

Natural Family Planning: “Catholic Contraception”?

Carey J. Winters

“It is also a sin to ‘be careful’ ...” – Cardinal Mindszenty

It was virtually inevitable. The generation both obsessed with sex and overly impressed by technology has finally invented computerized contraception.

Unilever’s new personal computerized contraception system is, according to its online advertisement, drug-free, 93-95% reliable ... and endorsed by the Church. “New Birth-Control Device Has Church OK” trumpeted the 9/30/96 *Bloomberg Business News* article by Dane Hamilton.

“I am sure the Church would welcome it,” Kieran Conry, spokesman for the Catholic Church of England and Wales, told Hamilton. The Church, he said, opposes devices that interfere with natural reproductive cycles, although it does not oppose family planning for married couples, contrary to commonly held views. Family planning advocates also welcomed the product.

The contraceptive system is based on a handheld monitor which uses built-in data from thousands of women, plus chemical information from the user’s own urine test sticks. “Through hormone evaluation,” Hamilton explains, “the device tells the woman when it is safe to have sex without risk of pregnancy.”

Why is the Church welcoming a device of clear contraceptive intent, in opposition to 19 centuries of Catholic teaching? **How**, for that matter, **did the Church, which has always held birth control to be a sinful violation of Natural Law, become the leading advocate of natural contraception?**

Satan’s Plan

Satan, Solange Hertz explains, is enraged by the wedding of matter and spirit in human conception:

*... not only was it the vehicle of the Incarnation, but it continues to produce members of Christ’s Mystical Body, including the priests upon whom His Eucharistic Presence depends. Inasmuch as the generation of life is an aspect of God’s image not found in angels ... it has fed Satan’s envy of both God and man from the beginning. (“Horses and Mules,” *The Remnant*, Jan. 15, 1997)*

Satan is well aware that the easiest way to rid the world of Catholicism is to rid it of Catholics. Hertz maintains that

*...the abomination of desolation is contraception ... particularly as practiced by His own people in the guise of so-called “natural family planning” ... Standing poised in the holy place to destroy souls and bodies at the very source of life in the Christian family, contraception is proving to be the apex and consummation of that old Master heresy from which all Christian heresies have derived. By its means Lucifer hopes to terminate the Church as we know her. (***Beyond Politics***, p 200)*

Contraception, abortion and infanticide have throughout history been associated with the black arts, whose principle characteristic is **the manipulation of the natural law for personal ends**. New Testament scholars link the Greek word *pharmakeia*, sometimes translated as “sorcery,” to birth control, noting that it refers to the mixing of potions for secretive purposes. Hertz writes that Innocent VIII’s authoritative bull on witchcraft, *Summis desiderantes affectibus*, “Promulgated in 1484 and increasingly relevant in postconciliar society ... specifically cites the prevention of the procreation of children as a major crime of practitioners of the black arts ...” (“Horses and Mules,” *The Remnant*, 1/31/97)

The introduction of **any** type of contraception into Catholic family life took a good deal of orchestration – but such is well within the capabilities of an archangelic intelligence.

Contraception: It’s Nothing New ...

According to Fr. Saunders, “Anthropological studies show that means of artificial birth control existed in antiquity. Medical papyri described various contraceptive methods used in the year 2700 BC and in Egypt in the year 1850 BC Soranos (98-139 AD), a Greek physician from Ephesus, described 17 medically approved methods of contraception. Also, at this time, abortion and infanticide were not uncommon practices in the Roman Empire.” (“The History of Contraception Teachings,” *Arlington Catholic Herald*, 11/02/95)

Hertz explains that knowledge of women’s infertile periods, too, was widespread in biblical times:

The levitical prescriptions of the Mosaic Law formally acknowledged the practice [of rhythm contraception] by outlawing it, expressly forbidding sexual intercourse during these intervals. Part of the baggage of the old Chaldean-Babylonian gnosticism ... it was transmitted from generation to generation outside the Church through the Talmud and other spurious Jewish sources. It could not have been unknown to those kabbalist doctors of the Law who compounded the Master Heresy by systematically setting the Talmud above the Torah, and to whom our Lord predicted, "Behold, your house shall be left desolate to you." (Mt. 23:38)

Filtering down to the Manicheans and thence to the Cathars, Albigensians, Waldensians, Jansenists and other spiritual descendants of heretical Judaism, for centuries [rhythm contraception] found no entry into the main body of the faithful. (Beyond Politics, p 201)

Certainly the Church Fathers were familiar with the method; St. Augustine places ‘natural contraception’ among the aberrations of the Manicheans.

But it was alien to Christianity for more than 1900 years. Christian teaching remained monolithic regarding the matter of contraception. There was no question and no dissent on this matter. Protestants concurred. Luther had taught that Onan's sin was greater than adultery or incest, using that passage as a basis to condemn any form of contraception (*Works*), and Calvin pronounced it 'monstrous.'

Church Teaching: Biblical God Opens and Closes the Womb

Not only were children clearly viewed as a blessing by God’s people in Bible times, but those folk understood that it was God who opened and closed the womb. Isaac, St. John the

Baptist, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Our Lord were all conceived under spectacular circumstances. Human beings might cooperate, but God was the Author of life. The barren prayed for an end to their reproach; the fecund praised God for his largesse.

The Levirate law of Judaism (**Deut. 25:5-10**) required that, if an older brother died, the next oldest, unmarried brother would marry his widow to preserve the family line. Genesis tells the story of Onan, who followed the exterior law by marrying Tamar, his dead brother's wife. "Onan, however, knew that the descendants would not be counted as his; so whenever he had relations with his brother's widow, he wasted his seed on the ground to avoid contributing offspring for his brother. What he did greatly offended the Lord and the Lord took his life." (cf **Deut 38:1ff**)

Tobias and Sara

Hertz's serialized article "Horses and Mules" retold the story in the Book of Tobias¹, relating it to the Church's theology of marriage. After pointing out that, until the outbreak of Modernism, the book had been treated as an historical work, Hertz notes that "as in all of Scripture, an allegorical interpretation is possible, and a moral must be drawn ... [It is] the story of the family, wounded by the Fall and ... on its way to Redemption amid hostile surroundings." (*The Remnant*, Jan.15, 1997)

The young Tobias, of a family deported to Ninevah, journeys to the home of his kinsman in the company of the disguised archangel Raphael (whose name means "God heals"). The kinsman's daughter, Sara, is obsessed by the demon Asmodeus, who has dispatched her last seven husbands on their wedding nights. Raphael instructs Tobias to marry Sara, but to spend the first three days with her in chaste prayer. "When the third night is passed, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust..."

The archangel "enlightens his protégé on the true condition of marriage in fallen human society, where without divine help, it is only normal for couples to find themselves at the mercy of the devil: 'For they who in such manner receive matrimony as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and the mule which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.' " (**Tobias 6:17**)

The metaphor chosen by the angelic intelligence is exquisitely applicable to married degenerates throughout history, but more fitting representatives of those currently produced by modern sex education could hardly be found than the horse and the mule. The most limited experience with stallions can testify to their sexual vigor, a characteristic which renders gelding a necessity if they are to be put at the service of ordinary equestrians. And what more appropriate consort for the horse than the mule? Whether male or female, this hardy, libidinous creature ... is noted for being dependably sterile ... These two beasts 'which have not understanding' are therefore perfect complements, exemplifying lust unlimited joined to carefree sterility ...

¹ Hertz notes that the Book of Tobias forms part of Scripture's Catholic Canon. "Beyond deploring its passing popularity among early Gnostics, Mother Church has never entertained any serious doubts of its worth or its authenticity...The book formed part of the Septuagint quoted by our Lord and the Apostles, whence it found its way into the Vulgate and modern versions. At the Council of Trent its divine inspiration was ruled official once and for all" ("Horses and Mules", *The Remnant*, Jan.15, 1997). The Fathers of the Church believed it to be a true story, but it has been held in suspicion by Protestants, "who adhere to the Masoretic text glossed and expurgated by the infidel Jews who convened in Jamnia around 90 AD."

To the degraded contraceptive mentality, the Book of Tobias proposes the only remedy possible by revealing that to seek sexual pleasure without progeny, even in wedlock, is to create a Satanic safehold. (ibid.)

Hertz explains:

As chieftain of the anti-life forces, Asmodeus² is the promoter of every contraceptive practice the world has ever known. Permitted by God to chastise the wicked and purify the elect, he therefore attacks life at its deepest source, in the hidden wills and intentions of potential parents. Striking at them through their inherited concupiscences for each other, he uses impurity as his weapon of choice, as often as not disguising it as 'responsible parenthood' ... The evil forces deployed against Christian marriage cannot be annihilated, for they are immortal and angelic, and they lay their snares with God's permission; but if St. Raphael's advice is followed, they can be routed and rendered helpless. (ibid.)

Marriage in Heaven?

Our Lord's response to the Sadducees regarding the woman with seven husbands indicated that in Heaven there is no marriage. (**Mark 12:25**) In Heaven, there is no death, and therefore no need for procreation. Had Jesus Christ subscribed to the primacy now given the "unitive" aspect of marriage, His answer would have been quite different.

