



The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: Flame of Love

Part X: Saint Joseph and Refuge in the Flame of Love



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Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Helen is a lay-Dominican with a love for music ministry. The Dominicans, I always mention, are also known as the Order of Preachers. In addition to being my lovely wife as well as a wonderful blessing, Sharon is a youth and adult formation catechist. 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.

We are also joined by special panel guests from the Flame of Love Movement; Eileen Piergiovanni, Patti Schwartz, and David Proctor.

Eileen is the National Director for the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Movement in the United States. She is a lay Discalced Carmelite assisting with the formation of the aspirants and she leads two rosary cenacles in two different parishes. Eileen speaks on the Extraordinary Grace of the Flame of Love and shares her personal conversion testimony and stories.

Patti is the National Hispanic director for La Llama de Amor, United States. She taught in the New York public school system for 24 years and received the top model teacher award for New York State by an NBC affiliate. Patti is currently hosting a weekly radio show on The Flame of Love at Radio María Miami and evangelizes the Flame of Love movement to the cities in South Florida.

David is a cradle Catholic and is an active member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Catholic Church. Since 2009, he has worked with the Missionaries of the Immaculate Mediatrix (MIM), a lay organization of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate and currently serves as Vice President and Treasurer. He has been actively involved with the Flame of Love of the

Immaculate Heart of Mary since 2017 and is currently serving as Associate State Leader for Indiana.

Of course, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because that was the job for which I was voluntold. 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.

We pray especially today for all who suffer from grief. Dear Lord, we pray Your hand of comfort will rest upon them and enable their hearts to look to the day You will wipe away every tear.

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, all you need to do is send us an email at armoroffaithradio@gmail.com. We ask that you include the word “prayer” in the subject line so that we will give it priority and ensure we place it in 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 the course of our daily prayers.

We would like to let you know that WCAT Radio, the organization through which this and a variety of kindred Catholic radio shows are presented, is conducting a funding drive to help address the costs of operation and production. WCAT Radio presents two dozen hours of new, quality, Catholic programming each week and offers well over 5,000 hours of archived programming in history, theology, spirituality, and poetry for the purpose of promoting the Catholic spiritual journey — it is a virtual audio library of our Catholic faith. Please consider giving a tax deductible donation to WCAT Radio to enable them to continue to broadcast the Catholic message. You can donate online at <https://wcatradio.com/support>. Any amount you can contribute, helps.

We would also like to ask you to assist Armor of Faith Radio in 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 trust 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:

Context and Truth

The employment of partial context is one means of deception. If we see only part of the picture or only have a portion of the facts, we are left to speculate about what is missing and what it might reveal to us about truth. In the gaps of context, our analysis is likely to be flawed. It is by this means, the propagandist is able to deceive us while professing everything they said is true.

Full context is not always available to us. Even when we see the video of an event, the context of sound might be missing. The context of what happened before the video starts or ends could influence our perception of what actually transpired. The context of a different angle might reveal a different perception of the moment. Perhaps one of the most famous examples of this is the Covington Catholic Boys where the media took off to condemn teenagers based on a video which indicated one context, but when a longer video from a different angle surfaced, a much different context was observed.

One thing I learned from military operations is that early reports tell us something happened, but the early reports are often inaccurate as to exactly what happened. Additional investigation and reporting are required to gain a truly accurate picture. I find today's media reporting often misses critical context in their reporting which leaves us with misperceptions. I believe this is intentional as the media does not seem to be concerned with reporting truth as much as they are concerned with reporting political narratives. If the truth goes against the narrative, it simply gets left out, or worse, outright lies are told, often reinforced by anonymous sources. In such cases, the context of the source is missing. How convenient.

It is disappointing to observe this in the world outside the Church, but I am observing the same tactics within Church related journals and publications. Political propaganda is being used in Catholic media to both manipulate us and attack us. It is designed to appeal to our emotions rather than engage reasoned logic and the values to which God calls us. Often, the tactic of deception is through missing or distorted context. Another variant is to use irrelevant context to distort or obscure.

If we seek to understand our faith through a verse here or a verse there, we will not have an accurate picture of the threads of the relationship between God and the children of His creation which flow through the generations. We must ask ourselves about the context we receive. Granted, sometimes an author is simply unaware of missing context, which can influence their conclusions, but it becomes intentional deception when relevant context is purposefully left out to influence our analysis, conclusions, and perceptions.

As we engage the world, we must resist the temptation to rush to judgment. We must endeavor to ask the questions about the context which may be missing. This is especially true of our personal relationships as well as our learning of the world and our faith. We must ask questions

about the motivation of what is being communicated to us. When we suspect missing context, we may need to follow up with investigation of our own. We must look beyond the initial reports for the evidence which supports or refutes the political narrative. Unfortunately, this takes time and effort; and when something pings our emotions, we are likely to respond before assessing what facts are available as well as possible explanations.

