

Birth Control Rejected In Pope's Encyclical

(National Catholic News Service)

VATICAN CITY — Pope Paul VI has confirmed the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church of family regulation and has reaffirmed the rejection of every form of artificial birth control.

In an encyclical entitled "Humanae Vitae," from the two Latin opening words, meaning "Of Human Life," Pope Paul insisted on the firmness of natural law that "each of every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life."

Though not specifically mentioned, the use of the "pill" to avoid pregnancy is excluded by the papal document, according to Msgr. Fernando Lambertucci of Rome's Laval University, who presented the encyclical at a press conference at the Vatican press hall.

POPE PAUL acknowledged that "it can be foreseen that this teaching will perhaps not be easily received by all. Too numerous are those who are tempted by modern means of propaganda which are contrary to the precept of the church."

However, he asserted, "To tell the truth, the church is not surprised to be called, as her Divine Founder, a sign of contradiction, yet because of this she does not cease to proclaim with humble firmness the entire moral law, both natural and evangelical."

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who has made so many advances in dominating and organizing natural forces now "tends to extend his dominion to his own total being: to the body, to physical life, to social life and even to the laws which regulate the transmission of life."

THE QUESTION asked today, the encyclical stated, is "whether, in view of the increased sense of responsibility of modern man, the moment has not come for him to entrust to his reason and his will, rather than to the biological rhythms of his organism, the task of regulating birth."

Before giving his answer, the Pope paused to point out that he was speaking out on the subject by virtue of the power entrusted by Christ to Peter and the Apostles and their successors.

When Christ entrusted the church to these, Pope Paul said, "He constituted them as guardians and authentic interpreters of all the moral law, not only that is, of the law of the Gospel but also of the natural law, which is also an expression of the will of God, the faithful fulfillment of which is equally necessary for salvation."

In drawing up his answer, the Pope acknowledged the work of the special commission established by Pope John XXIII in 1963 and later expanded by Pope Paul, as well as the views

sent "by a good number of our brother bishops."

He noted, however, that the conclusions of the commission did not "dispense us from a personal examination of this serious question," since the commission was not in full agreement on various points.

The Pope stressed that there are two inseparable aspects in the conjugal act, union and procreation. While not "every conjugal act is followed by a new life... nonetheless the church, calling men back to the observance of the norms of the natural law, as interpreted by her constant doctrine, teaches that each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life.

The LETTER begins with the statement: "The most serious duty of transmitting human life, for which married persons are the free and responsible collaborators of God the Creator, has always been a source of great joy to them, even if sometimes accompanied by not a few difficulties and by distress."

The letter took brief note of various problems which have even advanced those who support artificial birth control methods. Among them, the Pope noted the world population, which, he said, is "growing more rapidly than the available resources, with growing distress to many families and developing countries."

He also referred to arguments regarding the need to better educate children today and the change that has come about in woman's place in modern society and lastly that man

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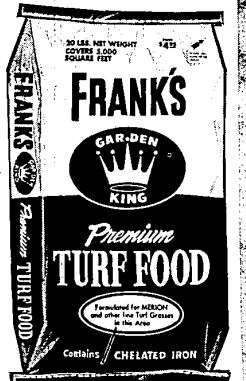
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