



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: Spiritual Warfare
Part X: Counter Tactics to Those of the Evil One

Book of Books
Inspired of God
Beautiful in Expression
Light of Life
Enduring Eternally
(artist unknown)
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. In addition to being my lovely wife (which is a handicap to her, but a blessing to me), 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 Word Youth Day.

Of course, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because they had to find something simple for me to do. 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 as well as their petitions for the blessings of Your great mercy.

Dear Lord, we continue to pray for our Good Shepherds. We pray You will protect them and increase their number so that through them, we may clearly hear Your voice so that You may bring Your flock to Your heavenly Father.

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, Apple PodCasts, Spotify, and CastBox, among a host of 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 you to help our 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:

The Commitment of Action

Sharon and I were recently blessed to listen to a homily which included a story about a young priest who had a great idea which he presented to his parish. I am going to try to retell that story here, with my apologies to the original story teller.

The young priest told the parish that he had an idea for a bible study program where participants could learn how to read and use the Bible as a means to grow in and strengthen their faith. He asked the parish what they thought. The feedback was gushing and glowing. “What a wonderful idea,” the people told the priest as he greeted them after Mass.

Encouraged by the response, the priest went to relate the news to his bishop. The bishop replied, “I think there is a lesson to learn here. I understand your excitement, but I want you to go back and ask the question in a slightly different manner. Rather than ask what the parish thinks about the idea, ask them how many want to participate.”

The young priest did as he was instructed. When he asked the question as to how many of the parish members want to participate in the program, only four hands were raised,

two of which appeared to the priest to go up in a somewhat hesitant manner. Everyone knows that type of hand raise, where one kinda looks around first to see if anyone else is going to raise theirs – we might venture ours if someone else looks like they are going to venture theirs – kind of a community courage, if you will. Anyway, the priest realized the lesson the bishop wanted him to learn, which is that it is one thing to gain the acceptance of an idea, but quite another to put it into action.

While the purpose of the story was to present the lesson learned, the question which was not answered was, what did the priest do then? The priest could have simply taken the feedback and simply given up. If no one is interested, why bother? Perhaps there is more we should consider here than the stated moral of the story. There are several possible tangents, of which one is a matter of work and perseverance.

We all know the cliché, “Actions speak louder than words.” Actions present the true feedback as to acceptance and commitment. We must consider that our actions not only speak to others, but also to God. We should also consider that our actions are also feedback to ourselves.

So, let's go back to the priest. After learning the lesson, it would be understandable if the priest simply turned away dejected and decided to do nothing. Again, if no one is interested, why bother; but the priest has a mission and responsibility to feed the lambs and tend the sheep of the portion of our Lord's flock entrusted to him. Helping his flock tend to the quality and strength of their faith is an important part of that mission.

The four hands in the air presented both an opportunity and revealed a challenge. The four hands are opportunities, for they provide something upon which to build. The rest of the parish presented a challenge in that the priest now saw the magnitude of those he must encourage.

The idea was accepted, but for the most part, putting the idea into action was accepted not so much. The challenge was no longer selling the idea, the challenge was selling the effort and commitment needed from the parishioners.

We might wonder if the priest went forward with his program and whether it ever got off the ground? Was the priest able to work with the four such that others were able to see the benefit and were encouraged to join? Did some reflect on their own and assess how their reluctance was really depriving themselves of both a contemporary and an eternal benefit? There are many scenarios we could wander down, but what we must recognize is the opportunity of the four hands. The Bible provides account after account, such as those of Lot, Noah and Elijah, how God works through the few from which to build for, teach, and encourage the many.

Of course, the moral of this story is not about the priest, it is about us. Will we be among the number to help? Will we be among the number to share the benefit? Will we be among the number who help build? Will we be among the number to help explain the blessings of the fullness of our faith? Will we be among the number to invite and encourage others? The most important question is are we willing to invest not only in our current day, but in our eternity?

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Saints – Part XIV:

Blessed Father Solanus Casey, O.F.M. Cap. *Capuchin Franciscan, Humble Servant*

On November 25, 1870, Bernard Solanus was born into an Irish immigrant family in Wisconsin. He was the sixth child of what would eventually be ten boys and six girls. His family had simple but great faith and from this learning, Bernard grew into adulthood devoted to his prayer time. He had a strong belief that God answered every prayer. His parents were farmers so he grew up learning about hard work.

