



The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: Spiritual Warfare

Part VI: More On What Jesus Taught Saint Faustina



Divine Mercy
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 a youth and adult formation catechist, and we are also blessed to have on our panel, 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.

Of course, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because questions breed answers, which can lead to more questions, and hopefully breeds more answers. We could all ponder that cycle 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.

Dear Lord, we pray especially for our good shepherds. We are in such desperate need of them. We pray You will protect them, as well as increase their number. We pray You will grant them the wisdom, courage, strength and good health by which to bring Your Holy Truth to the children of Your creation.

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:

Fatima 2020, the Movie

On Labor Day, Sharon and I had the opportunity to view the film “Fatima,” which I believe was released on 28 Aug 2020. Immediately afterward, we watched a review by Dr. Taylor Marshall. After listening to my commentary during the movie, then watching Dr. Marshall's review, my lovely wife remarked, “You two must be brothers.” Well, we're not, and I certainly do not pretend to have the same knowledge of the faith which Dr. Marshall has, but it was an interesting confirmation that we came away with similar observations.

Before I comment, though, I want to thank the film makers, and the entire cast and crew, for taking on telling the story of such a moment in history which I believe the world is overlooking. Especially in our time of political ideologies, few are paying attention to the various ways God speaks to us, and history such as this is part of that communication.

I realize how difficult it is to take a drama which unfolded over six months, not to mention the aftermath, and put it all into a movie of slightly less than two hours duration. A number of decisions must be made as to what is essential to telling the story. I appreciate the effort of the

whole crew to put this film out and remind the world of a relatively modern day miracle witnessed by an estimated 70K people.

While I recommend the film, I must confess that it left me wanting. I will refer you here to Dr. Marshall's review, because he talked about it for about 20 minutes or so, but I have one fourth the time, so I will only talk about one key thing. I felt more time should have been spent on the messages of Our Blessed Mother. I'm sure the people of the time spoke of what those messages held for us, but I did not really see that come out in the film.

While a miracle occurred, in fact many, if you think about it; the real story is not about the miracle, but about what God communicated through Our Blessed Mother. I do not believe the importance of these messages or what they mean to us were presented in a manner which would cause the world to stop and say, "What does this mean to me?" or more importantly, "What should I do now?" In other words, we have a moment of documented history, a miracle documented by even secular and atheist news organizations, but as a world, we are not asking ourselves what does God want us to understand as He sends Our Blessed Mother to speak to us?

One of the messages for which I was looking was when Our Blessed Mother warned that if her requests were not heeded, then, Russia would spread her errors to the world. If we examine history, we see that is exactly what happened and we are living in the midst of its consequences.

While the Soviet Union is no more, its errors, the errors of Marxism-Leninism (aka Communism, Socialism, Liberalism, or Progressivism), plague many parts of the world. We must also remember that one of the objectives of those who spread these errors is to destroy the Catholic Church. The Soviet Union saw the Catholic Church and the West as obstacles to spreading their "revolution." If we follow history, we shall see the consequences of what Our Lady warned, and we shall see that the seeds set by the spread of Russia's errors infects our Church as well as many nations, to include our own.

We discussed a portion of this during our series, "By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them," which can be found at episodes 57 – 68. You can also listen to our discussion concerning Fatima, which were the last three episodes from our series, "Miracles and Faith," which can be found at episodes 47 – 56.

The "By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them," series was inspired by an EWTN Documentary entitled, "Wolves in Sheep's Clothing," in combination with my experiences during the Cold War as a subject matter expert in security, terrorism-counter action, and civil disturbance operations. When I saw that documentary, it was the first time I heard the phrase, "Russia will spread her errors to the world." I had heard the name, Fatima, before, but I had no clue what it was about. It was this EWTN production that led me to learn about Fatima and its messages. It was my experience during the Cold War that allowed me to recognize the tactics mentioned in the documentary, but what I recognized was not how such tactics are directed against the Catholic Church, but how they were used against the West, and now I see those same tactics infecting our news, social media, and the so-called "peaceful" protests. If we look at our streets today, the Marxist-Lenin playbook is in motion, and the wolves are at our door.

As I mentioned, I would recommend the film, but, there is so much more to learn. Just as Dr. Taylor Marshall did, and I will include a link to his review in the topic summary for this show, I also recommend that you research Fatima more, not so much for the miracle, but to learn the messages God sent Our Blessed Mother to deliver. It is now almost 103 years since the miracle, but we must ask ourselves, now that we have heard the messages, when will we heed what is asked of us? When will we live what God asks of us?

