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And they that remain shall know, that there is nothing better than the fear of God: and that there is nothing sweeter than to have regard to the commandments of the Lord -Ecclus. xxiii.37.



Fourteenth Promise of our Blessed Mother To Christians Who Recite The Rosary: All who recite the Rosary are my sons, and brothers of my only Son Jesus Christ.

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J.M.J.

PRO-LIFE MEANS...by Father Paul Marx, O.S.B.

On Nov.17th, 1979 I discussed the pro-life movement with Pope John Paul II. He had just returned from the United States where in Chicago he roundly condemned contraception while speaking to the bishops.

I thanked him for that and for persistently opposing contraception. I shared with him my experiences in 48 countries then (91 now). **I told His Holiness that once contraception is widespread, the rest is predictable, and I spelled it out for him: In every country, contraception always leads to massive abortion. Once you have contraception and legalized or widespread abortion, birthrates fall; nations collapse; young people follow their parents in the abuse of sex; increasing numbers live together without benefit of marriage; adoption agencies dry up because some 90% of pregnant teenagers who do not abort keep their babies and thus start single-parent families; the prostitution of the medical and legal professions follows; venereal disease escalates; infertility increases; and, if you can kill before birth, why can't you kill after birth? So euthanasia is inevitable.**

For an uncomfortably long time, the Pope looked at me as if in prayer, and then finally said, "You have lots of experience. You must bring this pro-life, pro-family movement all over the earth; and if you do that, you will be doing the most important work on earth."

Some years before contraception was discussed at Vatican II, the present Pope, as the cardinal archbishop of Krakow, assembled the best Polish theologians to discuss the morality of contraception, particularly the consequences if contraception were commonly practiced. The conclusion: If contraception became widespread, the Church/society could not hold onto sexual morality. The consequences would be horrendous.



As I travel, I am often asked what is my basic and deepest conviction after 36 years of pro-life work, visiting 91 countries and writing 11 books on the subject. Without hesitation, I tell such serious questioners:

Once you have widespread contraception, you get what I described to the Pope. All subsequent experience and observation have confirmed this. **Contraception is a pervasive, metastasizing moral cancer that destroys the Church, the family, the youth, and the nation. It empties seminaries and novitiates; it engenders runaway VD (think of AIDS!); it has no redeeming features whatsoever, being intrinsically evil or dishonest (inhonest), as Pope Paul VI wrote in Humanae Vitae.**

Widespread contraception also blinds people to nature's way of controlling fertility, that is, God's way; the human female is among the most infertile of all mammalian animals on earth. Natural birth regulation (NBR) has a success rate for the motivated and informed couple that is better than that of the abortifacient pill-user. And yet, NBR continues to be the greatest secret in the Catholic Church. I will let the reader decide the reasons.

While we need a variety of pro-life groups hacking away at the anti-life monster, it is enormously futile and indeed grossly shortsighted to overlook the chief source of baby-killing, which is contraception.

Keep in mind that most contraception used today is abortifacient: the pill, Norplant, Depo-Provera, the IUD, the morning-after pill. What's left of contraception is the condom, withdrawal, the diaphragm (little used), and a small variety of ineffective spermicides. And by the way, **the whole research thrust of future birth control is abortifacient. That contraceptives and abortifacients have created enormous social, demographic, and family problems, unhappiness, and ill health needs no proving here;** in any case, proof enough should be the present worldwide sex mess and the fact that in the U.S. alone some 60% of married couples at age 45 have been sterilized!

Indeed, we need many pro-life/family groups working on all manner of facets in promoting the value of life and the centrality of the family, as a priest recently wrote.

But above all, we need to convince ever more priests as to what is the rock-bottom cause of the worldwide destruction of life, families, and nations, that is, priests must learn and preach the prophetic Humanae Vitae, and speak out against contraception, abortifacients, and sterilization. To allow priests to think that abortion is the only anti-life/family problem (and many do not even preach against abortion) is to lull them into a very false state of mind.

I have preached in some 800 parishes in the last 36 years. In more than 90% of these parishes, I am told by good parishioners that they have never heard a sermon on contraception, never a word about abortifacients or sterilization - and in too many cases, not even anything on abortion!

Any group or movement - especially one attempting to form priests to be totally pro-life - which does not attempt to bring home the all-embracing evil of contraception is futilely beating the air. In saying this, I see nothing divisive. I have said and written this for almost 40 years. No true-blue pro-lifer, no bishop, no priest, no religious, no layman has ever been able to point out a contraceptive country with a viable birthrate and a healthy family life.

By preaching and promoting the whole pro-life message, you are most certainly going to be perceived as being divisive to those who don't want to face the facts or live by the truth.

Throughout his whole priestly, episcopal, and papal life, Pope John Paul II has shown that we must work indeed on many fronts, but that contraception is at the bottom of it all - as he has made clear so often when speaking to NBR study groups in Rome. From his earliest priesthood, he was active in promoting healthy (noncontraceptive) parishes; as early as 1960, he wrote his magnificent Love and Responsibility, the whole thrust of which is the authentic, ancient, unchangeable teaching of the Catholic Church.



Some years ago, a leader of an American group that fights only surgical abortion accosted the Pope in Rome, assuring him that the group opposed abortion only. The leader emphasized that his group only fought abortion. The Pope listened patiently. In his response, he mentioned the need to fight contraception also, and repeated it at the end of his remarks! The Pope has condemned contraception at least once in every country he has visited, except Japan where he had only 16 hours and talked about the atomic threat.

In the longest encyclical ever, Evangelium Vitae, the Pope zeros in on contraception while condemning all its allied caused evils.

I dare to say that I have spoken to more pro-life leaders in the world than any other human being. Speaking for Catholics, I would say that the true-blue pro-life/pro-family promoter is totally convinced of what I have tried to cover here, namely, that contraception is the root, that any major group hoping to move the scourge of baby-killing from society must concentrate in large part on the evils of contraception.

And now I find that more and more Protestants and Protestant pro-life groups are coming this way, and are organizing groups to work on contraception. We all know about the comparatively many Protestant preachers who have come into the Catholic Church largely because of Humanae vitae, that prophetic document which is primarily concerned with contraception. Allow me to cite Scott Hahn and his book Rome Sweet Home.

I deny that these words create disunity. On the contrary, seeing the evil of contraception (and, again, remember it is mostly abortifacient) could be the underlying point of unity in the whole pro-life, family effort and among all the varying groups working on various facets. I predict that the future will see this happen.

(Fr. Marx is the founder and former chairman of Human Life International.)