



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: Family, Faith, and Social Issues
Part I: Defense of Life in the Womb



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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 and has a love for music ministry. The Dominicans, I always mention, are also known as the Order of Preachers. Sharon is still our token cradle Catholic on the team, and, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because it is my way of luring in answers. 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 are also joined today with special guest panelists, which includes Peter Northcott, who is the Director of Operations and Advocacy for Kansans for Life, and Jeanne Gawdun, the Director of Government Relations for Kansans for Life.

Peter previously served as Assistant State Treasurer, Chief of Staff to the Kansas Senate Majority Leader and Legislative Liaison for the Office of Governor, he has extensive experience in government affairs and grassroots advocacy. Peter and his wife Becca have two children, one of which is a blessing through adoption.

Jeanne has lobbied the state legislature on behalf of Kansans For Life since 1995, during which time more than 25 pro-life laws were enacted. Jeanne and her husband, Geoff, have been married 35 years, and have seven children and three grandchildren.

Jeanne and Peter, welcome to our panel.

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 share in living Your Holy Word. 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 and their petitions for the blessings of Your great mercy. We pray especially for Your healing hand to rest upon Clifford, that You will guide the hands of his care givers, and that Your hand of comfort will rest upon all those who love and care for him.

We also, dear Lord, lift up our prayers with all those who are praying as part of the 40 Days for Life prayer vigils. We pray especially for the safety and protection of those who come to the sidewalk to pray, as well as for the lives these prayer warriors lift up to You.

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, send us an email at armoroffaithradio@gmail.com. Please include the word “prayer” in the subject line so that we will give your email priority to ensure it is included 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 our daily prayers.

By the way, if you haven't discovered, yet, you can also listen to Armor of Faith Radio on demand and on the go using your smartphone. In addition to wcatradio.com/armoroffaith, we are available through a number of streaming services, such as iHeart Radio, Spreaker, iTunes, and CastBox, among others. Simply search for “Armor of Faith Radio” and select the episode you desire. We will be happy to keep you company wherever you are and wherever you are waiting.

We also have a special plea. Armor of Faith Radio is produced by Halo Haven Ministries, which is a ministry with a lot of heart, but not a large advertising budget. While we could ask for your financial support through which we could develop an advertising budget that will help us spread the good news of the Gospel and the blessings of our faith, we thought for a moment and decided to ask for your help in a more direct way. Instead of asking you to send us \$20.00, \$25.00, or \$50.00 to help finance our advertising campaign, we thought we would ask you to participate in that campaign directly by asking you to share Armor of Faith Radio with family members and friends.

All you need to do is share a link to the show, or a favorite episode, and drop it into an email or share it through social media. Several of the streaming services through which we are available on demand also have share options, so please help us to spread the good news of our faith in Jesus Christ. You may never know, that simple action of evangelization, through sharing a link, may open the heart of another. It is an opportunity to share the blessings of faith, and as we mentioned during our series on “Put on the Armor of Prayer,” a blessing is an invocation of God's power and care.

Faith Event Announcements:

This last weekend was a faith filled opportunity for Sharon and I as we started out our Saturday joining a “Walk for Life” in support of a small town Pregnancy Center. After that event, we drove to a neighboring town to participate in the “America Needs Fatima Rosary Rally for America.” I’m sure there was curiosity by some as they drove by and there were others who thought we were some form of religious activists, but one passerby was moved by the sign which announced we were praying for America. She stopped so she could join us in prayer and it was a very touching moment. I hope even more hearts were inspired, as they drove by, to consider their own prayers for America. We thank the Lord for every heart we are able to touch.

Speaking of touching hearts, we would like to remind everyone that the 40 Days for Life prayer rally campaign is still in progress and will continue through 3 Nov 2019. If you would like more information about 40 Days for Life prayer vigils in your area, visit <https://www.40daysforlife.com/>. Look for the “Find a 40 Days for Life Vigil” button, and at the search page, enter your city or state. You can also sign up for prayer vigils near your location.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

Things We Use for Mass – Sacred Art II

Last week we talked about how the USCCB describes Sacred Art. Today I want to share what another source says are the requirements to be considered when selecting art for our churches. Father Dwight Longenecker is an art authority and wrote the following which appeared in *The Imaginative Conservative*.

