

HUMANAE VITAE: A PROPHETIC DOCUMENT?

By: Professor Janet E. Smith

Popes are not customarily considered to be prophets. But Pope Paul VI has earned the title in the eyes of many for the "prophecies" he made twenty years ago in *Humanae Vitae*. There he "prophesied" that marriages and society would suffer if the use of contraception became widespread. Now the vast majority of spouses use some form of contraception and the use of contraception is widespread among the unmarried as well. It seems a good time to evaluate the legitimacy of *Humanae Vitae*'s prophetic voice and to reconsider the wisdom of the widespread neglect of this document.

To be sure, it is right to note that the encyclical was not written to be a prophetic document. Rather, it was written to be a clarifying document, one meant to present what the Church teaches about contraception. The encyclical does present this teaching clearly but has been little heeded in the last twenty years. Statistics show that few Catholics live by the Church's teaching, and it seems safe to suppose that few Catholics have read *Humanae Vitae* or reflected upon it. Furthermore, many theologians call into question the teaching and maintain that Catholics have a right to dissent from it.

Indeed, when *Humanae Vitae* was issued, many were furious with the Church for continuing to maintain what they thought was a retrograde view of sexuality a view that sexual intercourse is morally permissible only when its procreative meaning was maintained. Many thought the Church was standing in the way of progress and human happiness. They believed they "prophesied" that contraception would solve or at least reduce certain social problems, such as overpopulation and pregnancy out of wedlock, and would enhance married life by reducing the sexual strain in marriage caused by fear of pregnancy. As mentioned, *Humanae Vitae* "prophesied" quite the contrary. Which prophecies were true? Has contraception had a good or bad effect on marriages and society?

Before addressing this question, we should note that Pope Paul VI did not base his condemnation of contraception on his prediction that the use of contraception would have bad consequences. Rather, he argued that contraception is wrong because it is not in accord with the truth about the human person and the truth about the meaning of marriage. Christians understand marriage to be an elevated calling whereby God enlists spouses in the all-important enterprise of bringing forth new human life; to use contraception is to reject God and his life-giving ways. Thus the Church does not teach that contraception is wrong because it has bad consequences, but it teaches that contraception will have bad consequences because it is wrong.

In section 17 of *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI made four prophecies about the bad consequences that would follow upon widespread acceptance of contraception.

EFFECTS ON SEXUAL MORALITY

First Prophecy. The Pope noted that the widespread use of contraception would "lead to conjugal infidelity and the general lowering of morality." That there has been a widespread decline in morality, especially sexual morality, in the last twenty years is very difficult to deny. The increase in the number of divorces, abortions, out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and venereal diseases should quickly serve to convince any skeptic that sexual morality is not the strong suit of our age. Contraception may not be the sole cause of this decline but it is certainly among the contributing factors.

The phenomenon of teenage pregnancy is a case in point. While many predicted that ready access to contraception would reduce teenage pregnancy, it seems in fact to have exacerbated the problem. Indeed, studies show that in places where efforts to provide teens with contraceptives have intensified, there has been no clear decrease in teenage pregnancy, and in some cases there have been increases.¹ The availability of contraception has led teenagers to believe that they can engage in premarital sexual activity "responsibly." But teenagers are about as responsible in their use of contraception as they are in all other phases of their lives -like making their beds, and cleaning their rooms, and getting their homework done on time.

Consider that by age-nineteen, eight of every ten males has had sexual intercourse and seven of every ten females. Four of ten teenage girls have at least one pregnancy. There are nearly a million and half abortions each year and nearly a third of these-nearly 400,000 are to teenagers. More than one in seven teenagers has at least one abortion.²

Many young women who get pregnant out of wedlock end up welfare mothers; their children grow up with no father at home, with an immature mother, and with all the handicaps of poverty. The long term consequences of teenagers having babies out of wedlock are incalculable. I doubt that we have begun to realize the cost of single-parent households and broken homes. It is not wild speculation to think that much drug-dependency, crime, and sexual maladjustments can be traced to ailing family life. Children who do not have mature and loving parents have a hard time meeting the demands of life, have a hard time resisting the call to easy pleasures and other modes of escape. Who can calculate the cost of the insecurity, the low self-image and many psychological problems experienced by those who do not enjoy a secure childhood?

