



National Association of Catholic Families



“The future of Humanity passes by way of the Family”
Pope John Paul II



MORAL VALUES EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

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MORAL VALUES EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

A great deal of work has been done recently on values education for children and teenagers in schools. However, parents in several parts of the UK have found much of the material presented in our schools to be explicit, wrong and to actually encourage sin. Here we set out some clear principles to help parents and protect their children from being given inappropriate information and guidance.

Remember, parents are the prime educators and protectors of their children in matters of family life.

So, parents must

- Know exactly what material is to be offered to their children.
- Be able to comment upon this material
- Opt in (or out of) programmes as they wish.
- To understand what is (and is not) appropriate, read the definitive Vatican document “The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality” (TMS). We are delighted to hear that at least one diocese has now agreed that TMS is the central document for such school based packages. We’ll be telling you more about this in future editions of *Family Roundup* distributed regularly to NACF members. (New members can obtain a copy of the *Family Roundup* newsletter via our membership secretary).

In this edition of *Catholic Family* we provide some information on ‘teenage values education’ and also a checklist which parents can use when assessing the value of educational packages offered to our teenagers. (Parents who are concerned about packages in their children’s schools may contact us via the Secretary. The links in this article are to related papers prepared by the NACF).

Teenage moral values education

You will be very aware that the issue of teenage pregnancy has provided headline news for many years and a great deal of work has gone into trying to reduce teenage sexual activity and pregnancy. It is, of course, the case that pregnancy is not the only adverse effect of teenage sexual activity. As well as sexually transmitted diseases, there are also the issues of lifelong success in stable marriage, as well as stable parenting of future generations. (see our paper on *Human Life, Love and Marriage -- A Total Vision of Man and Married Love* in the last edition of *Family Roundup*).

Many parents have been told of school education packages that

- The school nurse is ‘Catholic’
- The diocese is happy with the package
- It supports Catholic values.

Not always! Several programmes of which this has been said are fundamentally **un-Catholic** and **harmful**. Such reassurances should not be taken at face value therefore.

Parents are the primary educators of children in these matters [1] and it is therefore the policy of the Catholic Church that schools should fully involve parents in these ventures. Where children are taught in school

- they should be taught with sexes separated.
- education should focus on values and issues of marriage
- biological explanations should be limited and not the key focus of work.

A fierce debate has raged between those who promote discussion of biological matters and promotion of value free discussion, with knowledge of condoms and those who have felt that educational

initiative should be more solidly based upon value discussion and life-time planning.

In the United States a widespread adoption of values-based education programmes has been associated with positive outcomes. For example, in one scheme in Monroe County, New York, research showed that such a programme had a positive impact. After three years of teaching 9-14 year-olds, the number of students saying they had sex by the age of 15 fell from 47 to 32 per cent, while the pregnancy rates among 15 to 17-year-old girls fell faster than in surrounding counties. (Source: *Journal of Health Communication*) [2] In contrast, the promotion of contraception and condoms to teenage children in the UK has led to a small rise in abortion under the 1967 Act but a huge rise in pregnancies terminated by the use of the morning after pill.

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have said that the aim of chastity education “is to nurture the virtue of chastity”. [3][It is therefore right that parents of children in schools where biologically-based education programmes are favoured should be concerned. Some of these programmes include description of male and female organs at primary school levels; others try to suggest that masturbation is harmless and to be encouraged. Videos have been shown to primary school children, which talk of intercourse “when you feel ready”. School nurses employed outside of the school are given confidential access to young children - and their parents may be unable to know exactly what has been said discussed or prescribed. Parents are the primary **protectors** of their children. [4]

Parents have the absolute right to withdraw their children from programmes which they believe are unsuitable. They do not have to give reasons for doing this -- and it is our duty to support them. As Pope Pius XI said “*Conscientious parents, aware of their duty in the matter of education, have a primary and original right to determine the education of the children given to them by God in the spirit of the true faith and in agreement with its principles and ordinances. Laws or other regulations concerning schools that disregard the rights of parents guaranteed to them by the natural law, or by threat and violence nullify those rights, contradict the natural law and are utterly and essentially immoral.*” [5] Schools are obliged to support parents, and allow them to withdraw their children from teaching about which they are concerned.

