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THE RECEPTION OF THE ENCYCLICAL
HUMANAE VITAE IN THE UNITED STATES
A Study of the Theological Journals
Theological Studies and *The Thomist*

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PRESENTATION

The growing acceptance of contraception could be attributed to the different historical and sociological factors, such as the discovery of birth control methods, the demand for an industrialized society, the sexual revolution, and the consciousness of the role of women in the society. The discovery of the different methods of birth control had caused not only a widespread use of contraceptives to curb the growing population but also the proliferation of promiscuity among married and young people alike. Confronted with this situation the Magisterium of the Church responded by teaching the Gospel of life and the morality on marriage and family. The encyclical *Humanae vitae* is but one of the concrete examples of the Church's active role in teaching moral norms and at the same time being faithful to its prophetic vocation. The teaching of *Humanae vitae* is significant because of its decisive importance.

In the United States (U.S.) major changes had occurred in the first part of the 20th century when Protestant Churches accepted the use of contraceptives for social, cultural, economic, medical and demographic reasons. While the government had been anxious in the reports about the population explosion which threatens the social and economic stability of the different countries, especially in the third world countries, debates had been intensified as to the morality of the different contraceptive methods. Popes John XXIII and Paul VI set up a Papal Birth Control Commission (PBCC) to intensely study the issue.

It is worth noting that before the publication of *Humanae vitae* many Catholic theologians, religious and lay people expected a change in the teaching of the Church regarding the morality of artificial birth control. In fact, the so-called majority report of the members of the PBCC recommended Paul VI to accept some modification of the Church's moral teaching on contraception. However, the Pope, after

careful and prayerful study, had finally come-up with the encyclical *Humanae vitae* which does not only maintain the traditional teaching about the evilness of contraception, but also teaches that any act which impedes procreation is «intrinsically evil» (HV n. 16).

In the U.S., *Humanae vitae* has met adverse protest and disagreement. Right after the day of its release, Charles Curran, an associate professor of moral theology at the School of Theology in the Catholic University of America, together with more than eighty theologians, drafted a statement disagreeing the moral teaching of the encyclical. He re-asserted the common but not well-known theological teaching that Catholics may dissent from authoritative but non-infallible Church's teachings*. Moreover, he declared that Catholic spouses, by using their conscience, can responsibly decide what is good for the family under certain conditions.

Many theologians believe that the encyclical has failed to shield itself from different protests and various dissents. In the minds of dissenting theologians, *Humanae vitae* has created a crisis in the Roman Catholic Church. They contend that the said encyclical has stimulated different reactions in the Church. They would even say that some bishops and theologians admit that Catholic faithful can still have full communion of the Church even if they would not follow the moral teaching of the Church on the artificial birth control. However, there are also some Catholic theologians who would say that the prophetic teaching of the *Humanae vitae* has been proven right with the decline of the morality of sex and marriage life, as shown by the widespread use of contraception**.

In this work we intend to know the extent of the reception of the encyclical *Humanae vitae* and the debate which took place in the U.S. The bibliographies are numerous. But our objective is to limit the investigation by analyzing two journals, namely: *Theological Studies* and the *Thomist*. These two journals are chosen for the reason that they contain significant articles and essays which represent the different opinions and positions of Catholic theologians in relation to the controversial encyclical.

Part I of this work deals on the historical and sociological context prior to the release of *Humanae vitae*. It presents some important dis-

* Cfr. C. E. CURRAN (ed.), *Contraception: Authority and Dissent*, Herder and Herder, New York 1969, p. 9.

** Cfr. J. E. SMITH (ed.), *Why Humanae Vitae was Right*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1993, p. 11.

cussions on the issue of overpopulation like the role of the Church and the government in curbing the rapid growth of population, the widespread use of the different methods of contraception and the debates concerning the morality of these methods. In particular, the preparation of the encyclical is discussed, as well as the debate on contraception and the creation of PBCC.

Part II tackles the different reactions to *Humanae vitae* in the U.S. Its main objective is to show how the Church's hierarchy, theologians and faithful received the teaching of the encyclical apropos the morality on contraception. Themes related to the reception are given enough consideration like the relationship between Magisterium and theologians; individual conscience and the responsibility of Magisterium; the issue of dissent; the different views of dissenting theologians in relation to the defense of theologians who have accepted the teaching of the encyclical and the infallibility of the papal Magisterium.

