



The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: Humanae Vitae

Part III: Prophecies of Rejection – Relationship Impacts



*L'Angelus - Jean-Francois Millet
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]

Sister Sara Draney is a Dominican Nun from the Monastery of the Infant Jesus in Lufkin, Texas. Helen is a lay-Dominican and has a love for music ministry. The Dominicans, I should mention, are also known as the Order of Preachers. Sharon is still our token cradle Catholic, and, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions, because without questions, our panelists would have nothing to answer. Anyway, to answer my questions and correct my pronunciation is why we have our panelists, so welcome to our panelists as well as to our listeners.

We would like to welcome you to our 100th episode.

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.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

The question of the day. **What does the word genuflect mean and why do we do it?**

Let's go to the GIRM, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. This is the book that tells us what we are to do during a Liturgy. The GIRM states: "A genuflection, made by bending the right knee to the ground, signifies adoration, and therefore it is reserved for the Most Blessed Sacrament."

When did this practice start?

Actually this act goes back to medieval days. All subjects of a nation were required to genuflect when in the presence of the king. It is a sign of respect.

For Christians and Jews alike, God has always been The King. So should He not receive the same kind of respect? Over time, Christians adopted the custom and by the 16th century it was fully enacted in the Roman Rite.

In medieval days, the left knee was bent in reverence to the king so Christians chose to customize this act for their own use and began bending the right knee. Bending the knee is called genuflecting. And thus began the custom of genuflecting on the right knee before the King of kings.

So why do Catholics genuflect when they walk into a church?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us,

(CCC: 1378)

"In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord."

Now that we know what it is, when do we do this?

Genuflecting is done toward God, who is present in the Holy Eucharist. We do not genuflect to people or things, like the Altar Table. We genuflect toward the Tabernacle which is the reposed home of Jesus.

The GIRM states, "all who pass before the Most Blessed Sacrament genuflect."

This means that Catholics are to ONLY genuflect when a tabernacle is present with the Precious Body in it. You know that Jesus is Present by looking at the lighted red light that is always near the Tabernacle. When is that light not lit? Good Friday is normally the only day of the year when the Tabernacle is emptied and the doors are left open as the Eucharist is not inside

In the Roman Rite, genuflecting is very symbolic and allows Christians to pray with both body and soul. The custom of genuflecting on only the right knee is used when Jesus is within the Tabernacle. Another custom is to genuflect on both knees when Jesus is no longer behind a door and is visible to all. So when we attend adoration, Jesus is fully present in the monstrance, we should genuflect on both knees when entering the church and into His presence. What a beautiful way to adore our King and it symbolizes that our hearts are bowing before the Lord.

St. Ambrose (d. 397) said, “The knee is made flexible by which the offense of the Lord is mitigated, wrath appeased, grace called forth,” and Alcuin (d. 804) later added, “By such a posture of the body we show forth our humbleness of heart.”

Genuflection is a beautiful custom preserved by the Roman Rite which gives honor to the true “King of kings” who is truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

If you would like to learn more about why we genuflect, 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 100.

Discussion:

Last time, as we discussed the prophesy within *Humanae Vitae* concerning marriage and morals, we touched upon some very sensitive issues of which most of us have faced at least a facet, whether we have experienced some of the temptations and trials in our own relationships or experienced some of the consequences as they ripple through the relationships of family, friends, co-workers, or even people we do not know.

As I mentioned, we do not present these issues from a perspective of judgment, finger pointing, or condemnation; but a perspective of what we may do to enable our love of God and His desire that we may share love with one another. Should we face any of the temptations we mentioned during the course of our discussion, we should ask ourselves what behaviors enable positive relationships and what behaviors are destructive to ourselves or others? We must then work within ourselves to accentuate what is right and just, and turn away from the temptations of destructive behaviors.

God wants us to be in a position to build up one another rather than tear each other down. If we fail in what God asks of us, though, all hope is not lost. Our Lord and Savior opens the door to second chances, but His desire is that we do not keep repeating the same mistakes over and over, especially the mistakes destructive to the soul.

