

ARTICLE 37

Legio Sanctae Familiae – The Legion of the Holy Family

Marriage a gift from God

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Marriage! Couples Betrayed

Priests who fail to uphold Church teaching on contraception, damage Marriage

Our third child was born by caesarian section in December 1992. The following year we moved from County Tipperary to a parish in Co Sligo. We got to know the parish priest quite well and on one occasion when my wife was speaking with him on the subject of marriage and children he told her that perhaps it was time for her to go and talk to her doctor about birth control.

When I subsequently tackled this priest about his remarks to my wife, I asked him whether or not he would uphold Church teaching on the matter of contraception if he were preparing young couples for marriage. He responded by saying that it was not a matter that he would emphasise to them.

Dissent is Widespread

We moved house again in 1996, this time to a small rural village in County Leitrim. Our parish priest here was regarded as a great theologian so you can imagine my wife's surprise when he told her during a conversation that he had no problem with sterilisation if a couple felt that they needed to avoid having any more children. He also asked her what she thought of the case whereby a woman might ovulate twice in the month. My wife, being the woman that she is thought, how wonderful, double ovulation, twins! However the priest in this case felt sorry for the man and primarily perceived this situation as a difficulty for the man.

The Belief that Men are animals who cannot control themselves

Here we come to another manifestation of the problem that arises when Church teaching on contraception is not upheld. Men are portrayed as being animals who are virtually incapable of controlling their desires. Now, in the highly sexualised culture in which we live, it is indeed difficult for men to control their desires and some men don't even try, however with God's grace it is always possible for men to be manly and to exercise control over their passions. The difficulty with taking the opposite view is that the woman becomes a scapegoat for the man's passions and she is encouraged to contracept in order to satisfy his uncontrolled desires.

Satan approaches the Woman first

I also find it interesting that, in our married life, no priest ever approached me to encourage me to make use of contraception. It was always my wife whom they spoke to on this matter. The devil, as in the garden of eden, will always tend to try to seduce the woman first and many women will have gone along with the bad advice they have received from priests in this regard.

The final case I want to look at concerns a young married woman with more than three children who approached me at a book launch I was involved with in 2009. The book in question showed the damage that contraception does within marriage. This young woman was struggling in trying to cope with the demands of her family life and needed to take a break from becoming pregnant. She wanted to uphold Church teaching in her marriage but had found that natural family planning didn't seem to work for her. Her husband was not opposed to using contraception and so she sought the advice of a priest. The priest told her that in her case it was OK to use contraception, so she went to

another priest, and another, and another. In all she told me that she had gone to six priests and that each one of them told her that it was OK to contracept.

The Bishop plays Pontius Pilate and dissents

Finally, in desperation she wrote to her bishop. Her bishop responded by telling her that he had sent her letter to what he described as, one of Ireland's leading theologians, and had asked him to address her concerns. The theologian in question was none other than the heretical priest and former professor from Maynooth, whose own archbishop had written against his opinions in 1970, the same professor who was appointed to the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council in the 1980's despite his public dissension from *Humanae Vitae*.

A Wife betrayed by her Bishop and Priests

The young woman then showed me the letter from the former professor and in it he told her that she could use whatever contraception her doctor recommended the sole proviso being that she should avoid anything that was abortifacient in nature. The young woman had begun to use the pill and condoms subsequent to receiving this letter.

This case highlights just how far the Church in Ireland has fallen. Here we have a young woman, a wife and a mother who is trying to live out her life according to the infallible teachings of the Church on marriage. Herself and her husband do not see eye to eye on this matter so she looks for support firstly from the clergy. After their betrayal of her marriage, she seeks support from her bishop only to be betrayed again. There was no need for the bishop to forward her letter to a theologian. The bishop after all had been granted the authority to teach and to uphold the deposit of faith in his diocese. But this bishop, rather than supporting this young woman and her husband, denied the teachings of the Church and passed the '*problem*' over to another priest who was publicly known for his dissent from Church teaching on the matter. The bishop failed in his duty to uphold Church teaching.

Contraception destroys Marriage, dissent destroys Marriage

Think for a moment upon the damage this bishop's actions have done to this young couple's marriage. A wife seeks to live her life according to the rule of Jesus Christ but now her husband can say to her; the priests disagree with you, the leading theologian disagrees with you, and even the bishop disagrees with you. How can you be right and all of them be wrong?

In this case the priests, the bishop and the theologian, perverted right order and introduced corruption into the marriage of a couple who sought their guidance. I am of the opinion that this is not a rare case. The majority of Irish Catholics no longer accept Church teaching with regard to contraception and it is my belief that the majority of our priests no longer accept this teaching either. I would not yet go so far as to say that the majority of our bishops disagree with this teaching although I would not be surprised if that were the case, but I will say that none of our bishops have taken any public action to eradicate the false teaching that was promoted by the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council and which is still being promoted by ACCORD, (the renamed marriage advisory council), today.

Dissent is a Cancer in the Mystical Body of Christ

When the Irish bishops failed to prevent heretical priest professors from spreading their errors on marriage within the seminary at Maynooth, they allowed a cancer to go untreated and to spread. They also undermined their own teaching authority for, if no correction was forthcoming for those who publicly dissented from Church teaching, it stands to reason in the layman's mind that, there cannot be any problem with the dissenter's opinions, otherwise the bishops would have corrected them.

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