

Shall we have children  
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# Shall we have CHILDREN?



THE ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE  
PLANNED PARENTHOOD MOVEMENT



# SHALL WE HAVE CHILDREN?

## *The Ethical Aspects of the Planned Parenthood Movement*

A PANEL DISCUSSION AND OPEN FORUM  
CONDUCTED AT BALTIMORE, MD.

under the patronage of

THE MOST REVEREND MICHAEL J. CURLEY, D.D.  
Archbishop of Baltimore and Washington

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## PRAYER

**A**LMIGHTY and Eternal God, we humbly pray that You will look down with favor upon us all. Our purpose is to emphasize the vital importance of observing the obligations of the married state. Earnestly we pray that You will help all people in Your infinite mercy to understand that only by being faithful to divine and natural law can they expect to achieve real happiness in their lives, to contribute to the good of society, to maintain Christian civilization, and ultimately to procure the salvation of their immortal souls. We beg You to grant that all fathers take inspiration from the Foster-Father of Your Divine Son, St. Joseph, that all mothers model their lives on that of the Blessed Mother of Christ—practicing no other form of planned parenthood save that which is accomplished by self-control and continence. Enlighten and strengthen all parents that they may understand and know it to be a positive fact, that with the assistance of Your grace the practice of self-control is not only possible but on occasion is of obligation. All this we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE RIGHT REV. MSGR. JOSEPH M. NELLIGAN,  
Chancellor, Archdioceses of Baltimore and Washington.

## PRAYER

As we pray and Eternal God, we humbly pray that You will look down with favor upon us all. Our purpose is to emphasize the vital importance of observing the obligations of the married state. Earnestly we pray that You will help all people in Your infinite mercy to understand that only by being faithful to divine and natural law can they expect to achieve real happiness in their lives. We contribute to the good of society, to maintain Christian faith, and attempt to promote the salvation of their immortal souls. We pray You to grant that all nations take inspiration from the Father-Teacher of Your Divine Son, St. Joseph, that all mothers imitate their lives on that of the Blessed Mother of Christ—practicing no other form of planned parenthood save that which is recommended by self-control and continence. Enlighten and strengthen all hearts that they may understand and know it to be a positive fact that with the assistance of Your grace the practice of self-control is not only possible but an occasion is of our prayers. All this we ask through Christ our Lord, Amen.

The Right Rev. Most Rev. Joseph M. Nettles,  
Bishop, Diocese of Richmond and Washington



## INTRODUCTION

By BRIGADIER GENERAL HENRY C. EVANS

Past Commander, Maryland Department, Catholic War Veterans

AS WE TURN the pages of history, we find that time and time again Christianity has been threatened and civilization has been in danger. One of the most insidious dangers facing Christianity today is the "Planned Parenthood" movement, "Planned Parenthood" being no more than a euphemism for "Birth Control," or "Contraception."

The movement is insidious because its authors are generally respected citizens, leaders in their communities in civic affairs, and prominent in Protestant and Jewish religious circles. It is a danger because it advocates breaking the Natural Law and Moral Law. Whenever in history a people have broken such law, their civilization has perished.

It is hard to convince the advocates of this modern form of race suicide of the error of their ways. Logic does not touch them. Statistics make no impression. These persons give little thought to history or experience. Warnings not to tamper with nature are wasted. They turn a deaf ear to the appeals of religious or moral or spiritual motives.

They call themselves patriotic. Yet they see nothing wrong with a cause that eventually will decimate our beloved country.

Our returning soldiers, who risked their lives on foreign soil, have a right to object to the suicide of our race, the inevitable result of any further headway made by the Planned Parenthood Movement.

I recently read that General Von Moltke, of the German Imperial Staff, many years ago said to Bismarck, "We needn't kill the French. They are killing themselves." He came so close to being right, for France through "birth control" almost obliterated herself as a nation. France's birth rate dropped from an average of about 4 children per family in 1835 to about 2 per family 100 years later.

Russia started on a Birth Control program project shortly after World War I, but soon abandoned it, not because of moral principles, but because Russian leaders saw that it would weaken their country physically. They must now be chuckling to themselves, for Russians have only to wait for Planned Parenthood to make a little more progress, and they with a rising birth rate, can inherit the Western World, without the Bomb.

I have talked to a number of people who advocate Planned Parenthood. They, of course, think they are right, but they have failed to consider the moral and ethical aspects of Planned Parenthood. They do not realize whither their cause is leading. Most of them use as their principal argument the economic difficulties faced by poor families. Yet they do not tell us why their main converts are among the well-to-do, among those who could well afford to support and educate larger families.

Recently an investigation was made of one of the classes that graduated from Yale about the time of World War I. The average Yale graduate is hardly from the lower socio-economic strata of society. At the time of the investigation most of the class were in their late forties. This was the result:

Out of 333 who graduated, 83 did not marry;  
250 married, but 42 of those married had no children;  
64 had only one child;  
81 had only two children.

The 250 that married and their 250 wives had 502 children, of which 16 had died. This means that they averaged less than two children per married couple. In other words those who married did not fully reproduce their own number, much less make up for the 25% of the class that did not marry at all.

What is to become of our country if our most able citizens selfishly fail to reproduce themselves?

## HISTORICAL NOTE

ON FEBRUARY 11, 1947, there appeared in the *Baltimore Evening Sun* the report of a speech made in New York City at a Planned Parenthood Association meeting. In this address Dr. Alan G. Guttmacher of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, gave the results of a questionnaire he had sent to 15,000 American doctors on the subject of birth control.

The news story was brought to the attention of His Excellency, the Most Reverend Michael J. Curley, D.D., Archbishop of Baltimore and Washington. The Archbishop laid plans for the Panel Discussion and Open Forum which this booklet records, and, February 12, gave to the press the following statement, which proved to be his last public utterance:

### ARCHBISHOP CURLEY'S STATEMENT

A statement concerning the endorsement of birth control by a high percentage of doctors, coming from Dr. Alan F. Guttmacher of the Johns Hopkins, appeared in the press just recently.

Let me say unqualifiedly that if artificial birth control, that is the use of contraceptive devices, is meant, the endorsement of all the doctors in the world would not change by one iota the moral law of God regarding it. That law, as set forth by the common Father of Christendom, has concisely been stated in these words:

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 grave sin. (Pope Pius XI.)

There is, however, that birth control, accomplished without the use of contraceptives, effected by self-restraint, which is properly expected of self-controlled human beings, who bear the image and likeness of God. If this is meant, then it may be that the figures quoted by Dr. Guttmacher are correct. As a matter of fact, it is inconceivable that there is any doctor who does not believe in such self-control on the part of a rational human being—and even believe that it is demanded at times.

I do not intend here to discuss in any detail either Dr. Guttmacher's statement or the deplorable subject of artificial birth control. But I

wish to warn well-meaning people against the recent feigned interest of the organization for artificial birth control in the health and general well-being of children. It is difficult to interpret that in any way than as a means of getting an entrance into your homes, your hearts, and your pocketbooks. It is this organized group that has popularized in our American civilization the inhuman term, "the unwanted child." It is this organized group that has brought about in our midst the incredible situation in which approximately half the married woman in the salaried and wage-earning groups of our cities have not a single child, and many of the others have only one. That spells a nation definitely on the road to rapid decline. And that, I say, is what the past quarter century and more of birth-control propoganda has brought upon us.

Let me just make one more brief point—but a truly shocking one. Organized birth control has done unbelievable harm to the morals of our young people—the fathers and mothers, presumably, of tomorrow. The present drive for funds being conducted everywhere is making that situation still worse. And the funds received, you may be certain, will be used in turn to add further to the dreadful harm that has already been done.

It seems high time that a public opinion is aroused against the dreadful moral and social damage that is inherent in this movement.



# Christian Motherhood

By MRS. WILLIAM BERRY  
American Mother  
for the Year 1942

By Ewing Galloway, N. Y.

AS I am myself the mother of a large family, I presume I may speak with some authority on the general topic of Motherhood. My children are mostly grown now. The youngest of my thirteen children is already in boarding high school. Thus I am able to give what little time and talents I possess in trying to promote Christian Home and Family Life.

When I was selected the American Mother of the Year in 1942, I looked upon it, as I do everything else that has ever happened to me, as coming from God. I am frank to say that I took advantage of the publicity it gave me to speak to audiences all over the country. I saw an opportunity to exalt the ideals of Christian Motherhood, and at the same time, to point out the false notions of the misguided members of what is euphoniously called the "Planned Parenthood Organization." I tried to impress upon the women of America that motherhood is an intimate co-operation with God in sustaining human life on earth, and anything that interferes with that co-operation is essentially evil.

Years ago, when a Christian man and woman were united in holy bonds of matrimony, they did not ask themselves the question, "Shall we or shall we not have children?" They accepted with loving arms each little one as it came along. They did not worry too much about what they should eat or what they should drink or how they should clothe these children. They put themselves entirely in the hands of God. I would like to speak especially of dependence upon God as the central point in the life of Christian Motherhood.