Church Teaching: Papal & Patristic

Prior to 1930, according to Hertz, "it was universally accepted among professed Christians that the primary purpose of marriage was the procreation and nurture of offspring, to which the allaying of concupiscence must remain subordinate, the pleasure of the spouses or the enrichment of their personalities figuring as desirable by-products at best." (*Beyond Politics*, p 211) Saint Augustine maintained that "intercourse even with one's legitimate wife is unlawful and wicked where the conception of the offspring is **prevented**." (cited by Fellows, "Radical Faith: John Paul II and the Transitional Church," *The Remnant*, Nov. 15, 1997) Pius XI cited the saint in *Casti Connubii*, and then explained that "any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in a way that the act is **deliberately frustrated** in its natural powers to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin."

As St. Augustine wrote in *The Morals of the Manichees*:

Is it not you who used to warn us to watch as much as we could the time after purification of the menses when a woman is likely to conceive, and at that time refrain from intercourse lest a soul be implicated in the flesh? From this it follows that you consider

² Asmodeus, the demon of lust, appears frequently in Jewish literature; he is traditionally pictured with the feet of a cock. The demon's name is derived from the Hebrew *shamad*, "to destroy", and Cabalistic lore makes him the son of Adam and Lilith -- Adam's alleged first wife, created from filth and mud. In 17th century France, Asmodeus was invoked at Black Masses, and logically, children were sacrificed for his benefit (Richard Cavendish, *The Black Arts*). According to the *Lemegeton*, which cabalists attribute to Solomon, Asmodeus must always be invoked bareheaded. One of the Cabala's ten evil sephiroth, Asmodeus is classed by the grimoires among the evil seraphim; it stands to reason, therefore, that God would send an angel of Raphael's rank against him.

*marriage is not to procreate children, but to satiate lust. Marriage, as the marriage tablets themselves proclaim, joins male and female for the procreation of children. Whoever says that to procreate children is a worse sin than to copulate thereby prohibits [the purpose of] marriage; and he makes the woman no more a wife than a harlot, who, when she has been given certain gifts, is joined to a man to satisfy his lust. If there is a wife, there is matrimony. **But there is no matrimony where motherhood is prevented, for then there is no wife.***

The relationship between this understanding of the primary end of marriage and the prohibition of contraception is intrinsic. That they could be licitly divorced – and an **intentionally sterile** marriage act facilitated solely for the pleasure of the spouses – was unthinkable. Hertz notes that “when St. Thomas Aquinas postulated in his *Summa* that the marriage act whose motive is lust is always sinful, he was merely formulating the constant teaching of the Church.” (“Horses and Mules,” *The Remnant*, Jan. 15, 1997) She demonstrates her point by quoting not only St. Thomas, but Sts. Augustine, Jerome and Gregory the Great on the subject. They are in perfect accord. The primary end of marriage is the begetting of children, and intercourse undertaken for this purpose, or to discharge the marriage debt, reflects no fault. Undertaken with only lust in mind, intercourse, even between lawfully wedded spouses, is **venially** sinful. Blessed Innocent XI ratified the traditional doctrine by formally condemning the opinion that the marriage act engaged in solely from motives of pleasure could be free of sin (Denziger, No. 1159).

Demonic advances Lambeth begins the descent

Until 1930, not only did every Christian denomination teach that contraception is wrong, but even the secular world disapproved of it. State laws against selling birth control devices were not the work of Catholic legislatures. At the Lambeth Conference in 1930, however, the Anglican Church became the first Christian body to change its mind about contraception. (They had themselves previously condemned artificial birth control in 1908 and 1920.) The Anglican bishops passed a resolution which allowed **the use of methods** to limit the size of families “where there is a clearly-felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood.” The “primary and obvious method” was considered “complete abstinence from intercourse ... in a life of discipline and self-control lived in the power of the Holy Spirit”; however, other, artificial methods were also to be allowed.

According to George Sim Johnson, “*The Washington Post* was as indignant as Pope Pius XI. It seemed self-evident to at least a plurality of Christians that the **deliberate obstruction** of the life-making potential of sex is gravely disordered (“Contraception, Why Not?”). Catholic theologians opposed the secular drive to dismantle laws against the sale of contraceptives, even in the early 1960s. *America* opposed the use of government money for population control in 1962 – and in 1963 mounted an attack on Dr. Rock’s contraceptive pill.

Anne Roche Muggeridge points out that, in 1963, Jesuits John Ford and Gerald Kelly “taught in their widely used theological textbook *Contemporary Moral Theology* that ‘The Church is so irrevocably committed to the doctrine that contraception is intrinsically gravely immoral that no substantial change in this teaching is possible. It is irrevocable.’ ” (*The Desolate City: Revolution in the Catholic Church*, pp 77-78)

Muggeridge writes that

...in 1960 the majority of Catholics ... gave to the Church the presumption of truth in sexual morality as in all moral law because of the idea they held of the authority of the Church. And the presumption of truth bound them to obedience. Catholics accepted this, approaching the difficult teaching on marriage with varying degrees of heroism. Being sinners, they probably disobeyed it at least as often as they disobeyed the other natural moral laws. But even when they were totally disobedient, they continued to accept the Church's competence to teach it as true. Disobedient Catholics, knowing they had no firm purpose of amendment, absented themselves from the sacraments until such time as grace or circumstances enabled them to be once again in communion.

(Desolate City, p 105)

Pushing artificial contraception Assault on Church authority

Muggeridge observes that “fidelity to the Church’s teachings on marriage disappeared within a very short period, beginning in 1963. The first important break in the theological front was made by Edward Schillebeeckx, who argued in a Dutch Catholic weekly magazine that **openness to procreation applies to the whole of marriage rather than to each act.**” (*Desolate City*, p 78) He and other modernist theologians found the anti-ovulant pill morally acceptable, and they lobbied for a change in Church teaching.

Notre Dame’s subversion

Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, President of Notre Dame University and Director of the Council on Foreign Relations, was instrumental in the assault on Church teaching in this country. Dr. E. Michael Jones wrote of secret meetings hatched between Hesburgh and the Population Council, funded by Rockefeller Foundation to undermine the Church’s anti-contraceptive stance (“Ethnic Cleansing, Philadelphia Style,” *Culture Wars*, p 78) The Rockefeller Foundation, which has funded population “control” and abortion aggressively worldwide, later **rewarded Fr. Hesburgh** with the chairmanship of its board of trustees.)

The goal of these schemers, like that of Satan, was fewer Catholics. John Dewey’s war-time investigation of Philadelphia’s Polish community had shown liberal thinkers that Catholicism and Masonic principles were inimical. The Blanshard brothers worked on Dewey’s team, and their final report noted that “The test of any institution or society is ... the extent to which it enables and encourages every member of it to enjoy complete freedom of growth.” Polish Catholicism, Jones notes, failed. “It is a world which is simply not our world, a world in which independent criticism and disinterested science is and must remain unknown, a world which still abounds with the primitive concepts and fancies of the middle ages.” (*Journal of American History*, June 1997, pp 105-106, cited by Jones) Solid blue collar Catholic neighborhoods were rich in both vocations and political clout, and the postwar population surge threatened to expand further Catholic influence. Such was the “Catholic problem” – and the solution was contraception.

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund supplied American Friends Service Committees (Quakers) with thousands of dollars for block-busting services in ethnic neighborhoods, fracturing the existing Catholic power bases. In the ensuing “White flight,” Catholics scattered, moved to the more expensive suburbs, and contracepted so that their now-working wives could help

with the mortgage. And Hesburgh held secret conferences at Notre Dame University to imbue American theologians with a burning desire to approve contraception.

The Birth Control Commission

John XXIII (Angelo Roncalli) initially named three scientists and three theologians to a Vatican commission established in 1963 to study the new birth control pill. Monsignor George Kelly notes that “the group operated under no guidelines, an unusual procedure given the importance of the subject matter.” (*Keeping the Church Catholic with John Paul II*, p 31) Roncalli died before the Commission had its first session.

In 1964, Paul VI (Montini) added 46 more members to the Commission “In April 1964, the noted German Redemptorist theologian and Council *peritus*, Bernard Häring, addressed the Commission and persuaded it to drop the whole argument from natural law upon which the Church’s teaching on contraception was largely based ... Robert Kaiser, the influential *Time* magazine correspondent at Vatican II, calls Häring’s intervention ‘a turning point for the Commission.’ From that time, emphasis in the Commission’s discussion of marriage shifted from the objective, social, and eternal dimensions of marriage to the subjective, personal, and temporal.” (*Desolate City*, p 79)

Concurrently, the Council’s third session aired the revisionist theology of Häring and Schillebeeckx in the discussion of marriage in *Gaudium et Spes*. Cardinals **Leger** and **Suenens** argued for a new understanding of marriage that would legitimate marital intercourse without reference to procreation – a repudiation of Innocent XI’s decision. They urged a retirement of the hierarchical understanding of the ends of marriage.