A perception we are tempted to adopt is that when we do not face an immediate consequence in the moment we make a choice, somehow, we believe we will escape, forever, the adverse effects of our poor decisions. We are tempted to believe that the trials and tribulations of bad decisions will always stalk others, but somehow, we shall always escape.

If we have walked the way of sin, let us remember the words of Jesus to the adulterous woman, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, [and] from now on do not sin any more.” (John 8:11) In other words, Jesus is willing to forgive our transgressions, if we approach Him with a contrite heart and a desire to repent.

When we fail and fall, He wants to pick us up, but He also wants to encourage us to the path of what is right and just. His greatest desire is to remove the destructive nature of sin from our lives. His desire is to encourage us to a better way. As we endeavor to follow the example of Christ, let us also encourage one another to walk in the ways of His love and the tranquility of His peace.

Today we are going to discuss the warning within *Humanae Vitae* that rejection of the Church's teaching on life and sexuality will adversely impact relationships between man and woman.

(Question 1: As we think about how God created us as male and female, He did not make us the same, rather He made us with sexual distinctions. What are some of the attribute differences between male and female and how might this influence our relationships with one another?)

- Hormones
- Reproductive systems
- Bone structure
- Muscle structure
- Strength versus nurture

(Question 2: We are told in Genesis 2:24 that God made us male and female so that a man might leave father and mother and cling to his wife and that the two may become one flesh. When we reflect on the relationship between male and female and what God expects of us, what are some of the attributes of that relationship we might expect within and external to the sacrament of marriage?)

- Mutual Respect
- Partnership
- Love
- Commitment to one another
- Commitment to the raising of children within the sacrament of marriage

(Ephesians 5:28-32)

28 So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body.

31 “For this reason a man shall leave [his] father and [his] mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

32 This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. 33 In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband.

(Ephesians 5:28-32)

1 Children, obey your parents [in the Lord], for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother.” This is the first commandment with a promise, 3 “that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life on earth.” 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up with the training and instruction of the Lord.

“Another effect that gives cause for alarm is that a man who grows accustomed to the use of contraceptive methods may forget the reverence due to a woman, and, disregarding her physical and emotional equilibrium, reduce her to being a mere instrument for the satisfaction of his own desires, no longer considering her as his partner whom he should surround with care and affection.” (Paul VI)

(Question 3: In section 17 of his encyclical, Pope Paul VI warns that separating the possibility of procreation from conjugal love will have an impact on the way men treat women. What is the nature of his concern and what have we observed in society as to the general changes in relationships between men and women?)

- Conquest versus courting
- Objectification of women
- Disposable Relationships
- Competition versus partnership
- Selfishness

(Question 4: While Pope Paul VI looked at how men would treat women, there are always two sides to any relationship. How might contraception change the way women treat men?)

- Distrust of male motives
- Objectification of men
- Disposable men
- Out of wedlock children
- Single parenthood
- Abortion as birth control

(Question 5: Of course, children look to their parents as examples for their own behavior. What do children perceive as divorce raises its head and the children see mom or dad with a new partner?)

- Confusion
- Challenges with trust
- Fear of commitment to others
- Defensiveness – Don't let anyone in so I can't be left or hurt

As we are raised by our parents, part of their responsibility is to prepare us for adulthood and the vocations to which we are called. We ask those who are considering the priesthood or religious life to go through a discernment process of learning, observation, reflection, and most importantly prayer.

During a recent Halo Haven Ministries Core Group meeting, as we were discussing the perceptions of adolescents and young adults, it was mentioned that as a vocation, marriage requires as much discernment as any other vocation a person may consider. The comment was

also made that as part of the discernment process of one considering the vocation of marriage, that they should pray that God will lead them to the spouse He wants them to have.

The person who made this comment related that he learned this from his dad and of course, he relates such advice to the youth he has the opportunity to teach.

