

St. Therese Catholic Church

Spiritual Warfare
Session 5

November 28, 2023

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Overview

Spiritual Warfare	
Session I	Spiritual Warfare (Sacred Scripture and Tradition)
Session II	Angels and Fallen Angels (devil and demons)
Session III	Extraordinary Activity of the Devil (signs and influence)
Session IV	Church's Response (Exorcism and Openings to Evil)
Session V	Church's Response (Exorcism and Church Protocols)
Session VI	Ordinary Activity of Devil and Christ's Protection

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Goals for This Session

- A look at the spiritual preparation involved around the Rite of Exorcism
- A look at the Rite of Exorcism, including the steps and sacramentals associated with the rite
- Look at the Intake Questionnaire and beginning steps to help with pastoral care
- Look at the Catholic Exorcism application (free), including the prayers for the laity.

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A Little History

- The Second Vatican Council called for all liturgical rites to be revised. The Rite of Exorcism was the last liturgical rite to be revised after the Council. It was promulgated in 1998 (69).
- The Rite of Exorcism had not been revised since the year 1614. It is amazing to think that from 1614 to 1998 – 384 years, the rite remained virtually unchanged (69).
- An English translation, *Exorcisms and Related Supplications* was issued in 2016. Along with the revision of the major rite, there are supplications or minor exorcism prayers asking God to bring relief into the one who is afflicted by the evil one (70).

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Acts of the Apostles

- The Acts of the Apostles records that St. Paul performed an exorcism on the slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying (16:16-18).
- After many days of being annoyed, he said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out at that very hour.



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Spiritual Preparation

- Before celebrating the rite, Fr. Lampert prepares himself by spending time in prayer, fasting, going to confession, and celebrating Mass (71).
- **Note:** Fr. Lampert's practice of spiritual protection is a good reminder for us that we should pour out our hearts to the Lord and ask for his protection before major trials.
- Demons do not want to depart from their victims and will do anything and everything to hold on (71).
- They are like Catholics who refuse to move out of their spots in their pews, even when people need to get in.

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Exorcisms and Prudence

- Fr. Lampert says that there are demons who manifest by spouting out the sins of the exorcist in order to humiliate him and make him feel inadequate in the battle (71).
- Additionally, demons will try to distract the exorcist so that he can disrupt the prayer of the Church and continue to hold on the one who is afflicted (71).
- The exorcist determines where the exorcism will take place. This is typically in a sacred place as a church or chapel where there is a crucifix and an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- **Note:** Fr. Lampert says they are never performed in an abandoned house, on a dead-end street, at midnight, or during a thunderstorm.

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Exorcisms and Prudence

- **Key:** The devil does not get to choose where he will be defeated. The Church herself makes that determination (72).
- Fr. Lampert decides who will be present. A family member or friend may be there during the rite. There are also people there with a rich prayer life and who know the basics around exorcisms.
- For example, they will never look into the eyes of a demon, interrupt the exorcism, or recite the prayers along with the exorcism (72).
- They prepare themselves beforehand so as not to be the weak link the demon uses to continue to lay siege to his victim (72).

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Exorcisms and Prudence

- Fr. Lampert says that he has seen demons manifest and then begin fixating his eyes on the others in the room trying to determine whom he can rattle the most (72).
- **Key:** The goal is to instill fear and cause those present to focus on what the demon is doing to show his power, rather than focusing on the power of God made evident through the Rite of Exorcism.
- Fr. Lampert gives the example of a demon seeing a deacon look him in the eye and telling him, "You think you're so smart. You're nothing but a bag a excrement!" (72)


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Exorcisms and Privacy

- Fr. Lampert says there is no such thing as exorcism tourism. Those present are there to **pray**. Confidentiality on the part of those present is crucial.
- The Rite of Exorcism itself says, "In no way may any opportunity be given to any of the media of social communication while the Exorcism is taking place, or even before the Exorcism takes place, and when it has been performed the Exorcist and those present, observing due discussion, should not divulge information about it." (73)
- The reason is to protect the privacy and dignity of the person and not allow them to become an object of study or curiosity.


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Exorcism Steps

Fr. Lampert's Steps	
1.	Puts on his stole as a sign of his priestly office
2.	Offers a prayer asking God to strengthen him in his attack against the evil spirit
3.	Has with him holy water and a crucifix.


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Rite of Exorcism

Steps of Major Exorcism	
1.	Sprinkling of holy water recalling the Sacrament of Baptism and the fact that one is a temple of God. This says to the devil that they belong to God.
2.	Litany of Saints calling for the intercession and protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels, and saints.
3.	Recitation of the Psalms signifying the presence of Christ. The Word of God is a powerful tool against the devil.
4.	Laying on of hands and breathing into the face of the afflicted person. Jesus breathed on His Apostles.