Moreover, it deals on the teaching authority of the encyclical which is primarily founded on *Natural Law*, *Sacred Scripture* and the *Magisterium* of the Church. The discussion is principally based on the different views and positions of theologians in those articles written in both journals. The opinions of the dissenting theologians are analyzed vis-à-vis the point of view of the assenting theologians.

Part III explores the theme on responsible parenthood in relation to the transmission of human life. This subject is one of the themes being highlighted by the encyclical *Humanae vitae*. In fact, in the heated debates on the morality of marital relationship there lies a deeper consideration of what it means to be responsible parents. In this regard, the teaching of the encyclical on the immorality of contraception is given enough consideration in relation to the sins against human sexuality. Finally, it discusses the theological foundations of responsible parenthood and its relation to Natural Family Planning (NFP) as a method of birth regulation approved by the Church.

The chapters being presented in the excerptum provide the nature of the contraceptive society and at the same time present a theological vision of the teaching of *Humanae vitae* vis-à-vis the inseparable connection between the unitive and procreative dimensions of the conjugal act. The content of the excerptum forms the first two chapters of the Part III of the doctoral thesis.

The objective of the first chapter is to understand the relation between the nature of the contraceptive culture and the teachings of *Humanae vitae*. In the course of the discussion, it shows the moral implications of some of the birth control methods which are not in

accordance with the moral doctrines of the Church. It highlights the need for a renewed reflection concerning human sexuality and procreation in marriage life.

The second chapter underlines the theological foundations of responsible parenthood based on the teachings of Vatican II and *Humanae vitae*. The image of marriage as a covenantal reality is given enough emphasis in the course of the discussion. It also depicts conjugal love and fidelity as integral parts of the personalist view of marriage. It deals on the nature of conjugal love as basically open to the transmission of a new life. Finally it gives the reasons why the unitive and procreative dimensions are inseparable in the sexual act of the married couple.

This study would not have been achievable without the valuable contribution of generous individuals. In the first place, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the professors of the Department of Morals and Spirituality in the University of Navarre for the good formation they have afforded to us in the past years. In a very special way, an expression of gratitude is extended to professor D. Augusto Sarmiento, whose patience, dedication and expertise made the elaboration of this work possible.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A. REFERENCE WORKS, ARTICLES AND JOURNALS

AAS	Acta Apostolicae Sedis
AID	Artificial Insemination from a Donor
AIH	Artificial Insemination of Husband
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CDF	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
DV	Dei verbum
FC	Apostolic Exhortation, Familiaris consortio
GS	Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et spes
HV	Encyclical, Humanae vitae
LG	Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen gentium
NFP	Natural Family Planning
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
PBCC	Papal Birth Control Commission
PP	Encyclical Populorum progressio
ScG	Summa Contra Gentiles
STh	Summa Theologiae
TS	Theological Studies
Thom	The Thomist
US	United States
VS	Veritatis splendor

B. ALPHABETICAL ORDER OF BIBLICAL BOOKS

Bar	Baruch
Col	Colossians
1 Cor	1 Corinthians
Dt	Deuteronomy

Eph	Ephesians
Gal	Galatians
Gn	Genesis
Is	Isaiah
Jer	Jeremiah
Jn	John
Lk	Luke
Mk	Mark
Mt	Matthew
Rom	Romans
Sir	Sirach
2 Thes	2 Thessalonians
1 Tm	1 Timothy

THE RECEPTION OF THE ENCYCLICAL *HUMANAE VITAE* IN THE UNITED STATES

Chapter One

HUMANAE VITAE IN THE CONTRACEPTIVE SOCIETY

A «contraceptive culture»¹ is a type of culture in which the social structure is characterized by some changes in the reproductive domain through the practice of contraception. It is a way of life in which the contraceptive practices have become «institutionalized». In other words, these practices have penetrated into the structure of the society and brought about some changes in the pattern of behaviors and beliefs of the people apropos sexual relationships and reproduction.

