



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: Saints of Inspiration
Part IX: Saint of the Poor



Saint Teresa of Calcutta
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. Sharon, in addition to being my lovely wife as well as a wonderful blessing in my life, 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 questions open the doors to learning, and I appreciate everyone who joins me on my learning journey. 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 especially for Father Jim Blount, a faithful priest who endeavors to spread the Flame of Love. We pray, dear Lord, You will protect him and grant him the wisdom, courage, strength, and good health by which to bring Your Holy Truth to the people and to encourage the spread of the Flame of Love and our Lord's Divine Mercy.

Let us also lift up 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.

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:

Complex Problem Solving

Complex problem solving appears to be beyond the abilities of our political class and the understanding of our propaganda media, which many refer to as our main stream media. The players in those institutions act as if problem solving is their interest, but their real interest is political power. Unfortunately, what that means is that the ability to conduct complex problem solving is obliterated under the dark canvas of politics. The distraction is the lust for power.

Complex problem solving requires:

- Full contextual recognition there is a problem which must be addressed
- Definition of the problem
- Full contextual analysis of the facts bearing on the problem
- Analysis of impacts and consequences of various courses of action
- Criteria for selection of the best course of action

- Solution coordination and implementation
- Evaluation of solution results
- Application of lessons learned leading to refinement of the solution or selection of another course of action

When politics and ideologies become engaged in the process, that process goes out the window in favor of “never letting a crisis go to waste,” to obtain a political end.

As we observe the issues of our day, it appears that everything must be politicized, which means we will have solutions imposed upon us for problems which are ill defined, incorrectly assessed, or may not even exist; and these solutions may produce more problems than they solve, if they solve anything. In many cases, it appears our politicians and their enabling media do not really want solutions that will improve the lives of people, for it is not the solution which gains them political power. The continued existence of the problem enables them to manipulate us to give them power. Power, then, becomes the goal; not workable, effective, and efficient solutions.

So, what does that have to do with our faith? Well, the issue arises as we allow politics to infect our Church. The Church cannot avoid politics, for it is part of the environment of the world, but when matters of faith and morals become infected with politics, the quality of our ministry and faith endeavors suffer. When our shepherds allow politics to blind them, they become the blind leading the blind. This is where Satan loves to play.

So, how do we address this? The first step is prayer. This issue is so deep and sludgy that we cannot deal with this alone. We need the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us. We also need to become versed in the problems solving process so we are able to recognize when politics distracts us. As political propaganda swoops in to obscure our understanding, cloud our thinking, and manipulate us, we must ask the person who presents it or repeats it, “Why do you believe this? What evidence have you seen? Are you aware of the full context, or are you only presenting the political narrative in obedience to the dark shadow of Political Correctness?”

Not only must we be versed in the process, we must teach it to our children. We must help them understand it as well as the social dynamics of teams which can make the difference between effective and efficient solutions to real needs or the charade which solves nothing, but only conveys power to the wolves.

Most importantly, we must know the fullness of our faith if we are to know the fullness of what God expects of us as we apply the problem solving process. As I have mentioned before, our salvation is not a matter of whether this ideology or that is right or wrong, it is a matter of whether we understand and endeavor to live what God asks of us.

Let us pray the Holy Spirit will guide us in all our endeavors so we may help accomplish the will of God, which a certain saint reminds us, is love and mercy, itself.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Catholic Definitions – Part XXIII: Apostle

Good afternoon. Today I want to talk about the word Apostle. What does it mean, where does it come from and does it apply to us or is it only in reference to those Jesus chose as His twelve?

Catholicculture.org, has a dictionary and according to them, Apostle is defined as:

A messenger and authorized representative of the sender. Broadly used in Scripture, it refers to many followers of Jesus who spread his message. More precisely, however, it applies to the original twelve men chosen by Jesus to be his immediate aides. They are referred to as disciples during the period in which he was instructing them, but following his ascension they are always called Apostles. After Pentecost they spoke and acted with confidence and assurance in teaching others what he had taught them and in assuming leadership roles in the early church. They were ordained priests by Christ at the Last Supper and were commissioned by him to preach the Gospel to all mankind (Matthew 28:19-20). (Catholic Dictionary)

In Latin, the word is *apostolus*, which means apostle and in Greek it is *apostolos*, which means one who is sent off.

So according to this definition, those of whom Jesus chose to be His students, were called disciples. They did not become Apostles until Pentecost when they received the gifts of the Holy Spirit which gave them the strength to preach as Jesus did.

