

The Truth and Beauty of NFP

(by Fr. Michael Freihofner)

I ask you [age 14 and above], as you read this, to be open to God's Spirit. If we think with the world (and our flesh and the devil), we will be closed and rigid. All of us should be flexible in the Holy Spirit and 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). [In my eleven-plus years as a priest, I have helped a number of people struggling with their identity—same-sex attraction—in various cities. I used to work with an AIDS/Hepatitis C support group. Many who were struggling were thankful for the help; they began to let Jesus “walk” with them.] 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 23-29) our Church celebrates Natural Family Planning (NFP) awareness. NFP is a way to work with God and lovingly accept children. God is against any form of artificial birth control and sterilization. Artificial methods of birth control 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.

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. I have to abstain everyday; it is difficult, but God gives me the grace to be celibate.

Our Archdiocese is blessed. It has been teaching NFP to young couples preparing for marriage for over 18 years now. There are many NFP teachers throughout the state. To get more information and learn more about NFP, visit www.ccli.org. Women, you can get great advice from 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 the Archdiocese.

Why Satan Is So Scared of St. John Paul II, According to Rome's Chief Exorcist

[This was originally published in 2011 from Catholic News Agency. Note: Fr. Amorth died in September 2016.]

The chief exorcist of Rome is seeing a rising number of young people coming under the influence of evil, but he has found in recent years that St. John Paul II is a powerful intercessor in the battle for souls.

A small, unassuming office in southwest Rome seems a rather ordinary setting in which to play out a grand battle between good and evil. It is here, though, that Father Gabriele Amorth has carried out most of his 70,000 exorcisms over the past 30 years.

The Ordinary & Extraordinary Powers of the Devil
“The world must know that Satan exists,” he told CNA in 2011. “The devil and demons are many and they have two powers, the ordinary and the extraordinary.”

The 86-year-old Italian priest of the Society of St. Paul and official exorcist for the Diocese of Rome explained the difference.

“The so-called ordinary power is that of tempting man to distance himself from God and take him to Hell. This action is exercised against all men and women of all places and religions.”

As for the extraordinary powers used by Satan, Fr. Amorth explained it as how the Devil acts when he focuses his attention more specifically on a person. He categorized the expression of that attention into four types: diabolical possession; diabolical vexation like in the case of Padre Pio, who was beaten by the Devil; obsessions which are able to lead a person to desperation and infestation, and when the Devil occupies a space, an animal or even an object.”

Fr. Amorth says such extraordinary occurrences are rare but on the rise. He's particularly worried by the number of young people being affected by Satan through sects, séances and drugs. He never despairs, though.

“With Jesus Christ and Mary, God has promised us that he will never allow temptations greater than our strengths.”

Hence he gives a very matter-of-fact guide that everybody can use in the fight against Satan.

“The temptations of the Devil are defeated first of all by avoiding occasions (of temptation), because the Devil always seeks out our weakest points. And, then, with prayer. We Christians have an advantage because we have the Word of Jesus, we have the sacraments, prayer to God.”

“Because He Disrupted My Plans...”

Not surprisingly, ‘Jesus Christ’ is the name Fr. Amorth most often calls upon to expel demons. But he

also turns to saintly men and women for their heavenly assistance. Interestingly, he said that in recent years one man – Pope Saint John Paul II – has proved to be a particularly powerful intercessor.

“I have asked the demon more than once, ‘Why are you so scared of John Paul II and I have had two different responses, both interesting. One, ‘because he disrupted my plans.’ And, I think that he is referring to the fall of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe. The collapse of communism.”

“Another response that he gave me, ‘because he pulled so many young people from my hands.’ There are so many young people who, thanks to John Paul II, were converted. Perhaps some were already Christian but not practicing, but then with John Paul II they came back to the practice. ‘He pulled so many young people out of my hands.’”

And the most powerful intercessor of all?

“Of course, the Madonna is even more effective. Ah, when you invoke Mary!”

“And, once I also asked Satan, ‘but why are you more scared when I invoke Our Lady than when I invoke Jesus Christ?’ He answered me, ‘Because I am more humiliated to be defeated by a human creature than being defeated by Him.’”

Keep Praying

The intercession of the living is also important, though, says Fr. Amorth. He reminds people that exorcism is a prayer and, as such, Christians can pray to liberate a soul or place from the Devil. However, three things are needed.

“The Lord gave them (the Apostles) an answer that also for us exorcists is very important. He said that overcoming this type of demon, you need much faith, much prayer and much fasting. Faith, prayer and fasting.”

“Especially faith, you need so much faith. Many times also in the healings, Jesus does not say in the Gospel it is me who has healed you. He says, you are healed thanks to your faith. He wants faith in the people, a strong and absolute faith. Without faith you can do nothing.”

You can access additional links by accessing our online bulletin and clicking on the titles:

American Exorcist-In-Training Shares Stories of Battling Demons in Rome

The Haunting Stories of 5 Saints Who Battled Demons

How the Famous Sell Their Soul to Satan

Why Are Demons So Afraid of Mary?

