

**JAHLF Conference  
Rome – May 21, 2018**

**John-Henry Westen**

**The aftermath of the rejection of God's command to be fruitful and multiply**

Many parents of large families are criticized publicly both in demeaning jokes and public admonishments for having too many children. Often these public criticisms come from women, and I believe it is related to guilt.

That guilt is present because it is not only divine but natural law which recognizes in the heart of man that the primary end of marriage is the begetting of children.

Guilt, when it doesn't lead to repentance and reformation leads to condemnation of those who live according to divine and natural law. Those who obey the law are a living witness to the truth and thus a reproach without words to those who flout the law of God.

In the Apocalypse Ch. 11 we read of the two witnesses:

*"After they finish their witness for some three years the Anti-Christ kills them. 8And their bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city, ... and they of the tribes, and peoples, and tongues, and nations, shall see their bodies for three days and a half: and they shall not allow their bodies to be buried. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over their deaths, and make merry: and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt upon the earth."*

Mothers and Fathers of large families should not wonder why they receive such animosity from some quarters for their mere presence. They are walking billboards of openness to life which torment the consciences of those who reject God's blessing and command to be fruitful and multiply.

It was indeed the very first command God gave to man at his creation.

In Genesis 1:28 we read: "And God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth."

God is the author of life. As the Scriptures teach, He "opens the womb."

*Joshua 24:3-4: "Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac; and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. ..."*

*Ruth 4:13: "So Bo'az took Ruth and she became his wife; ... and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son."*

As every Christian pro-lifer knows, Scripture describes God as the primary creator: "Thy hands fashioned and made me" (Job 10:8); "... the LORD who made you, who formed you from the womb ..." (Is 44:2; cf. 44:24).

This constant teaching of the Church is what led to one of the greatest compliments to motherhood ever penned. Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty, the great apostle against communism wrote:

*"The most important person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral—a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body. Even the angels have not been given such a grace! What is more glorious than this: to be a mother."*

Man looks for various goods happiness, peace, joy, fulfillment, friendship, kinship, intimacy, freedom from poverty, and health.

But the rejection of God's first command to mankind results in the loss of all of these goods, just as the result of the first sin by our parents resulted in the loss of the garden of Paradise.

It was the first command and blessing. It was repeated after the flood to Noah and his children. It was the constant blessing for the ancient Jews.

The Holy Bible indicates that God hates contraception. As the encyclical *Casti Connubi* says, God "regards with greatest detestation this horrible crime and at times has punished it with death. As St. Augustine notes, "Intercourse even with one's legitimate wife is unlawful and wicked where the conception of the offspring is prevented. Onan, the son of Juda, did this and the Lord killed him for it."

The rejection of God's command to be fruitful and multiply in our current age can be seen as the heart of the attack on marriage and the family. The late Cardinal Caffarra revealed at our Rome Life Forum last year that this attack is the fulfillment of Our Lady of Fatima's prophecy of the "final battle between Our Lord and the Reign of Satan".

The most significant decline in the birth rate did not begin as most think in the 60s, the decent began in 1930 with the promotion of the condom. It was the precursor to the sexual revolution, which was given the definitive spark with the pill. And it was directly correlated with a unprecedented rise in divorce rates.

*Humanae Vitae* warned of many of the consequences of the acceptance of contraception in ways which make it look like a prophetic document today.

The encyclical warned of four resulting trends: 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.

A general lowering of moral standards is painfully obvious today.

Pope Paul VI warned: "Another effect that gives cause for alarm is that a man who grows accustomed to the use of contraceptive methods may forget the reverence due to a woman, and, disregarding her physical and emotional equilibrium, reduce her to being a mere instrument for the satisfaction of his own desires..."

You often hear that 'it's not so bad now, things were worse in the past.' Empirically however, that is not true.

There are more people who view pornography on TV, the internet and movies today than there were people alive in 1917 when Our Lady warned that more people go to hell for sins of the flesh than any other reason.

Despite the claims of Planned Parenthood, consistent findings over the last three decades show that contraception increases rather than decreases abortion. And there are more deaths by abortion in the last 50 years than deaths by war in the history of the world.