As Jesus began His ministry, he was followed by many people. He seemed to always have people around Him who wanted to hear what He had to say and to learn from Him. There were those who were curious and just wanted to witness how this Man behaved. There were those who followed because they heard about His ability to heal and desired to be healed themselves. These are all people who are called disciples, or followers.

Jesus did something different in His ministry. He hand picked 12 men to whom He taught carefully His thoughts, His truths, His behaviors, and His love. These 12 were closer to Jesus than perhaps anyone else, with the exception of His mother and Joseph.

At the end of three years, Jesus had imparted upon the men all that they would need to carry out their mission of evangelizing the world. During the last meal that they shared, Jesus gave to these men the powers to heal and to forgive sins. They received their calling to go out and preach. They were ordained to be priests and also to be the first bishops of the church of Jesus Christ. Now, they were no longer students, but rather, the teachers, which imposed the title of Apostles.

Who were the 12 men chosen by Jesus?

1. There was Simon who's name was changed to Peter. Simon means loosening or knowing. Peter means rock. Jesus entrusted His church to Peter, the rock, who would lead.
2. Andrew, which means glorious power or answering.
3. James, is known as the apostle of grief.
4. John, means the grace of the Lord. He is known as Jesus' favorite.
5. Matthew, means given. He was a tax collector before joining Jesus.
6. Philip, means large mouth or the orifice of the torch.
7. Batholomew means the son of him who lets down water.
8. Thomas, means deep or twin. He is also known as the doubter.
9. James the son of Alphaeus, means supplanter of the step of life.
10. Jude means praised one.
11. Judas means confession. (He is also the betrayer and was replaced by Matthias as we are told in Acts 1:26)
12. Simon, means obedience.

Interesting that before receiving the powers of the Holy Spirit, these men were filled with doubt, fear, weakness. After receiving the Holy Spirit, they were filled with wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord, and became fearless in their leadership of the church.

What does this mean for us? When we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, we receive the same gifts that the Apostles received on the first Pentecost. The Holy Spirit gives us the same powers to carry out the work of Jesus Christ. We are called upon to be soldiers of Christ and commissioned to evangelize. So yes, that makes us Apostles as well.

So, as Confirmed Catholics, though we are not ordained as are the clergy, we are commissioned, or sent forth, to share the Word of God. As soldiers of Christ, we join the ranks of the original Apostles to carry on the ministry Jesus began so long ago. OK Soldiers, carry on and be joyful bearers of the good news.

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 the “Apostle” 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 194.

Discussion:

As we concluded our last discussion, I mentioned that in a message to the Bishop of Albano, in whose diocese rests the shrine of St. Maria Goretti, Saint John Paul II wrote:

We do not know whether it was the mother who taught forgiveness to the daughter, or whether it was the forgiveness offered by the martyr on her deathbed which determined the behavior of the mother. Nevertheless, it is certain that the spirit of forgiveness animated the relationships of all the Goretti family, and for this reason could be so naturally expressed by both the martyr and her mother. (Saint John Paul II)

When we examine the lives of the saints, we are tempted to focus only upon the virtues of the saint, but we should also consider the ripple effects of the saint's example to generate virtue in others. Of course, that generates the question, to what virtues can the saints lead us?

As we observe the lives of the saints, we may observe the many ways we do not measure up. This should not be cause for our despair, rather, a cause for our hope. The example we discussed last time was that of the virtue of Saint Maria Goretti and the example of her forgiveness, but we also discussed the virtue of Maria which rippled through Alessandro, her assailant. What this reveals is that should we find ourselves poor in virtue, as did Alessandro, we have the hope of repentance, we have the hope of penance, we have the hope of a contrite heart, we have the hope of reconciliation, and we have the hope of forgiveness. We have the hope that as we approach our Lord, that He will receive us and wipe away every tear.

Today, we turn our discussion to reflect upon a 20th Century saint, one who draws our attention to the needs of the poor. Before we get into her work, I would like to take a moment to address the environment of her upbringing. Born 26 Aug 1910, the given name of this saint of the poor was Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu. She grew up in a devoutly Catholic family, but similar to Saint Maria Goretti, Agnes lost her father at a young age, the age of eight. Some speculate he was poisoned by political enemies. (Biography.com)

We are told that after her father's death, Agnes became extremely close to her mother, Drane, who guided Agnes to a commitment to charity. Though the family suffered financially after the death of her husband, Drane was known to open her doors to the destitute to dine with her family.

