanimous affirmation of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Pope John Paul II ordered a decree to be issued authenticating a miracle attributed to Mother Marianne's intercession.
- May 14, 2005, Venerable Marianne Cope was beatified. Another verified miracle happening after her status of Blessed would lead to her canonization.
- June 16, 2011, Vatican Medical Board rules unanimously that a second miracle case is an inexplicable medical recovery.
- October 8, 2011, theologians rule unanimously that the second miracle case was due to the intercession of Blessed Marianne Cope.
- December 6, 2011, the Congregation for Causes of Saints affirms Blessed Marianne for canonization.
- 2011, Pope Benedict XVI affirms Blessed Marianne for canonization.
- October 21, 2012, canonization of Mother Marianne Cope.  
(Diocese of Honolulu)

As you can see, Mother Marianne lived a most courageous life and was extremely dedicated to the “outcasts” of society. While the events in her life made clear that she deserved the title of “Saint”, it took from her death in August 1918 until October of 2012 for the canonization to take place.

*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 Saint Marianne Cope, 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 157.

## **Discussion:**

As we conducted our series, “Our Lady of America,” we mentioned that it is currently an unapproved apparition by the ecclesiastical authority, however Bishop Rhoades, after investigation and consideration of the associated evidence and history, stated:

“Given this history of prayers and religious articles being given approval by competent ecclesiastical authority, the use of such prayers religious articles may continue as a matter of private devotion, but not as a public devotion of the Church. Indeed, such private devotion would be consistent with the history of the United States of America being dedicated to Our Lady.” (Rhoades)

During the course of that series, which you can listen to on-demand (select episodes 148 through 156), we discussed the call to defend the sanctity of the family and purity of heart. We also discussed how we may look to Saint Joseph as an example of both fatherhood and purity. Most importantly, we discussed the call to our youth, those who are in the morning of their generation, to be the Torchbearers of the Queen, the one who points to her Son as the “the only true way to the Father,” and therefore, the Torchbearers hold the light, which points to the path of Light. As Saint John Paul II alluded as he encouraged our young, our youth will help hold the torches of light which shall point to the One who holds out His hand to guide us on the path to eternal life.

We all have a role in the fight in defense of the family and faith. Parents form their children so they may form the generations to come. If we do not share with our youth the blessings of God's Holy Truth, they can neither live it nor share it themselves. If we do not enable our youth to learn, we leave them vulnerable to the prince of lies and sower of death. Let us, then, encourage our children, present them with the armor of God, and teach them how to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. (cf. Ephesians 6:10-17) Let us enable our youth to hold high the Light of life.

As we prepare our youth, we must remember, they are a critical target of the evil one. He knows that the earlier he can take the innocence of our children, the easier it will be to manipulate them towards worldly ways as they grow. In military terms, our children are a high value target (HVT) for the devil.

The series we are going to begin today is not only about that battle, but the war for all souls. Spoiler alert, we know the end; she will crush its head, but as I always point out, we do not want to become a spiritual casualty along the way.

This war affects every soul, and if we are to protect ourselves, we must not only put on the Armor of God, (cf. Ephesians 6:10-17), but we must also train and prepare to defend ourselves against what Satan targets against us. A war is fought with many weapons, using many tactics, and is waged at various levels.

The prime objective of war is to destroy both the means and will of the opposition to resist and fight. In the realm of spiritual warfare, our means to fight comes from the knowledge of our faith and the skills and talents God has placed within us. Our will to fight is found in the strength of our love for God and one another.

In the military, we had a mantra, “Let no soul cry out, had I only the proper training.” It was a reminder to leaders of the importance of knowledge and training to the capability and preparedness to engage and prevail in battle. We may give the best technology and strongest weapons to our soldiers, but such things are useless unless our soldiers are trained and practiced in their use. It is the same in spiritual warfare, we cannot hope to prevail, much less protect ourselves, if we are not well trained and practiced in our faith.

The objective of this series is not to provide the full range of training required to be soldiers of Christ, but we want to raise awareness of what we must be prepared to face and the means by which we may prepare ourselves for spiritual battle.

When a military unit prepares for operations, one of the first things they assess is the “situation.” Understanding the situation enables planning and decision making. Failing to understand the full context of the situation, can result in the nasty surprises which yield casualties, destruction, and potentially defeat.

