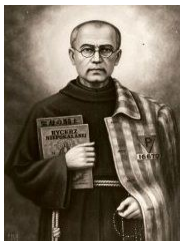




The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: Saints of Inspiration

Part II: Saint of Media and Radio Evangelization



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 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.

Of course, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because how am I going to learn if I do not ask questions? And of course, I have a lot of learning to do. 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 pray, dear Lord, for all who are at the end of their days. May Your hand of comfort rest upon them as they prepare to come to You, and may Your hand of comfort rest upon all who love and care for them.

We pray especially today for parents. We pray You will grant them an increase in faith, as well as a thirst and desire to learn Your holy Word, so that as they learn, they may so teach their children.

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 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:

The Sanctity of Life, Marriage, and Family

If our focus was on the sanctity of life, marriage, and family, we are likely to observe a much different and better world, but as we allow ideologies to attack and destroy them, we shall continue to witness the dark struggles of society.

Our Creator gave us the gift of life and we are called not only to respect it, but to nurture it with love. God gave us the sacrament of marriage by which a man and a woman may become one flesh so that if it is the will of God, children may be brought forth through them. Through this sacrament, a man and a woman are called to the vocation of spouse and parent by which the children of God's creation may be protected, nurtured, and raised to accomplish the purpose for which God created them and so their generation may prepare the next. This is fundamental to our faith and the formation of a well ordered society, but it is being traded away to the desires of the world.

Sadly, the politics of our day seems to have become one steady attack against these fundamental beliefs of what God asks of us. These politics have resulted in mixed messages from our bishops, not to educate us in faith and morals, but to accommodate politics and the so called forces of political correctness. While we must not compromise the sanctity of life, some bishops and clergy attempt to make the case that it is OK to trade these off to address other political issues of concern. We must ask ourselves, if we do not have the right to life, then, what does

anything else matter? It is fundamental and a precursor before we can lovingly address any other condition. When we do not have a proper foundation for society; the sanctity of life, marriage, and family; whatever is built will not be safe.

The sacrament of marriage was given so that God could be in the midst of the loving relationship between a man and woman.

(Matthew 19:4-6)

*4 [Jesus] said in reply, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. **Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.**"*

Not all marriages receive the fruit of children, but when they do, father and mother are called to work in partnership to fulfill the responsibilities of the vocation to which God called them. If they do their job well, their children shall be well prepared to assume their own vocation within their generation and to help care for the generations to come. If that job suffers from neglect, society suffers.

The sanctity of life, marriage, and family are not meant to be political chips to trade away for some other perception of good. Yes, we must look to the care of the less fortunate, but if we do not protect the sanctity of life, marriage, and family; we can only expect the numbers of the less fortunate to swell as life is ended prematurely, marriages are torn, and children are left to be raised by the ravages of the world.

We are not the faith of any political party, ideological organization, or movement; therefore, our job is not to appease them, but influence them in positive ways to help accomplish God's will, keeping in mind to what we are called in 1 Peter 3:8-17. The clergy must recognize this and speak as God would have them speak, not as political correctness would have them speak.

We must ask ourselves, how may we apply the gifts God created within us to protect the sanctity of life, marriage, and family? With what wisdom, strength, courage, and love will we engage and positively influence those who surround us? How will we lovingly engage the political entities to turn them away from the fuels of evil? How will we influence our clergy to encourage them to speak lovingly, but boldly about what God asks of us? Of course, we must also ask, how will we turn from our own political biases to look at problem solving through the eyes of God rather than the eyes of those thrashing for power and worldly things.

What I am raising here is not an easy issue. It requires wisdom, strength, and courage, not to mention the whole armor of God (cf Ephesians 6:10-17). As Saint Faustina reminds us:

I know well that the greater and more beautiful the work is, the more terrible will be the storms that rage against it.

We must be prepared for the ravages of the storm. It also requires we seek the guidance of our Lord. Let us begin in prayer. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to lead us in our choices and our

endeavors. Let us ask Him to help us see the opportunities by which we may help influence and gain the conversion of souls. Let us ask Him to guide us in how we may help accomplish the will of God, which if I haven't mentioned this before, Saint Faustina reminds us is love and mercy itself.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Catholic Definitions – Part XVI: Fasting

OK, so we have now officially entered into the season of Lent. Did it seem strange to be given ashes on the head instead of the forehead? Yea, seems like lots of things in our lives today are strange.

