



***The Armor of Faith***  
**Topic Summary: Saints of Inspiration**  
***Part XII: Saint of the Little Way***



*Saint Theresa of Lisieux*  
*(Photo taken at Saint Joseph's, Grand Junction, Colorado)*

## **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 World Youth Day.

Of course, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because questions open the doors to discussion. The hard part we leave to our panelists, which is to answer my questions, correct my pronunciation, and make sure I know which century I am talking about, 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 continue to pray for Brenda's father as he prepares to come to You. Dear Lord, may Your hand of comfort and mercy rest upon him. We pray You will guide the hearts and hands of his care givers, and that Your hand of comfort and blessings shall also rest on all who love and care for him.

We pray too, dear Lord, for our good shepherds. We pray You will protect them as well as increase their number. We pray You will grant them the wisdom, courage, strength, as well as good health by which they may 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, all you need to do is send us an email at [armoroffaithradio@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://wcatradio.com/armoroffaith) via email or social media and tell family and friends as well. Several of the streaming services through which we are available on demand also have share options, so we invite you to join the evangelization and help us spread the good news of the Gospel and our 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:**

### ***Watching, Examining, and Doing***

I keep reminding myself that there have been much worse times in history, but there is no denying that as the culture of death expands and attacks grow in opposition to the sanctity of marriage and family, we are speeding in the wrong direction. Incivility is fanned by our media and fueled by political ideologies wrestling for power. We are pitted against one another by those who categorize us and label us by the color of our skin or the make up of our chromosomes. They do not want us to see one another as who we really are, children of God's creation, with whom He holds no partiality. (cf. Wisdom 6:7, Acts 10:4, Ephesians 6:9)

In these times of ideological tyranny, we must observe not only what is spoken, but also the consequences of what is done. Some talk of unity, but not true unity. Their view of unity is compliance with their ideology and acceptance of their power without consideration that all the children of God's creation have a higher calling. Even as some speak lofty words of peace, they villainize and demonize with *ad hominem* attacks rather than engage in civil discourse and reasoned discussion through which effective and just problem solving might be accomplished. Bearing false witness seems to have no meaning to the media who have become institutional propagandists with a mission to inflame, outrage, and divide the people for the purpose of ideological power objectives.

The finger of injustice is easily pointed, but the action of correction is far more difficult. It is easy to present words, but the proof of what is right and just is found in what we do and what we fail to do. We must observe with what words and actions align if we are to correctly identify with whom we shall join hands to help accomplish the will of God and whom we should seek to lovingly influence so their hearts may become opened to God. (cf. 1 Peter 3:15-17)

It is not enough for us to complain, but we must ask ourselves the hard question, to what may we put the talents God created within us to stand firm against the tactics of the devil? We must ask, who do we trust to help us put on the whole armor of God and with whom shall we work to resist the evil day? (cf. Ephesians 6:10-17) We are warned that there are those who will wander among us in the clothing of sheep, but who are in truth, ravenous wolves seeking the ruin of souls. (cf. Matthew 7:15-20) In truth, I believe the more dangerous are the wolves in the clothing of shepherds. We are told that by their fruits we shall know them, (cf. Matthew 7:16, 20) but we cannot fully know the nature of their fruits if we do not also know the fullness of our faith. The more we know our faith, the less we leave ourselves vulnerable to the one who would deceive us away from what God asks of us.

So, let us watch carefully. Let us examine the fruits. Let us observe who aligns their faith with their actions and that both are aligned with what God asks of us. Let us observe the sources of our information and their reliability for yielding truth. We may need to consult several sources by which to obtain the full context by which truth is accurately discerned.

Let us observe who bears false witness, for all suffer when injustice is presented as justice. (cf. Isaiah 5:20-21) Most importantly, let us examine ourselves and ask, how will our Creator, as well as our neighbor, know us by our fruits? Let us ask how we shall use what God created within us to help accomplish His will, which Saint Faustina reminds us, is love and mercy itself.

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

### ***Catholic Definitions – Part IVX: Lent***

Lent is upon us. In one week we will begin the season of Lent. I would like to focus a few sessions on this holy season so today we will begin with the meaning of Lent and especially on the events which will lead us into this season.

Lent is a season of the Liturgical calendar. It is a time set aside for Christians to slow down the pace of life and give a bit more time to Christ. During the season of Lent we focus our attention

on prayer, fasting, charitable giving, and penance. This is the time for us to spend with Christ as we remember His Passion and the sacrifice He gave so that we might have salvation and eternal life with Him in Heaven.

