

Dear Lord, we pray especially today for the healing of our nation. We pray You will protect our good shepherds and 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 people so the blessings of Your wisdom and love may be spread from heart to heart, not only across our land, but also around the world.

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.

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Current Day Commentary:

Little Steps of Ministry

When a problem appears larger than us, we are tempted to turn away. “It is beyond us,” we may be tempted to say to ourselves. We do not make the decision. We do not have the money. We do not...; well, we can just fill in the blank with whatever we believe we lack and so we wander away, leaving nothing done – but do we assess what portion of a burden we can shoulder versus our inability to carry the entire burden by ourselves?

It is true, by ourselves, we cannot solve all the problems of the world, but that does not mean we should do nothing. What we must do is look at what God has given us and created within us and ask Him to help us understand how we may use whatever He has given us stewardship over so that we may help accomplish His will.

The answer to our prayer may not come through an interior voice, rather, we might see it through our observation of the opportunities before us. Do we have a moment to share in kindness? Do we have a moment to provide a helping hand? Do we have a listening ear? Can

we help bring forth a smile? Is there a task in the parish which is going undone which we can help address? Is there a ministry which we may join through which we may join our talents with others to help address a community problem or assist those who are less fortunate? Even if we are among the less fortunate, we should ask ourselves, has God given us some talent by which we may offer help to another? We may find that as we offer help to others, others will offer help to us.

The evil one wants us to feel helpless or overwhelmed with our own problems that we do not see the opportunities to help one another. The prince of darkness wants to stir enmities so we will not work together. He wants our emotions in play so that we do not use reason or logic to justly address the problems at hand. He wants us to hate. He does not want us to consider the wisdom of God or the blessings which shall come if we live as God asks of us.

Throughout our day, we have many choices to make. Many of those choices ripple to influence the day of those who surround us and subsequently of those who surround them. As we consider our choices, the desire of the evil one is that we will use our time for his purpose. What is that purpose we might ask? The answer is anything which does not help accomplish the will of God. Satan does not care how we hurt our relationship with God and one another, only that we do.

As we look at the swelling problems of the world, what we must remember is that grand things are not accomplished through just one task or action. The accomplishment of grand things begin through the accomplishment of many small tasks. We cannot defeat the devil in a day, but day by day, we have the opportunity to do something, maybe only a little thing – but it is one thing more than nothing. It may not seem like we are able to travel far with a little step, but as we look back over time, we may be surprised at how far many little steps have brought us.

It is true, we do not have the power which God commands, but we can open our hearts to Him and allow His power to work through us. Let us, then, look for the opportunities. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to lead us to what we can do to help accomplish the will of our Lord. Let us allow Him to help us see the mountain we may form as we bring to Him the little pebbles of love we share each day.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Saints – Part XIII:

St. Katharine Drexel, S.B.S.

St. Katharine Drexel's feast day is March 3. She is known as a school builder and the founder of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People.

Katharine Drexel was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on November 26, 1858. She was born to Francis Anthony Drexel and Hannah Langstroth. Katharine was the second child born into this family. Her sister Elizabeth was her constant companion. Hannah did not fare well in childbirth and passed from complications of childbirth when Katharine was only five weeks old. For the next couple of years, the two little girls lived with an aunt and uncle while their father recovered from his grief.

In 1860, Francis married once again. Emma Bouvier Drexel became his new bride. She took on the task of raising Katharine and Elizabeth as her own. Three years later, Louise would join the sisters. Emma was a good mother to all three of her girls and the two older girls always referred to her as their mother, and the term “step-mother” was never used. Their home was blessed with constant prayer time and Emma taught her girls to be very close to God.

Katharine was born into a wealthy family as her father was a banker and philanthropist. From the beginning, Katharine's parents made sure their children understood that God had gifted them with wealth and that it must be shared. Francis and Emma were very generous folk and several times a week they opened their doors to those who were in need. They offered the people who came clothing and food, and even gave gifts of money so that bills could be paid. When the girls were old enough, they too joined in to help those who needed their assistance.

Like many of us who have had the opportunity to travel, the Drexel's visited many parts of the United States. These trips proved to be more learning than rest and relaxation. The girls became aware of Native Americans and of their impoverished living conditions. This experience stayed with young Katharine and she found herself wanting to devote her life to caring for these people. She did indeed devote her life and wealth to building missions and in 1887 she established an Indian school in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Katharine traveled extensively. During a visit with Pope Leo XIII, Katharine requested that he send her missionaries to aid her in caring for the Native American Indians as well as African-Americans. At this time, Katharine was a lay person and financially doing all the work on her own. The pope in his compassion listened to her request and then asked her why she herself didn't become a missionary. This request was surprising to the young girl, so she took this to her spiritual director, for counsel. After much reflection, she made the decision to give herself totally to God. On February 12, 1891, she professed her first vows as a religious and founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Katharine was only 33 years of age.

