

Amendment G Homiletics Resources for Sept. 22, Oct 13, Nov 3

General Points from SDCC (Michael Pauley)

Amendment G: DANGEROUS and DECEPTIVE

- South Dakotans should REJECT AMENDMENT G which would add a radical “right to abortion” to our state constitution.
- Allows painful, late-term abortions, even on healthy babies who can survive outside the womb.
- Endangers women’s lives by eliminating health and safety standards for abortion.
- Overturns commonsense laws that protect women and girls from coerced abortions.
- Visit NoOnGsd.com for details about the intentionally confusing and vague language of this radical pro-abortion amendment
- Amendment G denies parents the right to know if their underage daughter is undergoing an abortion procedure
- “Abortion is a grave injustice. It can never be a legitimate expression of autonomy and power. If our autonomy demands the death of another, it is none other than an iron cage.” –Pope Francis
- “Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love one another, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.” – St. Teresa of Calcutta

Here are a few FAQs you may find helpful:

“Why is the Church involved in politics?”

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church (#2246) states, “It is a part of the Church’s mission to pass moral judgments even in matters related to politics, whenever the fundamental rights of man or the salvation of souls requires it.”
- With abortion, we are dealing with an issue that affects BOTH the fundamental rights of humans and the salvation of souls. The Church can no more be silent on abortion than it can be silent about racism, slavery or genocide.
- The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has declared: “The threat of abortion remains our pre-eminent priority because it directly attacks our most vulnerable and voiceless brothers and sisters and destroys more than a million lives per year in our country alone.” (Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, Intro Note)
- St. John Paul II quote: “Just as the Church spoke out against injustices suffered by the working classes a century ago, now she must speak out on behalf of the great multitude of weak and defenseless human beings, unborn children in particular, whose fundamental right to life is being trampled upon.” (Evangelium Vitae, 5)
- Another St. John Paul II quote: “We find ourselves in the midst of a battle between a culture of life and a culture of death. We are all involved in it, with the inescapable responsibility of choosing to be unconditionally pro-life.” (Evangelium Vitae, 28)
- In the book of Proverbs, we read: “Did you fail to rescue those who were being dragged off to death...because you said, ‘We didn’t know about it’? Surely, the Searcher of hearts

knows and will repay all according to their deeds” (Proverbs 24:11-12). The Church cannot and will not remain silent while innocent children are “dragged off to death.” Silence on this matter would be tantamount to “misleading and scattering” the flock that we hear about in the reading from Jeremiah.

- Each Sunday in Mass, we say the Lord’s prayer, which includes: “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” We know it is God’s will that human life should be protected, not just as some abstract “personal” value, but in the laws of our society. We don’t pray, “Thy will be done, but not in Congress.” Or, “Thy will be done, but not in the legislature.” We certainly don’t pray, “Thy will be done, but not at the ballot box.” We’re never going to have godly laws that honor life unless godly people are willing to get involved in politics and work on behalf of justice and truth.

“Why is the Church against abortion?”

- We read in the book of Jeremiah (1:5), “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.” Our dignity in the eyes of God is not linked to whether our physical bodies have attained some kind of developmental milestone. Our dignity comes from the fact that we are known and loved by God.
- Pope Benedict XVI stated: “God’s love does not differentiate between the newly conceived infant still in his or her mother’s womb and the child or young person, or the adult and the elderly person. God does not distinguish between them because he sees an impression of his own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26) in each one.” (Address to the 12th General Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life, Feb. 27, 2006)
- St. John Paul II writes: “Man has been given a sublime dignity, based on the intimate bond which unites him to his Creator: in man there shines forth a reflection of God himself. The Book of Genesis affirms this value when it places man at the summit of all God’s creation. Only the creation of man is presented as the result of a special decision on the part of God, a deliberation to establish a particular and specific bond with the Creator. The life which God offers to man is a gift by which God shares something of himself with his creature. Among all visible creatures, only man is capable of knowing and loving his Creator.” (Evangelium Vitae, 34)
- In our society today, sadly, many people seem incapable of recognizing the dignity of preborn human life, especially in the first days and weeks after conception. But every single person in this church, every one of you who hear my voice, this is how you started. This is what you looked like. Not only that, this is what our Savior Jesus Christ looked like when he was taking form in the womb of the Virgin Mary. How can anyone who professes the name “Christian” not understand the profound dignity of a preborn child, when we realize that the God who created the universe took on the form of a fragile, helpless embryo in his mother’s womb?
- St. John Paul II expands on this point above: “The New Testament confirms the indisputable recognition of the value of life from its very beginning. The value of the person from the moment of conception is celebrated in the meeting between the Virgin Mary and Elizabeth, and between the two children they are carrying. It is precisely the children who reveal the advent of the Messianic age: in their meeting, the redemptive

