

Cardinal Burke Interview with Teresa Tomeo on Catholic Connection,  
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Teresa Tomeo (TT): I'm very honored and blessed to share with you a special edition of our program today because we have someone that so many of us know and love within the Faith, who is such a warrior for all of us and for The Lord and for the Truths of the Catholic Church. He really doesn't need any introduction, especially for the EWTN audience, but I have with me this morning His Eminence Raymond Cardinal Burke. And of course, Cardinal Burke has quite a background in standing up for the Truth in Love. He currently serves as the Patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Previous positions as the Cardinal Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura in Rome which he held until 2014 in November, and the Vatican of course has been announcing that he is doing a number of other great works and working on the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, and most importantly though we know him and love him as someone who has been out on the front lines, especially on the pro-life cause for decades in his dedication to the Church. Also serving of course in his past work here in the United States as the Bishop of La Crosse and as the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Your Eminence, thank you so much for joining us. First of all, Happy New Year to you.

Cardinal Burke (CB): Thank you Teresa. I'm so happy to be able to have this time with you and to speak to all your listeners.

TT: Well I know that you're very concerned about the culture and what's happening in our world and the impact on the Church, and so you're inspiring, Your Eminence, a national Rosary campaign. Let's take a few steps back and think about what went into this and what your main concerns were in thinking that this was necessary for our time.

CB: Well there's no question that we're living in a time of great confusion in the world itself and also in the Church and oftentimes this confusion leads to error and the result of that of course, is profound hurt and even violence to others. And so good and faithful Christians find themselves profoundly concerned about the situation. Of course the devil is always at work in all of this and he tries to discourage us. When we are conscious of the serious difficulties which the world and our Church herself faces, he tries to discourage us and have us give up hope.

And so my inspiration in joining with a very fine Apostolate with which I've cooperated now for many years, Catholic Action for Faith and the Family, is to start a crusade of Catholics and others to pray the Rosary, asking the intercession of the Mother of God for us, to give us hope first of all and then to keep us sound in our understanding of the Faith and in our practice of it and to help us be good witnesses of that to others, especially in a very confused and oftentimes disordered world. This is an inspiration that comes in a time of terrible crises for the Church and really for Western culture.

When there was the threat of the destruction of Christian culture by the Moors, by Islam in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Pope St. Pius V called upon all of the Catholics in Rome to pray the Rosary and have Rosary processions, to invoke the intercession of the Mother of God. Of course as we know

when we pray the Rosary, whenever we turn to our Blessed Mother, she draws us very close to the source of all Grace, her son Our Lord Jesus. And through this Rosary crusade the Battle of Lepanto on October 7<sup>th</sup>, the Christians won a victory which they should not have been able to win against the far superior Islamic forces. That victory was attributed by everyone to the intercession of the Blessed Mother. So I think in these times when we really sometimes fear for the future, even the immediate future, because there are so many threats that are around us, even within the Church, we find those who are confused about fundamental Truths. With regards to human life, with regard to marriage and the family, we have to turn to our Blessed Mother begging her intercession to obtain from her son for us first of all profound hope which will then inspire us to do all that we can to give witness to the Truth and to the kind of Truth. We know we don't have to go looking for it, it's memorialized for us, it's contained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Tradition, the unbroken line through which Our Lord by the Apostolic Ministry, by the ministry of the Apostles, has continued to be alive for us, in the Church teaching us and sanctifying us and disciplining and governing us.

TT: If you're just joining us on a Friday morning we are chatting with His Eminence Cardinal Burke and we're talking about Operation Storm Heaven, and you can find out more information at [CatholicAction.org](http://CatholicAction.org). On December 8<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and the launch of the Jubilee Year of Mercy His Eminence actually celebrated Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine in La Crosse Wisconsin. The Mass and Rosary prayed marking the first official inauguration of the newly inspired Rosary campaign of which the Cardinal is speaking this morning. The campaign is aiming, your Eminence, to rally at least 1 million Catholics to pray the Rosary on the first day of each month throughout this year, correct?