Moreover, the connection between contraception and abortion becomes ever clearer. Certainly some have argued that abortion and contraception are quite distinct issues and this is a plausible argument since abortion is the taking of a human life already begun and contraception (when it is truly contraceptive) prevents life from beginning. Many now recognize, however, that widespread use of contraception has paved the way for more abortions. Contraception has led the way to more extramarital sexual intercourse, which in turn leads to more unwanted pregnancies. Many of these unwanted pregnancies are then terminated by abortion.

Indeed studies show that over 80 percent of young women having abortions are contraceptively experienced. They know all about contraception but choose not to use it for a variety of reasons. (For instance, they do not like the side effects or do not like to think of themselves as "prepared for sex." Some intentionally get pregnant to force their boyfriends to declare their intentions).³ Not many women intend to use abortion as a "backup" to failed contraception but that in fact is how it is often used.⁴

Abortions may also result directly from products marketed as contraceptives. With the IUD and some forms of the pill, a woman may still ovulate and thus conceive. If she conceives when using the IUD or the pill, she may well self-abort. That is, the effect of these so called "contraceptives" is often to prevent the newly fertilized embryo from implanting and thus to cause it to die an early death. Thus, some forms of the pill not only contribute to abortion, they in fact cause abortions.⁵

THE DIGNITY OF THE PERSON

Second Prophecy. Pope Paul VI also feared that the man who grew accustomed to the use of contraceptive practices might ultimately lose "respect for the woman," and "no longer caring for her physical and psychological equilibrium" might come to consider her as an "instrument of selfish enjoyment, and no longer as his respected and beloved companion." This concern reflects what has come to be known as a "personalist" understanding of morality, an understanding based on respect for the human person and his or her dignity. The Pope realized that the Church's teaching on contraception was designed to protect the good of conjugal love. When spouses violate this good, they do not act in accord with their innate dignity and thus they endanger their own happiness. By treating their bodies as mechanical instruments to be manipulated for their own purposes, they risk treating each other as objects of pleasure.

Nor does contraception treat the human body very respectfully as an instrument: It seems truly prophetic that Pope Paul VI should mention the dangers of contraception to a woman's "physical and psychological equilibrium" at a time when these dangers were not well-known. Such dangers are becoming more widely recognized today. For example, most pharmaceutical companies in the United States no longer market the IUD because of the law suits stemming from the harm it has done to women. The contraceptive pill has a list of "contra-indications" so long, it is a rare woman who does not experience some of these.

Part of the disturbing increase in infertility among women is due to contraceptives, for they alter a woman's delicate hormonal balance for years on end and can cause scarring of the uterus.⁶

Feminists, too, are beginning to warn women about the dangers of the pill. Germaine Green has ridiculed women for taking massive doses of chemicals daily to counteract an even--fertility--which occurs only a few days a month, and very predictable days at that.⁷ She is also angry that contraception is pushed on

women in the Third World who do not have the education to read about the dangers of the "medication" being forced upon them.

And what are the dangers to the "psychological" equilibrium of women who use contraception? Certainly, one of the side-effects of the pill is depression, but more is involved than that. Pope Paul VI warned that the use of contraception can assist "the man" in looking upon "the woman" not as a special woman with her own needs and desires, not as a female with a marvelous procreative faculty, but as an object from which to derive sexual pleasure without the risk of personal bonding. The bond created by sexual intercourse open to procreation needs to be more fully understood. Young girls often have a preference for "unprotected" sexual intercourse because they feel they are thereby giving themselves more fully, that they are showing their love more completely to their boyfriends. And there is something fundamentally right about that "feeling." Few are willing to have "procreative" sex with someone whom they do not love, with whom they are not willing to share a lifetime of responsibilities. "Recreational" sex admits of a large number of partners for they are partners only for momentary sexual pleasure, not for sharing in a lifetime project. Engaging in "procreative" sex, on the other hand, is an act which bespeaks a more exclusive and profound commitment. For when a man and woman engage in sexual intercourse without thwarting its procreative meaning, they are expressing a willingness to have children with each other, a willingness to effect a lifetime bond with one another.

