

WHAT THEY ASK ABOUT

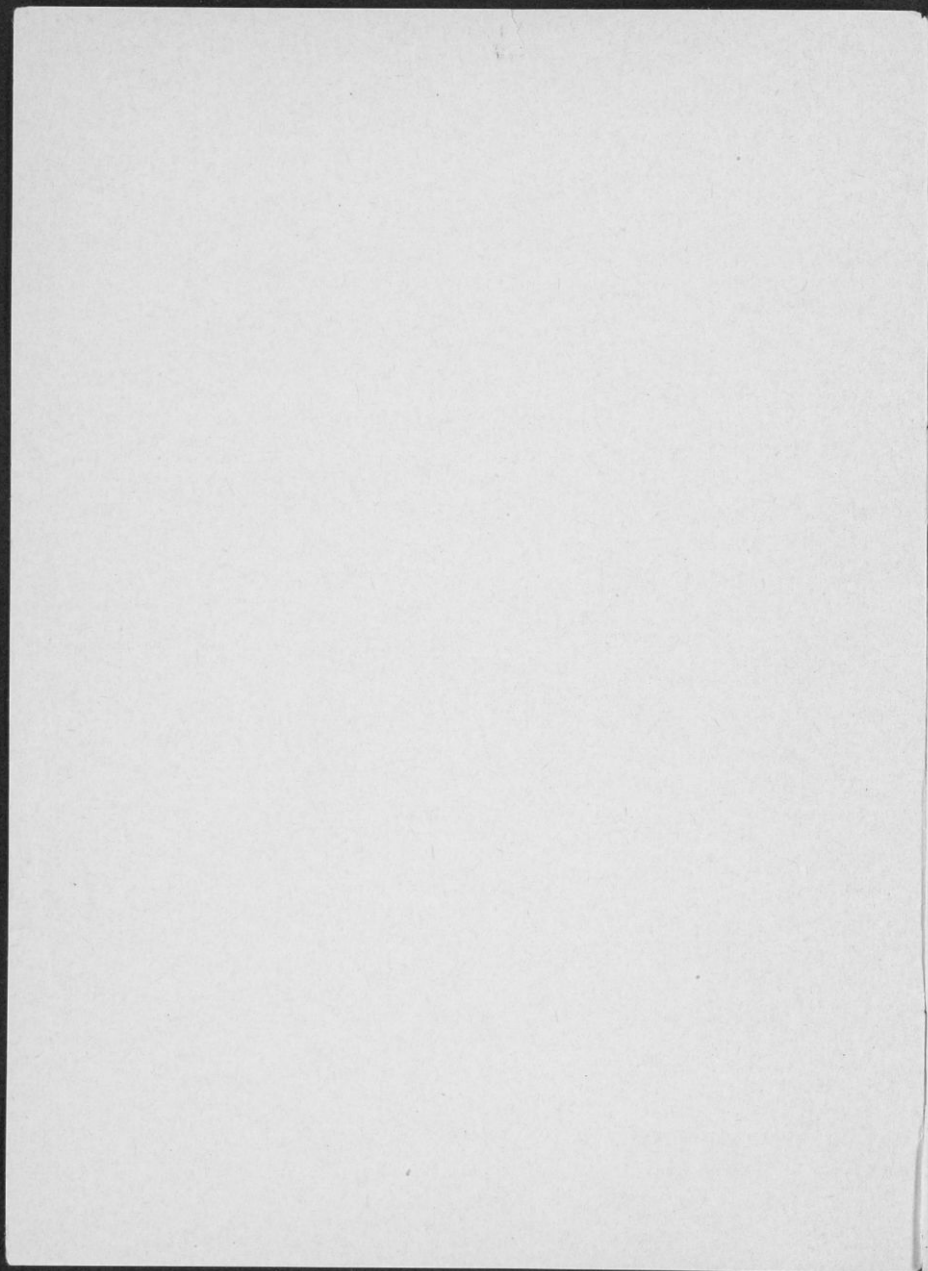
Conway, J.D.  
- What they ask about  
birth control  
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# BIRTH CONTROL

By Monsignor J. D. Conway



Right attitude  
Broken vow  
Sterilization  
So many do  
Advice of non-Catholic doctor  
The Bible says  
Stand of the Church  
Attitude of the Church  
Books favoring contraception  
Catholic doctor  
A priest's advice  
Wife cooperates  
False conscience  
Mortal sin?  
Confession  
Buying the contraceptions  
RH factor  
Slums  
Malthus