The first question is, “What is sacred art?” The answer is that sacred art is essentially an icon, and the word “icon” means “image.” If it is an image, then it represents something other than itself. The idea of the image is integral to Christian theology for Jesus Christ became the “Image (icon) of the unseen God.” (Col. 1:15) Therefore, an icon is a sub-incarnation inasmuch as it is an image in some way of some aspect of the incarnation. As such it is arguable that purely abstract art could be spiritual or symbolical, but it cannot be authentically sacred in the Christian sense. (Longenecker)

What a powerful definition. Sacred art is an icon and an icon is an image. Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ is the image of God. Awesome! This also means that an image, which would be, a statue, a picture, a banner, or a sculpture, are all icons. So we must be careful that when we place icons in our churches, they are worthy of being images of God. Along with being icons, images must also be simple, detailed, and tell a story. Jesus and the saints were all humble beings who had a story to tell and did it with great purpose. Like these holy folks, sacred art should serve to teach us in the same manner.

The church takes great measure to express that all art should be simple. It should never be so ornate or flashy that it takes attention away from what is happening on the sanctuary.

Sacred art needs to express the truths of whatever it is depicting. A statue for example must be made to represent the person it is made to look like. A statue of Saint Michel should look like an

angel. It must show him as a warrior since that is the role he has been accorded in Scripture. Do the colors matter? Not always, but again, it needs to tell a story without being over bearing within the setting in which it will be placed.

Sacred art must be in keeping with traditions of the ancient church. When we place objects into our churches we need to be able to see them as representing our history. The Catholic Church is so very rich in history and we are fortunate to have icons to help us learn about and remember those who went before us.

Sacred Art should be appropriately matched to the architecture of the church and to the culture and environment of the community. When we lived in Europe, during Doug's military years, we visited many Cathedrals. In those buildings, the art was large, ornate, old and beautiful. That is very appropriate in those very large buildings and the long history they represent.

In Colorado, we attended Mass at a small church in a small town named Woodland Park. It was heavenly. It was very simple and yet the art invited us into an atmosphere of love and devotion. The Altar Table was made of a beautifully polished wood, representing the mountainous region in which they reside. This theme of nature was continued throughout the church.

The place for the Tabernacle was also made of the same beautiful wood. It was not a table but appeared to be a tree with it's branches supporting the home of the blessed Eucharist; again, representing the nature of their environment. The appearance, of course, was new as the church itself was relatively new. The pews were also made of the same wood and arranged so that the congregation was easily able to participate in the Mass. This was a very small building, so there were very few statues.

Sacred Art is a very important part of our lives, our history and our present. It should represent us and our surroundings. The art in our churches needs to be simple, yet true. We need to be spiritually fed when we gaze upon the art within our churches. We need to feel a closeness with God and the creatures of His making. We need to feel joy whenever we are in God's home.

We must also remember, while sacred art may stir our hearts, it is a means to remind us of the stories, history, and meaning of our faith; but we do not bow down to or worship any of the artifacts, for that would be idolatry. We must always remember, worship is for God and God alone.

If you would like to learn more about Sacred Art and its importance to sharing our faith, 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 116.

Discussion:

Today, we begin a news series of discussion, which we entitled, "Faith, Family, and Social Issues." Over the next several weeks, we will examine concerns of faith within the family as well as how modern society impacts both faith and family.

When Sharon and I attended the 20th Annual Midwest Catholic Family Conference in Wichita KS back in August, we were just finishing our series concerning “*Humanae Vitae*” and just before that, our series on the “Culture of Life,” so I was naturally drawn to the Kansans for Life information table. At the time, I had in our long range planning to return to life issues during Lent of 2020, however, Peter reminded me that October is “Respect Life Month,” therefore, he convinced me to adjust our schedule so that we might help to raise awareness as to a Kansas Supreme Court ruling of grave concern.

(Question 1: On 26 Apr 2019, the Kansas Supreme Court issued a ruling concerning what some call "abortion rights." What are the consequences of this ruling to efforts to protect life in the womb?)