Her newly founded religious order would be devoted to her passions, to serve Indian and African-American peoples. She felt called to these people because she had witnessed the poverty of the Indians during family trips to the western United States. During this time, she also learned about the plight of the black people. She learned that they too suffered from being underpaid, denied education, and also denied Constitutional rights. This was something she felt the call to work on to change.

Katharine held a high regard for justice and wanted changes for these two groups of people. She realized that the only real way to help was education. You see, during these times of social differences, the Indians and Blacks were met with many denials of Constitutional rights that others were given. Why was this? Because these folks could not read the Constitution. They did not know that in the United States, they had rights just like others. Katharine decided that she and her sisters, would seek equality by proving quality education.

Building educational resources for the Indians and Blacks was not an easy task. She began with schools in the west and south western regions of the United States. She was personally involved with opening, staffing and financially supporting 23 schools and 40 missions, in sixteen states.

Her missionaries provided, religious education, social services, and they visited the people in homes, hospitals, and prisons too. The south was a more difficult area to move into, but she conquered that as well. In 1925, she established Xavier University of Louisiana. This was her crowning glory in her endeavors to educate as this was the only African-American Catholic institution of higher education in the United States.

In her childhood, Katharine learned valuable lessons about prayer and these stayed with her her entire life. She devoted hours each day to prayer and instructed her pupils so that they too learned to love having time in prayer. It was during her prayer times that she grew strength for overcoming the obstacles in achieving her goals. She learned to be bold and to speak out against injustices and to publicly speak against racial discrimination.

In the last 18 years of her life, Katharine was quite ill. She suffered a disease which caused her to be bedridden. During these years, she devoted herself to prayer and adoration. She died on March 3, 1955 as the age of 96.

Katharine was beatified by Pope John Paul II on November 20, 1988 and canonized by the same pope on October 1, 2000.

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 Katharine Drexel, 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 165.

Discussion:

As we examine the tactics which the evil one may deploy against us, we must also consider the ground upon which we may experience them. We find these tactics deployed against us where we learn, work, and play. We also find them creeping into the resources we use for learning and living our faith. For example, some presenting themselves as “Catholic Media” profess to promote our faith, but as we read the language, we find they are heavily infiltrated by and promote Progressivism, aka Communism/Socialism/Marxism/Leninism. To the other extreme, we find those who fall into what I call the “trap of the Pharisees,” where they are more concerned with the trappings of the law rather than endeavoring to comprehend its purpose and proper application.

As we engage our day, we must remember that our salvation is not about whether this ideology or that celebrity is right or wrong, it is a matter of our understanding of and living the truth to which God calls us.

We might ask ourselves, what are we to do when there are so many wolves in the clothing of sheep wandering among us, working through means of deception and distraction to lure us away from what God asks of us? We must look to our good shepherds to help guide us to the truth by

which we are called to help accomplish the will of God, which, I don't know if I have ever mentioned this before, but Saint Faustina reminds us is love and mercy itself.

Of course, if the wolf in the clothing of sheep is dangerous, we must be even more wary of the wolf in the clothing of the shepherd. This wolf walks among us with the appearance of the authority and office to which we believe obedience is owed. Indeed, such obedience is owed to the good shepherds, but not the wolves.

How are we to tell? After all, we are simply the sheep and disguises can be clever. The answer is found in what Jesus teaches us.

(John 10:1-5)

1 "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. 2 But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. 5 But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers."

Do we recognize the voice calling to us? The more we study God's Word, the better we shall recognize His voice. We should ask ourselves, have we studied the Word of the Lord enough to recognize what He speaks? Do we have a relationship with Him through prayer, adoration, ministry, reconciliation, and the Eucharist by which we may recognize His voice? Do we hear His light, silent sound in our hearts, leading us in our choices and our ministry? The closer we are to our Lord, the more difficult we make the task of the evil one to deceive us away from God and the love and blessings which our Lord desires us to share.

Last time, we discussed the evil one's tactics of deception and distraction. Today, we will turn our attention to his tactics of temptation and doubt.

According to our friends Merriam-Webster, to be tempted is defined as:

1: to entice **to do wrong** by **promise of pleasure or gain**

2a : to **induce to do something**

b : to cause to be strongly inclined

(Online Dictionary)

(Question 1: When we discuss temptation, we often think in terms of the first definition and the enticement to do something "wrong." Is all temptation a matter of sin? Why should we still be wary when we do not see the word "wrong" in the definition?)