CB: That's correct and I join them in offering the Holy Mass on that day for all of the intentions of what we like to call the Rosary warriors, those who are in battle for Our Lord, His true soldiers praying the Rosary, so I pray for all of their intentions which are sent to me each month, and then for the intentions that are part of the project Operation Storm Heaven, that our Holy Father and the Bishops may have the guidance which they need in these tumultuous times, to be true shepherds of the flock, that all the confusion and error will be dispelled, that our families will be protected and kept strong, that those who have fallen into sin will experience the Grace of conversion and God's mercy, and for the holiness of life of all Catholics that they will give that witness which is inherent to our Baptism and Confirmation in the world.

So the campaign is simple. On the first day of each month each Rosary warrior is asked to offer the Rosary for these intentions. I offer the Holy Mass on that day and pray my Rosary for those intentions also.

TT: Your Eminence, in terms of what you're hearing from Catholics and their concerns, and I'm sure what you're hearing is similar to what we're hearing here at EWTN, people are concerned for Holy Mother Church. But what we need to remind everyone is to stay in the Barque of Peter, correct?

CB: That's correct. People, no doubt you, and I too am daily concerned, as a Bishop and a Cardinal of the Church, I consider it my duty to express these concerns in a way I hope always for the building up of the Body of Christ. But what I keep foremost in my mind is that the victory

is already won. In other words the final chapter of the story which has become the story of our faith journey which has become very difficult in this time, the final chapter is written and it's the victory of Christ. And so for us it remains in these difficult times to remain always united with Christ and His Mystical Body the Church and it is only in the Roman Catholic Church that Christ comes to us and gives us His Life, sustains us. So we have to remain always true to our Catholic Faith and not give up hope. And even the media reports all kinds of stories about the Church changing its teaching on marriage, the Church changing its teaching on Holy Communion, or the Church changing its teaching on the priesthood, whatever it may be, we can't let ourselves be taken in all kinds of wrong directions by these reports. We have to stay firm with our Catholic Faith. I say to those who write to me after they read these stories in the media and are deeply concerned and confused, I say to them, "Go to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. There you'll find what the Church teaches."

And that doesn't change. It can't change. And even if someone in very high authority says that it is changing, we know that can't be correct.

TT: Right. That is so important, and we tell that to people all day, all the time here on EWTN, as you know they hear this, that and the other thing. But the important thing too is that we have a bigger responsibility today I think, Your Eminence, because of the amount of information that is available and because of all these new great resources such as EWTN, Catholic Answers, really good outfits that are preparing the Faithful, that give us the information, that refer us to the Catechism. And of course the way the Vatican has expanded their own outreach in terms of making different documents and encyclicals, apostolic exhortations and just the overall teachings of the Church so readily available that there really is no excuse any more for us not to know what the Church teaches.

CB: That's correct Teresa and God bless EWTN and all these, Catholic Answers, all of these Apostolates which are using the tremendous powerful means of communications today to spread the Truth of Christ and draw others to Christ. And also the Vatican website, their access to all of the magisterium of the Church, the Catechism but also we have the tremendously gifted Pontificate of Pope Saint John Paul II and also Pope Benedict XVI and all their documents can be found there. For instance on the family the document *Familiaris Consortio* is unequalled, you can't get better an expression of the Church's teaching.

TT: The one thing I always struggle with in prayer and in spiritual direction, and my spiritual director says, "Don't look back, just keep looking forward," but I just get so frustrated about, and that is why I try to come on the air every day and give people resources, about how much people don't know about their faith. Because I'll tell you what Your Eminence, you know my story, but it was the Church that saved my marriage and saved my life, and once I discovered those teachings it was like opening up a whole new world to me. And I was so frustrated that I hadn't heard about these things growing up but at the same time I probably wouldn't have been open to it. There's this constant struggle within me in prayer, that wanting people to know the depth and the beauty and everything the Church has to offer, but at the same time I get so frustrated. I think that's a challenge for a lot of us.