As Catholics, we fasted and abstained from meat last Wednesday. Is this the end of that? No. According to Canon Law and the USCCB, we are required to abstain from meat on every Friday during Lent. This is a penance. We are also called to fast. So what does this mean? According to Canon Law:

Can.1251: Abstinance 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. Abstinance and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Fasting means to abstain from food. Today we hear people talk about various fasts for gaining a healthier way of life. That is not what a Lenten fast is about. A Lenten fast is a spiritual fast. While fasting, we are to not eat full normal meals. The Church teaches that as we fast, we may have only one full meal on that day and perhaps two smaller food portions during the same day. Why do I call it “food portions”? Because we are asked to not eat full portions---to fast from meals. Why? This is a way for us to experience what others who are less fortunate or in countries that are in poverty are living with. During this time of fasting, we can feel the pains of hunger of which so many people live with on a daily basis.

In many of her apparitions, Our Blessed Mother asks us to fast from food on Fridays. She asks us to consume only bread and water. She does not limit the amount of bread or water, but this is a great sacrifice as we are accustomed to eating more rounded meals. This is in keeping with the fast required by the Church during Lent.

We also have an example in Scripture of fasting and hunger. Matthew writes in 4:1-2:

(Matthew 4:1-2)

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.

This is one of the Scriptural examples we have for fasting and for doing the 40 days of Lent. Jesus fasted and prayed for 40 days while in the desert and he was hungry. So if we can do this for any time during Lent, we are then following the example of Jesus. The Church does not say that we have to fast every day as Jesus did, but we are called to fast on Fridays and any other days in which we can do so.

Does everyone have to fast? Yes. The rule is that everyone who is between 14 and 60 years of age is required to do this. However, there are exceptions to every rule. If you are ill, you do not have to follow this. If you are a laborer, you need the nutrients to sustain your ability to work, so you are exempt. If you are a pregnant mother, you need nutriment for your baby, so you are exempt. If you have questions, about the exceptions you might talk with your priest about your particular situation.

There are other ways to fast as well. The Church tells us that fasting means from food. However, since we have many folks who, for whatever reason, cannot do a food fast, there are other ways to fast. How about fasting from TV or computer games or fasting from the regular night out with friends to stay home and read Scripture or some other spiritual edifying source? Fasting may mean giving up some eating out at restaurants. During those times, you can take the money you would have spent on eating and set it aside to donate to an organization like Food for the Poor. Be creative this season.

When next we meet, we shall talk about alms giving or charitable giving and how we can do this during Lent.

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 “Fasting,” we invite you to follow the links in the reference section of the topic summary for this episode. You can obtain the topic summary by visiting <https://wcatradio.com/armoroffaithstudyguides/> and select episode 186.

Discussion:

As we concluded our last discussion, I mentioned that Father Robert referred to Saint Therese of Lisieux 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 was such a good place for us to start this series 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, I may have mentioned before, Saint Faustina reminds us is love and mercy itself.

Today, we are going to turn our attention to a saint who employed both printed and radio media by which to evangelize the Gospel. While the majority of his story is one of evangelization, he was also recognized by Pope John Paul II as a martyr of charity.

It is reported that in 1917, Saint Kolbe witnessed demonstrations where it was chanted:

“Satan will reign in the Vatican and the Pope will be his servant”.
(Knight of the Immaculata, 33)

Saint Kolbe is reported to have said in response:

“Is it possible that our enemies should make such a display of force in order to defeat us, while we fold our hands in our lap and do nothing? After all, do we not have more powerful weapons; can we not count on Heaven, and especially on the Immaculata?”
(Knight of the Immaculata, 33-34)

According to Church Life Journal, Saint Kolbe acted in response. They write:

On October 16, 1917, as the Great War [WWI] raged around them, Brother Maximilian and six other Conventual Franciscans, founded the Militia of the Immaculata, which Pope Benedict XV blessed a year and a half later on March 28, 1919. The goal of the M.I. was and is to “extend as much as possible the very gentle Kingdom of the Sacred Heart of Jesus through Mary Immaculate”—to spread the civilization of love. Maximilian did not hesitate to use any means at his disposal to fulfill this mission.
(Keating)

(Question 1: Let's listen to the words of Saint Kolbe again. “Is it possible that our enemies should make such a display of force in order to defeat us, while we fold our hands in our lap and do nothing?” Now, more than 100 years later, do we observe any similarities to our day?)