The Sign From Which Demons Flee

Church Picnic In Walden Next Sunday; July 30

Join us at a picnic after the 1 p.m. Mass at St. Ignatius on Sunday the 30th to celebrate. Bring something for lunch and extra to share! (July 31 is the feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the patron of our church in Walden.)

August 13 Mass and Rosary Procession at Our Lady of the Snow

Sunday, August 13, we will have a Rosary Procession after the 9:30 a.m. Mass in Granby. We are honoring the 100-year anniversary of the Blessed Virgin Mary appearing to the three children at Fatima, Portugal. There will be quite a few (50-100) people driving up from the Denver-metro area to participate. Let's show our charity by feeding them. We need help with the following:

- Set-up
- Clean up
- Bringing food

Please contact Kathy DiGirolamo at kadquilter@yahoo.com or (303) 862-1029.

Mass Time Changes This Week due to Totus Tuus

Mass on Monday and Wednesday will be regular. There will be Mass available at Our Lady of the Snow Monday to Friday at 11:15 a.m. See the Mass schedule at the bottom right.

Hearts Afire: 33 Days to Morning Glory Small Group Retreat

(A parish-based program from Fr. Michael Gaitley)
Men, women and young adults, if you are looking for a way to be spiritually renewed, develop a deeper relationship with Our Merciful Savior, through Mary, and grow in holiness, join us for 33 Days to Morning Glory Small Group Retreat. Pick up a flyer as you leave the church. For more info or to register, call Jan, 970-887-2000, or Becky, 303-419-3507. Registration ends August 15. One-week sessions begin first week in September and end first week in October. Don't miss out on the surest, quickest and easiest way to holiness! Some of our modern day saints had a particular devotion to Mary. What is that about, and why wouldn't we?

Gems of Wisdom from the Diary of Saint Faustina

990. I know well, O Lord, that You have no need of our works; You demand love. Love, love and once again, love of God-there is nothing greater in heaven or on earth. The greatest greatness is to love God; true greatness is in loving God; real wisdom is to love God. All that is great and beautiful is in God; there is no beauty or greatness outside of Him. O you sages of the world and you great minds, recognize that true greatness is in loving God! Oh, how astonished I am that some people deceive themselves, saying: There is no eternity!

992. + I am going forward through life amidst rainbows and storms, but with my head held high with pride, for I am a royal child. I feel that the blood of Jesus is circulating in my veins, and I have put my trust in the great mercy of the Lord.

Totus Tuus Vacation Bible School; July 23 – 28

Our Lady of the Snow. \$20 donation to offset the cost. Grades 1-6: Mon – Fri, 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.; grades 7-12: Sun – Thur, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. (Be sure to pack a lunch and snacks for your children.)

Calendar of Events

- Jul 23-28 (Sun-Fri).** *Totus Tuus* Vacation Bible School
- Aug 13 (Sun).** Rosary Procession after Mass at OLS
- Sep 2 (Sat).** Last Saturday Vigil Mass at StB until Nov 18

Mass Collections, July 15 – 16

St. Anne	\$ 3143
St. Bernard	1945
Our Lady of the Snow	2059
St. Peter	437
St. Ignatius	490
Total	\$ 8074

Vocations Prayer Calendar

Please pray for our seminarians every day.

Sat--Miguel Mendoza & Samuel Munson

Sun--Red Braz & Joe Bui & Luis Mendes

Mon--Sean Conroy & Anthony Davis

Tue--Ryan Kent & Sile Kone & Michael Tran

Wed--Carlos Velasquez & Peter Srich

Thu--John Stapleton & Patricio Chuquimarca

Fri--Increase in vocations to priesthood/religious life

Mass Intentions and Schedule for StA, StB, and OLS

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

OLS = Our Lady of the Snow

-Sat, Jul 22, StA, 5 p.m., Tiffany/Steven Franzluebbers

-Sat, Jul 22, StB, 5:30 p.m., Mary Frances Rozas 5

-Sun, Jul 23, StB, 7 a.m., Parishioners and visitors

-Sun, Jul 23, OLS, 9:30 a.m., +John Murphy/Carolyn

-Sun, Jul 23, StA, noon, Angela Kreiling

Weekday Masses

-Mon, Jul 24, StA, 8:30 a.m., Steve and Jan Robar

-Wed, Jul 26, StB, 8:30 a.m., Mary Frances Rozas 6

-Mon, Jul 24, OLS, 11:15 a.m., Barry/Aimee Kroneberger

-Tue, Jul 25, OLS, 11:15 a.m., Patrick and Lisa Hayes

-Wed, Jul 26, OLS, 11:15 a.m., Keith/Debbie Morrison

-Thu, Jul 27, OLS, 11:15 a.m., S./Mary Lou Vecchiarelli

-Fri, Jul 28, OLS, 11:15 a.m., Cyrille/Marianje Duperret

Mass Intentions and Schedule for StP and StI

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

-Sun, Jul 22, StP, 10 a.m., Larry and Janice Gross

-Sun, Jul 22, StI, 1 p.m., Parishioners and visitors