

**VCY AMERICA'S HOME FRONT**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023 - WISCONSIN FAMILY COUNCIL**

**I. WELCOME**

Good afternoon on this Wednesday of what we often refer to as Passion Week as we move towards Good Friday and then glorious Resurrection Sunday. It's also the day after a major election here in our state. We'll be taking a deeper dive into both of those soon on this edition of VCY America's Home Front program. I'm Julaine Appling, your host for today's show. Thanks for joining us. I also serve as president of Wisconsin Family Council, a statewide organization that, by God's grace has been strengthening, preserving, and promoting God's plan for marriage and family, the sanctity of human life and religious freedom in our great state for nearly 37 years. We are all about informing, inspiring and involving citizens and churches regarding the critical issues of our day. And those are the issues we'll be talking about today on Home Front. So let's get started.

**II. ISSUES**

**A. Election results**

If you listen regularly to a VCY station here in Wisconsin, you've heard a great deal about the election that just culminated in Election Day yesterday. Certainly people around the country heard about it—in particular the race for an open seat on our state supreme court.

Well as you likely heard because the supreme court race was called quite early last evening, the winner was the liberal progressive Janet Protasiewicz. She beat conservative, constitutionalist Dan Kelly by 12 percentage points. With 100% of the vote in, Protasiewicz had 1,021,330 votes to Kelly's 818,182 votes for a total of 1,839,512 votes cast. I know that total was higher than what many election experts were predicting. Most were saying we would have around 1.5 to 1.7 million votes. Some are saying this was the highest voter turnout for a spring election without a presidential primary. In fact, one report I got said Dan Kelly's vote alone was higher than almost any other supreme court candidate going back to 2008 with the exception of the vote in 2016 when we had a presidential primary. We knew all along this race was about which side did a better job of turning out their voters—liberals or conservatives. It also has to do with enthusiasm. Liberals saw this as a huge opportunity to make a significant gain while conservatives were protecting their position. Generally, the enthusiasm edge belongs to the group wanting a gain or a change.

Where these votes came from helps to understand what is happening in our state. Of course, the majority of the votes for Protasiewicz came out of Milwaukee and Dane counties. For instance, in Dane County Protasiewicz beat Kelly with 82% of the vote and in Milwaukee she prevailed with 73% of the vote. Those are huge margins to overcome, especially when they come from our two largest population centers. Protasiewicz received nearly 200,000 votes from Dane county alone and over 170,000 from Milwaukee. That's nearly a third of her total votes. That means the areas outside of those two counties that are known to be conservative have to perform very, very well in order to offset those margins and make up that 370,000 vote difference. That did not happen in this election.

The WOW counties—Waukesha, Ozaukee and Washington—together only gave Dan Kelly about 149,000 votes. Other areas where Kelly as the conservative candidate needed to do extremely well, also didn't perform as some hoped. In addition, Protasiewicz also picked up more counties in southwestern Wisconsin than liberal candidates usually do. Election experts will gnaw on these numbers for months...and will come up with explanations for why the election went the way it did.

The bottom line is this: liberals won this open seat and come August when Protasiewicz takes her seat on the court, the Wisconsin Supreme Court will lean liberal by a 4-3 margin for the first time in well over a decade. And that's significant. This was an unusually ugly race—with lots of campaign rhetoric designed to mislead people, with insane amounts of money spent—the most money spent ever in America for a supreme court race. We also saw for the first time very open declarations from one candidate about how she would likely decide cases. That's new. Will that now happen across the country in other states because it has worked here? What does this mean for the 2024 presidential election? Lots of questions.

So, what can we expect? Well, first I want to say very, very clearly that nothing in this race or campaign or outcome surprised God. He is still in control. If we as Christians truly believe in God's sovereignty, then we must accept outcomes that we don't like as being His will, even when we don't understand them. Now, that doesn't mean we don't learn from such situations and try to improve, but it does mean that ultimately we must accept these results as orchestrated or at least allowed by our great God Who does not make mistakes and is bringing His ultimate will to pass and nothing and no one will thwart that.

That said, we do still have to deal with some realities that will happen as a result of the outcome of this election. Look, I really don't like being a doomsday person, and generally I am not. However, in this situation, I am keenly aware of what the liberals have been saying all along that they want. Here in our state they have been thwarted by 8 years of a conservative governor, Scott Walker, and over 10 years of a conservative majority in the state legislature. They haven't been able to advance their agenda through bills becoming the law. So, the courts have been their go-to. And with the state supreme court now tipping liberal, I am more than confident that we will see many lawsuits filed after Protasiewicz is seated on the court this August.

Frankly, I suspect the liberals already have lawsuits pretty much ready to go on many issues and as soon as they know they have that majority on the high court secured, they'll start pushing them through the judicial pipeline. We already have one case out there that has dragged on in circuit court—the lowest level of state courts—for over 10 months—and that's the challenge to the 1849 law that bans abortion. I think we'll see this case now pick up steam and begin moving—but they still may wait until June or July just to make sure their timing is right and that it doesn't get to the supreme court too early.

I look for the court to rule that the pre-*Roe* law is unconstitutional, and it wouldn't surprise me in the least that they find, better said, concoct a so-called “right” to abortion in our state constitution. It isn't there obviously; but we've seen this show before. Liberal justices are typically judicial activists and have no trouble at all making law rather than interpreting law. Their view of constitutions being living documents give them the latitude they need to do that. It's wrong, and is an abuse of our very important distinctions between the three branches of government and our checks and balances, but it's become commonplace with liberal judges and justices at all levels of our judicial branch.