Early in 1966, for the Commission’s second session, Montini added seven cardinals and nine bishops, including **Karol Wojtyla**. The final vote was 64 to 4 in favor of lifting the ban on contraception. The majority opinion argued that “There is a certain change in the mind of contemporary man. He feels that he is more conformed to his rational nature, created by God with liberty and responsibility, when he uses his skill to intervene in the biological processes of nature so that he can achieve the ends of the institution of marriage in the conditions of actual life than if he would abandon himself to chance” (cited by Kelly, p 43). The majority also sought to justify its position by pointing out that **what is now called Natural Family Planning is simply another form of contraception, since the intention is the same.**

The five long years between the formation of the Commission and the publication of *Humanae Vitae* had done serious damage; public opinion during the interim had been molded by outspoken modernist theologians, and bolstered by leaked accounts of the Commission’s viewpoint. Notre Dame continued its subversion of the Church’s teaching; Suenens and Häring roamed the United States, promoting change. In Msgr. Kelly’s words, “Once [the Commission’s] results became known, and they did with the proverbial speed of lightning, the immediate effects on the general Catholic public were three:

- 1) Doubts about the reliability of the Church’s teaching authority;
- 2) The establishment of ecclesiastical status and power for scholarly opinion independent of the Magisterium; and
- 3) The rise of conscience as the final arbiter of right and wrong, particularly when reinforced by popular opinion.” (p 42)

A *Newsweek* poll in 1967 showed that 73% of Catholics favored a change in teaching.

Dissent has its rewards

According to Jones, it was Hesburgh who had arranged an audience for Nelson Rockefeller with Paul VI – during which the former offered to write the latter’s birth control encyclical for him. While that offer was rejected, it did not end the involvement of the Rockefeller population planners with Vatican decision making. Jones reveals that Notre Dame sociologist Donald Barrett applied for a \$500,000 grant from the Population Council for Notre Dame; his request was forwarded to the Ford Foundation, which awarded the grant while Barrett and Noonan were deliberating on the Birth Control Commission! Christian Family Movement’s Patricia Crowley, a Commission member from the beginning, became a dissenter from *Humanae Vitae* – and graduated from the commission to giving Rockefeller-funded symposia in Italy.

Dissent and consequences

In *Humanae Vitae*, Paul 6 “came down on the side of the constant teaching [against **artificial** contraception], thus earning the hatred of dissenters; yet by making no effort to enforce the teaching or to discipline prestigious bishops and theologians who publicly dissented, he earned the rooted distrust of the still numerous obedient faithful who would otherwise have rallied to his support.” (*Desolate City*, p 83) The document itself is inconsistent, and the revolutionaries scored points in its rejection of the hierarchical ends of marriage. When Paul VI issued the encyclical, “he welcomed the ‘lively debate’ he hoped would ensue. But if contraception is indeed, as *Humanae Vitae* says, ‘In contradiction with the design constitutive of marriage and the will of the Author of life,’ what can be left to debate? He claimed in *Humanae Vitae* that the teaching authority of the Church was exercising the power given it by Christ to interpret authentically and authoritatively not only the Gospel but also the natural moral law. Yet he instructed the spokesman for the Vatican at the press conference held upon the publication of the encyclical to answer to the question upon the status of *Humanae Vitae* **that the encyclical was not to be considered an infallible teaching.**” (p 84) He opened the Church to the crippling contraceptive war.

Humanae Vitae was released in July 1968 – and it was immediately met by organized dissent. Father Charles Curran had 87 signatures on his opposing statement by the following morning, including that of his mentor, Bernard Häring.

In Muggeridge’s view, the revolution used the **pretext of contraception** to introduce, into Catholic thinking, the Protestant principle of **private judgment** – thereby undermining the Church’s teaching authority on any subject. At their first press conference the dissenters rebuked Paul VI, noting that “the encyclical assumes that the Church is identical with the hierarchical office ... It betrays a narrow and positivistic notion of papal authority as illustrated by the rejection of the majority view presented by the Commission established to consider the question ...” The Theologians’ statement concluded that “As Roman Catholic theologians, conscious of our duty and limitations, we conclude that spouses may responsibly decide according to their conscience that artificial contraception in some circumstances is permissible and indeed necessary to preserve and foster the values and sacredness of marriage.” (p 87)

Most significantly, Muggeridge noted that those Catholics who accepted the dissenting theologians’ “permission” to contracept found themselves “in self-justification, throwing in

their lot with the revolutionary ideology.”³ (p 80) The number of American Catholic women who did so was not insignificant. Those using birth control rose from 30% in 1955 to 53% in 1968. Muggeridge cites the results of Andrew Greeley’s surveys, establishing that, between 1963 and 1974, opposition to contraception fell from 52% to 13%.

Pushing "natural" contraception: Assault on the ends of marriage

A smaller percentage of Catholics remained unwilling to dissent from Rome’s teaching regarding artificial contraception, even with the encouragement of apostate theologians. These were the loyal folk, those willing to undertake some sacrifices at the behest of their Church. For these Catholics, Asmodeus had another plan: Natural Family Planning (NFP).

“The traditional Church,” writes Dr. Rama Coomaraswamy, “taught *de fide* that: ‘The primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of offspring, while its secondary purposes are mutual help and the allaying ... of concupiscence. The latter are entirely subordinate to the former.’” (“The Problem with the Other Sacraments,” <http://www.traditio.com>). This, he explains, was so declared by the Holy Office with the approval of Pius XII (AAS 36, 1944, 103). As long as the Church’s teaching on the ends of marriage remained intact, NFP, **with its clear contraceptive intent**, would remain, at best, suspect.⁴ To inject natural contraception into the loyal Catholic family, it therefore became necessary to change the Church’s *de fide* teaching.

It will be observed in the ensuing discussion that the shift away from procreation as the primary end of marriage directly parallels the dramatic rise in conciliar church approval of natural contraception. In the space of a few decades, barrier-free but intentionally contraceptive behavior shed its centuries-old stigma of mortal sin and became something tantamount to a required virtue.

Love and Responsibility

In his article serialized in *The Remnant*, Fellows traced the shift in the ends of marriage to Karol Wojtyla’s 1960 book, *Love and Responsibility*. “Although Wojtyla acknowledged the importance of procreation in marriage, his primary focus was on what is now called the ‘unitive aspect’ – the sexual relationship between husband and wife. Biographers have noted that Bishop Wojtyla’s book dwelled on ‘sexual excitement, unsatisfied wives who faked orgasms,’ and ‘the fundamental importance of a man’s making sure that his mate climaxed.’ ... Wojtyla also included several female fertility tables, with explanations, and a description of

³ The principle remains true when applied to NFP as well. Acceptance of NFP on the authority of the Council and the last three popes effectively separates Conciliar Catholics from the nearly 2000 year Magisterium -- which rejected any interference in the process of procreation. No doubt today's NFP practitioners consider themselves faithful Catholics; they're following the Pope, after all, and obeying the mandates of recent encyclicals. Knowingly or not, however, Conciliar NFP adherents, too, have been bribed. Having accepted natural contraception, they lend their uncritical support to every other innovation introduced by the Council, or by this Pope -- from "interfaith dialogue" to "liturgical reform". To reject any of the reforms would be to cast doubt upon the legitimacy of their (albeit natural) form of contraception. 19 centuries of authoritative Church teaching has become, for the Conciliar Catholic, either unknown or irrelevant; layman and cleric alike seem unable to quote anything written before 1963.

⁴ Mark Fellows notes that "...until this century, NFP was generally viewed as a morally questionable practice, occasionally suggested in the confessional "to lead habitual onanists from their mortal sin" ("Radical Faith", *Remnant*, Jan. 31, 1998).

‘the configuration of the female sex organ.’” (“Radical Faith,” *The Remnant*, Nov. 15, 1997) The book was outspoken in its advocacy of NFP.

According to Fellows, “Bishop Wojtyla may or may not have intended to place the sexual relationship of husband and wife on a par with the divine imperative of procreation, but this was the practical effect of *Love and Responsibility* ... The Bishop’s preoccupation with marital intercourse, and his comparative neglect of its primary end, procreation, was reminiscent of the views of certain theologians who were censored by Pope Pius XII for teaching that ‘the secondary ends of marriage are not subordinated to the primary end, but of equal importance and independent of it.’ ” (ibid.)

Overview of encyclicals and Vatican II documents

Casti Connubii, of course, provides the benchmark against which doctrinal deviations can be measured. In this encyclical, Pius XI reiterated the constant magisterial teaching regarding both the primary, generative end of marriage and the ‘intrinsically vicious” nature of **its deliberate frustration**.

In his *Allocution to the Italian Midwives*, Pius XII reaffirmed the traditional teaching that procreation is the principal end of marriage. He made, however, a “hard case” concession in the use of natural family planning, although with **dire warnings** should the concession be **abused**.