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CONTROL**

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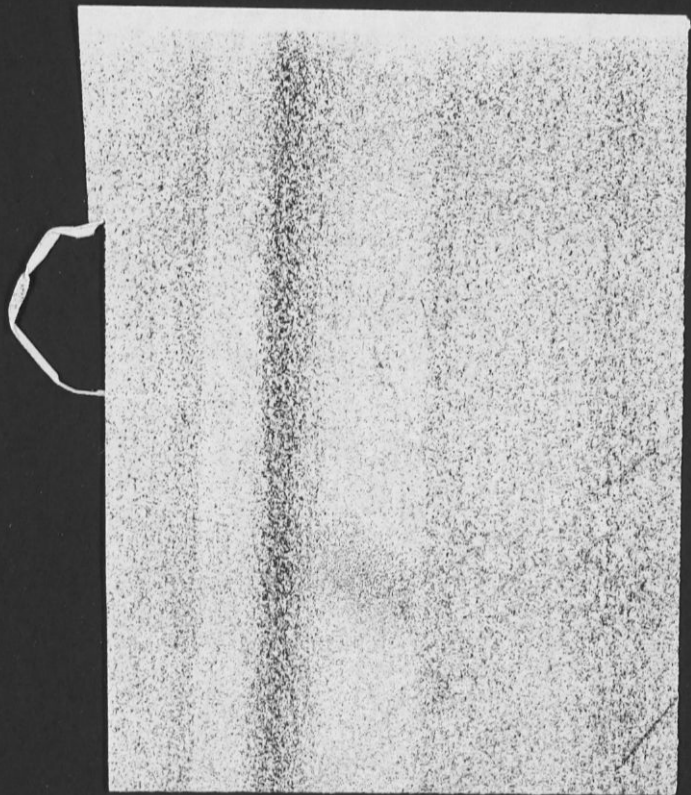
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## BIRTH CONTROL

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*Q. Please solve my problem. When I was married, our pastor told me to use my marriage privilege in a natural way. He said that to do otherwise would frustrate God's plan and be a mortal sin. We have been blessed with six lovely children and are very happy, but our financial status prevents us from "keeping up with the Jones'." Lately I have been hearing: "What, another one? You ought to be ashamed. How can you cheat the ones*

*you have by taking from them to give to others?" Am I cheating them, and just what should I do under such circumstances?*

A. Maybe you should follow that tendency—which you must have had at times—to tell your critics to go to the devil, whose cause they are representing to you. But it is surely more charitable and patient to simply remind them that another new soul which can be happy with God for all eternity seems more important in your eyes than a few additional material benefits for yourselves and your children. Your letter leads me to suspect that your family is much more happy than those of your critics.

*Q. Many years ago a mother made a vow to the Blessed Virgin that she would never do anything to prevent the birth of children. She has a large family, but recently she advised and assisted her daughter to produce an abortion. She is now afraid to go to confession because she has broken her vow. She can not even pray to the Blessed Virgin now, and she always had great devotion to her. Is the breaking of her vow a sacrilege which can not be forgiven?*

A. This mother has been guilty of many grievous sins, but they can all be forgiven if she is sincerely and honestly sorry, as she apparently is. There are more important things than her vow to worry about in this case. Taking the life of a human being, depriving it of the chance of baptism and heaven, the scandal of leading her own daughter into serious sins, and the excommunication from the Church which she has incurred by having part in an abortion.

I wonder if it was a real vow which she took. Vows are not made to the Blessed Virgin, but to God alone. Solemn promises might be made to the Blessed Virgin; but these would not have force of law, or bind under pain of sin.

Sometimes when a person says she made a vow to the



Blessed Virgin she means that she made a vow to God in honor of Mary. But before it can be a real vow the person making it must fully realize that she is binding herself under pain of sin—that she is making a special law for herself. And she must fully intend to accept that obligation and bind herself under sin.

The breaking of a private vow is not called a sacrilege, in the strict sense. But even if it were it would be quickly forgiven if repentance were sincere. It is a sin against religion, and it is serious, but it should not keep a person from confession a single day.

Catholics should not make vows without the advice of their confessor.

The excommunication may cause more trouble. The priest may have to obtain faculties from the bishop to absolve from it. But the seal of confession will be strictly observed. If the mother did not know about this excommunication, she did not incur it, and the priest can absolve her without delay.

The Blessed Virgin will not forget a quarter-century of faithfulness to this vow, or promise, because of one violation, serious as it is. Pray to her with confidence and love—and go to confession at once.

