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CALX MARIÆ

Rebuilding our Christian civilisation

FOCUS:

HUMANÆ VITÆ IN RETROSPECT

INCLUDING:

YOUTH SYNOD:

setting the stage for a monumental change

FAITH AND FAMILY IN CHINA:

an exclusive interview with Steven Mosher

BISHOP SCHNEIDER:

his message to Catholic families



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CALX MARIAE

ISSUE 2 ❁ AUTUMN 2018



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The response to our first issue of *Calx Mariae*, the heel of Mary, has been a heart-warming witness and reminder of the extended Christian family of bishops, priests, lay fathers and mothers, grandparents and children: thank you! Someone told me that going through it was like looking at a family album and encountering those to whom one is related – not

by blood, but by love of the truth. Indeed, through the bonds of faith, we help one another remain steadfast no matter how fierce the storm. What a grace it is to be a member of this family, the mystical body of Christ, extending beyond all borders and human imagination.

Today this supernatural family has been largely forgotten. And consequently, the natural family is increasingly misunderstood. At the World Meeting for Families in Dublin last August, the Archbishop of Dublin said: “There are those who would look at the World Meeting as some sort of ideological gathering to celebrate a type of family, which probably does not exist.”

What a shocking statement for a bishop to make! The family is a reality. It is the claim that it does not exist that is ideological. We must pray for more Catholic families: they are the future of the Church we love. Bishop Athanasius Schneider explained in a video address at another family conference in Dublin held at the same time: “True Catholic families will strengthen the Church of our days with the beauty of the Catholic faith. From that faith will come out new Catholic fathers and mothers, and from them, there will come out a new generation of zealous priests and intrepid bishops, who will be ready to give their life for Christ and for the salvation of souls.” (See p. 44)

The anti-family narrative is relentlessly promoted by secular authorities. But the “LGBT” theory, being widely taught to schoolchildren even before they reach the age of reason, has spread throughout the Church and lies at the heart of this month’s Youth Synod. For the first time a Vatican document, the *Instrumentum Laboris*, effectively the synod’s agenda, uses the term “LGBT”. Those in charge of the synod claim that they are following the lead of young people themselves by adopting this language. Such an abdication of their duty to teach young people the truth, is a betrayal of them. The fact that a number of bishops attending the synod face allegations – unanswered to date – of covering up clerical abuse only deepens already serious concerns. (See p. 4)

Voice of the Family’s own conference *Created for heaven: the mission of young adults in today’s world* will take place in Rome during the synod. It will seek to strengthen the commitment of young people to defend the true faith in the public square and, indeed, within the Church. But above all, it will be an opportunity for prayer and sacrifice with all-night Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament offered for the Church and Her bishops. Full coverage of this event will feature in the next issue of *Calx Mariae*.

As the Church is shaken by attacks against her purity, it is our Mother inviolate to whom we must turn. She “is the rod in which was neither knot of original sin, nor rind of actual guilt.” (*Ant.*) If we stay close to her, nothing can make us lose heart, for as St Ambrose wrote: “When the apostles fled, she stood at the Cross, and with pious eyes beheld her Son’s wounds, for she did not look for the death of her Offspring, but the salvation of the world.” ✚

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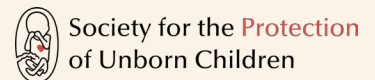
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DESIGN: Selina Fang

PRINTERS: Buxton Press

Publication is sponsored by:



Special thanks to: **LIFE SITE**

COVER IMAGE: The Marriage of the Virgin, Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino 1483 - 1520

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Calx Mariae seeks to contribute to the rebuilding of Christian civilisation by providing essential coverage and analysis in the areas of life, family and culture. Our aim in producing this magazine is to strengthen our readers in the faith and in their witness to the truth about human life and the family.

Calx Mariae is published by Voice of the Family, an international coalition of 26 pro-life and pro-family organisations formed in support of Catholic teaching on the family. The following truths are particularly at the heart of Voice of the Family’s work:

- ✓ Marriage, the exclusive, life-long union of one man and one woman, is the foundation of a stable and flourishing society and is the greatest protector of children, born and unborn.
- ✓ The procreative and unitive ends of the conjugal act cannot licitly be separated; the rejection of this truth lies at the root of modern attacks on life and the family.
- ✓ Parents are the primary educators of their children and the protection of this right is essential for building a new “culture of life”.

PROTECTING THE FREEDOM TO PRAY FOR THE UNBORN IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

BY MARIA MADISE

It is not often in the pro-life battle that we can bring home truly good news. But the recent announcement by Sajid Javid, British Home Secretary, that he would not seek to ban peaceful prayer vigils in front of abortion centres in England and Wales, certainly was such news. Despite a high profile campaign demonising pro-life demonstrations, he concluded that “introducing national buffer zones would not be a proportionate response” to the complaints of the abortion industry. He said that “[t]he main activities reported to us that take place during protests include praying, displaying banners and handing out leaflets.”

Welcoming the decision Antonia Tully of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) said that the Society had distributed over 80,000 postcards to its supporters calling on Mr Javid to respect the right to protest publicly against abortion. But she added:

“Throughout our campaign to protect pro-life vigils our thoughts have always been for the mothers who need help, even as they are walking into the abortion clinic, and for the many babies and children alive today because of an encounter with a loving pro-life citizen.”

Although a serious setback for abortion providers, it is likely that the pressure on local councils to create buffer zones in their own areas will



SPUC'S MERSEYSIDE REGION IN FRONT OF THE BPAS ABORTION CLINIC IN LIVERPOOL

be stepped-up. In April 2018, Ealing council in London introduced the first buffer zone to Britain when it voted to use a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to ban a prayer vigil outside the Marie Stopes facility in the borough. In July, the High Court rejected an attempt to have the Order lifted.

Given that the Home Office found little evidence of harassment, what is the real aim of the campaign to criminalise pro-life vigils?

Dr John Edwards, who appeared before Nottingham County Court earlier this year when he was the subject of an emergency injunction for anti-social behaviour (he was praying in front of an abortion facility) wrote about his own prosecution:

“The question needs to be asked, at a time of increasing concern over terrorism and street violence, why are local authorities spending so much time and money going after Christians praying peacefully in public and offering help to vulnerable women. This is no longer just a debate about

abortion: the fundamental right of citizens to express themselves peacefully in public is at risk.”

Dr Edwards argued:

“[T]he Council’s action against a group of people praying had nothing to do with a threat to public order but was politically motivated. The comments of witnesses against me – one described the idea of people praying for her as a ‘violation’ – were telling; clearly, one of the things they find most objectionable of all is our religious beliefs.”

As access to abortion is increasingly presented as a human right, attempts to silence Christians who defend unborn children are likely to grow. The decision by the Home Office to reject demands for buffer zones, therefore, has enormous significance not just for unborn children but for the freedom of expression for Christians themselves to continue to proclaim the law of God in the public square. ✝



PHOTO CREDIT: S. ANG

THE YOUTH SYNOD:

setting the stage “for a monumental change” and making young people responsible for it

BY LIAM GIBSON

The cancer of sodomitic impurity is creeping through the clerical order... Unless the force of the Apostolic See opposes it as quickly as possible, there is no doubt that when it finally wishes for the unbridled evil to be restrained, it may not be possible to halt the fury of its advance.¹

St Peter Damian, *The Book of Gomorrah*, c. 1051

Pope Francis has made no secret of his wish to use the synod of bishops to decentralise the power of the papacy.² In 1965, when they were established in their current form, synods were consultative assemblies with no authority in matters of doctrine. And while the synods on the family, in 2014 and 2015, were more contentious than previous gatherings, they did not actually give greater responsibility to the bishops. Instead, the curia was accused of engineering a predetermined outcome to pave the way for the reception of Holy Communion by Catholics in non-sacra-

mental unions.³ Described as revolutionary, the post-synodal exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* remains divisive.⁴ It is, however, the unfinished business of the family synods, which now overshadows October's Synod on Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment.

Halfway through the 2014 synod the publication of the *relatio post disceptationem*, or the midterm report, revealed an intention to change the Church's teaching on homosexual acts. Published even before the bishops saw it, the *relatio* caused an immediate sensation. Under the headline Vatican: 'Homosexuals have gifts

and qualities to offer Christians' in *The Guardian*, Vatican reporter John Thavis described it as “an earthquake, the ‘big one’ that hit after months of smaller tremors...the document clearly reflects Pope Francis's desire to adopt a more merciful pastoral approach on marriage and family issues.”⁵

Since then the testimony of Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò has confirmed the strength of the homosexual network within the Church.⁶ It is not surprising, therefore, that many commentators fear that the Youth Synod will result in a pronouncement

that homosexual acts are not intrinsically evil.

Open and welcoming community to all

At the June press conference for the launch of the *Instrumentum Laboris* (IL) for the synod, Lorenzo Cardinal Baldisseri (who remains the Secretary General of the Synod despite accusations of manipulating the Synods on the Family), was asked why the term “LGBT [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender] youth” was used for the first time in a document of the Holy See.⁷ At paragraph 197, in the section “Open and welcoming community to all”, it states:

“Some LGBT youths, through various contributions that were received by the General Secretariat of the Synod, wish to ‘benefit from greater closeness’ and experience greater care by the Church, while some BC [Bishops Conferences] ask themselves what to suggest ‘to young people who decide to create homosexual instead of heterosexual couples and, above all, would like to be close to the Church’.”

The Cardinal answered that the organisers were “very diligent in taking into account the work done by the bishops’ conferences, but especially the results of this meeting with youth, of which they were the protagonists” and the acronym was taken from the pre-synodal document compiled by the young people.⁸ In fact, it doesn’t appear in the document but that hardly matters. The real significance is its use in the IL which is the agenda for the entire synod: something the homosexual lobby recognises.

The next day, *New Ways Ministry*, a group which seeks acceptance of “the

homosexual condition as though it were not disordered”, celebrated the use of the term.⁹ Francis DeBernardo, their Executive Director, wrote:

“In the *Instrumentum Laboris*, a preparatory document released on June 19th which lays out the direction for the October 2018 Synod on Youth in Rome, the Vatican for the first time used the acronym ‘LGBT’ to describe individuals with diverse sexualities and gender identities. Similar to 2013 when Pope Francis became the first pope to use the word ‘gay’, this change in language signals that church officials are beginning to understand that they have to treat LGBT people with simple respect by referring to them with more accurate terms.”¹⁰

More accurate or not, this language certainly signifies a shift in thinking. Until now the Church has refused to “consider [a] person as a ‘heterosexual’ or a ‘homosexual’ and insists that every person has a fundamental identity: the creature of God, and by grace, his child and heir to eternal life”.¹¹ Using the LGBT label indicates the adoption of an ideology which categorises human beings on the basis of their sexual inclinations, temptations and behaviour.

DeBernardo underlines this by quoting Fr James Martin’s book *Building a Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community Can Enter into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion, and Sensitivity*.

“...[R]espect means calling a group what it asks to be called. ...Names are important. Thus, church leaders are invited to be

attentive to how they name the LGBT community and lay to rest phrases like ‘afflicted with same-sex attraction,’ which no LGBT person I know uses, and even ‘homosexual person,’ which seems overly clinical to many. I’m not prescribing what names to use, though ‘gay and lesbian’, ‘LGBT’ and ‘LGBTQ’ are the most common. I’m saying that people have a right to name themselves. Using those names is part of respect.”

As he points out:

“Martin’s book has been praised by church leaders around the globe, including Cardinal Kevin Farrell, the head of the Vatican’s Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life which plays a significant role in the Synod on Youth. In fact, Farrell wrote a blurb for the book’s jacket cover.”¹²

Farrell also gave Martin a prominent platform to promote gender ideology at the World Meeting of Families in Dublin in August. His endorsement of homosexual propaganda raises serious questions about his suitability to lead the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. Accusations that he knew about the predatory behaviour of his mentor Theodore McCarrick (the retired Archbishop of Washington DC) and did nothing, may make his position untenable.¹³ Although widely known, McCarrick’s activities were ignored by his fellow bishops. In April 2008, the sociologist, Richard Sipe, an adjunct professor at St Mary’s Seminary, Baltimore, Maryland (1972-1984), wrote an open letter to Pope Benedict XVI about sexual abuse in the American Church.

In it, he claimed to have “documents and letters that record the first-hand testimony and eye-witness accounts” of McCarrick’s homosexual activity while a bishop in New Jersey.¹⁴

It was the influence of the homosexual network which protected McCarrick. As the Italian journalist and author Riccardo Cascioli noted, following his removal from the college of cardinals:

“...the gay lobby has never been so powerful in the Vatican. It was already powerful in the 1990s considering that McCarrick was able to become archbishop of Washington and therefore a cardinal despite complaints about his conduct ha[ving] even reached Rome. We cannot help but notice, that in the last few years, there has been a tremendous growth of power in the hands of prelates involved (directly or indirectly) in cases of homosexuality and sexual abuse or widely talked about.”¹⁵

Notwithstanding Farrell’s feeble denials over the McCarrick scandal, his involvement can only fuel concerns regarding the Youth Synod.

The *Instrumentum Laboris*

The *Instrumentum Laboris* is replete with buzzwords, slogans and pseudo-psychological jargon. Central to the document is Pope Francis’s pre-synodal meeting with 300 young people in March 2018 and the feedback from 15,000 individuals engaged through the Facebook social media platform. And while the LGBT label doesn’t appear in the report of that meeting there are repeated references to “especially controversial” teachings such as “contraception, abortion, ho-



PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN ARON

mosexuality, cohabitation, marriage, and how the priesthood is perceived in different realities in the Church”.¹⁶

The numerous IL passages, which seem to reveal the real agency for change, include:

- IL 1 – IL 214 *nessuno escluso* – no one excluded (“without exception” in the English version) is reminiscent of the slogan “all are welcome”. It appears in the first paragraph of the introduction, the last paragraph of the conclusion and at several points in between. While the Church seeks the salvation of souls, without exception, the Gospel requires repentance of sins which, unless rejected, may result in the loss of sanctifying grace and, potentially of eternal life. It is first and foremost the confessional, where all are welcome, without exception.¹⁷
- IL 3 “...identif[ying] where reforms are needed, as well as changes to ecclesial and pastoral practices that otherwise might become fossilized.” – There can never be a change in pastoral practice without – at least – an apparent change in doctrine. Once theory and practice are separated, the practice, logically, starts to serve a different theory.
- IL 48 “International research shows that many young people face inequality and discrimination because of their gender, social class, religious membership, sexual orientation, geographical location, disability or ethnicity.” – Such language shows an acceptance of homosexuality as normal and equates its rejection with unjust discrimination equal to racism or religious bigotry.
- IL 48 “The PM [Pre-synodal Meeting] gave specific attention to forms of discrimination impacting young women, also in the ecclesial domain: Today, there is a general problem in society in that women are still not given an equal place. This is also true in the Church (PM 5).” – This seems intended to re-open the issue of female ordination closed definitively in 1994 by Pope John Paul II in *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*.
- IL 53 “...many [young people] believe that ‘the sexual question must be discussed in a more open and unbiased way’.” [In the Italian text *senza pregiudizi* – without prejudice.] – Without prejudice

either implies that ideas of right and wrong should be set aside or that the Church's teaching is based on human prejudice.

- IL 53 “Young Catholics ‘who do not agree with [the teachings of the Church], still wish to be part of the Church anyhow, and ask for greater clarity on this issue. Hence, the PM asks church leaders to “speak in practical terms [in the Italian text *maniera concreta* or concrete way] about controversial subjects such as homosexuality and gender issues, which young people are already freely discussing without taboo’.” – What really seems to be demanded is the approval of sexual immorality on the false basis that such sins do not deprive us of sanctifying grace and therefore the sacraments.¹⁸
- IL 128 “Accompaniment in reading the signs of the times ...their interpretation requires accompaniment and can become an instrument to identify the signs of the times that the Spirit brings to the attention of the young and of the church.” – Here the views of young people are presented as comparable to divine revelation. As this passage tacitly acknowledges, however, this is not the Holy Spirit but the spirit of the times.

Supposedly, the theme of the synod is faith and vocational discernment but the agenda set by the IL is one of sweeping change. It quotes one episcopal conference as saying “young people are asking the Church for a monumental change of attitude, direction and practice”.¹⁹ The synod fathers are told at the outset that they must ask questions “without suggesting pre-defined answers”.²⁰

The eclipse of faith

For a document of more than 34,000 words, the IL has little to say about faith and is preoccupied with socio-economic problems, the environment and ending discrimination in the world and the Church.

Young people, it declares:

“...are leaving the Church in large quantities. Understanding why is crucial in moving forward’ (PM 7). For sure, among the reasons for this, we find indifference and failure to listen; also, ‘the Church oftentimes appears as too severe and is often associated with excessive moralism’ (PM 1).”²¹

The message is clear: if the Church does not abandon her moral teaching there will be an exodus of young people. The concern with moralising is summed-up in the IL’s interpretation of the story of the Prodigal Son which shows that “life in the house of the Father can be an experience that makes people unable to love”.²² The parable is not about God’s mercy for repentant sinners but about “a courageous father, who allows his children to experience the risk of freedom, without imposing constraints that mortify their choices. He is a father whose heart is so big he does not exclude anyone and he

wants to reintegrate everyone in his household at the same time.”²³

The hidden agenda on vocations

The definition of vocation adopted for the synod is so broad that it takes in “deciding our course of study, choosing our profession, deciding our beliefs, discovering our sexuality and making life-changing commitments”²⁴ as well as “the choice of social and political engagement”.²⁵ When eventually it does address vocations to the priesthood it briefly restates a familiar complaint about “the concern of many Churches over the decline in the number of candidates” and calls for “a renewed reflection... ..on a vocational pastoral care that is able to convey the attractiveness of Jesus’ call to become the shepherds of his flock.”²⁶

The priesthood may appear to be an afterthought but the agenda of change has far-reaching implications for the ordained ministry. It is priests who will “speak in practical terms about controversial subjects such as homosexuality”,²⁷ priests will be asked to bless homosexual couples and ensure they “experience greater care by the Church”.²⁸ Past experience would indicate that candidates for the priesthood who object to the provision of such pastoral care may well find it impossible to proceed to ordination.

“

For a document of more than 34,000 words, the *Instrumentum Laboris* has little to say about faith and is preoccupied with socio-economic problems, the environment and ending discrimination in the world and the Church.

The priesthood has been central to the changes of the last 50 years. The “spirit” of Vatican II demanded the introduction of ideas to make the priesthood more open to the world. These ideas led to the widespread rejection of the Church’s teaching on sexuality and the growth of a homosexual subculture in many seminaries. This revolution was documented by Michael Rose in his 2002 book *Goodbye, Good Men*.²⁹ Abuse of the kind perpetrated by McCarrick is a consequence of the admittance to the priesthood and the promotion of men with homosexual tendencies. The power wielded by such men also perpetuated abuse by

covering it up. As Richard Sipe explains in his 1999 paper *The Problem of Prevention in Clergy Sexual Abuse*:

“Institutionally, the network of this underworld can and sometimes does evolve into blackmail—for example, clerics hold knowledge against their bishop or vice versa to establish or maintain their position. ... Often bishops know a great deal about the sexual history of each other. It is not uncommon for authorities to use knowledge of hidden scandalous behaviour to keep each other or a religious institution in line with the threat of public expo-

sure of secret violations if they do not conform. The power of the underworld is tremendous and destroys real accountability.”³⁰

The letter published in May 2018 by 48 seminarians from Tegucigalpa, Honduras, decrying the epidemic of homosexuality in their seminary shows that this problem is persistent and pervasive. Tegucigalpa is the archdiocese of Oscar Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga, a close advisor of Pope Francis.

When questioned about the homosexual lobby in the curia in 2013, the Pope was dismissive, saying: “There’s a lot of talk about the gay lobby, but I’ve never seen it on the Vatican ID card”.³¹ Yet this lobby exists and has grown stronger since his election. From the beginning of his reign, Francis has promoted men of questionable character to influential positions. Many have become well known for their advocacy of the homosexual agenda while a few have been forced to resign in disgrace.

Desperate to deflect responsibility for the crimes of homosexual priests and bishops, liberal churchmen continue to blame the abuse on clericalism or celibacy.³² Under the guise of pastoral care for “LGBT youth”, these same churchmen are now poised to use October’s synod to force Catholic teaching to conform to homosexual ideology. This is what Fr Dariusz Oko, theology professor from the Papal University in Krakow, described in 2012 as the “homoheresy”.³³

The salvation of souls – the supreme law of the Church³⁴
Regardless of Cardinal Baldisseri’s claims about young people being the protagonists, those in control of

“

The definition of vocation adopted for the synod is so broad that it takes in “deciding the course of study, choosing our profession, deciding our beliefs, discovering our sexuality and making life-changing commitments” as well as “the choice of social and political engagement”.



PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN ARON

the synod are unlikely to relinquish their own power. In *Night Conversations*, the late Carlo Cardinal Martini,³⁵ a leading member of the St Gallen group³⁶ that engineered the papal election in 2013, envisioned using “young ‘prophets’ to revolutionise the Church – and said it would ‘never occur’ to him to ‘judge’ homosexual couples”.³⁷ These two issues have now been brought together in the Youth Synod.

At Fatima, the Blessed Virgin told the three young shepherds that more souls go to hell for committing sins of the flesh than for any other reason. Despite their youth, Our Lady did not spare them a terrifying vision of the damned because the reality of hell is central to the Christian faith. If the threat of hell was not real then Christ’s death and resurrection was unnecessary. If it does not exist, then no one can be condemned by their sins and no one excluded (*nessuno escluso*) from heaven. The portrayal of Our Lord in the IL shows “the teacher, model and friend of every young person”³⁸ – a companion, but not a Saviour. Today’s young Catholics, arguably the least catechised generation in the history of the Church, deserve to hear the truth that Christ died to save them from their sins.

In his testimony, Archbishop Viganò describes the “unbridled evil” foretold by St Peter Damian:

“These homosexual networks, which are now widespread in many dioceses, seminaries, religious orders, etc, act under the concealment of secrecy and lies with the power of octopus tentacles, and strangle innocent victims and priestly vocations, and are strangling the entire Church.”³⁹

In recent weeks, some bishops have announced that they will not attend the synod or have questioned whether it is appropriate for it to go ahead at all. To many lay people the thought that Church officials implicated in this crisis will take part in discussions on “the pastoral care of adolescents and young adults”⁴⁰ is itself, scandalous. The refusal of the Holy See to address this problem means that lay people must look to the faithful bishops, the successors of the Apostles, to act.

St Peter Damian, pray for us! ✝

ENDNOTES:

1. St Peter Damian, *The Book of Gomorrah*, c. 1051. Trans. Matthew C Hoffman (New Braunfels, Texas, Ita Ad Thomam, Books & Media, 2015) p. 82.
2. “From the beginning of my ministry as Bishop of Rome, I sought to enhance the Synod, which is one of the most precious legacies of the Second Vatican Council. ...In a synodal Church, as I have said, ‘it is not advisable for the Pope to take the place of local Bishops in the discernment of every issue which arises in their territory. In this sense, I am conscious of the need to promote a sound “decentralization”’” Pope Francis, Ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the institution of the synod of bishops, 17 October 2015. On 15 September 2018, the Pope promulgated *Episcopalis Communio* a new apostolic constitution creating a mechanism for the final document produced by a synod to be included in the official magisterium. It is also expected to give additional power to the Secretariat.
3. See Edward Pentin, *The Rigging of a Vatican Synod*, Amazon Kindle, 2015.
4. “*Amoris Laetitia* a New Paradigm of Catholicity – a major shift in our ministerial approach nothing short of revolutionary. Moving from universal principles to concrete situations”. Blase Cardinal Cupich quoted by Dan Hitchens, *The Catholic Herald*, 10 Feb 2018, <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/02/10/cardinal-cupich-defends-popes-record-on-doctrine-and-abuse/> [Accessed 29 Aug 2018].
5. Lizzy Davies, “Vatican: ‘Homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer Christians’”, *The Guardian*, 13 Oct 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/13/vatican-homosexuals-same-sex-marriage-christians-catholic-church> [Accessed 3 Aug 2018].
6. Diane Montagna, “Pope Francis covered up McCarrick abuse, former US nuncio testifies” *LifeSiteNews*, 25 Aug 2018 <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/former-us-nuncio-pope-francis-knew-of-mccarricks-misdeeds-repealed-sanction> [Accessed 3 Sept 2018].
7. The English version is available at <http://www.synod2018.va/content/synod2018/en/fede-discernimento-vocazione/instrumentum-laboris-for-the-synod-2018--young-people-the-faith.html> [Accessed 12 Aug 2018].
8. Diane Montagna, “Why is the Vatican highlighting ‘LGBT youth’ in lead up to Youth Synod?” *LifeSiteNews*, 20 Jun 2018 [Accessed 12 Aug 2018].
9. *The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Rome, 1 Oct 1986 para 16.
10. Francis DeBernardo “Youth Synod Document Shows Vatican Evolution on LGBT Topics.” *New Way Ministry*, 20 Jun 2018 <https://www.newwaysministry.org/2018/06/20/youth-synod-document-shows-vatican-evolution-on-lgbt-topics/> [Accessed 5 Sept 2018].
11. The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons para. 16.
12. DeBernardo as above.

13. See Diane Montagna, “Pope Francis covered up McCarrick abuse, former US nuncio testifies” *LifeSiteNews*, 25 Aug 2018. <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/former-us-nuncio-pope-francis-knew-of-mccarricks-misdeeds-repealed-sanction> [Accessed 4 Sept 2018].
14. Richard Sipe, “Your Holiness, I Have the Evidence Card McCarrick Is a Homosexual, Please Act Open Letter to Benedict XVI”, *Tradition in Action*, 22 Apr 2008. https://www.traditioninaction.org/HotTopics/a02z_007_SipeOpenLetter.html [Accessed 5 Sept 2018].
15. Riccardo Cascioli, “Can we save the World Meeting of Families from the gay lobby?” *La Nuova Bussola Quotidiana*, 4 Aug 2018 <http://www.lanuovabq.it/it/can-we-save-the-world-meeting-of-families-from-the-gay-lobby> [Accessed 12 Aug 2018].
16. “Report of the Pre-synodal Meeting with Young People” Part 1, section 5. <http://www.synod2018.va/content/synod2018/en/news/final-document-from-the-pre-synodal-meeting.html> [Accessed 5 Sept 2018].
17. “...he who causeth a sinner to be converted from the error of his way, shall save his soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.” James 5:20.
18. “...if any man that is named a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or a server of idols, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such a one, not so much as to eat. For what have I to do to judge them that are without? Do not you judge them that are within? For them that are without, God will judge. Put away the evil one from among yourselves.” 1 Cor 5:11-13.
19. IL 138.
20. IL 2.
21. IL 65.
22. IL 176.
23. IL 79.
24. IL 16.
25. IL 110.
26. IL 102.
27. IL 53.
28. IL 197.
29. Michael S Rose, *Goodbye, Good Men - How Liberals Brought Corruption into the Church in America* (Regnery Publishing Inc Washington DC 2002).
30. Richard Sipe, “The Problem of Prevention in Clergy Sexual Abuse” *Bless Me Father for I Have Sinned - Perspectives on Sexual Abuse Committed by Roman Catholic Priests*, Thomas G Plante (ed.) (Westport, CT, Praeger Publishers, 1999) p.124.
31. John L Allen, “Pope on homosexuals: ‘Who am I to judge?’” *National Catholic Reporter*, 29 Jul 2013. <https://www.nronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/pope-homosexuals-who-am-i-judge> [Accessed 12 Aug 2018].
32. Research conducted by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice “indicated that of all victims whose gender was reported, 81per cent were male and 19 per cent were female” (p.69) and that the “majority of victims are males between the ages of 11-17” (p.70). *The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in The United States 1950-2002*. (The City University of New York, February 2004) http://www.bishop-accountability.org/reports/2004_02_27_JohnJay_revised/2004_02_27_JohnJay_Main_Report_Optimized.pdf [Accessed 8 Sept 2018].
33. Fr Dariusz Oko Ph.D., “With the Pope against the Homosexuality” *Rorate Caeli*, 8 Apr 2012. <https://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2013/02/fr-dariusz-okos-major-article-with-pope.html#more> [Accessed 12 Aug 2018].
34. “...the salvation of souls, which must always be the supreme law in the Church, is to be kept before one’s eyes.” Can 1752. *Code of Canon Law* http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P70.HTM [Accessed 12 Aug 2018].
35. Julia Meloni, “The Man Who Was Ante-Pope” *Crisis Magazine*, 28 Feb 2018. <https://www.crisismagazine.com/2018/man-ante-pope> [Accessed 4 Sept 2018].
36. Jeanne Smits, “Cardinal Danneels admits being part of clerical ‘Mafia’ that plotted Francis’ election” *LifeSiteNews*, 25 Sep 2015 <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/cardinal-danneels-admits-being-part-of-clerical-mafia-that-plotted-francis> [Accessed 4 Sept 2018].
37. Julia Meloni, “The St. Gallen Mafia’s ‘LGBT’ Youth Synod” *Crisis Magazine*, 3 Jul 2018. <https://www.crisismagazine.com/2018/st-gallen-mafias-lgbt-youth-synod> [Accessed 4 Sept 2018].
38. IL 80.
39. See note 6.
40. IL 190.

PRAYER TO ST RAPHAEL FOR PURITY

St Raphael, Patron Angel of Youth, I beg you to plead with God for me, that I may always keep my life pure and holy. As thou didst guard the young Tobias from dangers of soul and body on his journey to a strange land, protect me from the many dangers that confront me in my life. Strengthen me in my struggle against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I pray and beg of Thee, glorious St Raphael, to be my Patron Angel of Purity. For thy great love for Jesus, the King of Angels and for Mary, the Queen of Angels, deign to keep me from all uncleanness and to obtain that my mind may be untainted, my heart pure, and my body chaste. May I frequently receive the “Bread of Angels” in Holy Communion, that it may be an effective remedy and protection against the temptations that press round about me, and seal my heart forever against the suggestions of sinful pleasures.

Help me always to serve Jesus and Mary in perfect chastity, so that one day I may merit to belong to those of whom Jesus spoke when He said, “Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God.”

Amen.

FOCUS

Humanae Vitae in retrospect



In July 1968 Paul VI published his encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae*. In it, he predicted that the consequences of accepting artificial birth control would include a general lowering of moral standards throughout society; a rise in infidelity; a lessening of respect for women by men; and the coercive use of reproductive technologies by governments. Fifty years on, not only have these predictions come true but, furthermore, we have come to the point where society widely accepts that marriage can be separated from sexual relations and sexual relations from having children. In order to spare future generations from the destructive effects of the contraceptive mentality, and to help restore an authentically Christian culture, Catholic teaching on chastity and openness to life in marriage must be defended and taught boldly – as many events and publications marking this anniversary have emphasised.

Voice of the Family’s conference at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas in Rome ‘*Humanae Vitae at 50: setting the context*’ in October 2017 was a prelude for this anniversary year. In his opening remarks at the conference His Eminence Walter Cardinal Brandmüller recalled the authoritative nature of the Church’s teaching on contraception and warned against false theories of doctrinal development. His Eminence noted: “*Humanae Vitae* provides an extraordinary example of the workings of the process of *paradosis*, which means transmission of the doctrine of the Church. When the truth of faith is received, adopted and transmitted, what happens is, that what is received, when adopted and transmitted, responds with a deeper understanding and precision to the needs of the individual in question, while continuing to be identical to itself. In all of this, contradiction

between yesterday and today is impossible: it is the Holy Spirit who acts in the Church of Jesus Christ to guide this process of *paradosis*. It is the Holy Spirit who ensures that the faith of the Church develops in the course of time, just as an adult person continues to be identical to the infant it was in the past, an intuition formulated by Vincent of Lérins as early as 430 and elaborated upon by Blessed John Henry Newman.”

In the FOCUS of this issue we wish to look at *Humanae Vitae* in retrospect – as a medium of truth received, adopted and transmitted. A selection of talks and articles from conferences and publications throughout this anniversary year will hopefully give you a fuller historical, cultural and doctrinal context for this landmark encyclical letter. ✝

THE ENCYCLICAL HUMANAE VITAE IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS TIME

BY PROF. ROBERTO DE MATTEI

This talk was originally delivered at “Humanae Vitae at 50: setting the context”, Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas, Rome, 28 Oct. 2017.

In an interview released to Vatican Radio on 25 July 2017, Msgr Gilfredo Marengo, president of the *Humanae Vitae* study committee, nominated by Pope Francis, said that “from the historical-theological research perspective, it would be very useful to reconstruct the encyclical’s elaboration process which had developed in distinct steps since June 1966 to its publication on 25 July, 1968” through the examining of the documentation stored in some Holy See archives. My essay intends to be an external contribution to this reconstruction.

The roots of the moral crisis

Humanae Vitae cannot be debated, without recalling the systematic errors that this encyclical fought, especially the movement of “birth control” that was part of the broad process of the sexual revolution of the twentieth century. In the investigation of the historical roots of this phenomenon, it is necessary to trace the trend of ideas, or to study the revolutionary agents’ biographies. In the first case, our understanding of the influence of evolutionism, Marxism and Freudianism must be deepened. In the second case, it is necessary to follow the action not so much of ideologues, but of the propagators of revolutionary ideologies. There is of course a parallelism

and an interdependence between the two paths. It is not incidental, for example, that the dates of life and death of two promoters of the sexual revolution in the twentieth century, coincide:¹ Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957), ideologue of Marx-Freudianism and Alfred Kinsey (1896-1956),² who with his Institute for Sex Research,³ gave a pseudo-scientific role to Reich’s pan-sexualism.

As far as the specific issue of “birth control” is concerned, the ideology of neo-Malthusianism and feminism is interwoven with the biography of Margaret Sanger (1879-1966), the main activist of the anti-natalist movement of the twentieth century, founder of the Birth Control Federation of America (BCFA), which in 1942 became the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA).

Margaret Sanger

The expression “birth control” appeared for the first time, in the June 1914 issue of the magazine “The Woman Rebel” in which Margaret Higgins Sanger, a young American anarchist, announced the creation of a movement in defence of a woman’s right to be the “absolute mistress of her own body”.⁴ The magazine, published by Rabelais Press, was owned by the revolutionary woman’s lover, the Greek anarchist John Rompapas, and featured the motto “No Gods, no Masters” as subtitle.⁵

In December of that same year, Margaret Sanger met, in London,



PROF. ROBERTO DE MATTEI

the ideologist Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), author of *The Task of Social Hygiene* (1912), in which he proclaimed women’s liberation and their right to sexual pleasure. Ellis, founder of eugenics, became Sanger’s mentor, encouraging her to work for the spread of contraceptive methods.⁶

The first development of the movement took place in England, where in 1877 Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891) and Annie Besant (1847-1933) published the book *The Fruits of Philosophy, or the Private Companion of Young Married People* (1832) by Charles Knowlton (1800-1850), an atheist and secularist physician of Boston, known for his *Elements of Modern Materialism* (1829). Bradlaugh, also known as one of the founders of vegetarianism, was affiliated to the loggia of Perseverante Amité, a branch of France’s Grand Orient.⁷ Besant was a socialist and feminist activist who, thanks to Bradlaugh, joined Freemasonry, and later the Theosophical Society of which she became the second pres-

ident in 1907 after Elena Blavatskiy (1831-1891).

After the publication of the book, Bradlaugh and Besant were arrested and put on trial in London for obscene publications. When the “Knowlton trial” opened,⁸ Besant called Charles Robert Drysdale (1829-1907), a close friend of Darwin, in his defence. Drysdale and his companion Alice Vickery (1844-1929) were two free thinkers, convinced that marriage was “legal prostitution”. The two unmarried partners, together with Charles’s brother George Robert Drysdale (1825-1904), founded the Neo-Malthusian League in England, presided over by Charles Drysdale, then by Vickery and after his death by his son Charles Vickery Drysdale (1874- 1961).



MARGARET SANGER

In London, in 1914, Margaret Sanger got in touch with the League and received wide support from Alice Vickery Drysdale and Drysdale’s son Charles. Back in the United States, in 1916 she opened the first birth control clinic in Brooklyn. She was also arrested and tried, on charges of distributing pornographic material. On this occasion, another militant feminist intervened in favour of Sanger: Marie Stopes (1880-1958), the English prophetess of birth control, who had previously met her in London. In

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Malthus, unlike his followers, proposed chastity as the only legitimate means of limiting births. The first failure of this religious neo-malthusianism occurred at the Anglican Lambeth Conference of 1930, which asserted the legitimacy of artificial birth control.

1921, Sanger founded the American Birth Control League, which merged into the International Federation of Birth Control Leagues. The institution was re-established in 1925, at the 6th International Neo-Malthusian Congress. The boost was provided by the New York American Birth Control League. In Geneva, on 29 August 1927 the first World Population Conference opened, organised by Sanger and the Society of Nations, with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation. From that date, the Malthusian League ceased its activity, which was resumed by Sanger. The Society of Nations, then the United Nations Organization and the great American Foundations, became the main sponsors of Sanger’s activity.

In those years, thanks to its apostolic nuncios and delegates and a network of excellent collaborators, the Vatican had an efficient information service. The Historical Archive for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs (The Vatican’s “Foreign Ministry”) had kept a detailed report, dated 1926, on the Neo-Malthusian movement, documenting its historical origin and its international extension in the world.⁹ In the text, we read, among other things: “All the Neo-Malthusian movement is headed by Mrs Margaret Sanger. She is

assisted in her business by a number of secretaries. The movement is particularly feminist.”¹⁰

The Encyclical *Casti Connubii*

Since the early centuries the Church has condemned contraception and abortion as serious sins, regardless of philosophical discussion regarding the moment when the soul is infused. “No Catholic theologian has ever taught that ‘contraception is a good act’,” says historian John Noonan.¹¹ The first supporter of the need to reduce births – in 1798 – was an Anglican pastor, Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), whose movement was called Malthusian after his name. Malthus, unlike his followers, proposed chastity as the only legitimate means of limiting births. The first failure of this religious neo-malthusianism occurred at the Anglican Lambeth Conference of 1930,¹² which asserted the legitimacy of artificial birth control.

That same year, the Catholic Church reiterated that contraception is a serious sin. This doctrine was confirmed as binding and finalised by Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) in his encyclical *Casti Connubii* of 31 December 1930. In this document, the pope wanted to draw the attention of the whole Church and of all humanity,



POPE PIUS XI

to the fundamental truths regarding the nature of marriage, conceived not by men, but by God Himself, and on the blessings and benefits that result from it, for society. The pope then denounced the mistakes and abuses committed against marital union and suggested the necessary remedies to restore Christian marriage.

The encyclical contains a clear and vigorous condemnation of contraceptive acts.

“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... 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.”¹³

Pius XII (1939-1958) confirmed in many speeches the doctrine of his predecessor: from the allocution to the Sacred Rota of 1941,¹⁴ to the speech

to hematologists held in 1958,¹⁵ one month before his death.

Overstepping *Casti Connubii*?

However, in the 1950s and 1960s, within the Catholic Church, a process of overthrowing traditional morality began.¹⁶ The protagonists were theologians such as the German Jesuit Josef Fuchs (1912-2005), professor at the Gregorian University, and the German Bernard Häring (1912-1998), professor at the Alphonsum, who tried to transfer to theology’s moral field the thesis of the *nouvelle theologie*, just condemned by Pius XII in the encyclical *Humani Generis*.¹⁷ The Catholic University of Leuven was a hub for disseminating and applying these theses. The main representative of the new Lovanian culture was the personalist theologian Louis Janssen (1908-2001).¹⁸

The key issue of these innovators was the replacement of the concept of nature with that of person.¹⁹ Human nature is in fact the essence of man, what he actually is before being a person. Man is subject to rights and duties because he is a person, but he is a person by virtue of his human nature. All Häring’s work tends to frustrate natural law in the name of a “Christian existential personalism”.²⁰

Re-founding morality basing it on the individual rather than on the objective reality of nature means giving a dominant role to human conscience. If the person comes before nature, morality is based on self-consciousness and on one’s own will. The moral rule is no longer objective and rational, but affective, personal and existential. Individual conscience becomes the sovereign norm of morality. And the first field for implementing this new anthropology was marital morality.

Second Vatican Council opens

On 25 January 1959, just three months after his election to the papal throne, Pope Roncalli announced the Second Vatican Council.²¹ One of the documents drafted by the preparatory committee to be discussed in the hall was called *De castitate, virginitate, matrimonio, familia*.²² The text reiterated that “the primary purpose [of marriage] is solely the procreation and education of the offspring” and that secondary purposes are “the mutual help and comfort of the spouses in the shared domestic life, as well as the remedy, as it may be defined, to concupiscence.” Among the mistakes condemned are “theories that, reversing the right order of values, put the primary purpose of marriage in the shade with respect to the biological and personal values of the spouses and that, in the same objective order, suggest the conjugal love as the primary goal.” (No. 14) In the second chapter, devoted to the rights, duties and virtues proper to Christian marriage, the document, resuming the traditional Augustinian doctrine of the three goods, distinguishes the “*bonum prolis*”, “*bonum fidei*” and “*bonum sacramenti*” (n 16). From *bonum prolis* descends the right and duty of spouses to procreate, but artificial insemination and the use of contraceptives are forbidden.