Archbishop Karol Wojtyla played a significant role in re-drafting *Gaudium et Spes*. Michael Davies has called it “a depressing mixture of Christianity and humanist utopianism.” As John-Paul II, Wojtyla acknowledged his indebtedness to the liberal priests Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac in this effort – priests whom Fellows notes had been “publicly censured by Pius XII for their modernism. Vatican II moved de Lubac and Congar from the doghouse to the penthouse. After joining forces with Wojtyla for *Gaudium et Spes*, the unrepentant theologians were rewarded with cardinal’s hats from him when he became John-Paul II.

In *Gaudium et Spes*, procreation receives approval, but “Marriage is **not** merely for the procreation of children ...” *Gaudium et Spes*, “under cover of pastoral language, deliberately omit[s] the Church’s teaching that procreation was the primary end of marriage and conjugal love the secondary end. This was done ‘in order to give special emphasis to the unitive end of marriage.’ ” (ibid.)

Artificial contraception was not explicitly condemned, and oblique reference is made to NFP. **The procreative prerogative is effectively snatched from God and given to the spouses:** “It is the *married couple themselves* who must in the last analysis arrive at these judgments before God.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, note 50). This was, after all, the Vatican II document which asserted that “Believers and unbelievers agree almost unanimously that **all things on earth should be ordained to man** as to their center and summit.” (note 12)

Fellows notes that “the evolution of the novelty in *Gaudium et Spes* (presenting procreation and conjugal love as co-equal) continued in *Humanae Vitae* ... There is a consensus among Wojtyla’s recent biographers that his influence as a consultant and drafter were considerable. His signature may appear in the following tactic used by the writers of *Humanae Vitae*, but first used by Bishop Wojtyla in *Love and Responsibility*. The tactic: Give only brief mention that ‘serious reasons’ are required for the practice of NFP, but emphasize instead the universally appealing humanity of husband and wife, and how essential natural family planning is to sustaining the marital bond.” (ibid.)

NFP made its official debut in *Humanae Vitae*. Fellows observes that the “just motives” cited by *Humanae Vitae* as justification for the use of NFP “are the traditional secondary ends of marriage, which Pius XI and Pius XII (and of all popes before them) declared must remain subordinate to the primary end of procreation. By careful paraphrase and textual placement, the authors of *Humanae Vitae* give the impression that Pius XII held the ‘manifesting of affection’ and the ‘safeguarding of mutual fidelity’ to justify recourse to NFP. **Pius XII never taught this, but Cardinal Wojtyla did.** He still does.”

While much of the Catholic world lamented *Humanae Vitae*’s reiteration of the traditional condemnation of artificial contraception, a few of the more astute observers recognized the revolution represented by the document’s shift in emphasis. Notre Dame’s Noonan argued that, properly understood, the document actually gave papal **approval** to contraception by making the ends of marriage coequal. “It is clear,” he wrote, “that not every act need be open to the transmission of life ...” Noonan had already abandoned arguments from natural law in favor of a more subjective, Maritain-inspired personalism.

Familiaris Consortio took the revolution one step further, **omitting any need for a ‘serious reason’ to practice NFP**. Instead, it exhorts everyone involved to make “a broader, more decisive and more systematic effort to make the natural methods of regulating fertility known, respected and applied.” The reversal is complete; today, NFP is a “morally required activity ... not something which is permitted in exceptional circumstances, but an attitude and behavior which are necessary and obligatory” – at least according to Wladyslaw Skrzydlewski, a theologian and spokesman for the Pontifical Council for the Family (quoted by Fellows, *The Remnant*, Jan.15,1998). Try to find a diocesan Pre-Cana program without an NFP component.

Aggiornamento

Pope Pius VI had warned that “It is not fitting that the Church of God be changed according to the fluctuations of worldly necessity.” (*Quod Aliquantum*, 1791) The Church’s position prior to Vatican II was that “Christ has entrusted His Church with all truth.” (Pope Pius XII, Mar.9,1956); as His earthly representative, the Church alone was the moral arbiter of human behavior. Her decisions were morally binding – the concept of “liberty of conscience” had been condemned (Pope Pius IX, *Syllabus of Modern Errors*).

Gaudium et Spes declared that the Church should instead be adjusted to the modern – and, by 1963, thoroughly narcissistic – world (note 44). The widespread acceptance of the work of Heinz Kohut in the 1960s popularized the concept of self-esteem – a positive reworking of narcissism, now viewed as “healthy.” Courtesy of the Human Potential and Self-Psychology movement, humility, modesty and self-sacrifice came to be viewed as repression, rather than virtue. “We began to believe that we have no obligation to live by any set of absolute standards of good and evil – we could choose our own. We convinced ourselves that self-fulfillment, self-actualization, self-realization and so on was the highest standard of good.” (“NARTH Interviews Dr. Satinover,” *NARTH Bulletin*, September 1995)

The world’s toxic narcissism is nowhere more evident than in *Gaudium et Spes*. Human life, including the life of the Church, was **no longer ordered to God** – instead, “Christians cannot yearn for anything more ardently than **to serve the men** of the modern world.” (note 93) The Church, instead of proclaiming the debt to God, “proclaims the rights of man.” (note 41) Scholasticism and reasoning from natural law had been abandoned in favor of personalism, expressed in “pastoral language.” That the same document should view marriage first

and foremost from the viewpoint of human glorification followed logically from this perverted world-view.

The personalist problem

“Self-actualization” reaches its philosophical zenith in the evolutionary personalist idea propounded by Mounier, Maritain, and the Catholic Worker movement. In the words of Mounier: “A personalist civilization is one whose structure and spirit are directed towards the development as persons of all the individuals constituting it. They have as their ultimate end to enable every individual to live as a person, that is, to exercise a maximum of initiative, responsibility, and spiritual life ... The personalism that we have delineated places a spiritual value, i. e., the person, *the receptacle and the root of all other values*, at the very heart and center of all human reality.”

Personalism is Humanism in vague religious dress; it aims at the utopian construction of a new earth based upon its man-centered principles. “Man,” explained Pope St. Pius X, “has with infinite temerity put himself in the place of God, raising himself above all that is called God; in such wise that although he cannot utterly extinguish in himself all knowledge of God, he has condemned God’s majesty and, as it were, made of the universe a temple wherein he himself is to be adored.” (*E supremi*)

The personalist influence on the new theology of marriage is indisputable. **The pleasure of the spouses now enjoys pride of place in Church documents, supplanting procreation.**

Sacralizing Sex

Recent personalist Church documents on marriage have, in the words of Ursula Oxfort, “contrived to adorn human love with divine attributes in order to glorify the love of the creature, shutting out the love of the Creator.” (*Christian Counter Revolution*, No. 63) *Gaudium et Spes* (note 49) maintains that “This [sexual] love that the Lord has judged worthy of special gifts, healing, perfecting, and exalting gifts of grace and charity.” The authors then note that “such love, **merging the human with the divine**, leads the spouses to a free and mutual gift of themselves ...”

Gaudium et Spes has consistently maintained that man is to be the focus of all attention; here it is alleged that the divine law “reveals and protects the integral meaning of conjugal love, and impels it toward a truly **human fulfillment** ... The sexual characteristics of man and the human faculty of reproduction wonderfully exceed the dispositions of lower forms of life. Hence, the acts themselves which are proper to conjugal love, and which are exercised in accord with genuine human dignity, must be **honored with great reverence.**” (notes 50-51)

Sex may be sacred to Freemasons and to the New Theologians, but the Church had always taught a much more balanced view of procreation. As Pius XI wrote in *Casti Connubii*, “Although Christian spouses, even if sanctified themselves, cannot transmit sanctification to their progeny, nay, although **the very natural process of generating life has become the way of death by which original sin is passed on to posterity**, nevertheless they share to some extent in the blessings of that primeval marriage of paradise, since it is theirs to offer their offspring to the Church in order that ... they may be regenerated through the laver of baptism unto supernatural life ...” Saint Thomas Aquinas explained that “venereal concupiscence and pleasure are not subject to the command and moderation ... due to the punishment for the first sin.” (*Summa Theologica*, cited by Oxfort) Sex is sacred only to those who overlook or deny

original sin. While its proper use does not prevent holiness, neither does it automatically produce it. “It is heresy,” notes Oxford, “to say that a married couple are sanctified through carnal pleasures when in fact their holiness is derived from the practice of heroic Christian virtues ...” (ibid.)

The fallout, to date: Canon Law

Monsignor Cormac Burke, an Opus Dei member and a judge of the Roman Rota, the Church’s highest appeals court, argues that new developments in canon law reflect a “deeper understanding of marriage, based on the Christian personalism of Vatican II.” He acknowledges that neither Vatican II nor *Familiaris Consortio* makes any mention of a hierarchy of ends in marriage ... noting that “the Church today defines marriage with two equal and inter-related primary ends.” (“Marriage, Annulment, and the Quest for Lasting Commitment,” *Catholic World Report*, January 1996) The **new conciliar code** says that marriage “is by its nature ordered to the good of the spouses and to the procreation and education of offspring” (1055) – **omitting any hierarchical understanding of ends, and inverting the order to place the good of spouses first.** The *New Catechism of the Catholic Church* phraseology is identical.