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Rite of Exorcism

Steps of Major Exorcism	
5.	Profession of Faith or the Renewal of Baptismal Promises followed by the Lord's Prayer . The afflicted person makes an act of the will to renounce the devil and profess the faith.
6.	The afflicted person is shown a crucifix and the Sign of the Cross is made over the person. Jesus is victorious.
7.	A supplicating prayer is said, by which God is asked to bring relief into the life of the one who is suffering.
8.	Major exorcism follows where the devil, in the name of Jesus Christ, is commanded to depart from the one who is afflicted.

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Rite of Exorcism

- The rite may be prayed repeatedly over an extended period of time, sometimes months and even years (76).
- Each session should last approximately thirty to sixty minutes with follow up sessions scheduled until the demonic presence is fully gone (76).
- **Key:** The person afflicted must not only desire to be freed from suffering, but also desire to turn from sin and to have a relationship with Jesus Christ (76).

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Rite of Exorcism

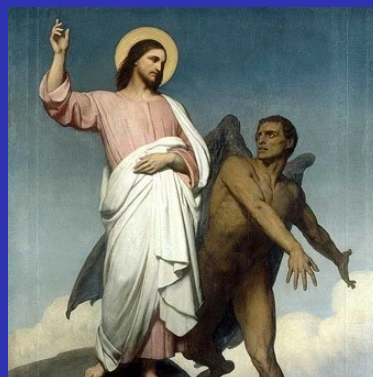
- Fr. Lampert says that demons seem to have a more powerful hold on those who have heard the Good News of Jesus Christ but who have now turned a deaf ear to it (70 – 71).
- The negative trend of many people walking away from the Catholic faith and a relationship with Jesus Christ is very troubling.
- Given the power of the old rite of 1614, the Congregation for Divine Worship gave permission in 2011 for many exorcists to use these prayers at their discretion (77).

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Rite of Exorcism

- Fr. Lampert reminds us that the devil is the “father of lies” (Jn 8:44). That said, he does not pay attention to what the demon tells him during an exorcism (77).
- An exorcist should never allow a demon to take control of the situation by paying more attention to the words of the demons than the words of the Church (78).



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Diagnosing Possession

- Major exorcisms must follow strict protocols. For example, exorcists are trained skeptics. They allow for all reasonable explanations for what is taking place in the person before believing that someone is possessed (101).
- They should consult experts in the medical and psychiatric sciences to determine if there is mental illness.
- **Key:** Psychology, medical science, and religion are not at odds with each other, but rather working in tandem. The goal is to bring relief to the person who is suffering (102).

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Diagnosing Possession

- Several psychological disorders, including Tourette syndrome and schizophrenia, can produce the types of effects seen in possessed people (102).
- **Key:** Fr. Lampert says that if a person is suffering from mental illness, the Church is doing greater harm by labeling the person possessed if this prevents the person from seeking out the medical or psychological treatment they require (102).
- The challenge that many exorcists face is to find a mental health expert at least open to the possibility of possession.

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The American Protocol

- Given that the United States often calls into question or outright rejects spiritual realities, certain protocols have been put in place before a major exorcism can be performed (103-104).
- A thorough **physical** examination by a qualified medical doctor with appropriate specialists consulted as needed (104).
- A thorough **psychological** examination by a qualified clinical psychologist or psychiatrist, identifying all areas of concern. They do not determine whether a person is possessed (104).
- A “life history” of the person identifying where the entry point of evil may have originated, utilizing the Intake Questionnaire (104).

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The American Protocol

- Normalization of the spiritual and sacramental life of those possessed. It is not enough that the demon is cast out, one must also invite God in.
 - **Luke 11:24-26:** When an unclean spirit goes out of someone, it roams through arid regions searching for rest but, finding none, it says, ‘I shall return to my home from which I came.’ But upon returning, it finds it swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and brings back seven other spirits more wicked than itself who move in and dwell there, and the last condition of that person is worse than the first.

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The American Protocol

Extraordinary Signs of Demonic Possession	
1.	Speaking languages otherwise unknown to the individual
2.	Exhibiting superhuman strength
3.	Knowledge of hidden things
4.	An aversion to anything of a sacred nature

- The exorcist must follow the norms of Canon Law and the diocesan norms put in place by his bishop (105).
- The case is compiled and sent to the bishop requesting his permission for a major exorcism to take place in the diocese. The diocesan bishops makes the final decision as to whether or not a major exorcism is performed (105).


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The Diocesan Protocol

- The pastor should meet with the afflicted person to determine if something extraordinary or preternatural is occurring. Counseling may be helpful to rule out psychological reasons for the affliction (105).
- Likewise, a medical examination should be considered to rule out a fundamental medical condition as the cause (106).
- The pastor should help the person return to a life of faith or come to faith for the first time. He should help the person make a profound confession, encourage regular Mass attendance, and begin a strong prayer life (106).