The Christian mothers of my generation lived daring rather than cautious lives. We were not afraid of life. We lived from day to day,

even from moment to moment, considering that the larger design of our lives was in the care of Someone other than ourselves, Someone infinitely superior to ourselves in both wisdom and strength. Life was a gift granted by God, not a gift from ourselves to ourselves. Knowing this, we considered it unreasonable to seek exclusive control over our own lives. Why should we wish to be independent of the Power which created us? Why not emphasize our dependence on God rather than our independence?

Independence of God is the beginning of an infinite series of worries and fears and disasters in the life of any mother. On the other hand, the more a mother realizes her dependence on God, the more peace she will experience in life, the less fears she will have, the bolder she will be in times of difficulty. She will live freer from care and with greater abandon. The more this dependence is emphasized, the more sacred a thing her motherhood becomes, the more precious are the children confided to her care. In our days, motherhood has not been without its difficulties, but we have believed that those difficulties were allowed by God, and that He would supply the means of overcoming them.

Our task as mothers is to live according to God's laws. After that, all the difficulties belong to God. We must live our lives according to God's guidance. The plan of our lives is of God's making, not our own. A mother can do only the little that is within her power to do. The rest belongs to God—a fact for which Christian mothers have ever been supremely grateful. God was very good in not delivering our lives completely into our own hands. Our minds would have broken to pieces trying to plan the infinite details of our lives. Where would we have found the strength to overcome the terrifying difficulties in rearing a large family of children?

I would like to emphasize dependence on God as the source of a mother's freedom from worry. It is the explanation of that spontaneity with which Christian mothers have always lived. Because of this sense of dependence, and a corresponding lack of concern for our human frailty, we can claim very little credit for whatever success there has been in our lives. We mothers have done very little. God has done very much.

What we have done is this. We have trusted God. We have trusted the Catholic view of life that we learned as children. We have trusted the sound instincts of our own natures. We have trusted the clear judgments of our own consciences. Neither God nor our Christian Faith nor the sound instincts of nature, nor the clear judgment of conscience could possibly fail us or prove insufficient for our work.

Having their belief in Divine Providence, the mothers of yesterday did not have to rely on human planning, inventions of science or human skill. Even where scientific and medical skill had their place, we still preferred to emphasize our confidence in powers which transcend the human skills, especially in those things most intimately connected with our lives as mothers.

We did not consider whether or not it was dangerous to become a mother and to raise a large family of children. We recognized the duty of our state in life, a duty we would no more think of avoiding than we would think of pulling down the stars from out of the heavens.

This is the manner in which Christian mothers in my generation have lived. It is the tradition. It is no mere ideal. It is the manner in which life has been handed down from the beginning. It is the manner of living taught by nature and our Christian Faith. You may test this tradition any way you choose, by the splendor of its ideals, or by the manner in which it has worked out in practice. I have no fears that it will fail under any challenge.

So, in the name of the Christian mothers of yesterday, I suggest confidence in Divine Providence to the Christian mothers of today as the first guiding principle of their lives. If anyone would have you violate the laws of your own nature in the name of some human providence or some human planning, or in the name of medical science, be forewarned that an evil and a perverted thing is being offered you. Its greatest evil is the substitution of a flimsy human providence for the infinite wisdom and power of God. What proportion can there possibly be between the providence of man and the providence of God? The true glory of Christian motherhood rests in a mother's fidelity to the sacred task confided to her by God. How could God's providence fail her if He has confided to her such a glorious mission as that of giving birth to children of His own creation?

The rewards even in this life of motherhood and fatherhood are very great. Think of parents' pleasure when they see their children make their first Holy Communion, of the joy they experience when they see one of their sons for the first time offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the joy yet sadness they feel when they see one of their beautiful daughters leave home forever to become a bride of Christ; then the weddings in the family, the flutter and excitement of bridal veils and long white dresses!

What about the pride they feel when they see four and five, yes and even six of their stalwart sons march off to war to defend their country! And tell me, pray, you, who plan the future citizenship of America, what this country would have done if there had not been a

few old fashioned fathers and mothers who were not afraid to rear a family of children? The strength of this nation does not lie in the mighty ships that ply the ocean, or in the powerful planes that fly the air, no—not even in the atom bomb. The strength of this nation lies in its manhood and womanhood.

This being true, it seems to me that it is almost treason for anyone to suggest just how many children the fathers and mothers of America should bring into the world.

Does it not seem strange, then, that in spite of all this, there are countless women in this country who deliberately deny themselves the privileges of Motherhood? If it were within my power, I would stand at the entrance of every Birth Control Clinic in this country and shout, "Do not enter here, for you not only offend God, but you deprive yourselves of the greatest happiness a woman can possess." How do I know? Well, I know from experience. I am convinced that Divine Providence never failed the mothers of yesterday. Neither will it fail the mothers of today.







# Medical Evidence

By THOMAS K. GALVIN, M.D.  
Clinical Professor of Gynecology  
University of Maryland

AS physicians and as Catholics we endeavor here honestly to state convictions, experiences, and views in regard to the advocacy by the "Planned Parenthood Movement" of the limitation of offspring by the use of *positive* contraceptive methods.

To such a practice, because of our adherence to the natural law and to the teaching of our Church, we are categorically opposed. And we have always maintained this position in years of obstetrical practice in Baltimore.

True, neither the Church, nor ourselves in adhering to the Church's teachings, are opposed to the avoidance of pregnancy, nor to the limitation of offspring by the *natural* methods of periodic or total abstinence, where there are urgent reasons of health. We do not deny that there are circumstances which at times make child-bearing undesirable. Nor, as Catholic physicians, contrary to widely publicized statements, do we advocate that a married couple must beget as many children as is biologically possible. But in avoiding pregnancy or in limiting offspring, we feel that the moral law must be observed, and natural not artificial means must be employed.

So much for convictions. What has been our experience in adhering to our principles? Have we encountered undue difficulties in our medical practice? Have our patients or the public suffered or been damaged as a consequence of our principles? If they have, the records of hospitals and doctors who have been guided by these principles should reflect this damage in maternal mortality statistics. I present a brief résumé of the records and our experience.

For the purpose of this paper, we selected three Catholic hospitals in different sections of the city of Baltimore, and for comparison, we chose three non-sectarian hospitals of a similar character. The six hospitals chosen all have ward as well as private service, and the

record of all will convince any one that they have cared for the average number of pathological cases encountered in supervised hospital practice. The time chosen was a three year period: 1941, 1942, and 1943. Here are the figures obtained from a study of the records of these two comparable groups of hospitals:

During three years, there were delivered in the three Catholic hospitals 11,548 patients, with 11,233 live births and 13 maternal deaths. The three non-sectarian hospitals during this same period had 7,802 deliveries, 7,643 live births and 10 maternal deaths. Applying the standard formula (i.e., dividing maternal deaths, including those from abortion and ectopic pregnancy by the number of live births), we arrive at a maternal death rate of 1.15 per 1,000 live births at the Catholic hospitals, and a maternal death rate of 1.3 for the non-sectarian hospitals.

This means that, statistically, out of every 100,000 mothers with live babies in the three Catholic hospitals, we would have 115 deaths. In the non-sectarian hospitals, out of 100,000 mothers with live babies, statistically, we would have 130 deaths.

It is clear from these maternal mortality statistics that obstetrical patients delivered in Catholic hospitals run on Catholic principles do not seem to have fared any worse than patients in other hospitals.

It might be of interest for a moment to look at the combined records of the practice of three reasonably active specialists in obstetrics who are at the same time Catholics. As accurate an estimate as possible of the total number of deliveries was obtained, and in order to avoid overstatement, the combined estimate was discounted 5%. The total number of deliveries for the three, thus computed, was 11,200. A painstaking search for the number of deaths among this total number of deliveries showed a total of 10, or an average maternal mortality of .89 per 1,000 deliveries. This is a pretty good record. None of these three had ever given positive contraceptive advice, done a therapeutic abortion, or referred a patient to another doctor for a therapeutic abortion. Do the figures indicate that the patients of these Catholic doctors have suffered as a result of their principles?

Consideration of figures and statistics would seem to indicate that Catholic institutions and Catholic doctors who adhere to the principles of the natural law, have had at least as good a record as others in the treatment of obstetrical patients and obstetrical difficulties.

We are quite sure it will be implied that extra-hazardous maternity patients avoid Catholic institutions. This does not seem to us true. As a matter of fact, anyone acquainted with the difficulty of hospital-

izing patients in Baltimore during the past seven years knows it has been difficult enough to get a bed in any hospital, let alone in a particular hospital.

One of the assumptions upon which the "Planned Parenthood Movement" is based, is that child spacing is a necessity from a medical standpoint. Let us glance at what the latest and most authoritative medical work has to say on this subject.

Dr. Nicholson J. Eastman, from the Department of Obstetrics, Johns Hopkins University and Hospital, writing in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* in April, 1944, tells us that the entire rationale from the medical viewpoint of so-called child spacing is based upon an article by Woodberry in 1925. In his article, Woodberry, after a meticulous and exhaustive analysis of the more important causal agents in infant mortality, concluded that infants born after short intervals between pregnancies had a markedly high mortality rate from all causes. Eastman further states that those interested in the furtherance of birth control were quick to argue that if conception could be prevented in women during the first year or two after child-birth, the high mortality associated with a short interval between pregnancies would be prevented. Forthwith, the Woodberry study became one of the cornerstones of the Birth Control Movement and has remained so ever since.