POPE JOHN XXIII

The original schema for marriage and the family arrived in the hall on 11 October 1962, but like all other resolutions adopted on the eve of the Council by Pope John XXIII, it was never discussed, because following the “*blitzkrieg*” implemented by the liberal minority in the first days of the Council, it was absorbed within a framework in which the relationship between the Church and the modern world was supposed to be debated. Within the appointed committee, called to draw up the new document, a sub-commission for family and marriage was created, chaired by Msgr Emilio Guano (1900-1970), bishop of Livorno. Fr Bernard Häring, who was the main author of the document, was nominated as secretary. In 1964 the document became the XIII schema.²³

The schema was very different from that of the preparatory committee. Article 21 of the fourth chapter of schema XIII was devoted to *The dignity of marriage and the family*. However, the text in fact avoided the traditional distinction between the primary and secondary purposes of marriage and, indeed, the procreation of children was subordinate to the marital bond of love, leaving open the possibility of “birth control”, entrusted to the spouses’ consciences.

Dr Pinkus’s “pill”

The birth and marketing of the first oral contraceptive, Enovid, the famous Dr Pinkus’s pill, marked a historic turn. In his book *The Birth of the Pill. How Four Crusaders Reinvented Sex and Launched a Revolution*, Jonathan Eig ascribes the birth and spread of the pill to four “crusaders”: the feminist star Margaret Sanger, the iconoclastic scientist Gregory Goodwin Pinkus

(1903-1967), the Catholic doctor John Rock (1890-1984), “and the supplier of cash behind it all”, Katharine McCormick (1875-1967).²⁴

Dr Pinkus had worked on fertilisation since the 1930s and had been dismissed from Harvard University for being unscrupulous in his research activity (Dr Frankenstein had been nominated), but his plans began to be realised in the 1950s thanks to Margaret Sanger’s decisive support. She convinced Katharine McCormick to fund his research. John Rock published a book in 1963, *The Time Has Come*, in which he claimed the need for a new approach from churches, and above all of Catholicism, to the issue of birth control.²⁵ That same year, a long article by the already quoted theologian Louis Janssens came out, in which the topics contained in Rock’s book were commented on and which reached the conclusion that perhaps, indeed, “the time had come”.²⁶ The University of Leuven with its great protector, the primate of Belgium Cardinal Leo Jozef Suenens (1904-1996), stood in favour of the pill.

As for the opposite coalition, Jesuit theologians John Cuthbert Ford (1902-1989) and Gerald Kelly

(1904-1964) recalled the traditional doctrine, writing that “according to the authoritative teaching of Pius XII and the unanimous teaching of the theologians, the use of pills as contraceptive means, is sinful, and Catholics who intend to use them in this way, cannot be granted absolution and admitted to the Eucharist.”²⁷

On 8 March 1963 John XXIII set up an ad-hoc committee consisting of eight experts. The issue was addressed, from this moment on, by two different commissions, that of the Council and that instituted by John XXIII and then extended by Paul VI.

The creation of the new committee had been recommended to the pope by Cardinal Suenens.²⁸ It was no coincidence that the first meeting took place in Leuven on 12 and 13 October 1963. It consisted of six members: the French Jesuit Stanislas de Lestapis, the Swiss Dominican Henri de Riedmatten, the English neurologist John Marshall, the Belgian demographer Clement Martens, the Belgian doctor Pierre van Rossum and the Belgian economist Jacques de Wilmars. Half of the members were Belgian. Four members were lay, all married; two were priests, but none of them was a

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Re-founding morality basing it on the individual rather than on the objective reality of nature means giving a dominant role to human conscience. If the person comes before nature, morality is based on self-consciousness and on one’s own will. The moral rule is no longer objective and rational, but affective, personal and existential. Individual conscience becomes the sovereign norm of morality. And the first field for implementing this new anthropology was marital morality.

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The position between those favourable and those against the contraceptives was not yet defined.

On this issue the decisive battle was going to go far beyond the case of the contraceptive pill and to touch the very foundation of natural law.



theologian. All the members had been suggested by Cardinal Suenens.²⁹

The second meeting took place in Rome from 3-5 April 1964, with the addition of another seven members, for a total of 13 participants. Some members of clear liberal orientation were introduced, such as the priests Joseph Fuchs and Häring and canon Pierre de Loch, Cardinal Suenens's counsellor, but also others of orthodox orientation such as the Spanish Jesuit Marcelino Zalba of the Gre-

gorian University, and Redemptorist Jian Visser of the *Accademia Alfonsiana*. The commission was again convened in Rome on 13 and 14 June of the same year with the participation of two new members, Tullio Goffi and Fernando Lambruschini.

On 23 June 1964 Paul VI revealed the commission's existence in a speech to the cardinals,³⁰ asking the Council to address the subject only in general terms. The position between those favourable and those against the

contraceptives was not yet defined. On this issue the decisive battle was going to go far beyond the case of the contraceptive pill and to touch the very foundation of natural law. Many of the council fathers welcomed the Malthusian suggestions that “prophesied” a catastrophe for mankind unless a strict “birth control” be implemented. Among them, Bishop Joseph Reuss, rector of the Mainz seminary,³¹ the two Canadian cardinals Maurice Roy (1905-1985), Bishop of Quebec, and Paul-Emil Léger (1904-1991), Archbishop of Montréal³² and above all, the Cardinal primate of Belgium Leo Suenens, the great protector of the Leuven school.

On the opposite side were the Cardinals Michael Browne (1887-1971), Ernesto Ruffini (1888-1967) and Alfredo Ottaviani (1890-1979), alongside a large group of bishops and some experts of traditional orientation, such as Salesian Ermenegildo Lio (1920-1992) and the Spanish Jesuit Marcelino Zalba (1908-2009).

Second Vatican Council

At the end of October 1964, the issue of contraception entered the arena during the discussion on schema XIII about the Church and the modern world, from which the conciliar constitution *Gaudium et Spes* was generated. On 23 October, presenting the schema, Msgr Guano, Bishop of Livorno, warned the fathers that the question of the regulation of births was not within the jurisdiction of the council, as the pope having taken the issue upon himself had entrusted its study to a special commission. But when the debate opened, Cardinal Ruffini, who was the first to speak



CARDINAL ALFREDO OTTAVIANI

by order of seniority, criticised the schema presented by Msgr Guano, because he had asserted “that the last word on the number of children remains only to the spouses themselves”, defining this doctrine as very difficult to accept, “obscure and full of dangerous ambiguities”. Cardinal Ottaviani³³ addressed the fathers of the council in a way which stunned the audience for the personal slant seldom heard in his speeches: “The priest now speaking to you, is the eleventh of a family of twelve children. His father was a workman, a workman, not a boss of workmen, just a workman, nevertheless he never doubted Providence, never thought of limiting the number of his children, regardless of difficulties. Do we want to forget the words of Our Lord: ‘Look at the birds of the air (...), look at the lilies in the fields’ (Mt 6:28)?”³⁴

Immediately after Cardinal Ottaviani’s speech Cardinal Browne spoke, who explained the traditional concept of marriage in a clear manner as opposed to what the document was proposing.³⁵

The most notable speech was the one of Cardinal Suenens on 29 October,³⁶ who explained the role of the committee on birth control, wanted by him, in the following words:

“The first task of this committee lies in the line of Faith and must consist of this: to check if we have sufficiently highlighted all aspects of Church teaching on marriage. (...) It may be that we have overstressed the words of the Scripture: ‘Grow and multiply’ to the point of leaving in the shadow the other divine words: ‘The two will be one flesh’. (...) It will be up to the commission to tell us if we have not overly emphasized the primary purpose, which is procreation, at the expense of an equally imperative purpose, which is growth in marital unity. Similarly, it is up to the commission to respond to the immense problem posed by the current demographic explosion and overpopulation in many parts of the earth. (...) The commission’s second task lies in the line of scientific progress and more in-depth knowledge of natural ethics. The commission will have to examine whether traditional doctrine, especially in the manuals, takes into sufficient account the new data of today’s science. We have made progress from Aristotle and discovered the complexity of the real in which biology interferes with psychology, the conscious with the subconscious. New possibilities are constantly discovered in man, in his power to direct the course of nature (...) Who does not see that in this way we will be perhaps led to further research on the problem of what is for or against nature?’ Let’s follow the progress of science. I beg you, Brothers. Let’s avoid a new ‘Galileo trial’. One is enough for the Church.”³⁷

While listening to this speech, Cardinal Ruffini could not help knocking a punch on the table in indignation and two days later, he vented his anger in front of Cardinal Cicognani, the Secretary of State, defining Suenens’s words as “horrendous”.³⁸ On the other hand, Archbishop Helder Câmara expressed his enthusiasm for the Primate of Belgium: “He said everything that could be dreamed of listening to about birth control, including the courage to assert in his role of a cardinal of the Holy Church, as a moderator of the council, and in St. Peter’s basilica: ‘We will not repeat the Galileo trial!’.”³⁹

The “*claque*” for Cardinal Suenens was organised by Câmara himself. “He had notified me,” he writes, “and we made sure that his pioneering position was warmly applauded in the Basilica. Once again he has appeared to be the leader paving the way for us.”⁴⁰

Paul VI, who did not share the progressivist positions on moral issues, was bewildered and in a frenzied meeting with Suenens, he scolded him for failing to be prudent.⁴¹

Gaudium et Spes

In the time between the third and fourth sessions of the council, the two committees, the conciliar and the papal, continued to proceed on two separate rail tracks. Within the conciliar commission, that was working on schema XIII, a subcommittee called to address the problems connected to marriage, was also operative. This was chaired by the Bishop of Detroit John Francis Dearden (1907-1988), assisted by the auxiliary bishop of Liège Joseph Heuschen (1915-2002) and Belgian mayor Victor Heylen

(1906-1981), professor of moral theology at Leuven. “This” – says Renzo Puccetti – “was a triad, completely in favour of making contraception allowable.”⁴² The new formulation of schema XIII, which at the end of September 1965 reached the arena, had the triad’s hallmark.

During the discussions, the issue of Christian marriage and “birth control” was again addressed.⁴³ The text emphasised some general principles, stating that it is up to the spouses to “determine the number of children”, but without specifying how this could happen. Cardinal Ruffini judged that the nature of marriage was badly illustrated,⁴⁴ and that the same was instead much more clearly explained in *Casti Connubii* by Pius XI.⁴⁵ The Cardinal highlighted the parts of the text which, in his view, seemed to add doubts and confusion to the path of married couples. In particular, it was not reaffirmed in the schema that it is always shameful, dishonest, and against nature, to deprive the marital act of its natural procreative force and purpose. The text underwent thousands of amendments by both sides.

Between the end of October and the end of November there was a struggle behind the scenes between the *lovanienses* and the priests most faithful to the Church’s teachings, in particular Fr Lio and Fr Ford. Paul VI himself was concerned about the approach of the text and intervened through his theologian, Mgr. Carlo Colombo (1909-1991), proposing four restrictive amendments. The commission, only partially, accepted the pontifical amendments and the final result was a compromise text that did not leave anyone satisfied. In *Gaudium et Spes*, the pastoral constitution of 7 December 1965, paragraphs 47

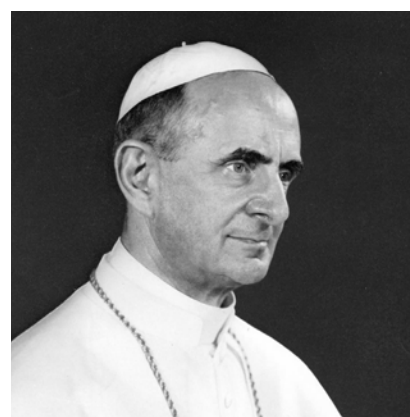
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As in many other cases, this Council text was a substantially ambiguous document. Cardinal Walter Kasper emphasised this in an article in the “Roman Observer”. “In the conciliar texts” – he wrote – “we had to find compromise formulas. (...) So the conciliar texts themselves have enormous potential conflicts; they open the door to a selective reception in either direction.”

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to 52 are devoted to the matrimonial institution in general (No. 48), to the concept of conjugal love (No. 49), to maternal fertility (No. 50), and to the interaction between love and procreation (No. 51). The supremacy of the procreative end over the unitive end is not clearly stated. It is true that in his speech in 1956 to the participants of the Conferences on Infertility, Pius XII spoke of the co-existence of the two ends of marriage, the procreative and the unitive, but the subordination of the secondary end, which is the union of the spouses, to the primary purpose of procreation, remains clear in his Magisterium.⁴⁶

In No. 51 of *Gaudium et Spes* it is stated that the children of the Church, in regulating procreation, will not be allowed to follow the ways that are condemned by the Magisterium in the explanation of divine law. In the related note (119), there is a reference to *Casti Connubii* and to the address of Pius XII to obstetricians, but it adds that “some problems needing further and more thorough analysis, by order of the Supreme Pontiff, were entrusted to the Commission for the study of population, family and birth rate in order to allow the Supreme Pontiff to give his judgment after the completion of this task. With regard to the doctrine of the Magisterium,



POPE PAUL VI

at this stage, the Council does not intend to propose considered solutions immediately.”

As in many other cases, this Council text was a substantially ambiguous document. Cardinal Walter Kasper emphasised this in an article in the *L'Osservatore Romano*. “In the conciliar texts” – he wrote – “we had to find compromise formulas. (...) So the conciliar texts themselves have enormous potential conflicts; they open the door to a selective reception in either direction.”⁴⁷

The majority of the Fathers voted for the document, with the understanding that procreation remained primary and the basis of the objective nature of the marriage institution. The progressivist fathers, on the other hand, interpreted the equalisation as the negation of the primacy of procreation and the implicit affir-

mation of the primacy of conjugal love, founded not on nature but on the human person.

The work of the committee after the council

The council closed, but the Pontifical Commission continued its work. Fr Ford could not understand the ambiguous attitude of Paul VI who, on the one hand, intervened in the council to confirm *Casti Connubii*, and on the other hand, encouraged the Pontifical Commission to explore ways that would have inevitably led to the rejection of the same doctrine.⁴⁸ Cardinal Ottaviani, together with the vice-presidents, the Cardinals of Monaco and Westminster, Döpfner and Heenan, all of whom had different positions, were appointed chairmen of the committee. At the 6 June session, John Ford had to defend the reasons for keeping the doctrine, while his brother Jesuit Joseph Fuchs illustrated the arguments for a change. On the 23 June, a *Schema documenti de responsabili paternitate* was voted on: nine members of the committee voted in favour of contraception, three voted against, three abstained (one member was absent). On 26 June, the commission report was brought by Fr Riedmatten and Cardinal Döpfner to Paul VI who, not satisfied by it, encouraged Mgr. Carlo Colombo to deliver him a report produced by the minority. At the end of the same year the pope set up a new eight-member committee chaired by Cardinal Ottaviani with Mgr. Carlo Colombo as rapporteur.

In December 1966 a news leak occurred. The priest (then married) Leo Alting von Gesau (1925-2002), one of the authors of the *Dutch Catechism*, approved by Cardinal Bernard Alfrink (1900-1987), sent the text of

the committee's report in favour of contraception to some newspapers, falsely claiming that it had been approved by a very large majority. The aim of the manoeuvre was to exert pressure on the pope by media, in order to prevent him from changing the committee's decisions. On 15 April 1967, the "National Catholic Reporter" published an article entitled: "On responsible parenthood: 1) Final report; 2) Minority Report; 3) The issue is not closed: the liberals reply." The conviction that Paul VI was ready to change the Church's traditional doctrine on birth control became widespread, because almost everywhere family planning had been presented as a need of the contemporary world and the birth control pill, as a means for "liberating" women.

After a few months of indecision and internal conflict, on 25 July 1968, Paul VI published the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*.⁴⁹ In this document, contrary to the opinion of the majority of experts he had consulted,⁵⁰ the Pope reaffirmed the traditional position of the Church on artificial contraception⁵¹ with these clear words:

"Similarly excluded is any action which either before, at the moment of, or after sexual intercourse, is specifically intended to prevent procreation—whether as an end or as a means. Neither is it valid to argue, as a justification for sexual intercourse which is deliberately contraceptive, that a lesser evil is to be preferred to a greater one, or that such intercourse would merge with procreative acts of past and future to form a single entity, and so be qualified by exactly the same moral goodness as these. Though it is true that sometimes it is lawful

to tolerate a lesser moral evil in order to avoid a greater evil or in order to promote a greater good, it is never lawful, even for the gravest reasons, to do evil that good may come of it, in other words, to intend directly something which of its very nature contradicts the moral order, and which must therefore be judged unworthy of man, even though the intention is to protect or promote the welfare of an individual, of a family or of society in general. Consequently, it is a serious error to think that a whole married life of otherwise normal relations can justify sexual intercourse which is deliberately contraceptive and so intrinsically wrong (n. 14)."

The announcement in July of 1968 came as a "veritable bombshell", writes Ralph McInerny.⁵² According to Romano Amerio, it was the most important deed of Paul VI's pontificate.⁵³

The opposition to *Humanae Vitae*

A few days later, on 30 July 1968, under the title *Against the Encyclical of Pope Paul*, the New York Times issued an appeal signed by over two hundred theologians who invited Catholics to disobey the encyclical of Paul VI.⁵⁴ This statement, also known as the "Curran Declaration", by the name of one of its promoters, Charles Curran, theologian of the Catholic University of America, was something never witnessed before, in the whole of the Church's history. The exceptional fact is that the dispute was not only between theologians and priests, but also between some episcopates, including, first of all, the Belgian one, headed by Cardinal Pri-

mate Leo Suenens.⁵⁵ *The Déclaration of the Episcopate of Belgium on the Encyclical Humanae Vitae* of 30 August 1968 was, together with the declaration of the German episcopate, one of the first drafts elaborated by a bishops' conference and served as a model of rebellion for other episcopates.⁵⁶ A group of protagonists of the council, opposing the encyclical of Paul VI, including Cardinals Suenens, Alfrink, Heenan, Döpfner and König, met in Essen to decide on opposition to the document and on 9 September 1968, during the Katholikentag of Essen, in the presence of the pontifical legate, Cardinal Gustavo Testa, an overwhelming majority voted for a resolution to review the encyclical. From the correspondence between Mgr. Gérard-Maurice Huyghe (1909-2001), bishop of Arras, and Cardinal Suenens we know about many other reactions, such as that of Cardinal Michele Pellegrino (1903-1986), archbishop of Turin, who defined the encyclical as "one of the tragedies of papal history".⁵⁷

In 1969, nine Dutch bishops, including Cardinal Alfrink, voted for the so-called *Independence Declaration* inviting the faithful to reject the teaching of the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. On the same occasion, the Dutch Pastoral Council, with the abstention of bishops, supported the *New Catechism*, refusing the corrections suggested by Rome and calling for the Church to remain open to "new radical approaches" on moral issues, which were not mentioned in the final motion but which emerged from the council's work, such as premarital intercourse, homosexual unions, abortion and euthanasia.⁵⁸ This request was consistent with the role of sexuality as recognised by progressivist

theology: an instinct that men do not have to suppress through asceticism but rather "liberate", finding in sex a form of "realisation" of the human person.

"In 1968" – as recalled Cardinal Francis J. Stafford – "something terrible happened in the Church. Within the ministerial priesthood, among friends, fractures occurred everywhere, which would never again be healed, those wounds continue to afflict the whole Church."⁵⁹

Paul VI was almost traumatized by the dispute, which emerged from some of the council's main characters closest to him and, in the ten years following *Humanae Vitae*, he did not publish any other encyclicals, although he had published seven between 1964 and 1968.

The post-council period did not see the directions of *Humanae Vitae* followed, but rather those of Cardinal Suenens and the dissident theologians. In papal colleges and seminaries, the texts used were those of Fr Häring and the "moralists of Leuven".⁶⁰

In 1979 Louis Janssens published an article with sixty quotations from *Gaudium et Spes* to justify his approval of artificial insemination.⁶¹ In Italy the "new moralists" were theologians such as Don Tullo Goffi (1916-1996), Don Enrico Chiavacci (1926-2013), Don Ambrogio Valsecchi (1930-1983), Don Leandro Rossi (1933-2003).

In 1973, an Encyclopedic *Dictionary of Moral Theology* for the Paoline editions was published by Valsecchi and Rossi which intended to replace the classic *Dictionary of Moral Theology* by Cardinals Francesco Roberti and Pietro Palazzini. In the new dictionary of moral theology, Enrico Chiavacci argued that "real human nature is that of not having nature".⁶² The

new moralists replaced the objectivity of natural law, with the "person", intended as a will, relieved of any legal constraint and immersed in the historical-cultural context, or in the "ethics of the situation". And since sex is an integral part of the person, they claimed that the role of sexuality, defined as the "primary function of personal growth", represents the most intimate and intense aspect of human love, regardless whether it is aimed at procreation or not. According to Don Tullo Goffi, sexuality helps the "evolution" and "maturation" of man through the "knowledge" of the other, by implementing the teaching of *Gaudium et Spes* (No. 24).⁶³ A critic, Fr Cornelio Fabro, summed up their positions: "God's love acts as love for neighbour, the love for neighbour is expressed first and foremost in sexual intercourse."⁶⁴ This was the new morality that developed and is still dominant today.

