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Letter from Canada

J. Bernard Costello

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Letter From Canada . . .

The razzle dazzle of political party conventions, the election of new leaders for our countries, the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the brutality of race riots, have all captivated our attention. The crisis of conscience precipitated by the papal encyclical and the attempts to resolve this currently dominate our thoughts.

Statements have been issued of profound acquisitiveness, by groups of clergy and hierarchy, as though none have doubts or reservations. Equally unrealistic have been the protestations of those who do not like this Papal pronouncement. They attack, with some validity, the lack of proof within acceptable limits. In these years since the Council, resolved for many doctors, patients and confessors have, on their consciences. These are not now likely to be seriously troubled by a papal directive, that relies for its strength on papal teaching authority alone.

However, for those who face the problem of childbirth regulation, within the framework of that ruled as licit by the Church, there can be only a renewed interest in Rhythm, both natural and artificial. Because of these pressures, I would like again to present my current experience in creating an artificial rhythm by regulating ovulation.

Since I last wrote, I now have followed one hundred and sixty couples avoided marital relations from day 1 to 16 inclusively.

Out of one hundred and sixty couples in this series, five pregnancies have been conceived. One has already delivered a normal baby. One may express a failure of the system, but I cannot be certain of this. These five all document the fact that in these cases, when taking Ortho-Novum free from day 15 to day 25, ovulation is not inhibited.

This artificial Rhythm requires less day of abstinence to avoid conception and is very accurate (as opposed to natural Rhythm) in that ovulation is controlled. Side effects are minimal, and the risk of pregnancy. Patient acceptance of the system by peoples of all beliefs and other contraceptive practices, has been good.

Collecting statistics is informal slow and would welcome hearing from other controlled series, so that our pooled efforts may warrant making this available to all who wish it.

I also believe, but have not yet proven, that the days of abstinence may be able to be shortened to days 11 through 16 inclusively. When, (and if) the time of abstinence can be reduced to five days, it certainly should not be difficult to practice moral birth control.

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5625 Cambie Street
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Montmartre Hotel, Miami Beach Florida
December 1, 1968

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds

Present were 62 Guild members representing 39 affiliated Guilds of the Federation.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Dr. O'Loughlin announced that Father Kenneth MacKinnon of Detroit will be the N.F.C.P.G. moderator for the next two years succeeding Msgr. Bordelon, who now heads the World Justice of Peace.

Dr. O'Loughlin reported that the Board of Directors met in June in San Francisco and again on November 30 in Miami Beach. The June meeting was in conjunction with the Gerald Kelly Lecture which was given by Dr. J. Engebret Dumphy, and it was a great success, as was the subsequent A.M.A. panel discussion on the morality of transplantation. Dr. Vincent Collins, a Chicago Guild member, was an outstanding member of the panel.

Dr. O'Loughlin asked for prayers for all deceased Guild members. He reported that the Los Angeles Guild lost its only black member with the recent death of Dr. Ray Peyton. He asked for positive Guild action on recruiting more black members and, in a related field, recruiting and assisting more black medical students.

Dr. O'Loughlin said the N.F.C.P.G. officers had spent the year discussing the aims and goals of the Federation, and he said he hoped that a special committee, having a wide geographic and philosophic distribution, would be appointed to restudy the reasons for existence of the Guilds and the Federation.

Dr. O'Loughlin said that the coming year should be one in which we respect Pope Paul's attitude that theologians and scientists must have reasonable freedom for research and development. He said this approach can help us over last years rough spots and clear the way for a constructive new year.

MODERATOR'S REPORT: Father MacKinnon said that there is a good possibility that there will be approval of a votive Mass for physicians and paramedical personnel in the near future.

He said he feels that the Federation does exist, and that the time has come to stop questioning its existence, but to get on with the clarification and amplification of its goals and services. He said the Guilds exist as a potentially strong, competent, directive voice of the Church in this country. He said doctors should no longer be running as a group to stop things, but should be in the forefront of things directing them.

Father MacKinnon suggested that in the administrative wing of the Church there should be a lay man directing lay