*Q. Is it possible for a young couple who have had eight children and are expecting the ninth, who have tried to use the rhythm system and find it impossible on account of physical disturbance of the young mother, to get permission to have an operation so that there will be no more children?*

A. It is not possible for anyone in the Church to give you permission to have this operation. The immediate purpose of the operation is sterilization. That is contrary to the law of God. No one can give you permission to break the law of God; no one can give you permission to steal, or lie, or commit adultery.

I think everyone sympathizes thoroughly with you in your problem. You write that you are still very young and that you have many complicating difficulties in the family. Apparently Our Lord expects you to be heroic. He does demand unusual sacrifices from some people, and usually from those whom He loves most.

*Q. Is not the fact that so many good Catholics practice birth control proof that the Church is divided on the matter?*

A. Good Catholics don't. Even if an equal number of otherwise good Catholics began robbing banks, it would not prove the Church had changed her teaching on the seventh commandment.

*Q. To what extent can a Catholic rely on the advice of her non-Catholic doctor, who tells her she should have no more children? There is no Catholic doctor in her community.*

A. She might ask him what he would have her do about it. She might explain to him that artificial birth control is out of the question for her, that it is morally wrong, a mortal sin. Does he merely think it inadvisable for her to have another child? Would he advise periodic abstinence—the rhythm? Or does he think it gravely dangerous to her health or life to have another child—so dangerous that he would not trust the rhythm, but would recommend complete abstinence from marital relations?

If she pins him down this way, she may get some practical advice. It is quite easy for a non-Catholic doctor to simply tell a patient that she should have no more children. To him it seems the safer procedure. Why take a chance? It might be dangerous. It will be difficult, at least. He intends artificial birth control, of course. He may be inclined to ridicule scruples against this practice; but if a Catholic patient is firm and makes it clear to him that she does not solve

problems by breaking the moral law, she may make him realize the problem he poses for her. Once he understands, his advice should be the same as that which a Catholic doctor would give.

I would not be guilty of advising a woman to go contrary to her doctor's warning in a serious medical matter. But I do advise her to beware of his encouragement that she commit sin. In matters of health and medicine he is presumed competent. In questions of morality he may be immorally wrong.

*Q. What are the words and where do you find it in the Bible that birth control should not be practiced?*

A. Genesis 38:8-10 relates that Onan practiced birth control: "And therefore the Lord slew him, because he did a detestable thing."

Good thing the Lord doesn't keep up his sudden punishment to Onan's successors. Birth control would be not only sinful but an extremely dangerous practice. And race suicide would be quickly accomplished.

*Q. Do you think the Catholic Church will ever change its stand on birth control?*

A. I'm certain she will not. It's a law of God, not a law of the Church.

*Q. I am a convert and have five children. A Catholic told me that the Church does not encourage large families but forbids birth control. Is that statement correct?*

A. Almighty God forbids prevention of conception by artificial means. The Church finds it necessary these days to insist

that such action is immoral. The Church has made no law in the matter. God's law is perfectly clear.

If nothing sinful is done to prevent conception, the size of the family does not directly concern the Church. God, through his natural laws, will probably take care of that. Catholic writers and teachers constantly point out the advantages of large families over small ones: more immortal souls for eternal happiness and God's glory; more generosity, happier family life, and greater social adaptability; less selfishness, less frustration, and much more genuine love.

Of course, practical, hard-headed (and hard-hearted) moderns will argue in favor of the small family, that it is better to have a few and raise them well, etc. For answer, make your own survey: apart from certain under-privileged large families—made that way by social injustice, or personal defects—is it your own observance that the pampered brats of eugenically proper families are better raised than the wholesome, hearty brood of holy, happy, healthy homes?

*Q. I am reading books favoring contraceptives, because I feel I would be dishonest if I did not see both sides of the question. My sister says this is wrong. Which of us is right?*

A. Your sister is a smart girl. Your zeal for honesty is misleading you. The label on the bottle says poison, but you feel you would be dishonest if you did not try it and see for yourself. It would not be right for you to take the chemist's word that it is poison.

If you were a moral theologian I would advise you to read those books. You would be able to pick out their errors. But in your case, your fervent zeal for seeing both sides of the question convinces me you are gullible enough to simply devour those errors.

*Q. My non-Catholic sister-in-law says that her doctor (a Catholic) says that it is all right for her to use a diaphragm to pre-*

*vent her having any more children for a while. She already has four, and the doctor says she should not have another one right away because of her health.*

*I told her this doctor must not be living up to his religion, if he inserts a diaphragm or advises the use of one.*

*My question is this, may a person, under any circumstances, use a diaphragm as a means of birth control?*

A. The use of a diaphragm to prevent conception is wrong and sinful. It is contrary to the law of God. There are no exceptions to this law. There are no circumstances which permit the use of any type of instrument, medicine, or other material as a means of birth control.

