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Marriage and Contraception

Cormac Burke

Monsignor Burke delivered this paper at the Bay Area Conference on the Ethics of Human Reproduction, July 27-31, 1987 in San Rafael, California. The proceedings of this conference are forthcoming in a book to be published by Christendom College Press, Route 3, Front Royal, Virginia, 22630.

I. Background

A few preliminary remarks may help to set this theme in context. Some people maintain that the understanding of marriage which prevailed in the Church, up to Vatican II, was social or institutional. In their view, the traditional “bona” or “goods” of marriage — children, unity, perpetuity — were stressed to the detriment of the good of the spouses, which today is often described as the personalist end of marriage.

Vatican II, so they suggest, gave rise to a new understanding according to which the personalist end — the “intima communitas vitae et amoris coniugalís” (GS 48): the intimate partnership of life and love — is seen to be equally important along with the other ends; and is, in fact, seen as “independently” important, in the sense that it can stand on its own and basically has little or no relationship to the other ends.¹

Now, to turn to our immediate concern, there are two related issues before us — two questions asking for clear and, if possible, simple answers: a) why must the conjugal act be open to procreativity; b) why must procreation be the consequence of a true conjugal act?

Of these two issues, the first is bigger; it is of importance everywhere round the world, and of moral significance to practically all married couples. It has been the subject of intense debate for some 25 years, and at this stage, I feel, well-matured answers are available.

The second issue is of much more recent appearance. It also is intensely debated, although basically in academic circles with echoes in the press. It is of practical interest to relatively few couples. Probably it will take some years before its finer points (as in certain forms of homologous artificial

fertilization) can be fully seen in satisfactory light. I feel that a clear answer to this second question will largely come in consequence of having clearly answered the first, to which, in fact, most of my remarks will be addressed. My main endeavor, therefore, will be to show why one cannot annul the procreative aspect or the procreative reference of the marital act without necessarily destroying its unitive function and significance.

II. Contraception and Marital Union

There is a modern argument for contraception which claims to speak in personalist terms, and which could be summarized as follows. The marital act expresses love; it unites. It has, indeed, a possible procreational "side-effect" which can result in children. But since this side-effect depends on biological factors, which science today permits us to control, the procreative aspect of marital intercourse can be nullified, while leaving its unitive function intact.

Until quite recently, the traditional argument against birth control has largely been that the sexual act is naturally designed for procreation, and it is wrong to frustrate this design because it is wrong to interfere with man's natural functions. But the reply can be made, and is made that we do interfere with other natural functions, for instance when we use earplugs or hold our nose, etc., and no one has ever argued that to do so is morally wrong. Why then should it be wrong to interfere for good reasons with the procreational aspect of marital intercourse?

The defenders of contraception dismiss this traditional argument as mere "biologism"; as an understanding of the marital act that fails to go beyond its biological function or possible biological consequences, and ignores its spiritual function, i.e., its function in signifying and effecting the union of the spouses.

They feel they are on strong and positive ground here. The marital act, they maintain, is not only potentially a procreative act; it is actually and in itself a love-act, a unitive act. And, while contraception frustrates the biological or procreative aspect of the act, it fully respects the spiritual and unitive aspect and, in fact, facilitates it by removing tensions or fears capable of impairing the expression of love in married intercourse.

This is the contraceptive argument, couched in apparently personalist terms. If we are to offer an effective answer to it and show its radical defectiveness, I would suggest that we, too, need to develop a personalist argument, based on a true personalist understanding of sex and marriage.

This contraceptive argument is evidently built on an essential thesis: that the procreative and the unitive aspects of the marital act are *separable*, i.e., that the procreative aspect can be nullified without this in any way vitiating the conjugal act or making it less a unique expression of true marital love and union.

This thesis is of course explicitly rejected by the Church. The main reason why contraception is unacceptable to a Christian conscience is, as Paul VI puts it in "*Humanae Vitae*", the "*inseparable* connection,

established by God ... between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act" (HV 12).