A concrete example of the contraceptive culture is the American society² in which contraceptive practices have become operative in the level of beliefs and behavioral patterns of the people. In this respect, J. Thomas points out some of the factors which wrought changes in the whole cultural context of the society. First, the highly industrialized society makes the people vulnerable to some social pressures of weighing the advantages and disadvantages of bearing and raising offspring. It results to the high rate of contraceptive practices by restricting the number of children. The preferred lifestyles are within the grasp of individuals due to the freedom to choose the kind of commitment towards generating and rearing of children. Second, married couples who refuse to follow the culturally accepted birth regulation methods and do not integrate themselves to some cultural patterns and value systems of the society would experience disappointment.

This chapter presents the underlying characteristics of the contraceptive culture in relation to the behavioral patterns of the people and the kind of mentality that is operative in the American society, vis-à-vis the moral teaching on sexuality and family by the encyclical *Humanae vitae*.

1. CONTRACEPTIVE SOCIETY

To regard American society as a contraceptive culture does not mean that most of the married couples engage in contraceptive activities. It rather signifies that the practice of contraception, as a generally accepted mode of behavior, is accompanied by some important «changes in the whole cultural complex of beliefs, values, normative standards and behavioral patterns traditionally associated with sex, marriage, and the family»³ in the society. McCormick mentions the argument of Dr. D. Cashman⁴ who challenges some of the practical concerns of *Humanae vitae*. This doctor holds that contraceptive act does not result from the decline of respect that is due for women. He claims that «discipline involved in periodic abstinence is often a source of harm to marriages»⁵. His contention does not support the practice of rhythm method in the sense that it only brings a marginal satisfaction.

In his article, L. Porter⁶ cites the theologian Gustave Martelet⁷ who declares that the section 14 of the encyclical which prohibits the use of contraception is intended to make clarification concerning the stance of the Church against contraception. The purpose of the formulation is not to bother the Catholic couples who are in the state of dilemma and who feel the need to limit the size of the family but are not able to practice the methods sanctioned by the Church. The contraceptive practices of the married couples are regarded as a form of «disorder» but are not sinful if done in «good conscience» and granted they have done their best to follow the teaching of the encyclical according to the context and circumstances of their life⁸.

According to McCormick, some moralists maintain that married couples who feel the need to resort to contraceptives are not opting for the lesser evil but they do so within the consideration of the «hierarchy of values», which is meant at preserving marital love, mutual life and the well-being of the whole family. He continues to say that if the wording used by *Humanae vitae* apropos contraception be changed from «moral evil» to simply «disorder»⁹, it would have solved the problems. The argument of Curran¹⁰ is also relevant in this discussion when he declares that contraception is not a violation to an ideal but it consists of a pre-moral evil. In his opinion the banning of the use of artificial methods of contraception as stated in the encyclical is not correct. The result of this error is the widespread dissent within the Church. Besides, it also incites pluralism of which the consequence is the diminution of the prophetic function of the

Church. The worse scenario would be the unbearable dissonance between the accepted official teaching and the practice of the people¹¹.

In the light of the teaching of *Humanae vitae*, McCormick purports that the fundamental message is to warn married couples regarding the use of contraception because it confuses the real meaning of «responsible parenthood» with egoistic type of pleasure-seeking. Accordingly, it serves as a caution against a form of disvalue. In the questions of «contraception and sterilization», these are «constant reminders that they are disvalues, yet allowance for the fact that there is, in a world of conflict, still place for a ‘theory of just sterilization’»¹². However, he also admits that sterilization and even contraception are considered to be among those undesirable intrusions to marriage life.

At this juncture, it would be helpful to know how different authors view human sexuality in relation to the moral teaching of the Church.

1.1. Physicalism in Sexual Ethics

It is S. Jensen who offers a comprehensive study on the nature of physicalism¹³ apropos the current sexual issues, especially in viewing contraception in purely physical terms. He asserts that this topic is not only limited to itself because it also affects other areas of morality. In the point of view of physicalism, the quality of an action takes its moral specification from the physical features apart from the will. In other words, external action by its very nature already receives its moral characterization.

The moral consideration of an act does not terminate in the intention of the moral agent but it extends to the «material of an action» itself¹⁴. The importance of this subject in the overall evaluation of an action is seen in its relationship to the essence of an act. It is affirmed that the consideration of the material of an action is that which establishes the direction of a particular action¹⁵.