Contraception is also alienating because there is rarely "mutuality" in the use of contraception. Most often the woman bears responsibility for contraception and it is she who suffers most of the unpleasant "side-effects." Natural family planning (NFP) requires a loving and respectful relationship for successful use. Whereas men who engage in contracepted sexual intercourse often come to view women as objects and desire to have them always at their disposal, men using natural family planning (NFP) learn self-mastery and begin to appreciate the woman and her cycles and her needs. Disenchanted former users of contraception and converts to NFP are often the most avid and eloquent defenders of the difference between them.

Today in the United States, where almost half of all marriages end in divorce, couples who use NFP experience an almost negligible divorce rate.⁸ Granted, these couples may have a commitment to the indissolubility of marriage that other couples lack, but most couples when they marry hope never to divorce. Still contraception makes infidelity easier and infidelity leads to divorce. And there is much evidence that couples using NFP communicate better and experience stronger bonds with each other. Contraception, then, rather than being a source of happiness in a marriage, may be assisting in the breakdown of marriages.⁹

POPULATION CONTROL AS A WEAPON

Third Prophecy. Pope Paul VI also observed that the widespread acceptance of contraception would place a "dangerous weapon... in the hands of those public authorities who take no heed of moral exigencies." The history of family planning programs in Third World nations is a sobering testimony to this reality. In these countries many undergo sterilization unaware of what is being done to them. The forced abortion program of China shows the stark extreme to which governments can take population control programs.¹⁰ And few are willing to face the increasingly commanding evidence and argumentation that people in many parts of the world now face not a problem of overpopulation but a problem of underpopulation.¹¹ Countries such as France and West Germany have tried without much success to adopt legislation that will make child-bearing more attractive to their citizenry.

THE BODY AS AN INSTRUMENT

Fourth Prophecy. The final warning Pope Paul VI gave about contraception is that it would lead men and women to think that they had limitless dominion over their own bodies and functions. Although he did not elaborate, his worry now seems well-grounded. For instance, sterilization is now the most widely used form of contraception in the United States; in the quest for control over their own bodies individuals do not hesitate to alter permanently the very make-up of their bodies. Undoubtedly, we have not begun to realize the long-term physical and psychological ramifications of widespread sterilization. We are tampering unthinkingly with one of the chief sources of human happiness: the ability to have children.

The desire for unlimited dominion over one's body extends beyond contraception. Surely the making of babies in test tubes is an indication of a refusal to accept the limitations of the body. Demands for euthanasia and pleas for transplant organs from the nearly dead are strong indications of our lack of respect for the body and its nature.

Certainly, for each of the problems mentioned above there are a host of contributing factors. It is reasonable, though, to view contraception as a contributing factor to many of the problems society faces today problems contraception was predicted to help solve.

POPE PAUL VI'S POSITIVE PROPHECIES

In *Humanae Vitae* Pope Paul VI also pointed to the good that would come from abiding by the Church's teaching on contraception. He acknowledged that spouses may have difficulty in acquiring the self-discipline or

self-mastery needed to practice methods of family planning requiring periodic abstinence. But he believed this was possible, especially with the help of sacramental grace. In section 21, he remarked that

this discipline which is proper to the purity of married couples, far from harming conjugal love, rather confers on it a higher human value. It demands continual effort yet, thanks to its beneficent influence, husband and wife fully develop their personalities, being enriched with spiritual values. Such discipline bestows upon family life fruits of serenity and peace, and facilitates the solution of other problems; it favors attention for one's partner, helps both parties to drive out selfishness, the enemy of true love; and deepens their sense of responsibility. By its means, parents acquire the capacity of having a deeper and more efficacious influence in the education of their offspring; little children and youths grow up with a just appraisal of human values, and in the serene and harmonious development of their spiritual and sensitive faculties.

This passage of *Humanae Vitae* is rarely studied. Pope John Paul II is one commentator who recognizes its deep wisdom. It is this passage which plays the central role in his reflections on *Humanae Vitae*. He focuses on the importance of "self-mastery" for the proper use of sexuality.

