

## **The Truth and Beauty of NFP**

(by Fr. Michael Freihofer)

Be open to what the Holy Spirit wants to teach you as you read this article [age 14-and-up]. All of us should be open to God's loving plan for our lives. The truth sets us free—not emotions. God teaches us in the Holy Scriptures that children are a blessing. Jesus, the head of our Church, teaches us through Sacred Tradition and the Magisterium (the Pope in union with the Bishops) that children are a blessing. Jesus teaches us that He wants to work with us and through us. We Catholic Christians are open to life. Sex is sacred and is reserved for those who are truly married (one man and one woman, as designed by God).

The marital embrace should always be open to life; this is why any form of masturbation is intrinsically wrong and selfish (we must pray to be chaste and confess our sins frequently). This week (July 21-27) our Church makes us aware of Natural Family Planning (NFP). NFP is a way to work with God and lovingly accept children. God is against any form of artificial birth control and sterilization. Artificial birth control and sterilization shut God out and lead to an anti-children, selfish-adult *mentality*.

In 1968, Pope Paul VI wrote *Humanae Vitae* (*Of Human Life*). Because of limited space, let's look at the consequences of a society that uses artificial birth control. Pope Paul VI was a prophet, as all of the following things have come to pass. Paragraph 17 of *Humanae Vitae* states:

*Responsible men can become more deeply convinced of the truth of the doctrine laid down by the Church on this issue if they reflect on the consequences of methods and plans for artificial birth control. Let them first consider how easily this experience is needed to be fully aware of human weakness and to understand that human beings - and especially the young, who are so exposed to temptation -- need incentives to keep the moral law, and it is an evil thing to make it easy for them to break that law. 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, no longer considering her as his partner whom he should surround with care and affection.*

Since the pill and other forms of artificial birth control came on the scene, divorce (~ 52% in the U.S.; 56% in Colorado), adultery, pre-marital sex, cohabitation, STDs, etc. have skyrocketed. The media is fairly quiet about the side-effects of chemical contraceptives. They can cause abortions; so can IUDs. Side effects from the chemicals include: breast cancer, cysts, migraines, strokes, irritability, depression, weight gain, and reduced libido.

Since sex is seen as primarily for pleasure, and not for procreation in God-based married life, our country has

developed a mentality of anything is “legal”: homosexual activity, transgender “rights,” and other so-called “alternative lifestyles.” Without respect for the Lord (see Proverbs 9:10), the list of sinful activities and confusion increases: LGBTQIA+. **[We have a prayer team and have prayed and walked with those who are confused.]** Also with a life of pleasure and comfort, men are no longer seen as spiritual leaders and defenders of the faith.

Our country seems to have a *mentality* of having two children and then “stopping.” We Catholics, on the other hand, pray to God and ask Him how many children He wants us to bring into His Kingdom. We let Him be our Lord and Master. The Church allows NFP as a way of spacing births. Many people are afraid of trying it; they think it is too hard or unreliable. We know that fear is behind every sin and that the Bible says not to be afraid 366 times. (God was prepared for leap year!)

There are many advantages to using NFP. Let's look briefly at the spiritual, physical, and relational aspects. Spiritually, NFP couples appreciate the wisdom of the Church and see a woman's fertility as a gift, and not as a disease or side-effect of sexuality. Also, they respect the truth of sexuality and the language of the body. Finally, they become cooperators and co-creators with God. Physically, NFP has no side effects. It is extremely reliable for preventing pregnancy (97-99%). Used with ecological breastfeeding, it promotes important bonding. Breastfeeding also reduces the chances of breast cancer. Relationally, very few NFP marriages end in divorce. It fosters communication and greater mutual respect and trust. Since the couple is working with God, they are open to “surprise” pregnancies. Periodic abstinence fosters self-mastery and generosity; it promotes self-esteem. For those who were chaste before marriage, it recalls the joy of courtship. Couples become better lovers, since the sexual act becomes more the result of choice than of an urgent need. In general, the NFP household is more tranquil, less materialistic, and is a good example to children.

My brothers and sisters, I encourage you to study the teachings of our Church on this issue and pray. God will give you the grace to practice NFP and appreciate it. I invite you to take Dr. Janet Smith's CD, *Contraception: Why Not?*, from the entryway CD racks and learn from it. Please, if you are afraid, don't “shoot the messenger” and “bad-mouth” God's Church. NFP is the teaching of Jesus through His representative, the Pope. It takes discipline to be a disciple of Christ.

Our Archdiocese is blessed. It has been teaching NFP to young couples preparing for marriage for over 20 years now. There are many NFP teachers throughout the state. To get more information and learn more about NFP, visit [www.ccli.org](http://www.ccli.org). Women, you can get great advice from [www.bellanwc.org](http://www.bellanwc.org). Also, you could leave a message for me, Fr. Michael, at the office and I will give you the names and numbers of persons who teach NFP within our territory and the Archdiocese.