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The Diocesan Protocol

- The pastor should contact the exorcist with information from the Intake Questionnaire.
- Naturally, the pastor should remain in contact with the afflicted person to provide on-going pastoral care.
- **Key:** The parish priest should be the first line of contact. The afflicted person should not contact the exorcist. Additionally, contacting the exorcist should not be delegated to the parish administrative staff (106).
- The exorcist only has authority in his own diocese for exorcisms.


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Intake Questionnaire

Questions	
1.	A person is asked to share their basic background, including marital status, age, religion and so on.
2.	Please describe the experience or experiences which lead you to believe that you are being affected by the presence of evil. What has been the frequency and duration of time that these experiences have occurred?
3.	Is there an event or series of events which create the impression of evil?


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Intake Questionnaire

Questions	
4.	Please describe your psychological history: Have there been any periods of psychotherapy and if so, about what issues? Are you currently under the care of a psychiatrist or any other type of therapist? Are you currently taking any medication prescribed by a doctor? If so what kind and type? Have you discussed these occurrences with a therapist? (The priest may want to ask for permission from the individual to speak with the therapist).
5.	Have you had any history with chemical addiction or abuse with drugs or alcohol?


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Intake Questionnaire

Questions	
6.	Have you had any history with the use of pornography through the media, internet, magazines, television, etcetera? What kind of music do you listen to? Frequency?
7.	What kind of movies and / or television programs do you watch? Frequency?
8.	Have you had any experience or history of engaging in the occult: witchcraft, magic, magicians, fortune tellers, crystals, wizards, or game boards that are linked to the occult?


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Intake Questionnaire	
Questions	
9.	Have you had any relationships or contact with people who are associated with the occult or satanic practices?
10.	Have you ever attended a satanic black mass or other satanic ritual? Have you ever tried to communicate with spirits, demons, or the devil itself?
11.	To the best of your knowledge, has anyone ever placed a curse on you?

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Intake Questionnaire	
Questions	
12.	Do you have any aversion to sacred objects or rituals that have become part of your personal experience?
13.	Has anything strange ever occurred in your life for which you have no logical explanation?
14.	Have you read any books or done any research on the topic of exorcism?
15.	Have you been "prayed over" or "exorcised" by an individual or group? Have you turned to someone else for help before seeking help from the Church?


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Intake Questionnaire

Questions	
16.	How would you describe your own personal self-discipline? How do you deal with personal limits?
17.	What avenues of healing have you already sought? Spiritual, Medical (including any therapy and medication), Counseling
18.	Has anyone involved in the occult ever given you anything that is still in your possession?
19.	Do you truly want to be free of the evil influences you believe are presently affecting you? Will you do what must be done?


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The Diocesan Protocol


- The Intake Questionnaire allows the exorcist to better understand the person seeking help and what they are experiencing (115).
- The questionnaire gives the parish priest a starting point on how to respond and minister to those who believe they are dealing with extraordinary demonic activity (115).
- Key: Do not go to your parish priest and tell him you are possessed (especially if he is handsome).
- It is better to say there is something going on in your life that you cannot explain, and you need his spiritual guidance and direction. He can then help you with the appropriate spiritual care (115).

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The Diocesan Protocol


Catholic Exorcism Application



Prayer Options

Prayers
Prayers for Priest Exorcists
Deliverance Prayers to be Used by Any Priest
Prayers for Those Assisting Priests in Exorcisms & Deliverance Praying
Blessings Used by Priests
Deliverance Prayers for the Laity

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Prayers for the Laity

- Deliverance and protection prayers before sleep
- Prayer for breaking curses of the occult
- A prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary
- A binding prayer for demons impeding Mass attendance
- Prayer for breaking the wall built up around the heart
- Deliverance from evil spirits of pornography

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I Am Loved (Laity)

- In the Holy Name of Jesus, I know that I am a beloved daughter/son of our heavenly Father. May the Precious Blood of Jesus cover me. In His Most Holy Name and covered in His Precious Blood, I bind all evil spirits of doubt, fear, despair, unforgiveness, unworthiness, and self-hatred.
- I renounce you; I reject you; I rebuke you; and I cast you out.
- I hold the TRUTH from God that I am a beloved daughter/son of the Heavenly Father. I claim that in and through the sacraments I have received, that the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit dwells in me and that I have inestimable value in God's eyes.

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I Am Loved (Laity)

- I know that I am beloved because I have been created in the image and likeness of God. I know that I am beloved because God the Father has sent His Son Jesus Christ into the World because of that love. And I know that Jesus Christ died out of his personal love for me, and, in His infinite mercy, my sins are forgiven.
- I forgive all those who have told me that I am worthless, unworthy, or never good enough. I ask God to forgive them and bless them.
- I am a beloved daughter/son of our heavenly Father and for that LOVE and that TRUTH, I give him thanks. Amen.

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Next Time

Read for Next Time

- The Ordinary Activity of the Devil (117 - 128)
- A Word to Priests (129 – 136)
- Best Practices to Fend off the Devil (137 - 144)
- The Victory Belongs to Christ (145 – 146)