Pope John Paul II has been most concerned to help Catholics understand and live by the teachings of *Humanae Vitae*; he has spoken often, forcefully and with great sophistication on the topic.¹² Here only the barest sketch of his thinking can be given, but even this should serve to show why he is so enthusiastic about the benefits of non-contraceptive marital relationships.¹³

Throughout his teachings, Pope John Paul II explains the meaning of the human body and the human person as these bear upon sexuality. Fundamental to his understanding is the distinction between what he calls man's "original" condition and his "historical" condition. In his commentaries on Genesis, the Pope explains that man and woman were created for each other, to be a loving community with each other. In this original condition they did not experience self-serving lust or disordered passions. Thus they were able to love each other authentically and without all the troublesome emotions and disordered passions men and women now experience. After the fall, however, a great deal of selfishness entered into human relationships; individuals easily exploit and use one another in the realm of sex, as in other realms. If men and women are to regain the authentic loving relationships for which their hearts yearn, they must learn to control their disordered passions. If they do not do so, they will be expressing lust rather than love in their sexual relationships. Rather than giving themselves and receiving each other as gifts, they will be imposing themselves on each other and using one

another. But if they learn the self-mastery spoken of in *Humanae Vitae*, there will be tremendous fruits for their own relationship and for the other relationships of their lives, especially those within the family.

The passage cited earlier from *Humanae Vitae* indicates what some of these "fruits" are. It claims that spouses will be able to develop their personalities, which will be enriched with spiritual values. It speaks of the "serenity and peace" that comes with discipline, a discipline that flows to other areas of ones life. Perhaps most importantly, the spouses become unselfish; they become more concerned about the well-being of their spouses rather than about themselves.

Not to be underestimated is the witness spouses can give to their children and other young people. One practitioner of NFP told me what a great witness his commitment was to the young men at his place of work to whom he was trying to counsel restraint in sexual behavior. He found them most impressed with his argument, that if he could sleep in the same bed with the woman he loved and control his sexual desire, they could control their sexual desire for the women they were dating. Young people sense the attitudes about sex held by adults; if their parents have a reverence for the meaning of sex, if their parents have learned how to exercise self-control, surely they are more likely to be responsible about their sexuality.

NFP vs. CONTRACEPTION

Some think there is little difference between NFP and contraception, since both contraceptors and practitioners of NFP want to control their fertility. But users of NFP gain this control by self-mastery, by obtaining internal control over themselves; contraceptors seek this control by technological mastery of their bodies. Indeed users of contraception and users of NFP agree that there is a great difference between the two; neither switches easily or readily to the other. Contraceptors are generally reluctant to give NFP a try because they fear they will lose control over a very important part of their life that they will be casting their fate to the winds-or to their fertility, as it were. They do not take a lot of comfort in the reassurances that NFP is every bit as effective a form of family planning as the most effective forms of contraception. But apparent lack of trust in the method may conceal a lack of trust in themselves, their spouses and the strength of their marriage. Although they may have had to abstain many times in their marriage because of illness or prolonged separation, they do not think it is wise deliberately to plan to abstain.

Many practitioners of NFP, on the other hand, are repelled by the thought of using contraception. Although they experience powerful sexual desires during the periods of abstinence, the thought of purchasing and using a contraceptive is repugnant to them. For them, talk of contraception as something that violates human dignity is not an elevated abstract notion, but is nearly a physical feeling. They have a profound sense that the use of contraception would violate the dignity of themselves and their spouses.

Certainly, most users of NFP have struggled with the method and with their sexual desires. Those who were chaste before marriage and have never contracepted have an easier time of it. But many struggle with the irritability abstinence may cause; they struggle with trying to live with their frustration without taking it out on their spouses, without making their spouses feel rejected. Eventually, they learn to communicate better with their spouses about their sexual feelings and their other feelings as well. And they begin to gain the virtue of self-mastery which enables them to control their sexual desires and sexual behavior. Once progress is made, they assure others that self-restraint enhances rather than harms one's love life.