If a Catholic doctor really encouraged your sister-in-law to use a diaphragm, fitted her with one, or directed her elsewhere to be so fitted, he did wrong. He is either (1) *ignorant of the true meaning of God's law and the Church's teaching regarding it*, or (2) *he is deliberately breaking this law in a serious way*.

He might try to argue that your sister-in-law is not obliged to observe this law, because she is not a Catholic. He is wrong. The law comes from God, and all His people are bound by it, whether they be Catholic or heretic, Christian or pagan.

He may argue that she does not believe that birth control is wrong, and hence commits no sin by it. So he is not co-operating in sin or encouraging her to commit sin. He is simply leaving her in good faith and giving her some good amoral medical advice or assistance. Again he is wrong. He may not make use of his patient's ignorance to accomplish a purpose contrary to the moral law. It is like putting a gun in the hands of a child and telling that child to shoot someone. The child is not guilty of sin.

He may argue: well, if I don't fit that diaphragm, she will simply go to another doctor who will, and I will lose a

patient. The answer: and if you do fit it, you will lose a soul, and it will be your own.

*Q. Can a priest ever advise a woman penitent to have herself fitted with a diaphragm to prevent conception? Sounds incredible, but a friend of my wife solemnly told her that a married friend of hers was so advised by a confessor because they "already have five children and any more would be a severe economic burden." I have heard similar allegations made four times in the last four years by four different married women. One of them swore that her confessor told her: "Go ahead and practice (artificial) birth control but be sure to confess it every time." My question: Do YOU think any priests could be guilty of such grave errors?*

A. I do not—definitely and absolutely. I think there might have been misunderstanding of what the priest did tell them, or a process of rationalization in an effort to find excuse. I think that the stories might have been distorted, too, as they passed through the ears and mouths of three women before they came to you (and I pay my deep respects to your wife). Priests can make big mistakes at times; but I can't imagine one being that far wrong.

If a confessor ever did give such advice, in matters of this kind, the law of the Church requires that it be reported to the Bishop—by the party getting the advice.

*Q. Is it a mortal sin on the part of a wife if her husband interrupts intercourse against her wishes, or is it only a mortal sin on his soul? His purpose is birth control.*

A. The problem you present is a very complicated one, and it is very difficult to give a general answer. Certainly no one

is guilty of sin unless they consent to it. A wife is not guilty of sin because of something her husband does against her will. However, in matters of this kind, the co-operation between husband and wife is most intimate. If the wife fully knows that her husband intends to commit sin in the course of the act in which she is co-operating with him, can she give her co-operation? She does not want to commit sin. She gives no direct consent to the sin. But she has an immediate part in the act by which sin is committed. The sin would not be possible without her.

Questions so complicated should usually be taken up in the confessional, and presented on an individual basis, with all the circumstances. We may make these following general observations:

1. Is the wife really desirous of having children? Is she whole-heartedly opposed to birth control herself? Or would she like to avoid conception and at the same time avoid sin? Is she simply anxious to avoid personal responsibility and shift the burden to her husband? The wife's attitude in this regard can have a great influence upon the husband's action. If she is entirely honest in her own attitude and intentions, in a great majority of the cases she can probably induce her husband to agree with her.

2. Presuming that she is honest, has she really and sincerely tried to get her husband to conduct his relations properly? She must do all that she can to avoid even the material part which she has in his sin. And unless she honestly tries to keep him from the sin, she will also have a formal part in it.

3. If she is honest and sincere in her attitude, and has really tried to get her husband to perform the act properly, then she is probably not guilty of sin. She directly co-operates with him in a relationship which is entirely right and proper. She knows that the relationship will not be completed rightly, but she has no direct part in that. She is opposed to it. She has done all she can to prevent it.

Again, I say it is a matter which should be taken up in confession where all the particular circumstances can be discussed and understood.

*Q. Your answers in the Question Box on birth control have caused me some serious thought. My parents believed in birth control; I followed their way. Two was enough for me. I encouraged my children to do likewise. Now, I am wondering: Have I done wrong in encouraging this practice? I have never mentioned this in confession. Now my eyes are opened. Should I make a general confession?*

A. Wrong things done in sincere good faith are not sins. When we honestly believe that a bad act is good, we have no moral guilt in doing it. We do not need to confess it when we later find out that it was bad.