The anti-natalist culture

After Paul VI, both John Paul II and Benedict XVI reiterated the Catholic doctrine on contraception, but *Humanae Vitae* was disqualified in practice. Today, a contraceptive mentality is, unfortunately, prevailing even within the Church.⁶⁵ According to Mgr. Ignazio Carrasco de Paula, at the root of the anti-natalist imperative there are three postulates:



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“1) Only through frequent and fulfilling sexual intercourse, can a real “couple life” exist (anthropologic postulate, of clear Freudian matrix).

2) Only through limiting population growth, thus reducing the number of children to a minimum, is it possible to promote an adequate quality of life (economic postulate, demographic, neo-malthusianfiliation).

3) Only contraception can unite these two opposed needs: it is the technological postulate, the original contribution of the birth control ideology.”⁶⁶

These postulates have not spread as a result of a process immanent to history, but thanks to the personal action of agents who, outside and inside the Church, wanted to overturn traditional morality. The result of this revolution in mentality and customs has been an increase in premarital intercourse and cohabitation, a delay in and decrease of marriages, the postponement of the first child, an increase of children born outside marriage, a reduced fertility rate, to such an extent that it has fallen below the replacement rate (2.1 children per couple), and also the rise in divorces and the dissolution of families.⁶⁷

Is the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* infallible?

The strategy of those who tried to impose the artificial regulation of births in the council, and then contradicted *Humanae Vitae*, has been that of “reinterpreting” or “re-reading” the encyclical of Paul VI, as confirmed by the title of a book which appeared



in 1970, edited by some Belgian and Dutch theologians: *Pour relire Humanae Vitae*.⁶⁸ In fact, one of the book’s editors Msgr Philippe Delhaye (1912-1990) said: “We have lost a battle, we have not lost the war.”⁶⁹

The post-synodal exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* seems to be an act of revenge for the 1968 defeat. What the authors proposed in 1970 to win the war was to re-read *Humanae Vitae* in the light of the statements of the bishops’ conferences of the time. Today, the neo-modernists propose to re-read *Humanae Vitae* in the light of *Amoris Laetitia*, a document that has its cultural background in the positions of those theologians who, back then, contradicted the encyclical of Paul VI.

Someone could formulate this objection: are theologians and pastors who today criticize Pope Francis’s exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* not in a position similar to that of those theologians and bishops of dissent, who yesterday opposed *Humanae Vitae*? Don’t we have the duty to obey Pope Francis? Just as yesterday it was mandatory to obey Paul VI, because

the pope is the pope, and a Catholic has the duty to always follow, in any circumstance, his words and actions?

The answer to this objection is not difficult. Papolatry is not part of the Catholic faith. The error of the dissenting Catholics of 1968 was not to resist Paul VI, but to refuse the everlasting teaching of the Church, of which the pope was, at that time, the spokesman. Those who today criticize *Amoris Laetitia*, like the cardinals who wrote the *dubia* and the authors of the *Correctio Filialis*, do not intend to oppose the Pope, who is acknowledged as the supreme authority, but rather to oppose a document that contradicts the Church’s Tradition. The Church’s living Magisterium is not limited to the present but includes the past, and no “majority” can impose it on the “minority”. In the Church, Benedict XVI explains, “there is no such thing as the present-day society. In it, the dead are not dead, because the communion of saints goes beyond the boundaries of present time. The past has not passed, and the future is already present. In other words: in the Church there can be no majority

against the saints, against the great witnesses of the faith, who characterise the whole history. They always belong to the present, and their voice cannot be isolated in the minority.”⁷⁰

Fr. Arthur Vermeersch SJ (1858-1936), the great moral theologian of the Gregorian University, in his commentary on *Casti Connubii*, the encyclical of Pius XI, believes that the condemnation of acts contrary to nature which limit births, represents a solemn and infallible pontifical definition.⁷¹ The pope in fact declares that he speaks to the whole Church and even to the whole human race; he states that, regarding the issue of marital onanism, there is a Christian doctrine transmitted from the beginning and faithfully preserved; finally, in his role of teacher of the Church, he solemnly promulgates and imposes this doctrine. All the conditions of infallibility, mentioned by the First Vat-

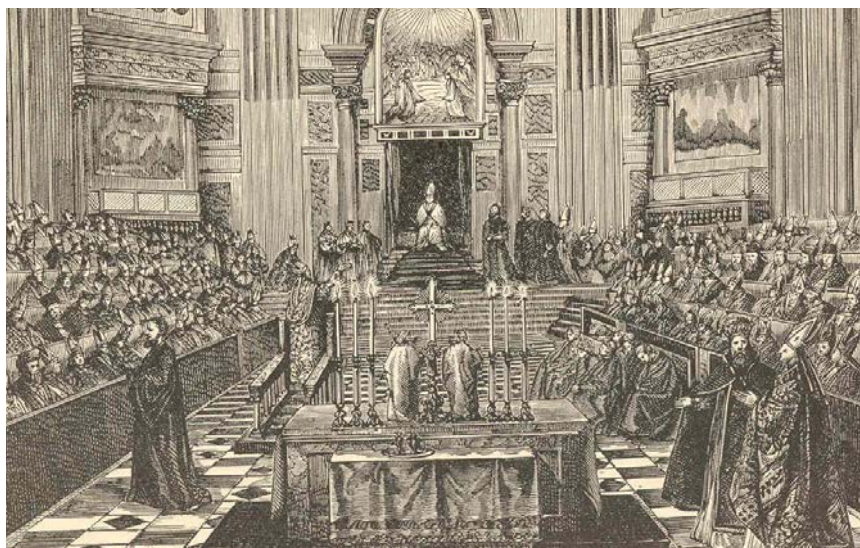
The infallibility of the Church is not limited to the extraordinary case of the pope who, alone or in union with bishops, speaks *ex cathedra*, but it is also extended to the ordinary universal Magisterium. Fr Marcelino Zalba in a book on *Infallibility of the Universal Ordinary Magisterium and Contraception*, which appeared in 1979 in Cardinal Giuseppe Siri’s “Renovatio” magazine, applies this principle to *Humanae Vitae*.⁷³ The author, considered one of the safest moral theologians of his time, recalls that two other well-known American theologians, John C. Ford and Gerald Kelly, had studied in 1963, five years before the promulgation of the encyclical of Paul VI, the extent of certainty and truth that should be ascribed, in the theological field, to traditional Catholic doctrine concerning the intrinsic and severe immorality of contraception.⁷⁴ According to these two Jesuit

state in numerous interventions that contraceptive acts are a serious violation of the law of God, if it were not really so. With its wrong intervention, the Church would give rise to innumerable mortal sins, contradicting the promise of Jesus Christ’s divine assistance.

One of the two moralists, Fr Ford, in collaboration with philosopher Germain Grisez, addressed this problem in a subsequent paper, published in 1978 in the journal “Theological Studies”, entitled *Contraception and the Infallibility of the Ordinary Magisterium*.⁷⁵ Ford and Grisez, also referring to *Lumen Gentium*, the Constitution of II Vatican Council, concluded that the doctrine of *Humanae Vitae* could be considered infallibly taught, not by virtue of its act of promulgation (which was less solemn and categorical, for example, than that of *Casti Connubii* of Pius XI), but because it confirmed the universal ordinary Magisterium of the popes and bishops.

Ten years earlier, a Brazilian theologian and philosopher Arnaldo Xavier da Silveira had reached the same conclusion with an article published in the magazine “Catholicismo”.⁷⁶ Although not an *ex-cathedra* pronouncement, Silveira wrote, *Humanae Vitae* became infallible when, condemning contraception, it reaffirmed a doctrine proposed by the ordinary universal Magisterium of the Church. This means that no Catholic is allowed, under any circumstance, to deny or question this doctrine, because it is a dogma of the ordinary Magisterium of the Church.

The document *Dei Filius* of First Vatican Council, established, in chapter 3, that there may be truths that must be believed, with divine and



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ican Council, are present. What the Pope calls infallible and unchangeable is that every use of marriage in which artificial methods are used to prevent the marital act procreating life, violates divine law, violates natural law, and represents a serious sin.⁷²

theologians, it was a doctrine that should be considered normative for the conduct of the faithful. It would be inconceivable for the Catholic Church, assisted by the Holy Spirit for the preservation of evangelical doctrine and morals, to explicitly

Catholic faith in the Church, without the need for a solemn acknowledgment, because they have been expressed by the ordinary universal Magisterium. The word “universal” must be intended not in the synchronous sense of an extension in space in a particular historical age, but in the diachronic sense of a continuity of time, to express a consensus that embraces all the ages of the Church.⁷⁷ In the case of the ban on contraception, Cardinal Giuseppe Siri recalls: “In the first century, the *Didaché*, talking about the path to death, mentions the killers of children. The same words are repeated in the letter of Barnabas (20: 2); Clement of Alexandria is determined and thorough against contraceptives (*Pedagogus* 2. 10. 91. 2). Minucio Felice can also be mentioned (*Octavius* 30, 2), together with Lattanzio (*Divinae institutiones* 6.20-25), Giustino (*Apologia*, I, 9), Atenagora (*Legatio pro Christianis* 33). This tradition continues with the fathers who followed, with particular emphasis on St. Augustine’s texts, which are the basis of canon law. The patristic and theological tradition is anchored in the same concepts. We thus arrive at the encyclical *Casti Connubii* of Pius XI (30 December 1930). The teaching of this encyclical summarised ancient and common teaching. It seems like we can say that the conditions under which the ordinary Magisterium is unchangeable, have been reached. The time of widespread restlessness is a very recent occurrence which does not damage, in any way, the serene possession of so many centuries. It is necessary to bear in mind that there is not only a solemn Magisterium and a purely authentic Magisterium; between the two expressions is sited the

ordinary Magisterium, endowed with the charism of infallibility.”⁷⁸

At this point we can only repeat the words of Pius XII: “This doctrine is fully in force today as yesterday and such will be tomorrow and forever, because it is not a precept of simple human right, but the expression of a natural and divine law.”⁷⁹ Paul VI confirmed the same doctrine with *Humanae Vitae* and John Paul II vigorously reaffirmed it: “Paul VI, defining the contraceptive act as intrinsically illicit, intends to teach that the moral standard is such and it does not allow exceptions. No personal or social circumstance can now or ever, make such an act lawful in itself. The fact that there are specific rules concerning man’s behaviour in the world, which have such a binding force as not to admit, for any reason, any possibility of exceptions, is a constant teaching of the Church’s Tradition and Magisterium, which cannot be questioned by a Catholic theologian.”⁸⁰

Whoever proposes to re-interpret *Humanae Vitae*, having it in mind to reach the conclusion that in some cases it is possible to admit the use of artificial contraceptives, denies a truth so ascertained by the Church and can only be considered heretical. The fight continues but on the level of the doctrine of the faith the case is closed and no study commission, even if appointed by a pontiff, has the right to reopen it. ✚

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The vision of Dr Jérôme Lejeune

THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY FOR LIFE

BY JEAN-MARIE LE MÉNÉ

It is not often that I am entrusted with a matter which is “easy” to tackle. It is however evident that “the most serious role of the transmission of human life” (the first words of *Humanae Vitae*) is not, in itself, such an easy topic, as history demonstrates. But speaking of the vision of Prof. Jérôme Lejeune is a very different matter, because it is he who has to take the floor! This French geneticist had the gift of rendering the most complex and delicate matters clear and accessible to all. As always, on this matter as on others, Jérôme Lejeune was just, a characteristic embodying both a sense of rigour and a sense of measure.

The interventions of Jérôme Lejeune on birth control cover essentially two approaches. Firstly, a somewhat anthropological approach relating to the moral act of the union of the sexes perceived by a physician. Secondly, a more biological approach relating to the nature of contraception and its different methods of action.

Is the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* infallible?

Having recalled that “we are so made that whatever concerns the sexual directly involves the moral, neurologically speaking, – hence the impossibility of mastering emotive behaviour if the will does not command also, and perhaps first of all, conscious and deliberate sexual behaviour”, Prof. Lejeune broaches the question

of the moral act of bringing together the sexes.

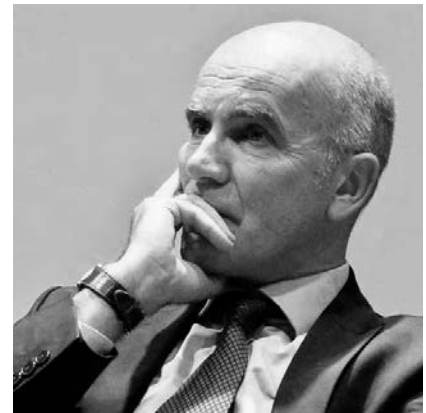
In modern civilisations, he says, the intimacy which can result in a woman becoming pregnant was the exclusive prerogative of the husband.

“The union of the sexes is an act of liberty, capable of definitively sealing the commitment of the persons. Possibly a number of hours later, a spermatozoon will penetrate an ovum, but this event is then a consequence of cellular physiology and does not require voluntary participation by the spouses.

“It follows that the introduction of the gametes, through the union of persons, properly speaking an ‘act of love’ differs from fertilisation, one might say an ‘act of birth’, of the being newly conceived.

“The intervention of a specialist may hence develop in two different registers:

- If he delivers gametes, in so doing he arrogates to himself, through the interposition of a syringe, the privilege of the husband. In this very real sense, there is substitution of the person.
- Conversely, if he removes the obstacle to union of the reproductive cells by overcoming an anatomical, infectious, hormonal or metabolic impediment, he is acting strictly to assist nature, the function proper to the physician.



JEAN-MARIE LE MÉNÉ

“This operational distinction (between the *substitutio personarum* and the *adjutorium naturae*), indeed in full accordance with sound doctrine, may at first sight appear a little over-academic. This is by no means the case, as is apparent from the enlightening reflection of a woman who had just had her embryo transferred after extracorporeal fertilisation. Three specialists had performed the procedure in a respectful atmosphere, to a background of soft music. Moments later, when the specialists had left, and her troubled husband enquired about the procedure, the would-be mother answered spontaneously: “I made love to the three of them!”

“This assertion, which somewhat flies in the face of honesty, is a realistic, or rather, surrealistic evocation, discoverable only by a woman, of the substitution of persons described by moralists.

“On this planet, man is alone in asking himself who he is, where he comes from, sometimes hearing the

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formidable questions: What have you done to your brother? What have you done to your child?

“Man is also alone in knowing, from the beginning, the mysterious relationship between love and the child. The cleverest and tamest chimpanzee would never be able to understand that.

“Man himself has always known that voluptuous passion is associated by nature with begetting of the similar; the ancients, most correctly, represented the passion of Love (Eros and Cupid) with the features of a child.

“This immense discovery vests our amorous acts with a dignity unknown to all other living things.

“The result is that to dissociate the child from love is, for our species, a methodological error:

- contraception, which is to make love without making a child;
- extracorporeal fertilisation, which is to make a child without making love;
- abortion, which is to unmake the child;
- and pornography, which is to unmake love;

all of which are, to varying degrees, incompatible with human dignity.”

The biological approach to contraception

Prof. Lejeune has provided useful information on different contraceptive methods, for which the question of implantation proves a necessary prerequisite.

• **The question of implantation**

“Under natural conditions, the mature ovum is ejected from the ovary by rupture of the follicle containing it. The fallopian tube (which links the ovary to the uterus) then accommodates it. Within this fleshy tube, the ovum migrates to the uterus, encountering on the way the spermatozoon which, out of a million others, will fertilise it.

“At the end of the journey, six to seven days after fertilisation, the fertilised egg, having feverishly divided

itself and already transformed into a minuscule embryo of one and a half millimetres in diameter, settles in the uterine mucus (implantation). Once there, it is firmly implanted through its chorionic villi and continues to grow until birth.”

Therefore, strictly speaking, the contraceptive act has differing significance depending on whether it prevents the encounter of the gametes, that is formation of the embryo which takes place in the fallopian tube, or prevents its implantation in the uterus, thereby condemning it to die.

• **The question of contraceptive pills (which prevent formation of the embryo)**

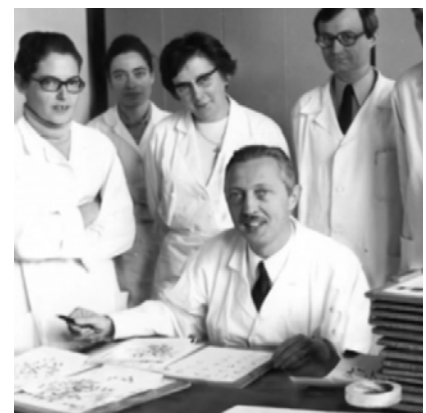
These fall into two types: the combined pill which contains both oestrogen and progesterone (mini-dose) and the progestogen pill (micro-dose) which contains progesterone only.

These pills act at three levels: thickening of the cervical mucus forming a barrier to spermatozoa, the possible prevention of ovulation, and thinning of the endometrium (uterine mucus) rendering it hostile to implantation. The contraceptive, hence abortive, effect is predominant in the progestogen pill, known as the mini-pill, which contains no oestrogen.

Hence this comment from Professor Lejeune: “No clear boundary

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PROF. JÉRÔME LEJEUNE

can be claimed between contraception and abortion. This reflection applies to the majority of pills, from mini-pills (containing no oestrogen), whose anti-implantation action is preponderant, to the RU [486], which is exclusively abortive.”

- **The question of the abortive pill RU 486 (contragestive, which makes gestation impossible)**

“The RU 486 product is a curious poison which is not a habitual toxin, but a specialised pesticide to be applied to the youngest of human beings. It does not in fact directly attack the human being in the process of development in the womb of its mother. This being has on average 15 days to one and a half months of intrauterine life, but its survival is under attack because this product is comparable to a false key which blocks the lock which is progesterone, a hormone indispensable to continuation of the pregnancy. This is not a direct attack on the tiny cosmonaut in its survival bubble, but the RU 486 cuts off its vital fluids. A man cannot survive on the moon because there is no atmosphere. A being as young as this cannot survive unless fed from the placenta. What the RU 486 pill does, through a complicated biological mechanism, is to cut off the supply of vital fluids and provoke intrauterine death. As always when there is intrauterine death, this triggers the secretion of another product, prostaglandin, which generates uterine contractions. [The] RU 486 pill makes it impossible for the baby to survive and the death of the baby will then spontaneously trigger uterine contractions. This eliminates the embryo in 80 per cent of cases and it is now proposed

to add more prostaglandin to achieve a 95 per cent level.”

- **The question of the so-called emergency morning-after pill**

This high-dose (progestogen only) pill has several mechanisms successively depending on the moment in the woman’s cycle. If absorption precedes ovulation, this will be blocked as in any simply contraceptive action, in fact preventing fertilisation.

On the other hand, if the woman has ovulated, because the spermatozoa take only 30 minutes to reach the place of fertilisation, the molecule

fallopian tube through which it has migrated for approximately one week, the young embryo will be unable to find favourable territory in which to implant, and will be expelled. It is this typically “interceptive”, that is abortive, effect of the product, which is therefore at work here. It must be remarked that a woman who ingests the morning-after pill will never know whether she has provoked an early abortion of a baby conceived.

In an announcement which caused a great stir in Italy, shortly after the morning-after pill was licenced by the pharmaceutical authorities,



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cannot avoid encountering masculine and feminine gametes. Under these circumstances, the morning-after pill (NorLevo or EllaOne) sets in place a primarily anti-implantation (high-dose) mechanism by changing the wall of the uterus. On leaving the

the Pontifical Academy for Life was compelled to remind people that pregnancy begins at fertilisation, not from the moment of implantation of the embryo in the uterine wall. The consequence is that the anti-implantation action of the morning-after pill

is, in reality, nothing other than an abortion achieved by chemical means. To deny this is neither logical, nor scientifically justifiable.

This is what, at a much earlier date, Jérôme Lejeune had expressed in these terms:

“To the best of my knowledge, and after consultation with highly competent colleagues, there is no method capable of preventing pregnancy, which does not provoke possible abortion.

“Indeed, no process exists, which makes it possible to prevent in vivo conception if competent spermatozoa are in the presence of a mature ovum. All the hormonal preparations proposed (including the RU 486 pill) have the effect of destroying the capacity of the uterus to accommodate implantation of the embryo.

“It is only if spermatozoa are deposited at the outset of the ovarian cycle, perhaps before the 10th day, that a brutal hormonal treatment could prevent ovulation (as does the conventional contraceptive pill), but a mechanism of this kind is highly problematic.”

