

HOMILY—Feast of the Holy Family & Contraception
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

In the beginning, there were only Adam and Eve, yet at that time, God was already establishing human institutions. The Book of Genesis tells us about the oldest institution on the face of the earth, the institution of marriage. Because marriage, as the primordial institution, was thus, the basis of all human society, Satan has always been trying to destroy it. Throughout history, men and women, who have become dissatisfied with the partner with whom they have been joined in “one flesh,” have resorted to adultery, polygamy and divorce. Even God’s own Chosen People resorted to divorce out of the hardness of their hearts. But Jesus rebuked the Pharisees by saying that in the beginning it was not so. “They are not longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.”¹

And just as God gave life to Eve because “it was not good for the man to be alone,”² He also gave both of them united in “one flesh” the capability to bring new life into being in order to be fruitful and multiply. But Satan has been always trying to frustrate that too, even in the most subtle of ways. When Jesus’ disciples tried to keep children away from Him, He the author of life Himself, became indignant, saying, “Let the children come to me.”³ Instead of thinking the children a nuisance, Jesus “embraced them and blessed them.”⁴ But so many of the people in our present culture consider children a nuisance and a danger to the planet.

In the newly gentrified neighborhood around St. John Cantius Church one rarely hears the voices of children and we sometimes joke that the typical household there consists of: two young professionals, a dog and no children. In the beginning, God created all of the wild animals and brought them to the first man, but found that among

them “there was not found a helper fit for him.”⁵ Somehow our crazy world has turned this all on its head. Instead of children, people now prefer dogs and cats.

Attacks against marriage and the family have always been a particularly effective tool of the Devil to break down morality, destroy cultures and lead people down the path to a multitude of sins that will ultimately land them in hell. We are now in the midst of one of the greatest attacks against marriage and the family that the Devil has launched against mankind and large numbers of people are unwitting collaborators in his campaign. His assault is tearing at the very fabric of society and is playing a major role in to the destruction of our entire western civilization. One of the primary elements of his campaign is contraception.

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta once said that abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace today,⁶ but it is only because of contraception that it became widespread and socially acceptable. With the acceptance of contraception came the mentality that pregnancies were “accidents” and if pregnancies were “accidents,” then the resulting child was not a gift from God, but an “accident” that needed to be corrected. “Unwanted” children became “problems” and abortion was the backup contraception that solved the “problem,” which the initial contraception didn’t prevent. By turning children into “problems” contraception has, therefore, become one of the most accepted but most insidious attacks of Satan against marriage, against the family and against life.

But contraception doesn’t merely regulate births. It doesn’t just prevent the conception of a child. It often eliminates new living members of the family by ensuring that a newly conceived child cannot implant itself in the wall of the womb. The effect is an abortion. Millions of children are eliminated from families in this manner and the parents are not even aware of it. Contraception is an attack on the family by getting rid of

its members. But in the beginning, God said to Adam and Eve: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.” Contraception is in direct violation of God’s mandate to man.

Contraceptives are also one of the leading causes of broken marriages in a country where the divorce rate is well over 50%. It creates a mentality that sex is only about personal pleasure—a form of recreation—and when this happens people begin to see their spouses as objects for the satisfaction of their own physical desires. Men begin to lose respect for women because women become “a mere instrument for the satisfaction of [a man’s] own desires, no longer considering her as his partner whom he should surround with care and affection.”⁷ Instead of liberating women, contraception has actually led to their exploitation by releasing men, to a degree unprecedented in the history of mankind, from any responsibility for their sexual aggression.⁸ Contraception leads to selfishness and this destroys families because couples who split the two essential aspects of the marital act—loving unity and procreation—are the ones most likely to see their marriages fail. God designed physical spousal love to renew and strengthen the marriage covenant but contraception weakens it without the couple even realizing the damage that is taking place within their marriage. This damage will ultimately also damage their family.

In fact, contraception has paved the way for all of the other sexual ills of our time, which have had a devastating effect on families. Remember, that it was contraception that made the sexual revolution of the sixties possible. Its claim of casual sex without responsibility was a myth. Contraception opened the Pandora’s Box, which led to widespread promiscuity, broken families, unwed mothers, child abuse, adultery, divorce and remarriage (which is merely socially acceptable serial adultery), sexually transmitted diseases, pornography of epidemic proportions, as well as our entire culture of hedonism.

Contraception is even at the root of same-sex unions because if all of the other attacks against marriage and the family become socially acceptable, then why not this?

When Pope Paul VI spoke up about contraception in 1968 in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, it fell upon deaf ears, both among the laity, as well as much of the clergy, but all of his predictions about the evils contraception would unleash if it became socially acceptable have come true.⁹ Every single one of them. Despite the Church's infallible teaching that it is a grave sin, Catholics as a whole statistically contracept at a rate similar to the general population. Priests have even encouraged married couples to contracept by telling them that it is a matter dictated by their own personal consciences and if they feel that they need to resort to contraception, then it is acceptable. But in the end, what's wrong is wrong. Throughout Her entire 2,000 year history, the Church has always condemned contraception as a grave sin, while giving married couples other acceptable and moral means to regulate births. Unfortunately, many Catholics don't even know this. The others just don't care.

Contraception is not an issue of freedom of conscience and the right to privacy. It is something directly contrary to the law of God. And those who publicly oppose the Church's teaching on this matter are, therefore, merely unwitting spokesmen for the Devil. Satan has always tried to wreak his destruction by striking at the most fundamental, stable and necessary institution created by God—the family. Contraception is not a harmless method for the regulation of births. It is a direct assault against the family and until we come to grips with its seriousness, we will not see an end to abortion or the host of other problems that now confront us.

¹ Mark 10:8-9.

² Genesis 2:18.

³ Mark 10:14.

⁴ Mark 10:16.

⁵ Genesis 2:20.

⁶ Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Nobel Lecture, 11 December, 1979.

⁷ *Humanae Vitae*.

⁸ Chaput, Archbishop Charles J., O.F.M. Pastoral Letter "Paul VI was right," 22 July 1998.

⁹ *Ibid.*