This year, Lent begins on February 17 which is next Wednesday. This is a special Wednesday and it even has its own name---Ash Wednesday. Why? Because on this day, we enter into the time period of 40 days of sacrifice and penance. We go to Mass and during the Mass the priest will put ashes in the sign of a cross on our foreheads. This is an outward sign that we acknowledge that we are sinners and are ready to repent. For most of the year, Catholics do not openly show signs of our faith, but on this day, we share with the world that we are sinners, we know it and we are ready to do sacrifices to atone for our sinful ways.

Why do we use ashes? The custom of using ashes came from ancient days when people did public penance for their sins. If a person had committed sins such as murder, apostasy, or adultery, they were required to wear ashes and sackcloth as they wandered around town doing their business. This was to show everyone that they were sinners and were begging for forgiveness. Often, they also wore signs telling what sins they had committed. Today we have a much more private form of penance----confession. But to keep traditions alive, we have this one day to publicly say that we are sinners.

This year, because of the COVID pandemic, the Church has decided that touching is forbidden. Ashes will not be placed on our foreheads as has happened for many decades. The priest will simply sprinkle ashes onto your heads. No outward sign this year but the idea is the same. Also, since so many are not attending Mass and doing this virtually these days, to miss this Mass is not a sin.

The Catholic Church has established requirements of which we need to follow. This is an attempt to help us do our penance. On Ash Wednesday, in addition to going to Mass and getting ashes, we are called to fast and abstain. Meaning, we are to limit our food consumption and to not eat meat at all on this day.

According to Canon Law:

Can.1251 Abstinence from meat, or from some other food as determined by the Episcopal Conference, is to be observed on all Fridays, unless a solemnity should fall on a Friday. Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Can.1252 The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year. The law of fasting binds those who have attained their majority, until the beginning of their sixtieth year. Pastors of souls and parents are to ensure that even those who by reason of their age are not bound by the law of fasting and abstinence, are taught the true meaning of penance.

The USCCB tells us:

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.

For members of the Latin Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Latin Catholic Church from age 14 on wards.

If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until the Easter Vigil (on Holy Saturday night) as the "paschal fast" to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus and to prepare ourselves to share more fully and to celebrate more readily his Resurrection.

In our next session we will look further into the history of Lent as well as other traditions we associate with Lent.

We are now ready for Lent to start. Remember to fast, abstain, and if you can, go to Mass on Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021. Happy Lent everyone.

*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 "Lent," 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 185.

## **Discussion:**

As we concluded our last discussion, which was also the conclusion to our series on "The Flame of Love," I expressed my thanks to our special guests from the Flame of Love Movement who joined us to help explain the Flame of Love Devotion; Eileen Piergiovanni, John Sullivan, Patti Schwartz, Lori Brown, David Proctor, and Yvonne Duffy. Their insights were wonderful and they all shared not only some inspiring thoughts, but also blessings from their hearts and personal experiences. In case you missed the series, you can always listen on demand, selecting episodes 173 to 184.

As we reflect on what is captured in the diary of Elizabeth Kindelmann, we observe the passionate desire of Jesus and Mary to bring love and mercy to the world, but more importantly for us all to work together for the salvation of souls. Jesus told Elizabeth, "*I seek hearts in the loneliness of the night.*" (Kindelmann, 30) We must ask ourselves, will He find our heart open to Him? This is where the spreading of the Flame of Love begins. It begins with the "Yes" of our heart just as our Savior coming to all of us began with the "Yes" of Mary.

I mentioned that it is through our hearts by which the prayers which blind Satan are lifted up. It is through our hearts by which love may be ignited within our families. It is through our hearts by which the love within a family may be shared with those who surround the family as well as all who cross their path. It is through our hearts by which the prayers for the salvation of souls are lifted up. It is through our hearts by which prayers, fasting, and penance are offered through

which to free souls from purgatory. It is through our hearts by which the blessings of love and mercy bring light to the world. It is through our hearts by which we perform the works of ministry which 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.

Today, we are going to open a new series to discuss saints of inspiration. Of course, there are so many, so we are going to open a door to only a few. We certainly cannot characterize our list as the top so many, because we are in no position to make such a call, so we are simply going to provide some examples.