- Political ideologies vs what God asks of us (Left and Right)
- Secular norms vs what God asks of us
- Political efforts to silence what God asks of us
- Ideological efforts in opposition to the sanctity of life, marriage, and family
- Heretical efforts to sow division within the Church and to peel us away from what God asks of us
- Media and institutional propaganda

He [St. Kolbe] was active in promoting the veneration of the Immaculate Virgin Mary. He was strongly opposed to leftist – in particular, communist – movements. (Wikipedia)

Nick Arma, in his article, “Saint for Our Times: Maximilian Kolbe Who Spoke Against the National Socialists and Made the Ultimate Sacrifice,” wrote of Saint Kolbe:

What would he have thought of the time we are in now? It’s not hard to imagine that he would be at his press or his podcast speaking out against the things that degrade the sanctity of life including the political ideologies that would do so. That would not just mean being pro-life, but pro the sanctity of the individual, a thing both the philosophies of Nazis (the National Socialist Workers Party) and Communism abjure. He would not have kept silent in the face of evil we face. He was locked up and died ultimately because he opposed what the National Socialists were preaching, because he fought against them trying to impose the deadly philosophy on Poland.

(Question 2: As we look at the threads of history and consider the swelling evil of our day, Saint Kolbe might give us pause to ask ourselves some questions. What are our weapons and what is our call to react?)

- Knowledge of the fullness of faith (knowledge of truth is power)
 - Prayer
 - ➔ In secret
 - ➔ With family
 - ➔ With friends
 - ➔ In community
 - Evangelization → raising awareness by word and example
 - Ministry → Producing the fruits which preach and engage souls
-

When Saint Kolbe established the original statutes of the Militia Immaculata, he wrote the following goals and duties:

Goal of Membership:

To work for the conversion to God of all men, be they sinners, heretics, schismatics, Jews, Moslems etc., in particular the Freemasons; and that all become saints, under the patronage and through the mediation of the Immaculate Virgin.

Duties of Membership:

1. If possible, to pray the following ejaculatory prayer at least once a day: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee, and for all those who do not have recourse to thee, especially for the Freemasons and for those who are commended to thy care."
2. To use all other valid and legitimate means for the conversion and sanctification of men, according to one’s means, in the different states and conditions of life, as the occasions present themselves; this is entrusted to the zeal and prudence of each one.

Particularly recommended, however, is spreading the Miraculous Medal. (Knight of the Immaculata)

(**Note:** To learn more about the Miraculous Medal, we invite you to listen to episode 52 of our series on Miracles and Faith.)

(**Question 3:** As we reflect on this portion of the statues of the Militia Immaculata, there are two duties Saint Kolbe outlines. What do these duties reveal to us?)

- Do we look at our opponents as adversaries or opportunities for salvation?
- If we look at adversaries as opportunities for salvation, how does that change how we view and engage relationships?
- What means do we have to influence our adversaries?
 - Prayer
 - Communication (1 Peter 3:8-17)
 - Example
 - Ministry
- If we are to influence in positive ways, what must we change in ourselves?
- We must be observant for opportunities
- Our means and the different states and conditions of our life may influence what we may accomplish, but we must also remember the mediation of Our Blessed Mother

When we reflect on these statues, we might ask ourselves, how do we look at our opponents or adversaries? Do we view them as enemies or opportunities for salvation? Viewing them as opportunities for salvation does not mean that we are there to force their conversion through oppressive or violent means, rather to encourage their conversion through prayer and the example of doing what God asks of us. perhaps to influence with the example of faith and perhaps as intercessors to pray for their souls.