"My child, never eat a single mouthful unless you are sharing it with others," she counseled her daughter. When [Agnes] asked who the people eating with them were, her mother uniformly responded, "Some of them are our relations, but all of them are our people." (Biography.com)

(Question 1: Last time, we spoke of the influence of parents on their children as well as the ripple effects of virtue from one person to another. We have also discussed, during the course of this series, a number of situations where saints are formed from modest means and challenging circumstances. **What might this reveal to us about the paths of saints?)**

- Relationships are part of what forms us
- Life events are part of what forms us
- The examples of faith which we witness are part of what forms us
- The trials and tribulations of the world form us (in positive and negative ways)
- Do we consider how the gifts God created within us form us?
- Do we consider how our choices form us?
- Do we consider how the wisdom of scripture forms us?
- Do we consider how the knowledge of our faith forms us?
- Do we consider how examination of the lives of the saints form us?
- Do we consider how a relationship with our Blessed Mother forms us?
- Do we consider how our relationship with Christ forms us?
- Do we consider how living according to what God asks of us forms us?
- Do we consider how putting all this in action (through our choices, efforts, and ministry) forms us?

It was at the age of twelve that Agnes felt her first call to religious life. After joining the Sisters of Loreto, she took the name Sister Mary Teresa after Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. As she pursued the path of religious life, she was steered to teaching. She taught at Saint Mary's High School for Girls which included girls from Calcutta's poorest Bengali families. (Biography.com)

The Vatican biography of this saint describes Sister Mary Teresa during this teaching period of her life. The biography states.

Noted for her charity, unselfishness and courage, her capacity for hard work and a natural talent for organization, she lived out her consecration to Jesus, in the midst of her companions, with fidelity and joy. (Vatican)

Let's break this out a bit. In this short sentence, we observe reference to the following characteristics.

- Charity
- Unselfishness
- Courage
- Hard work
- Natural talent for organization
- Consecration to Jesus
- Fidelity
- Joy

(Question 2: As we reflect on these listed characteristics, we might reflect on to what degree we find these in ourselves. What do these qualities reveal to us and where might we find them if we consider them lacking within us?)

- Scripture and the teachings of Christ guide us
- The Holy Spirit, if our heart is open to Him, guides us
- Even natural talent must be refined through learning and practice
- The traits and skills which define us may require our learning, but also our choice to engage them
- We can also assist one another to refine and grow our talents and skills

After making her final profession of vows on 24 May 1937, Sister Mary Teresa took on the title, “Mother,” hence, she became known as Mother Teresa. Mother Teresa continued to teach and in 1944, she became the principal of Saint Mary's High School for Girls. Her career in education would continue until she received a second calling.

The Vatican biography of Mother Teresa provides the following account:

On 10 September 1946 during the train ride from Calcutta to Darjeeling for her annual retreat, Mother Teresa received her “*inspiration*,” her “*call within a call*.” On that day, in a way she would never explain, Jesus’ thirst for love and for souls took hold of her heart and the desire to satiate His thirst became the driving force of her life. Over the course of the next weeks and months, by means of interior locutions and visions, Jesus revealed to her the desire of His heart for “victims of love” who would “radiate His love on souls.” “*Come be My light*,” He begged her. “*I cannot go alone.*” He revealed His pain at the neglect of the poor, His sorrow at their ignorance of Him and His longing for their love. He asked Mother Teresa to establish a religious community, Missionaries of Charity, dedicated to the service of the poorest of the poor. Nearly two years of testing and discernment passed before Mother Teresa received permission to begin. On August 17, 1948, she dressed for the first time in a white, blue-bordered sari and passed through the gates of her beloved Loreto convent to enter the world of the poor. (Vatican)

(Question 3: Mother Teresa made the journey into religious life and applied her talents to the education and formation of girls; part of the formation of society's future. For almost two decades, she was involved in this ministry, and then, she received what she describes as a “call within a call.” This call is to direct ministry to the poor. What might this reveal about God's plan for us versus our plan?)

- God may guide us to more than one mission or direction in life
- One mission may be a learning ground for another
- In prayer, we must listen
- As we observe the path of our life, we must look for God's fingerprints
- Even when we recognize His call, we are likely to face challenge as we respond
- Discernment is essential to looking forward and taking the right action

- When we are in our comfort zone, we should not be surprised when God nudges us to ever greater challenges towards helping to accomplish His will
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According to Biography.com:

Over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, [Mother Teresa] established a leper colony, an orphanage, a nursing home, a family clinic and a string of mobile health clinics. (Biography.com)

Let's take a look at this list of what she established during the period of approximately twenty years:

- A leper colony
- An orphanage
- A nursing home
- A family clinic
- A string of mobile health clinics