**(Question 1:** Before we get into our first saint, I want to ask a basic question. **Why should we learn about the saints and why should we consider a relationship with them?)**

- We may learn from their experiences
  - ➔ How they found the path to God
  - ➔ How they lived their devotion to God
  - ➔ How they faced adversity
  - ➔ How they encouraged others
  - ➔ How they shared the blessings of the Gospel
  - ➔ How they faced persecution
  - ➔ How they worked and sacrificed for the blessings of others
- They are the holy ones lifting up our prayers to God
- Even from heaven, they may help to strengthen us in our faith

(Revelation 5:8)

*When he took it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of the elders held a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, **which are the prayers of the holy ones.***

(Revelation 3:4)

*3 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a gold censer. He was given a great quantity of incense to offer, **along with the prayers of all the holy ones, on the gold altar that was before the throne.** 4 The smoke of the incense **along with the prayers of the holy ones went up before God** from the hand of the angel.*

(CCC: Pg 900: Glossary – Saint)

The “holy one” who leads a life in union with God through the grace of Christ and receives the reward of eternal life. The Church is called the communion of saints, of the holy ones.

(Saint Therese of Lisieux)

When I die, I will send down a shower of roses from the heavens; I will spend my heaven doing good upon earth.

We know Saint Therese of Lisieux for her “Little Way.” She wrote in her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*:

I concluded that God would not inspire desires which could not be realized, and that I may **aspire to sanctity in spite of my littleness. For me to become great is impossible.** I must bear with myself and my many imperfections; but I will seek out a means of **getting to Heaven by a little way**—very short and very straight, a little way that is wholly new. We live in an age of inventions; nowadays the rich need not trouble to climb the stairs, they have lifts instead. Well, I mean to try and find a lift by which I may be raised unto God, for I am too tiny to climb the steep stairway of perfection. I have sought to find in Holy Scripture some suggestion as to what this lift might be which I so much desired, and **I read these words uttered by the Eternal Wisdom Itself: "Whosoever is a little one, let him come to Me."** (Lisieux, 90)

(**Note:** The words Saint Therese used in scriptural reference to Proverbs 9:4 are found in the Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition. The New American Bible (Revised Edition) reads: “*Let whoever is naive turn in here.*”)

When asked, “And what is this *little way* that you would teach to souls?” She replied, “**It is the way of spiritual childhood,** the way of trust and absolute self-surrender.” (Lisieux, 137)

(**Question 2:** Saint Therese expresses her faith in terms of the “little” and “simple.” She says of herself, “For me to become great is impossible.” When we reflect on the nature of a “little one,” the thought of children comes to mind. **As Saint Therese uses this imagery of a “little one” or “spiritual childhood,” to what does she draw our attention when we consider our relationship with Christ?**)

- Like a child needs the nurturing of a parent, we need Christ
- Like a child needs the protection of a parent, we need Christ
- Like a child receives instruction from a parent, we need Christ
- Like a child receives help from a parent, we need Christ
- Like a child receives forgiveness from a parent, we need Christ
- Like a child receives love from a parent, we need Christ

(Matthew 18:1-5)

*1 At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” 2 He called a child over, placed it in their midst, 3 and said, “Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me.*

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In his pamphlet, “First Steps on the Little Way of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux,” Father Cameron, O.P., writes:

We must be realistic! The world does not live the Little Way. If we were truly living the Little Way:

- we would be delighted to take the last place in line
- we would recoil from flattery
- we would rejoice in the success of our neighbors
- we would make no excuses for our sins
- we would be quick to admit our weaknesses
- we would prefer hiddenness to acclaim
- we would be grateful when others criticized us and pointed out our shortcomings
- we would not be undone by the injury and injustice we suffer
- we would be unmoved by worldly status, fame, and prestige
- we would experience peace in the midst of the world's conflict, turmoil, and strife. (Cameron, 14)

**(Question 3:** So, Father Cameron says, “We must be realistic! The world does not live the “Little Way.” When we review this list of Father Cameron's, what does it reveal to us about the “Little Way,” and why are these characteristics important to our lives?)