Dr. Eastman, however, as a result of his own exhaustive and scholarly study of over 38,000 obstetrical cases, *contradicts the 1925 findings of Woodberry with the conclusion that infants born from 12 to 24 months after previous delivery have at least as low a mortality as do infants born after a longer interval.*<sup>1</sup>

As to the mother, Dr. Eastman concludes in the same study: first, that the longer the interval between births, the more likely the mother is to suffer with some form of hypertensive toxemia of pregnancy; and second, that in patients who have had a previous hypertensive toxemia of pregnancy, the likelihood of repetition of this complication becomes progressively greater as the interval becomes longer.

In a final sentence Dr. Eastman states, "For the best maternal and fetal outlook we are inclined to believe that youth is a better ally than child spacing."

Danforth in discussing this article of Eastman in the same issue of the Journal, among other things, states in relation to the Woodberry work:

It is remarkable how an error once published is quoted and repeated indefinitely. . . . In carefully analyzing his figures, and in

drawing the proper conclusions from them, Doctor Eastman has done us a service and it is to be hoped that his results attain their desired publicity.

Need we say more to combat the fallacy that child spacing is a necessity from a medical point of view?

Among other oft-quoted medical contra-indications to pregnancy are high blood pressure, neurological and mental disease, heart disease, tuberculosis, diabetes. A review of the medical literature reveals that the arguments *for* the use of contraception during these diseases are no stronger than the arguments *against* the use of contraception.

In considering the effect of pregnancy on patients with high blood pressure, Isenhour, in *The American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, 1942, states that although the belief that toxemias of pregnancy play a part in the production of permanent high blood pressure has become firmly entrenched in medical thought and literature, several reports have expressed the belief that these toxemias occur in patients who otherwise would have developed high blood pressure.<sup>2</sup>

To investigate the matter, Isenhour studied the blood pressure curves of 900 women who had borne children, as well as those of 900 who had never been pregnant. After a thorough study of the two groups, Isenhour concluded that there was no difference to be noted in the incidence of high blood pressure in the women who had children and in those who had not borne children. To him it seemed likely that the high blood pressure which occurs following a large portion of the toxemias of pregnancy are not a result of this contemplation, but rather that this complication occurs for the most part, if not exclusively, in patients who have no inherent tendency toward high blood pressure. In a word, Isenhour believes that high blood pressure occurs in a certain number of women whether or not they bear children.

Concerning mental and nervous diseases, we certainly agree that these in their severe form present an obstetrical problem. However, with De Lee, we feel that these mental diseases are simply contemporaneous with the pregnancy, and pregnancy need not be considered a direct cause of the mental disease; it is the mental disease and not the pregnancy that should be treated. Cheney, in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1934, writes that experience shows that some women with advanced neurological disorders and severe mental diseases may pass through a normal pregnancy and childbirth; and interruption of the pregnancy does not necessarily prevent a recurrence of the mental disease or bring about recovery from it.<sup>3</sup>

Regarding tuberculosis in relation to pregnancy, Marriette *et al.* in

*The American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, 1942, concludes after reviewing his twenty years of experience in the management of pregnant tuberculous women, that

Treatment of the pregnant woman with tuberculosis by the most modern methods of combating the disease, together with equally modern pre-natal care apparently offers her as good a chance for recovery from her tuberculosis as though pregnancy did not exist.<sup>4</sup>

Further, Raymond Cohen, after observing 100 cases of pregnancy associated with tuberculosis, concludes, in the *British Medical Journal*, 1943, that pregnancy and labor, per se, rarely exerted harmful effects; that therapeutic abortion is unnecessary, and that active disease is seldom accelerated, and under proper conditions pregnancy is but an incident in the disease.<sup>5</sup> It seems that the prognosis of tuberculosis complicated by pregnancy is more dependent upon the control of the tuberculosis than upon the associated pregnancy.

As to cardiac disease, of which about 90% of the cases seen in pregnant women is of the rheumatic type, we are reminded of the work of Gorenberg and McGeary. In the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, January, 1941, these men report on the study of 345 cases of pregnancy complicated by rheumatic heart disease. They conclude that patients with a severe grade of the disease, older patients, and those patients with a history of previous heart failure should be willing, if they wish to become pregnant, to submit to frequent observations and to spend a great part of their time in absolute bed rest, if necessary. With these precautions, they conclude that the instance of cardiac failure in pregnancy can be reduced markedly.<sup>6</sup>

In a later publication appearing in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, May, 1943, Gorenberg, reporting on 223 other cases of pregnancy with rheumatic heart disease occurring at the Margaret Hague Hospital in Jersey City, concluded that it was probable that every pregnancy complicated by heart disease could be brought to a successful termination if adequate care were instituted and complete rest were enforced where indicated.<sup>7</sup>

Concerning diabetes, Schumann, writing in *Human Fertility*, March, 1945, states that the health of the properly treated mother is not appreciably impaired, and that although the percentage of fetal loss is high, great strides are being made in the salvage of children of diabetic mothers.<sup>8</sup> Dr. T. Nelson Carey of Baltimore stated to me personally that in his experience, control of diabetes during pregnancy was relatively easy; that in a reliable patient who was willing to report

for frequent urinalyses, there was no appreciable danger from the diabetic state, although the insulin dose and food intake often had to be increased, that delivery could be done by the method of choice, and that anesthesia was optional.

A considerably larger number of studies could be quoted. However, I trust that I have mentioned enough to emphasize my conviction that the medical indications for contraception are decidedly fewer than the advocates of Planned Parenthood would have us believe. For the irreducible minimum, the Church and its adherents have a remedy within the bounds of sound moral conduct: for the average case, "Rhythm," and for the extreme case, abstinence.

As a matter of fact, to date, no 100% method of birth control other than complete abstinence or surgical removal of the child bearing organs has been devised.

It has not been my purpose in this paper to imply that those authorities who have been quoted are necessarily opposed to the "Planned Parenthood Movement." But they do represent the more conservative element in obstetrical practice who are constantly striving for fact, and have not hesitated to express it, regardless of its implications.

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# Ethical Aspects

By the REV. FRANCIS CONNELL, C.S.S.R., S.T.D.

Associate Professor of Moral Theology

The Catholic University of America

IN recent years we have heard much about what is called "planned parenthood." There is a society known as the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, which recently launched a nation-wide campaign, including a drive for \$2,000,000, in order to promote and to propagate the objectives to which it is committed.

Since the subject of planned parenthood has a vital bearing on the future welfare of America, and in fact on the very survival of our nation, it is supremely important that all Americans—particularly married couples—should understand the significance of this movement, and above all, its ethical or moral aspects. It is my purpose to discuss the morality of planned parenthood.

I am speaking, not only as a Catholic priest, but also as an American citizen, deeply concerned with the future of my country. There seems to be a very general impression that the only persons nowadays who oppose planned parenthood are Catholics. This is not true. There are many other American citizens of various religious denominations who vigorously denounce this movement.

But, even if it were proved that the great majority of Americans favor planned parenthood, in the sense in which it is ordinarily understood, it would not follow that they are right. Every intelligent person knows full well that it is possible for the majority to be wrong. Five hundred years ago the vast majority of mankind thought that the sun moves around the earth—but they were mistaken. Now, it is the contention of Catholics, and of many others, that what is generally designed as planned parenthood is opposed to ethical principles, is something immoral, and that the approbation of many people does not prove it to be moral.

In the first place, we should have a clear notion of what is meant by planned parenthood. If the expression be taken literally, it merely signifies that married people have children only when they plan to do so. However, as the phrase "planned parenthood" is generally used at the present day, it means more than this. It means that a married

couple avoid having children, or space their children by *contraception*—by some positive method whereby the normal effect of their conjugal relations is frustrated. In other words, it means that while they enjoy the privileges of married life, they deliberately escape its obligations and burdens. It is to planned parenthood in this sense that a number of Americans, particularly Catholics, are opposed.

When a married couple bring a child into the world and care for it with love and solicitude and guidance until it is able to care for itself, they perform a most exalted deed. They co-operate with the Almighty in His wondrous act of creating an immortal human soul. They enrich their own lives; they make their home an abode of innocence and happiness. They confer a great benefit on the human race, by doing their part toward preserving and propagating it from generation to generation.

They perform a patriotic service toward the nation, by providing it with citizens to maintain its progress in times of peace and to defend its freedom and its ideals in time of war. If all the married couples of this country had practiced contraception according to their convenience in the course of the past forty or fifty years, we should very likely be under the domination of Nazi Germany today, for the number of our fighting men would have been millions less than it actually was.

Above all, when a husband and wife not only give life to a child but also guide their little one from his earliest years in the way of truth and goodness, teaching him to know and to love his Heavenly Father, and instilling into him noble ideals, they are fulfilling the glorious task of leading a soul along the pathway of life to the goal of eternal happiness in the life beyond the grave.

Just because the function of parenthood is so sublime, the abuse of marriage relations is most degrading. Our reason tells us that the special privileges of married life have as their principal purpose the begetting of children. This is not indeed the only purpose of conjugal relations; they also tend to foster love and generosity between husband and wife, help them to render each other mutual assistance, and to bear patiently the hardships and trials of life. But, the primary purpose of conjugal relations is the production of new life; and consequently, the practice of contraception is a positive frustration or prevention of the primary purpose of the sexual function.