Conclusion

The pharmaceutical authorities more or less explicitly acknowledge the anti-implantation function of the morning-after pill, even of other pills, but refuse to include the product in the abortive category. Why this denial?

Quite simply because a definition, adopted by the World Health Organisation, states that pregnancy does not begin until the embryo has already implanted in the uterine mucus. Fertilisation is hence no longer correlated to conception or the union to procreation.



This conceptual sleight of hand makes a mockery of the actual biological reality and the objectivity of embryological data. We are confronted with yet another case of nominalist instrumentalisation of language, designed to refute the abortive categorisation of “interceptive” practices.

In conclusion, these citations of Professor Lejeune emphasise, in essence, to what point human love is a gratuitous, free and uncalculated act, in its very nature:

“The physical union which alone is capable of rendering the commitment of persons valid and definitive is an act desired and intended by the spouses. Fertilisation of the ovum by a spermatozoon will survive possibly for hours thereafter, but the union of reproductive cells is then a consequence of corporal physiology and no longer under the conscious and deliberate control of the spouses.” ✚

Jean-Marie Le Méné founded the Jérôme Lejeune Foundation in 1994, whose mission is to continue the work of Prof. Jérôme Lejeune (discoverer of trisomy 21, the chromosomal abnormality responsible for Down syndrome) in the field of scientific research, and the care and defence of life. In 1992, he joined the magistrates' corps of the Cour des Comptes in Paris. He is a former auditor of the Institute of Advanced Studies of National Defence (IHEDN), a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life and the Pontifical Council for Health. He is a knight of the Legion of Honour. He is married and has nine children.

REREADING HUMANAE VITAE IN THE LIGHT OF CASTI CONNUBII

BY PROF. ROBERTO DE MATTEI

Over the last few decades, the West has experienced an “anti-family” revolution without precedent in history. One of the tenets of this process of disintegration of the institution of the family was the separation of the two primary purposes of marriage: the procreative and the unitive. The procreative purpose, separated from conjugal union, has brought about *in vitro* fertilisation and the surrogate womb. The unitive purpose, emancipated from procreation, has led to the glorification of free love, both heterosexual and homosexual. One of the results of these aberrations is the recourse of homosexual couples to the practice of the surrogate womb in order to actualise a grotesque caricature of the natural family.

Paul VI’s encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, which celebrated its 50th anniversary on 25 July 2018, had the merit of reiterating the inseparableness of the ends of marriage and of clearly condemning artificial contraception, made possible in the 1960s by the commercialisation of Dr Pinkus’s Pill. Yet even *Humanae Vitae* has its faults: not affirming with the same clarity the hierarchy of the purposes of marriage – i.e. the primacy of the procreative over the unitive.

Two principles, or values, are never on the same level of equality. One is always subordinate to the other. This happens in the relationships between faith and reason, between grace

and nature, between the Church and the State, and so forth. It is about inseparable but distinct, hierarchically ordered realities. If the order of these relationships is not defined, tensions and conflicts will follow, resulting in the overturning of principles. In this respect, the process of moral disintegration inside the Church has among its causes also the absence of a clear definition of the primary purpose of marriage in the encyclical of Paul VI.

The doctrine of the Church on marriage was affirmed as definitive

tually, morally, and most of all spiritually, to help them attain their eternal destiny, which is Heaven. The second purpose is the mutual assistance of the spouses, which is not only a material assistance, nor only a sexual, sentimental intent, but primarily an assistance and spiritual union.

The encyclical contains a clear and vigorous condemnation of contraceptive methods, defined as “shameful actions and intrinsically dishonest”. Thus: “Any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that

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and binding by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Casti Connubii* of 31 December 1930. In this document, the pope calls the attention of the entire Church and all of the human race to the fundamental truths on the nature of marriage, an institution not of men, but conceived by God Himself, and on the blessings and benefits society derives from it. The first purpose is procreation – which doesn’t mean simply bringing children into the world, but educating them, intellec-

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” (no. 6).

Pius XII confirmed the teaching of his predecessor in many discourses. The original schema on the family and marriage at Second Vatican Council, approved by John XXIII in July 1962 but rejected at the start of the works by the council fathers,

reiterated this doctrine, explicitly condemning “theories that, reversing the right order of values, put the primary purpose of marriage in the shade with respect to the biological and personal values of the spouses and that, in the same objective order, suggest the conjugal love as the primary goal” (no. 14).

The procreative purpose, objective and rooted in nature, never ceases. The unitive purpose, subjective and founded on the will of the spouses, can die out. The primacy of the procreative purpose saves the marriage; the primacy of the unitive purpose exposes it to grave risks.

Furthermore, we mustn’t forget that the purposes of marriage are not two, but three, because there is also – subordinate – the remedy against concupiscence. Nobody speaks about this third purpose, seeing as we have lost the meaning of the notion of concupiscence, often confused with sin, in the Lutheran sense. Concupiscence, present in every person, except the Most Blessed Virgin, immune to original sin, reminds us that that life on earth is an incessant struggle, as St John says: “For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). The exaltation of sexual instincts, injected into the mainstream culture by Marxism-Freudism, is nothing other than the glorification of concupiscence and, consequently, original sin.

This inversion of the purposes of marriage, which leads inevitably to the explosion of concupiscence in society, appears in Pope Francis’s exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia* of 9 April 2015, where we read: “Then too, we often present marriage in such a way that its unitive meaning, its call to

grow in love and its ideal of mutual assistance are overshadowed by an almost exclusive insistence on the duty of procreation” (no. 36).

These words repeat almost verbatim those pronounced in the Council Hall on 29 October 1964 by Leo Suenens, in a discourse that scandalised Paul VI. “Perhaps,” said the cardinal, archbishop of Brussels, “we have accentuated the words of the Scriptures: ‘increase and multiply’ to the point of leaving the other Divine words in the shade: ‘and the two will be one flesh’ ... It will be up to the Commission to tell us whether we have emphasised too much the first, which is procreation, to the detriment of a purpose likewise imperative, which is growth in the conjugal union.”

Cardinal Suenens insinuates that the primary purpose of marriage is not that of increasing and multiplying, but that “the two be one flesh”. Here we move from a theological, philosophical definition to a psychological description of marriage, presented not as bond rooted in nature and dedicated to the propagation of the human race, but as an intimate communion, directed at the reciprocal love between the spouses. But once marriage is reduced to a communion of love, birth control, natural or artificial, whatever it is, is seen as a good and merits being encouraged, under the name of “responsible parenthood” inasmuch as it contributes to strengthening the first good of conjugal union. The inevitable consequence is that, once this intimate communion should stop, the marriage should be dissolved.

The inversion of the roles inside the conjugal union accompanies the inversion of the purposes. The phys-

ical-psychological well-being of the woman replaces her mission as mother. The birth of a child is seen as an element that can upset the intimate communion of the couple’s love. The child can be thought of as an unjust aggressor to the family’s equilibrium, which is to be protected with contraception and, in extreme cases, with abortion.

The interpretation we have given to Cardinal Suenens’s words is not a stretch of the imagination. Consistent with that discourse, the primate cardinal of Belgium, in 1968, spearheaded the revolt of bishops and theologians against *Humanae Vitae*. The Declaration of the Belgian Episcopate, of 30 August 1968, against Paul VI’s encyclical was, along with that of the German Episcopate, one of the first elaborated by an Episcopal Conference and served as a model of protest for other episcopates.

We, therefore, respond with firmness to the heirs of that contestation, who are proposing the reinterpretation of *Humanae Vitae* in the light of *Amoris Laetitia*, that we will continue to read Paul VI’s encyclical in the light of *Casti Connubii* and the perennial Magisterium of the Church. ✝

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HEATHENS COME TOGETHER FOR LUST, TRUE LOVERS FOR CHILDREN: *a lesson from the Book of Tobit*

BY DR PETER KWASNIEWSKI

It takes no special observational skills to see that the world around us is saturated with sex. But is it saturated with love? In some ways, it seems that the two are inversely proportional. The more untethered, aimless, and hyperactivated the sexual drive, the less room there is for personal love, that is, a friendship between persons for their own sake and not for the gratification they deliver. Chastity – that is, the virtue of controlling the sexual appetite for the sake of developing well-rounded human relationships – is valuable precisely because it protects and liberates the power of loving *persons* as they deserve.

In marriage, the power of loving persons that chastity makes possible includes not only one's spouse, but the children whom God will entrust to the couple – the *future* persons who are hidden within the love of the present.

In the Old Testament book of Tobit, we are given an icon of noble married love in the couple Tobias and Sara. Tobias prayed on their wedding day:

“We are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God... And now, Lord, Thou knowest that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which may Thy Name be blessed for ever and ever.”

(Tobit 8:5,9)

We can learn at least five lessons from this dense pair of verses.

First, those who belong to the People of God – for Tobias and Sara, the nation of Israel; for Christians today, the new Israel, the body of Christ – are “children of saints” and should live guided by the law of God, which, as John Paul II reminds us in *Veritatis Splendor*, is always for our greater good and never for our harm. We should not therefore behave like heathens who are utterly ignorant of their own worth in the sight of God and the profound respect they should receive from others.

Second, prayer to the Lord is the condition *sine qua non* for progress in friendship, especially that of marriage. Notice that Tobias does not become absorbed in Sara, as much as he loves her, but turns to God, from whom he knows that he will receive the grace he needs to love her unselfishly. It is a paradox: if we want to love another person well, we cannot become fixated on or obsessed with that person, for this always suffocates and destroys love. The relationship has to be broken open to allow in the presence of God, who brings eternity and infinity with Him.

Third, Tobias calls his wife “my sister.” In speaking thus, he shows the intimate nature of his love, as between siblings at peace. His is not a consuming, possessive love that sucks dry the object and spits it out when finished, but a tender, chivalrous bond that looks more to what they have in



DR PETER KWASNIEWSKI

common and how they might call forth the best in one another. This phrase “my sister” also calls to mind the ardent words of the Bridegroom to the Bride in the Song of Songs: “Thou hast wounded my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast wounded my heart with one of thy eyes, and with one hair of thy neck” (4:9). This verse testifies to an *eros* or erotic love that is nonetheless permeated with the reserve and respect of family love.

Fourth, Tobias swears to the Lord that he is not taking Sara “for fleshly lust but only for the love of posterity.” This seems like an astonishing thing for him to say – does he not love Sara *herself*? Is he only looking for children? But the contrast in his statement shows what he is thinking. For him, the contrast is between lustful after a woman's embrace, which reduces her to a means, and loving her as the total woman she is, including her mysterious power of fertility, her motherhood. When a man loves a woman with children in mind, he is loving her more, because he is lov-

ing more of her, all the fullness that she holds in promise and in desire. In short, Tobias is bearing witness to the truth, taught by *Casti Connubii* and *Humanae Vitae*, that the procreative purpose of marriage is what *defines* the union of spouses, making it distinct from every other type of human relationship. Without offspring, the very existence of the two sexes, let alone their ordering to each other, would make absolutely no sense.

Finally, Tobias says that he and his wife seek a posterity “in which may Thy Name be blessed for ever and ever.” Here, most beautifully, we see that the ultimate end of marriage is not merely bringing children into the world, but bringing them into the world *for the Lord*, that they might know and love Him, and give glory to His Name. For Christians, this takes on an even deeper dimension, for we bring children to natural birth in order to bring them to supernatural birth in baptism, by which they are made over to the Father and become *His* children, living the life of His Son Jesus Christ.

Behold the unfathomable physical and spiritual fruitfulness to which Christians are given access!

And what is done so often by modern-day disciples of the Master, the One who said: “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them” (Mt 19:14)? They say “no thanks, we would rather hinder them”.

This was not the Jewish way; this is not the Christian way. Everyone who is going to get married or is newly married should align their hearts with the wonderful prayer of Tobias, which has so much to teach us in so few words.

One last thought. In Byzantine icons, SS. Anne and Joachim are shown greeting one another at the city gate, tenderly embracing and kissing. Their love was pure but totally human: they, too, had longed for children, and had been afflicted with barrenness. The Lord intervened marvellously in bestowing on them the gift of the greatest human person in the history of the world: the Ever-Virgin Mother of God, Mary Most Holy. The prayer of Tobias is not, therefore, inherently about having many children. It is about loving children and being open to the gift of them, whenever and however the Lord wills to send them to us, and, most of all, humbly accepting His will. ✝

Peter Kwasniewski holds a B.A. in Liberal Arts from Thomas Aquinas College in California and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. After teaching at the International Theological Institute in Austria and for the Franciscan University of Steubenville's Austrian Program, he joined the founding team of Wyoming Catholic College in Lander, Wyoming, where he taught theology, philosophy, music, and art history, and directed the Choir and Schola. He now works as a freelance author, public speaker, editor, publisher, and composer.

Dr. Kwasniewski has published five books: Wisdom's Apprentice (CUA Press, 2007); On Love and Charity (CUA Press, 2008); Sacred Choral Works (Corpus Christi Watershed, 2014); Resurgent in the Midst of Crisis: Sacred Liturgy, the Traditional Latin Mass, and Renewal in the Church (Angelico Press, 2014); and most recently, Noble Beauty, Transcendent Holiness: Why the Modern Age Needs the Mass of Ages (Angelico Press, 2017). Resurgent in the Midst of Crisis has also been published in Czech, Polish, German, and Portuguese, and will soon appear in Spanish and Belarusian.

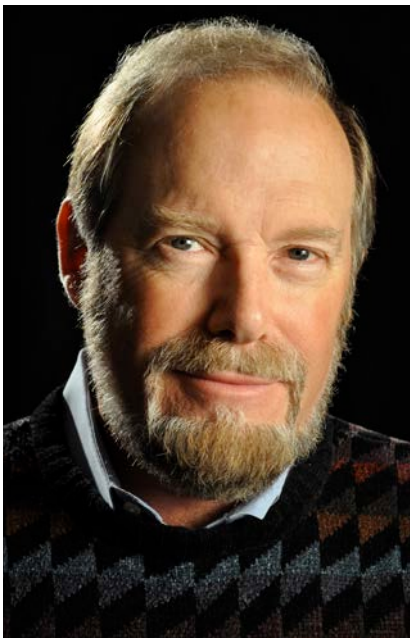


MEETING OF SAINTS JOACHIM AND ANNE AT THE GOLDEN GATE. FILIPPINO LIPPI 1457 - 1504

INTERVIEW WITH STEVEN MOSHER

CHINA'S DREAM

a new threat to its people and to the world?



STEVEN MOSHER

Steven Mosher is an internationally recognised authority on China and population issues, as well as an acclaimed author, speaker. He has worked tirelessly since 1979 to fight coercive population control programmes and has helped hundreds of thousands of women and families worldwide over the years.

In 1979, Steven Mosher was the first American social scientist to visit mainland China. He was invited there by the Chinese government, where he had access to government documents and actually witnessed women being forced to have abortions under the new “one-child policy”. A pro-choice atheist at the time, witnessing these traumatic abortions led him to recon-

sider his convictions and to eventually become a practicing, pro-life Roman Catholic.

Steven Mosher has appeared numerous times before the US Congress as an expert in world population, China, and human rights abuses. He is the author of the best-selling *A Mother's Ordeal: One Woman's Fight Against China's One-Child Policy*. Other books include *Hegemon: China's Plan to Dominate Asia and the World*, *China Attacks*, *China Misperceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality*, *Journey to the Forbidden China*, and *Broken Earth: The Rural Chinese*.

Steven Mosher lives in Virginia with his wife, Vera, and their nine children.

Calx Mariae: In the encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae* Pope Paul VI warned that if artificial contraception became widespread then, among other things, this would lead governments to utilise coercive methods to control population. The most glaring example of that is undoubtedly China, where the one-child policy brought about what was probably the most inhumane abortion regime in the world. What responsibility do Western governments and the United Nations bear in the institution and enabling of that regime?

Steven Mosher: Western governments and the United Nations not only welcomed China's 1979 foray into population control, they helped design, pay for, and implement a programme that they then used as a model for other countries. The goal of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other groups, as stated by then-UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik, was one of “achieving the lowest level of population in the very shortest time”.

The UNFPA has funneled hundreds of millions of dollars to China over the years in support of the one-child

policy. The World Bank opened up its coffers as well, and by 1996 had loaned more than \$22 billion to China.

Having funded the China programme, the UNFPA then began showering it with awards. The first United Nations Population Award was awarded to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1983, a year when 15 million young Chinese women were aborted, perhaps 90 per cent under coercive circumstances. Other awards followed.



“

China's population is now aging, its workforce is shrinking, and its economic prospects are dimming. (...) about a quarter of China's population will be 60 or older by 2030, up from 13 per cent in 2010. The country was almost four million workers short in 2016, a number that will grow with each passing year.

Finally, once the programme was underway, the UNFPA made strenuous efforts to export “the China model” to other countries. In April 1991, after perhaps 100 million forced abortions had taken place, Sadik said that “China has every reason to feel proud of and pleased with its remarkable achievements made in its . . . control of its population growth over the past 10 years. UNFPA is going to employ some of [China's family planning experts] to work in other countries and popularise China's experiences in population growth control”.

This was no idle threat. When the UNFPA served as the “technical secretary” of Peru's infamous sterilisation campaign a few years later – a

campaign which sterilised 300,000 poor Indian women – it brought in Chinese experts to train the surgical teams in how to tie women's tubes assembly-line style. Vietnam, with UNFPA assistance, designed and carried out a population control policy, which relies on targets, quotas and coercive measures virtually identical to China's to limit every couple to two children.

Although the Chinese model has proven difficult to export in its entirety, that hasn't deterred the UNFPA and other population control organisations from imposing the programme piecemeal on other countries. Governments have been encouraged by the UNFPA and other population control organisations to adopt Chi-

nese-style (1) targets and quotas, (2) bribes and punishments, (3) organisational structures, and (4) promotional propaganda. Where these techniques have been successfully transplanted, they have given rise to systematic coercion, even in countries lacking China's high degree of political control.

CM: What is the estimated loss resulting from China's radical population policy and how does it affect the structure of Chinese society today?

SM: It wasn't so long ago that Chinese officials were bragging about the success of their population control programme. When the Chinese Minister of Health, Gao Qiang, visited the US in 2011, he proudly told a horrified group of US Congressmen: “We have eliminated 400 million people from the population. We have eliminated more people than the entire population of the United States.”

It turns out that you can't eliminate 400 million Chinese – among the most productive, enterprising people in the world – without creating a gaping hole in both your demographics and your economic prospects.

China, you see, has turned Malthus' “dismal theorem” on its head. Instead of population growth outpacing food production, as Malthus predicted, in China we see the opposite. There, we see population control undermining the economy.

China's population is now aging, its workforce is shrinking, and its economic prospects are dimming. The State Council last year projected that about a quarter of China's population will be 60 or older by 2030, up from

13 per cent in 2010. The country was almost four million workers short in 2016, a number that will grow with each passing year. Overall growth is slowing dramatically, with Harvard's Kennedy School projecting just 4.4 per cent growth annually over the next decade.

Xi Jinping constantly invokes his China Dream, which is one of vaulting past the United States into global primacy. With that dream now threatened by the dearth of young people, he has decided to ramp up reproduction.

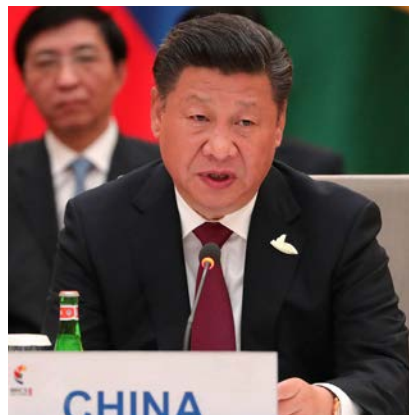
CM: There have been reports that the government is considering a relaxation of its population policy allowing families, first, to have two and subsequently encouraging more than two children in the family. What is the true state of the situation - has there been a real improvement in understanding the devastating effect of the one-child policy on the Chinese people or what, in your opinion, are the real considerations behind this change of course?

SM: Why is President for Life Xi Jinping abandoning strict limits on births? Has he heard, as I did, the cries of China's women? Is he appalled by the slaughter of tens of millions of infant girls by infanticide and abortion? Is he disturbed by the sight of the resulting "excess" men, 30 million strong, roaming China's cities and towns, and the explosion of sex trafficking and other crimes that have followed?

I suspect that the answer is, "none of the above".

The Chinese Communist Party has never been much concerned about

the human cost of the massive social engineering programmes they have engaged in, from the Great Leap Forward to the One Child Policy. The consequence of the Great Leap Forward was the death by starvation of 42 million people. The consequences of the One Child Policy are an order of magnitude larger. That policy has eliminated, by forced abortion and infanticide, of 400 million children.



XI JINPING

Xi Jinping's first move to increase the birth rate came back in 2015, when he ordered that all couples be permitted to have two children. The end of the one-child policy did not produce the expected baby boom, however. According to China's Bureau of National Statistics, births have continued to fall, dropping 3.5 per cent to 17.2 million last year alone.