Canon 1057 of the new Code describes matrimonial consent as the act by which the spouses “mutually give and accept each other in order to establish a marriage,” phraseology so broad and imprecise that the blame for the American **defect of consent** annulment explosion can be laid at its door. Robert Vasoli has pointed out that this communion of souls construct did not originate at Vatican II, but was recognized by earlier popes. “Whatever its derivation, however, it is nonetheless debatable whether it is integral to the essence of a valid marriage, or more appropriately to the essence of **ideal** marriage.” (*What God Has Joined Together*, p 40) To the utopian naturalists of Vatican II, the ideal is attainable here, in this life ... **and failure to obtain it may indicate that no marriage ever took place.**

Doctor Coomaraswamy cited some far-reaching societal implications of the changes: “With the traditional teaching, couples, whose love for any reason had grown cold, still stayed together for the sake of the children. Now, should the first listed reason for marriage no longer persist, divorce or separation is justified. No longer does the procreation and education of children come first. And to further facilitate the possibility of divorce, one of the new and post-conciliar indications allowed by the Rota (marriage court) is ‘**psychological immaturity.**’ Needless to say, it is only the saint who is not psychologically immature.” (“The Problem with the Other Sacraments”)

Societal impact

Divorce is hardly the only social ill traceable directly to the shift in the ends of marriage. Muggeridge asks, “If in marriage it is sometimes permissible to divorce the sexual act from its natural purpose, procreation, in the name of other values – love, charity, support, fidelity, health – why should it be wrong to divorce it from its purpose in cases where the same values might be felt to obtain – in masturbation, homosexuality, adultery, fornication, bestiality, artificial insemination, the sale of sperm, surrogate motherhood?” (p 100)

These results were not unforeseen. In 1930, when the Anglicans decided at Lambeth to allow contraception in hard cases, Charles Gore, one of their theologian/bishops, rose to issue a warning that cited most of the same logical outcomes. Sigmund Freud, certainly no friend of the Church, in a lecture entitled, “The Sexual Life of Human Beings,” had pointed out that

“The abandonment of the reproductive function is the common feature of all perversions. We actually describe a sexual activity as perverse if it has given up the aim of reproduction and pursues the attainment of pleasure as an aim independent of it. So, as you will see, the breach and turning point in the development of sexual life lies in becoming subordinate to the purpose of reproduction. Everything that happens before this turn of events and equally everything that disregards it and that aims solely at obtaining pleasure is given the uncomplimentary name of ‘perverse’ and as such is proscribed.” The significance of Freud’s viewpoint was not lost on former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Runcie, who knowingly ordained active homosexuals. Runcie traces today’s tolerance of homosexuality to the Lambeth conference.

Active promotion of NFP

Solange Hertz notes that “under the leadership of social apostles like Mother Teresa and Fr. Paul Marx, OSB... **birth regulation is now regarded as an indispensable adjunct of any pro-life program carried on under the aegis of the Church ...**” (*Beyond Politics*, p 215) Human Life International’s Fr. Paul Marx, according to Hertz, admits to having fostered Natural Family Planning since his 1947 ordination. “Anyone who accepts *Humanae Vitae*,” he maintains, “must actively promote ... Natural Family Planning.” NFP, initially allowed, Hertz says, “in exceptional cases as a lesser evil to incorrigible onanism,” has become for Fr. Marx an admirable and recommended practice for all married Catholics.

Hertz quotes a document distributed in the last decade by the Office of Natural Family Planning in the Archdiocese of Washington, D. C., in which the method’s contraceptive intent could not be clearer. “When used as instructed, Natural Family Planning methods are 98% effective in preventing pregnancy.” According to that circular, NFP techniques provide a “safe, non-chemical and non-mechanical approach ... with no side effects” which can “build a woman’s confidence and self-esteem.” (“Horses and Mules,” *The Remnant*, Jan.15, 1997) The guidelines in “Preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage” issued by the Vatican on May 27, 1996 emphasized the need for couples contemplating conjugal life to be aware of NFP techniques.

Answering the claims of NFP

Claim #1: “NFP is natural.”

There is nothing natural about intentionally divorcing an action from its intended purpose. Father Lavaud, OP, has said “we cannot see an adaptation to nature in something which is, in effect, a trick to frustrate nature.” (cited by Dvorak, p 48) As Romano Amerio explained, “contraception effects a **dissociation between what nature intends and what the human will intends**, or to put it in terms of an old but precise distinction, between the *finis operis* [the goal of the work] and the *finis operantis* [the goal of the worker] ... If ... the will intervenes in order to detach a physiological function from its end, so as to pursue pleasure while rejecting the natural effect of the function, a vice exists in the man in question ...” (*Iota Unum*, pp 664-665)

Dvorak simplifies: “It is a principle of ethics that a thing used in opposition to the purpose for which it was intended is a misuse or perversion of it – that is, to use something against its own purpose is not permitted.” She notes that birth control requires premeditation, planning reflection and the full consent of the will. “The First Commandment is already broken with

the first step – premeditation – because they desire to usurp dominion over life-giving powers that belong to God alone.” (ibid.) Planning again rejects God’s providence. **These conditions exist whether the couple is investing in latex or applying fertility cycle information.**

Animal life, Dvorak notes, instinctively reproduces according to the Natural Law because animals lack both the intelligence and the free will to oppose it; their nature will not allow copulation during infertile times. Hertz further expands the thought: “Falling even lower than barnyard morality, which follows God’s law by bringing males to females in heat, the newly resuscitated ancient practice [of NFP] actually reverses the laws of nature by precisely withdrawing females at such times.” (“Horses and Mules,” *The Remnant*, Jan.31, 1997)

What NFP proponents really mean by “natural” is that their method is “aesthetic”; it does not require the insertion of foreign objects or chemicals into the human body. For this reason, NFP has found considerable support among heterosexual feminists. The Federation of Feminist Women’s Health Centers and the Fertility Awareness Network recommend NFP solely to avoid the deleterious physical effects of artificial birth control. They have no qualms whatsoever about recommending abortion as a backup for NFP failure.

Claim #2: “NFP is open to life.”

This argument is repeatedly advanced by NFP proponents, who fail to explain how a contraceptive method with a “success rate” of 98% can be considered “open.” A good deal of charting, temperature-taking, and mucus evaluation has been undertaken precisely to assure that the act will be sterile. Professor Hallegers’ comments regarding the rhythm method apply equally well to its NFP cousin: “When there is no ovum to fertilize, the act is closed to reproduction.” (*Look*, Dec.19, 1968)

NFPers maintain that part of their “openness to life” consists of their willingness to parent their contraceptive errors. It has been successfully argued by pro-contraceptive individuals, however, that those who accidentally become parents despite the use of latex products could equally accept the young failure into their families, so this argument neither validates NFP nor differentiates it from any other contraceptive method. The words of Pope Pius XII, spoken in the *Allocution to the Italian Midwives*, should serve to silence forever this particular argument: “The simple fact that the spouses do not violate the nature of the act of procreation and are even ready to accept and raise a child who, despite their precautions, should be born, **is not in itself able to guarantee the rightness of their intentions nor of the absolute morality of such motives.**”

It is not necessary to sin with regard to the means in order to sin **by intentionally frustrating** the intended end of the marriage act. “It is ... sinful,” said Cardinal Mindszenty, “to **‘be careful,’** to attempt deliberately to avoid pregnancy – for all the rights involve responsibilities. Those who attempt to avoid the responsibility of conceiving a child turn the sanctuary of marriage into a den of iniquity. The marriage partners become companions in sin.” (cited by Dvorak, p 12)

Claim #3: “NFP strengthens the marriage.”

According to the American Life League’s *Pro-Life Encyclopedia*, NFP strengthens marriage because it “increases the husband’s respect for his wife’s fertility.” What that article does not explain is how the fixation on the mechanical aspects, or the dissection of the conjugal intimacies in group discussion (as suggested in *Humanae Vitae*, paragraph 26) fosters re-

spect. Cardinal John Wright, however, observed that “the separation of childbearing and love has in turn allowed man to turn his wife into a mistress until her ability to satisfy his lust wanes.” (cited by Dvorak, p 7) Saint Augustine, of course, had arrived at the same conclusion 1600 years previously.

This same *Encyclopedia* notes that NFP “allows the couple to share equally the responsibility of deciding whether to have a child and whether to make love ...” This is, of course, the crux of the matter. Deciding whether a new person should be brought into existence is God’s prerogative, not a responsibility the spouses should “share equally.”

Marriage is strengthened by the cooperation with grace. “There is no possible circumstance,” wrote Pius XI, “in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the Grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted ... ‘Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely that there are precepts of God impossible for the just to observe. God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help you.’” God will never, however, bless the marriage in which the partners seek to avoid the responsibility of conception, according to Cardinal Mindszenty.

Claim #4: “NFP requires self-denial.”