Pope John Paul II recently spoke of the Church's teaching on contraceptive as part of the "permanent patrimony" of the Church. The above analysis tries to indicate that twenty years of neglect of *Humanae Vitae* have produced enough unpleasant consequences to enable us to recognize how foolish and dangerous it is to waste this patrimony. The successful marriages and happiness of couples who use NFP suggests that once we reclaim this patrimony, we shall begin to experience joys and benefits we have nearly forgotten.

Pope Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae* implored priests, doctors, educators, and spouses to promote the teaching of the encyclical. Pope John Paul II has reiterated this plea. It is time we all do what we can to answer it, for the benefits will be ours and will be great.

Professor Smith teaches in the Program of Liberal Studies at the University of Notre Dame A well known writer and lecturer, Professor Smith's most recent work, Humanae Vitae: Twenty Years Later, will be published in 1989.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Documents

Bernardin, Joseph Cardinal. *Report to the NCCB Annual Meeting*, November 11, 1986. History, present situation and recommended response in regard to diocesan natural family planning programs. Single copy free from Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning.

Pope John Paul II. *Address to Two International Congresses on Marriage, the Family and Fertility*, 1984. Single copy free from Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning.

Pope John Paul II. *On the Family (Familiaris Consortio)*. Washington, D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services (No. 833-9), \$3.95. Also available from the Daughters of St. Paul.

Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities 1988

Pope Paul VI. *On the Regulation of Birth (Humanae Vitae)*. Washington, D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services (No. 280-2), \$2.25. Also available from the Daughters of St. Paul.

Statement on School-Based Clinics, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1987. Washington, D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services (No. 196-2), 95 cents; 25 copies for \$20; 50 copies for \$30.

Statement to Youth on School-Based Clinics, NCCB Administrative Committee, 1988. Washington, D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services (No. 215-2), \$5 per 50 copies. Also available in Spanish (No. 217-9~ Bishops talk directly to young people about human sexuality).

Print

Diocesan Plan for Natural Family Planning Program Development. South Orange, NJ: Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning. Guide for developing or expanding diocesan programs. Single copy free.

Glasow, Richard D., Ph.D. *School-Based Clinics: the Abortion Connection*. Washington, D.C.: National Right to Life Educational Trust Fund, 1988, \$2.95.

Kasun, Jacqueline. *The War Against Population: The Economics and Ideology of Population Control*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988, \$14.95.

Kippley, John F and Sheila Kippley. *The Art of Natural Family Planning*. Cincinnati: Couple to Couple League, \$6.95.

Lawler, Rev. Ronald, Joseph M. Boyle, Jr. and William E. May. *Catholic Sexual Ethics*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1985, \$7.95.

McHugh, James T A *Theological Perspective on Natural Family Planning*. South Orange, NJ: Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning, 1983, \$1.50.

McMahon, Kevin Thomas, STD. *Sexuality: Theological Voices*. Braintree, MA: Pope John Center, 1987, \$14.95 plus \$1 shipping.

Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities 1988

May, William E. *Sex, Marriage, and Chastity*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981, \$6.50.

Quay, Paul, M. *The Christian Meaning of Human Sexuality*. Harrison, NY: Ignatius Press, \$7.95; available Fall 1988.

Shivanandan, Mary. *Challenge to Love*. Chewy Chase, MD: KM Associates, \$5.00 plus \$1.00 postage.

Shivanandan, Mary. "Natural Family Planning: the Heart of the Matter," reprint from 1987 *Respect Life* manual. Single copy free from Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning.

Periodicals

International Review of Natural Family Planning, published four times a year by the Human Life Center, University of Steubenville. Annual U.S. subscription, \$20; \$31 for two years.

Resource agencies listed below also publish newsletters and other periodicals.

Resource Agencies

Diocesan Development Program for Natural Family Planning, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07104
(201)761-9647

Couple to Couple League, PO. Box 111184, Cincinnati, OH 45211 (513)661-7612

The Family of the Americas Foundation, PO. Box 219, Mandeville, LA 70470-0219 (504)626-7724

NFP Center of Washington, D.C., Inc., 8514 Bradmoor Dr., Bethesda, MD 20827 (301)897-9323

Pope Paul Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction, 6901 Mercy Road, Omaha, NE 68106 (402)390-6600

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING:

I was alive and fertile in 1968. I was 19 and I *knew* the pill was a gift from God and *Humanae Vitae* was a real crock. The pill was going to eliminate teenage pregnancy, marital disharmony and world population problems, bring a new era, etc.