(Question 6: Let us think about that advice for a moment, that when we consider the vocation of marriage, we should pray that God will lead us to the spouse He wants us to have. **How might this advice influence the relationships a person might enter towards the sacrament of marriage?)**

- Trust in God
- What God brings together, let no man separate (Matthew 19:6)
- Trust God will guide us to love
- Trust God will guide the marriage through all challenges

Quotes:

– *Saint John Paul II*

There is no place for selfishness and no place for fear! Do not be afraid, then, when love makes demands. Do not be afraid when love requires sacrifice.

– *Saint John Paul II*

A person's rightful due is to be treated as an object of love, not as an object of use.

– *Saint John Paul II*

When a young man or woman recognizes that authentic love is a precious treasure, they are also enabled to live their sexuality in accordance with the divine plan, rejecting the false models which are, unfortunately, all too frequently publicized and very widespread.

– *Saint John Paul II*

God has assigned as a duty to every man the dignity of every woman.

– *Saint John Paul II*

Women have the right to insist that their dignity be respected. At the same time, they have the duty to work for the promotion of the dignity of all persons, men as well as women.

Final Thoughts:

The temptation, as we see many things in our society going in the wrong direction, is to despair that there is no hope or the other temptation is to believe we can do nothing. Indeed, as we watch the politics of our day, it is easy to see why the average person feels powerless in the face of ideologies and media fads. While the situation may be dire, there is hope as we seek to learn and share what God asks of us. We must remember, scripture is filled with examples where God has worked through the faithful, the lowly, and the remnant few, but we must be prepared to roll up our sleeves so we may be participants in the efforts to accomplish His will.

The relationship challenges we face today in our society will not be corrected overnight, nor will they be corrected by any government or political organization. It will only be corrected as we, the children of God's creation, engage one another according to the love which God asks of us for Him and one another. It is also a generational effort where we must communicate across the generations and encourage one another to share the blessings of living the fullness of our faith. As we engage our youth, we must lovingly help them understand what God asks of us in our relationships, especially the relationships which may lead to the vocation of married life.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we turn our discussion to Pope Paul VI's warning of the potential for government abuse of contraception and intrusion on the intimate responsibilities of the sacrament of marriage.

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. 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. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: *Humanae Vitae* – Part IV: Governmental Abuse

Discussion References:

Cowen, Tyler; (3 Dec 2017); "The Power of Abortion Policy;" *Marginal Revolution*;
<https://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2017/12/power-abortion-policy.html>

Paul VI, Pope; (25 Jul 1968); "*Humanae Vitae* (On Human Life);" Holy See;
https://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html

USCCB; (May 2016); [Catechism of the Catholic Church](http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/index.html); United States Conference of Catholic Bishops;
<http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/index.html>

The New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE); (9 Mar 2011); United States Conference of Catholic Bishops;
<http://usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/index.cfm>

Why Catholics Do What We Do References:

Catholic Church; (2016); "General Instruction of the Roman Missal;" Holy See;
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20030317_ordinamento-messale_en.html

Catholic Straight Answers; "Why do we genuflect before the Tabernacle and kneel during Mass?" Catholic Straight Answers; <http://catholicstraightanswers.com/why-do-we-genuflect-before-the-tabernacle-and-kneel-during-mass/>

Frye, Peggy; (4 Aug 2011); "Why do we genuflect and what does it mean?" Catholic Answers;
<https://www.catholic.com/qa/why-do-we-genuflect-and-what-does-it-mean>

Kosloski, Philip; (20 Mar 2017); "Why do Catholics genuflect in a church?" *Aleteia*;
<https://aleteia.org/2018/04/24/when-should-catholics-genuflect-in-a-church/>

Kosloski, Philip; (24 Apr 2018); "When should Catholics genuflect in a church?" *Aleteia*;
<https://aleteia.org/2018/04/24/when-should-catholics-genuflect-in-a-church/>