Now, it must be evident to every reasonable person that it is morally wrong to frustrate the principal purpose of a natural power or faculty—to distort its use for one's own personal advantage or pleasure so that the power is prevented from achieving the purpose



intended for it by nature, and by the God of nature. A few simple, clear examples will demonstrate this point.

The power of speech has been given to man to enable him to communicate his ideas to his fellowmen, and thus to spread truth and knowledge. Now, when a man uses his power of speech to utter falsehood instead of truth, to deceive his fellowmen instead of enlightening them, he is guilty of moral wrong. He has abused the power of speech, he has prevented the primary purpose of this marvelous faculty from being achieved, in order to obtain some selfish purpose of his own.

Again, the Creator has endowed man with a digestive faculty, the power to assimilate food and drink. Evidently the primary purpose of this power is to nourish and preserve the body. But, when a person employs this power *only* for his own gratification by eating excessively, so that he is sick, or by drinking excessively, so that he is intoxicated, he is surely doing wrong, for he is frustrating the chief purpose of the digestive faculty; he is using it in a manner that is harmful rather than beneficial to his body.

In a similar fashion, when a husband and wife practice contraception, they are misusing the wondrous faculty with which God endowed them for the benefit of the human race. They are employing the power to generate life merely for their own gratification, while at the same time they are deliberately preventing the primary purpose for which it is intended. They put themselves in the same class as the liar and the drunkard, for they use solely for their own pleasure a faculty that God gave them, and use it in such wise that the chief purpose for which God gave it, is frustrated. Their sin is worse than that of the liar and the drunkard, for they injure, not themselves, but the human race and their own nation.

Such is the teaching of the Catholic Church regarding contraception—and it matters not whether contraception be called birth control or planned parenthood or conception control. Whatever one may call it, the fact remains that it is an attempt to defeat the designs of nature and God, by frustrating the chief purpose of an important faculty conferred by Him on human beings.

Pope Pius XI expressed the Catholic position on this matter: "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." (*Encyclical on Christian Marriage.*) It should be emphasized in this connection that the prohibition to practice contraception is not regarded by the Catholic Church as one of its *own* laws, binding *only* Catholics. The Church

proclaims this prohibition as a law of God, which binds all human beings, whether they be members of the Catholic Church or not. Whatever religion a person may profess, *if he descends to contraceptive practices, he degrades the dignity of his human nature.*

Some people believe that the Catholic Church teaches that a married couple are obliged to have as many children as is physically possible; but this is not true. The Catholic Church recognizes that at times a husband and wife may have good reasons for not having any more children, at least for the time being—such reasons as economic stress, weak health, or crowded living quarters; but in such circumstances the only lawful way in which they can avoid having offspring or can space the births of their children is abstinence from the use of their conjugal privileges, either total or periodic.

Many and varied are the objections brought up by those who attempt to overthrow the Catholic Church's stand on contraception. One of the favorite objections is an appeal to sentiment. The objector describes a married couple who already have a large family of children. The mother is unwell, the father is out of work, the family is oppressed by dire poverty. After painting this picture, the objector asks dramatically: "Would you say that these people should have another child that would probably cause the death of the mother, and would deprive them of enough food or proper shelter?"

The answer to this question is that it is better for such a couple not to have another child if they are actually in grave want of the necessities of life. But that does not mean that they would be permitted to violate the law of God by practicing contraception. It means that self-restraint should be practiced by the husband and wife.

The fact that self-restraint may be difficult does not justify husband and wife in committing a crime against nature. In the words of Pope Pius XI: "No difficulty can arise that justifies the putting aside of the law of God, which forbids all acts intrinsically evil. There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted." (*Encyclical on Christian Marriage.*)

To hold that a person is allowed to do something wrong just because it is difficult to do what is right is utterly destructive of all moral principles. If we argued in the same way regarding other problems of life, we should conclude that all manner of evil deeds are perfectly permissible when people find it hard to be good.

Now, every intelligent person knows that it is absolutely false to say that a man is allowed to get drunk when he finds it hard to stay

sober, or that a bank clerk is allowed to steal money when he finds it difficult to live on his salary, or that a soldier is allowed to desert his post when he finds it dangerous and irksome. How then, can an intelligent person consistently claim that a married couple are allowed to transgress the law of God by abusing their marriage privileges, just because they find it difficult to practice the self-restraint that is the only lawful method of avoiding conception?

Sometimes we hear the charge that the Catholic Church is inconsistent, insofar as it condemns contraception, and yet permits its members to avoid conception by continence or periodic abstinence, when they have a good reason for not having more children. Those who bring up this objection ask: "What's the difference between the methods, if the same effect is procured?" Evidently, this objection is based on the notion that when a person is striving for a lawful goal, it makes no difference what means he employs to attain it. That is certainly a very false notion.

A brief illustration will make this clear. Two young men start out with the laudable ambition of procuring a gift for their respective mothers—a watch or a ring or a fur coat. One of the two earns the money by getting a job and working hard and saving his salary; the other gets the money by holding up a bank messenger. They both achieve the same objective; but the means employed by one was perfectly good, the means employed by the other was a grave violation of God's law. Nobody would say that it makes no difference which of these two methods is used to get money. How, then, can anyone say that it makes no difference whether a husband and wife avoid offspring by chaste self-control, or by gratifying their passions and at the same time deliberately cheating nature, frustrating by a degrading act the chief purpose of a sublime power that God has given them. There is certainly a vast difference between the *non-use* and the *abuse* of a faculty.

In recent times much emphasis has been given to the claim that the great majority of the physicians in the United States are in favor of contraception. It is not my intention to discuss the survey on which this claim is based. Its validity and reliability can be challenged even granting that a large number of doctors favor contraception. Granting even that most American doctors favor it, what argument does that fact give us for the moral goodness of contraception? The *ethical* aspect of the problem of contraception is not to be sought in a survey of doctors, any more than the medical aspect is to be found in a survey of lawyers. In fact, the members of the Planned Parenthood Federation apparently have little or no concern for the moral aspect of con-

trapection. They either believe that it is not of any importance, or they take for granted that it is perfectly legitimate for people to distort the laws of God for their own gratification, and to make their own morality.

However, even from the medical standpoint, the fact of approval of contraception by many of our doctors is not a very strong argument. A brief study of the history of medicine will show that it has frequently happened in the past that medical methods advocated by one generation of physicians were rejected as harmful by the next generation. It is quite possible that thirty or forty years from now all the doctors of our land will be opposed to contraception, even on purely medical grounds. At any rate, the moral aspect of this matter must be regarded as its most important phase, unless one regards human beings as mere animals, with no moral possibilities or obligations to God or to society or to their own human dignity.

Sometimes the advocates of planned parenthood protest that their objective is more and better babies for married couples who are physically and mentally capable of having them. They claim that they wish to stress the advantage of having children while the husband and wife are still young, and of educating people to appreciate the joy and happiness of having a large family.

In themselves, such objectives are indeed commendable, and if the Planned Parenthood Federation confined itself to this type of campaign, it would be doing a great service to our country. But, it must be remembered that in conjunction with the recommendation to what is called the "right type" of parents to have more children, the Planned Parenthood Federation also tells married couples that contraception is something perfectly lawful in itself, and even advises that it be practiced at least for the spacing of births.

That fact vitiates any positive program the Planned Parenthood Federation may advocate. For, the majority of married couples, once they are persuaded that contraception is a perfectly good and normal way of using their conjugal privileges, even though they are urged to have a large family, will use contraceptive practices for their own pleasure—which means that they will restrict their family to two or at most three children, even though they possess the health and the material resources to have more.

The Planned Parenthood Federation is destroying its own alleged purpose by refusing to admit the immorality of contraception. Its doctrine that under certain conditions a married couple may defy the law of God is simply an opening wedge that will undermine any plan for increasing the population.

We have a parallel in the matter of divorce. When the divorce laws for the various states of the Union were drawn up, the purpose was to allow the severing of the marriage bond only in rare and exceptional cases. The laws were worded in such wise that it appeared that only in extraordinary circumstances would a husband and wife be allowed to separate and contract another union. For a time, divorces were rare; but legal permission, however carefully worded, was there, and as time went on, the divorce rate increased, until today one marriage in every three in the United States ends in the divorce court. The opening wedge was the admission by our law that *in certain circumstances* divorce is permissible; and nowadays, every married couple that want a divorce can put their case in those certain circumstances by some manner of trickery or subterfuge.

The same is true of contraception. Once a married couple are persuaded that contraception is permissible *in certain circumstances*, they will argue that *their* case comes under these circumstances, as soon as they find it irksome to bring children into the world and to bring them up. And just as it is now very evident that our divorce laws have brought about the destruction of home life in America, so it will be evident in a few years, if the Planned Parenthood Federation obtains its objectives, that propaganda for contraception will bring about the destruction of the American nation. Very appropriately did President Theodore Roosevelt call contraception "race suicide."

Even now, intelligent people can read the handwriting on the wall. In 1941, our Census Bureau stated that if the present birth and death rates continue, the population of the United States will fail to maintain its numbers by approximately 4 per cent per generation. In the large cities of our country today only seven persons are being born to replace ten now in existence. In the face of such appalling conditions, loyal Americans will do all in their power to check the disastrous movement which is being sponsored by the Planned Parenthood Federation, and which has already worked such great havoc in our nation.