Parents must be fully informed of the content of schools’ education packages. At the same time, parents may be advised about how better to discuss these matters with their children. A great deal has been said about the problems of communication with children on these issues and such an invitation will go a long way to supporting parents in discussing these issues.

The American Government Department of Health and Human Services has advised [6] that parents and other adult mentors must play key roles in encouraging young adults – and that abstinence and personal responsibility must be the primary messages of prevention programs [although along with chastity we emphasise the centrality of marriage]. The UK Government has also said that values based education is crucial. In January 2004 we read this newspaper headline: “Children should be told to say ‘No’ to sex to help stop the spread of infections, a Government agency said” [7]

Parents’ values and hopes are traditional which is why they want the best for their children. There is therefore, no reason to exclude them from the process of values education.

For further information, see our website and the references listed there.

[1] Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality www.catholic-family.org.uk

[2] Journal of Health communication Volume 6, Number 1 January-March 2001 and www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/womenfamily.html?in_article_id=206031&in_page_id=1799

[3] Catholic bishops conference of England and Wales <http://217.19.224.165/frameset.htm>

[4] Pope Pius XI encyclical Letter Mit brennender Sorge (The Church under Nazism) -Church in History Information Centre - reprinted for historical purposes, with permission of the Catholic Truth Society, London.

[5] Pope Pius XI encyclical Letter Mit brennender Sorge (The Church under Nazism) -Church in History Information Centre - reprinted for historical purposes, with permission of the Catholic Truth Society, London.

[6] <http://www.aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/teenp/teenpreg99.htm>

[7] www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/womenfamily.html?in_article_id=206031&in_page_id=1799

Checklist for parents to evaluate content and appropriateness of teenage values educational packages.

Core features of programmes should incorporate the following key points;-

Arrangement of programmes

- Parents must be recognised by all parties to be the primary educators *and protectors* of children in these matters
- Parents must be fully involved at all stages of any school-based education
- Parents have the right to see for themselves what material is planned for use in diocesan schools.
- Parents have duty to withdraw their children from programmes they consider damaging.
- Schools should, in fact, seek written permission from parents to **OPT IN** to such programmes well before they commence, just as they do for school trips.
- Boys and girls should be taught separately
- Material used must be available for inspection by parents, with adequate notice so that they may see what it contains and be involved in discussions with their children on the matters
- Parental control and protection must never be undermined - particularly by clandestine sex instruction classes or by school nurses prescribing the 'pill' or abortions in schools for which, under God, bishops are responsible

Content should be based around the following points;-

- The focus must at all times reflect the beauty and dignity of marriage and the family.
- Sexual love, is for the procreation of children and mutual support of the spouses in co-operation with God, within the lifelong exclusive covenant of marriage.
- The changes that take place at puberty prepare us for marriage and for motherhood and fatherhood – if that is to be our vocation.
- Is there emphasis on self control? Every person - married or single – must exercise self-control with regard to their sexual feelings and thoughts. Modesty in dress, prudence in conduct when alone with another person, trust and respect for parents etc. can greatly help this self control. Respect for parents should never be undermined.
- Trust and respect for parents which greatly helps this self-control must be emphasised..
- It should be stressed that although our sexual feelings are good when rightly directed within marriage, they are affected by the weakness of sin. In particular, they can be used in greed, selfishness, addiction and even violence.
- Graphic descriptions of the marriage act are not appropriate.
- Only honest good information should be given. "Safe sex" messages are therefore forbidden. These messages are deceptive;- condoms still allow the spread of infection and nothing, apart from chastity, properly prevents the spread of many sexually transmitted diseases

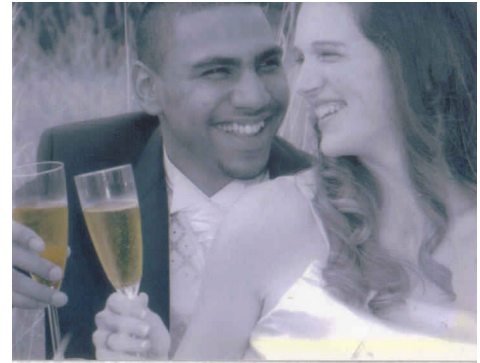
All programmes must conform to the guidance in *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality* which is available from the NACF website www.Catholic-family.org

Human Life, Love and Marriage;- A total vision of man and married love

The most famous statement of the twentieth century on marriage and love was, without doubt “Humanae Vitae” [1] meaning “on human life”. Humanae Vitae (HV) was written by Pope Paul VI in 1968. Most people think that HV is all about contraception. This is in fact, not true.