As I have mentioned on other occasions, when we do not know our faith, we leave ourselves vulnerable to the one who would deceive us away from what God asks of us. A variant on that is when we do not know our history, we leave ourselves vulnerable to the one who would have us repeat its errors. To reduce these vulnerabilities, we must study the fullness of our faith and we must learn its history as well as the lessons learned by the generations before us. If we do not, how will we pass on truth to our children? How will we warn them of the deceptions of the world?

Let us beware the propagandist and put on the armor of God through the study and discernment of the fullness of our faith; and parents, let us remember the words of Moses as he brought the commandments of the Lord to the people, “*19 Teach them to your children, speaking of them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up, 20 and write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates,*” (Deuteronomy 11:19-20) Of course, we must remember, we cannot teach what we do not learn, so what we learn is not only an investment in our future, but the future of all with whom we share the blessings of our faith.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Catholic Definitions – Part XI: Homily

The word for the day is “Homily.” It is a funny little word. The first time I heard it, I was a child and I thought it had to do with hominy grits. Nope, lets explore.

According to thesacredheart.com:

Homily means: Preaching by an ordained minister to explain the Scriptures proclaimed in the liturgy and to exhort the people to accept them as the Word of God.

The word “homily” came from the Greek language and means explanation. Even though the Scriptures are living histories, they sometimes sound like a foreign language. You know the saying, “It’s all Greek to me.” Well it is true that often we hear the words and wonder just what it means. During Vatican II, a mandate was put forth in a document called “*Dei Verbum*.” This document declared that Scripture was to be taught and explained by homilies and catechesis. The members of Vatican II recognized the need to make clear to the people all that Scriptures said and meant for those who listened to these passages before us, for us today and for those who will come after us. Understanding is most important to our way of being able to live out our lives as God has directed.

A homily is preaching. A homily is explaining Scripture. A homily is done during a church service. Isn't this also called a sermon? Actually, no. There are differences between the two, even though they are very similar in purpose.

A sermon is a talk about a selected subject chosen for the day. It is done during a church service and is normally given by the minister, but may be given by anyone knowledgeable on the subject. The subject may be chosen for whatever reason the preacher deems suitable.

The homily on the other hand, is given only by an ordained minister. The bishop, priest or deacon are the only ones permitted to preach a homily. It is given during a Mass but only after the reading of the Scriptural passages designated for the day. And one more thing, the minister is to preach on the readings, not on whatever he feels called to speak on.

The time for a homily during a Catholic Mass is the time for the bishop, priest or deacon to explain more fully the Scripture passages that were just read. Why? Because there are things about Scripture that are sometimes not understood. The minister might, for example, explain the history, the living conditions of the time in which the passage was written; he might explain something about the politics of the day; he might explain words that were very common at the time of the writing, but not so much today; he might further explain something about the people of the story; he might explain to us how an event in the New Testament is the fulfillment of a prophecy from the Old Testament; he might even use a more modern story to help explain the passages just read. However he chooses, he must speak on the issues of the Scriptural readings.

The Scriptural passages read during a Mass are set in a standard form. They are designed so that by the end of a three year calendar cycle, if one attends Mass every day, he/she will have essentially read the entire Bible. All Catholic churches all around the world read the same passages on the same days, so no matter where you are, you will hear the same readings that Catholics everywhere will also hear.

There is a long standing tradition within the Church for this time of explanation and reflection. From ancient days until today, ministers have used sacred Scripture to catechize the faithful on the truths of the Church.

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 the Catholic meaning of “homily,” 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 182.

Discussion:

As we concluded our last discussion, I shared the following quote from Elizabeth's diary.

On August 3, I went for adoration from noon to 3:00 p.m. However, I was distressed by a family disagreement that keeps getting repeated. Jesus spoke, “I see your great efforts.

They are not in vain. I will free your family from the Evil One who disturbs their peace. Trust me.”

“They will need a miracle,” I said.

“*Can I not work a miracle?*” he replied. “*I will so bless this impossible problem that it will be straightened out. I cannot deny my Mother anything when she uses her Flame of Love.*” (Kindelmann, 31-32)

Each time I reflect on the quote I just read, I think to myself of Jesus' humor. “*Can I not work a miracle?*” Through this quip of humor, Jesus reminds us that we sometimes get so caught up in battling what is beyond us and feeling we are powerless, that we forget His undeserved help, also known as grace. He knows what is beyond us and He knows what is within the abilities He created within us. We must remember, He wants us to do our part, then, ask for His grace.