In the emphasis given by St. Thomas concerning the plan of nature as coming from God, it makes him conclude that any defiance of it is an act against nature; hence, is an affront against the Creator. This kind of contention has made many moral theologians to consider the sexual ethics of St. Thomas as a regrettable type of «physicalism». Guevin claims that these moral theologians, who criticize the Thomistic sexual ethics, do not deny the vital role of reason but

argue that to ground human reality according to the plan of nature or «*ordo naturae*» is very limiting. In order to give clarification to this subject, it is good to know what the Angelic Doctor meant when he talks about the role of reason, whether it only refers to the function nature engages in human sexuality or not. For Guevin, the solution of this question lies in the fact that St. Thomas does not refer to the physical foundation of the «sexual morality as such, but for the natural pattern of sexuality that has been created *by* God for the benefit of the species»¹⁶.

Through the aid of practical reason, human being can make moral judgments whether certain actions are in conformity or not to the truth of the pattern of nature as perceived by speculative reason. It is true that speculative and practical reasons are essentially inclined to the «natural pattern of sexuality». But it cannot be sustained that the Angelic Doctor employed a kind of «physicalism». He cannot be said to fall into the «naturalist fallacy»¹⁷.

The purpose of Guevin in the present discussion is to criticize the misreading of the doctrine of St. Thomas and the teaching of the Church concerning the sexual ethics as a kind of «physicalism». To charge St. Thomas and the Church of drawing «moral obligation» from «physical structures» would be hard to maintain. It is because for St. Thomas to categorize some actions as sins against nature do not imply that such actions are going contrary to the «order of nature», but that the «order of reason» is not allowed to permeate into the physical reality of the human person. In this consideration, the subject matter which serves as the basis of morality is not purely «biological». It is the person in his totality (bodily and spiritual dimensions), in connection with his relationship with God and with other human beings, which determines the moral quality of an action.

Finally, Jensen gives his evaluation to the nature of physicalism as something true but false in certain respects. For instance, the claim of the extreme physicalism which views an external action as having a moral character apart from the will is false because external action does not have moral specification without the intention of the moral agent. However, the claim of the moderate physicalism is true in the sense that external action as being «*conceived*» already contains a moral character independent of the interior act of the will¹⁸. In this manner, one can now understand the reason why to separate sexual act from the good of procreation contradicts the principle of the sexual ethics.

1.2. Arguments against the Good of Procreation

To establish the argument against the fundamental procreative good, McCormick makes use of the structure of reasoning of Pope Pius XII. Accordingly, the Pope has made two proposals. First, he outlines the universal obligation to procreation in which the existence of each person, community and the Church largely depends on the fruitful marriage. To freely contradict this duty without a serious reason is to commit a sin against the very significance of a marriage life. Second, the Holy Father mentions those factors which are serious enough to ground the non-realization of this marital obligation to procreate even for a long period or for the whole period of conjugal life¹⁹.

McCormick interprets the words of Pius XII that states: «to sin against the very meaning of conjugal life», as to mean to «turn against a basic good» which is expressing an inability to carry out the duty to procreate. But this obligation is not violated if there are serious reasons to justify it. Hence, what determines the sin against conjugal life is the presence or the absence of these justifications. McCormick contends that the implication of this assertion would mean that the structure of the «periodic abstinence» is connected to the idea of «turning against a basic good» with a pattern of actions, and the presence or absence of a proportionate reason²⁰. And he believes that it is how it should be.

McCormick accuses May of committing a physicalist, or if not, a dualistic formulation by placing the nature of rightness and wrongness in the «biological functions». This is exactly the point of the contemporary moral theologians who view that sexual act contains a «meaning in itself (*bonum honestum*)». Consequently, they do not consider it as a form of a «*bonum utile*» or utilitarian good. The consideration that «that sexual intimacy was morally right, beyond the needs of procreation, *ad remedium concupiscentiae*, to avoid sin, etc»²¹ has been part of the tradition of the Catholic Church for a long time.