By my five year reunion (high school), those of us who had been so confident about contraception had gone from euphoria to anger. Nothing seemed to work. I'd been on the pill less than two years before I'd quit. The pill depressed us. Or scared us (especially those of us who were smokers) because of the "stroke" factor. I didn't want to keep taking it year after year, or on again off again after I broke up with my college lover. So I decided to live a minimally healthy life style and quit both smoking and oral contraceptives.

The "safer" IUD (copper T) gave me cramps and heavy periods. I was lucky. A friend of mine got such a ghastly infection from her IUD she lost her uterus, tubes, ovaries—the works. The woman was devastated.

I tried the diaphragm. Hard to keep motivated on that one. I felt wadded up with junk, inwardly disgusted. I wanted to be delectable, like a Haagen Dazs ice cream cone; instead, I was a spermicidal sump.

By the 10th high school reunion, my friends were still fiddling with this method and that, they'd had abortions, and/or their marriages were falling apart. Mine almost did. Then my husband and I settled on the condom plus periodic abstinence. But we depended on the condom in a way that made it easy to rationalize some "fudging" on abstinence. You know what "fudging" can lead to. Thank God I didn't have an abortion, but I did have one hell of an untimely pregnancy...

Finally, my husband and I reached a turning point. At a very low point in our marriage, we met some great people who urged us to really give our lives to the Lord and to be chaste in our marriage.

That blew our minds. We thought it meant "give up sex." That's not what it means. It means respecting bodily union as a sacred act. It meant acting like a couple in love. For my husband and me, it meant NFP (natural family planning) with no condom, no "fudging." And I won't kid you, it was a difficult discipline.

NFP and a chaste attitude toward sex in marriage opened up a new world for us. It bonded my husband and me in a way that is so deep, so strong, it is hard to describe. Sometimes it's difficult, but that makes us even closer.

Sad to say, I was past 35 when I finally realized that the Church was right after all. The Church is right about contraceptive (it stinks) and about marriage (it's a sacrament), right about human happiness (it flows—no, it floods when you embrace the will of God). It gave us depth. It opened our hearts to love...

Excerpted from Repartee Section, National Catholic Reporter, Kansas City, MO.

TEEN STAR

Teen STAR is a year-long program designed to help teenagers learn about their sexuality and their fertility.

Currently there are 800 students in 15 U.S. dioceses enrolled in the program. The program addresses the fact that adolescents want to talk about their identity and clarify their feelings about growing up. It also helps teens to recognize a religious and/or ethical basis for making decisions and to understand and value their capacity for becoming parents.

In a structured curriculum, teens learn what their bodies can tell them about their fertility patterns. Because working things through with parents is an essential part of growing up, parental involvement is important. Only after the program is explained to parents and their permission sought is the teen approached and asked to join the class. Open class discussion is part of the program and confidentiality is respected.

Young women meet every two weeks for the first three months, once a week for the next three months, then every three months for the rest of the year. If the class contains both young men and young women, they are taught separately for the first seven classes. These classes concentrate on giving teens an understanding of their own bodies. Afterwards, they learn together and listen to what each other has to say.

Teachers of the Teen Star course must go through special training to become certified. They are trained and supervised by the staff of the Natural Family Planning Center of Washington, D.C., which pioneered work in fertility awareness and developed the program. Training begins with a formal workshop, followed by field work supervised by a Center staff member. Satisfactory completion of the year-long program leads to certification.

For more information contact:

Natural Family Planning Center of Washington D.C.

8514 Bradmoor Dr.

Bethesda, MD 20817

SERVING FAMILIES

The Cleveland diocesan NFP Commission was established in 1980 to give recognition to the natural methods of family planning...as an essential component of Christian marriage and family living. The Commission was established in response to the diocese's commitment for the need of the church community to develop a plan to expand NFP services to the parishes of the diocese.