When he had grown enough to leave home and seek work on his own, Bernard took on jobs in the logging industry, he was a prison guard, a street car operator, and a hospital orderly. While working as a street car operator, he witnessed the assault of a woman by a drunk man. He was filled with the sense of needing to help others. He wanted to make the world a better place to live.

In order to fulfill his desire to change the world, Bernard entered the St. Francis High School Seminary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He wanted to be a diocesan priest. His studies were difficult as he was an English-speaking Irishman, now trying to learn in a German-speaking environment. It was determined that he should leave the seminary and join an order, the Capuchins. At this time, he received his religious name of Solanus.

Sadly, this too was not a good fit for Solanus. The Capuchins were also German-speaking and his studies continued to be difficult. The superiors agreed to accept Solanus, they would allow him to be ordained but not allowed to hear confessions or preach. He was ordained in 1904 and spent the next 20 years doing his priestly works in the New York area. Also in his priestly ventures were assignments in Detroit and Indiana.

Fr. Solanus was soft spoken and well liked by all who he encountered. He was a man of prayer and often prayed for cures to illness. His prayers gave his followers peace. Solanus was believed to be an example of St. Francis, an example of the true ideals of the Capuchin order and an example of extraordinarily virtues.

Fr. Solanus was truly a man of God and a servant of the people. He met with people of all ages and backgrounds, and prayed for them during times of illness and sorrows. Many people believed that he was gifted and requested his prayers for healing and prophecy. Fr. Solanus was never far from those who needed him. He liked to say that, like his examples, Jesus and Francis, he had two loves, the sick and the poor.

While in Detroit, his job was to man the door and to greet any who came calling on the monastery for help. He was known as the “Doorkeeper”. In this role, he served soup and counsel to many and often the lines were blocks long of people who needed his help. Fr Solanus gave his all for the people. In return, he asked them to seek greater spiritual lives and to devote themselves to God and their neighbors.

Fr. Solanus believed so strongly in God that he was often shocked to learn that others did not share his same faith. His faith was strong and bold. His example demonstrates to us that faith is a cornerstone and that our very existence is dependent upon it. Many think that holiness is not attainable. Fr. Solanus was a living breathing demonstration that ordinary people can live extraordinarily lives of faithful service to God and community. His love and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament were so strong that Fr Solanus often played his violin for Jesus during times of adoration.

Fr. Solanus was diagnosed with erysipelas and died on July 31st, 1957. His body was found incorrupt thirty years after his death.

Father Solanus' journey to sainthood began with his ministry to the people he served. Many have reported that his prayers were indeed answered and that some were answered in extraordinary ways. Pope John Paul II declared him Venerable in 1995. On November 18, 2017, Pope Francis declared Fr. Solanus as Beatified. This was done at Ford Field in Detroit after a miraculous cure was approved. He is still awaiting the approval of another miraculous miracle in order to reach Saint status.

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 Blessed Father Solanus Casey, 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 166.

Discussion:

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. For example, when we recognize the tactic of deception, we must assess from what we are being distracted and/or to what we are being manipulated to do or accept.

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 everyone to 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. Let's start by considering our defense against the tactic of deception.

(Question 1: The most effective deception or disinformation is often disguised with elements of truth. What are some means by which we may discern and recognize deception/disinformation?)

- Our knowledge of God's Holy Word
- Our knowledge of church documents as they explain and teach God's Holy Word
- Our knowledge of the lives of the saints for what they reveal about living the fullness of our faith
- Our knowledge of the purpose of God's commandments
- Our knowledge of context to which God's Word applies
- Examination of raw evidence (but remember relations to context)
- Examination of inconsistencies → which path reveals truth?
- Examination of reason and logic as God sees, not as we see

(Isaiah 55:9)

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, **my thoughts higher than your thoughts.**

(Note: For those who set science in the place of God, as if science reveals all and is somehow infallible, there is a fly in their logic. The ability of a methodology of study, of which science is, to help us accurately understand and comprehend God's creation is only as accurate as the flaws and limitations of those who apply the methodology as a means and measure of understanding and comprehension. One bad assumption or one variable unaccounted for can produce misperceptions, misinterpretations, and false conclusions.)

(Question 2: The detection of deception does not always reveal the truth, but when we detect deception, it is a red flag. What are some important tasks when we suspect deception?)