Paul VI affirmed this inseparable connection. He did not, however, go on to explain *why* these two aspects of the marital act are, in fact, so inseparably connected, or why this connection is such that it is the very ground of the moral evaluation of the act. Yet, I think that serene reflection easily enough discovers the reasons why this is so: why the connection between the two aspects of the act is, in fact, such that the destruction of its procreative reference necessarily destroys its unitive and personalist significance. In other words, if one deliberately destroys the power of the conjugal act to give life, one necessarily destroys its power to signify love: the love and union proper to marriage.

III. The Marital Act as an Act of Union

Why is the act of intercourse regarded as *the* act of self-giving, the most distinctive expression of marital love? Why is this act, which is but a passing and fleeting thing, particularly regarded as an act of *union*? After all, people in love express their love and desire to be united in many ways: sending letters, exchanging looks or presents, holding hands What makes the sexual act unique? Why does this act unite the spouses in a way that no other act does? What is it that makes it not just a physical experience but a *love* experience?

Is it the special pleasure attaching to it? Is the unitive meaning of the conjugal act contained just in the sensation, however intense, that it can produce? If intercourse unites two people simply because it gives special pleasure, then it would seem that one or other of the spouses could, at times, find a more meaningful union outside marriage than within it. It would follow, too, that sex without pleasure becomes meaningless, and that sex with pleasure — even homosexual sex — becomes meaningful.

No. The conjugal act may or may not be accompanied by pleasure, but the meaning of the act does not consist in its pleasure. The pleasure provided by marital intercourse may be intense, but it is transient. The *significance* of marital intercourse is also intense, and it is not transient; it lasts.

Why should the marital act be more significant than any other expression of affection between the spouses? Why should it be a more intense expression of love and union? Surely because of *what happens* in that marital encounter, which is not just a touch, not a mere sensation, however intense, but a *communication*, an offer and acceptance, an exchange of something that uniquely represents the gift of oneself and the union of two selves.

Here, of course, it should not be forgotten that while two persons in love want to give themselves to one another, to be united to one another, this desire of theirs remains, humanly speaking, on a purely volitional level.² They can *bind* themselves to one another, but they cannot actually *give*

themselves. The greatest expression of a person's desire to give *himself* is to give the *seed* of himself. Giving one's seed is much more significant, and in particular is much more real, than giving one's heart. "I am yours, I give you my heart; here, take it", remains mere poetry, to which no physical gesture can give true body. But, "I am yours; I give you my seed; here, take it", is not poetry; it is love. It is conjugal love embodied in a unique and privileged physical action whereby intimacy is expressed — "I give you what I give no one" — and union is achieved. "Take what I have to give. This will be a new me. United to you, to what you have to give — to your seed — this will be a new *"you-and-me"*, fruit of our mutual knowledge and love." In human terms, this is the closest one can get to giving one's self conjugally and to accepting the conjugal self-gift of another, and so achieving spousal union.

Therefore, what makes marital intercourse express a *unique* relationship and union is not the sharing of a sensation, but the sharing of a *power* — an extraordinary life-related, creative, physical, sexual power. In a true conjugal relationship, each spouse says to the other: "I accept you as somebody like no one else in my life. You will be unique to me and I to you. You and you alone will be my husband; you alone will be my wife. And the proof of your uniqueness to me is the fact that with you, and with you alone, am I prepared to share this God-given life-oriented power."

In this consists the singular quality of intercourse. Other physical expressions of affection do not go beyond the level of a mere gesture; they remain a symbol of the union desired. But the conjugal act is not a mere symbol. In true marital intercourse, something *real* has been exchanged, with a full gift and acceptance of conjugal masculinity and femininity. And there remains, as witness to their conjugal relationship and the intimacy of their conjugal union, the husband's seed in the wife's body.³

Now if one deliberately nullifies the life-orientation of the conjugal act, *one destroys its essential power to signify union*. Contraception in fact turns the marital act *into self-deception or into a lie*: "I love you so much that with you, and with you alone, I am ready to share this most unique power" But *what* unique power? In contraceptive sex, no unique power is being shared, except a power to produce pleasure. But then the uniqueness of the marital act is reduced to pleasure. Its significance is gone.