In the military, the situation paragraph of an operations plan or order contains the following basic elements for the planning staff to outline and define:

- Area of Interest → Surrounding area which may influence operations
- Area of Operations → The boundaries of fire and maneuver (where the unit can shoot and where the unit can move)
- Enemy Forces → composition, strength, capabilities, weaknesses, and likely courses of action
- Friendly Forces → composition, strength, capabilities, and mission

**(Question 1: So, let's look at the first element of information. In spiritual warfare, what might constitute our Area of Interest?)**

- Heaven
- Hell
- Political arenas outside of our influence



- Religious arenas outside of our influence
  - Cultural arenas outside of our influence
  - Areas which may be influenced through the ripple effects of our operations
- 

**(Question 2:** So, now, let's consider the second element. **In spiritual warfare, what might constitute our Area of Operations?)**

- The World
  - Where we worship
  - Where we learn
  - Where we work
  - Where we play
  - Where we minister
  - And in the “all of the above” category, where we live our faith
- 

**(Question 3:** Now we turn our attention to enemy forces. **In spiritual warfare, the consideration of enemy forces is situationally dependent, but what should we consider in relation to how the enemy will face us?)**

- Form → spiritual or physical → what we see and what we cannot see
  - Objectives → separate the children of God from their Creator → ruin of souls
  - Tactics → disruption, deception, despair, degradation, temptation, seduction
  - Weapons → pride, lust, over consumption, greed, sloth, anger, envy
- 

Friendly forces consist of those who are on our side, with similar objectives, and with whom we may share a boundary or common mission as we engage the fight. It is important we have good understanding of their operations, as well as their mission objectives, so we do not find ourselves working at cross purposes, or worse, causing casualties through friendly fire. We must also consider that their priorities may not be the same as ours, but our objective is to work together towards common objectives and the most common objectives is the will of God, which Saint Faustina reminds us, is love and mercy itself.

**(Question 4:** Our consideration of Friendly Forces is situationally dependent to our role or vocation if you will. **As laity, who might we consider to be our friendly forces?)**

- Ministries
- Religious
- Clergy
- Ecclesiastical authorities
- Magisterium of the Catholic Church

- Chair of Peter
- Saints
- Angels → especially guardian angels
- Saint Joseph
- Our Blessed Mother
- The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

**Note:** Good communications are required to work effectively with friendly forces, but one thing I have found, whether it is during battle or ministry, communications is the hardest piece.

## Quotes:

*Saint Padre Pio – from his exchanges with his spiritual director*

– 20 December 1910

I am in the hands of the devil who is trying to snatch me from the arms of Jesus. Dear God! What a war he is waging against me! There are moments in which I am on the point of losing my reason through the continual violence I must do myself. How many tears and groans, dear Father, I send up to heaven in order to be set free. But no matter, I will never tire of praying to Jesus.

– 9 May 1915

The enemies are continually rising up, Father, against the ship of my spirit and they cry out in unison: “Let us knock him down, let us crush him, since he is weak and cannot hold out much longer.” Alas, my dear Father, who will set me free from those roaring lions all ready to devour me?

– 4 August 1917

Satan with his malignant wiles never tires of waging war on me and attacking my little citadel, besieging it on all sides. In a word, Satan is for me like a powerful foe who, when he resolves to capture a fortress is not content to attack one wall or one rampart, but surrounds it entirely, attacks and torments it on every side. My dear Father, the malignant wiles of Satan strike terror into my heart, but from God alone through Jesus Christ I hope for the grace to obtain the victory continually and never to be defeated.

## Final Thoughts:

Situational awareness is critical to not just our physical safety, but more importantly to the safety of our soul. Situational awareness requires we survey all which surrounds us and assess from whence the enemy might attack us and where he has left traps and snares. The enemy has many hiding places and many weapons of stealth.

For evil to do its damage, it must reveal itself, but the question for us is whether we shall recognize it in time to defeat it or at least mitigate its harm. We must remain alert. We must remain vigilante. But if we are to do this, we must prepare, we must train, and we must be ready to stand in the face of evil.

Yes, war is always a scary thing, and spiritual warfare is the worst because of the consequences. We must remember, though, who is on our side. We are not defenseless.

We cannot battle alone and hope to prevail. We are called to help and encourage one another. We must work together and prevent friendly fire. We must also remember the One who leads us. Let us stand firm with the King of kings.

**Wrap Up:** Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next time as we turn our discussion to one of the most important elements of the art of war, “know your enemy.”

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:** Spiritual Warfare – Part II: Know Your Enemy

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

Vatican; (accessed 22 Jul 2020); “Bl. Marianne Cope;” Vatican; [https://www.vatican.va/news\\_services/liturgy/saints/ns\\_lit\\_doc\\_20050514\\_molokai\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20050514_molokai_en.html)

Diocese of Honolulu; (accessed 22 Jul 2020); Diocese of Honolulu; <https://www.catholichawaii.org/catholic-essentials/saints-traveling-relics/history-of-hawaiis-saints/saint-marianne/>

### **Discussion References:**

Rhoades, Bishop Kevin C.; (24 Apr 2020); “Statement Regarding the Devotion to Our Lady of America;” Diocese Of Fort Wayne –SOUTH Bend; <https://todayscatholic.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Statement-of-pertinent-Ordinaries-re-Our-Lady-of-America-4-24-2020.pdf>

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>