The vision of the diocese included:

1. Recognition of the contribution of all existing provider groups, and the desire for their cooperation and involvement in the diocesan program.
2. The need for all natural methods of family planning to be taught.
3. Assurance that all expansion of NFP services would have the ultimate purpose of enriching the marriage relationship, demonstrating the Christian esteem for the child, and strengthening family living.

In 1982 married couples were recruited to become part of an outreach group to teach other groups about NFP. Teacher couples receive a year of training which requires 48 hours of classroom work plus student teaching a minimum of three couples or individuals. Qualified instructors of an existing NFP provider system coordinate the training programs.

Upon completion of the training program students are evaluated by the Practicum Instructor (in consultation with faculty and regional committee), and the student teacher is issued a statement of authorization to teach for one year. Authorization statements are renewed annually, contingent on attendance at a continuing education workshop provided by the diocesan Institute.

In 1986 the Department for Marriage and Family Concerns recommended:

- that an NFP presentation be part of every parish and diocesan pre-Cana program;
- that the presentation be given by a practicing or teaching NFP couple;
- that the NFP couple be a member of the pre-Cana team.
- that an attitude of support for NFP be apparent in all the presentations given by the pre-Cana team.

To assist parishes to reach this goal, the Marriage and Family Office, as a temporary solution, can put the pre-Cana team in contact with couples qualified to give the NFP presentation. It has also designed a two-year plan to make it possible for each parish to have its own qualified teaching couple.

There are currently 44 couples teaching the program throughout the diocese, and every year approximately 600 couples enroll in the class. The class usually involves three two-hour sessions with follow-up examination of charts.

For more information contact:

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Cleveland, OH 44114

NOTES

¹ Todd Ackerman, "Data on Clinics Show They Don't Work" *The National Catholic Register* (November 2, 1986) 1.

² See Ann Hulbert "Children as Parents," *The New Republic* (September 10, 1984), 15-23.

³ See Kristen Luker, *Taking Chances: Abortion and the Decision Not to Contracept* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975)

⁴ Donaid DeMarco, "The Contraceptive Mentality and Abortion," *International Review of Natural Family Planning* 8:4 (Winter 1984) 297-314.

⁵ See: J.C. Espinosa, M.D., *Birth Control: Why Are They Lying to Women?* (New York: Vantage Press, 1980) 15 and 24ff

⁶ Since the 1960's the infertility rate among men age 20 to 24 has tripled to 11%; a recent study shows that up to 88,000 women are infertile because of infections from IUD's. For a report on infertility, see "Desperately Seeking Baby" in *U.S. News and World Report* (October 5, 1987) 58-64.

⁷ Germaine Greer, *Sex and Destiny: The Politics of Human Fertility* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984)

⁸ See Nona Aguilar, *No Pill, No Risk Birth Control* (New York: Rawson, Wade Publishers, Inc., 1980) 104ff

⁹ Elzbieta Wojcik, "Natural Regulation of Conception and Contraception," *International Review of Natural Family Planning* 9:4 (Winter 1985) 306-326

¹⁰ Mosher, Steven W., *Journey to the Forbidden China* (New York: Free Press, 1985)

¹¹ See Julian Simon, *The Ultimate Resource* (Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press, 1981) and Ben Wattenberg, *The Birth Dearth* (Pharos Books, 1987)

¹² The Pope's most philosophical treatment of love and sexuality is to be found in his *Love and Responsibility* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1982). *Familiaris Consortio* also provides a thorough treatment of marriage, the family, and the harm that contraception does to both. The talks of Pope John Paul II on the theology of the body, marriage and *Humanae Vitae* have been published by the Daughters of St. Paul in four volumes: *Original Unity of Man and Woman* (1981); *Blessed Are the Pure of Heart* (1983); *The Theology of Marriage and Celibacy* (1986); and *Reflections on Humanae Vitae* (1984) An excellent summary of the Pope's teaching can be found in Richard M. Hogan, "A Theology of the Body," *International Review of Natural Family Planning*, 6:3 (Fall, 1982), 227-316 (rpt. from *Fidelity* (December, 1981))

¹³ Boyle, Joseph M., "Contraception and Natural Family Planning," *International Review of Natural Family Planning* 4:4 (Winter, 1980) 309-15.