

Why is Contraception a sin?
Written by Rev. H.T. Burke

In July of 1968, Pope Paul VI issued a very important letter: "Humanae Vitae"(latin for Human Life). How many Catholics today know, love, live, and teach others it's truths? The New Universal Catechism calls contraception "intrinsically evil"(p.570) Contraception is against life. It goes against the natural design of God for sexuality, changing it into something it was never intended to be. God created sexuality to be life-giving, contraception makes it an act against life. It separates the two goods of marriage, life (procreation) and love (union), in an unnatural way going against the design of the Creator for sex. It is a sin against God because the sacred power of creating new life is shared by God with man through sexuality, and man does not have a right to engage the powers of sexuality in such a way that they are unnaturally against life, since they were designed by God to be for life. "What God has joined together men must not separate"Mt.19:6. This applies not only to marriage, but to the marital act. Contraception goes against the natural law given by God for the use of sexuality. Contraception was the sin of Onan(Gen.38:8-10) and God slew him because of it. Some have argued that onan was slain by God because he did not have children for his brother, but this contradicts the punishment given in Deut.25:5-10 which is much less than death. Catholics who wish to limit the number of children for serious reasons, can use Natural Family Planning. It involves a few days(7-12) of abstinence(1Cor.7:5), but it is safe(unlike the pill), and 99% effective. The new sympto-thermal method is different from the old calendar rhythm method and is much more accurate. For information write: The Couple to Couple League International, Inc. P.O. Box 11184, Cincinnati, OH 45211-1184.(513-661-7612). The witness of the devil to the truth of Humanae Vitae is found in Planned Parenthood. We see that this organization which is devoted to promoting abortion for teenagers also specializes in promoting contraception to prevent pregnancy and help slow the spread of aids(and they fail on both counts!). This shows how clearly abortion and contraception are related in the anti-life mentality. Often the same arguments for contraception are used for abortion, and if contraception fails, abortion is the next option. Contraception encourages promiscuity and teaches teenagers that sex, though created by God for man and wife, can be made into a plaything without the responsibility of parenthood. Contraception divorces the natural link established by God between sexual union and having children. It turns sex into something it was never intended to be by the Creator. It perverts and debases the sacred union into a selfish act of gratification instead of a self-giving act of life and love, an act of giving of oneself to another in a way that allows for potential new life. Contraception is a rejection of God's will for the plan of marriage. In Gen.1:28 God blessed our first parentsthem and said, "Be fruitful and multiply." In Scripture we find children are always seen as a blessing, and barrenness is a stigma. Today's selfish culture sees barrenness as a blessing, and children as a stigma. To them God says, "Behold, sons are a gift from the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth. Happy the man whose quiver is filled with them; he shall not be put to shame when he disputes with his foes at the gate." Psalm 127:3-5.

One of the aspects of the evil of contraception that helped me understand the truth of the Church's teaching is how it works to distort and destroy a woman's body. Most contraceptives are for the woman. The pill has a huge list of harmful side effects, including the death of the woman in a small number of cases. If you have a pill, this can be confirmed by reading the lengthy small print that comes with the insert in the box. This is in addition to the fact that it works to prevent the implantation of a child in the woman shortly after it has been conceived, and can be washed out with her monthly cycle while it is too small to be noticed. Thus, only in the next life will we learn of how many children have been killed in the first days of their existence through the action of the pill.

Another method is called "Norplant", which involves a surgical insertion of six flexible rods into the arm of the woman. They are designed to slowly release chemicals into the woman's bloodstream to prevent pregnancy for up to five years. Nearly all of its users have experienced bad side effects forcing early removal in 20 percent for the first year alone. (See "A Hidden Side of Norplant" by Kristine M. Severyn, R. Ph., Ph.D. in "Celebrate Life" July 94) What are we doing to our women? Is nature and the God of nature trying to tell us something? Maybe a woman is supposed to be fertile? Maybe a married woman is supposed to have babies? (Contrary to the desire of some feminists, the age of the pregnant man is not on the horizon) Maybe we aren't suppose to put chemicals and devices into women to change the way God made them? Maybe God got it right the first time, and we don't need to re-design the female body? When we observe harmful side effects to a woman's body, chemically induced abortion to conceived children, and a scientific war against a woman's natural bodily functions, maybe we need to wake up and see the writing on the wall. Maybe we need to see the finger of God at work in creation. We need to see sex as something sacred that involves the creation of eternal life which we have no right as creatures to change. We do not have ultimate authority and domain over our bodies. Scripture says: "You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."(I Cor.6:20) The sacredness of the human body and the value of children is to be seen in the light of eternity, not just in terms of this world. The New Catechism says: "Let all be convinced that human life and the duty of transmitting it are not limited by the horizons of this life only: their true evaluation and full significance can be understood only in reference to man's eternal destiny ... Sacred scripture and the Church's traditional practice see in large families a sign of God's blessing and the parents' generosity." (p.570, 571) As Christ's disciples we are called to a life of self-denial, not self-indulgence. Christ said: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." (Lk.9:23) "Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, but lose his own soul? (Mt.16:25, 26) "Woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger." (Lk.6:24, 25) "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how can you escape being condemned to hell?" (Mt.23:33) "Oh unbelieving and perverse generation how long will I be with you and put up with you?"(Lk.9:41) Does it seem likely that the same Savior who said these words would also permit us to mutilate, manipulate, and change our bodies and His Divine design for marriage and sexuality with contraception? I don't think so.