(Matthew 5:43-48)

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? 48 So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Quotes:

Some Quotes by Saint Maximilian Mary Kolbe

The most deadly poison of our times is indifference. And this happens, although the praise of God should know no limits. Let us strive, therefore, to praise Him to the greatest extent of our powers.

Modern times are dominated by Satan and will be more so in the future. The conflict with hell cannot be engaged by men, even the most clever. The Immaculata alone has from God the promise of victory over Satan. However, assumed into Heaven, the Mother of God now requires our cooperation. She seeks souls who will consecrate themselves entirely to her, who will become in her hands effective instruments for the defeat of Satan and the spreading of God's kingdom upon earth.

Never be afraid of loving the Blessed Virgin too much. You can never love her more than Jesus did.

Jesus honored her before all ages, and will honor her for all ages. No one comes to Him, nor even near Him, no one is saved or sanctified, if he too will not honor her. This is the lot of Angels and of men.

If anyone does not wish to have Mary Immaculate for his Mother, he will not have Christ for his Brother.

Final Thoughts:

As we brain stormed saints of inspiration to include in this series, I must confess that I recommended Saint Kolbe because he kept crossing my path. I initially became aware of him because of his sacrifice as a martyr of charity; the story of how he volunteered to take the place of a family man that the Nazis selected to starve to death as a retaliation for another prisoner's escape from Auschwitz. While martyrs are made in a moment, what prepares them for that moment is how they learned and lived their faith.

I didn't learn about the life of Saint Kolbe until the censorship on social media platforms caused us to research alternatives where we might engage without being suppressed or canceled. We began to establish a presence on Parler, but then, they were taken off line by a collusion of Big Tech companies. This eventually led us to discover a social media site devoted to the Catholic faith, called SP3RN. At the time, I had no clue as to what the name meant, but it was nice to find a platform friendly to Catholics.

A few days later, I saw a video which allowed me to make the connection between Saint Kolbe and SP3RN. These were the amateur radio call letters Saint Kolbe used over which to evangelize. Of course, this grabbed at me because of our efforts via Armor of Faith Radio.

Some may remember, we did several episodes on Fatima during our series, "Miracles and Faith," specifically episodes 54 – 56. After we did those episodes, I have continually found threads of spiritual history and warfare running through 1917. It was three days after the miracle of the sun, on 16 Oct 1917, that Saint Kolbe, and six other Conventual Franciscans, founded the Militia of the Immaculata. (Keating) He subsequently founded a news paper by which to evangelize the faith and try to alert the world to the evils of the day. Despite the meager

resources available to him, he continually explored modern tools, such as radio, by which to evangelize and to share his devotion to the Immaculata. Was this simply a coincidence or was this Apostle of Consecration to Mary being guided by Our Blessed Mother?

Father Stehlin of the Society of St. Pius X reflected:

In Fatima, the Immaculata gave us an effective spiritual weapon, and, almost at the same time, She chose Her loyal servant Maximilian Kolbe to organize this counterattack by the founding of the MI [Militia of the Immaculata]. (Hickson)

Then, as I prepared for this episode, I discovered another connection. I learned Saint Kolbe prayed and advocated for the canonization of Saint Therese of Lisieux, which was the first saint we selected to discuss to begin this series on Saints of Inspiration. This blew me away, because my family has several links to Saint Therese, to include the fact she is the patron saint of the diocese in which we reside. It would take me much longer to explain than the closing moments we have here, but it is clear from my experience with both of these saints, that the lives of these saints are meant to reach out to us, speak to us, and lead us.

If you experience a connection to a saint, do not ignore it. Explore the saint and allow the threads of their lives and the threads of their faith which speak to you. Examine the connection, for Saint Kolbe examined the connection he had with Saint Therese, the Little Flower, and used her Little Way as a model. (Kolbe Publications) Perhaps there is a saint who is seeking to guide you to use the talents God created within you to help do the will of God, which I may have mentioned before, Saint Faustina reminds us, is love and mercy itself.

Of course, there is so much more we could say about Saint Kolbe, but, again, we have so little time. If you would like to learn more about Saint Maximilian Kolbe, 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 186.

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 Archangel saints.

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 III: Archangel Saints

Current Day Commentary References:

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