As we discussed, our family members are not always in the same place of the journey of faith as we. Some are further down the path and some may still be searching for the path we are so jubilant to have found. Some may have left the path as a result of worldly deceptions. Regardless of where they are, we must pray the Holy Spirit will guide us to how we may enable faith within our family.

Blessed are the families who pray together, for they share the blessings of God's love. Families who struggle in faith and the mutual bonds of love, need our prayers. If but one heart may be lit with the Flame of Love within a family, they may pray for and minister to the remainder. Even if only part of the family is able to come together in prayer, they are able to pray for the remainder.

Let us, then, if we are alone, pray for our family. If we are blessed to bring but one other family member together with us, let us join with them in prayer. Let us pray with patience, but persistence. Let us ask the Lord how we may engage our family as an example of His love. Let us also ask Him for His undeserved help to accomplish whatever is beyond us. More importantly, let us ask Him to guide us in the ways we may help accomplish His will, which if I haven't mentioned this before, Saint Faustina reminds us is love and mercy itself.

Today, we are going to turn our discussion to another intercessor associated with the Flame of Love, who is Saint Joseph. Of course, this is not the first time we have spoken of Saint Joseph on Armor of Faith Radio. Our listeners might remember our discussions from episode 152 as well as our discussion with Father Donald Calloway during episode 155 in relation to his most recent book, which Scott Hahn describes as, “...a summary of the whole of the study of St. Joseph — the wisdom of the saints, the teachings of the popes, and the reflections of theologians.”

The title of the book is Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father. It is especially timely for this year of Saint Joseph declared by Pope Francis. The book is available for purchase through the website, www.consecrationtostjoseph.org or you can also visit www.fathercalloway.com, and at the upper right hand corner, you will see an oval that says, “Consecration to St. Joseph, Click here.” So, click there, and if technology works, it will take

you where you can learn more about Father Calloway's book; and I should also point out, it can be purchased in Spanish.

We know from scripture that Saint Joseph played a prominent role as the foster father protecting and providing for the Holy Family. We first hear of Joseph in Matthew 1:18-25, which reads:

(Matthew 1:18-25)

18 Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit. 19 Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. 20 Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her." 21 She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means "God is with us." 24 When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. 25 He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

In Luke 2:3-7, we read the account of how Joseph and Mary sought refuge while traveling to Bethlehem to comply with the census, but found no room in the inn.

(Luke 2:6-7)

6 While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Elizabeth recounts in her diary about a time Our Lady spoke of this journey. Elizabeth wrote:

These words caused an inner illumination, and I recalled Our Lady's words a few days ago: "Let us set out with St. Joseph. You must walk with us along Bethlehem's dark roads. We must seek lodging for my Flame of Love, which is Jesus Christ himself." After her words, my strength of soul carried me. "We traveled those dark roads and looked for lodging, but everyone rejected us." (Kindelmann, 36)

As the story progresses, we read in Matthew 2:13-15:

(Matthew 2:13-15)

13 [T]he angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him." 14 Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. 15 He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what

the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

(Question 1: As we reflect on this scripture, we see Joseph being led by the Angel of the Lord. We see him being led in his role as a father to provide for and protect His family, but what was entrusted to him to protect until the appropriate hour was the One who brought salvation to the world as well as his mother. Patti, can you comment as to the importance of the role which Joseph played as the foster father of Jesus and what inspiration might this provide parents when considering providing a refuge for the Flame of Love within the family?)

- Joseph was described as righteous, a person who does what is right and just
- He listened to the angel of the Lord to receive both Mary and her Child
- Joseph sought to provide for and protect his family
- He listened to the angel of the Lord to seek refuge for his family in Egypt
- Joseph was not a Ninja warrior bodyguard, but husband and fatherly protector
- Joseph was entrusted to protect the greatest gift to the world
- Joseph was one man, but by trusting in God, Joseph protected the only begotten Son of God to enable the fulfillment of salvation for a sinful world
- Great courage, trust, and love was required from Joseph to accomplish the tasks given to him by God

In her diary, Elizabeth wrote that Jesus told her:

“On Tuesday, pray for the family and make spiritual communions for each member. My Mother will take each under her protection. Offer night prayer for them. Invoke St. Joseph every day. He will help you.” (Kindelmann, 19)

We often think of the role of a father as provider and protector for his family. He works in partnership with his wife, within the sacrament of marriage, for the nurturing and raising of their children. We see this reflected in the scriptural stories of the Holy Family. Indeed, as Mary talks to Elizabeth, she lovingly reflects upon the challenges of her role and that of Joseph during the childhood of Jesus. A family, though, does not exist in isolation, they are a part of which forms community. Elizabeth writes that Our Lady had this request:

The Virgin asked me to place the parish community under her patronage and that of St. Joseph. Every day, I must ask for the grace of a happy death for souls. (Kindelmann, 30)

(Question 2: When we reflect on this example, Our Lady asks Elizabeth to place her parish community under her patronage and that of Saint Joseph. David, can you comment on this relationship of family and community and in what ways does the Flame of Love inspire that relationship?)