Deploring our cultural tendency to favor the easy over the difficult, the fast over the time-consuming, NFP supporters impute virtue to their contraceptive method on the basis of the effort involved in it. There is no satisfactory logic behind their claim; 20 hours of study does not in and of itself confer virtue upon an undertaking. Most successful bank robberies require much more planning than NFP classes involve. The Communist revolution in Russia was years in the making.

Claims of NFP asceticism are recognizable as a Satanic counterfeit; **the true asceticism of marriage is the submission to the Divine will in bringing into existence those children whom God chooses to create, regardless of the accompanying hardship.** “Let’s have no talk about ‘virtuous continence,’ ” wrote Fr. Calkins. “That’s a red herring often dragged in to confuse the issue. The people who use rhythm are not primarily concerned about continence. They seek to avoid conception.”

Tobias was told to remain continent for three days after his marriage ... but his was not the timed abstinence that aims at the avoidance of conception! What the Church has recognized is abstinence that honor’s God’s role in marriage, not abstinence that usurps that role! This legitimate abstinence, mentioned by St. Paul, has a higher motive – prayer. Hertz notes that “in 1911 the last Holy Roman Emperor, Karl von Hapsburg of Austria, ... began his marriage with Empress Zita ... by making a retreat with her, for ‘Now we have to help each other get to Heaven.’” (“Horses and Mules,” *The Remnant*, January 1997) Dvorak points out that during Advent and Lent, couples **who were able** were advised to abstain from relations as penance, or preparation.

Claim #5

“NFP facilitates responsible parenthood.”

The argument that children should be conceived only when the family, or the planet, can comfortably accommodate them was implicitly advanced by the majority “Pill Commission” report, and continues to be a staple in the pro-NFP argument arsenal. Surely, it is argued, we are expected to use our God-given rationality to control the biological processes for optimal results. The prideful assumption of **responsibility for a task that is not within one’s purview**, however, was at the core of the original sin. “I am he who should decide, who is Lord over me?” As Amerio noted, such an attitude springs from “the belief that man governs himself ... [that] he is the purpose for which the world exists, and that the exercise of control over the things of this world is the real task allotted to the human race.” (*Iota Unum*, p 473)

The very phrase “responsible parenthood,” used by John-Paul II, was originally coined by Planned Parenthood to further their contraceptive objectives. Yet contraception, according to Hertz, “is a kind of metaphysical murder in that it deprives a particular child of his very existence by depriving him of his soul ... [Those] whose avowed intention is only to ‘space’ births conveniently ... are actually arguing that one child is as good as another, provided it appears at the proper time.” (*Beyond Politics*, p 204) She quotes Robert Ruff, author of *Aborting Planned Parenthood*: “80% of ... abortions were performed on women who said [that] they wanted more children, [but] just not right now ... Without acceptance of family planning, the concepts of unintended pregnancy, unwanted child, and abortion simply do not exist ... Abortion is not the inevitable result of a failure to use family planning; quite the contrary, **abortion is the inevitable result of acceptance of the family planning mentality.**”

The responsibility people need to exercise is the freely chosen conformity of their wills to the will of their Creator. The consequences for failing to do so are dire. As St. John Vianney told the pregnant mother of a large family: “Be comforted ... if only you knew the women who will go to Hell because they did not bring into the world the children they should have given to it.” (cited by Dvorak, p 33).

Claim #6

“The Pope said that we should use NFP.”

Encyclicals, we are told, carry the weight of doctrine when they are consistent with Church Tradition. Dvorak points out that *Casti Connubii* is such an encyclical. *Casti Connubii* tells us, as have the Fathers and Doctors of the Church before it, that “Any use of the marriage act, in the exercise of which it is designedly deprived of its natural power of procreating life, infringes on the law of God and of nature, and those who have committed any such act are stained with the guilt of serious sin.” *Humanae Vitae*, however, introduces and endorses the novelty of NFP. Since the two encyclicals contradict each other, **one must be wrong** – and the erroneous encyclical is the one which is **not consonant** with the Tradition of the Church.

“[T]he Holy Spirit,” according to the Vatican Council (1870), “was **not promised** to the successors of Peter that by His revelation they might disclose **new doctrine**, but that by His help they might guard sacredly the revelation transmitted through the apostles and the deposit of faith ...” (*Enchiridion Symbolorum*, No. 1836). In the Coronation Oath, the Pope swears, “I vow to **change nothing of the received tradition** and nothing thereof I have found before me guarded by my God-pleasing predecessors, to encroach, to alter (change), or to permit any

innovation therein.” John Vennari reasons that “this Oath ... sworn by popes for 13 centuries, is ample demonstration that it is **possible** for a pope to institute or permit unlawful changes that are out of step with Church Tradition. If it were impossible for the Popes to deviate, then there would be no need for this severe Oath.” (“Resisting Wayward Prelates,” *Catholic Family News*, January 1996)

What course of action, then, is to be pursued by the faithful Catholic when confronted with dissonant teaching? Saint Thomas Aquinas taught, “Hold firmly that your faith is identical with that of the ancients. Deny this and you dissolve the unity of the Church.” It is licit, according to St. Robert Bellarmine, to resist a Pontiff who errs, “by not doing what he orders and preventing his will from being executed; it is not licit, however, to judge, punish or depose him, since these are acts proper to a superior.”

Is population the problem?

From Hertz,

...the idea that we should plan families for ourselves, using our own natural reason to determine when or whether others should be born, all for the betterment of mankind, is simply one more application of the atheistic principle behind secular governments, cookie-cutter villages, planned communities, and synthetic nations ... [p]art and parcel of the same world revolution which substituted the Rights of Man for the Will of God ...” (*Beyond Politics*, p 205)

Beyond Malthus

Planning of this sort received its first public endorsement with the dawning of the so-called Enlightenment. Economist and Anglican divine Thomas Robert Malthus published his *Essay on the Principle of Population as it Affects the Future Improvement of Society* in 1798, proposing the adoption of what Hertz terms “the old Manichean practice which now passes for Catholic birth control as a cure for the overpopulation he believed to be the root cause of poverty. Contemplating the menacing hordes of the future unborn relentlessly concentrating in cities and consuming everything in sight, he mistook the illusion created by the Industrial Revolution for reality and panicked, communicating his alarm to John Stuart Mill, Robert Owen and numbers of nineteenth century reformers.” (*Beyond Politics*, p 211)

Population control remains a central tenet of the social planning agenda, the proponents of which demonstrate a rather astonishing ability to ignore evidence contradicting their position. (The failure of the predictions in Paul Ehrlich’s book, *The Population Bomb*, to materialize has in no way damaged his credibility.) Catholic utopians have wholeheartedly embraced the population planning construct.

Mother Teresa

According to Hertz, Mother Teresa “boasted in her acceptance speech for the Nobel prize in 1979 that ‘in Calcutta alone in six years ... we have had 61,273 babies less from the families who would have had them, because they practice this natural way of abstaining ...’” (*Beyond Politics*, p 215) Her sisters go from house to house in India, teaching the method and doing follow-ups.

John Paul II

Karol Wojtyla has not only boosted the unitive aspect of marriage at the expense of the generative – he has also accepted the “need” for family planning on a societal scale. Hertz writes that “in anticipation of the International Conference on Population and Development called for in 1994 in Cairo by the United Nations, John Paul II pointed out the ‘great potential’ for family planning, inasmuch as ‘humanity as a whole is growing at a rate which could, in the future, cause difficulties for coexistence among peoples.’ Quoting from the new Catechism ... he conceded, ‘the state has a responsibility for its citizens’ well-being. In this capacity it is legitimate for it to intervene to orient the demography of the population. This can be done by means of objective and respectful measures. **Spouses must make their decision to procreate** according to a reasonable plan based on a generous, and at the same time, realistic evaluation of their possibilities, the good of the newborn, and that of society in light of objective moral criteria.’ ” (cited by Hertz, p 215)

Fiat or non serviam? A 50-year-old summation

Dvorak quotes at length from an article by Fr. Hugh Calkins, OSM, which appeared in the June, 1948 issue of *Integrity* magazine. “The thing is out of hand,” Fr. Calkins explained. “A method meant to be a temporary solution of a critical problem has become a way of life, a very selfish, luxury-loving, materialistic way of life ...”

Father Calkins cited the unbridled promotion of what was then the rhythm method via lectures, retreats, marriage preparation programs, etc., all designed to help the Catholic couple “enjoy all the privileges and none of the obligations of marriage ... It is enough to make God vomit out of His mouth the creatures who ignore so completely the divine purpose of Marriage. How will we ... convert Godless America, or produce modern saints, if we will not give God citizens for His Heavenly Kingdom?”

“... There has sprung full-grown from pagan propaganda this vicious rhythm mentality – a state of mind that will not trust God ... God just does not know how to arrange things there. We will take care of that through family planning. But the planning centers on how **not** to have a family. So our do-gooders extol either the practice of total sexual abstinence (oh, so piously), even when the other partner is unwilling and is being justly defrauded, or the practice of methodical rhythm. They do not admit or do not care about the mortal sins such systems produce. They are determined: No Pregnancy Now. There is the state of mind that despairs of God’s help.