Certain social reforms are surely called for which would make it easier for married people to have children. The housing situation should be improved so that young married couples will be able to have a suitable home for raising a family. A decent family wage should be provided for all workingmen. Legal measures should be taken against householders who exclude prospective tenants just because they have children in the family. These social reforms would doubtless help considerably.

But the basic means of protecting the American home and the

American nation must come from married people themselves. They must realize that the state of matrimony is something holy, and that God has accorded to them the privileges of marriage that they may be His representatives in the exalted task of preserving the human race. They must be convinced of the selfishness and the baseness of seeking their own gratification while at the same time they reject the burden that God would have them bear.

Of course, all this supposes a practical belief in God and in the eternal destiny of the human soul. If a person believes that there is no Supreme Being Who has laid down laws for His creatures, and that there is no life beyond the grave, but that men, like animals, perish with death, he has no adequate reason for practicing morality. But fortunately the majority of Americans still believe in God.

Parenthood often involves difficulties and hardships; it often requires the sacrifice of pleasures and luxuries. Yet, when it is accepted and fulfilled according to God's designs, it is something very noble, very sacred. For it means that a man and woman, bound to each other by the ties of love, are so upright and honest that they will not degrade themselves by trying to cheat nature, but will cheerfully accept the children whom God may will to send them, will strive to bring them up properly and make them loyal, devoted citizens, and above all will guide their minds and hearts to the true goal of earthly life—happiness with God in the possession of eternal life.

## DISCUSSION CLUB QUESTIONS

### Christian Motherhood (Pages 11 to 14)

Why is Mrs. Berry particularly qualified to speak about Christian Motherhood? How does she regard it?

What does she regard as centrally important in a Christian mother's life?

What is the consequence of a Christian mother's realizing her dependence on God?

Can you contrast instances of human planning and God's plans in regard to motherhood?

How is "Planned Parenthood" to be regarded as a substitute for Providence?

What rewards of parenthood may be enumerated?

How do those who patronize Birth Control Clinics do themselves injury?

### Medical Evidence (Pages 15 to 20)

Why is Dr. Galvin particularly qualified to speak about the Medical Evidence in regard to the means and the necessity of postponing parenthood?

For what reasons is Dr. Galvin opposed to the limitation of offspring by the use of *positive* contraceptive methods?

How many children does Dr. Galvin as a Catholic hold that parents must have? As many as is biologically possible?

How does Dr. Galvin believe pregnancies are to be avoided?

How have the obstetrical patients of Catholic gynecologists and Catholic hospitals suffered from the adherence of those physicians and institutions to Catholic principles of sex morality?

What is the basis in medical literature for the Planned Parenthood contention that child spacing is essential for low infant mortality?

What is the latest and most authoritative evidence for the necessity of child spacing to guarantee low infant mortality, and maternal health?

Is there evidence that high blood pressure, mental disease, tuberculosis, cardiac disease and diabetes make pregnancies unsafe for patients?

What is the 100% perfect method of preventing pregnancy?

Are all gynecologists of the same *ethical* or *moral* opinion as Dr. Galvin? Can a truly Catholic physician hold the opposite moral or ethical opinion?

## **Ethical Aspects (Pages 21 to 28)**

Why is the Planned Parenthood Federation important?

Are Catholics alone opposed to the activities of this group?

What really in practice is meant by planned parenthood?

In what way is bringing a child into the world and caring for it, personally advantageous to parents, patriotic, socially useful?

What the the purposes of conjugal relations? Why is it morally wrong to practice contraception? What does the Catholic Church teach about contraception? Is contraception wrong only for Catholics?

When there are good reasons for not having children for the time being, how many married couples avoid having them?

Because self-restraint is difficult, need married couples therefore not practice it? What are the moral and the immoral means of avoiding conception? Does the end here justify the means?

Why do many physicians not hold that contraception is immoral?

What is the psychological and social effect of teaching that contraception is sometimes permissible? What is the effect on a nation of the practice of contraception?

What social reforms should Catholics promote to combat the evils of contraception?

Is it necessary to realize and accept the fact that parenthood involves hardships?



## OPEN FORUM QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Has any speaker read Dr. Alan Guttmacher's report on his own work on artificial insemination?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) Yes, I have read it, but I don't see that it is pertinent to this discussion at all.

QUESTION: (On artificial insemination)—as to whether any speaker would discuss it. Would a Roman Catholic doctor or priest allow it, on the part of a man or on the part of a woman?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) What is meant by artificial insemination? It means that the woman becomes a mother through the semen of a man who is not her husband. That is forbidden by God's law, and consequently no Catholic priest and no Catholic doctor could recommend or approve of such a method. It is actually, in the case of a married person, a sin of adultery. It does not present the gross form of what is called adultery, but actually it is; and consequently it must be condemned according to Catholic ethical principles. It is a strange travesty of morality when many people are breaking God's law in order to avoid children and others are breaking God's law in order to have children. Artificial insemination is wrong, immoral.

QUESTION: What was Mrs. Berry's economic status when married and when the first child was born? Did that have anything to do with her convictions that birth control is evil?

ANSWER: (Mrs. Berry) My economic status when I was first married—my husband made \$75 a month. We thought it was a lot of money, but we soon found out that it would not support a child born every 18 months; so we kept plugging along and trusted in Divine Providence. Finally when each child came along, we worked a little harder and advanced along until we were able to educate our children. I think that everybody who has that problem can really do it; you have to do your part, but in the case of poor people who do not have the opportunities, I think it is up to the State and the economic structure of our country to try to take care of them. In other words, the poor should not be denied the privileges of motherhood and fatherhood. They are entitled to be fathers and mothers just the same as people who can afford to be.

QUESTION: What should be done by the people of the nation where the population has grown too large?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) That is a very practical question. It is a question, in fact, which certainly should be considered at the present time. Some larger nations, not our own, are increasing rapidly because they are not practicing contraception. The answer is this:

when a nation increases to the extent of overpopulation, it has a right to have its people taken care of in other parts of the world, where there is no congestion. There is plenty of room for colonization, and every nation which has land facilities should be willing to accommodate the people of another nation. Every person born into this world has a right to a livelihood from the earth and from the world in which we live. A person has a right to go to another country if his own is too congested, and if that were done, the world would be a much happier and much more prosperous place.

QUESTION: Chairman Evans attributes the decline and fall of France to the practice of birth control. France was and is Catholic. Why was the Catholic Church not better able to enlighten and control its members during the past fifty years?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) France has been stated to be 72% Catholic. Actually, in the past two or three generations a large portion of the people of France were not practicing Catholicism. They either were not Catholics or they did not go to church. We are willing to admit that many people who call themselves Catholics practice birth control. The fact is that too many people of France, while calling themselves Catholics, are not *actually living as Catholics*, and the consequence of that is that they have been practicing birth control.

QUESTION: It is dangerous to have a child during menopause, is it not? Will there be danger of the child being abnormal?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) I don't think one would be particularly likely to have a child during menopause. It is true a certain percentage of women have a child very late in their time of life, but it has not been proven that this of itself has an effect on the mentality, or anything else, of the child.

QUESTION: Does the use of contraceptives cause cancer?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) I think that is rather farfetched. Certainly, I presume an improperly fitted device might cause irritation, but I am not at all sure that it causes cancer. Nobody else knows what causes cancer.

QUESTION: You speak of race suicide and danger to America. Who are Americans? Are they not persons from every country in the world? Do we not have to let down the immigration bars and we will assimilate them? Do you disagree?

ANSWER: (Chairman Evans) Well, it appears that if the Planned Parenthood Movement keeps going, immigration will be the only way we can keep this country going; yet I would like to see some of our own Americans contribute, at least to keep up some of the population.

QUESTION: Does the Catholic Church teach that the use of

“rhythm” or periodic abstinence is always permitted to a married couple?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) No, the Catholic Church does not teach that. Some people think that the use of “rhythm” or periodic abstinence is permissible under any and all circumstances. That is not true. According to Catholic theological principles, married couples are allowed the practice of “rhythm” only when there is a very good reason, a very grave reason, for not having more children. If people would practice “rhythm” without any sufficient reason, by not having children they would not be guilty of the sin of contraception, but they would be guilty of the sin of selfishness. If it were kept up for several years, for example, it might be even a mortal sin. Of course, we must remember that the “rhythm” is the *non-use* of the faculty at certain times, and contraception is the *abuse* of it; and the two are different; but to say that the Catholic Church favors “rhythm” without any qualifications is an incorrect statement.

QUESTION: Is it true that the use of contraceptives is apt to result in mental or physical disorders? Is birth control a *recent* innovation, or is it true that it was practiced by the early Greeks and Romans?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) No, I don't think it would be a fair answer to say that the use of contraceptives necessarily is surely going to result in a mental or physical disorder. One needs also to know something about the psychiatric effect upon a couple who want to practice complete abstinence. Well, it is a natural fact that people can, if they want to.

“Is birth control a recent innovation or is it true that it was practiced by the early Greeks and Romans?” Yes, the little I have read about it, I am of the impression it was practiced in ancient times to some extent, but largely by way of infanticide.