(Question 4: Of course, one person did not do all of this. For these institutions to be established and operated to effectively accomplish their mission, many hands and considerable resources were required. **What might this reveal to us about the efforts of saints?)**

- Efforts may begin with a nudge from God, but it requires a choice for someone to move forward
 - Efforts may begin with a nudge of a saint (perhaps on behalf of God), but it requires a choice for someone to contribute
 - Remember the qualities of charity, unselfishness, courage, and hard work?
 - In what ways do we recognize our opportunities to assist the work of a saint?
 - Of course, it is not about a saint, but about what God asks of us
 - In what ways do we listen, discern, and act?
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According to Biography.com, Mother Teresa was also embroiled in some controversies. They write:

Despite this widespread praise, Mother Teresa's life and work have not gone without its controversies. In particular, she has drawn criticism for her vocal endorsement of some of the Catholic Church's more controversial doctrines, such as opposition to contraception and abortion. "I feel the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion," Mother Teresa said in her 1979 Nobel lecture...

The most scathing criticism of Mother Teresa can be found in Christopher Hitchens' book *The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice*, in which Hitchens argued that Mother Teresa glorified poverty for her own ends and provided a

justification for the preservation of institutions and beliefs that sustained widespread poverty. (Biography.com)

(Question 5: A saint embroiled in controversies? She dared to oppose contraception and abortion? She also dared to oppose divorce? She glorified poverty for her own ends? What might these controversies reveal about this saint and why would any saint be involved in any controversy?)

- We might remember, Jesus was involved in a controversy or two
- Remember the qualities of charity, unselfishness, courage, and hard work?
- We must remember Political Correctness is often on the wrong side of what God asks of us – such as solutions of true love and mercy
- Those who persecute do not always do so with truth
- The world defines controversies, God defines truth

(Matthew 5:10)

10 Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

(Romans 12:14)

Bless those who persecute [you], bless and do not curse them.

– Saint Teresa of Calcutta

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives: Be kind anyway. If you are successful you will win some false friends and true enemies: Succeed anyway. If you are honest and frank people will try to cheat you: Be honest anyway. What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight: Build anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous of you: Be happy anyway. The good you do today, will often be forgotten by tomorrow: Do good anyway. Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough: Give your best anyway. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

For a novena in honor of the Saint of the Poor, we recommend visiting novenaprayer.com and search for Saint Teresa of Calcutta. <https://novenaprayer.com/?s=teresa+of+calcutta>

Feastday: 5 September

Patron: Poor and sick, Missionaries of Charity and World Youth

Death: 5 Sep 1997 (age 87)

Beatified by: Saint John Paul II

Canonized by: Pope Francis

Quotes:

Quotes by Saint Teresa of Calcutta

Your true character is most accurately measured by how you treat those who can do 'nothing' for you.

Some people come in our life as blessings. Some come in your life as lessons.

I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.

I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us, and we change things.

At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.

Final Thoughts:

I must confess, as we began to develop this series, I did not know the saints we would select to talk about. We did not set out to identify a top ten or twelve list. We set out to simply discuss some saints of inspiration. I chose Saint Therese of Lisieux and Saint Maximilian Kolbe to open the series, but the remainder were chosen by our panel. From that point on, it has been a journey of learning and discovery.

I chose to start off with Saint Therese of Lisieux, because of her "Little Way." She taught us that great things can be accomplished through little ways of love. I was somewhat surprised when I discovered during the research for Part II of our series, that Saint Kolbe found part of his inspiration through Saint Therese of Lisieux. I should not have been surprised, then, to learn that Saint Teresa of Calcutta took her name after Saint Therese of Lisieux. Perhaps we see that inspiration in the quote attributed to this Nobel prize winning saint that, "Small things done with great love will change the world."

We often look to the lives of the saints for inspiration, but as we discuss their lives, it is never just about them. There are always others involved; those who raised them, those who taught them, those who challenged them, those who opposed them, those who helped them, and those who loved them.

We could make the case that the life of a saint is never about one person, but on the other hand, it is. If we are to look at the one common thread for all the saints, it is the love of Jesus Christ. If we love Him, we will listen to Him and study His Word. If we believe in Him, we will live His commandments. As we examine the lives of the saints, we see they always point, just as our Blessed Mother does, to the Sacred Heart of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

There is so much more we could share about the Saint of the Poor, but again, we have so little time. If you would like to learn more about Saint Teresa of Calcutta, 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 194.

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 Saint of the poor.

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 XI: Saint of Cancer Sufferers

Current Day Commentary References:

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