power of the presence of the Son of God among men first becomes operative. Elizabeth was the first to hear the voice; but John is the first to experience grace.” (Evangelium Vitae, 45)

- Pope Francis has called us to see the person of Jesus in every preborn child: “Every child who, rather than being born, is condemned unjustly to being aborted, bears the face of Jesus Christ, bears the face of the Lord, who even before he was born, and then just after birth, experienced the world’s rejection.” (Address to the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations, No. 2. September 20, 2013)
- The Church’s teaching on abortion is settled and unchangeable, because truth cannot change. The Second Vatican Council solemnly declared, “...from the moment of its conception life must be guarded with the greatest care, while abortion and infanticide are unspeakable crimes.” (Gaudium et Spes, 51)

What does Amendment G propose to do?

- In the coming weeks and months as we approach the November 5 election, there will be a tidal wave of information and misinformation spread about Amendment G.
- There will be so much noise that it may be difficult for some people to understand clearly what Amendment G will do, and what it won’t do.
- Amendment G would insert into our state constitution a radical and extreme “right to abortion” throughout pregnancy.
- The amendment divides pregnancy into three trimesters. In the first and second trimesters, abortion can be chosen for ANY reason.
- The second trimester ends at 27-28 weeks, which is past the time that a baby is viable and can survive outside the womb, if only he or she is given a chance to be born. This means that Amendment G will allow painful, late-term abortions of perfectly healthy children.
- Even in the third trimester, which extends all the way to the moment of birth, Amendment G allows abortions for any reason related to health. The amendment doesn’t define the word “health,” but we know from previous court decisions that it’s NOT limited to just physical health. It can include emotional, psychological and familial factors.
- Amendment G endangers women’s lives by prohibiting even basic health and safety standards for abortion in the first trimester. It also would prohibit the state from enforcing laws that are designed to protect women and girls from being coerced into getting abortions they do not want.
- Amendment G is so radical that even many people who say they support abortion, or call themselves “pro-choice,” should have plenty of reasons to vote against it.

Isn’t Amendment G all about supporting “freedom”?

- Supporters of Amendment G have called their proposal the “South Dakota Freedom Amendment.”
- Calling it the “Freedom Amendment” certainly sounds better than “The Amendment to Allow Abortion Throughout Pregnancy For Any Reason.” As Catholics, we must ask about the nature of the “freedom” that is being proposed.

- The freedom to inflict a cruel and painful death on a third trimester baby is not the sort of freedom that any South Dakotan should be supporting.
- Pope Francis has written: “Abortion is a grave injustice. It can never be a legitimate expression of autonomy and power. If our autonomy demands the death of another, it is none other than an iron cage.” (*Let us Dream*, p. 115)
- St. John Paul II: “There is a disturbing tendency to interpret crimes against life as *legitimate expressions of individual freedom, to be acknowledged and protected as actual rights*. It is a surprising contradiction that, precisely in an age when the inviolable rights of the person are solemnly proclaimed and the value of life publicly affirmed, the right to life is being denied, especially at the more significant moments of existence: life and death. Such attacks directly violate respect for human life and represent a *direct threat to the entire culture of human rights*.” (*Evangelium Vitae*, 18)

Homily Help: September 22nd, 2024: 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading (Wisdom 2:12, 17-20)

“The wicked say: Let us beset the just one, because he is obnoxious to us; he sets himself against our doings, reproaches us for transgressions of the law and charges us with violations of our training.”