Again, I offer thanks to those who made the movie as it gives us an opportunity to talk about this miracle, but I want to encourage everyone to learn more and we hope you will listen to the series, “Miracles and Faith,” episodes 47 – 56, and “By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them,” episodes 57 – 68. You will have to scroll down a ways in the on-demand listing, and we caution that the numbering is not always linear to find the episodes you want. Something happened with the technology as we expanded our availability, but all the episodes are there.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Saints – Part XI:

American Saints.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, R.S.C.J.

St Rose Philippine Duchesne's feast day is November 18. She was a missionary to Native Americans.

On August 29, 1769 in Grenoble, France, a baby was born to Rose-Euphrosine Perier and Pierre-Francois Duchesne. On her baptism, the proud new parents chose to name their baby Philippine Rose. Philippine is the female form of Philip, which was chosen because of the apostle Philip. Rose came from Rose of Lima.

Young Philippine's parents provided for her a good education. She attended the Convent of the Visitation of Ste. Marie d'en Haut. It was during these formative years and the example of the Sisters that Philippine chose to explore the vocation of becoming a Sister. When she was only 18 years old, she became a novice.

At 18, Philippine was a young woman looking to spread her wings and explore her chosen vocation. However, this would prove to not be possible at the time for there was a revolution going on in France. The community of which she had chosen to be a part was closed down and Philippine was sent back to live with her family. Now her job was to be nursing prisoners and others who suffered.

After the war, the monastery she had lived in was destroyed and unable to be repaired. She learned of a new community of sisters, the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and requested to be received into the order. The Foundress of the new community, Mother Madeleine Sophie Barat, welcomed Philippine and a few of her companions to join as novices in the Society.

Seems that at this time in history, many religious were feeling the call to do missionary work in other parts of the world and especially in that new world, the United States of America.

Phillippine very strongly wanted to continue growing in her devotion to the contemplative life, but she was beginning to also long urgently for sharing her faith with others. She wrote a letter to Mother Barat explaining her desires and said that she was well ready to go at any moment. It would be a dozen years however before this opportunity would arrive.

In 1818, the bishop of the Louisiana territory sent out a request for educators who would help him evangelize to the Indian and French children in his territory. Mother Barat presented this request to Phillippine and of course she cheerfully accepted this new challenge.

In 1818, Sister Phillippine and four other sisters from the Religious of the Sacred Heart, headed across the ocean. They arrived at St. Charles, which is near St. Louis, Missouri. There, they set up the first house for the Society that was not in France. They lived in a log cabin and lived a life very similar to that of frontiersman of the day. They experienced very hard work, very little money to support themselves, and they endured extreme weather changes. They also struggled to learn the new language of this new country in which they now lived.

The young religious women worked very hard to get life set up for themselves and to be able to serve the educational needs of the children for whom they had come. In the same year, they opened the first free Catholic school west of the Mississippi River.

Within 10 years, the sisters had established six houses which served as schools for young women in Missouri and Louisiana. She loved serving as the superior over all of this and caring for the educations of all her charges. But there was one piece of the bishop's request that she still wanted to tend to. She longed to serve the American Indians.

One day, Phillippine was asked by a Jesuit priest to join him on a new adventure. A school for the Potawatomi Indians was opened at Sugar Creek, Kansas and he wanted Sister Phillippine to bring her well tried and tested skills of mission building to this new mission.

She was at this time 72 years of age and not in very good health. Her sister companions worried that she was too ill and not able to take on this new task. The priest insisted that she join him and said that while she might not have the strength to do much work, he was convinced that the project would be successful because of her prayers. He was counting on her being there to bring down favors from heaven.

She signed on for the adventure, but was only with the Potawatomi for one year. Her health just could not keep up with the life style of the village. She was courageous and spent long hours in prayer for the Indians. The Indians were so enchanted by her dedication to prayer that they named her, Quah-kah-ka-num-ad, which means, "woman who prays always."

In July of 1842 Sister Phillippine returned to St. Charles. Her desires to serve never slowed down and her heart continued to long for work in the Rocky Mountain missions. To the end, she had the same desire to serve in America as she did when she first wrote her letter to Mother Barat.

Sister Phillippine remained in St. Charles for another 10 years where she died on November 18, 1852 at the age of 83. In 1940 she was beatified by Pope Pius XII and in 1988 she was canonized by Pope John Paul II.

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 Phillippine, 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 163.