Your sins are things which you do contrary to your own personal conscience. As long as you follow your conscience when it tells you an act is good and should be done, you are guilty of no sin. They might put you in jail for it, but you will never go to hell for it.

Sometimes our consciences are wrong, as in your case. You were wrongly taught. But you followed your conscience. The things you did were wrong, but you committed no sin. If you were to do the same things now that you know better, it would be a sin.

We must never judge past acts by knowledge we acquire later. Judge them by the knowledge you had at the time you did them.

We need confess only actual sins. The wrong things you did were not sins, because you did not know they were wrong. They do not now become sins when you learn that they were wrong. You have no obligation to confess them. I would advise against confessing them. But if you think it



would make your conscience more at ease, then you might explain the matter to the priest in confession just as you have explained it to me. That should be enough; and you should then give it no more thought—except to undo, as far as you can, the wrong teaching you have given your children.

*Q. Is it a mortal sin to practice birth control? If you confess it, and your intentions are to continue this practice, can you receive Holy Communion in the state of grace, or would you be guilty of mortal sin?*

A. Birth control is a mortal sin. It is directly opposed to the purpose of the marriage act. It is contrary to the virtue of chastity, because it seeks sexual pleasure for its own sake while deliberately frustrating the purpose for which God intended the pleasure.

When we go to confession we must realize the serious wrong in our sins and be honestly sorry for them because they offend God who loves us, because they repudiate the love of our Lord Jesus Christ dying on the Cross for us, or at least because they deprive us of the happiness of heaven and condemn us to the unending sufferings of hell.

We cannot be honestly sorry for our sins if we intend to repeat them. Suppose you had hit your friend in the face, and you told him, "Oh, I am awfully sorry for that; I realize how wrong it was and how it hurt you; I hope you will forgive me. But, of course, you know that as soon as you do forgive me, I intend to hit you again. It gives me so much pleasure."

Can you imagine your friend forgiving you while you are so disposed?

Birth control presents a problem in confession, because often the person who confesses it has no honest practical intention of discontinuing the sin. They simply "feel bad" about sinning and have an uncomfortable wish that the practice were not "necessary," or they make a vague half-

hearted promise to "try" with a secret intention of failing in their "try." But even this insincerity is preferable to the attitude of those who have "rationalized" their sin and found excuse for it in their own blinded conscience—who question the Church's teaching, and ask, "Did GOD really forbid it?" These have lived too much with the modern pagan errors adopted by their secular neighbors. Their sin is eating away the foundation of their faith.

Unless we are honest in confession our sins are not forgiven. We do not regain the state of grace. If we were to go to Holy Communion in that state we would commit a mortal sin of sacrilege. Do you think our Eucharistic Lord is pleased to be the guest of one who plans to slap Him in the face by mortal sin as soon as the opportunity offers?

*Q. I have a friend who was always forgiven at confession in her own parish for preventing conception, and she went to confession in another parish and was not forgiven. Can she now go back to confession in her own parish and get forgiven? Why aren't all our priests the same? I do feel that there is a lot of partiality.*

A. It is not a question of partiality but of insincerity, and it is your friend who is insincere. Apparently she has been able to fool her own priest into thinking that she is sincere. He has been trusting her, giving her the benefit of doubt, and hoping that she really intends to mend her ways. But evidently she makes no changes. She goes right out from confession and returns to her old life of sin. Now this other priest has caught her up, questioned her, and detected her dishonesty. She doesn't like it. None of us like to be caught telling lies; and she has been telling lies to Almighty God, to her pastor, and to herself, for a long time.

What does she think confession is? An absolution machine? Certainly it is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ to give

us His grace and to forgive us our sins. But it cannot pour grace into a soul which has closed itself against grace. It cannot forgive the sins of a person who likes sin better than God, and intends to remain in sin.

What good would it do your friend to go back to her own pastor and fool him all over again? She might get him to pronounce the words of absolution. But what good would those words do her? They would only add one more sin of sacrilege to her soul.

The basic essential for the forgiveness of sins is honest contrition. With that we can often have our sins forgiven even before we go to confession. Without that the Pope himself cannot give you effective absolution. You can sometimes receive absolution without confessing your sins at all, but you can never receive effective absolution without contrition.

The priest in confession acts as a judge. He must judge the disposition of the penitent. If he judges that the penitent is honestly sorry for his sins and really intends to reform, he must give him absolution. If he judges that the "penitent" is not really sorry, but intends to go right on sinning, he is forbidden to give him absolution. It would be a mortal sin of sacrilege for him to do so.

