February 1965


Catholic Physicians' Guilds

Follow this and additional works at: http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol32/iss1/27
of all charts has proved far more effective than the previous system in preventing surgery of questionable necessity or morality.

There are three Catholic Physicians' Guilds in Canada but currently only the one in Manitoba is affiliated with the National Federation. However, I believe all members subscribe to The LINACRE QUARTERLY. Several years ago the Manitoba Guild staffed a booth at the national C.M.A. convention and recently the Guild in British Columbia held as part of the official C.M.A. program a panel discussion on medical practice in a Catholic hospital. Excellent cooperation was obtained from the executives of the C.M.A. and this may help establish a precedent for the inclusion in future scientific programs topics pertinent to religion, ethics and medicine.

In non-Catholic hospitals tubal ligation is a frequent procedure, requiring only the written consent of the parties involved and of two consultants. It is nearly a routine procedure at third caesarean. So-called "therapeutic" abortion is becoming less frequent as the consultants seem to be finding less reason to be able to justify it; however, press releases from our official medical organizations would give the impression that the medical and legal profession are 100% in favour of taking abortive and sterilization legal procedures.

The absence of a moral code in helping to regulate peoples' lives is reflected by the statements of some doctors. Their suggested remedies to the current epidemic of illegalizing and the rising venereal disease are the provisions of sex education by the schools and birth control information in the schools. Pregnancy is presented as the problem, the immorality is not even recognized.

It is in a background such as this that our Guilds have had the largest role to play—not to enter into a newspaper debate with those suggesting but to develop leaders of thought in all fields and to educate the public by cooperating with people of all faiths, advocating moral solutions to all problems.

This is our problem in Canada and I am sure it is not ours alone, so for long. By further communication I am sure we can help each other meet local problems and provide leadership to overcome the decline of morality throughout the world.

J. Bernard Costello, M.D.
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

DR. CUNNINGHAM IN AUDIENCE WITH POPE PAUL VI

On November 25, 1964 it was the great privilege and honor of Dr. Clement P. Cunningham, immediate past president of the National Federation to meet our Holy Father, Pope Paul VI. He is photographed here presenting His Holiness with the Manual of our Federation activities. Speaking in English, the Pope conveyed his great happiness to learn of the numerous Guild projects and their development. He asked Dr. Cunningham to convey to all the members and their families his special Apostolic Blessing along with good wishes for the success of the works in which the organization is engaged.

Following the audience, Dr. and Mrs. Cunningham left by plane from Rome flying to Bombay, India to attend the Third Asian Congress of Catholic Doctors and the Eucharistic Congress then in progress. The trip to Bombay was very delightful and made even more impressive as they traveled in the company of the Papal Delegate, His Eminence, Cardinal Agagianian, who is aware of the efforts of our Federation in the medical mission world.

The Third Asian Congress provided three days of intensive study of the population problem, particularly as reflected in India. It seemed somewhat ironic to Dr. Cunningham that in the United States where so many consider family planning the country's most pressing problem, in India it occupies seventh place with priorities given to more urgent needs such as food, education, health, economics, and others.

The inauguration of the Asian Federation took place during this meeting and plans are being developed to join the International Federation of Catholic Physicians.

From observing the activities of this newly formed group, Dr. Cunningham feels it is the responsibility of American doctors to communicate as much as possible with physicians in other areas of the world. Opportunities will be available during the next four years when the International Federation will meet in October 1966 in Manila and two years later the Fourth Asian Congress will meet in Tokyo, Japan.
In the November 1951 issue of the Italian Union of Obstetrical Nurses, an appeal to the Church was issued by Pope Pius XII to the Conferece of Large Families. November 26, 1951. Acta Apostolicae Sedis, Vol. 43, pages 835-854 (1951).

La sterilisation directe, perpétuelle ou temporaire, de l'homme comme de la femme, est illéic dans vertu de la vie naturelle.

