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Catholic Physicians' Guild

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## POPULATION PROBLEM REVIEWED . . .

"The Population Expansion" problem was the theme of the day-long scientific program presented to observe the 25th jubilee celebration of the Catholic Physicians' Guild of Detroit on November 9 of last year. Program participants included Reverend John L. Thomas, S.J. of St. Louis University who discussed the social aspects of population expansion, saying there is a "backlog of bitterness" growing among today's young married couples who have "the right and the obligation" to the moral principles and the medical knowledge regarding sex and regulating the family size but who are not being advised. He further said it is amazing the number of couples who have seized on the implication of change arising from the Second Vatican Council to convince themselves that the Church will somehow ease her opposition on such things as contraceptive devices. The widespread ignorance of couples regarding sexual morality in marriage calls for a "whole new system of education and training" as well as a "rethinking" of the moral principles and premises in this area. "We have an obligation to prepare these young people to make adequate decisions once they are married. They need this moral training and medical information when they are still free, not when they have become party to a sacred contract," Father Thomas said.

Dr. Thomas Burch of Georgetown University's Center for Population Studies, Washington, D.C., said there is no certainty standing-room-only signs will be placed on this earth, just because demographers predict a rapid population growth. "Something will

happen to change this situation," he claimed. The more dynamic view today, he indicated, is that man will not sit idly by but will strive to solve the problem of over-population.

Dr. Bernard Pisani, director of the rhythm research clinic at St. Vincent's Hospital of the City of New York, urged doctors to "open avenues of communication" on the subject of love and procreation to inform parents, clergy and physicians. Explaining the work of his clinic, founded in 1961, Dr. Pisani said studies indicate that the rhythm system has been employed with "a remarkable percentage of success" among the 300 couples under study. Although data available is in no way final, Dr. Pisani disclosed, the results prompted the New York Archdiocese to open similar clinics in other Catholic hospitals. "The search to perfect the rhythm method will do much to create happier families," Dr. Pisani stated.

Reverend Michael O'Leary of Sacred Heart Seminary, Philosophy Department, Detroit, scored advocates of government-sponsored birth control programs for their use of economic pressures to promote their ideas against the conscience of individuals. He also criticized promoters of "selfish love" by means of novels, movies and other communication means which affect the attitudes of "many of our own Catholics." Father O'Leary said that "it would be a tremendous blessing" if doctors would become better informed on the subject of periodic continence and would pass on this information to those patients who need this knowledge.