Usually the priest has to accept the word of the penitent. If he says he is sorry the priest will usually believe him. The very fact that he goes to the trouble and humiliation of confession indicates some good purpose. But often the frequency and circumstances of sin must make the priest suspicious. Then on inquiry he may find that this person is living in an immediate occasion of sin—or loves his sin so much he will not give it up. The priest will try to persuade him, but unless he really wants to give up his sin, and is willing to separate himself from its occasion, there is nothing more the priest can do. Absolution would do the penitent no good anyway.

The contrition which is needed for confession comes from a common-sense recognition of the Goodness of God and the evil of sin, and the offense it gives to God; a clear recollection of the love of God for us and our lack of love for Him,

of His gifts to us and the return we make to Him, of His death as Jesus Christ on the Cross for us and of our sins which caused His death; a brief glance into the happiness of heaven and the horrors of hell. As men of reason we must then be really sorry for the wrong we have done, and if that sorrow makes any sense we will be determined to avoid similar wrong for the future. It is most insincere to weep with sorrow for past sins while planning future ones with glee. That is to have two minds without making up either of them, to have two faces, the tearful one looking back—for the confessor to see—the anxious one looking forward to the devil's charms.

Honesty is the secret of a good confession. The person who is thoroughly honest with himself, his God, and his confessor, cannot possibly make a bad confession. The person who tries to deceive himself or his confessor can hardly make a good one.

*Q. If a person bought some of those contraptions which are on the market to be used for birth control, would they have committed a sin when they bought them, as they had the intention to use them? Would they be guilty of this sin even if they later decided not to use them, and actually never did?*

A. The mere buying of those things was a sin, but not nearly as serious as the intention of using them.

When we definitely decide to sin, we are guilty of sin. We are guilty internally of this sin which we decide to commit. Sin is primarily a product of the will. When our will decides upon sin, we are guilty of sin. Sometimes we carry it out; then it becomes an external sin. Sometimes we do not carry it out; then it remains an internal sin. Sometimes we are simply prevented from carrying it out; sometimes we change our minds.

From the rest of your letter I would judge that you are

inclined to be just a little bit scrupulous. Scrupulous people should not worry about internal sins. They are apt to become confused and to be fearful that they have committed sin when they actually have not.

People who are not scrupulous should know that there is a great difference between temptation and internal sin. We may be very much inclined to commit sin; we may dally with the idea; we may give some consideration to the attractiveness of the proposition; we may be on the fence; and all of this may remain only a temptation and putting ourselves in danger of sin.

But it is not until we definitely decide to commit the sin that we are guilty of the internal sin itself. Then, if we later change our mind, we are still guilty of the internal sin which we committed, even though we never put it into practice.

It might be possible for a person to commit a number of internal mortal sins about one and the same action. For instance, you might wake up on Sunday morning, look at your clock, and then decide that you are not going to bother getting up and going to Mass. You roll over and go to sleep. You have committed internally the sin of missing Mass. Then later on you wake up and realize that you are seriously obliged to go to Mass; so you make up your mind to fulfill your obligation. You jump up and start to dress. Then you realize how tired and sleepy you are; so you decide that it is simply too much trouble. You go back to bed again with a definite intention that you are not going to go to Mass this Sunday. Then again before the time of the last Mass, you decide that you must fulfill your obligation. You start the process all over again, but then you start thinking of a trip you would like to take, and you decide that you won't go to Mass after all; you will go on this trip. You might change your mind again and actually go to Mass, but you would be guilty of three serious sins of deciding to miss Mass.

This is quite different from the situation you would find yourself in if you woke up in the morning, and you were simply awfully tired, very much tempted not to get out

of bed, and you started dallying with the idea of missing Mass, without ever reaching a definite decision. You would be fooling with temptation, but you would not be guilty of the internal sin of missing Mass. You might dally with the temptation most of the morning, and then get up and go to Mass and be guilty of no serious sin.

*Q. What about the problem of the Rh factor in pregnancy and birth? I know a case in which three babies have died. The doctor recommends sterilization.*

A. Your question is a difficult one, and there is no easy solution. We hope the doctors may find a solution soon; but meanwhile we must keep in mind moral principles of right and wrong. We may not solve a problem by committing sin.

Sterilization is wrong when it is done to prevent conception. It is not a solution to this problem.

Artificial birth control is wrong. It can not be presented as a solution to the problem.

In extreme cases continence seems to be the only solution. It demands heroic sacrifice, but is the only choice between sin and death.

If the mother's health is not too critically endangered, normal or periodic marital relations are recommended, with trust in God and submission to His holy will.