May²² offers a different approach to the subject matter. His contention proceeds from recognizing the intrinsically evil feature of some pre-moral disvalues apart from giving account to the end and circumstances. He gives an example of direct sterilization which undermines the twofold meanings of union and procreation. The double powers of life-giving and love-giving are essential to man and therefore should be respected. He points out that to engage a surgical sterilization for the purpose of contraception is tantamount to the rejection of this power present in the human person. He concludes that direct sterilization in itself is an assault to the human moral

goodness, hence, intrinsically evil. To view that sterilization may be permissible is to reduce the human sexual power into a purely «utilitarian good» (*bonum utile*) and a purely «biological function». It explains why the intrinsically evil nature of sterilization would only permit a so-called «material cooperation» with severe specifications in «Catholic hospitals».

The response of McCormick is challenging, if not provocative. He says that the weakness of the argument of May lies in the claim that to prevent contraception through artificial interference, like that of direct sterilization includes a denial to the procreative good. This notion tries to connect two different domains. First, it tends to correlate both the attitude of the mind and will. Second, it tries to associate the good of procreation with the level of physical action. It is an indisputable fact that to reject the good of procreation is morally evil. However, McCormick purports that this form of denial must be situated in the selfish attitude of not wanting to have children or in the selfish attitude of limiting them, or even in the irresponsible increase of the size of the family. He argues that it should not only be limited in those «nonabortifacient contraceptive measures one uses to keep procreation within the limits of responsibility»²³.

1.3. Immorality of Pseudo-Sexual Act

The pseudo-sexual act, as discussed by Grisez, is an aversion of an authentic marriage love which is characterized by a great fulfillment of human desires. The perfection which brings freedom in the sexual acts of marriage cannot be experienced by the contraceptive couples who confused the lovely, truly humanly and spontaneous sexual relationship with genital automatism. Any genital automatism which expresses itself in the «semi-human pseudo-sexual acts is an enemy of reason and of moral law...»²⁴.

Considering that sex is the first good that man may encounter includes risk of transforming it into a kind of idol which hampers the realization of one's dreams and hopes for self-perfection. The «pseudo-sex» behavior which starts with the act of masturbation hinders one to attain self-transcendence by finding consolation in self-gratification. This pseudo-sexual activity which is kept mostly in sexual acts of adolescents may be transformed into a sexual perversion and «into a habit of regular and mechanical sexual acts which is supported by the practice of contraception»²⁵. Such acts are not considered genuine human

sexual activities and are contrary to the free gift of oneself which is present in an authentic conjugal love.

L. Dewan²⁶ refers to the view of St. Thomas concerning sexual sins as worst sins next to homicide. This argument proceeds from the teleological basis that the emission of the semen apart from the intention of procreation contradicts the human good. Therefore, such an act is morally evil in itself. In the Thomistic fashion, an act against nature, i.e., contraception is a sin. Moreover, if a person acts in a manner in which the release of seed ushers the coming of another human being but does not carry out the education of offspring is still a sin. Hence any undue release of human seed is considered a serious offense.

Dewan further explains that the entire judgment involved in this consideration is the common good and the individual good of the person who should be born in a manner suitable to a healthy human life. The aforementioned text of St. Thomas shows that the contraceptive sexual act is opposed to the teleological approach to the human bodily parts with respect to their appropriate proper functions. This has been noted that it is the seriousness of the «problem of generation in human life that leads to the judgment that misuse in this domain is criminal»²⁷.

It is interesting to note the «thirteenth-century objection»²⁸ written in the *Summa Theologiae* which apparently depicts the present mentality as regards contraceptive sexual actions. It argues that sin contrary to nature is not the worst sin among the sins of lust. However, the reply of St. Thomas is significant to shed light to the questions being raised. The transgression against nature, in fact, pertains to the gravest species of sins²⁹.

St. Thomas in the *Contra Gentiles* makes a distinction between the «sexual sins against nature and walking on one's hand»³⁰. St. Thomas clearly argues that there is a purpose of sex which is directed for the universal common good. This is the reason why the misuse of sex is a serious sin. The sexual disorder is so grave that it hampers the very nature of the person. It also rules against the use of reason as the foundation of ethics.

Going through the doctrinal contents of *Humanae vitae*, Dewan is amazed due to the scope of its theological and pastoral consideration. The encyclical introduces the person into the framework of the teaching of the Magisterium as having competence in interpreting both the «natural and divine law»³¹.