Contraceptive intercourse is an exercise in meaninglessness. It could perhaps be compared to going through the actions of singing without letting any sound of music pass one's lips.

Some of us can remember the love duets of Jeanette McDonald and Nelson Eddy, two popular singing stars of the early "talkies". How absurd if they had sung *silent* duets, going through the motions of singing, but not allowing their vocal chords to produce an intelligible sound — just meaningless reverberations; a hurry or a flurry of movement signifying nothing. Contraceptive intercourse is very much like that. Contraceptive spouses involve each other in bodily movements, but their "body language" is not truly human.⁴ They refuse to let their bodies communicate

sexually and intelligibly with one another. They go through the motions of a song but there is no *song*.

Contraception is, in fact, not just an action without meaning; it is an action which contradicts the essential meaning which true conjugal intercourse should have as signifying total and unconditional self-donation.⁵ Instead of accepting each other totally, contraceptive spouses reject part of each other, because fertility is part of each one of them. They reject part of their mutual love — its power to be fruitful.

A couple may say, "We do not want our love to be fruitful." But if that is so, there is an inherent contradiction in their trying to express their love by means of an act which, of its nature, implies fruitful love; and there is even more of a contradiction if, when they engage in the act, they deliberately destroy the fertility-orientation from which precisely it derives its capacity to express the uniqueness of their love.

In true marital union, husband and wife are meant to experience the vibration of human vitality in its very source.⁶ In the case of contraceptive "union", the spouses experience sensation, but it is drained of real vitality.

The anti-life effect of contraception does not stop at the "No" which it addresses to the possible fruit of love. It tends to take the very life out of itself. Within the hard logic of contraception, anti-life becomes anti-love. Its devitalizing effect devastates love, threatening it with early aging and premature death.

At this point, let us anticipate the possible criticism that our argument so far is based upon an incomplete disjunction, inasmuch as it seems to affirm that the conjugal act is either procreative or else merely hedonistic. Can contraceptive spouses not counter this with the sincere affirmation that, in their intercourse, they are not merely seeking pleasure, but they are also experiencing and expressing love for one another?

Let us clarify our position on this particular point. We are not affirming that contraceptive spouses may not love each other in their intercourse, nor, insofar as they are not prepared to have such intercourse with a third person, that it does not express a *certain* uniqueness in their relationship. Our thesis is that it does not express *conjugal* uniqueness. Love may somehow be present in their contraceptive relationship; conjugal love is not expressed by it. Conjugal love may, in fact, soon find itself threatened by it. Contraceptive spouses are constantly haunted by the suspicion that the act in which they share could indeed be, for each one of them, a privileged *giving* of pleasure, but could also be a mere selfish *taking* of pleasure. It is logical that their love-making be troubled by a sense of falseness or hollowness, for they are attempting to found the uniqueness of the spousal relationship on an act of pleasure which tends ultimately to close each one of them sterilely in on himself or herself, and they are refusing to found that relationship on the truly unique conjugal dimension of loving co-creativity, capable, in its vitality, of opening each of them out, not merely to one another, but to the whole of life and creation.

IV. Sexual Love and Sexual Knowledge

The mutual and exclusive self-donation of the marriage act consists in its being the gift and acceptance of something unique. Now this something unique is not *just* the seed (this indeed could be "biologism"), but the *fullness of the sexuality* of the other person.

It was in the context of its not being good for man to be alone that God made him sexual. He created man in a duality — male and female — with the potential to become a trinity. The differences between the sexes speak therefore of a divine plan of complementarity, of self-completion and self-fulfillment, also through self-perpetuation.

It is not good for man to be alone because man, on his own, cannot fulfill himself. He needs others. He especially needs one other — a companion, a spouse. Union with a spouse, giving oneself to a spouse, sexual and marital union in self-donation, are normally a condition of human growth and fulfillment.

