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Tenth promise of Our Lord Jesus Christ to Saint Margaret Mary for those who have devotion to His Sacred Heart: I shall give Priests a special ability to move the hardest hearts



Our Lord to Berthe Petit Contd. "The Church has defined in the case of My Mother what I myself had ordained - Her Immaculate Conception." Contd...

Excerpts from the book **New Perspectives on Contraception** by Dr. Donald DeMarco

Personalism

Because man is ordered to God, the separation of the marital act from procreation also separates man as a person from God. Neither the personal nor the spiritual can be entirely divorced from the physical. Contraception, in separating the sex act from life, inevitably separates, at least to some degree, the sexual being from the author of life. Spiritual contraception is a predictable consequence of physical contraception. To erect a barrier against God's creative act is inseparable from becoming alienated from God in other ways. The (p.116) contraceptive barrier against reality is also a barrier against truth. According to one theologian, "God, through His Church, both denounces contraception and proffers the graces to regulate the size of one's family by continence. Disbelief in the one truth implies disbelief in the other."²⁰ The contraceptive act that excludes God may also exclude His grace.

Continence can be a greater expression of love than contraceptive sex. When husband and wife decide, with good reason, to forego the marital act rather than use contraception, they honor the personal wholeness that sexual union implies. It is better that they not use sex to express their love than to misuse it. A married couple honors the wholeness of the marital act in two ways only: 1) positively, by expressing it in its natural wholeness and integrity; 2) negatively, by not expressing it at all, rather than defiling it by expressing it in a vitiated way. The same can be said about telling the truth. One may tell the truth or not say anything at all. But it is the falsified truth, the lie, which is morally objectionable.



The fact that physical contraception leads to spiritual contraception is perhaps nowhere better evidenced than in what has been referred to as the current "Condom Generation." The condom has become a metaphor for isolation, not only from new life and sexually transmitted diseases, but from any intrusion or penetration from the outside world, including truth, love, and grace. A university student has explained the matter simply and directly: "We are the condom generation. We have learned to protect ourselves against intrusion, mental, auditory, physical, emotional. Don't try the shock treatment, it will have the opposite effect from what you hope."¹²¹

Victims of the Condom Generation distrust everything that is not part of themselves. Given time, when they realize that there is no justification for trusting themselves and no one else, they learn to distrust themselves as well. The spiritual contraception that physical contraception engenders makes it exceedingly difficult to communicate to those who are practicing contraception, the truth about the alienating effect their practice has on them.

The Church's teaching on contraception is based on the natural law, incorporates the sacramental character of marriage, honors the dignity of the marital act, and affirms the sacredness of new human life. In addition, it recognizes man's nature as a person, that is, an embodied, engendered, being-in-the-world, who lives and develops through knowledge and love.

A person is an individual, unique and unrepeatable; but a person is, at the same time, communal and capable of profound interpersonal (p.117) relationships. In referring to the personalistic implications of marriage, the most common and fundamental form of human community, John Paul states that "this conjugal communion sinks roots in the natural complementarity that exists between man and woman and is nurtured through the personal willingness of the spouses to share their entire life project, what they have and what they are. For this reason, such communion is the fruit and sign of a profoundly human need."²²

Contraception, as John Paul has pointed out on many occasions, contradicts the "innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife."²³ In a verbal lie, the word contradicts what one knows to be the case. In a bodily lie, the body's expression (the language of the body) contradicts the meaning the person ascribes to that bodily expression. When Judas gave Christ a kiss, he did not intend it to mean friendship, which a kiss signifies naturally but to indicate betrayal. His kiss was a lie. He did not intend it to mean what it means in the natural language of the body. Contraceptive intercourse is a lie on a deeply personal level because, on the one hand, intercourse symbolizes the total giving of the partners to each other, whereas contraception, on the other hand, is their willful negation of each other's procreative potential.

As a person a human being is not simply a body or simply a spirit, but an embodied spirit. Sexuality, therefore, is not merely biological. To allege that contraception negates only the biological dimension, leaving the partners free to have sex with each other on a more spiritual level, is to do violence to the integrity of the person. Sexuality is diffused throughout the whole of one's personality. When husband and wife share the marital act, they express love to each other as incarnate persons, not as either animals or angels. Man is a person. Contraception contradicts his integrity and wholeness as a person.

The possibility that the marriage act can produce a child, a new image of God, gives husband and wife a dimension that clearly transcends their individualities. Recognition of this supra-personal dimension elicits a sense of wonder and privilege, what one might call awe. An American woman reported that she and her husband were able to experience "awe" once they abandoned contraception and allowed God to re-enter their conjugal relationship.²⁴ An Australian woman reports this same sense of "awe" when she and her husband honor God's creative presence.²⁵ Finally, a Pulitzer Prize winning novelist makes essentially the same point that if such "awe" is not experienced between the sexes, their union is reduced to a mere transaction. To exclude the procreative possibility is not only to invite (p. 118) lust and power, he maintains, but to abandon that world of love in which God is the supreme master.²⁶

As a person, one lives, not by lust, but by love. Love, which is the promotion of the good of another, proceeds from the wholeness of the loving person. True love between spouses is a synthesis of two wholes, two persons in one flesh. Lust is fragmentary. It is asynthesis between fragments, between appetite and that part of the other that arouses the appetite. Lust aims at the disintegration of personality, a direction that is essentially meaningless. Lust is also chained to necessity, whereas love is always given in an atmosphere of freedom. Contraception prevents love from being truly whole. Because of its fragmentary propensities, it is highly compatible with lust.



Referring to the incarnate love that husband and wife freely share with one another, Pope Paul VI writes:

This love is of the senses and of the spirit at the same time. It is not, then, merely a question of natural instinct or emotional drive. It is also and above all, an act of free will, whose dynamism ensures that not only does it endure through the joys and sorrows of daily life, but also that it grows, so that husband and wife becomes in a way, one heart and one soul, and together attain their human fulfillment.²⁷

For John Paul II, that which "constitutes the essential evil of the contraceptive act" is the way it violates the interior order of conjugal union, an order that is rooted in the very order of the person.²⁸

The Church teaches that the spouses minister the sacrament of marriage to each other. It is, therefore, most fitting that as they express, in sexual union, that mysterious language of their bodies, they do so in all truth that is proper to it.

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