Complete Married Love

The central message of HV is an absolutely beautiful vision of complete married love. At its core HV talks of a “total vision of man” and “married love.” Without this vision, marriage is unstable, illegitimacy common and young people are denied the opportunity of a fulfilling married life. HV states that “*Marriage is the wise institution of the Creator to realize in mankind His design of love.*”



The key characteristics of marriage as described in HV are

- Marriage is fully human
- Marriage is total
- Marriage is faithful
- Marriage is exclusive.

This vision describes a strong indissoluble 100% commitment in love of man to woman. This is, indeed the central vision of marriage which has supported so many couples and families through thousands of years. Contraception does not feature in this description. It is however completely clear that in marriage “*love is total, ..., it is a very special form of personal friendship, in which husband and wife generously share everything, without undue reservations or selfish calculations. Whoever truly loves his marriage partner loves not only for what he receives, but for the partner's self, rejoicing that he can enrich his partner with the gift of himself.*”

Love is about new life

HV points out that love is destined to continue, raising up new lives. “*Marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the begetting and educating of children. Children are really the supreme gift of marriage and contribute very substantially to the welfare parents [2].* This vision is, in fact very attractive to young people. Sadly, at the start of the 21st century, this vision is obscured and few are able to see beyond a culture that sees marriage as temporary, negotiable and only a partial sharing of man with woman and woman with man.



It is in the vision of complete love and complete giving of one to another that HV says clearly that artificial contraception is wrong. When artificial contraception is used, the central and most exclusive act of marriage, is dishonoured. By the interference of contraception the reality of completely sharing married love is disrupted. Natural Family planning does not do this and is different;- it uses and accepts the fertility and love that God has given for marriage.

Rejection

When it was published many disputed and rejected HV. Over time, and in response to Pope Paul VI’s call for scientific study much scientific evidence has accrued to support HV. Artificial contraception has been associated with increasing rates of promiscuity and consequent illegitimacy and divorce wherever it has been made available [4]. Contraception has enabled cohabitation before marriage which has been shown to reduce the permanence of marriage. By contrast, couples who do not live together before marriage have better marriages, with less domestic violence, less conflict over money, are better at conflict resolution and stay married much more often [5]. ([link to statement on cohabitation](#)) Natural Family Planning which



is reliable and safe[6]([link to statement on NFP](#)) supports marriage and is associated with low rates of divorce [8] often below 1% over 5 years.

Anti-life alternative

The promotion of contraception to school children has been associated with rapid increases in rates of sexual activity and increases in sexually transmitted disease up by 62% between 1997 and 2004 [9] along with consequent adult infertility [10] and despite increasing use of post coital (morning after) abortion, a small increase in the rate of abortions carried out under the UK 1967 Abortion Act [11] and a huge increase in pregnancies terminated by the morning after pill. ([link to paper on teenage values education](#))

In the fight against AIDS it is now clear that Chastity and Be Faithful campaigns are helpful while the promotion of condoms has either failed to stop epidemics, or actually worsened them [12]. Indeed in the Philippines in 1987 there were more cases of aids (135) than Thailand (112), which has a considerably larger population with 82 million, compared with only 66 million. The World Health Organisation predicted in 1991 that by 1999 the Philippines would have between 80,000 and 90,000 cases, and Thailand 60,000-80,000. Thailand immediately started massive information campaigns promoting condoms. The Philippine Bishops on the other hand objected to this approach. (The Philippines are 85% catholic). The Bishops forcefully pleaded from the start for A (Abstinence) and 'B' (Be faithful). In 1999 Thailand did not have 80,000 victims, but 755,000. The Philippines however did not have 90,000 sufferers, but only 1,005! [13] ([link to paper on HIV prevention](#))