QUESTION: Mrs. Berry, are the married children of your family following your example of having large families?

ANSWER: (Mrs. Berry) I have one married daughter who has been married about seven years; she has four children, and this fall another one will come along. All my sons who are married have children except one, and this couple just haven't had time.

QUESTION: When was the Planned Parenthood Federation started and by whom? Is it being promoted in the hospitals, and what progress is being made?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) As far as I know, the recent popular Birth Control, or Conception Prevention movement, now known as the Planned Parenthood Federation, which as I understand represents

two or three different organizations, owes its recent or more modern origin to Margaret Sanger. About whether it is being permitted in the hospitals, I am not aware that any of the hospitals are actually having contraceptive clinics. I think there are, of course, contraceptive clinics in the city, but I don't know about the progress.

QUESTION: Is not the Catholic Church inconsistent when it denounces birth control and yet commands its priests to lead celibate lives?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) You must remember that the Catholic Church denounces birth control because of the method that is used. The Church is not primarily concerned with the question of an increase in the population. The Church is concerned primarily with the question of God's law. The denunciation by the Church of birth control is because of the methods used; they are a violation of God's law.

The Church at the same time advocates the state of virginity as a more perfect state, and the Church imposes that upon a priest. The reason is as follows: the priest can do much more effective work for the common good, for his fellowmen, when he leads a celibate life. For example, he is able to go out among people who may have some very dangerous disease with the realization that if he does catch the disease, no one will suffer except himself. He has no family to whom he can communicate it. He is ready to go to different parts of the diocese and throughout the country, at the command of his lawful superiors; and a priest's love of God can be more wholehearted, more complete, more pure when leading a celibate life. There is nothing inconsistent in that at all.

QUESTION: Mrs. Berry used the term "Christian" synonymously with Roman Catholic. Does she not admit that there are other "Christians" who might differ with her on the subject of birth control?

ANSWER: (Mrs. Berry) When I used the word "Christian," I certainly meant everybody who believes in Christ. There are many Christians in the world, not of our faith, and I, of course, realize that. I have some good Protestant friends in North Carolina who are good Christians; so when I used the word Christian Motherhood, I did not mean there are not many mothers who do not belong to the Catholic Church, and who are perhaps just as good Christian mothers as anyone else. The word "Christian" means a follower of Christ.

QUESTION: Is it possible that at some future time the Church will change its stand on birth control?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) It requires very little study to answer that question. The Catholic Church has constantly preached

from the very beginning that it was wrong. The Catholic Church does not change its moral principles. The Catholic Church will never, under any circumstances, change its teaching.

QUESTION: The Planned Parenthood Federation states that they help sterile couples have a family. Is this true?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) I think I have heard it—I am quite sure of it—that that is one of their activities, and it has been added rather recently; it is sort of a rider.

QUESTION: When a young couple are planning to marry, but for financial reasons cannot have any children for a couple of years, would it be better for them to marry and practice periodic abstinence for a time, or to postpone marriage until they can have children?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) It is very difficult to give a general answer to a problem of this nature, but I would say, generally speaking, that when people feel they cannot have children in the immediate future, it would be better for them to postpone their marriage until such time as they can begin to have a family. That would be the better thing. I would not say it would be absolutely wrong to do the opposite, but I think their married life would be happier if they would not do that.

But I might say that young folks who believe they cannot have a child for a year or two for economic reasons should be very honest about the matter. Perhaps their standards of economic comfort are too high. This was brought out very beautifully this evening by Mrs. Berry. People should be prudent, but if they insist on having luxuries, I think they are following very false standards. I think the message Mrs. Berry gave this evening is very practical. If young folks feel a call to the married state, then let them marry and then abide by God's law without fear. It works out very well in the long run.

QUESTION: The average married couple has a hard time, due to expenses in birth and education of children. Particularly when they desire to foster and maintain a Catholic home and education for the children. How can the cost of child bearing be adequately reduced? Why cannot some concessions be made for couples by hospitals and doctors so that those who find it difficult financially may be helped?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) I don't remember that I ever got any particularly large fee. But to answer the question, hospitals are certainly making a sincere effort to do that. And I can speak of four or five Catholic hospitals which do. They have ward services, and they have a fixed rate. The deliveries are done by the staff, the house men; they are supervised. But one of the difficulties is that often people just don't want to be satisfied with that. They want to get a certain,

perhaps a well-known doctor, because someone else has done it. And after all, one person can't deliver all the babies.

QUESTION: Why should we try to increase the population of this country when there are so many people starving in Europe and Asia whom we could admit if we had a static or falling population?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) Many times statements have been made that the world is overpopulated, but actually our country could comfortably support several times as many people as it has at present. We have land in abundance; we have natural resources; we have everything necessary for a great increase of population. Let us leave the future in God's hands. If people observe God's law properly and if nations are willing to share their lands, wealth and property with one another, you may be sure that God will provide. Everybody knows that the birth rate is decreasing. Contraception is not the only reason why the birth rate is less than it was a century ago. There are other, natural reasons for that, and in that we can see God's providence. When and if the time comes when the earth will be greatly populated, God will see to it that the needs of the human race will be provided for.

QUESTION: Do you think there is an increase in immorality among the young unmarried people due to contraceptives?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) I really don't think so. I used to; I did sometime back; but it certainly has not been borne out in my experience in the office and around the hospital. I do not mean to say there is not some, but I could not say that it has increased.

QUESTION: Mrs. Berry, I understand your financial background was fairly free from worry. How about the many poor families of the Carolinas for whom each new mouth is a highly difficult task to fill, and for whom the constant fear of pregnancy obliterates marital joy?

ANSWER: (Mrs. Berry) I did not know we had any more poor people in North Carolina than we had in Baltimore. God said, "The poor you will always have with you." And we always will. That is why I stated that the State, for the good of the family, should provide free maternal care for the poor.

QUESTION: Do you really think a woman is capable mentally to supervise a new child oftener than every two years?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) I hope so; my mother did.

MRS. BERRY: My children were from 18 to 20 months apart. The longest space between my children, the last two, was four years.

DR. GALVIN: To give a fairly serious answer, I did not mean to be facetious. But it is not so terribly often that women have children closer than every two years or so. I think Eastman brought that out

very nicely in his work. As a matter of plain arithmetic I am not denying that you do see a baby after 11 months or 12, but that happens very seldom. I think a woman can do right well with a large family if she wants to; I think a great many have.

QUESTION: What is the psychiatric effect upon a couple who must practice complete abstinence? How long could they abstain without harming their physical and mental health?

ANSWER: (Dr. Galvin) Well, I cannot adequately answer that, of course, because I am not much of a psychiatrist. But I can say in absolute sincerity that I know of at least eight or ten couples who for one reason or another have practiced complete abstinence. I do not know at all that there is any positive evidence that continence is so destructive of mental health. I think all the discussion comes about largely because of the fact that so many people who do have mental disease are so apt to be mixed up also on sex matters. People are very prone to rationalize about the effects of continency, celibacy, and so forth.

QUESTION: When a person uses contraceptive measures, is he not actually performing an action similar to what he does when he trims his fingernails or has his hair cut? Would you say it is wrong to check the power of nature by these latter actions?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) That is an objection that has often been given. The answer is this: we must emphasize the difference between frustrating the purpose of a natural power and controlling it. The two are very different. There are times when we control natural powers, the forces of nature, and we thus help them to produce their effect better. One example, a person has his hair cut; that is in order to keep his appearance in proper shape. The hair is more effective if it is trimmed properly. It is very different with a contraceptive, for that frustrates nature.

I repeated several times in the course of my talk the reason why contraception is wrong—because it frustrates the very *purpose* of a divinely given power. If a man did anything in regard to the organs of his body, to frustrate their purposes, he would be doing wrong. A man, for example, who would injure his heart in some way, who would get drunk and in that manner injure his heart, would be doing wrong. If he mutilated his body, say a man during the war-time mutilated his hand to escape military service, that again would be wrong because it would permanently prevent proper functioning. There is a difference between controlling a function and abusing or misusing it.

QUESTION: Don't you think Catholics could do something constructive about combating the spread of the Planned Parenthood Move-

ment? What I had in mind was promoting laws creating an annual wage. I believe one of the basic reasons for the use of contraceptives is economic.

ANSWER: (Chairman Evans) I will answer that myself. I agree that that is one of the major reasons. I think that what anyone can do to better the average economic status of the people in the country will help. The sooner the people of this country return to a firm belief in God and to obeying His laws, particularly each doing unto others as he would have others do unto him, the sooner we will arrive at a solution of our economic problems.

QUESTION: Would it not be true also that the legalized selling of contraceptives may have increased immorality among single people, because by using contraceptives they are thus able to gratify their passions, and yet be almost sure of avoiding the consequences of intercourse—causing the birth of an illegitimate child? Do you think it would be well for the Government to prohibit the sale of contraceptives?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) I do think that if our nation is really anxious to support its manpower and its strength, it would be a very fine thing if legal measures were taken against the sale of all kinds of contraceptives. I believe that would be very effective. As a matter of fact, of course, in some states there are still prohibitions, but even in those states I believe they still sell contraceptives. I think it was a very destructive thing during this last war when contraceptives were available to our soldiers in such great number. The Government was certainly doing much to destroy itself. It was spreading race suicide.