Now Xi is going to allow couples to have two children, but I doubt it will make much difference. I predict that the number of births in China will continue to drop dramatically in the years to come. This will reflect both a shrinking population of women in their reproductive years – remember that tens of millions of females in their birth cohorts have been killed – as well as lower fertility desires overall. Most Chinese women now say that

they want no more than one, or at most two, children.

Such numbers will not be nearly enough to reverse the demographic decline that China is now experiencing. Reversing this death spiral and stabilising the population will require the relatively few women available, or at least many of them, to give birth to three or more children.

I think the Chinese Party-State now realises that this is not going to happen, at least voluntarily.

CM: Given the relentless commitment to reducing births for three decades, do you think there is a danger of the government going to the other extreme with increasing births? What might that involve?

SM: By announcing a two-child policy, the Chinese Communist Party is not offering "reproductive freedom" to women, so much as threatening reproductive servitude. President for Life Xi Jinping has decided not to stand idly by while an aging population and a declining workforce derail his "China Dream" of building a modern, powerful China by 2035.

A massive campaign is now underway to increase the birth rate.

The Chinese Communist Party is busily "mobilising the masses" to reproduce. For example, the authorities in Yichang, a central Chinese city of some four million people, have called on all Communist Party members to "take the lead in responding to the Party Central Committee's call" to have a second child.

The official Communist Party document, which is posted online, uses

language reminiscent of China's Maoist past: "Party members of all ages are urged to 'take various measures to mobilise the masses to actively achieve a 'full two children policy'".

Younger Party members are ordered to lead by example (the Chinese phrase used literally means "doing it starts with me"), while older comrades are instructed to "educate and supervise their children" with the obvious intent of encouraging grandchildren.

Another sign of this new political campaign to raise the birth rate is that, in recent months, the state-controlled media have been publishing "opinion pieces" about the need to reverse China's low birth rate. It wasn't so long ago that articles in the People's Daily were urging the masses to stop having children "for the good of the country". In a remarkable about face,

an article that recently appeared in the People's Daily asserted that increasing the birth rate is a matter of national concern, stating "the birth of a baby is not only a matter of the family itself, but is also an event of national importance".

The state-controlled media, designed for public consumption, does not take the same strict tone as an internal Party document. Rather it seeks to "promote births" by exhortations such as the above, and by announcing various family-friendly policies.

This is the difference between party discipline and party propaganda. The first is an order, the second is a suggestion, at least at the beginning. The propaganda will become more and more insistent over time if the masses prove recalcitrant – as they will in this case.

We in the West wrongly assumed that the two-child policy meant that all couples would be "free" to have a second child. But Beijing was never implementing a voluntary two-child policy at all, but one where every couple was required to have two children.

State control of reproduction is, in fact, a long-established principle in the People's Republic. The late Chairman Mao Zedong decreed in the early fifties that it would be the party, not the people, who decided family size.

Does anyone doubt that, if Chinese women don't voluntarily produce enough workers for the high-tech industrial future that Xi has envisioned, that he would hesitate to order that childbearing be made mandatory?

Does anyone doubt Beijing's willingness to use coercive, often brutal methods to impose its will on the masses?

Anyone who does should ask China's Catholics, Tibetans, Uyghurs, or China's vanishing human rights activists about their experience in this regard. For that matter, they should ask any one of the hundreds of millions of women who have suffered under the policies of the past four decades.

CM: In May you urged the diplomats in the Vatican not to sign an agreement with the Chinese authorities which you described as "a viciously atheistic regime that is actively trying to stamp out all religious belief and practice within China, starting with Catholicism." You said that you also warned that such an agreement would be seen by Chinese believers as "nothing short of a



OUR LADY OF CHINA

rank betrayal.” Can you sum up for us the present situation regarding the diplomatic relations between China and the Holy See – why would it be a bad idea for the Vatican to sign an agreement with China? Have your warnings been heeded? *[Editor’s note: On 22 September 2018, after this interview took place, the Holy See signed a “provisional agreement” with PRC on the appointment of Bishops.]*

SM: The Chinese Party-State is hostile to all expressions of religious faith, but especially towards Catholicism, whose practitioners are suspected of divided loyalties. The new “Regulations for Religious Affairs” which came into effect on 1 February, are already being rigorously enforced. Students and party members have been warned not to participate in religious activities. Churches have been told to keep minors from attending Mass, and catechism classes and summer camps are now off-limits.

Churches continue to be defaced by having their crosses and statues removed, or even demolished entirely. Priests in the Underground Church have been ordered to register for a “clergyman certificate” so they can be monitored and supervised. Even the sale of Bibles has been banned as the United Front Department prepares a “Sinicized” – that is, Party approved – version.

The Chinese Communist Party has made it clear that the Patriotic Church is expected to behave like an arm of the Party in carrying out the will of the “people’s democratic dictatorship.” Homilies will be expected to praise the existing order (led by “Core Leader” Xi Jinping), and to promote

the official ideology (known as “Xi Jinping thought”).

As for the Underground Church, it will simply be annihilated, insofar as it is within the regime’s power to do so.

It is not hard to see that there is an irreconcilable contradiction between the demands of the party and the demands of the Catholic faith.

If the Vatican signs an agreement with Beijing, this agreement itself will be used to complete the subversion of the Catholic Patriotic Church into an agent of the state. Then the Church itself will be used to force the ideological assimilation of all Chinese Catholics into the political order – the people’s democratic dictatorship – that Xi Jinping controls. It is impossible not to conclude that Xi’s ultimate goal is that same as Mao’s was, namely, the total eradication of this “foreign” religion from the soil of China.

The agents of this subversion will be Patriotic Catholic Bishops like Bishop Peter Fang Jianping of Tangshan, one of three compromised bishops who are members of China’s rubberstamp parliament, the National People’s Congress.

Bishop Fang eagerly promotes Xi Jinping’s call for the “sinicization of religion,” which is the idea that religion should chiefly serve the interests of the Chinese Communist Party that Xi himself leads. The reason why Catholics should support the Party and its leader, according to Fang, is “because we, as citizens of the country, should first be a citizen and then have religion and beliefs”.

Such a formulation – which gives the Chinese Caesar pride of place – leaves no doubt where Bishop Fang’s primary loyalty lies.

Faced with a similar choice between secular and sacred authority, St Thomas More famously said, “I am the King’s good servant, but I am God’s first”.

Bishop Fang would turn More’s affirmation of the faith on its head. He is saying, in effect: “I am God’s good servant, but I am Emperor Xi’s first.” He is putting Caesar before God, which seems to me to be a form of idolatry.

While it is true that the English bishops, with the exception of the martyred Cardinal John Fisher, followed Henry VIII into schism, one might add that at least Henry still claimed to be Christian.

CM: Catholics in China are obviously in a very vulnerable position following President Xi Jinping’s decision to place the Church under the United Front Department, which has a long record for carrying out vicious persecutions. In light of this what would be the best course of action for the Holy See to take?

SM: On 22 March this year, the Chinese Communist Party announced that all “religious affairs” in China would henceforth be supervised by a shadowy party office called the “United Front Department”. The former government agency responsible for Catholic and other believers – the State Administration of Religious Affairs bureau (SARA) – has been summarily abolished.

The reorganization attracted little attention outside of China, but it is certain to have unpleasant repercussions for Chinese believers. I believe that this move means that the persecution of Catholics and other believers is about to get much more intense, perhaps rising to levels not seen since the dark days of the 1950s.

The change also means that, in all probability, the draft agreement between the Vatican and Beijing that has been under discussion for years is now a dead letter. In fact, signing it now would mean more than surrendering papal authority over the appointment of bishops to the Chinese state, as bad as that would be. Signing it now would be a betrayal of the faithful into the hands of a new Red Emperor who seems to have a particular animus towards Christians, especially Catholics, and who seems determined to suffocate and extinguish the faith throughout his empire.

It is no secret that religious liberty – despite being guaranteed by the PRC Constitution – has always been severely restricted in the People’s Republic of China. But to understand why putting religious affairs into the hands of the CCP’s United Front Department bodes so ill for Catholics you need to understand the purpose of the Department and its work.

The United Front Department was created by Chairman Mao Zedong to co-opt and control non-Communist organisations and individuals during the Chinese civil war. Its efforts were so successful that Mao called it one of the three “magic weapons” that helped to revolution to succeed. (His other two “magic weapons” were

propaganda and, not surprisingly, the Red Army.)

After the civil war, the United Front Department was re-tasked with serving the Party leadership by coercing various groups, such as intellectuals and businessmen, into actively collaborating with the newly established “people’s democratic dictatorship”. Now that Catholics have been brought under the Department’s purview, the same kind of pressure will be exerted on them, and the same kind of active collaboration demanded of the Patriotic Catholic Church with the regime and its goals.



CARDINAL JOSEPH ZEN

The work of the United Front Department, in other words, will not be limited to merely ensuring that Catholic bishops, priests, and laity comply with the regulations governing religious activity. If that was the only issue then SARA, which was already enforcing such regulations on Catholics, would not have been abolished.

Nor does the move simply mean that the Church will be losing the (already very limited) freedom of action it once had, although this is also absolutely the case.

Rather, putting the United Front Department in charge of religious affairs

means that the party leadership is determined to make the Patriotic Catholic Church into an active “agent of control” for the regime with a single purpose: to subvert and undermine the faith of the millions of Catholics in China, and to prevent them from spreading the faith to others, including their own children. It is nothing less than a hostile takeover – an expropriation if you will – of the Catholic Church in China.

Like Chairman Mao, Xi Jinping hungers for ironclad control over Chinese society and is turning to the United Front Department to accomplish this end. Channeling the late chairman, Xi likewise declared in his October 2017 speech to the National People’s Congress that “United Front work is an important magic weapon for the victory of the Party’s cause”.

Even Chinese officials, who are trying to sell the reorganisation as a way of enhancing the “efficiency of government,” acknowledge that it is an effort to assert control over believers. “It means management of religious affairs and ethnic issues will be stepped up,” says Yang Shu of Lanzhou University. “And we could see the authorities taking a tighter grip than before.”

A tighter grip, indeed.

CM: What have you been able to do to help Chinese Catholics in the present situation? Apart from praying for their welfare what can we in the West do to help the situation of our fellow Catholics in China?

SM: We continue to be in contact with elements of the Underground Church in China and help where we

can. In the past we have built churches in Catholic villages and opened orphanages for children abandoned because of the one-child policy.

Such activities are coming under increased scrutiny from the Chinese Party-State and may soon prove to be impossible.

Chinese Catholics themselves are best able to navigate the shoals of the dangerous waters that they now find themselves in. We should keep them in our prayers but otherwise not attempt to dictate to them a particular course of action, as the Vatican is now trying to do in urging them to join the Patriotic Church.

CM: The dire predictions about over-population have been completely discredited long ago. Why do you think the idea of over-population still persists in the public imagination?

SM: It turns out that movements with billions of dollars at their disposal and tens of thousands of employees do not go quietly to their graves, even when their animating ideas are discredited. Not even the New York Times believes in what it has called “the myth of overpopulation”, yet that same myth continues its zombie-like existence down to the present day.

As population control falls into increasing disrepute worldwide, the population controllers have reinvented themselves, much the same way that the Communists in the old Soviet Union re-emerged as “social democrats” following its collapse. Thus organisations working in this area have found it wise to disguise their agenda by adopting less reveal-

ing names. Thus Zero Population Growth in June 2002 became Population Connection. The Association for Voluntary Surgical Contraception the year before changed its name to Engender Health.

Documents prepared for public consumption by the UNFPA and other population control agencies now routinely cloak their plans in language about the “empowerment of women”, “sustainable development”, “safe motherhood”, and “reproductive health”. Yet the old anti-natal zeal continues to come through in internal documents. When Thoraya Obaid assumed control of the UNFPA in 2002 she pledged to “slow and eventually stabilise population growth” in a presentation to her new bosses on the UN Commission on Population and Development.

“Today I want to make one thing very clear,” Obaid told them in no uncertain terms. “The slowdown in population growth does not mean we can slow down efforts for population and reproductive health – quite the contrary. If we want real progress and if we want the projections to come true, we must step up efforts ... While population growth is slowing, it is still growing by 77 million people every year.”

The various deceptions adopted by the anti-natalists will, in the end, avail them nothing. For, as we will see, their central idea – the Malthusian notion that you can eliminate poverty, hunger, disease, and pollution by eliminating the poor – is bootless.

Reducing the numbers of babies born does not in itself solve political, military, economic, or environmental

problems, as millions of well-meaning westerners have been propagandised into believing. On the contrary, it often creates them. Yet where population control programmes are concerned, these costs have been largely ignored (as the cost of doing business) while the benefits to people, the environment, and to the economy, have been greatly exaggerated.

Population control programmes cause real harm to real people in the area of human rights, health care, and the development of democratic institutions. They should be ended.

CM: In recent years the Holy See has invited a number of proponents of population control to speak at conferences in the Vatican, for example, Jeffrey Sachs of the Earth Institute and Paul Ehrlich, the author of *The Population Bomb*. This has caused many Catholics, especially those who are actively pro-life, a great deal of concern. In your opinion, can there be any common ground between groups which advocate population control and the Catholic Church?

SM: Ehrlich’s book should have been named *The Population Explosion*, instead of *The Population Bomb*, for according to Ehrlich the “bomb” had already gone off and there was nothing to do now but wait for the inevitable human die-back. “Too many people” were, in his words, chasing “too little food”.

The most optimistic of Ehrlich’s “scenarios” involved the immediate imposition of a harsh regimen of population control and resource conservation around the world, with the goal of reducing the number of people to 1.5 billion (about a fourth of its current level) over the next century

or two. Even so, about a fifth of the world's population would still starve to death in the immediate future, he predicted.

He also claimed that our reckless breeding had jeopardised earth's ability to support life. All life, not just human life. Our planet was literally dying. Not only were we Children of Earth killing ourselves, we were going to take "Mother" to the grave with us as well.

Likening the earth to an overloaded spaceship or sinking lifeboat, issuing apocalyptic warnings about the imminent "standing room only" problem, he captured the popular imagination. His prescriptions were always the same: "Join the environmental movement, stop having children, and save the planet".

Ehrlich's doomsday predictions never materialised. His anti-natal views – he proposed putting contraceptives in the drinking water to drive down the birth rate – should have made him and others like him *persona non grata* at Vatican conferences.

Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, the head of the Pontifical Academy of Science and the Pontifical Academy of Social Science, had invited Ehrlich to one of his conferences. Bishop Sanchez is best known for his astonishing declaration (after a single visit to China!) that "those who are best implementing the social doctrine of the Church at the present time are the Chinese".

I don't have space to recount our entire conversation, which lasted for four hours! During that time we discussed not only China, but a whole host of

issues, including population control, climate change, and pro-life work. Suffice to say that the good Bishop is rather better informed on subjects like China and global warming than he was previously.

There is, quite obviously, very little common ground between those who see people as a plague on the planet and those who see mankind as the pinnacle of creation, indeed, the very reason that God created the universe in the first place.

CM: If people want to find out what is happening in China or learn about your work in other areas, where can they go for information?

SM: In *Bully of Asia*, my latest book on China, I describe how Chinese president Xi Jinping dreams of overturning the current US-led world order and replacing it with one dominated by China.

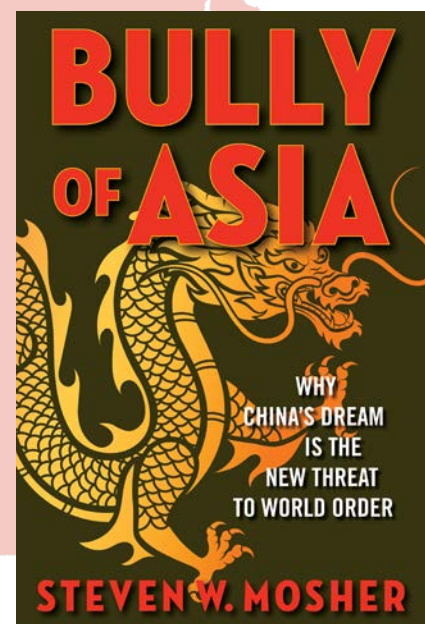
In a world bristling with dangers, only one country poses a truly mortal challenge to the United States and the peaceful and prosperous world that America helps to guarantee. That country is China, that under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party:

- continues to practice the totalitarianism that it invented thousands of years ago;
- possesses economic power which rivals our own;
- tells the Chinese people that their superior race and culture give their country a natural right to universal deference;
- teaches its people to hate America for standing in the way of achieving

its narcissistic "dream" of world domination;

- believes in its manifest destiny to usher in the World of Great Harmony;
- publishes maps showing the exact extent of the nuclear destruction it could rain down on the United States;
- persecutes believers of all religions, but reserves a special hatred for Catholics.

The new Red Emperor – President Xi Jinping – has managed to seize control of the Party, the army, and the government, and is likely to be in power for decades to come. Now, more than ever, US foreign policy must be consistently and resolutely directed at curbing the power-hungry People's Republic of China, and pressing for the Chinese Party-State to respect human rights within its borders. ✚



On more general population questions, excellent resources are to be found at: www.pop.org

PURGATORY

and the Holy Souls

BY FR THOMAS CREAN OP

Each November, as the end of the liturgical year approaches, the Church invites us in a special way to remember the dead and encourages us to gain indulgences on their behalf. With this in mind, Fr Thomas Crean OP has agreed to explain some of the most important questions about purgatory and the plight of the holy souls.

“...As regards those who are truly penitent and die in charity before they have made satisfaction by worthy fruits of repentance for their misdeeds and omissions, their souls are purged by purgatorial or purifying punishments; and the sacrifices of the Mass, the prayers, the almsgiving and other devout works offered on their behalf...help to lessen these penalties.”

- Council of Lyons, 1274

What is the basis for our belief in purgatory?

The possibility of a purification for souls after death is suggested even by natural reason,¹ but it is taught implicitly, at least, by scripture and explicitly by the Church Fathers from the earliest times. It is assumed by the practice of praying for the dead in the Old and New Testaments. St Paul speaks of those who will be saved ‘as by fire’² and St Peter tells us:

“Christ also died once for sins, the just for the unjust, being put to death indeed in the flesh but en-

livened in the spirit, in which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who had formerly been incredulous when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah.”³

Our Lord Himself refers to those who will not go out from prison till they have paid the last penny.⁴

What is purgatory for?

For the expiation of our sins. Sin, especially mortal sin, leaves behind a debt of punishment. Our sins offend the goodness of God. Divine justice requires that they be expiated. When

we fall into sin after baptism, we must ourselves take part in this process of expiation, by uniting voluntary and involuntary sufferings to the passion of Christ. Because many of us don’t fully expiate our sins before death, purgatory is made necessary since “nothing defiled shall enter heaven”.⁵ Purgatory does not increase our love for God. If we do not learn to love God in life, we cannot learn to after death. Our degree of charity when we die remains for all eternity. Here we can gain merit from good acts done in state of grace, but souls in purgatory can’t merit an increase in grace.



AN ANGEL FREES THE SOULS OF PURGATORY, LUDOVICO CARRACCI 1555 - 1619

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Many souls may be like the paralytic in the Gospel who was lying on the edge of the pool for 38 years, waiting for someone to carry him into the water. We help them greatly by having Mass said, but also by attending a Mass, making the stations, fasting and forgiving wrongs done to us.



ST THOMAS AQUINAS

This is one reason why it is foolish to think “I’ll do the minimum to get into purgatory” rather than try to expiate past sins now.

Who goes there?

Those who die truly penitent and in the charity of God, but before they have fully made satisfaction for misdeeds and omissions. They have genuine faith, not just a vague belief in God but real belief in His revealed truth, especially the Incarnation and the Trinity and repent of their past sins as contrary to God’s will. Someone who never thinks about God and is not sorry for sins cannot expect to enter purgatory.

What is Purgatory like? How is the debt paid?

For us, there are three main ways sins can be expiated (though always in reliance on God’s grace) prayer,

penitential works such as fasting, and works of mercy. In purgatory only prayer – communication with God – is possible. So we can suppose that the essence of purgatory lies in a soul’s relationship with God which provides the purifying pains that expiate sins. In his poem *The Dream of Gerontius*, Blessed John Henry Newman has the guardian angel explain the suffering of souls in purgatory in two ways.

Firstly, the departed soul experiences a desire for God, whom in His incarnate form, it will glimpse at the particular judgement. A disembodied soul grasps more clearly that it was made for God and all happiness lies in seeing Him. Each moment the vision of God is delayed is excruciating.