Marriage, then, is a means of fulfillment through union. Husband and wife are united in mutual knowledge and love, a love which is not just spiritual, but also bodily and a knowledge underpinning their love which is likewise not mere speculative or intellectual knowledge. It is bodily knowledge as well. Their marital love is also meant to be based on *carnal* knowledge. This is fully human and fully logical. How significant it is that the Bible, in the original Hebrew, refers to marital intercourse in the terms of man and woman "knowing" each other. Adam, Genesis says, *knew* Eve, his wife. What comment can we make on this equivalence which the Bible draws between conjugal intercourse and mutual knowledge?

What is the distinctive knowledge that husband and wife communicate to one another? It is the knowledge of each other's integral human condition as spouse. Each "discloses" a most intimate secret to the other — the secret of his or her personal sexuality. Each is revealed to the other truly as spouse and comes to know the other in the uniqueness of that spousal self-revelation and self-gift. Each one lets himself or herself be known by the other, and surrenders to the other, precisely as husband or wife.

Nothing can undermine a marriage so much as the refusal to fully know and accept one's spouse or to let oneself be fully known by him or her. Marriage is constantly endangered by the possibility of one spouse holding something back from the other; keeping some knowledge to oneself that he or she does not want the other to possess.⁷ This can occur on all levels of interpersonal communication, physical as well as spiritual.

In many modern marriages, there *is* something in the spouses, and between the spouses, which each does not want to know, does not want to face up to, wants to avoid, and this something is their sexuality. As a result, since they will not allow each other full mutual carnal knowledge, they *do not truly know each other* sexually or humanly or spousally. This places their married love under a tremendous existential tension which can tear it apart.

In true marital intercourse, each spouse renounces protective self-possession, so as to *fully possess* and be *fully possessed by* the other. This fullness of true sexual gift and possession is only achieved in marital intercourse open to life. Only in procreative intercourse do the spouses exchange true "knowledge" of one another, do they truly speak humanly and intelligibly to one another, do they truly *reveal* themselves to one another in their full human actuality and potential. Each offers, and each accepts, full spousal knowledge of the other.

In the body language of intercourse, each spouse utters a word of love that is both a "self-expression" — an image of each one's self — as well as an expression of his or her longing for the other. These two words of love meet, and are fused in one. And, as this new unified word of love takes on flesh, God shapes it into a person — the child, the incarnation of the husband's and wife's sexual knowledge of one another and sexual love for one another.

In contraception, the spouses will not let the word — which their sexuality longs to utter — take flesh. They will not even truly speak the word to each other. They remain humanly impotent in the face of love; sexually dumb and carnally speechless before one another.

Sexual love is a love of the whole male or female person, body and spirit. Love is falsified if body and spirit do not say the same thing. This happens in contraception. The bodily act speaks of a presence of love or of a degree of love that is denied by the spirit. The body says, "I love you totally", whereas the spirit says, "I love you reservedly". The body says, "I seek you"; the spirit says, "I will not accept you, not all of you".

Contraceptive intercourse falls below mere pantomime. It is disfigured body-language; it expresses a rejection of the other. By it, each says: "I do not want to know you as my husband or my wife; I am not prepared to recognize you as my spouse. I want something from you, but *not* your sexuality, and if I have something to give to you, something I will let you take, it is *not* my sexuality."⁸

This enables us to develop a point we touched on a few pages back. The negation that a contraceptive couple are involved in is not directed just toward children, or just toward life, or just toward the world. They address a negation directly toward one another. "I prefer a sterile you", is the equivalent to saying, "I don't want all you offer me. I have calculated the measure of my love, and it is not big enough for that; it is not able to take all of you. I want a 'you' cut down to the size of my love ..." The fact that both spouses may concur in accepting a cut-rate version of each other does not save their love or their lives or their possibilities of happiness from the effects of such radical human and sexual devaluation.