QUESTION: Isn't it a greater sin to bring children into the world in a condition of severe poverty than to use contraceptives? Do you hold that in circumstances of poverty, poor health, and over-crowded living quarters, that a man and a wife should deny themselves the consolation of conjugal love if they cannot afford more offspring?

ANSWER: (Father Connell) I thought I answered that question. Is it a greater sin to bring children into poverty than to forego contraceptives? The real question is not which is a greater sin, but whether or not a person should commit any sin. There is a third possibility in this case, and that is chaste abstinence. It is like a man for example who says, is it a greater sin to get drunk or to steal? Well, it is hard to say which is greater; they are both sins. The solution is to avoid both. If people think it is a sin to bring children into the world, then why should they commit another sin? The method is to abide by God's laws and practice chaste abstinence.



CHAIRMAN: I would like to call on the Right Reverend Monsignor Nelligan to close the Open Forum Discussion for this evening.

MONSIGNOR NELLIGAN: The real difficulty about this Planned Parenthood Movement is not one of reason, is not one of logic. Planned Parenthood is simply a subterfuge. The real difficulty is that the majority of the people in this country today are persuaded that continence and control is impossible. Now that is their fundamental and basic mistake. If we try to correct their thinking in that matter, we have done something definitely worthwhile that will contribute not only to our spiritual life but to our national life and to our Christian civilization.

QUESTION: \* If the marital relationship is for the prime purpose of begetting children, why does the Church approve rhythm when its purpose is to prevent pregnancy?

ANSWER: The prime purpose of the marital relationship is the procreation of children. Its secondary purpose, however, is to afford a mutually satisfactory means of expressing conjugal love. We may say that the marital relationship may be sought for its secondary purpose, provided that the primary purpose is not artificially and unnaturally excluded. Marital relations, as a mutually satisfactory means of expressing conjugal love, during a wife's sterile periods, do not *artificially* and *unnaturally* prevent pregnancy.

QUESTION: Do you think rhythm is really conducive to the expression of marital love?

ANSWER: Rhythm is a last recourse to be resorted to only in case of a reasonable cause for avoiding pregnancy. The restraint it involves is obviously a handicap to the spontaneous expression of marital love. Would anyone maintain either that the gross practices of using equipment: devices, creams or douches are "conducive to the expression of marital love"?

QUESTION: Since the purpose is the same, by what fine line does the Catholic Church differentiate between rhythm and mechanical contraception?

ANSWER: The Catholic Church differentiates between rhythm and mechanical contraception by the same kind of fine line it uses to differentiate between borrowing \$50 and stealing it. The *purpose* of using rhythm is the same as the purpose of using mechanical contraception, just as the purpose of borrowing is the same as the purpose

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\* Questions up to this point were submitted in writing and answered *viva voce* in the Open Forum Discussion. The following questions were also submitted at the Open Forum, but the answers were supplied by the Editor because the late hour required that the Open Forum adjourn.

of stealing. They are, however, obviously *means* of a different sort, though they aim at the same purpose. The Catholic Church is still able to distinguish between means, even when those who have accused her of saying that the end justifies the means, are now acting upon the very same false principle of the means being justified by the end.

QUESTION: Is periodic abstinence morally wrong if there is no question of health or material need involved? Please cite the specific authority which defines the "lawful" use of periodic rhythm?

ANSWER: The whole question of the morality of the use of the rhythm has been reviewed in a recent study: O. N. Grieser, *Rhythm in Marriage or Christian Morality* (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1946). In general one may say that the practice of periodic abstinence is morally wrong if there is no real and serious need for its use.

QUESTION: You say that a married couple in dire circumstances of poverty and ill-health should practice birth control by natural methods. That is fine. But the point is that they are precisely the people who have not been properly educated in matters of birth control either artificial or natural. Do you think they should be educated in natural methods?

ANSWER: In individual cases of need, individual couples should be instructed by a competent physician in the possibilities of rhythm. A competent physician's instruction is always necessary. The social consequences should be seen to be obviously too grave for anyone to recommend wholesale and public instruction of all married couples, such as that available from certain sources. Moreover, it should be kept in mind there are many wives by whom rhythm may not successfully be used.

QUESTION: Is abortion legalized by Controlled Parenthood?

ANSWER: I do not see how it can be said that abortion is "legalized by Controlled Parenthood." Possibly by breaking down reverence and respect for new life, Planned Parenthood makes many no longer hesitate much about the murderous abortion of unwanted babies.

QUESTION: In the case of natural abortion, what about baptism? Is the soul created simultaneously with conception? Has the baby a soul at the time of conception, at the time the mother feels life, or when it takes its first breath?

ANSWER: In general, every aborted fetus, or premature child should be immediately baptized by any competent person. The Church's practice proceeds in accord with the view that the soul exists, is created, from the moment of conception. Doctors and nurses may find the following pamphlet instructive in regard to necessary emer-

gency baptisms: J. B. McAllister, *Emergency Baptism; Especially for Nurses, Physicians, and Clerics*. (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1945.)

QUESTION: By what authority does Father Connell state that conception is a violation of God's law? There is no such teaching in the Bible.

ANSWER: Father Connell states that contraception for us is a violation of God's law because it is certainly against God's law to abuse the powers He has given us for the benefit of the human race. Our own reason tells us this, just as it tells us that it is against God's law to get drunk. Father Connell is also able to state that contraception is a violation of God's law on the authority of the Catholic Church which we know teaches without possibility of error in God's name and in God's place about how man is to live morally and about what he is to believe in order to please God. As for the Bible, cf. *Gen.* xxxviii. 10.

QUESTION: When did mankind first learn to practice continence or abstinence in conjugal relations?

ANSWER: Who knows? What does it matter, if now mankind is sometimes morally obliged to this practice?

QUESTION: How many children should married couples have? Is it wrong not to have a child the first year of marriage? How long will the Church permit a marriage without children?

ANSWER: The Church does not specify how *many* children married couples should have. Probably they should have as many as they can reasonably hope to raise to be religious and patriotic citizens. To have fewer by means of rhythm may be more or less seriously selfish. To have fewer or none by artificial or unnatural means is grossly immoral and wrong. Those who are selfish will not and do not raise a large family, because they would have to give up many personal comforts and conveniences.

If one deliberately avoids having a child in the first year of marriage by unnatural or artificial means, or by rhythm without need, it is wrong.

The Church sees no wrong even in a lifelong marriage without children, provided that artificial or unnatural means are not taken to avoid children, or that rhythm is not practiced without need or good reason. The Church would question the validity of a marriage into which either or both parties entered with the determination to have no children at all.

QUESTION: Are a newly married couple justified in practicing contraception until they are in a financial position to support and educate their first offspring? In the case of a young married couple,

it the husband is going to college, do you think it is wisest for them not to have children until he finishes his studies? Why are contraceptives forbidden when we have a four months old baby, and don't want another right away, as the first cannot be properly taken care of?

ANSWER: The general question, already answered in two papers, and of which we have here specific instances, is: Are there *economic reasons* which would make the avoidance of pregnancy wise and morally right? There are. Whether they exist in a particular case needs be determined in the particular case, by the individuals with the aid of their confessor. *The chief point at issue is*, however: is any means other than complete or periodic abstinence from the marriage act legitimate as a means of avoiding pregnancy. The answer is: *no other means is moral*. Artificial and unnatural means of avoiding pregnancy are seriously wrong. The end will not justify the use of *any* bad means.

QUESTION: Does the Catholic Church sanction contraception if ill health prohibits a woman from having children? What is your opinion as to the morality of birth control when practiced by a girl who has been told by doctors that she must never have a child? How can a mother of several children rest in order to overcome some medical defect which without rest will result in miscarriage? When a woman is in ill health, how can she help having a child as long as she is with her husband? What shall she do that won't be a sin?

ANSWER: The general question—already answered in the pages of Father Connell and Dr. Galvin, and of which we have here now specific instances is: are there *medical reasons* which would make the avoidance of pregnancy wise and morally right. There are. Whether they exist in a particular case needs to be determined in that case. More conservative medical opinion is inclining toward the view that the contra-indications for becoming pregnant are neither so great nor so many as the Planned Parenthood people would have us believe. Catholics must consult a doctor who is not an advocate of the Planned Parenthood movement.

Again, if a wife is medically advised against pregnancy, she may not use artificial or unnatural means of avoiding pregnancy, nor acquiesce in her partner's use of such means. The only means available—moral means—is complete, or temporary, or periodic abstinence from the marriage act.

QUESTION: If one partner practices birth control though the other one objects, is there sin for both parties or for just one?

ANSWER: If one partner practices birth control, the other is obliged to object. However, supposing a protest has been made, the

innocent partner may submit in certain circumstances. Catholics placed in these difficulties should seek counsel in the confessional.

QUESTION: If positive methods of birth control are considered immoral and contrary to the laws of nature, why are not strides in medicine such as those whereby human life is extended by artificial means, equally contrary to the laws of nature and therefore immoral?

ANSWER: Progress in medicine whereby human life is extended by artificial means may not justly be compared with the use of artificial or unnatural means of preventing conception *whereby human life is prevented from coming to be*, because in the former case man's natural powers are aided, in the latter they are frustrated.