Par sterilisation directe, Nous entendons désigner l'action de qui se propose, comme but ou moyen, de rendre impossible la procréation ; mais nous n'appelons pas ce terme à toute action, qui rend impossible en fait la procréation. L'homme, en effet, n'a pas toujours l'intention de faire ce qu'il réussit de son action, même si l'il a prévu. Ainsi, par exemple, l'extirpation d'ovaires malades aura comme conséquence nécessaire de rendre impossible la procréation ; mais cette impossibilité peut n'être voulue ni comme fin, ni comme moyen. Nous avons repris d'état les mêmes explications dans notre allocution du 8

Direct permanent or temporary sterilization of man or woman, is illic in virtue of the natural law.

By direct sterilization, we intended to designate the action of him who proposes, as an end or as a means, to render impossible procreation. Man, indeed, does not always intend the result of his action, even if he foresees it. Thus, for example, the removal of diseased ovaries will have as a necessary consequence to render impossible procreation, but this impossibility can be neither willed as an end, nor as a means. We have repeated in detail the same explanations in our Allocution of October 8, 1953 (A.A.S., 45, 673) to the Congress of Urologists.

The same principles.—permit the solution to a question much discussed
La mise à profit de la stérilité temporaire naturelle, dans la méthode Ogino-Knaus, ne viole pas l'ordre naturel, comme la pratique décrite plus haut [l'utilisation des préservatifs], puisque les relations conjugales répondent à la volonté du Créateur. Quand cette méthode est utilisée pour des motifs sérieux proportionnés (et les indications de l'eugénique peuvent avoir un caractère grave), elle se justifie moralement. Déjà nous en avons parlé dans Notre Allocution du 29 octobre 1951, non pas pour exposer le point de vue biologique ou médical, mais pour mettre fin aux inquiétudes de conscience de beaucoup de chrétiens, qui l'utilisaient dans leur vie conjugale. D'ailleurs dans son encyclique du 31 décembre 1930, Pie XI laissait la place à une position de principe : "Neque contra naturam ordinem agendo ridicendi sunt conjuges, qui ut ne nesci et naturali ratione utuntur, eiusmodem sive temporis sive quaedam defectuum causas novae inde a vita oritur non possint." (A.A.S., 32, 561 [1930]).

Nous avons précisé dans Notre Allocution de 1951 que les époux, qui en usent de leurs droits conjuguels, ont l'obligation positive, en vertu de la loi naturelle propre à leur état, de ne pas exposer la procréation. Le Créateur en effet a voulu que le genre humain se propague précisément par l'exercice naturel de la fonction sexuelle. Mais à cette loi positive, nous appliquons le principe qui vaut pour toutes les autres : elles n'obligent pas dans la mesure ou leur accomplissement comporte des inconvenants notables, qui ne soient pas inséparables de la loi elle-même, ni inhérents à son accomplissement, mais viennent d'ailleurs, et que le législateur n'a pas eu l'intention d'imposer aux hommes, lorsqu'il a promulgué la loi. (From pages 736-737).

We have stated precisely in Our Allocution of 1951 that spouses who make use of their conjugal rights, have the positive obligation, by virtue of the natural law proper to their state, not to exclude procreation. The Creator indeed has willed the propagation of the human race precisely through the natural exercise of the sexual function. But to this positive law, we applied the principle valid to all others: they do not oblige to the extent that their fulfillment involves notable inconveniences, which are not inseparable from the law itself, nor inherent in its accomplishment, but come from elsewhere, and which the legislator did not intend to impose on men, when he promulgated the law.

The taking advantage of natural temporary sterility, in the Ogino-Knaus method, does not violate the natural order, as does the practice described above [the use of contraceptives], since the conjugal relations correspond to the will of the Creator. When this method is utilized for proportionately serious motives (and eugenic indications can have a grave character), it is morally justified. Already we spoke of this in Our Allocution of October 29, 1931, not to put forward the biological or medical viewpoint, but to put an end to the anxieties of conscience of many Christians, who utilized it in their conjugal life. Furthermore, in his Encyclical of December 31, 1930 ("Casti Conubii"), Pius XI had already formulated the principle: "Neither are those spouses to be said to act against the natural order, who use their right correctly according to natural reason, even though a new life cannot springs forth because of natural causes either of time or of whatever defect."