- We are called to put others before ourselves
- The pursuit of flattery leads us away from selflessness
- Taking joy in the blessings of our neighbors allows us to share in joy
- God does not want our excuses for our sin, He wants a contrite and loving heart
- When we admit our weaknesses, we admit the help we need from our Lord
- Acclaim can corrupt; hiddenness from acclaim hides us from corruption
- Reflecting on criticism is healthy if we look at it as an opportunity for growth
- Brooding on injustice and injury we suffer is a distraction from selflessness
- Worldly status, fame, and prestige are distractions from caring for others
- Trust in Jesus enables us to cope with the world's conflict, turmoil, and strife

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Father Robert McTeigue suggests that Saint Therese is “dangerous.” He begins in his writing by asking what words we would use to describe Saint Therese, to which he lists, gentle, innocent, child-like, trusting, loving, passionate, hidden, and little. Then, he says, “I would describe Saint Therese as 'dangerous.’” (McTeigue)

We might ask ourselves, to whom might this gentle, innocent, child-like, trusting, loving, passionate, simple, unassuming little Carmelite, who was frail at birth, be so dangerous? Well, Father Robert answers:

Therese is a danger to those who've resigned themselves to spiritual mediocrity. She's a threat to every soul that will not dare to aspire to holiness. She's the mortal enemy of the lukewarm. (McTeigue)



**(Question 4:** When Father suggests Saint Therese is dangerous to the lukewarm, those who will not dare to aspire to holiness, and those who have resigned themselves to spiritual mediocrity, he is reflecting upon the state of faith in our current day; a faith which is presented with any number of competitors for our time. **In what ways is Saint Therese a danger to the lukewarm?)**

- She reveals: “If we’re not holy it’s because we don’t want to be.” (McTeigue)
- She reveals that even the smallest of flowers add beauty to the garden
- She reveals the power of humility
- She reveals the power of simple acts of kindness
- She reveals the power of the little ways of love
- She reveals the power of placing our trust in Christ
- She reveals the power of allowing God to guide us to what He asks of us
- She reveals the simplicity by which we may receive Jesus in our hearts
- She reveals the little ways we may help accomplish the will of God (which another saint reminds us is love and mercy itself)

(Revelation 3:15-19)

15 “**I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. 16 So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. 17 For you say, ‘I am rich and affluent and have no need of anything,’ and yet do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich, and white garments to put on so that your shameful nakedness may not be exposed, and buy ointment to smear on your eyes so that you may see. 19 Those whom I love, I reprove and chastise. Be earnest, therefore, and repent.**”

## Quotes:

### *Some Quotes from the Life of Saint Therese of Lisieux*

Holiness consists simply in doing God’s will, and being just what God wants us to be.

It pleases Him to create great Saints, who may be compared with the lilies or the rose; but He has also created little ones, who must be content to be daisies or violets, nestling at His feet to delight His eyes when He should choose to look at them. The happier they are to be as He wills, the more perfect they are.

Jesus has chosen to show me the only way which leads to the Divine Furnace of love; it is the way of childlike self-surrender, the way of a child who sleeps, afraid of nothing, in its father’s arms.

Do you realize that Jesus is there in the tabernacle expressly for you – for you alone? He burns with the desire to come into your heart... Don’t listen to the demon; laugh at him, and go without fear to receive the Jesus of peace and love.

I understood that all we accomplish, however brilliant, is worth nothing without love.

Jesus, help me to simplify my life by learning what you want me to be and becoming that person.

Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love.

Remember that nothing is small in the eyes of God. Do all that you do with love.

### **Final Thoughts:**

Father Robert referred to Saint Therese as dangerous because she removes the excuses any of us may have in relation to the competition of the world for the time and attention we may devote to living our faith. The reality is that the more we understand our faith, it is what enables us to engage our responsibilities in the world and in a manner which is a blessing to all who cross our path. She reveals to us that no matter our state in life, we have the choice and ability to help accomplish the will of God. Holiness is not reserved for the great figures of the world, it is within our own grasp through simple choices and little ways of love.

This was the reason why Saint Therese is such a good place for us to start as we examine saints of inspiration, because the temptation for us as we look at the lives of the holy ones is to believe the path they walked is beyond us. As Father Robert reflects, the little way by which Saint Therese approached our Lord takes away the obstacles we put in front of ourselves. What we do is a choice. If we are not able to produce what is great and grand, it matters not, for what God desires of us is love. We, by ourselves, may not be able to solve all the problems of the world, but we can give a smile to a wounded soul, a listening ear to the suffering heart, a hand of help which may join with others to help lift off a burden. We may not be able to be all things to the world, but if we choose, we can engage the little ways by which we may help accomplish the will of God, which Saint Faustina reminds us is love and mercy itself.

Of course, there is so much more we could say about Saint Therese of Lisieux, but we have so little time. If you would like to learn more about Saint Therese of Lisieux, 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 185.

**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 a Saint who used the technology of the time to extend the reach of his evangelization.

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:** Saints of Inspiration – Part II: Saint of Media and Radio Evangelization

### **Current Day Commentary References:**

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