Secondly, it will suffer by its vision of itself: “For though now sinless, thou wilt feel that thou hast sinned as never thou didst feel.” A soul in purgatory is sinless, but sees the ugliness of its un-



ST CATHERINE OF GENOA

expiated sins, how they caused Christ to die on its behalf, how they deprived God of the glory owed to Him, how its example caused others to sin, especially those who were under its authority on earth; and the pain it feels at this vision serves to expiate its sins.

St Thomas Aquinas says that in addition to these pains the soul will suffer by way of material elements, that is, by ‘fire’. He considers this a fitting recompense for a soul’s having preferred the material world to its Creator. He believes that material elements will cause the soul to experience purgatory as a *confinement*, corresponding to scripture’s use of the word ‘prison’. Many saints have received apparitions of the holy souls in the midst of flames. Newman doesn’t deny this but suggests that the burning desire for God and the burning sorrow for having offended Him, will be the soul’s “veriest, sharpest purgatory”.

St Catherine of Genoa (1447-1510) – the ‘doctor of purgatory’ – insists that the souls are there willingly. As well as saying, “God sends a soul to purgatory”, we might equally say that God allows the soul to hide itself from His face out of mercy, as well as out of justice, until it is ready. Despite their inconceivable desire for heaven, they don’t want to leave purgatory a moment before they are ready, not just because of the pain it would cause but because they would not be worthy of Him.

What is the relationship between the holy souls and the rest of the Church?

There is an exchange of spiritual goods between the different parts of the mystical body of Christ. We pray and do penance for the holy souls and

it is increasingly common to ask for their prayers. It's disputed whether the suffering souls are able to pray for us but the Church has never discouraged it. There's no reason why God shouldn't reveal to them the fact that someone here has asked for their prayers, and as their charity cannot fail, if they know that their prayers have been requested, they will certainly pray. We can suppose that they will pray in particular for those who have helped them, for example, those who have Mass offered for them, or brought a priest to them when they were ill. Think of the gratitude of those souls who were in danger of dying in a state of mortal sin, if they hadn't received the sacraments on their death-bed.

Many souls may be like the paralytic in the Gospel who was lying on the edge of the pool for 38 years, waiting for someone to carry him into the water. We help them greatly by having Mass said, but also by attending a Mass, making the stations, fasting and forgiving wrongs done to us.

How long must souls spend in purgatory?

Obviously, the duration of purgatory depends on the individual soul. It would seem to rely on two things; first, the love of the soul, secondly, the quantity of sin that it has to expiate. (This is not necessarily in inverse proportion. For example, someone who converted late in life might die with a greater love for God than another person and yet have more sins to expiate.) The more love a soul has, the

more piercing their desire for God, so the quicker sins are expiated. Of course, the greater the quantity of sin, the longer the soul must wait. These factors determine the length for each, except to the degree that God allows the living to intervene on their behalf.

It is said that in Fatima, when Lucia asked about a villager who had died, Amelia (aged between 18-20), Our Lady replied: "She will be in purgatory until the end of the world." Such souls need not be those of the greatest sinners; it might be that in life their desire for heaven was very weak, and where love was weak the debt owed to divine justice reduces very slowly – like trying to strip paint not with a blow-torch but with a candle.

Do the holy souls ever appear to the living to ask for their prayers?

Yes, though rare, there are examples of this happening. Padre Pio said: "I see so many souls from Purgatory that they no longer frighten me." St Gregory the Great says explicitly that "the souls of the departed sometimes appear to the living and beg that Mass should be offered for them." In his book *Dialogues* he gives a number of examples.⁶

Every year a plenary indulgence can be received on each of the first eight days of the month of November and applied to a particular departed soul, known or unknown.* Conditions for obtaining the indulgence are: 1) visit a cemetery and pray for the dead; 2) on All Souls'

Day visit a church or an oratory and recite an Our Father and the Creed. You must be in the state of grace, have a complete detachment from sin, even venial sin (otherwise, the indulgence becomes partial, not plenary); go to confession; receive Holy Communion; and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father. (One confession around the time the indulgence is sought is sufficient for the whole period but a separate reception of Communion and separate prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father are required for each plenary indulgence.)

Finally, however much they have to suffer, the holy souls are God's friends and His love sustains them. God promised us through Isaiah:

“When thou shalt pass through the waters, I will be with thee, and the rivers shall not cover thee; when thou shalt walk in the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, and the flames shall not consume thee.”⁷✠

** Of course, there are many other ways to obtain a plenary indulgence throughout the year.*

ENDNOTES:

1. Plato writes in *Gorgias*: "Immediately on separation from the body, the souls come before their judge to be attentively examined. Does he see a soul disfigured by sin? He will send it heaped with ignominy to the dungeon where it will suffer the just punishment of its crimes. But there are some who profit by the pains which they endure: there are they whose faults are of such a nature that they can be expiated."
2. 1 Corinthians 3:15.
3. 1 Peter 3: 18-20.
4. Matthew 5:26.
5. Apocalypse 21:27.
6. Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, Book 4, ch. 55.
7. Isaiah 43:2.

A PRAYER FOR THE DEAD

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant unto the souls of Thy departed servants full remission of all their sins, that through the help of our pious supplications, they may obtain the pardon which they have always desired, Thou Who lives and reigns world without end. Amen.



CATHOLIC FAMILY

the bulwark against the great apostasy of our times

BY HIS EXCELLENCY ATHANASIUS SCHNEIDER



BISHOP ATHANASIUS SCHNEIDER

The following text is from a video address that was given by His Excellency Athanasius Schneider, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Saint Mary in Astana, to the Conference of Catholic Families organised by the Lumen Fidei Institute in Dublin, August 2018.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! Dear family fathers, dear family mothers! Dear grandfathers and dear grandmothers! Dear spouses! Dear young men and dear young women, you who are preparing yourselves for the sacrament of marriage. Dear boys and girls! Dear innocent children! You are gathered in Dublin for the Conference of Catholic Families, organised by the *Lumen Fidei* Institute. It is a profound joy for me to greet you all and to transmit to you the spiritual food of the ever beautiful, the ever valid, the unchanging truth of the faith about marriage and family.

You are rightly gathered in order to proclaim the truth about marriage and family, to share this truth with

one another, to defend this truth and to live the joy of this truth. You are holding a conference, which has the meritorious courage to resist the totalitarian and worldwide gender ideology. Whereas some other Catholic family meetings have already surrendered themselves to this ideology or wilfully accepted it – such a surrender to the gender ideology and its acceptance constitutes ultimately a betrayal of Christ, an apostasy from the integral and Divinely revealed Catholic and Apostolic Faith.

Dear brothers and sisters! Even though you are numerically small, even though you have not the sympathy of the powerful of this world and sometimes you have not the support even from the official structures of the Church, you are powerful in the eyes of God and in eternity. Why? Because you have the true and undistorted faith. You can say to the others: you have the money and all the administrative and organisational structures; you have the applause of the anti-Christian world. We, however, have the Faith, and that matters.

Let us look with the eyes of faith and with the gift of our reason and common sense to the beauty of the divine created order of marriage and the family. We live in a time in which one of the most beautiful creations of God, namely marriage and the family, are under general attack from the neo-Marxist dictatorship, which disguises itself with the artificial and bizarre name of LGBT. The so-called

LGBT homosexual dictatorship has gained almost universal power in the media. The Christian family is facing a kind of a new Goliath.

However, it is enigmatic that we can discover in our days collaborators with this attack on marriage and the family even in the ranks of the clergy. A collaboration with such an ideology signifies apostasy from the Gospel.

But right now, we are called to be faithful to the unchangeable truth of our Catholic and Apostolic faith, which our fathers and forefathers have transmitted to us. We have a chance to be courageous witnesses of the Divine truth and of the beauty of marriage and the family. To this end we received the gifts of the Holy Spirit especially in the sacrament of confirmation. This virtue has bestowed the faithful during two thousand years with the ability to prefer death rather than to betray the baptismal vows, to die rather than to sin, to die rather than to betray the wedding vows, to die rather than to betray the priestly or religious vows.

The family and the entire human society will flourish only when the Divine truth on marriage and the family will be observed, as taught by Pope Leo XIII:

“From the beginning of the world, indeed, it was divinely ordained that things instituted by God and by nature should be proved by us to be the more profitable and salutary the more they remain un-

changed in their full integrity. ... If the rashness or the wickedness of human agency venture to change or disturb that order of things which has been constituted with fullest foresight, then the designs of infinite wisdom and usefulness begin either to be hurtful or cease to be profitable, partly because through the change undergone they have lost their power of benefiting, and partly because God chooses to inflict punishment on the pride and audacity of man. Now, those who deny that marriage is holy, and who relegate it, stripped of all holiness, among the class of common secular things, uproot thereby the foundations of nature, not only resisting the designs of Providence, but, so far as they can, destroying the order that God has ordained. No one, therefore, should wonder if from such insane and impious attempts there spring up a crop of evils pernicious in the highest degree both to the salvation of souls and to the safety of the commonwealth.”
(Arcanum Divinae, no. 25)

In order to remain faithful to the Divine commandments there are in our days families, young people, priests and bishops who often become marginalised, ridiculed, because of their fidelity to the integrity of the Catholic faith and of the Divine Worship according to the tradition of the forefathers.

In order to remain faithful to their vocation the Catholic family must especially practise the daily common prayer. Pope Pius XII spoke to newly married couples:

“We beseech you, take it to heart to keep this beautiful tradition of Christian families: the common prayer in the evening. The family gathers at the end of each day to implore the Divine blessings and to honor the Immaculate Virgin through the praises of the Rosary for all who sleep under the same roof. The hard and inexorable exigencies of the modern life don’t give you the leisure to dedicate some blessed moments of gratitude towards God, nor read, according to an ancient custom, a

short biography of the saint whom the Church proposes to us each day as a model and as a special protector. Strive to sanctify this even short moment dedicating it to God in order to praise Him and to present to Him your desires, your needs, your sufferings and your occupations. The centre of your home must be the Crucified or the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: May Christ reign over your home and gather you around Him every day.” (Address to newly married couples, 12 February 1941)

Pope Leo XIII gave us a very concise explanation about the original and first duty of parents concerning the education of their children, and in the first place concerning the education in the Catholic faith. This duty has its foundation in the natural order of the Divine creation:

“The common sense of mankind is in such complete accord, that they would be in open contradiction with it who dared maintain that the children belong to the



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State before they belong to the family, and that the State has an absolute right over their education. Untenable is the reason they adduce, namely that man is born a citizen and hence belongs primarily to the State, not bearing in mind that before being a citizen man must exist; and existence does not come from the State, but from the parents.” (*Divini Illius Magistri*, no. 35)

“And therefore,” says the same Pope Leo XIII, “the father’s power is of such a nature that it cannot be destroyed or absorbed by the State; for it has the same origin as human life itself.” (*Rerum Novarum*, no. 14)

“By nature parents have a right to the education of their children, but with this added duty that the education and instruction of the child be in accord with the end for which by God’s blessing it was begotten. Therefore it is the duty of parents to make every effort to prevent any invasion of their rights in this matter, and to make absolutely sure that the education of their children remains under their own control in keeping with their Christian duty, and above all to refuse to send them to those schools in which there is danger of imbibing the deadly poison of impiety.” (*Sapientiae Christianae* quoted in *Divini Illius Magistri*, no. 35)

Already more than seventy years ago Pope Pius XII made an appeal to the Christian families to be new crusaders in spreading and defending the true Catholic faith in the midst of the general and heavy torpor into

which the drugs of false ideas, widely diffused, have sunk the human family in the twentieth century. This diagnosis, which Pius XII made, is fully applicable to our times. Pius XII said:

“It is for the best and most distinguished members of the Christian family, filled with the enthusiasm of Crusaders, to unite in the spirit of truth, justice and love to the call; God wills it, ready to serve, to sacrifice themselves, like the Crusaders of old. If the issue was then the liberation of the land hallowed by the life of the Incarnate Word of God, the call today is, if We may so express Ourselves, to traverse the sea of errors of our day and to march on to free the holy land of the spirit, which is destined to sustain in its foundations the unchangeable norms and laws on which will rise a social construction of solid internal consistency.” (Christmas Message of 1942)

The first and most holy goal and end of matrimony and family is giving birth to new citizens of heaven. Pope Leo XIII said:

“By the command of Christ, it not only looks to the propagation of the human race, but to the bringing forth of children for the Church, ‘fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God’; (Eph. 2:19) so that ‘a people might be born and brought up for the worship and religion of the true God and our Saviour Jesus Christ’ (*Catechismus Romanus*, ch. 8)” (*Arcaenum Divinae*, no. 10)

The family is therefore the first and original place where the integ-

rity and the beauty of the Catholic faith should be taught to the children, and by this way handed over to the future generations. Indeed, from this transmission of the faith depends the spiritual health of a nation as taught by Pope Pius XII:

“The family is holy. It is the cradle not only for the children, but the entire nation. Man and woman should pass on the torch of the physical and also spiritual, of the moral and of the Christian life to the future generations.” (Radio message on 13 May 1942)

One of the main causes of the moral, spiritual and religious crisis of the current time consists in the religious ignorance, in ignoring the truths of the faith and in an erroneous knowledge of the faith. Saint Pius X very rightly observed this connection, saying:

“The enemy has, indeed, long been prowling about the fold and attacking it with such subtle cunning that now, more than ever before, the prediction of the Apostle to the elders of the Church of Ephesus seems to be verified: ‘I know that fierce wolves will get in among you, and will not spare the flock.’ (Acts 20:29) Those who still are zealous for the glory of God are seeking the causes and reasons for this decline in religion. Coming to a different explanation, each points out, according to his own view, a different plan for the protection and restoration of the kingdom of God on earth. But it seems to Us, that while We should not overlook other considerations, We are forced to agree with those

who hold that the chief cause of the present indifference and, as it were, infirmity of soul, and the serious evils that result from it, is to be found above all in ignorance of things divine. This is fully in accord with what God Himself declared through the Prophet Osee: ‘And there is no knowledge of God in the land. Killing and adultery have overflowed: and blood hath touched blood.’ (Osee 4:1-3)” (*Acerbo Nimis*, no.1)

Pope Benedict XIV said:

“There is nothing more effective than catechetical instruction to spread the glory of God and to secure the salvation of souls.” (*Constitution Etsi Minime*, no. 13)

The beauty of the Catholic faith manifests itself in a special manner in

large families. We possess one of the most striking and illuminating affirmations of the Magisterium on this theme in the following words of Pope Pius XII addressed to the Associations for Large Families:

“Large families are the most splendid flower-beds in the garden of the Church. [...] The brows of the fathers and mothers may be burdened with cares, but there is never a trace of that inner shadow that betrays anxiety of conscience or fear of an irreparable return to loneliness. Their youth never seems to fade away, as long as the sweet fragrance of a crib remains in the home, as long as the walls of the house echo to the silvery voices of children and grandchildren. Their heavy labors multiplied many times over, their redoubled sacrifices and their renunciation of

costly amusements are generously rewarded even here below by the inexhaustible treasury of affection and tender hopes that dwell in their hearts without ever tiring them or bothering them. And the hopes soon become a reality when the eldest daughter begins to help her mother to take care of the baby and on the day the oldest son comes home with his face beaming with the first salary he has earned himself. [...] Children in large families learn almost automatically to be careful of what they do and to assume responsibility for it, to have a respect for each other and help each other, to be open-hearted and generous. For them, the family is a little proving ground, before they move into the world outside, which will be harder on them and more demanding.” (Address to the Directors of the Associations for



FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, FRA ANGELICO 1395 - 1455

Large Families of Rome and Italy
in 20 January 1958)

The truth that the family is the first place where the beauty of the Catholic faith is lived is evident in the following edifying witness in the autobiography of St Thérèse of the Infant Jesus:

“There was one feast most dear to me, and it came every week – Sunday, Our Lord’s own day, a wonderful day, a day of rest. We all went to the High Mass, and when it was time for the sermon, I remember we had to leave our place because it was so far away from the pulpit and go all up the nave to find places nearer. I would really listen, but I am afraid I kept my eyes on my father far more than on the preacher because I could read such a lot in his noble face. Sometimes his eyes would fill with tears he could not keep back, and when he was listening to the eternal truths, he seemed to be already in another world and no longer in this.” (*Story of a Soul*)

The analysis of the modern world made by St Pius X a hundred years ago, is fully applicable to our time:

“The great movement of apostasy being organised in every country for the establishment of a One-World Church which shall have neither dogmas, nor hierarchy, neither discipline for the mind, nor curb for the passions, and which, under the pretext of freedom and human dignity, would bring back to the world (if such a Church could overcome) the reign of legalised cunning and force, and



ST LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE

the oppression of the weak, and of all those who toil and suffer. [...] Indeed, the true friends of the people are neither revolutionaries, nor innovators: they are traditionalists.” (*Notre Charge Apostolique*)

The Catholic family represents the first bulwark against the current great apostasy. The two most efficient weapons against the modern apostasy outside and inside the life of the Church, are the purity and integrity of the faith and the purity of a chaste life. The admonition which St Louis IX, King of France, left to his son, remains always valid:

“My dearest son, my first instruction is that you should love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your strength. Without this there is no salvation. Keep yourself, my son, from everything that you know displeases God, that is to say, from every mortal sin. You should permit yourself to be tormented by every kind of martyrdom before you would allow yourself to commit a mortal sin. [...] Work to remove all sin from your land, particularly blasphemies and heresies.” (Letter to his son)

Once, a member of an anti-Christian movement, who later converted to the Catholic Church, said to Fr. Mateo Crawley, the Apostle of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart:

“We have only one goal in mind: to de-christianise the family. We leave to the Catholics gladly the churches, the chapels, the cathedrals. For us it is enough to have the family in order to corrupt the society. If we have control over the family, our victory over the Church is guaranteed.” (Freundeskreis Maria Goretti e.V. (ed.), *Familie und Glaube*, Munchen 2001, p. 146)

True Catholic families – and desirably large families – will strengthen the Church of our days with the beauty of the Catholic faith. From that faith will come out new Catholic fathers and mothers, and from them there will come out a new generation of zealous priests and intrepid bishops, who will be ready to give their life for Christ and for the salvation of the souls. Christianity was born out of the family, the Holy Family, so that the family may be born again out of Christianity. The first fruit of the redemption is the Holy Family, just as the first blessing of the Creator was given to the family. Indeed, what the current world and the Church mostly need, are true Catholic families, the first places where the beauty of the Catholic Faith is lived. ✚

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

A COLUMN BY MATTHEW MCCUSKER

This is the first of what we hope to be a regular feature exploring the history of the Church and its relevance to the present day. Matthew McCusker has a Master's Degree in History from the University of York, where he specialised in ecclesiastical history.

Does the response of the Catholic clergy and laity to the “Testimony” of Archbishop Viganò mark the beginning of a new phase of Catholic attitudes to the papacy?

In his “Testimony” of 25 August 2018 Archbishop Viganò called on Pope Francis to resign, alleging that he, and more than twenty cardinals, were guilty of covering-up sexual abuse by Theodore McCarrick, the former Archbishop of Washington. At the time of writing, no less than thirty-five cardinals and bishops, mostly from the United States, have called for a full investigation of the allegations made against the pope and many have expressed their belief in Archbishop Viganò’s integrity. Calls for an investigation of the pope’s conduct, and for his resignation, have gained the support of thousands lay Catholics and priests. Some of these have spoken out against Pope Francis’s teaching and conduct since the beginning of his pontificate, but many others have defended him until very recently. Such widespread calls for the resignation of a reigning pope are unprecedented, at least since the final years of the Great Schism of 1378-1415.

This forthright and courageous response by many bishops, clergy and laity to the revelations of Archbishop Viganò may mark the end of a period

in the Church’s history, roughly 150 years in length, during which many Catholics have been greatly influenced by a false or exaggerated understanding of the role of the papacy within the Church.

The essential nature of the papacy, which was conferred on St Peter by Our Lord Himself, remains forever unchanged. The pope is the visible head of the Church militant, he enjoys ordinary and immediate jurisdiction over the whole Church. He is infallible, that is,

“when, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter.” (Vatican I)

Yet there is historical variation both in the manner in which papal authority has been exercised and the particular attitudes of Catholics towards that authority.

The eighteenth century was a difficult period for the Church. All across Europe she lost ground to the rationalistic errors of the “enlightenment” and suffered at the hands of “enlightened absolutist” regimes, which dominated many traditionally Catholic nations including Austria, Spain and Portugal. These governments subjected the Church to a variety of depredations including the seizure of church property, the suppression of religious houses, particularly those

of contemplative orders, and the encroachment of the state on properly ecclesiastical powers. Much of the Church in France professed “Gallicanism”, which limited the authority of the papacy over local churches to spiritual aspects of teaching and governance and denied papal infallibility by holding that the teaching of the pope was only irreformable if it received the consent of the Church.