It is recommended that all young people know their blood types, and whether they are Rh positive or Rh negative. If a young woman knows that she is Rh negative she will be very smart not to let herself fall in love with a man who is Rh positive. Likewise the Rh positive man may avoid trouble, tragedy, temptation, and tribulations if he avoids all amorous contact with Rh negative girls. Once they have fallen in love they will hardly be deterred from marriage by distant threats of dangerous abortions and miscarriages or of children born

with erythroblastosis, to undergo critical transfusions, with death or debility as the probable outcome.

*Q. In the slum districts, where it is a fight to keep alive, it usually happens that families are unusually large, and very often must accept relief, which is a burden on the taxpayers. Why wouldn't birth control be the answer, and if not what would you suggest?*

A. Birth control is not the answer because it is contrary to the law of God. It is mortal sin, and we don't solve any problems by mortal sin. The end does not justify the means. Birth control is no more the right solution than rat-poison for the kids, or sterilization for the parents, or a lighted match touched to the shacks.

How does God want us to solve the problem? That is the question we must keep asking ourselves; and much time and effort is wasted by social planners who ignore that question. They find handy rat-poison solutions which destroy the souls of men and weaken the moral fiber of society, while raising the standard of living.

There is probably no single, simple solution. But there are many things we can do to help: (1) *eliminate slum conditions by community effort*, (2) *provide employment*, (3) *pay just wages*, (4) *iron out the various inequities in our industrial and social system*, (5) *provide capable social workers who can help with family and personal problems*, (6) *provide schools and churches for education and spiritual training*, (7) *work out the present thorny problem of adequate medical and hospital care*.

We would not be so blind and hard-hearted as to fail in sympathy for the poor taxpayer. He certainly is not the forgotten man; he is rather the gotten man—they get him coming and going. But relief to the poor is not one of his great burdens. I am sure he is supporting more government

workers on fine salaries than he is slum families on relief rolls. The poor may be a burden, but helping them will never cause ruinous inflation which comes from riotous deficit spending and fiscal incompetency. In other words, slum relief has usually been a minor problem of the taxpayer; it hardly rates the name of head-ache amid the racking pains which afflict his oft-gouged frame.

Then there is the question of long-term costs. Easy solutions like birth-control are cheap now. But they tear up God's laws and undermine social morality. What may later be the costs of all that? There will be the devil to pay, of course—and his charges come high. Whence come the frightening costs of Communism to the world? The costs in fears and frustrations and armament prices and disrupted industry? Do they not come ultimately from distortion of truth and perversion of morality?

If we all believed God's teachings and obeyed His laws the world would be peaceful, happy, prosperous and confident. There would be no war, or threat of war, no enemies or injustices, no want or poverty or fear. These things result from breaking God's laws—trying to solve problems cheaply and simply and immorally. Let's do it according to His rules, if we want permanent results here and eternal results hereafter.

*Q. A Jesuit priest recently stated that the world does face the "danger of over-population." Is not this Malthusianism? Are we not to believe that when God ordered man to "increase and multiply," He would give man enough resources to sustain human life in a decent manner?*

A. The Rev. Thomas Malthus was an English clergyman of the late 18th century. He was very gloomy about man's prospects, predicting that human beings would soon all be starving to death because population was increasing much faster than the food supply. He made it mathematical; the increase



of humans is geometric, 2 - 4 - 16 - 256 - 65536; the best food increase to be hoped for is arithmetic, 2 - 4 - 8 - 16 - 32. So in fifty years — by mid-nineteenth century — disaster would be upon us.

The mid-nineteenth century saw an industrial boom and more food per mouth than Malthus had known. While events made his dire predictions ridiculous, he has not lacked disciples who found much truth in his general theories. They are called neo-Malthusians. Their favorite proof is India where the starving population increases five million a year and the food supply increases hardly at all. And usually their favorite facile remedy is birth-control.