Normal conjugal intercourse fully asserts masculinity and femininity. The man asserts himself as man and husband, and the woman equally asserts herself as woman and wife. In contraceptive intercourse, only a maimed sexuality is asserted. In the truest sense, sexuality is not asserted at all. Contraception represents such a refusal to let oneself be known that it

simply is not real carnal knowledge. A deep human truth underlies the theological and juridical principle that contraceptive sex does not consummate marriage.

Contraceptive intercourse, then, is not real sexual intercourse at all. That is why the disjunctives offered by this whole matter are insufficiently expressed by saying that if intercourse is contraceptive, then it is merely hedonistic. This may or may not be true. What is true, at a much deeper level, is that if intercourse is contraceptive, then *it is not sexual*. In contraception there is an "intercourse" of sensation, but no real sexual knowledge or sexual love, no true sexual revelation of self or sexual communication of self or sexual gift of self. The choice of contraception is, in fact, the rejection of sexuality. The warping of the sexual instinct from which modern society suffers represents not so much an excess of sex, as a lack of true human sexuality.

True conjugal intercourse unites. Contraception separates, and the separation works right along the line. It not only separates sex from procreation, it also separates sex from love. It separates pleasure from meaning, and body from mind. Ultimately and surely, it separates wife from husband and husband from wife.

Contraceptive couples who stop to reflect realize that their marriage is troubled by some deep malaise. The alienations they are experiencing are a sign as well as a consequence of the grave violation of the moral order involved in contraception. Only a resolute effort to break with contraceptive practices can heal the sickness affecting their married life. This is why the teaching of "Humanae Vitae" as well as subsequent papal magisterium on the matter, far from being a blind adherence to an outdated posture, represent a totally clear-sighted defense of the innate dignity and true meaning of human and spousal sexuality.

V. Why Does Only Procreative Sex Fulfill?

Our argument so far is that contraceptive marital sex does not achieve any true personalist end. It does not bring about self-fulfillment in marriage, but rather prevents and frustrates it. But, one may still ask, does it follow that procreative marital sex alone leads to the self-fulfillment of the spouses? I think it does, and that the reason lies in the very nature of love.⁹ Love is creative. God's love (if we may put it this way) "drove" Him to create. Man's love, made in the image of God's, is also meant to create. If it deliberately does not do so, it frustrates itself. Love between two persons makes them want to do things together. While this is true of friendship in general, it has a singular application to the love between spouses. A couple truly in love want to do things together; if possible, they want to do something "original" together. Nothing is more original to a couple in love than their child, the image and fruit of their love and their union. That is why "*the marital thing*" is to have children, and other things, as substitutes, do not satisfy conjugal love.

Procreative intercourse fulfills also because only in such intercourse are the spouses open to all the possibilities of their mutual love, ready to be enriched and fulfilled not only by what it offers to them, but also by what it *demands* of them.

Further, procreative intercourse fulfills because it expresses it and does not contradict it, as contraception does. It is only on life-wishes, not on death-wishes, that love can thrive. When a normal married couple have a child, they pass their child joyfully to each other. If their child dies, there is no joy; there are tears, as they pass the dead body to one another. Spouses should weep over a contraceptive act — a barren, desolate act which rejects the life which is meant to keep love alive, and would kill the life to which their love naturally seeks to give origin. There may be physical satisfaction, but there should be no joy in passing dead seed, or in passing living seed only to kill it.

The vitality of sensation in sexual intercourse should correspond to a vitality of meaning (remembering, as we have said, that sensation is not meaning). The very explosiveness of sexual pleasure suggests the greatness of the creativity of sex. In each conjugal act, there should be something of the magnificence — of the scope and power — of Michelangelo's "Creation" in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. But it is the dynamism just not of a sensation, but of an event — of something that happens, of a communication of life.

A lack of true sexual awareness characterizes the act if the intensity of the pleasure does not serve to stir a fully conscious understanding of greatness of the conjugal experience: I am committing myself — my creative life-giving power — not just to another person, but to the whole of creation: to history, to mankind, to the purposes and design of God.