- Families are the foundation of society
- Parents have roles within both family and community

- Parents must prepare their children to participate in family and community
 - Roles between family and community must be balanced
 - Families have the opportunity to minister to and influence their community
 - As we care for one another in both family and community, we fulfill the second of the greatest commandments, to love one another
 - With the Flame of Love, Mary wants to bless families and help them come alive with love
 - Jesus and Mary remind Elizabeth to invoke the help of Saint Joseph
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(Question 3: As timing would have it, Pope Francis recognized the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church by declaring 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021, a year of Saint Joseph. Eileen, can you tell us a little about the indulgences offered during this year and how that relates to the Flame of Love?)

- The plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful under the usual conditions
 - ➔ Sacramental confession
 - ➔ Eucharistic Communion
 - ➔ Prayer for the Pope’s intentions
 - ➔ Spirit detached from any sin
- Participate in the Year of St. Joseph on occasions and manners indicated by the Apostolic Penitentiary
 - ➔ Meditate for at least 30 minutes on the Lord’s Prayer
 - ➔ Take part in a Spiritual Retreat of at least one day that includes a meditation on St. Joseph
 - ➔ Following St. Joseph’s example, perform a spiritual or corporal work of mercy
 - ➔ The recitation of the Holy Rosary in families and among engaged couples
 - ➔ Entrust daily activity to the protection of St. Joseph
 - ➔ Invokes the intercession of St. Joseph so that those seeking work can find dignifying work
 - ➔ Recite the Litany to St. Joseph
 - ➔ Prayer to St. Joseph proper to liturgical traditions (flameoflove.us)

The efforts of Saint Joseph to protect his family were efforts of love. As a family provides a refuge to the Flame of Love, so shall the family grow to bless the community.

Quotes:

From the Diary of Elizabeth Kindelmann

The next day, Mary said, “Remember what I told you about setting out on the dark road to Bethlehem? Come with St. Joseph and me. The Flame of Love seeks lodging. Get close to St. Joseph. He will accompany you.” (Kindelmann, 40)

The heavenly Father says that in the measure that we love God, the world will be freed from sin. We are responsible for one another, for our family, and our nation. Feel responsible for the fate of all humanity. Our Lady said, “*All will see the results of their labors on behalf of the Flame of Love.*” (Kindelmann, 102)

A day later, Jesus continued, “*If a fire begins, do not people put it out? Why do you not put out Satan’s fire? How many look on in cowardice. They will be responsible. They close their eyes and let souls be condemned. Oh, consecrated souls do not be lazy. Laziness is the root of every evil in your soul. It leads to despair, and you are unaware of its presence.*” (Kindelmann, 109)

[Jesus said,] “*You must be responsible for your family, leading them to Me, each in his own particular way. Ask for My graces on their behalf unceasingly.*” (Kindelmann, 109)

Final Thoughts:

Mary told Elizabeth, “*You must walk with us along Bethlehem’s dark roads. We must seek lodging for my Flame of Love, which is Jesus Christ himself.*” Mary continued, “*We traveled those dark roads and looked for lodging, but everyone rejected us.*” (Kindelmann, 36)

As we reflect on these words, we might envision Jesus, Mary, and Joseph traveling from heart to heart as they seek refuge for the Flame of Love. Their desire is to find room for the Flame of Love within every heart. The question is, what will they find within our heart? Will there be a sign that our heart is filled with so many worldly things that we have no room for them? Will we reject them or will we invite them in so that we may help the Flame of Love to grow?

We are in times where the family is under attack as well as the values to which God calls us to live the values of selfless love. Elizabeth wrote that Jesus told her, “*You must be responsible for your family, leading them to Me, each in his own particular way. Ask for My graces on their behalf unceasingly.*” (Kindelmann, 109) He also told Elizabeth, “*Your principal missionary work will always be your family.*” (Kindelmann, 35)

Saint Joseph provides us an example of the love to which we are called through his care of Jesus and Mary. He followed the instructions of the angel of the Lord to accomplish his tasks. We might ask ourselves, what would be our response if we walked in Joseph's sandals? Would we listen? Would we act? Perhaps, more importantly, would we consider who depends on us to do what is right and just? If we look to Joseph as an example, we will do what God asks of us 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 time as we turn our discussion to the promises of the Flame of Love.

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.

And let us share the Flame of Love Prayer:

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
spread the effect of grace of thy Flame of Love over all of humanity,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: Flame of Love – Part XI: The Promises

Current Day Commentary References:

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