CB: I've been ordained now 40 years and in those 40 years, and before, the catechesis in the Church, the teaching of the Faith, that has been very weakened and in some cases was confused and even erroneous. So we have many good and devout Catholics who simply don't know their Faith very well because they were never taught. That's not their fault, and that leaves them particularly vulnerable in the present situation. So I try to do my little part in supporting work like yours to encourage people and to share with them. What has a particular force in your case because of your direct experience is the Grace that you received when you returned to your Catholic Faith and began to live it strongly. So we have to try to help fill in those gaps which are in people's understanding of the Faith because when we don't understand our Faith, when we don't know it deeply, we can easily be lead astray.

The devil's principle works are confusion and anger and by that he sows division. We are experiencing a lot of that in the Church today too, which is profoundly sad, the attempt to put one person against another and calumnies against good people simply defending the Catholic faith, claiming that they're enemies of the Pope or they're going into schism. So you have a ridiculous situation of someone who simply defends what the Church has always taught and practiced being accused of being schismatic or being contrary to the Roman Pontiff. This is all the work of the devil and we have to recognize it for such and not let ourselves be deterred or intimidated by that. A lot of that too is meant to intimidate good people, to silence them by making them feel that somehow they're not being a faithful Catholic when in fact, they're being a faithful Catholic in an essential way by defending the Truth of the Faith.

TT: How many people, Your Eminence, have signed up so far for Operation Storm Heaven? Do we have an idea of the numbers yet, because I know you're trying to reach a million, right?

CB: Yes. I don't have that number in my mind. I just met with Mr. Thomas McKenna who is the Founder of Catholic Action for Faith and the Family who also was inspired with this idea of Operation Storm Heaven but I know that several thousand have come on board. We have to work towards that one million number. In that regard, if I could put in a little pitch to please encourage listeners to contribute to support Operation Storm Heaven because obviously this kind of work, in order to reach a million people, and we hope even more, that requires some material resources so we need your help. And you can find out about that on the website of Catholic Action at [CatholicAction.org](http://CatholicAction.org), there you'll find all the information on the Operation Storm Heaven.

But I think we're moving toward it and I can tell you this, I'm living in Europe and I'm there most of the time and this has been picked up in Germany, France, Italy and other places. People are picking up on this and one thing that Catholic Action for Faith and the Family would like to do is to be able to translate it. It's not a lot of material, the information of Operation Storm Heaven, it's a simple, very clear and very efficacious spiritual tool for our time, but to translate it into various languages so more people who don't speak English would know about Operation Storm Heaven and be encouraged to join. So there is a lot of work to be done but it's a work that's filled with hope and assures us that our Lady will intercede powerfully in these times.

TT: All right, we'll take a quick break and when we come back we'll talk more about Operation Storm Heaven. We're chatting, I'm sure you'll recognize that wonderfully peaceful and spirit filled and holy voice of his Eminence, Raymond Cardinal Burke. We're talking with him about

Operation Storm Heaven, CatholicAction.org is the website. It's a campaign that is an initiative of Catholic Action for Faith and Family, the aim to rally one million Catholics around the world to pray the Rosary on the first day of each month throughout the year. Now the specific intentions set forth by the campaign under the guidance of His Eminence Cardinal Burke is to be united with the personal calls of other members and the intention of course is to shine the light of Truth clearly in the Church and for peace to reign in the hearts of the faithful and all people. Again you can go to CatholicAction.org to sign up and they're looking for at least a million, but considering that we go out all over the world hopefully we'll have that done at the end of this show today. We'll be right back to wrap up with his Eminence Raymond Cardinal Burke on a Friday morning. Stay tuned.