Discussion:

As we concluded our last discussion about what Jesus taught Saint Faustina about spiritual warfare, I mentioned we should note that the instructions of our Lord are not about holding physical ground or the material treasures of the world, rather it is about holding the ground of the soul and the treasures of God's blessings, especially the treasures of charity and love.

We must have no illusions, the evil one attacks our soul in a variety of ways and especially through our emotions, but if we put on the armor of God, if we study to know our faith, if we ask our Lord in prayer to help us understand how He desires we put the talents He created in us, if we pray to listen for God's whispers to our heart, if we seek refuge in the Sacred Heart of our Lord and Savior, we fortify our soul against the evil one's attack.

We must also recognize that alone, we are no match for the evil one. While he wants us to believe it is hopeless to fight him, we must remember that we are not in the fight alone. We must encourage one another. We must work together to spread the good news of the Gospel. We must help one another put on the armor of our faith. We must work together to help accomplish the will of God. But even if we do all that, if we do not listen to our Lord and seek His assistance, we shall falter; therefore, let us take His hand. Let us allow Him to lead us so that love and mercy may be shared by all and His will may be done, which Saint Faustina reminds us is Love and Mercy itself.

Last time, we discussed 10 of the 25 instructions Jesus gave Saint Faustina as He taught her about spiritual warfare, so, obviously, we have some more to examine and discuss.

(Question 1: Jesus told Saint Faustina, *“Do not bargain with any temptation; lock yourself immediately in My Heart and, at the first opportunity, reveal the temptation to the confessor.”* I mentioned during our last discussion that it is a principle of warfare that we do not want to engage in battle on ground favorable to the enemy. How might we see this instruction of Jesus as an example to that principle and to what ground does Jesus call us?)

- We are not a match for the deceptions and designs of the evil one
- Temptations are the spiritual ground on which we do not want to fight
- The heart of Jesus is our strongest refuge

- The heart of Jesus is the ultimate hospital for the wounded soul
 - Our confessor speaks in *persona christi*, therefore, provides to us the instruction of Christ as we engage the sacrament of reconciliation
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As we look at these next four instructions, they appear to be focused on what we should do when we find ourselves on certain grounds. Jesus tells Saint Faustina:

- *Put your self-love in the last place*, so that it does not *taint your deeds*.
- *Bear with yourself with great patience*.
- *Do not be guided by feeling*, because it is not always under your control; but all *merit lies in the will*.
- *Do not examine with curiosity* the roads down which *I lead you*.
- *When boredom and discouragement beat against your heart*, *run away from yourself and hide in My heart*.

(Question 2: When we look at these instructions, we do not always see the reason why, for example as in the first where Saint Faustina is cautioned as to the impact of not heeding the instruction. We also see a spectrum of conduct inward, outward, and in relationship to Christ. **What do these instructions reveal to us about what may distract us from what God asks of us?)**

- We must care for ourselves to take care of others, but we must be careful that in the process of caring for ourselves, we do not forget the caring for others part
- As we examine our faults, we must also have the patience to learn from our failures and address them so we do not repeat them
- The quality of our communication, problem solving, and decision making suffer when our emotions are elevated; it is our emotional energy which gives us the will to control the outcomes → we must increase our guard when our emotional energy is low
- Jesus leads us to opportunities for right action; over thinking can distract us and lead us to bad choices → in other words, we replace His will with ours
- When we are weak, we can turn to our Lord → He is our refuge

(Philippians 2:1-4)

1 If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing. 3 Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, 4 each looking out not for his own interests, but [also] everyone for those of others.

These next two instructions appear related in terms of our “will” or “self-discipline.

- *Observe the rule **as faithfully as you can.***
- ***Do not neglect** interior mortifications.*

Before we discuss this, we should probably take a moment to look at what the “rule” is to which Jesus refers as well as the definition of “mortification.” The rule of a religious order is just that, the basic rule by which the members of the order lead their lives to demonstrate their obedience and love of Christ. It is usually more rigorous than by what we live outside of a religious order.

According to our friends Merriam-Webster, “mortification” is defined as:

[T]he subjection and denial of bodily passions and appetites by abstinence or self-inflicted pain or discomfort (Merriam-Webster)

Paraphrasing and oversimplifying the explanation found in the Catholic Encyclopedia, it is described as essentially self-denial as a means to “curing bad habits and implanting good ones.” (New Advent)

We often perform acts of mortification during Lent through acts of penance, abstinence, fasting, and giving up something of desire for the period of Lent. We may also perform acts of mortification in reparation for the sins of others.