The progress of “enlightenment” ideology and attacks on the ecclesiastical hierarchy culminated in the French Revolution. The Civil Constitution of Clergy in 1790, created a schismatic Church separated from Rome and subject to the French state. The escalation of the Revolution in the years that followed led to violent persecution both in France and in nations occupied by French forces, which often aimed at nothing less than the destruction of the Church itself.

The horrors of the French Revolution brought about a renewed determination within the Church to defend the rights of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and particularly the papacy, from violation by the state. This reassertion of loyalty and devotion towards the papacy, as expressed by theorists such as Joseph de Maistre, became known as ultramontanism, because it showed loyalty to the papacy “across the mountains” in contrast to the former “Gallicanism”.

The popes of the revolutionary period had much to suffer. In 1799 Pius VI died in France while a prisoner of the revolutionary state. In 1809 his successor Pius VII was im-

prisoned and then exiled, returning to Rome only in 1813. The papacy of Bl. Pius IX witnessed continual turmoil and revolution, culminating in the seizure of the papal states and the beginning of a long period, lasting until the establishment of the Vatican City State following the Concordat of 1929, during which the popes were “the prisoners in the Vatican”. Throughout this period the popes were consistently men of moral integrity, courageous in their profession of the Catholic faith and in their opposition to the revolution in its varied forms.

The rest of the Church – clergy and laity alike – responded to the trials of the papacy, and the virtue of the popes, with an outpouring of loyalty and devotion to the individual person of the pope, which was perhaps unknown in the prior history of the Church.

Over the course of the nineteenth century the papacy became ever more central to the devotional lives of the faithful, and power and influence came to be ever more centralised in the Roman Congregations *vis a vis* the local churches. This centralisation was increasingly aided by the rapid technological developments which enabled Rome to communicate with local churches with a rapidity that had previously been impossible. The development of the Catholic press, and then, in the twentieth century, the development of radio and television, brought the Catholic faithful worldwide in ever closer contact with the papacy.

Loyalty, devotion and obedience to the man who held the office became, for many Catholics, one of the most central aspects of the Catholic

faith and a key identifier of a “good Catholic”.

The new centrality of the person of the pope may have yielded fruits while the popes were men of orthodox faith and virtuous conduct. But did the new dependence on the man who held the office carry dangers with it? Already in the mid-nineteenth century many reflective men, such as Bl. John Henry Newman, were deeply concerned that the authentic doctrine of the papacy was being distorted. This became more clearly evident in the debates surrounding the definition of papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council in 1870. While the definitions of the Council are precise in setting out the limits of papal infallibility, for many Catholics the notion took root that the pope could scarcely teach or do wrong. A good example is a commentary on the Baltimore Catechism, published in the United States during the pontificate of Pius XI (1921-1939), which, after setting out the correct teaching on the limits of papal infallibility, makes the following extraordinary statements:

“Nevertheless, whatever the Pope teaches on anything you may be pretty sure is right... Other rulers cannot and need not know as much as the Holy Father, because they have not to govern the world, but only their own country.... We may say the Pope has also the experience of all the Popes who preceded him, from St. Peter down to our present Holy Father, Pius XI - two hundred and sixty-one popes. Therefore, considering all this, we should have the very greatest respect for the opinions and advice of the Holy Father on any subject. We should

not set up our limited knowledge and experience against his... The Holy Father knows the past history of nations; he knows the nature of mankind; he knows that what takes place in one nation may, and sometimes does, take place in another under the same circumstances. Thus the Holy Father has greater foresight than we have...”

The notion that a pope is necessarily more knowledgeable, wiser and virtuous than the average man, and the refusal to accept the possibility of his possessing all the common human flaws, or worse, has had disastrous consequences for the Church. Since the Second Vatican Council, it has resulted in “good Catholics” being complicit in the calamitous misgovernment of the Church by successive popes, including the suppression of the traditional liturgy, the spread of doctrinal errors, the appointment of unworthy candidates as bishops and the covering up of sexual abuse of children worldwide. Catholics who have remained faithful to the Church’s traditional teaching and liturgy, and who have opposed the widespread intellectual and moral corruption within the hierarchy, have often been labelled “bad Catholics” when their words or actions brought them into conflict with the men who have held the office of the papacy over the last fifty years.

Yet, the response to the revelations of Archbishop Viganò may indicate that many Catholics are now more willing to see through nineteenth and twentieth century illusions and come to a more honest, realistic, and theologically correct, view of the papacy. ✚

ST JOHN FISHER

BY LIAM GIBSON

On the morning of Tuesday, 22 June 1535, John Cardinal Fisher was taken from his prison cell and beheaded. His naked body was left on the scaffold all day. Towards night, two soldiers carried it away on pikes and tumbled it into a rough grave. His head was placed on a spike above London Bridge but was soon removed owing to the veneration of the people.

During his life, St John Fisher was recognised as the holiest bishop in England and one of the wisest in Christendom. Had his example been followed, England might have led the Counter-Reformation. Instead, in the country known as Mary's Dowry, images of Our Lady were burned, shrines desecrated and countless souls led into schism and heresy.

In 1504, Fisher succeeded to the See of Rochester – the poorest diocese in England. Only 35, he was known for his “singular virtue” and his academic brilliance.

The role of bishop weighed heavily with Fisher. In a sermon on Psalm 50, he wrote: “...the office of doctor or teacher of God's laws is no small charge. It is a great jeopardy, where I myself remembering the same am often afraid, for many times I think upon St Paul saying ‘If I teach not the law of God onto the people I shall be damned.’”¹

Fisher was tireless in administering the sacraments, instructing the ignorant and working to relieve poverty. He rooted out heresy and corruption in the priesthood.

The same year he became a bishop, Fisher was made Chancellor of Cambridge University and togeth-

er with Lady Margaret Beaufort, Henry VII's mother, began its revival as a place of Christian learning. He oversaw construction of Christ College and in St John's College. He pre-empted the seminaries established after the Council of Trent. From Cambridge, Fisher set about evangelising the poor by persuading Lady Margaret to pay for preachers to travel throughout England teaching the Faith.

Writing of the saint Butler observes: “...had Fisher's timely warning on the subject been attended to, it seems not unlikely that even Henry VIII and his Sejanus, Cromwell, would have been unable to wrest the nation from the faith of its forefathers.”²

As Martin Luther's heresies began to spread, Fisher's response was simple and direct, despite his immense learning. In many ways, Fisher was Luther's antithesis.

- Where Luther was vulgar and vitriolic, Fisher based his arguments on scripture and Patristics without resorting to abuse.
- When Luther denounced the Pope as the Antichrist, Fisher recognised the divine origin of the papacy yet distinguished between the office and the man who occupied it.
- While Luther saw marriage as a mere civil institution,³ Fisher would lay down his life for the indissolubility of the sacrament.

And it was Fisher's defence of Queen Catherine's marriage to Henry VIII that earned the enmity of the King. While imprisoned in the Tower of London, Fisher was made a car-



ST JOHN FISHER

dinal. On hearing the news Henry raged:

“Well, let the pope send him a hat when he will, but I shall so provide that whensoever it cometh, he shall wear it on his shoulders, for head shall he have none to set it on.”⁴

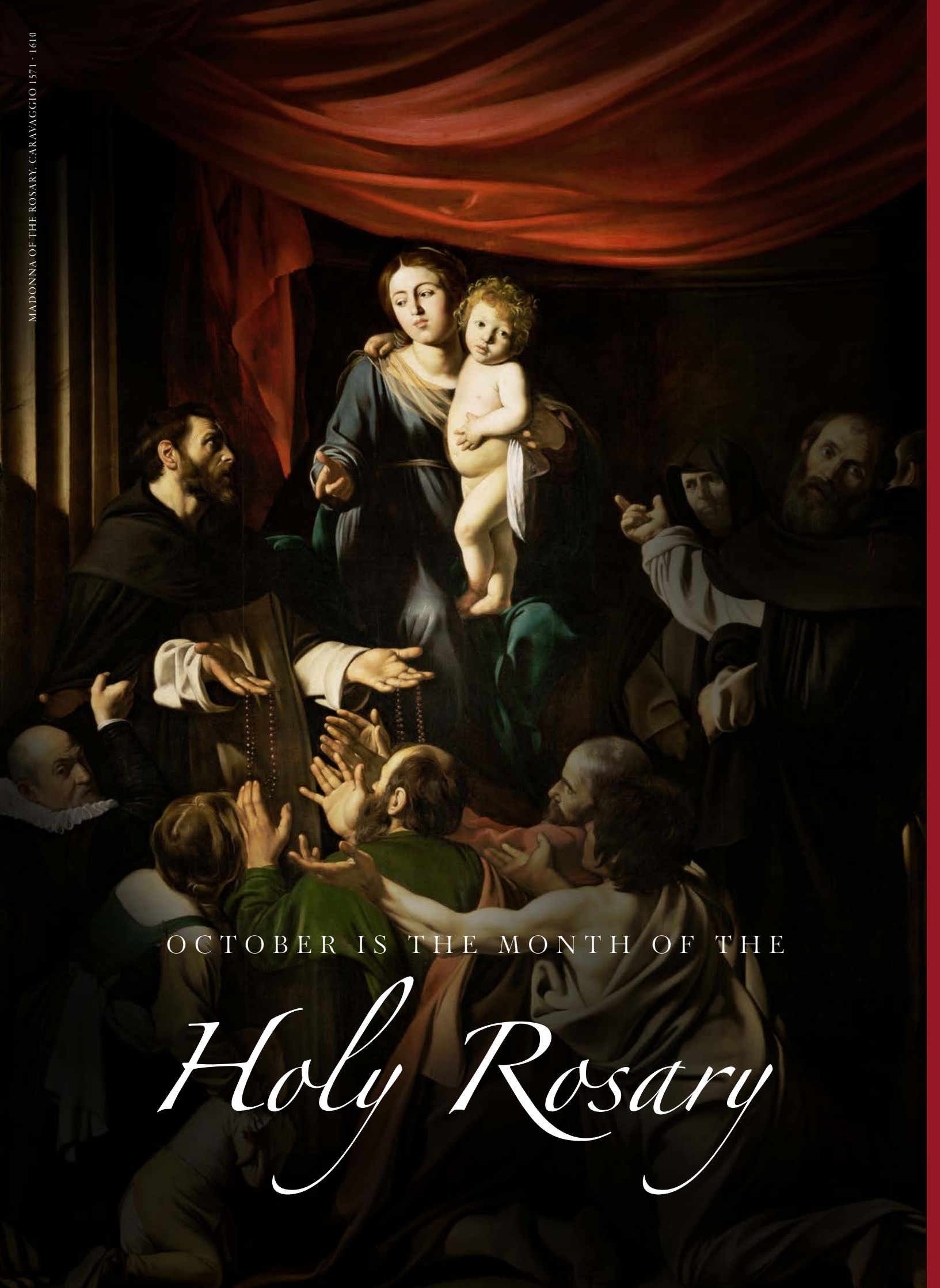
Condemned to be hung, drawn and quartered, it was feared that Fisher, now frail, would not survive being dragged on a hurdle to the scaffold. The sentence, therefore, was commuted to beheading. Nevertheless, his execution shocked the people.

In an era when the pope lionises Luther, when bishops fail to defend marriage, promote heresy and cover-up corruption, men of the stature of John, Cardinal Fisher are needed more than ever.

St John Fisher, pray for us! ✚

ENDNOTES:

1. St John Fisher, *Exposition of the Seven Penitential Psalms*, (Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1998) p126-27
2. Alban Butler, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*, vol V, (Virtue, London, 1936) p293
3. Luther even condoned bigamy. Philipp, Landgrave of Hesse, was still married to Catherine, daughter of Duke George of Ernestine Saxony when, in 1539, Luther gave him permission to take the 17-year old Margaret von der Saale as an additional wife.
4. Butler p298



OCTOBER IS THE MONTH OF THE

Holy Rosary

THE 15 PROMISES OF OUR LADY
MADE TO ST DOMINIC AND BL. ALAN DE LA ROCHE

1. To all those who shall recite my Rosary devoutly, I promise my special protection and very great graces.
2. Those who shall persevere in the recitation of my Rosary shall receive some signal grace.
3. The Rosary shall be a very powerful armour against hell; it will destroy vice, deliver from sin, and dispel heresy.
4. The Rosary will make virtue and good works flourish, and will obtain for souls the most abundant divine mercies; it will substitute in hearts love of God for love of the world, and will lift them to the desire of heavenly and eternal things. How many souls shall sanctify themselves by this means!
5. Those who trust themselves to me through the Rosary, shall not perish.
6. Those who shall recite my Rosary devoutly, meditating on its mysteries, shall not be overwhelmed by misfortune. The sinner shall be converted; the just shall grow in grace and become worthy of eternal life.
7. Those truly devoted to my Rosary shall not die without the Sacraments of the Church.
8. Those who recite my Rosary shall find during their life and at their death the light of God, the fullness of His graces, and shall share in the merits of the blessed.
9. I shall deliver very promptly from purgatory the souls devoted to my Rosary.
10. The true children of my Rosary shall enjoy great glory in heaven.
11. What you ask through my Rosary, you shall obtain.
12. Those who propagate my Rosary shall be aided by me in all their necessities.
13. I have obtained from my Son that all the members of the Rosary Confraternity shall have for their brethren the saints of heaven during their life and at the hour of death.
14. Those who recite my Rosary faithfully are all my beloved children, the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.
15. Devotion to my Rosary is a great sign of predestination.

QUEEN OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY, PRAY FOR US!



REVERENCE FOR LIFE VS THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS: *Two paintings of Giotto*

BY DR PETER KWASNIEWSKI

Giotto di Bondone (ca. 1267–1337) holds a front rank among the great painters of the Western tradition. Giotto's work shows a mastery of form, colour, volume, spatial arrangement, dramatic appeal, emotional expressiveness, and spiritual depth. Although his influences are obvious (e.g., Cimabue and the Assisi circle), the alchemy he performs with them is, like Suger's St. Denis in Paris, a miracle of transformation.

Giotto and Fra Angelico are often mentioned in the same breath as artists in whom one sees a marvelous confluence of medieval luminosity, Byzantine formalism, and a new awareness of naturalism and perspective. The resulting whole is greater than the mere sum of its parts. Giotto's work stands poised at a magical moment when the naïve innocence of medieval art and the stable, hieratic framework of the icon are still the order of the day, but when artists have acquired a new eye for shading, nuance of brushstroke, and depth of human psychology.



In the image above, a detail from one of the many scenes painted on the walls of the Scrovegni or Arena

Chapel in Padua, we see Our Lady holding the Christchild with tender love and reverent awe. Her serene face tells us that she has not suffered the pains of childbirth, while the bright eyes of her Son and His preternaturally upright head tell us that He is no ordinary mortal boy, but the Promised One who fully knows Who He is, whence He has come, and whither He goes. As in Byzantine icons, He is wrapped in swaddling clothes that hauntingly suggest burial linens; He is about to be placed in a manger that anticipates His tomb.

The Virgin's almond eyes burn with the fervour of her adoration and love, as if she could not possibly get enough of the sight of her Child's countenance. The maid assisting her, though less intense and more intent on serving, is ineluctably caught up in the same wonder, the joy that keeps silence because no words are adequate to the Word made flesh. Even the dumb ox, symbol of the lower creation in its brute force, seems to take its cue from the Virgin and turns into a contemplative, pleased to be an animal-in-waiting at the humble court of the Lamb of God.

What a contrast with another wall painting from the same chapel, this one depicting the slaughter of the Holy Innocents! Here, Giotto exploits the new sense of depth, bright colours, and emotional drama to pull his viewer into the horror of barbaric bloodshed. Herod stands above the very scene and commands the evil with full premeditation. His soldiers, large, clumsy, brutish, scarcely human, seek out, clutch, and butcher

the children, casting their dead bodies into a mounting heap of sorrow, the future of the town laid waste. Mothers in tight formation struggle to escape, weep in helplessness, and surrender to their anguish. Their children have been torn from their bosoms, torn almost from their wombs.



The dignity of the boys is revealed in their nobly chiseled and highly individual features, reminding us that there is no such thing as a generic human being: each person is unique, made in the image of God, able to be remade in the image of Christ.

These particular boys, circumcised Hebrews of about the same age as the Christchild, are venerated by the Catholic Church as martyrs who died in His place and for His sake.

Giotto brings out all these aspects of the story and more, with an obvious understanding of and sympathy with the biblical story and the Church's faith. This is what an artistic genius can do; this is what a great Catholic painter does. ✚

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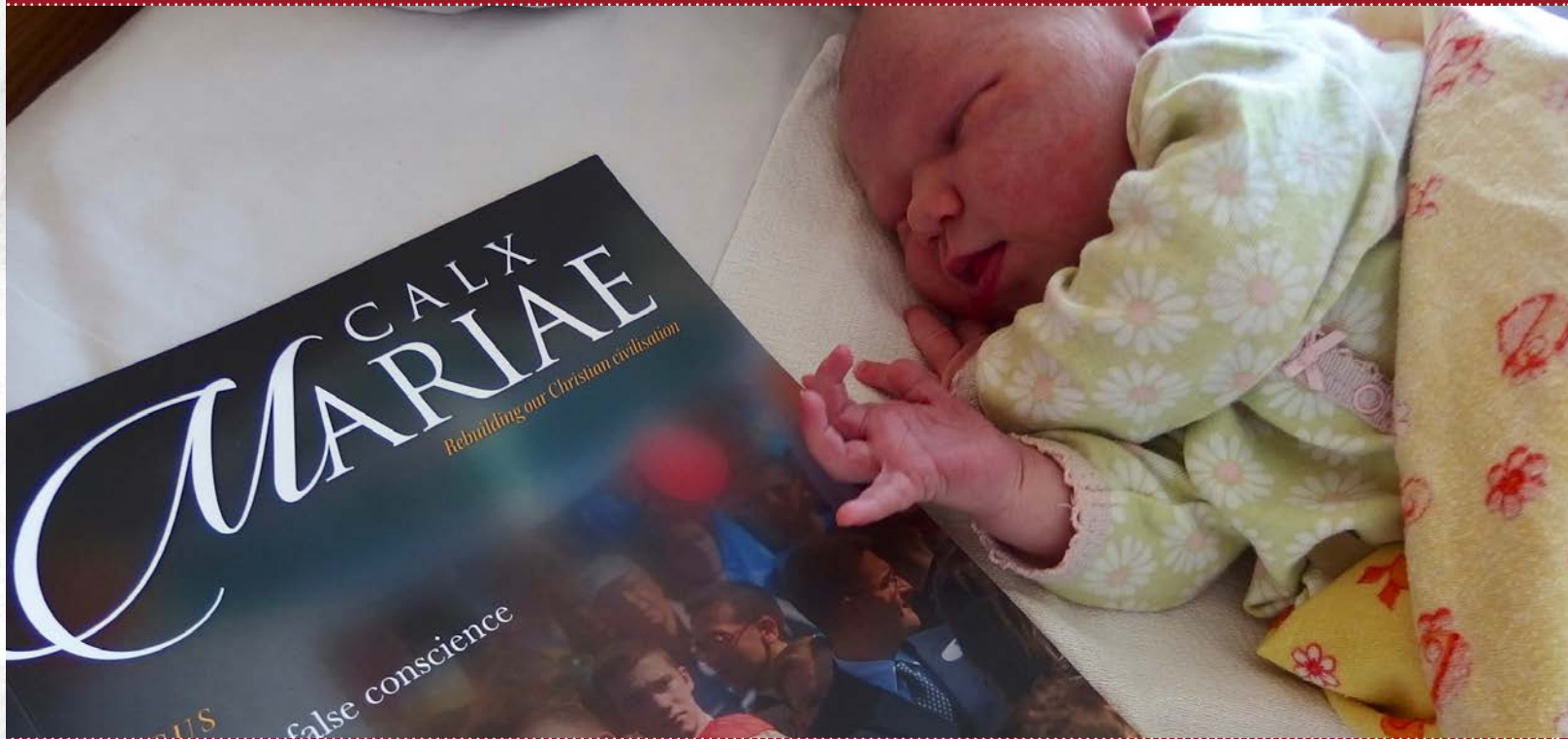
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It is my pleasure to welcome Voice of the Family's new magazine, Calx Mariae. Its title, with its allusion to the protoevangelium (Gen 3:15), should remind us that the Holy Virgin's victory over our ancient enemy is already assured. I hope that its presentation of the beauty of Catholic teaching will contribute to the rebuilding of Christian civilisation. I pray that its content will help all those who read it to draw ever closer to our Blessed Mother at this time of trial for the Church - like St John, those who remain close to her will not abandon the Lord.

I would encourage readers to assist this wonderful apostolate with their prayers and generous support.

Bishop Athanasius Schneider O.R.C.



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This project is entirely funded by voluntary donations.

If you would like to help us publish future editions of Calx Mariae please consider making a donation using the form on page 55.

May God bless you for your support!



“...she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel” (Gen 3:15)