And for the proof of Pope Paul VI's prediction on the coercive use of reproductive technology by governments I will quote from a recent April 18 article in the extremely liberal Washington Post.

**Washington Post, April 18, 2018:**

*Nothing like this has happened in human history. A combination of cultural preferences, government decree and modern medical technology in the world's two largest countries has created a gender imbalance on a continental scale. Men outnumber women by 70 million in China and India.*

*The consequences of having too many men, now coming of age, are far-reaching: Beyond an epidemic of loneliness, the imbalance distorts labor markets, drives up savings rates in China and drives down consumption, artificially inflates certain property values, and parallels increases in violent crime, trafficking or prostitution in a growing number of locations.*

*Those consequences are not confined to China and India, but reach deep into their Asian neighbors and distort the economies of Europe and the Americas, as well. Barely recognized, the ramifications of too many men are only starting to come into sight.*

*"In the future, there will be millions of men who can't marry, and that could pose a very big risk to society," warns Li Shuzhuo, a leading demographer at Xi'an Jiaotong University.*

*Out of China's population of 1.4 billion, there are nearly 34 million more males than females — the equivalent of almost the entire population of California, or Poland, who will never find wives and only rarely have sex."*

In India the problem is worse with an excess of 37 million males. It is the same as the whole population of Canada, all men, with no women at all.

If you're wonder how the liberal Washington Post got away with writing such a thing, it was the headline "TOO MANY MEN".

Even apart from the warnings of Humanae Vitae, the aftermath of contraception's proliferation are devastating.

The side effects of contraception are today well known.

Hormonal contraception increases users' risk of blood clots, hair loss, brain shrinkage, hardening of the arteries, weight gain, decreased libido, and negative effects on mood, self-control, and energy level and increased infertility. There is an increased suicide risk, and cervical cancer risk, and of course a recognized increased risk of breast cancer.

One of the less obvious effects is loneliness

The German newsmagazine Der Spiegel reported that gerontology researchers have linked the epidemic of loneliness among the elderly to a contraceptive mentality:

"...the fact that more and more people are opting not to have children threatens to worsen the isolation experienced by older people. Indeed, childlessness significantly increases the risk of loneliness." [German Center of Gerontology] director Clemens Tesch-Römer.

In Germany over 20% of people aged over 70 have regular contact with only one person or none. Over two million Germans aged over 80 live alone. "One in four receives a visit less than once a month from friends and acquaintances, and nearly one in 10 is not visited by anyone anymore," Der Spiegel reported in 2013.

According to the New York Times, four thousand elderly Japanese now die alone every week. Every year there are news stories in Japan of people who die alone in their homes. Often their deaths go unnoticed and unremarked for weeks or months, rent and utility payments silently flowing out of the deceased's bank accounts, until finally neighbors complain about a bad smell.

There is now a Japanese business whose business is to clean apartments after the corpses of "lonelies" are discovered in them.

In Britain the issue of loneliness is so serious, said to affect nine million people in the UK, that the government has appointed a Minister for loneliness.

### **Islamic take over**

"If you want to see the face of Europe in 100 years, barring a miracle, look to the faces of young Muslim immigrants." Thus said Philadelphia Archbishop Charles Chaput at a 2017 Napa Institute conference.

"Islam has a future because Islam believes in children," he said.

Writer William Kilpatrick points out that a number of observers of the European sceneproject that large parts of Europe will be Islamic already within three or four decades. "And if you were to wander by mistake into the no-go zones that surround Paris, you would think that the "faces of young Muslim immigrants" is already the face of Europe," he said.

### **Same Sex 'Marriage'**

The main argument behind the U.S. Supreme Court 2015 decision that legalized same-sex "marriage."

Claiming that the institution of marriage has "evolved over time," Justice Kennedy wrote that the essence of the marital bond is a sharing of intimacy, which does not require partners of opposite sexes. He argued that the plaintiffs in the Obergefell case were not undermining the institution of marriage, but showing their respect for that institution by seeking to participate in it.

