

Humanae Vitae

On the Regulation of Birth

New Questions

- #3 Are the moral norms still valid for married relations?
- Do good intentions legitimize the use of artificial birth control?
- Should people have complete rational control over their bodily functions?

Interpreting the Moral Law

- #4 The magisterium has a Divine obligation to teach moral norms to the Church
- This document is one of many the Church has issued over the centuries on the moral norms of marriage

Special Studies

#5 Commission set up by Pope John XXIII
in 1963 consisted of:

Married Couples

Experts in various related fields

Many Bishops

God's Loving Design

- #8 Married love gets its true nature and origin from God, who is love
- Marriage is the wise and provident institution of God the Creator
- The marriage of the baptized represents the union of Christ and His Church

Married Love

- #9 not just instinct or emotional drive, but an act of free will
- The husband and wife become one, sharing everything
- They give and receive freely from each other
- It is faithful and exclusive
- Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the procreation and education of children. Children are the supreme gift of marriage and contribute in the highest degree to their parents' welfare.

Responsible Parenthood

- #10 Awareness of and respect for the proper function of biological processes
- The reason and will must control the processes
- Responsible parenthood may be exercised by having children or, under serious circumstances, not having children
- It concerns the moral order and a right conscience

Observing the Natural Law

- #11 An inability to have children does not invalidate marriage, because the unitive aspect of sexuality is still valid
- Not every act of sexual intercourse does, or should result in procreation
- God has built into the fertility cycle periods of fertility and non-fertility
- Every act must, though retain its relation to procreation

Union and Procreation

- #12 The unitive and procreative aspects of sexuality are inseparable
- The two becoming one in sexual intercourse produces life, and the children have a unifying effect on the parents

Faithfulness to God's Design

- #13 must follow the moral order
- Should never be imposed, but free
- To deliberately act against any part of the process is to deny the great good inherent in it, and repugnant to human dignity
- We are not the masters of our sexuality, but ministers of it to our spouses

Unlawful Birth Control Methods

- #14 Any direct interruption of the generative process already begun is absolutely excluded as lawful means of regulating the number of children:
 - All abortion
 - All sterilization
 - Vasectomy
 - Tubal Ligation

Continued...

- Similarly excluded is any action, before, during, or after the act, specifically intended to prevent procreation
- It is never right to do evil so that good may come from it

Lawful Therapeutic Means

- It is lawful to use therapeutic means to cure bodily diseases, even if a foreseeable impediment to procreation should result

Recourses to Infertile Periods

- #16 We must use reason and intelligence to guide our marital love, but always within the limits of God's moral law
- If there are well-grounded reasons for spacing births, the couple may take advantage of natural periods of infertility
- Natural Family Planning (NFP)

Consequences of Artificial Methods

- #17 Many *possible* problems; could lead to:
 - Infidelity
 - Lowering of moral standards
 - Lack of reverence of woman by man
 - Public authorities might legislate and enforce it for population control

Limits to Man's Power

- All limits must be set in order to give proper reverence due to the whole human organism and its natural functions

Concern of the Church

- #18 This is a tough teaching that will not be easily accepted by many people
- The Church must teach it anyway
- We are encouraged to do the right thing, even if it is not always easy or convenient

To Scientists

- #24 Should pool their efforts to elucidate more thoroughly the conditions favorable to a proper regulation of births.
- By the study of natural rhythms to determine a sufficiently secure basis for the chaste limitation of offspring.