## **The Truth about Human Reproductive Principles.** **Will You Follow Jesus and His Teachings?**

(by Fr. Michael Freihof; help from San Juan Catholic Seminars)

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus came to us out of love and set up a beautiful Church in order to distribute many invisible gifts of love, peace, healing, etc. He is the head of the Church (see Col 1:18). He set up the hierarchy and gave His disciples the authority to teach, preach, sanctify, and legislate (see Mt 28:18-20, Jn 20:23, Mt 18:17-18, and 1 Cor 11:23-24). In Luke 10:16, Jesus said to His closest disciples: “Whoever listens to you listens to Me. Whoever rejects you rejects Me. And whoever rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.” In John 14:15, Jesus also said: “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”

Jesus is serious about obedience. He gives us laws, precepts, and beatitudes to keep us happy. Unfortunately, today it is popular to rebel. The prevalent attitude is: “No one is going to tell me what to do.” Satan told Eve in Gen 3:5, “...you will become like gods.” Then Adam and Eve disobeyed God and became very unhappy. Disobedience becomes a curse.

The following short synopsis regarding human reproduction is taught to us through the Magisterium, the teaching authority of the Church. In 1987, the Vatican issued a document called *Donum Vitae* (= the gift of life). Because it may be difficult for the beginner to read, it is summarized into the concepts below. As stated above, Jesus speaks about faith and morals through the Magisterium, the pope in union with the bishops.

### **Basic Reproductive Principles from God, Given Through His Church**

- (1) Medicine and technology must respect the moral teaching of the Church. Not everything that is scientifically possible is morally allowable.
- (2) A child is a gift from God. Married couples do not have an absolute right to have a child. Married couples only have the right to the marital act that opens up the possibility of children if that is God’s will.
- (3) All of us are made in the image and likeness of God. All human life is sacred from the moment of conception because it involves the creative action of God. No one should kill innocent human life.
- (4) Sex is sacred and reserved for marriage between one man and one woman. In procreation, spouses cooperate with God who infuses a spiritual soul at the moment of conception. The marital act is procreative and unitive (“babies and bonding,” life-giving and love-giving). New life must be the product of the natural marital act between husband and wife. We humans are both physical and spiritual. Conjugal love is a human act where the physical procreative process expresses the

spiritual love between the spouses. Every child has the right to be brought into existence through a truly human or personal act.

(5) As soon as the male sperm has fertilized the ovum (female egg), a new life has begun; and any attempt on this life is murder. Although the laboratory production of human life is evil, the children that result are human beings made in God’s image and likeness, and have full human rights.

(6) Since this new life is from God and is sacred, this new human should not be treated as the object of an experiment or destroyed to obtain his/her cells.

(7) A child has the right to be conceived, nurtured in the womb, born, and raised within marriage by his/her parents. Parents must develop the child and affirm him/her as a prince or princess of the Lord.

### **Artificial Procreation (“Test-Tube Babies”) and Why It Is Wrong**

In-vitro (= in glass) fertilization (IVF) is the fertilization of an egg by a sperm in a petri dish. The test tube supplies the nutrition for the young human (embryonic stage of development) until it is transferred (embryonic transfer = ET) into the woman’s womb. Eggs are collected from the woman (this surgery is called laparoscopy) and sperm is collected through masturbation (disordered, sinful). Normally, many eggs are fertilized and the “healthiest one” is implanted in the woman’s womb; the rest are destroyed (which is abortion/murder). Cloning can create a human life. To keep it simple, in cloning scientists intervene by separating cells of an embryo, trying to create two different embryos with the same genetic information.

At this point, using the Catholic moral principles listed above, it should be obvious why IVF, ET and cloning go against God’s teaching. However, just in case, here are a few of the problems:

- (1) Ordinarily, IVF involves abortions, since unused embryos are destroyed.
- (2) IVF, ET, and cloning are dangerous experiments on the new human life. It was all about the uninformed decision or poor judgment of the parents and not about the rights of the child.
- (3) IVF and cloning excludes the unitive aspect of the marital act and it perverts the procreative aspect, since the egg and sperm are brought together without natural intercourse.
- (4) IVF and cloning violate the child’s right to be conceived naturally.

If you have been involved in IVF or ET or other grave sins, please see your priests ASAP. God’s greatest attribute is mercy. The truth will set you free; God will bless you. You can spread the message of His Kingdom.