“These bleeding hearts, especially busybodies-in-law and nosey neighbors, scream protestingly: ‘Who will take care of the next baby?’ The simple answer is: the same God that takes care of you even when you resist His will. ‘But we must give our children security and education.’ Just because God does not give parents and children all that today’s phony materialistic standards require does not mean that He fails them. He did not give His own Mother much in material security, but Heaven, not security, is the goal set for the babies God sends ...

“Too many people are trying to play God. God alone is still the Author of new life. And God does not need alarmist doctors, despairing parents, not even thoughtless priests trying to run His affairs and deciding when new life shall be born. **What God wants from us is free will cooperation with His Will** ... What God demands from married partners is willingness

to have children He shall decide to send. **People get to Heaven only by doing God's Will, not by planning things for Him ...**

"If the rhythm mentality prevailed ... there would have been no Bernadette of Lourdes, coming from a jail flat, nor Teresa of Lisieux, from sickly parents and a mother who had lost three babies in a row, and most certainly not a Catherine of Siena, a 23rd child, if the 'prudent planners' had had their way. What all these extollers of prudence forget is: **God's will is the end of man, the essence of sanctity is doing His Will within our state of life ...**"

Notes

¹ Hertz notes that the Book of Tobias forms part of Scripture's Catholic Canon. "Beyond deploring its passing popularity among early Gnostics, Mother Church has never entertained any serious doubts of its worth or its authenticity... The book formed part of the Septuagint quoted by our Lord and the Apostles, whence it found its way into the Vulgate and modern versions. At the Council of Trent its divine inspiration was ruled official once and for all" ("Horses and Mules", *The Remnant*, Jan. 15, 1997). The Fathers of the Church believed it to be a true story, but it has been held in suspicion by Protestants, "who adhere to the Masoretic text glossed and expurgated by the infidel Jews who convened in Jamnia around 90 AD."

² Asmodeus, the demon of lust, appears frequently in Jewish literature; he is traditionally pictured with the feet of a cock. The demon's name is derived from the Hebrew *shamad*, "to destroy", and Cabalistic lore makes him the son of Adam and Lilith -- Adam's alleged first wife, created from filth and mud. In 17th century France, Asmodeus was invoked at Black Masses, and logically, children were sacrificed for his benefit (Richard Cavendish, *The Black Arts*). According to the *Lemegeton*, which cabalists attribute to Solomon, Asmodeus must always be invoked bareheaded. One of the Cabala's ten evil sephiroth, Asmodeus, is classed by the grimoires among the evil seraphim; it stands to reason, therefore, that God would send an angel of Raphael's rank against him.

³ The principle remains true when applied to NFP as well. Acceptance of NFP on the authority of the Council and the last three popes effectively separates Conciliar Catholics from the nearly 2000 year Magisterium -- which rejected any interference in the process of procreation. No doubt today's NFP practitioners consider themselves faithful Catholics; they're following the Pope, after all, and obeying the mandates of recent encyclicals. Knowingly or not, however, Conciliar NFP adherents, too, have been bribed. Having accepted natural contraception, they lend their uncritical support to every other innovation introduced by the Council, or by this Pope -- from "interfaith dialogue" to "liturgical reform". To reject any of the reforms would be to cast doubt upon the legitimacy of their (albeit natural) form of contraception. 19 centuries of authoritative Church teaching has become, for the Conciliar Catholic, either unknown or irrelevant; layman and cleric alike seem unable to quote anything written before 1963.

⁴ Mark Fellows notes that "...until this century, NFP was generally viewed as a morally questionable practice, occasionally suggested in the confessional "to lead habitual onanists from their mortal sin" ("Radical Faith", *Remnant*, Jan. 31, 1998).

APPENDIX - A

Excerpts from the encyclical letter, *Casti Connubii*, of Pope Pius XI

IV. Vices Opposed to Christian Marriage

53. ... We shall explain in detail the evils opposed to each of the benefits of matrimony. First consideration is due the offspring, which many have the audacity to call the disagreeable burden of matrimony and which they say is to be carefully avoided by married people not through virtuous continence (which Christian law permits in matrimony when both parties consent) but by frustrating the marriage act. Some justify this criminal abuse on the ground that they are weary of children and wish to gratify their desires without their consequent bur-

den. Others say that they cannot on the one hand remain continent nor on the other can they have children because of the difficulties, whether on the part of the mother or on the part of family circumstances.

54. But no reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose, sin against nature, and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.

55. Small wonder, therefore, if Holy Writ bears witness that the Divine Majesty regards with greatest detestation this horrible crime, and at times has punished it with death. As St. Augustine notes, "Intercourse even with one's legitimate wife is unlawful and wicked where the conception of the offspring is prevented. Onan, the son of Judah, did this and the Lord killed him for it."

56. Since, therefore, openly departing from the uninterrupted Christian tradition, some recently have adjudged it possible solemnly to declare another doctrine regarding this question, the Catholic Church, to whom God has entrusted the defense of the integrity and the purity of morals, standing erect in the midst of the moral ruin which surrounds her, in order that she may preserve the chastity of the nuptial union from being defiled by this foul stain, raises her voice in token of her divine ambassadorship and through Our mouth proclaims anew: any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offense against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin.

59. ... Nor are those considered as acting against nature who, in the married state, use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons either of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth. For in matrimony, as well as in the use of matrimonial rights, there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider, so long as they are subordinated to the primary end and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.

60. We are deeply touched by the sufferings of those parents who, in extreme want, experience great difficulty in rearing their children.

61. However, they should take care lest the calamitous state of their external affairs should be the occasion for a much more calamitous error. No difficulty can arise that justifies putting aside the law of God which prohibits all acts intrinsically evil. There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the Grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted. This truth of Christian faith is expressed by the teaching of the Council of Trent: "Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely that there are precepts of God impossible for the just to observe. God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help you."

APPENDIX - B

Birth prevention, by any other name

Rhythm Method

The now obsolete Calendar Rhythm Method used each woman's past cycle history to predict future cycles. Practiced correctly, Rhythm used the shortest and longest cycle in the past year or so in formulating rules for each woman. If a woman has a cycle much shorter or longer than her normal length, she could become pregnant.

Ovulation (Billings) Method (OM)

Using this method, the woman observes not only her bleeding, but also her production of fertile cervical fluid. Writing online, one feminist advocate observes that "An added advantage is that the OM allows intercourse from the end of bleeding all the way up to the time that your fertile time begins, which happens when the sperm-sustaining fertile cervical fluid appears."

Sympto-Thermal Method

This contraceptive method uses cervical fluid observations like the OM in conjunction with daily waking temperatures. The rise of temperature in the previous cycle confirms that ovulation has occurred. This method also relies on symptoms of fertility, most commonly the presence of fertile cervical fluids, and the position of the cervix. (The cervix withdraws further into the body as fertility approaches, and its opening widens.) Intercourse is often allowed during menstruation.

Lactation Amenorrhea Method (LAM)

God's providence allows an infertile period after childbirth, until the woman's body is ready for another pregnancy. This period is severely shortened when mothers fail to breast-feed. With typical inversion of ends, this provision has become a method of contraception. Cathy Woodgold's web page explains: "The rules for LAM are simple: If a woman has given birth in the last 6 months, is fully breastfeeding her baby (no formula, solid food, etc.) and has not yet menstruated, she can assume she has 98% family planning effectiveness from breastfeeding alone. You can achieve higher effectiveness by following guidelines of 'ecological mothering': nursing on demand, nursing at night, nursing in a lying-down position for naps and at night, no bottles or pacifiers." As an afterthought, she adds that "Not only is breastfeeding good birth control, it is highly beneficial to your baby's physical and emotional health by providing nutrients, antibodies, and nurturing."

APPENDIX - C

The Ends of Marriage

Casti Connubii

In 1930, Pope Pius XI issued his reaction to the Lambeth decision in *Casti Connubii*, "Chaste Wedlock." The encyclical is a high-water mark of Magisterial teaching on marriage, including clear reiteration of the Church's consistent stance on birth control and divorce.

Casti Connubii reaffirmed the traditional Church teaching on the ends of marriage: “the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children.”

Allocution to the Italian midwives

Pope Pius XII’s 1951 *Address to Midwives*, which first attempted to legitimate severely limited use of natural contraception, reaffirmed the traditional Church teaching on the ends of marriage. “Now the truth of the matter is that marriage, as a natural institution and in view of the Creator’s holy will, has as its primary and most intimate end, not the spouses’ personal fulfillment, but the procreation and education of new life.” He said. “The other goals in marriage, although also designed and intended by nature, are not to be found at the level of the primary end of marriage and, even less, are they to be considered superior to them, but are indeed **essentially subordinated** to them.”

Gaudium et Spes

While procreation is shown favor in *Gaudium et Spes*, **it is no longer viewed as the primary end of marriage**. “Marriage is not merely for the procreation of children; its nature as an indissoluble compact between two people and the good of the children demand that the mutual love of the partners be properly shown, that it grow and mature ...”