The best for our children

Chastity awareness programmes [14] have been associated with positive outcomes. There is now compelling evidence that the promotion of sexuality awareness in primary schools as is common practice in the UK, followed by confidential access to contraception in secondary schools will not reduce the pregnancy rate of teenagers, but will and does worsen the sexual health of those teenagers upon whom it is imposed. In addition it will also damage long term relationships and the health therefore of future generations. ([link to paper on teenage values education](#))



The prophetic message of HV

We must therefore remember that *Humanae Vitae* has now been supported by a wealth of scientific evidence. Its beautiful vision of fully shared, committed married love is a vision which inspires us all, young and old alike. This vision married couples must build each day of their married life. The surprise, for many, is that this simple vision expounded in HV, truly supports married love and promotes long term stable relationships. The anchor of that vision is completeness in marriage and the prohibition on artificial contraception is central to that completeness. Without it, scientific evidence shows that huge damage occurs. With it, and with the proper use of effective natural family planning, families, and married couples, have a future of which few currently dream.

- 1 www.catholic-family.org.uk/
- 2 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution GAUDIUM ET SPES, no. 50.
- 4 <http://www.cqnet.com.au/~user/dancasey/Contraception.htm>.
- 5 www.usccb.org/laity/marriage/cohabiting.htm
- 6 Natural family planning": effective birth control supported by the Catholic Church - BMJ 1993; 307: 723-26.
- 7 If used properly, Natural Family Planning is almost 100 percent effective with a .004 pregnancy rate (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1978)) versus "the pill," which is 97 percent effective, or the condom, which is 79-88 percent effective (*Contraceptive Technology*). <http://www.catholicerald.com/saunders/03ws/ws030731.htm>
- 8 www.ccli.org/nfp/divorce.shtml
- 9 www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/womenfamily.html?in_article_id=299672&in_page_id=1799
- 10 www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/thehealthnews.html?in_article_id=633&in_page_id=1797
- 11 www.statistics.gov.uk
- 12 BMJ 2004 James D. Shelton et. al. published in the British Medical Journal, volume 328, dated 10 April 2004.
- 13 30 April issue of Katholiek Nieuwsblad
- 14 www.famyouth.org.uk/issues.php?pagename=abstinence
- 15 www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/womenfamily.html?in_article_id=206031&in_page_id=1799
- and US Dept of Health and Human Services :- www.aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/abstinence02/ch2.htm
- 16 [http://news.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=603192004,](http://news.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=603192004)

Condoms, a step in the wrong direction

By Greg Clovis, of Family Life International (UK)

The BBC's "Today" programme (23/7/04) reported that despite the consistent and correct use of condoms by couples, 3 out of 10 of the women contracted AIDS - related complex (ARC) from their HIV positive partner in an 18-month period. In other words, there is an infection rate of about 20% per year.

During the post-pill and pre-HIV period the condom because of its method failure rate of more than 5% and its user failure rate of 15% was despised as a method of family planning. Yet the singular focus of the anti-AIDS campaign over the last 10 years has been to eulogize the protective qualities of the condom as a shield against the pandemic of sexually transmitted diseases (STD).

With no vaccine in sight and lacking the moral courage to embrace chastity, contemporary society, by marketing the condom as the solution to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, has put all its eggs in a condom basket. Yet the very experts who promote the condom as a strategic weapon against HIV/AIDS are silent in regard to its failure as a contraceptive. Nor do they highlight the care with which condoms must be 'stored and transported', HIV/AIDS epidemiology experts have established that not only is latex heat, cold, light and pressure sensitive but it is also adversely affected by humidity, ozone, air pollutants and deteriorates over time [1]. With this in mind, keeping a condom in a wallet, purse or car glove-box compartment would appear to violate the stringent storage requirements to maintain it in a good condition.

In an experiment to test the effectiveness of condoms against HIV, researchers filled condoms with a liquid containing plastic molecules analogous to the AIDS virus: i.e., they were similar in shape and size. These plastic particles were placed inside a condom with a glass plunger inside the condom. This arrangement was designed to imitate many of the 'environmental' factors operative during intercourse. By testing condoms in an active in-vitro (test tube) system which simulated key physical conditions that influence viral particle leakage an accurate understanding could be obtained of the protective attributes of condoms during actual coitus.