- We are called to speak the truth in love in all things
 - When we fail to do so, we are failing to love our neighbor, the second greatest commandment
- Today, we are called to tell others the truth about Amendment G
 - Despite appearances, it is a radical pro-abortion amendment to our state constitution
 - It will prohibit any restrictions on abortion in our state
 - It will put us in a worse position than we were under Roe v Wade

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 54:3-4, 5, 6, 8)

“O God, by your name save me, and by your might defend my cause. O God, hear my prayer; hearken to the words of my mouth.”

- Let us turn to the Lord and pray that Amendment G will be defeated
- We know that the prayers of a just man will not go unanswered
- Let us not rely on our own strength and wisdom, but beg the Lord to help us defeat this amendment

Gospel (Mark 9:30-37)

“But they did not understand the saying, and they were afraid to question him.”

- Many of our fellow South Dakotans – even including our fellow Catholics – do not understand the truth about Amendment G
 - Contrary to what it’s proponents say, it is not the “Freedom Amendment”
 - Rather, it will enslave us

- We are called to help them understand both the Church’s teaching on Life and the truth of this Amendment
 - There are many resources available to educate others
- Jesus says that the truth will set us free (Jn 8:30-32)
 - Let us do our part to help others understand true freedom

Homily Help: October 13th, 2024: 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading (Wisdom 7:7-11)

“I prayed, and prudence was given me; I pleaded, and the spirit of wisdom came to me.”

- We are facing a crucial moment in our state this fall: the radically pro-abortion Amendment G is on the ballot
- Many of us are comfortable voting No on G, but are less sure about how to talk about this vote with others
- But we are not alone
- Let us beg our Heavenly Father for the wisdom necessary to share the truth about this amendment with others
- Let us implore His Divine assistance in the defeat of this amendment

Second Reading (Hebrews 4:12-13)

“No creature is concealed from him, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.”

- As Catholics, we heavenly home, but we are also citizens of earth
- Our bishops have called us to be faithful citizens of our great country
- This means that we have a duty, an obligation to participate in elections and other civic activities
- That includes this fall’s election, especially regarding the radical pro-abortion Amendment G
- We will all be held to account for our actions, not just in religious obligations, but in every aspect of our lives
- Let us do our part to not only vote against Amendment G ourselves, but to help our fellow South Dakotans do the same

Gospel Reading (Mark 10:17-30)

“Jesus answered him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother.”

- The first of the Commandments that Jesus names in this passage is the prohibition against killing
- Amendment G would legalize the killing of the most innocent of us
 - It would legalize abortion up to the moment of birth, without exception & regulation

- If we, like the Rich Young Man, desire the good life, not only for ourselves and but for our fellow South Dakotans, we too must obey the Commandments

Homily Help: November 3rd, 2024: 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading (Deuteronomy 6:2-6)

“Fear the LORD, your God, and keep, throughout the days of your lives, all his statutes and commandments which I enjoin on you, and thus have long life. Hear then, Israel, and be careful to observe them, that you may grow and prosper the more.”

- These words of Moses are as true for us today as they were for the Israelites of his time
- It is only by following the Lord and His Commandments that we will find true peace and prosperity
- This is not just Moses’ or my opinion as a religious leader; this is a fact
- As South Dakotans, we face a crucial moment in this election: the possibility of unregulated abortion up to birth if Amendment G is adopted
- It is our duty & responsibility not just as Catholics, but as South Dakotans, to both vote No on G and encourage our fellow South Dakotans to do the same

Gospel Reading (Mark 12:28b-34)

“One of the scribes came to Jesus and asked him, ‘Which is the first of all the commandments?’ Jesus replied, ‘The first is this: Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.’”

- The Second Greatest Commandment is to love our neighbor
- We have the opportunity to fulfill this commandment in a powerful way by voting against the radical pro-abortion Amendment G this Tuesday
- This Amendment is not about Freedom or Choice... it is about Death
- Let us love the least, the smallest of our neighbors and “Vote No on G” this Tuesday