- Validate the nature and magnitude → what does the evidence reveal?
- Discern the truth
 - ➔ Research evidence
 - ➔ Consider full context
 - ➔ Pray for understanding
- Assess and evaluate
 - ➔ What are the perceptions of others and what is leading that perception?
 - ➔ From what does the evil one want to distract us from or manipulate us to do or accept?
 - ➔ What does God expect of us?
- Raise awareness
 - ➔ Help others see the deception → consider the power of questions
 - ➔ Help others see the truth and context of the truth
 - ➔ Help others see what God asks of us

As we mentioned, there are many ways by which the evil one can distract us from what God asks of us. Those distractions may come in the form of pleasurable temptations, but they may also come in the form of trials and tribulations designed to overwhelm us and blind us to our blessings.

(Question 3: We do not always recognize the distractions the evil one uses against us. **How might we recognize them?)**

- Discern the potential of their fruit → what does an activity yield in relation to the yield of our time?
 - Discern effort versus outcome
 - ➔ What resource or energy is expended → value versus waste?
 - ➔ What is the value generated versus the work performed?
 - ➔ What is the contribution to sharing blessings?
 - ➔ What is the contribution to the accomplishment of the will of God?
 - Discern our ability to help or influence blessings for others versus needless worry, neglect of others and/or ourselves, or worse, harm to others and/or ourselves
 - Pray for the wisdom by which to discern and recognize what God expects of our time and resources
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(Question 4: Especially when we are distracted from hope or the sustenance of our soul, we may find ourselves wounded and withdrawing; licking our wounds in unhealthy ways. **When we experience distractions which seduce us away from what God asks of us and the efforts by which we may help accomplish His will, what may we do to counter the distraction?)**

- Pray for the ability to discern priorities in relation to what God asks of us
 - Evaluate our pursuits and assess their relationship to what God asks of us
 - Discern what God would tell us is the best use of our time
 - Discern the value of pursuits, not in relation to our wants, but to our soul
 - Pray for assistance to set distractions aside
 - Pray for grace in difficult moments, so we might not despair nor become despondent (as Saint Faustina reminds us)
 - Pray for clarity of purpose and how to navigate past the distractions
 - Pray in thanks for our blessings
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Quotes:

(Proverbs 6:16-19)

*16 There are six things the LORD hates,
yes, seven are an abomination to him;
17 Haughty eyes, a lying tongue,*

hands that shed innocent blood,
18 *A heart that plots wicked schemes,*
feet that are quick to run to evil,
19 *The false witness who utters lies,*
and the one who sows discord among kindred.

(Proverbs 6:6-11)

6 *Go to the ant, O sluggard,*
study her ways and learn wisdom;
7 *For though she has no chief,*
no commander or ruler,
8 *She procures her food in the summer,*
stores up her provisions in the harvest.
9 *How long, O sluggard, will you lie there?*
when will you rise from your sleep?
10 *A little sleep, a little slumber,*
a little folding of the arms to rest—
11 *Then poverty will come upon you like a robber,*
and want like a brigand.

(James 4:13-17)

13 *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we shall go into such and such a town, spend a year there doing business, and make a profit"—* 14 *you have no idea what your life will be like tomorrow. You are a puff of smoke that appears briefly and then disappears.* 15 *Instead you should say, "If the Lord wills it, we shall live to do this or that."* 16 *But now you are boasting in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.* 17 *So for one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, it is a sin.*

Final Thoughts:

As we consider the tactics of the evil one, deception is designed to seduce us to accept what is evil as good and manipulate us to turn away from what is good and towards what is evil. Distraction is designed to divert our attention from what God asks of us and the priorities He expects of us such that what is right and just in the eyes of the Lord is not accomplished. These are two major tactics which influence our daily choices.

As we discussed, prayer plays an important role in our discernment, but we must also prepare ourselves such that we are able to decide correctly in the moment. The more we know our faith, the more difficult becomes the task of the evil one to deceive us. The more we know our faith, the more difficult we make the task for the evil one to distract us away from the responsibilities God has for us. The more we know our faith, the more we will recognize the opportunities we have to help accomplish the will of God, which, just in case I haven't mentioned this before, Saint Faustina reminds us, is love and mercy itself.

If the distractions of the world lead us to believe that living our faith is confining or boring, we have work to do to better learn to what God calls us. The more we learn about the fullness of our faith, the more the meaning of our faith comes alive for us. The closer we approach our

Lord and Savior, the more we shall see His desire to prepare us for His kingdom. Let us allow Him to mold us. Let us take His hand so that He may guide us to prevail over the tactics of the evil one. Let us seek to be, as the song goes, among that number as the saints go marching in.

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 continue our discussion related to 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 XI: More on Counter Tactics to Those of the Evil One

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