A last point should be made. The whole question we are considering is, of course, tremendously complicated precisely by the strength of the sexual instinct. Nevertheless, the very strength of this instinct should itself be a pointer toward an adequate understanding of sexuality. Elementary common sense says that the power of the sexual urge must correspond to deep human aspirations or needs. It has, of course, been traditional to explain the sexual urge in cosmic or demographic terms; just as we have a food appetite to maintain the life of the individual, so we have a sex appetite to maintain the life of the species. This explanation makes sense, as far as it goes. However, it clearly does not go far enough. The sex appetite — the strength of the sex appetite — surely corresponds not only to cosmic or collectivist needs, but also to personalist needs. If man and woman feel a deep longing for sexual union, it is also because each one personally has a deep longing for all that is involved in true sexuality: self-giving, self-complementarity, self-realization, self-perpetuation, in spousal union with another.

The experience of such complete spousal sexuality is filled with a many-faceted pleasure, in which the simple physical satisfaction of a mere sense instinct is accompanied and enriched by the personalist satisfaction

of the much deeper and stronger longings involved in sex, and not marred and soured by their frustration. If continuous and growing sexual frustration is a main consequence of contraception, this is also because the contraceptive mentality deprives the very power of the sexual urge of its real meaning and purpose, and then tries to find full sexual experience and satisfaction in what is basically little more than a physical release.

VI. Why Does Procreation Have To Be the Fruit of a Conjugal Act?

Human life has its origins in sex. It cannot be passed on other than by sexual reproduction. The generation of each child, which marks the renewal and perpetuation of creation, is always and necessarily the result of the union of sexual differences. Modern science has made procreation possible by fusing these sexual differences without any actual union of the bodies of husband and wife. It is the teaching of the Catholic Church that this gravely violates the God-given rule and mode of procreation, as well as the use and purpose of sex within marriage. This teaching has been most recently set forth in the Instruction "Donum Vitae".¹⁰ The few remarks that I set down here simply constitute some incidental thoughts on the topic of artificial fertilization, in line with the reasoning of the preceding pages on human sexuality.

The child is meant to be not just the fruit of sexuality in a purely biological sense, i.e., the fruit of the union, however brought about, of two cells, but the fruit of *human and spousal* sexuality. The child is - has the right to be - the fruit of the living union of two *persons*, which means the union of two souls and two bodies, not just of two *wills* with no true bodily union. A union of wills, without a union of bodies, lacks the proper composition of parental love. It does not constitute a sufficient *human* basis for the creation of a new life, nor does the simple union of seed, without the union of bodies. The union of bodies is conjugal and human. It is the *mere* union of seed which is "biological".

A child is not meant to be the fruit of a *bodiless* union. That way his origin is less than human; he is *de-humanized* in his origins. If the child is not the fruit of true marital intercourse between the parents, fruit of that act by which they have human-sexual knowledge of one another, he is not actually *conceived*. He remains, all his life, a *product* of the "knowledge" of technology, but not an *incarnated concept* of his parents' spousal and bodily knowledge of each other.¹¹ Humanly, if not biologically, he will suffer the consequences. He may easily end up as a misfit in a life which he has certainly started as a misconception.

There is a certain logic in the failure of secularism to see that there is *no* right to die "with dignity" (in the sense in which they understand it), but there *is* a right to be conceived and brought into this world with dignity.

Questions of rights, of course, underlie the present debate, much of which seems to assume that the spouses have a right to children. This is not so. They do not possess such a right. The generation of a child may fulfill an *expectation* of the spouses, but it does not fulfill any *right* of theirs. They

collaborate in producing the gift of life. But it is not they who really give the gift to one another. The gift is a free gift, and comes from above. In the end, it is God Who gives it or does *not* give it. God's plan for some is that they have children, and yet they circumvent His plan. Just so, there may be others to whom God does not give children and they will not accept this.