TT: What a blessing and an honor to spend time with His Eminence Raymond Cardinal Burke, and also a blessing and a privilege to tell you about this campaign. My mother always said, "Listen to your mother!" in her Jersey accent, and in addition to referring to herself she was always talking about the Blessed Mother. She would tell me, your Eminence, when I was growing up and she still says it today, my mom will be 90 in May, that the Blessed Mother is watching me, and she is watching all of us, and she is our mother and it is very important to call on her help. Now we're talking this morning specifically about this brand new effort and they're hoping to get at least one million Catholics, but I think we can get many many more, to pray the Rosary on the first day of each month throughout the year. Now this is to shed the light of Truth, to bring peace in the hearts of Catholics, and also to help peace reign throughout the world. CatholicAction.org is where you can sign up.

We were chatting during the break Your Eminence about how difficult it can be for the leaders in these positions such as yourself. What keeps you going every single day, because there are so many attacks on the Church, not only from without but from within as well?

CB: Well in this particular challenging time I've clarified in my mind what is essential to me in order to remain one with Christ because even in trying to do the right thing, the devil can tempt us to go in a direction which is not in union with Christ. So prayer is number one and during these times we really have to pray fervently and if possible increase our prayers. Number two, not to permit myself to become discouraged or to become embittered by all of the difficulties that one can encounter when you're fighting for the Truth, but to remain serene and I keep reminding myself all the time that Christ is with me, He is with us in the Church, He promised that and He doesn't tell lies, "I'll be with you until the end of time," and if He is with me, He has won the victory. All I have to do is do my part.

Here too I would recommend a reading in the beginning of the Letter to the Colossians. St. Paul talks about how he rejoices to share in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of the Church. We have to have that attitude and not give way to self pity or discouragement or bitterness. Number three, to join with others, in other words not to permit myself to become isolated, to feel like this is somehow that I'm doing this alone, which of course is not the case. There's a whole army of wonderful people who love the Church and are fighting for Her in this time, fighting for Christ obviously, fighting for the Church and so to keep communication with others, to keep close communion with them, in order to have that encouragement which is natural to us in the Church, which is a communion of believers, a communion of the disciples of Our Lord. That's been the

program I try to follow and in that way try to be strong against the temptations that Satan obviously puts in all of our lives. I don't know if that makes sense but...

TT: No, it does and I think there is always a balance because as you said earlier in the interview, in your position if you hear something or see something you have to bring it to the attention of the authorities, and for the average lay person, if they see something, if they see errors in teaching they need to go to, let's say maybe there is someone in the Church, a DRE, someone who is teaching incorrectly, and lovingly approach them and talk to them about it. Did they really say this, what did they mean, so give them a chance to explain, but go through the proper channels. But don't let discouragement get you down because you can always find problems and there always have been because we don't live in a perfect world. There always are going to be issues but that doesn't mean we stick our head in the sand and ignore them. But we can't lose our hope and our peace.

CB: That's right. And when we approach others for instance, if something is said by someone which we can't understand in terms of our Catholic faith, if we approach them serenely we can oftentimes open a person to see that either they've said something incorrectly or that what they said needs to be said with a greater understanding. But if we go at them in an embattled way and angry and frustrated, which is understandable, that simply closes people up and so there's less likelihood that they're going to hear what we have to say. But we need to open our minds and our hearts to those in the Church who are teaching the faith or have other authority in the Church in order that that they understand our situation, the situation in the various parts of the Church.

TT: Amen. Cardinal, thank you so much and God bless you for your continued ministry, international ministry, speaking the Truth in Love. We're chatting of course with his Eminence, Raymond Cardinal Burke, and just want to remind you to go to the website [CatholicAction.org](http://CatholicAction.org) and sign up for the Rosary campaign. We're looking for one million Catholics, but let's beat that, let's get a billion Catholics. Why not? [CatholicAction.org](http://CatholicAction.org).