No one should be surprised by the lawsuits that will be brought—no one. We've told people over and over what will happen. Protasiewicz was very open in this campaign about what her values are and what she thinks about a number of decisions the court has made. Apparently a majority of voters were good with what she has told us she believes and will most likely do on the court. Tragically, I think over the next several years, we will see challenges to school choice, religious freedom, election protections, Act 10, second amendment issues, right to work, legislative redistricting maps, and more. The door is now open for all of this and more that I'm not even thinking about right now. And we as Christians need to be prepared for how we will respond and live when these things happen.

For starters, I want to remind all of us that Scripture tells us we are to pray for those who are in authority—and that would include for sure the seven justices on our state supreme court. Will you commit to that? We need to pray first and foremost for their salvation and then that they would decide wisely any case that comes before them. And I think it's fine to pray that God would rule and overrule in their decisions.

Second, we don't despair. We don't hand-wring. We don't blame. We stand strong in what we believe, we share the Gospel with courage and urgency, we build strong families, we urge our churches to stay true to the Word of God, and we continue to be good citizens. We vote in elections, we help find good candidates to run, we support good people, we hold elected officials accountable. We stay informed and involved. Election results don't dictate how we live or our response. We are in control of those...and we need to show the world how true Christianity responds to adversity.

With that, let's move on to the outcome of the Senate District 8 special election that saw the Republican Dan Knodl narrowly defeat the Democrat candidate. The race wasn't called until late last night, maybe early this morning. But with nearly 100% of the votes in, the margin is a little over 1000 votes separating the two candidates out of over 35,000 votes cast. This seat had been long held by Republican Senator Alberta Darling. She stepped down this past December, creating the need for the special election. I think many people are going to be a bit surprised by how close this election was in a district that has been for years pretty solidly red. But the district was changed somewhat with the new legislative maps that went into effect last fall. At any rate, Dan Knodl, who is currently serving in the State Assembly, will soon be sworn in as a state senator. And when that happens, the Republicans in the Senate will have a 2/3 majority. Knodl gives them the 22<sup>nd</sup> vote they needed to secure that majority.

And what does that majority mean? It's a veto -proof majority, but it doesn't do much good because the Republicans are 2 votes short in the Assembly of a veto-proof majority—and now with Dan Knodl gone and a special election being needed to fill his seat—that margin could change, too. To override the governor's veto, both houses have to have 2/3 yes votes. So, overriding vetoes is not going to happen. However, the state legislature does have impeachment power. Impeachment in Wisconsin starts in the Assembly with a simple majority vote to impeach a "civil officer" of the state, which could include district attorneys, judges, etc., and then the Senate tries the impeachment. The senate acts as a court and tries the official based on the evidence. If 2/3 of the senate vote to impeach, then the person is removed from office. In recent days, more and more talk about the impeachment power of the senate has surfaced. We will be watching this closely to see what come of this power afforded the state legislature now that the Republicans have that 2/3 majority.

Then we have the 3 referendum questions that were on the statewide ballot. They all passed. Only the first two dealing with conditions of release of a person accused of a crime and on how much bail came be put on a person accused of a violent crime make any difference. Because these two passed, our state constitution is now amended to reflect the will of the voters. The third question about able-bodied, childless adults being required to look for work while receiving taxpayer funded welfare benefits also passed—but that was strictly advisory. Nothing changes because of it passing and nothing would have changed if it failed.

But our ballots contained much more than these statewide issues. We all had school board races, city council, mayors, town and village boards, and judicial races we needed to decide. You should make sure you check your local community's election returns so you know what happened in your backyard. One race we were especially watching was a school board race in Wauwatosa, west of Milwaukee. Three more conservative dads were running against 3 more liberal moms. This all started last year over people being upset about what the school was implanting as a sex-ed curriculum. Yesterday, all three of the moms prevailed over all three of the dads,

meaning the Wauwatosa school board is firmly under liberal control. Meanwhile, in Wausau, the 3 more conservative school board candidates won, keeping that board with a solid conservative majority.

Let's capstone the election results with this: Scripture tells us to not grow weary in well-doing. To occupy until Jesus comes. We all just keep doing right and recognize that each day is the day the Lord has made, and we rejoice and be glad in it.

#### B. Easter

Let's close today pondering the meaning of this season of the year. Christmas is spectacular because we celebrate the birth of our Savior which sets in motion what we commemorate this week—the securing of our salvation through the vicarious death, burial, and glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Oh the cost our salvation—false accusations, trials that were a mockery, horrible torture, the extreme agony of the cross—and most of all, God the Father turning His back on His only begotten Son because for a moment as He was suspended between Heaven and Earth, Jesus bore our sins—and thus our Holy God had to forsake His Son. And Jesus endured it all—including death and burial—for our sakes. He paid in full the sin debt we all have—a debt we could never pay no matter how hard we try. Praise God that the story doesn't end there...that early on the first day of the week, when the women went to the grave to anoint Jesus's body, they found an empty tomb and an angel declaring He is not here for He is risen as He said. To which we say, Hallelujah!

I trust you and your family will make sure to take time to talk about the real truth of this weekend's observances. Don't miss the opportunity to make sure the next generation especially understands why these days are so very special to us as Christians.

### III. CONCLUSION

With that, we are out of time for today's program. If Wisconsin Family Council can help you with any of the issues we've talked about today or to find out how you can support our efforts to strengthen, preserve and promote our shared values, please call us at 888-378-7395 or visit us online at [wifamilycouncil.org](http://wifamilycouncil.org).

Thanks for listening! This is Julaine Appling for Wisconsin Family Council wishing you and yours a most blessed Resurrection Sunday and reminding you the prophet Hosea said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."