A basic nobility of intention can no doubt be attributed, *prima facie*, to those married couples who want a child by means of homologous artificial fertilization. Nevertheless, it would be good to remember, and to remind them, that the moral issue they have to face is not just one of sexuality. It is also one of possible pride — of wanting to appropriate to themselves the tree of life and to seek its fruit on their own terms.¹²

A satisfactory answer to this whole problem will be found only by those persons who believe that God loves them more than they can ever love each other or love their real or possible children and that He, Who indeed has His mysterious ways, knows best.

References

1. This view, I could add in passing, has had a strong influence in the development of a canonical jurisprudence that distinguishes between the "right to procreative intercourse" and the "right to communion of life". Ultimately it is the same view as that which stresses the difference between the "biological" and the "personalist" aspects of marriage.

2. We are obviously not speaking here of the gift of self which a person may make to God.

3. In this way, in fact, the uniqueness of the decision to marry a particular person is reaffirmed in each marital act. By every single act of true intercourse, each spouse is *confirmed* in the unique status of being husband or wife to the other.

4. The "language of the body" is, of course, a key expression in Pope John Paul II's writings on sexuality and marriage.

5. "Contraception contradicts the *truth* of conjugal love". Pope John Paul II, Address, Sept. 17, 1983.

6. This still remains true even in cases where, for some reason or another, the spouses cannot have children. Their union in such cases, just as their union during the wife's pregnancy, draws its deepest meaning from the fact that both their conjugal act and the intention behind it are "open to life", even though no life can actually result from the act. It is their basic openness to life which gives the act its meaning and dignity, just as the absence of this openness is what undermines the dignity and meaning of the act when the spouses, without serious reason, deliberately limit their marital intercourse to the infertile periods.

7. Obviously we are not referring here to those occasions in which, out of justice to a third party, one of the spouses is under an *obligation* to observe some secret, e.g., of a professional nature. Fulfillment of such an obligation is in no way a violation of the rights of married intimacy.

8. If it is not sexuality which each spouse in contraceptive intercourse gives to or takes from the other, what does each one, in fact, actually take or give? In what might be termed the better cases, it is a form of love, divorced from sexuality. In other cases, it is merely pleasure, also, be it noted, divorced from sexuality. In one case or the other, contraceptive spouses always deny themselves sexuality. Their marriage, deprived of a true sexual relationship, suffers in consequence.

9. Cf. the author's essay, "Marriage in Crisis", in *Osservatore Romano* (English edition), Sept. 24, 1976.

10. "Donum Vitae" ("The Gift of Life"), Instruction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Feb. 22, 1987.

11. In contraception, man and woman do not become one flesh, they do not *know* one another sexually or humanly, and there is no fruit of knowledge. In artificial fertilization, they do not know each other either; there *is* fruit, however, but it is the fruit of scientific or technological knowledge, not the fruit of spousal, sexual carnal knowledge. It is this less-than-human aspect to it which turns it into forbidden fruit.

12. Even in relation to the very child whom they seek, their attitude shows a possessiveness which goes beyond the proper rights or expectations of parenthood.

In Memoriam

Rev. John R. Connery, S.J., of our Editorial Advisory Board, passed away just prior to Christmas, 1987 after a long illness. Father Connery, professor of moral theology at Loyola University in Chicago, served on our editorial advisory board for the past 15 years and proved to be one of its most productive members. During these years of theological dissent, he was a bulwark of the Church and a devoted and loyal adherent to its ordinary magisterial teaching. His incisive critiques of submitted manuscripts were deeply appreciated. The revised manuscripts were returned and published in much more convincing fashion.

Father Connery's steady hand, keen intellect and love for his Church were evident in his relationship with us. He was an advisor to the bishops of the United States in both an official and in an unofficial capacity. A winner of the *Linacre Quarterly* Award, his numerous articles in this publication were superb. His death will leave a void, as we have lost a good friend. He was, in my opinion, America's foremost moral theologian. While he has gone to a better place and left our presence, his dedication, loyalty and love will continue to inspire us as we Catholic physicians carry on our work in the Lord's vineyard.

— John P. Mullooly, M.D.