The test quantitatively addresses pressure, pH, temperature, surfactant properties (surface tension) and anatomical *geometry*. Leakage of HIV-sized particles through latex condoms was detectable for as many as 29 out of the 89 condoms tested. This result represents

a failure rate of 30%. [2]

Highly qualified researchers in the field of latex technology are now calling into question the merit of promoting condoms as a method of *stopping* the transmission of HIV-AIDS. For instance C.M. Rowland, Ph.D., editor of the journal *Rubber Chemistry and Technology*, wrote as long ago as 1992 to the Washington Post) stating:

- "... Electron micrographs reveal voids (holes) 5 microns in size (50 times larger than the virus), while fracture mechanics analyses, sensitive to the largest flaws present, suggest inherent flaws as large as 50 microns (500 times the size of the virus".)

This means that even a properly made condom can have naturally occurring channels which are at least 50 times larger than the AIDS virus.

One final note, a recent report from the UN clearly underscores the wisdom of the Catholic Church's position.. UN public health officials are perplexed by a paradox in the Philippines where there is both a very low rate of condom use and of HIV/AIDS infection. Condoms are not widely available in the Philippines and are generally shunned by the predominantly Roman Catholic population, yet no more than 10,000 out of a total of 84 million people are believed to be infected with HIV.

Official Philippino HIV/AIDS statistics are even lower than those estimated by the UN - they show that just 1,810 people have tested positive for HIV. However, Vietnam has a similar population to the Philippines but has around 130,000 people infected with HIV. Costa Rica, on the other hand has about the same number of cases of HIV and AIDS as the Philippines but is just one-twentieth its size, with 3.8 million people.

The reality is that the West's policy of forcing or seducing developing countries into adopting condoms as a solution against HIV/AIDS and STDs, when it is well known that no study has ever shown correlation between condom promotion and the reduction in STDs is tantamount to genocide on the part of the West.

[1]. Smith, R. W., "Safe" Sex? Bridgetown Evening News 25/1/1993

[2] Carey, R.F., Herman, W.A., Retta, S.M., Rinaldi, J.E., Herman, B.A., Athey, T.W. "Effectiveness of latex condoms as a barrier to human immuno-deficiency virus-size particulars under conditions of simulated use". *Sexually Transmitted Diseases* 1992; 19(4):230-234

THE NACF VISION.

The National Association of Catholic Families was founded in response to the Holy Father's call in his Apostolic Exhortation on the role of the Christian Family in the Modern World ("*Familiaris Consortio*") for families to meet and support one another in their mission of Catholic family life. We are founded upon the teachings of the Catholic Church on the Family. **The NACF is therefore an association of mutually supporting Catholic families who are faithful or try to be faithful to the Magisterium with particular reference to the Family Catechesis of the Popes. We are a living family catechesis.** The Association specifically supports families as they cherish and live out the vision of the family that Christ has expressed through His Church. All members both support and receive support through their support of the Association. We exist for both parents and children., as well as for families that cannot have children and for grandparents, uncles, aunts etc. Being Catholic, the NACF is open to any family who shares our basic *raison d'être* .



Family Days are the most central and most important thing we do. Family days vary in content but contain the following essential components.

1. We start with the Holy Father's Prayer for Families.
2. We display an image of the Holy Family who are our inspiration.
3. We cover some aspects of the Church's teaching on family life and then discuss them.
4. We end with the Prayer of Consecration to Our Blessed Lady to ask for Her protection for the families present at the Family Day.

By doing this we have supported many families, been blessed with new vocations and supported priests in their hope for the future of our Church. *Familiaris Consortio* and the other key Papal documents upon which we are founded are available via our website www.catholic-family.org.

About enthronement. We encourage all our families to enthrone Our Lady as Queen of their families, to pray the rosary daily as well as to attend confession regularly. These are basic and essential supports for our families as they live out their Catholic family life.

Wider support We are also supported by the prayers of contemplative orders in three continents, and have local groups in four continents. Older, sick and housebound people also help our families by daily prayer. In this way, they enrich and strengthen families just as they have throughout their lives.

Support us, pray for families and join, via our Website, or via our membership Secretary, Mrs J Patrick, Stelvio, Crane Hill, London Road, Ipswich, IP2 0SS