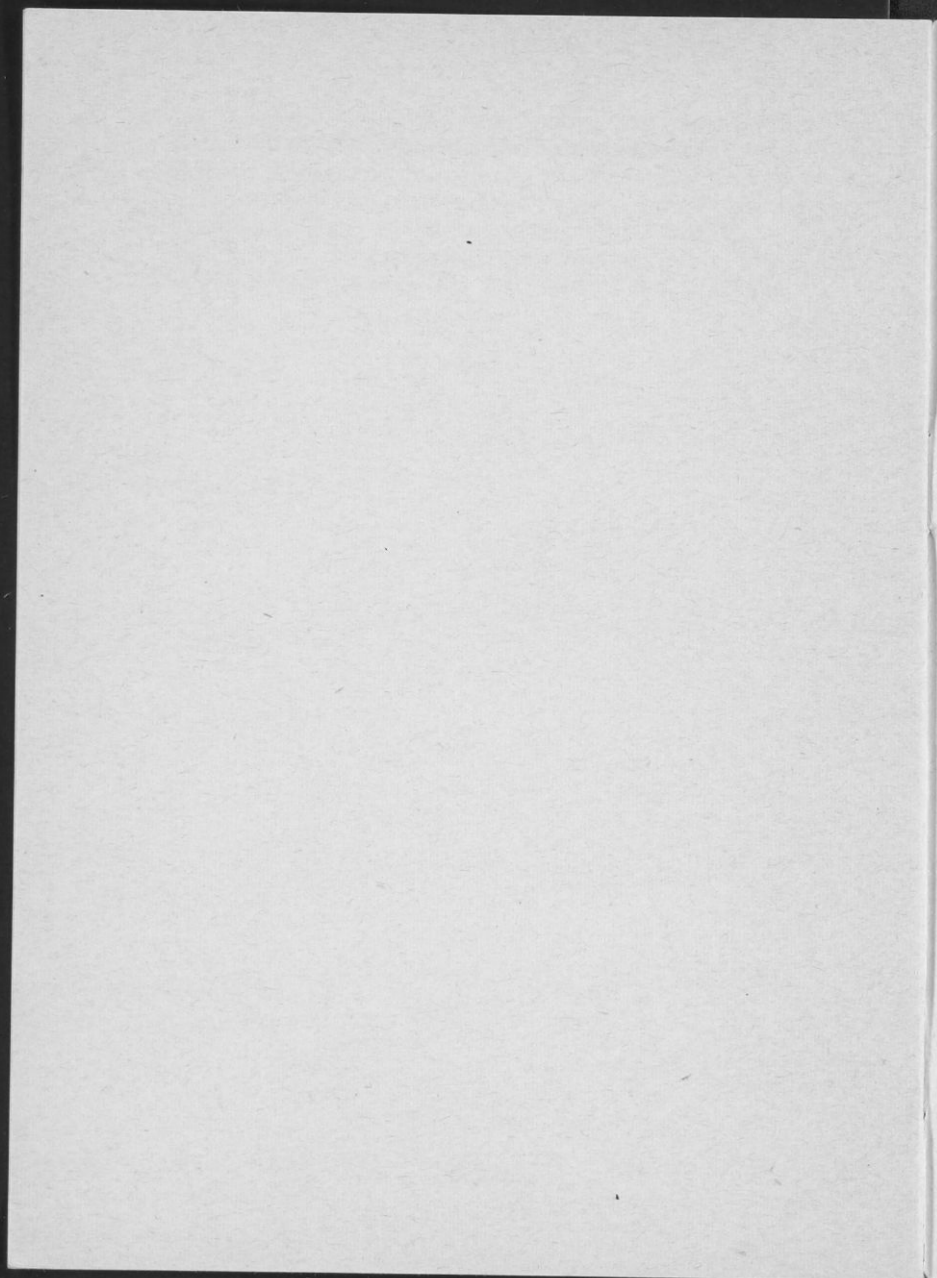
The subject is much too vast and complicated for me to have even an opinion on the facts. The world's population is certainly increasing rapidly, and yet we are constantly finding new sources of energy, supplies, and food. In the industrial areas of the world the standard of living increases with the population. There are tremendous opportunities for the improvement of farming methods, increasing soil fertility, and utilizing new areas, to say nothing of the food supply which might come from the sea. If these advances were made the world might feed many times its present population. But prophets of doom warn us that the population growth, led by India and China, will overwhelm us and starve us before we can make these advances.

My faith in God gives me assurance that He knows all the answers and has it all planned out, and is constantly on the job looking after the world, noting each sparrow which falls, and constant in His love for the man He created in His own image, redeemed with His own blood, and adopted as His own son. God has never promised man that He will be free of want, suffering, or catastrophe. But He has promised him eternal happiness if he keeps His laws. He never claimed that His universe was perfect. It couldn't be; it is created. But He has demonstrated considerable ingenuity in solving its problems as they arise. Among living things on earth there seems to be a system of balance and compensation. Let one increase out of proportion and a parasite comes along to

reduce it to its place, and then something else handles the parasite. When man disturbs the balance he usually runs into problems. God wants him to use his ingenuity and to work, but if he starts trying to solve his own population balance contrary to God's law, his problems will be eternal.

That thermonuclear bomb recently dropped in the Pacific might be the instantaneous solution to the problem.





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