Fellows explains that the radical forces at Vatican II, led by Cardinal Suenens, had “pressed for language to give more importance to conjugal love than to procreation.” (“Radical Faith,” *The Remnant*, Jan.31, 1998) Paul 6 ordered the commission on *Gaudium et Spes* to add amendments to the text, one of which specified that procreation was something necessary and primary, and not an incidental or parallel end of marriage. He instructed that the amendments were to be supported with inserted texts from *Casti Connubii*. As Fellows explains, “The commission, of which Wojtyla was a member, defied Paul VI and got away with it. Not one word of *Casti Connubii* appeared in the text of *Gaudium et Spes*. Artificial contraception was not explicitly condemned. Procreation was often referred to favorably, but not as a primary end of marriage.” (ibid.)

Humanae Vitae

Fellows notes that “Lost in the worldwide snit over the orthodox position of Paul VI on artificial contraception was the subtle shift in emphasis that distinguished *Humanae Vitae* from traditional Church teaching on procreation and the marital act.” (“Radical Faith,” *The Remnant*, Nov.15, 1997)

Fellows observes that *Humanae Vitae* is written in the “pastoral language” of Vatican II, and therefore it does not speak of the primary and secondary ends of marriage. Instead, the document refers to “meanings” and “aspects” fused together in “an inseparable connection” (No. 12). “After first observing that the marital act and procreation are inseparable from each other, the authors of *Humanae Vitae* conclude that the ‘unitive aspect’ of the marital act is as essential as procreation ...[T]he Church had always taught that conjugal satisfaction was secondary to procreation. *Humanae Vitae* appears to have changed this teaching by eliminating the distinction between the primary and secondary ends of marriage, and merging the formerly secondary end of marriage, conjugal love, with the primary end of procreation.” (ibid.)

Familiaris Consortio

In this document, the goals of marriage have been considerably broadened. Fellows explains that “John Paul II envisions the ‘building of an authentic family humanism’ (Section 7, Paragraph 1) and divine wisdom is to be used by ‘the families of today’ in order to ‘influence positively the building of a more just and fraternal world.’ (Section 8, Paragraph 6) In fact, the role of the family ‘also involves cooperating for a new international order, since it is only in worldwide solidarity that the enormous and dramatic issues of world justice, the freedoms of peoples and the peace of humanity can be dealt with and solved.’ (Section 48, Paragraph 1)” (“Radical Faith,” *The Remnant*, 1/15/98) Fellows comments that “[John Paul II’s] blueprint appears to leave families with little time for more mundane activities, like meals – or prayer.”

APPENDIX - D

Natural Contraception

Casti Connubii

Pius XI noted in *Casti Connubii* that the use of the marriage right during non-fertile periods was not sinful – “husband and wife are not forbidden to consider ... Mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence ... so long as they are subordinated to the primary end, and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.” Catholic “change agents” interpreted this statement as an endorsement of Rhythm contraception. According to Jeanne Dvorak, the Church hierarchy “deliberately but mistakenly allow[ed] theologians to examine the Rhythm method – though pastors were, as yet, forbidden to condone or recommend this practice.” (*Natural Family Planning and the Christian Moral Code*, p ix)

Pius XI had not, of course, endorsed Rhythm or any other method of birth control. In instructing spouses that it is not sinful to use the marriage right in non-fertile times, he was hardly teaching them to calculate and use those times exclusively, in order to avoid pregnancy. “Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children,” Pius wrote, “those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.” The periodic continence of which Pius spoke hearkens back to *I Corinthians 7:5*, wherein St. Paul says “Defraud not one another, except perhaps by consent for a time, that you may give yourself to prayer.”

Allocution to the Italian midwives

Pope Pius XII’s October 29, 1951 *Address to Italian Midwives* marked the first formal papal departure from what had been the constant teaching of the Church. Therein, in Hertz’s words, he “opened the door a crack to the old Manichean-Malthusian method by permitting its use ‘for serious reasons’ in those exceptionally ‘difficult circumstances’ where heretofore only abstinence had been deemed licit. The next month, on November 27, he confirmed the permission before the Family Front Congress ... Overnight what had been intended as occasional indulgence to fallen nature became a high-minded duty to be discharged at all times in the better interests of society. “How To’ books on Rhythm multiplied in Catholic bookstores,

and Cana Conferences were organized to inform the faithful of their marital duties.” (*Beyond Politics*, pp 212-213)

Pius warned his listeners against being carried away “by inappropriate and deceitful propaganda” for natural contraception; it was to be deemed licit “only in cases of absolute necessity.” Pius added that “to embrace the married state, continuously to make use of the faculty proper to it and lawful in it alone, and on the other hand to withdraw always and deliberately with no serious reason from its primary obligation, would be a sin against the very meaning of conjugal life.” Hardly an endorsement of today’s near-mandatory NFP practice. Pius had also condemned the personalist error, noting that “the selfish couple will have recourse to a whole litany of enticing remarks and observations as a foundation to a rosy pipe dream of a married life wherein the spouses wastefully use up a whole wealth of particular natural gifts, qualities and energies which nature, together with God’s grace, have so evidently designed and directed toward the continuation and multiplication of human life.” (quoted in “Contraception Under Cover of Asceticism,” *The Angelus*, July 1998, p 18)

Hertz notes that “these **unprecedented** utterances **were in no sense *ex cathedra***, being prudential judgments at best, which, like St. Peter’s concessions to the judaizers, can be erroneous without prejudice to papal infallibility.” (*Beyond Politics*, p 212)

Gaudium et Spes

“*Gaudium et Spes* warned how the now co-primary end of conjugal love was endangered when ‘the intimacy of married life was broken,’ presumably when a poor couple with a large family abstained from conjugal relations. The remedy obliquely alluded to in *Gaudium et Spes* was not the sacramental grace of matrimony, the Eucharist, Penance, prayer, or voluntary mortification, but natural family planning.” (“Radical Faith,” *The Remnant*, Jan.31, 1998) The secondary ends of marriage have actually become the primary, since from consideration of them procreation may be avoided.

“It is the married couple themselves who must in the last analysis arrive at these judgments before God.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, No. 50)

Humanae Vitae

Fellows notes that, once the unitive aspect of marriage was established as equally important with procreation, NFP could be presented to Catholics as “a holy alternative to artificial contraception.” NFP made its formal debut in *Humanae Vitae*, without the dire warnings of Pius XI and Pius XII, but still accompanied by a statement that: “If, then there are serious motives to space out births, which derive from the physical or psychological conditions of husband and wife, or from external conditions, the Church teaches that it is then licit to take into account the natural rhythms.” **After stressing the intrinsic evil of artificial birth control, the encyclical then endorses the natural method of achieving precisely the same end.**

Pope Pius XI had explained that “there is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and persevere in wedlock, their chastity unspotted. This truth of Christian Faith is expressed by the teachings of the Council of Trent. Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely, that there are precepts of God impossible for the just

to observe.” (*Casti Connubii*) Paul VI appears to “be so rash,” for he cites conditions under which pregnancy may be avoided.

Dvorak cites a December 10, 1968 *Look* magazine article by Andre Hallegers of Georgetown University’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. In that article, Professor Hallegers noted that “The encyclical’s biology is not thought through. It says that intercourse MUST be always let open to the transmission of life, then it asks us to perfect a method – Rhythm – that is closed to the transmission of life. It implies that when a woman is sterile, the marriage act is open to the transmission of life. This is not true. When there is no ovum to fertilize, the act is closed to reproduction. How to explain why intercourse that cannot possibly lead to a baby is intercourse open to the transmission of life? A scientist would say it is closed. We ask: Why is a sterile act fertile? Why is a closed act open?”

In the same issue of *Look*, Catholic biophysicist Dr. Thomas Hayes noted that “the encyclical condemns early withdrawal of the male; why not withdrawal of the female? That is what Rhythm amounts to. Rhythm is *coitus interruptus*, female style. It is not abstinence. That is like calling our eating habits periodic fasting; that is untruthful ... The Church has already approved tampering with the total act of reproduction in Rhythm – it should be consistent: approve all banned methods of contraception, or ban them all ...” (*Natural Family Planning and the Christian Moral Code*, p 21) This was, of course, the position taken by the majority of Paul 6’s birth control commission; they held that, since the intent and the effect were the same, NFP was simply another method of contraception.

Familiaris Consortio

The transition is complete. *Familiaris Consortio* omits any mention of ‘serious reasons’ – instead, it exhorts everyone involved to make a “broader, more decisive and more systematic effort to make the natural methods of regulating fertility known, respected and applied.”

This information was contained in the August 1998 issue of
the newsletter, ***RealCatholicism***, Vol. 1, No. 9

\$24/yr in USA (inquire for others)

Carey J. Winters, Editor
708 Kenilworth Dr / Box 113
Towson MD 21204 USA

Computerized in 1999

[**origins@ev1.net**](mailto:origins@ev1.net)