## Real NFP Couples' Stories: Articles, Videos, Learn

NFP Visit: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/what-is-nfp/couples-stories/index.cfm>

## The Desire that All of Us Here be Saved

In **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**, through St. Paul God gives us a short list of sins to avoid in order to get to heaven. (He has other lists throughout his writings.) Here are the verses:

Do you not know that the unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor boy prostitutes nor sodomites [homosexual activity] nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. That is what some of you used to be; but now you have had yourselves washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

God gives us the grace to overcome any addiction, any sin. We need to have confidence in Him. We need the grace given from the Sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist. We need to develop a deep friendship and prayer life with Him. We need confidential friends who can talk and walk with us into holiness.

## To Develop Confidence in God, Surrender Daily

### Daily Prayer of Surrender

O God Almighty, King of the Universe, I love You, praise You, and adore You! I surrender to You today with all my heart and soul. I say "yes" to You this day. O Most Holy Trinity, You are the only God, the one true God. Father, You are my true Father. Thanks for giving me a biological father in order to bring me into this world to share in Your divine nature by Your gift of grace. Jesus, I believe in You and receive You as my Lord and Savior. I hold nothing back. Jesus, You have my permission to live in my heart. Conform my heart and mind into Yours; let me love and think as You do. Holy Spirit, bring me to a deeper conversion to the person of Jesus Christ. Help me follow Your daily promptings. Immerse me, Holy Spirit, and let Your gifts come alive in me. Almighty God, I surrender all to You: my health, family, resources, work, skills, relationships, time management, successes, failures, and regrets. I release all of these to You and let them go. I surrender my understanding of how things ought to be, my choices, and my will. I surrender to You the promises I have kept and the promises I have failed to keep. I surrender my fears, temptations, insecurities, and sexuality to You.

Men, pray: Jesus, help me to become a man like You—a man of action that builds up Your Kingdom and who is sexually pure. Women, pray: Jesus, help me to become a woman like Mary—the greatest role model of all Christians, perfectly receptive to You, and sexually pure.

I especially surrender [surrender other areas as the Holy Spirit reveals them to you]: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, etc.

Lord, I surrender my entire life to You—the past, the present, and the future. In sickness and in health, in life and in death, I belong to You alone! Almighty God, I offer up my body to You as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing. Amen.

## Second Collection for Poor Churches in Africa This Weekend at StA, StB, and OLS, July 20 – 21

### Future Church Celebrations with Meals after Mass

-July 27 (Sat), StA. Right after 5 p.m. Mass.

-July 31 (Wed), StI. Right after evening Mass.

-Aug 4 (Sun), OLS. Right after 9:30 a.m. Mass.

### Calendar of Events

**-Jul 27, 31; Aug 4.** Church celebrations.

**-Aug 4 (Sun).** First Sunday Rosary, donuts, OLS

### Mass Collections, July 13 – 14

St. Anne	\$ 3462
St. Bernard	2115
Our Lady of the Snow	4502
St. Peter	512
St. Ignatius	764
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11355</b>

### Vocations Prayer Calendar

*Please pray for our seminarians every day.*

**Sat**—Peter Tran & James Finders

**Sun**—Daniel Rivas & Blaise Buches

**Mon**—Christian Burns & Jose Delgado

**Tue**—Daniel Jordan & Daniel Kaelin

**Wed**—Christopher Mellen & Jun Pham

**Thu**—Jason DiRito & Amilcar Ramos

**Fri**—Men and women applying for formation

### Mass Intentions and Schedule for StA, StB, and OLS

**KEY:** StA = St. Anne; StB = St. Bernard;

OLS = Our Lady of the Snow

-Sat, Jul 20, StA, 5 p.m., Kedran Kugelka

-Sat, Jul 20, StB, 5:30 p.m., Timothy and Jodee Seitz

-Sun, Jul 21, StB, 7 a.m., People in our region/visitors

-Sun, Jul 21, OLS, 9:30 a.m., Margaret Ledezma

-Sun, Jul 21, StA, 12 noon, Jordan and Victoria Goray

### Weekday Masses

-Mon, Jul 22, StA, 8:30 a.m., Phil and Mandy Kao

-Tue, Jul 23, OLS, 7:30 a.m., Healing and reparation

-Tue, July 23, OLS, 9:30 a.m., **Traditional Latin Mass**

-Wed, Jul 24, StB, 8:30 a.m., Mark and Debbie Goulette

-**Thu**, Jul 25, **OLS**, 8:30 a.m., +George Kaplan

-**Fri**, Jul 26, **OLS**, 8:30 a.m., Tom Luby

### Mass Intentions and Schedule for StP and StI

**KEY:** StP = St. Peter; StI = St. Ignatius (Walden)

-Sun, Jul 21, StP, 10 a.m., Larry and Janice Gross

-Sun, Jul 21, StI, 1 p.m., People in our region/visitors