Moreover, the ideals and aims of those who contribute to the progress of medicine are noble and altruistic; the purposes and aims of those who use artificial and unnatural means of preventing conception, in most cases, amount to gross selfishness, the avoidance of personal inconvenience or hardship and of social responsibility.

Nazi doctors employing revolting and immoral means to further the progress of medicine, made no real contribution to medical science, but effected only their own moral and intellectual degeneracy. It is also a lesson of history that nations and races which engage in the use of gross and immoral, artificial and unnatural means of avoiding child bearing, effect their own moral and intellectual degeneracy, and engage in a program of national race suicide. We do not want to learn from history when the lesson limits our selfishness.

QUESTION: If there is no restriction in birthrate, will the world not be overpopulated, and wars and slaughter necessary? Since the aggressor nations are all overpopulated, does it not appear that overpopulation is a factor in the cause of war? Is it more moral to prevent the birth of children than to raise them to be killed in war?

ANSWER: Here again is that old bogey raised by Malthus: that the world will be overpopulated. No serious student of the facts any longer accepts the *assertion* that the world is liable to be overpopulated, at least in the near future. Wars are always initiated by such evil persons as Napoleon, Hitler or Stalin. And, it is generally found wars are begun for various *other* reasons than population pressures. Not all historians accept the Marxist opinion that the course of history is determined by population or economic pressures which make war necessary. Moreover, *it cannot be shown* that "aggressor nations are all overpopulated."

It is psychopathologically morbid and sheer specious excuse-making to argue that by preventing the birth of children, one avoids raising them to be killed in war. It is obviously absurd to imply that all

children whose conception was not prevented were raised to be killed in war, or were actually killed in war, or will be killed in war. One might argue it is more moral to prevent the birth of all children than to raise them when they may be killed in automobile accidents!

QUESTION: What about children who are born of mentally deficient or degenerate parents? If a moron marries, is it right for the couple to bring a child into the world? What do you advocate in the case of morons, the feeble-minded and the mentally diseased? Should they have children?

ANSWER: Not all mentally deficient persons are degenerate; nor is degeneracy much more frequent among the mentally deficient than among those not mentally deficient. Moreover there are various grades of mental deficiency or feeble-mindedness. Morons are the most intelligent and socially adequate of the feeble-minded.

The first question is whether feeble-mindedness is hereditary. We should point out that normal parents can and do have feeble-minded children. Conservative opinion is now inclined to doubt that any more than one-third of the cases of feeble-mindedness are of *hereditary* origin. Another question is whether mental illness is *hereditary*. Mental illness can and does arise in families with no past history of mental illness. Conservative opinion is inclined to minimize the clear hereditary origin of most mental illness.

The second question is whether the feeble-minded or mentally ill should have children. There is no evidence that would require us to dissuade from marriage individuals of borderline intelligence, and perhaps high grade morons, when there is a reasonable hope they can get along in a simple social structure. (One has to be pretty sure of the diagnosis of feeble-mindedness. It is so easy to make an underestimate. Recent Nazi history has shown it can be made for political reasons.) Certainly low grade morons, imbeciles and idiots should be kept from marriage by *custodial institutional care*. Those *clearly* psychotic should likewise be kept, if necessary, from marriage, by custodial institutional care. (Again the difficulties and dangers in diagnosis should not be taken lightly.) Persons contemplating marriage should seek a marriage partner from a family with no immediate history of serious mental disease, especially if such a history exists in their own family.

The Catholic Church opposes as immoral the sterilization of the mentally deficient or mentally ill. The horrors of a sterilization program in unscrupulous hands have just been witnessed in Nazi Germany.

And finally, not even morons may morally use artificial or unnatural means of preventing conception.

QUESTION: Should epilepsy be considered a bar to Catholic marriage?

ANSWER: Epilepsy is not an impediment that would invalidate a marriage. Each couple will have to decide if they can live happily together if one partner is subject to seizures. The reader is referred to Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 98, *Epilepsy—The Ghost Is Out of the Closet*: “May an epileptic have children? A generation ago almost all doctors would have said no; today the men who have studied the question most thoroughly say yes.” (P. 23.)

QUESTION: You state that the greatest opposition to Planned Parenthood comes from Catholics. Isn't it more correct to specify Catholic “Church” inasmuch as its members are opposed primarily because of—sin, fear of hell, etc.—rather than from a moral or economic point?

ANSWER: Members of the Catholic Church *should* oppose the artificial and unnatural prevention of conception: (1) because the Catholic Church teaches with God's authority and in His Name that it is wrong, a sin. (2) because the methods of preventing conception proposed by Planned Parenthood can be shown by reason to be contrary to the natural law. Catholics know that sin and its punishment, hell, are both something to be avoided and feared. Catholics are at least as capable of non-emotional thinking as advocates of Planned Parenthood. A Catholic who is truly a Catholic *must* accept the teaching authority of the Catholic Church in the matter of the prevention of conception whether he finds the arguments from reason convincing or not.

QUESTION: Could a large number of “Planned Parenthooders” be prompted by a spirit of sincere helpfulness?

ANSWER: It is Christian charity not to question the sincerity of others until they have demonstrated their insincerity.

QUESTION: You spoke of certain social reforms, including a living wage, that would enable a young couple to have children without planning. Don't you think that the Catholic institutions should be the first to pay a living wage?

ANSWER: There can be no question but that Catholic institutions are *gravely obliged* to pay a living wage.

QUESTION: Why haven't Maternity Guilds been started in Baltimore?

ANSWER: I do not know whether or not they have been. And if they have not, I do not know why not. They are the one means that many Catholic parishes have initiated to alleviate the economic pressure that lead people to practice contraception.

QUESTION: Why don't obstetricians have night office hours to accommodate mothers with other small children?

ANSWER: Some do. Others do not, possibly because not even a doctor can work day and night all the time.

QUESTION: Medically speaking, you suggest that practically any mental or physical condition be considered secondary to pregnancy. Isn't the primary duty of a human being, the preservation of his own life and that of already existing life?

ANSWER: To speak of a physical condition as "secondary to pregnancy" is not to deny that one has a duty to preserve one's life. The preservation of one's own life, incidentally, is not the primary *purpose* of living. To speak of a physical condition as secondary to pregnancy is to mean: (1) that a doctor should strive to bring the pregnancy to successful term; and (2) that the physical condition is not to be *presumed* to be so grave that pregnancy should be *ipso facto* be avoided.

QUESTION: I gather from Father Connell's talk that the Catholic Church considers marital intercourse a sin unless children are conceived. Is this so?

ANSWER: No. It is not so. Father Connell said that people may not have marital relations in a way to prevent the conception of children. Married people do no wrong if they have relations in the proper way, even though children are not conceived.

QUESTION: If offspring really be "the will of God," could they be prevented by human intervention whether called "rhythm" or "contraception"?

ANSWER: It seems that the inquirer does not understand what is meant by "the will of God." Here, we can only say briefly that God wills what is right, but He has endowed man with his own free will, a power of self-determination, by which a man has the power to will or choose to practice such wrong or evil as the artificial and unnatural prevention of conception. But he has not the right to choose wrong.

QUESTION: What effort is the Catholic Church making to alleviate the economic stress among the lower classes, which encourages them to practice birth control?

ANSWER: The Catholic Church has always taught and preached and practiced the necessity of justice. In our own times Pope Leo XIII issued his famous Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* on the Condition of Labor, and Pius XI, his *Quadragesimo Anno*. Leo XIII said, "Every minister of holy religion must throw into the conflict all the energy of his mind, and all the strength of his endurance." Many priests have worked heroically in our own country for social justice, some with a



national reputation, v.g., Msgr. John A. Ryan, Bishop Francis Haas, and Father John F. Cronin. Many others have labored with heroism but with less renown. There is not room here for a review of what practically the Church has done to alleviate economic stress. No unprejudiced person will find it inconsiderable.

QUESTION: Why is not "continence" as much a violation of the "law of God" as "contraception"—both being equally contrary to nature's intent?

ANSWER? One doubts if this question can be answered adequately in a few lines. Contraception is a positive thwarting of the natural purposes and result of a function—the *abuse* of a function. Continence is the *non-use* of a function for a definite period by some or perpetually by a select group. There is a distinction between non-use and abuse, v.g., of money, or candy, or even atomic fission. Continence practiced for a definite period by some, or perpetually by a very small group for religious or ideal motives will not seriously affect the propagation of the species. The practice of contraception can be shown to result in the failure of even particular social or economic classes to propagate just their own class or social group.

QUESTION: Is it not true that people who use contraceptives are victims of nervous disorders? I have heard it said that about one-third of the patients in psychopathic clinics are there as a result of contraception and perversion; also that a similar ratio of the patients in tuberculosis clinics are there for the same reason.

ANSWER: It is not unreasonable to *suppose* or to infer that contraceptives when one feels guilty about their use, or contraceptives when they take all the natural normal spontaneity of affection out of the marriage relationship, *may* cause neuroses and psychoses. Some think they do. Others deny it. It is doubtful if any persons are in tuberculosis clinics merely due to the use of contraceptives.

QUESTION: Why not hold a similar panel discussion with leaders of the so-called "Planned Parenthood" movement in a larger hall?

ANSWER: What is to be gained by it?

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