- Restrictions on partial birth abortion may not be enforceable
- Bans on taxpayer funding of abortion may be threatened
- Violent, live dismemberment abortions will be allowed to continue
- Other life saving limits may be threatened, such as:
 - ➔ Parental consent for minors seeking abortion
 - ➔ Informed consent, alerting women to potential health risks
 - ➔ 24-hour waiting period
 - ➔ Abortion clinic sanitation and safety standards
(Kansans for Life)

The Kansas Supreme Court ruling appeared to center upon interpretation of section 1 of the Kansas State Constitution, which states:

"Equal rights. All men are possessed of equal and inalienable natural rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." (Kansas Bill of Rights)

In relation to these rights, the court stated:

Section 1 of the Kansas Constitution Bill of Rights affords protection of the right of personal autonomy, which includes the ability to control one's own body, to assert bodily integrity, and to exercise self-determination. This right allows a woman to make her own decisions regarding her body, health, family formation, and family life—decisions that can include whether to continue a pregnancy. (*Hodes & Nauser M.D.s, P.A., et al. v. Schmidt & Howe, pg 3*)

(Question 2: As I reviewed the 199 page ruling, the focus appeared to be upon the right of personal autonomy, which includes “decisions that can include whether to continue a pregnancy.” (Hodges) Within this ruling, what was the consideration for the personal rights of children as they mature from conception until natural death? Where might we find the enumerated protections for an unborn child's rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit

of happiness, or their ability to control their body and “assert bodily integrity?” Who stands for and defends the rights of children in the womb?)

- The issue was framed as one of women's freedom of autonomy
- The issue was framed as one of a woman's right to discontinue a pregnancy
- The focus overlooks the limits of one's freedom to end the life of another
- The focus overlooks that at conception, a unique person is formed and begins the journey of maturity which should not be ended by human hand
- The focus overlooks that once a life is lost, it cannot be restored by human hand
- The focus overlooks that when a life is taken in the womb, so also is lost all which may have come from that life, to include love, accomplishments, and future generations
- The law should protect the weak, marginalized, and defenseless; but it is lacking in protections for the most defenseless among us, the child in the womb

When rights come into conflict, courts are called upon to determine from the law whose rights prevails. As I mentioned, what struck me as I reviewed the ruling, was the focus upon personal autonomy without apparent consideration of the life of the child. The court essentially decided that a woman's right to personal autonomy supersedes the child's own rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, which is ironically the same set of rights from which the court derived the right of personal autonomy.

As we consider both *Roe v. Wade* and *Hodes & Nauser v. Schmidt & Howe*; the preeminent legal scholars of the respective courts are telling us that rights to privacy and personal autonomy are more important than a child's right to live. We must let that sink in for a moment and reflect upon the fact that if this legal concept of priorities applies to a life in the womb, what does that mean in terms of the sanctity of any life, for example our own life and those of our loved ones? This now legally sanctioned concept of priorities should be very scary to us all.

(Question 3: Sadly, because the ruling is the supreme law of the land in Kansas, there is no path for appeal. What, then, can be done to protect children as they mature in the womb?)

- Work to change hearts and minds so legal concepts become moot
- Change state Constitutions to define personhood and enumerate rights of the unborn

(Question 4: The judicial ruling we are discussing today concerns the Constitution of the State of Kansas; therefore, it is applicable only to that state. Why should residents of other states be concerned about this ruling?)

(*Hodes & Nauser M.D.s, P.A., et al. v. Schmidt & Howe*, pg 88)

It is also worth mentioning our court has not gone rogue today. By my count, appellate courts in 17 states have addressed whether their state constitutions independently protect a pregnant woman's decisions regarding her pregnancy from unjustifiable government interference.... Three others have implicitly held their state constitutions contain this protection.

(*Hodes & Nauser M.D.s, P.A., et al. v. Schmidt & Howe*, pg 90)

The Iowa Supreme Court recently articulated the intensely personal and demanding crossroads a pregnant woman can face at this constitutionally protected moment in her life:

"Many reasons have been identified to explain why women choose to have an abortion. Sixty percent of abortion patients already have at least one child and many feel they cannot adequately care for another child. Other women feel they are currently unable to be the type of parent they feel a child deserves. Patients frequently identify financial, physical, psychological, or situational reasons for deciding to terminate an unplanned pregnancy. Some patients are victims of rape or incest, and others are victims of domestic violence. Women also present with health conditions that prevent a safe pregnancy or childbirth. Sometimes, women discover fetal anomalies later in their pregnancies and make the choice to terminate." Planned Parenthood, 915 N.W.2d at 214-15

(*Hodes & Nauser M.D.s, P.A., et al. v. Schmidt & Howe*, pgs 90-91)

This Kansas litigation concerns S.B. 95, which injects the State into a pregnant woman's second trimester decision-making. Again, the Iowa court's description about the personal situations that can arise during this time frame is equally well-stated:

"There are many reasons women have second trimester or otherwise late-in-window procedures. Most women are not aware of a pregnancy until at least five weeks since their last menstrual period. Some forms of contraception can mask the symptoms of pregnancy, which delays women from discovering a pregnancy by days or weeks. Some patients' life circumstances change drastically between discovery and the decision to terminate. A patient may have lost her job, ended the relationship with her partner, or lost a support system. Significantly, almost no fetal anomalies can be diagnosed until the second trimester when prenatal screening is conducted. Usually, an anatomical ultrasound is not performed until the eighteenth or twentieth week of pregnancy. Thus, some women may not be alerted to a problem until the second trimester, and by the time they have spoken with physicians and made the difficult choice to terminate, they may be very close to, or beyond, the twenty-week cutoff [for an abortion in Iowa]." 915 N.W.2d at 218.

Bottom line, within the legal system, there can be a cross-pollination of judicial error as political forces search for legal concepts by which to achieve their agendas. Let's take a quick look at the list of reasons the court appears to endorse as justifiable reasons a mother may consider, or be pressured into, the decision to end the life of her child in the womb.

- Cannot adequately care for another child
- Unable to be the type of parent they feel a child deserves
- Financial concerns or job loss
- Ended the relationship with partner
- Lost a support system
- Physical concerns
- Health conditions of the mother
- Psychological concerns
- Situational reasons
- Victims of domestic violence
- Fetal anomalies
- Victims of rape or incest

We should subsequently ask ourselves,

- Would any of these be reason to justify our personal execution?
- How about the execution of a two year old or even a new born?
- Do these situations present an imminent fear of death by the mother?
- Are there lesser solutions available to address these situations which does not require the death of the child?

Of course, while we can criticize the ruling, we are not the legislators on the bench; and, yes, I said that correctly; but that does not absolve us of our responsibility to advocate for the innocent and defenseless. The issues are complex and we must consider the issues with all charity and compassion to the lives involved. We must endeavor to ensure the rights of both mother and child are protected as well as consider just priorities and means of resolution when those rights are perceived to be in conflict.

If we are to fulfill our responsibilities of faith and true social justice, not the social justice of political ideologies; we must be aware of the actions of our government and political entities and engage to encourage what is right and just in the eyes of God.

(Question 5: In the legal world, it is very difficult to change what is perceived as adjudicated and settled law; therefore, we must be proactive in the efforts to protect the sanctity of life. Where might our listeners go to maintain awareness of the legislative and judicial battles in progress concerning the sanctity of life?)

- Local life organizations such as Kansans for Life: <https://kfl.org/>
- National Right to Life: <https://www.nrlc.org/statelegislation/>
- 40 Days for Life: <https://40daysforlife.com/>
- USCCB: <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/>

(Question 6: As the battle for the sanctity of life continues in Kansas, it also continues around our nation. **How can both residents and non-residents of Kansas engage to help protect the sanctity of life?)**

- Research the facts and issues → Be careful of misinformation and disinformation
- Help to educate and share truth with others
- Financially support pro-life organizations
- Support pro-life fundraisers
- Volunteer with pro-life organizations
- Support pro-life events
- Support prayer vigils → at the sidewalk, in groups, and at home
- Write representatives at local, state, and federal levels
- Sign pro-life petitions
- Encourage and engage all sides with humility, civility, dignity, and respect

(1 Peter 3:9)

Do not return evil for evil, or insult for insult; but, on the contrary, a blessing, because to this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing.

For more information concerning how we can learn and engage, we invite you to listen to our “Culture of Life” series, especially our “Call to Action” episode, which is episode 97.

Episode: <https://www.spreaker.com/user/wcatradio/wcat-radio-the-armor-of-faith-060619>

Topic Summary: <https://wcatradio.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/WCAT-Topic-S97-Culture-of-Life-Part-IX-Call-to-Actionb.pdf>

Quotes:

– *Kansas Governor Sam Brownback - speaking at the NRLC 2012 Convention*

The place you change America isn't in Washington. It's in the states. ... That's how we'll change the life debate. It will be at the state level. Different states doing this, making very positive key changes until it can migrate to the federal level. And a court case can get up to the Supreme Court and *Roe v. Wade* be overturned. Which will ultimately happen. We have to keep pushing at these state levels.

– *Saint John Paul II*

Christ needs you to enlighten the world and to show it the “path to life” (Psalm 16:11). The challenge is to make the Church's “yes” to Life concrete and effective. The struggle will be long, and it needs each one of you. Place your intelligence, your talents, your enthusiasm, your compassion and your fortitude at the service of life!