- All which we are "tempted" to do is not sin
- We must understand the full context to produce the right and just result

- We must understand the purpose of God's commandments
 - We must understand the commandments of love (cf. Matthew 22:36-40)
 - We must be careful what we rationalize
 - The more we know our faith, the better prepared we are to respond with what is right and just
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We have all heard the scripture concerning the temptation of Jesus. Let's take a moment to look at one effort of Satan and the response by Jesus.

(Matthew 4:1-4)

1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. 2 He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. 3 The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." 4 He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"

(Question 2: In this first effort by Satan, we see him tempt Jesus to turn the stones into loaves of bread. Is it a sin to eat? What might we believe to be the devil's objective here?)

- Satan does not always tempt us to sin, but to give into our weaknesses
- As we give into our weaknesses, Satan finds a vulnerability to probe
- As we open the door, the evil one looks to lure us through

(James 1:12-15)

12 Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation, for when he has been proved he will receive the crown of life that he promised to those who love him. 13 No one experiencing temptation should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God is not subject to temptation to evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 Rather, each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire conceives and brings forth sin, and when sin reaches maturity it gives birth to death.

One of the tactics the devil loves to use against us is that of doubt.

(James 1:2-6)

2 Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. 5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and he will be given it. 6 But he should ask in faith, not doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed about by the wind.

(Question 3: Our faith is our belief and it sets the values by which we assess and make our choices. Our belief guides our behavior. In what does Satan want us to doubt and why?)

- Doubt in self
 - ➔ Knowledge
 - ➔ Capability
 - ➔ Courage
 - ➔ Strength
 - ➔ Acceptance
 - ➔ Will
- Doubt in others
 - ➔ Do they believe?
 - ➔ Do they care?
 - ➔ Reliability
 - ➔ Loyalty
- Doubt in our Church
- Doubt in the Word of God
- Doubt in what God asks of us
- Doubt in the Existence of God

Note: When we doubt, trust becomes an issue. A lack of trust leads to uncertainty, suspicions, defensiveness, and withdrawal. Ultimately, the evil one wants to use doubt to create the conditions by which we separate ourselves from our Creator and His ways.

Quotes:

– *Saint John Bosco*

When tempted, invoke your Angel. He is more eager to help you than you are to be helped! Ignore the devil and do not be afraid of him: He trembles and flees at the sight of your Guardian Angel.

– *Saint Philip Neri*

Do not grieve over the temptations you suffer. When the Lord intends to bestow a particular virtue on us, He often permits us first to be tempted by the opposite vice. Therefore, look upon every temptation as an invitation to grow in a particular virtue and a promise by God that you will be successful, if only you stand fast.

– *Saint Gregory the Great*

Do you really believe that it was by chance that this chosen disciple [Thomas] was absent, then came and heard, heard and doubted, doubted and touched, touched and believed? It was not by chance, but in God's Providence. In a marvelous way, God's mercy arranged that the disbelieving disciple, in touching the wounds of his Master's body, should heal our wounds of disbelief. The disbelief of Thomas has done more for our faith than the faith of the other disciples. As he touches Christ and is won over to belief, every doubt is cast aside, and our faith is strengthened. So the disciple who doubted, then felt Christ's wounds, becomes a witness to the reality of the Resurrection.

– Mark 9:20-24

*20 They brought the boy to him. And when he saw him, the spirit immediately threw the boy into convulsions. As he fell to the ground, he began to roll around and foam at the mouth. 21 Then he questioned his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” He replied, “Since childhood. 22 It has often thrown him into fire and into water to kill him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” 23 Jesus said to him, “‘If you can!’ **Everything is possible to one who has faith.**” 24 Then the boy’s father cried out, “**I do believe, help my unbelief!**”*

Final Thoughts:

During the course of our last two discussions, we examined Satan's tactics of deception, distraction, temptation, and doubt. Of course, these are simply the major categories and there are many forms by which the evil one may use these tactics against us.

We must also recognize that tactics may be used both in variation and combination. For example, we may find that through acts of deception, the evil one is then also able to sow within us seeds of doubt. If we are to counter these tactics, we must be able to recognize them; but our discovery of a tactic in play is but the beginning of the battle. When we recognize a tactic, we must also assess from what are we being distracted and/or to what are we being manipulated to.

There are also several avenues of attack by which the tactics of the evil one may be deployed against us. We will get into that during later episodes, but we want to turn back to some positive news. We don't want you think there is no hope. Spoiler alert, “she will crush its head.” Of course, I always caution, we know the end – we know who shall be the victor, but we do not want to become a spiritual casualty along the way.

If we are to be effective in the spiritual battle, we must consider what we may use to counter the tactics of the devil. We will begin to talk about this next time.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has once more come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next time as we discuss the counter tactics we may use in defense of our soul.

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 X: Counter Tactics to Those of the Evil One

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