Justice Kennedy explicitly rejected the notion that marriage is intrinsically oriented to procreation, writing: "An ability, desire, or promise to procreate is not and has not been a prerequisite for a valid marriage in any state." With the stress on the end or good of union, we are seeing these sorts of results, so it only confirms me in stressing the procreative end as the proprium of marriage.

### **Killing businesses**

The famous USA Toys "R" Us' company announced this year that it will be closing all its stores.

They explained in a recent filing: "Most of our end-customers are newborns and children," and "as a result, our revenues are dependent on the birth rates in countries where we operate."

In that same filing, Toys "R" Us continued: "In recent years, many countries' birth rates have dropped or stagnated...A continued and significant decline in the number of newborns and children in these countries could have a material adverse effect on our operating results."

But in the case of Toy's R Us it seems a poetic justice. For years, Toys "R" Us donated to Planned Parenthood -- they were literally donating money to put themselves out of business.

In the USA Planned Parenthood alone kills some 300,000 of Toys "R" Us' own target demographic.

### **The worst sign is the damage in the Church**

Since shortly after the election of Pope Francis there has been a steady stream of population control pushers speaking at the Vatican including even Paul Ehrlich, the father of the population control movement. The head of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Sciences, Bishop Marcelo Sorondo, who ran most of those conferences, is himself a population control advocate saying on camera at one such Vatican conference that limiting births was an obligation of the Church.

Pope Francis himself, on January 19, 2015 while speaking of "responsible" parenthood, cautioned against Catholics being "like rabbits."

Moreover, when Pope Francis was asked about "avoiding pregnancy" in areas at risk of Zika virus transmission, he said unlike abortion "On the other hand, avoiding pregnancy is not an absolute evil." "In certain cases, as in this one, (Zika) it was clear," he said. Asked for clarification,

the Vatican confirmed that Pope Francis was approving use of contraceptives and condoms in grave cases.

### **Condemnation of Lambeth**

Compare that to the strength of the Catholic Church's response when the Anglican Church at the Lambeth conference gave a very tentative and shy approval to contraception.

When the Anglicans first approved of contraception in 1930 at the Lambeth Conference, it was done with words and sentiments very similar to the justifications for second marriage (without annulment) provided in *Amoris Laetitia*.

At Lambeth, the Anglican leadership didn't just plainly say contraception was now permitted. They pointed to hard cases and employed many heart-rending justifications to get to what was the first breach against openness to life in the Christian world.

"Where there is clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, the method must be decided on Christian principles," said the Lambeth resolution.

It continued:

*"The primary and obvious method is complete abstinence from intercourse (as far as may be necessary) in a life of discipline and self-control lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless in those cases where there is such a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, and where there is a morally sound reason for avoiding complete abstinence, the Conference agrees that other methods may be used, provided that this is done in the light of the same Christian principles. The Conference records its strong condemnation of the use of any methods of conception control from motives of selfishness, luxury, or mere convenience."*

Despite all of the Christian-sounding justifications presented at the Lambeth Conference, the Catholic Church at the time pronounced its judgment on the Anglican decision in Pope Pius XI's encyclical *CastiConnubii*.

Pope Pius XI lambasted the Lambeth Conference approval of contraception. Even though he didn't name the Anglicans he made it eminently clear to whom he was referring.

In paragraph 56 of *CastiConnubii*, the Pope described the Lambeth decision as "openly departing from the uninterrupted Christian tradition" for "another doctrine" which constitutes "moral ruin."

The decision "defiled" the chastity of marriage with a "foul stain," he said.

Pope Pius' conclusion on this point bears repeating for all of us to hear, even more urgently than was necessary in his own time.

He said: *"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."*

## **Conclusion**

Finally, with our anti-natalist culture we are also depriving young married couples of the few years they have to beget children. That short space of some twenty years flies by -- as we know once we reach middle age. So many young people realize today only after it is too late the joy of having children, of having many children.

God is indeed the author of life. It is indeed a command to be fruitful and multiply. It is also a blessing.