(Question 3: Donna Mae, I'm going to start this question with you. Jesus instructs Saint Faustina to “Observe the rule as faithfully as you can.” It is said in a way that sounds like, “This may not be possible for you, but do your best.” The next instruction is more of a reminder, “Do not neglect interior mortifications.” What is the challenge we have in relation to our will versus God's will and how do acts of mortification assist us?)

(Matthew 16:24)

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, “**Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.***

(2 Corinthians 5:15-21)

*15 He indeed died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. 16 Consequently, from now on we regard no one according to the flesh; even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him so no longer. 17 **So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.** 18 And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 **For our sake he made***

him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

(Colossians 3:5-10)

5 Put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the greed that is idolatry. 6 Because of these the wrath of God is coming [upon the disobedient]. 7 By these you too once conducted yourselves, when you lived in that way. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, fury, malice, slander, and obscene language out of your mouths. 9 Stop lying to one another, since you have taken off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed, for knowledge, in the image of its creator.

The following six instructions appear to be related in terms of what I would call a dose of honesty with a bit of a pep talk. Jesus tells Saint Faustina:

- *Do not fear struggle; courage itself often intimidates temptations, and they dare not attack us.*
- *Always fight with the deep conviction that I am with you.*
- *I will not delude you with prospects of peace and consolations; on the contrary, prepare for great battles.*
- *Know that you are now on a great stage where all heaven and earth are watching you.*
- *Fight like a knight, so that I can reward you.*
- *Do not be unduly fearful, because you are not alone.*

(**Question 4:** “Do not fear struggle,” Jesus says, but then He does not “pull any punches” as He warns that the road ahead will be a challenge. He then encourages Saint Faustina to fight with conviction, with purpose, like a knight. What is perhaps the most reassuring thing Jesus communicates in this set of instructions and encouragement?)

(Matthew 28:18-20)

18 Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

Jesus sent His disciples forth with a great and challenging task, but He also reminded them He walks with them always as they go forth to help accomplish His will.

Quotes:

From the Diary of Saint Faustina

– (Diary, 28)

I saw Jesus standing at the kitchen door, and I said to Him, “You commanded me to ask for these mortifications, but Mother Superior will not permit them.” Jesus said, *I was here during your conversation with the Superior and know everything. I don't demand mortification from you, but obedience. By obedience you give great glory to Me and gain merit for yourself.*

– (Diary, 98)

When the soul comes out victorious from the preceding trials, even though it may stumble here and there, it fights on valiantly, humbly calling upon God, “Save me, I am perishing!” And it is still able to fight on.

– (Diary, 120)

When a soul has been cleansed, and the Lord is on intimate terms with it, it begins to apply all its inner force in striving after God. Yet the soul cannot do anything of itself. God alone arranges everything. The soul knows this and is mindful of it. It is still in exile and understands well that there may yet come cloudy and rainy days, but it must now look upon things differently from what it had up to now. It does not seek reassurance in a false peace, but makes ready for battle. It knows it comes from a warrior race. It is now much more aware of everything. It knows that it is of royal stock. It is concerned with all that is great and holy.

Final Thoughts:

As we discussed during this and previous episodes, spiritual warfare may have consequences in our physical world due to the choices we make, but it is often warfare conducted within ourselves on the ground of temptation and desire. It is also found on the ground of ignorance, especially ignorance of our faith and what God asks of us. One of the premises of our show is that those who do not know their faith leave themselves vulnerable to the one who would deceive them away from their relationship with and trust in God.

As we consider what Jesus taught Saint Faustina, we must reflect on what those instructions mean to us. His desire is that we shall all survive the battle, but we can only do so if we prepare ourselves. Of course, we are preaching to the choir here, for by listening to our show you have already taken a step forward in learning – and even if this is the first time, congratulate yourself on taking this step and encourage yourself to continue to learn and don't be afraid to learn with others.

We should remember there are a variety of resources by which we may study His Word and allow God to whisper His desires for us to our hearts. If we listen carefully, whether He speaks through scripture, through His messengers, or directly to our soul, we shall have the opportunity to follow Him so we may forever be with Him within His kingdom. Let us also take advantage of the ways God speaks to us during the Mass, adoration, prayer, religious formation, reconciliation, and ministry.

God speaks to us during ministry, some might ask? Yes, if we are alert, if we pay attention, God will speak to us in various ways as we set about the work and effort to help accomplish His will, which Saint Faustina reminds us is love and mercy itself.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has once more come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we turn our discussion to the spiritual tactics of the 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 VIII: Spiritual Tactics of the Enemy

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