

EPISODE 5: CREATING A LEGACY OF FAITH

Opening Prayer

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

Begin with a few moments of silent recollection.

Understanding the Breach

- 1) Dr. Ray Guarendi reflects, “One of the most common things I see is parents who come into my office and their young adults have left the faith. Then the parents are saying, “What happened? We didn’t raise them this way.’ And I can say, ‘I believe you, but I believe you underestimated the forces that did.’”
 - a. *Have you even gone through a struggle with your faith? What led to this struggle?*
 - b. *What, if anything, in your childhood home (for cradle Catholics) reminded you of the goodness or beauty or truth of the Faith?*
 - c. *If you could go back to that time, what would you wish would have happened in your family to help you grow in your faith?*
- 2) Fr. John Parks captures the heart of this episode: “Children have often failed to listen to their elders, but they’ve never failed to imitate them. Children know what we love and what we value by how we spend our time.”

- a. *If how we spend our time is the clearest measure of what we love, what does my own self-assessment of how I use my time tell me about what I love right now?*
 - b. *The average person in the West spends 5-6 hours per day on screens – not including computer work time. Obviously this means they are being formed by whatever worldview comes through the screen most of the time. How can we counter this tendency of the dominance of technology in our homes? What should the Christian pattern of life be, ideally, in contrast to this? What concrete, specific actions can you take to better order your time and that of your family?*
- 3) C.S. Lewis wrote something in *Mere Christianity* that corresponds to this episode: “If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles... the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who abolished the Slave Trade, all left their mark upon Earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with Heaven. Aim at Heaven and you get Earth thrown in. Aim at Earth, and you will get neither.”
- a. *When it comes to our marriages, how can we prioritize focus on Heaven above all? Be specific.*
 - b. *In our homes...?*
 - c. *When raising our children, supporting our adult children and grandchildren...?*

Bricks for the Breach

“How do I raise my kids in this apostolic age in which the society and the world aren’t Christian? How do I do that? Well, the first thing is by loving our kids, it’s by your love... [Your witness for your children communicates that] God loves you and God wants us to live a moral

life because He loves us so much. No matter what the world promises, it can't deliver on love." (Dr. Tim Gray)

"The moment children see their parents compromise on the Catholic faith, they learn that the Catholic faith is not the highest priority. So, it is very important that the parents are fully committed." (Fr. John Lankeit)

"So prayer time, with the family specifically, is quite difficult. We do try to make it a daily habit and this is probably the most tiring and high impact moment of my day. I can't say that it is ever peaceful or that there's very much serenity at all. It is a power through moment it is a building habits moment." (Jack Calcutt)

"Primary for our family, living as a Catholic family is the Sacraments. We want our kids to cling to them, we want them to be in the habit of seeking them. And so, building the habits of monthly Reconciliation, frequent reception of the Eucharist, always on Sundays, but hopefully throughout the week, clinging to the Sacraments is an important thing that we want to model and habituate in our kids." (Katie Scarlett Calcutt)

"There have been times when we have been more dependent on screens than we wanted, and we've had to pull it back. It requires really diving in as parents. So if someone wanted to wean their kid off of the dependence on an iPad or a parent wanted to wean themselves off of their kid on an iPad, my first suggestion would be to give them other options. Most kids aren't so far gone that they won't still love or prefer to kick a ball with you, read a book with you, tell you about their day, paint a picture, do a question and answer session." (Katie Scarlett Calcutt)

“When I was a Navy JAG, I worked with a lot of young sailors who made poor choices and got into trouble. And in my experience, almost all of them lacked a strong father figure in their lives. Research shows that a father’s practice of his faith is among the most important factors, if not the most important, in his children staying Catholic. That means as fathers, we cannot be bystanders. We need to be fully engaged in the faith lives of our children.”
(Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly)

“So, parents have to be the primary storytellers to their children of the Gospel. Which means I need to know the Gospel. So, to awaken a child’s imagination to the fact that God created you to be great and then you just expose children, whether it’s through biblical or Christian or just secular stories of people who’ve done great things. They go, ‘Oh, I want to be great, too.’” (Fr. John Riccardo)

“(To build a legacy of family life and love, prioritize) doing things together, having rituals within your family that honor God, making sure that you’re having prayer before meals, prayer after meals, making sure that you have nighttime prayer, making sure that you attend Mass together, making sure that you attend Confession together, making sure that as a family you go out and you enjoy the company of other families who are also trying to live out their faith.
(Dr. Monique Ruberu, M.D.)

Sword of the Spirit

LOVE OVER ALL

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. If there

are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing. For we know partially and we prophesy partially, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor. 13:4-13)

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD

If it is displeasing to you to serve the LORD, choose today whom you will serve, the gods your ancestors served beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose country you are dwelling. As for me and my household, we will serve the LORD. (Joshua 24:15)

Call to Battle

1. **Imagine your personal legacy of marriage and family.** Spend time writing your thoughts down after this episode, or the entire series. Here are two prompts that can be helpful:
 - a. Imagine your funeral, taking time to feel the finality of the situation (as to your time on earth). As your spouse and each of your children rise to say a word about your influence as husband and father, what would you want them to say? Imagine they say exactly that:
 - i. About your spousal care and love for your wife or husband.
 - ii. About your relationship with God.
 - iii. About your presence in your home.
 - iv. About your home itself.

- v. About how you treated each of them personally.
 - vi. About how your heart overflowed into service of neighbor.
- b. In the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, ask Him to help you take practical steps to prioritize prayer, care for your spouse, love for your children, and service to neighbor and community. Ask the Holy Spirit to move in you and your marriage anew, and through your love, to in some way “renew the face of the earth.”
- c. Set a few simple goals that will move the needle.
- i. A prayer goal
 - ii. A goal of loving your spouse practically
 - iii. A goal for loving each child
 - iv. A goal for service to neighbor
2. **Seek out and commit to a small group of friends** (such as *Cor*, developed by the Knights of Columbus) who will meet regularly for prayer, fellowship and formation to continue this growth, and accountability for decisions made.

Closing Prayer

Request intentions from the group, and then pray the Prayer for the Family to close:

Prayer for the Family from St. John Paul II

*Lord God, from You every family in heaven
and on earth takes its name.*

Father, You are Love and Life.

*Through Your Son, Jesus Christ, born of woman,
and through the Holy Spirit, fountain of divine charity,
grant that every family on earth may become
for each successive generation a true shrine of life and love.*

*Grant that Your grace may guide the thoughts and actions
of husbands and wives for the good of their families
and of all the families in the world.*

*Grant that the young may find in the family
solid support for their human dignity and
for their growth in truth and love.*

*Grant that love, strengthened by the grace of
the sacrament of marriage, may prove mightier than all the
weakness and trials through which our families sometimes pass.*

*Through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth,
grant that the Church may fruitfully carry out
her worldwide mission in the family and through the family.*

Through Christ our Lord, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Amen.

Notes