Final Thoughts:

As I mentioned during our discussion, I am not the legislator on the bench; and yes, again, I said that correctly; but when I reflect upon the use of force doctrine that I taught in the

United States Army Military Police School, the authorization of deadly force (which is what abortion is as it forcefully takes the life of a child, and I might add, often in rather painful and gruesome ways, to include dismemberment) is dependent upon the imminent threat of death or great bodily harm to one's self or another, and the other key caveat is that there is no lesser means by which to stop or defend against that threat.

The Kansas Supreme Court seemed to overlook the legal concept that personal autonomy freedoms are not absolute when another life is threatened. At conception, a new human life begins the journey of life. When we consider a pregnant woman, there are two lives which hang in the balance.

I find it interesting that some candidates for political office talk about freedom to control one's body, but, they only talk about only one of the lives or bodies involved when we speak about abortion. We must ask ourselves, what control does the child have to control what happens to their body or to control their “bodily integrity” when they are being dismembered in the womb?

While the court went to great lengths to profess the moral superiority of the Kansas Bill of Rights over those enumerated in the United States Constitution, it is interesting that they failed to consider or provide any protection to the child in the womb. They quickly dismissed the notion that children in the womb may have any Constitutionally protected, much less inalienable, rights as they refer to *Roe v. Wade* and state:

The State acknowledged that the United States Supreme Court decided in *Roe v. Wade*,...that a fetus is not a “person” entitled to protection under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and that, at least in the early stages of a pregnancy, the State could not interfere with a woman's right to decide whether to continue her pregnancy.” (*Hodes & Nauser M.D.s, P.A., et al. v. Schmidt & Howe*, pg 9)

In other words, they hid behind and continued the judicial errors of *Roe v. Wade* which fails to acknowledge that at conception, a unique human life is formed and begins the journey of life through all its various stages of maturity. We must remember, inalienable rights are given to us by God, not by government.

I know the issues are complex, along with a number of ethical variables, but our first objective must be to preserve the sanctity of life; for once a life is lost, it cannot be restored by human hand. While we cannot change judicial rulings already rendered, we can influence the change of legislation and Constitutions upon which such rulings are based. If the politicians will not, then, it remains up to the people, through the power of peaceful encouragement and votes, to steer our government to what is right and just for every person from conception until natural death.

We encourage our listeners to become aware, educated, and engaged with the efforts to protect the full spectrum of life. We must also remember, as we do, the conduct to which we are called in 1 Peter 3:9 where we are reminded:

Do not return evil for evil, or insult for insult; but, on the contrary, a blessing, because to this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing.

And if you remember from our series, “Put on the Armor of Prayer,” a blessing is an invocation of God's power and care. As we engage, let us not forget the power of prayer. Let us allow God to lead us and inspire us in how we may protect the most defenseless among us, the child in the womb.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next time as we turn our discussion to faith, personal identity, and God's design.

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: Faith, Family, and Social Issues – Part II: Coming Home Catholic

Why Catholics Do What We Do References:

Longenecker, Dwight; (10 Sep 2016); “The Role of Sacred Art;” The Imaginative Conservative; <https://theimaginativeconservative.org/2016/09/the-role-of-sacred-art-longenecker.html>

Discussion References:

Hodes & Nauser M.D.s, P.A., et al. v. Schmidt & Howe;
<http://www.kscourts.org/Cases-and-Opinions/opinions/SupCt/2019/20190426/114153.pdf>

Kansans for Life; (accessed 15 Oct 2019); “Return Power to Voters to Protect Women and Preborn Babies;” Kansans for Life; <https://kfl.org/legislation/constitutional-amendment/>

Kansas Bill of Rights; (Updated 9 Dec 2016); Kansas State Constitution; Kansas State Library; <https://kslib.info/826/Kansas-Bill-of-Rights>

K.S.A. 2011 Supp. §§ 21-5220 through 21-5231; (Aug 2011); “Kansas’ Self-Defense & Defense of Others Statutes;” Kansas State Legislature; https://ag.ks.gov/docs/documents/self-defense-statutes.pdf?sfvrsn=516a2f2b_4

NCSL; (1 May 2019); “State Laws on Fetal Homicide and Penalty-enhancement for Crimes Against Pregnant Women;” National Conference of State Legislators; <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/fetal-homicide-state-laws.aspx>

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

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