Dewan asserts that it is not true that *Humanae vitae* focuses only on the individual act of sexual intercourse, which is unconvincing and

disgusting, and that the encyclical breaks marriage down into separate acts of sexual intercourse. He argues that the encyclical «takes seriously any sexual act, and offers good reasons for so doing»³². This author claims that the purpose of the encyclical's appeal to all the «faithful of the Catholic World and men of good will» (HV n. 1) manifests a positive tone. In this regard, the encyclical does not intend to present a teaching which is «universally accessible» as such. Rather, it «has very much the pastoral purpose of interpreting the natural law for those who have serious need of help in such interpretation»³³.

The responsible procreative act can be properly distinguished from the irresponsible form of sexual activity which is performed through the use of different contraceptive methods.

2. ANTI-UNITIVE DIMENSION OF CONTRACEPTION

A distinction between conception and contraception is discussed by B. Häring in order to clarify the current moral issues. The broader sense of conception, according to him, would include the whole process from fertilization to implantation. In contrast, contraception in the narrow sense refers to every means which impedes the process of fertilization³⁴. There are many methods which tend to decrease the fertility of the sexual act, and in turn hinder the united effort of the husband and wife, and so obstruct the attainment of their spiritual union.

According to A. Pruss, the biological union of the married couple implies spiritual union which is far more important than the biological one. Unfortunately, most of the contraceptive methods do not promote and in fact fail to express the true marital union. In this regard, he mentions a number of unnatural sexual acts³⁵ which do not foster or even include union in the physical level because they fail to promote a common and united goal of the two persons. For example, the method of «*coitus interruptus*»³⁶ only takes an appearance of a union which is deceitful and not expressive of a true and meaningful unitive act between the couple.

Another example of an anti-unitive act is the swallowing of a contraceptive pill. If the purpose of taking the pill is to decrease the fertility or to render the sexual act less reproductive, then, such an act directly contradicts the true biological union of both husband and wife which is supposed to be the result of a spiritual union. For this reason, the act of taking the contraceptive pill is an offense against the

«dignity of marriage» because it is opposed to biological unity; and therefore, it is an intrinsically evil act³⁷. This is the reason why the deliberate obstruction of the process of natural fertility of the sexual activity of the married couple is an act contrary to the goods of unity and fertility. In this act, there is no love but lust and hate, opposed to the true nature of sexuality which is supposed to express a love that is fruitful and unitive as well³⁸. This kind of act is not expressive of an authentic sexual act.

2.1. Contraception as Contralife

Grisez and his co-authors³⁹ maintain that contraception consists in a contralife character, which has been constantly taught as immoral throughout the tradition of the Church. These authors primarily concern in showing the difference between contraception and NFP, in the sense that contraception is contralife while NFP is not. Their arguments concerning the evilness of contraception are founded on two propositions.

First, contraception is essentially contralife. They explain that contraception differs from the sexual sin because the former can be characterized in terms of one's «beliefs», «intentions» and «choices». In the act of contraception, for example, what one intends is to impede the coming of a new life and the being of that possible individual. Hence, persons who want to perform contraception do so by a choice and carry out actions different from the one doing a marital intercourse. Since contraception primarily lies in the intention to obstruct the initiation of a new life, «every contraceptive act is necessarily contralife»⁴⁰. It may occur that one who chooses a contraceptive act intends some good; like for instance, to avoid bad consequences to existing persons. However, in choosing contraception as a means of a projected good, one rejects the coming of a new life. In so doing, one chooses a will that is necessarily contralife. The character of that act does not only lie in the *will* because *in* and *of* itself is already contralife.

Second, contraception is evil for the reason of its being anti-life. These authors⁴¹ argue that contraception can be likened to a deliberate homicide. Of course they admit the essential difference between homicide and contraception, but they claim that the similarity lies in the involvement of a contralife *will* to both. To establish their thesis they offer two premises. First, choices that are morally sound should be in harmony with reason. Second, the initiation of a new person is

a «great human good». Consequently, the choice of a contraceptive act is against reason and therefore immoral. There are various motives to opt for a contraceptive act like for example: one's commitment to his or her profession, economic pursuit, etc, which may make them think that such factors justify their action. However, the underlying principles to contracept do not justify their choice, nor they take away the reason not to impede the initiation of a new life⁴².

Furthermore, Pope John Paul II⁴³ states the inability of the contraceptive marital intercourse to express the total and reciprocal self-giving of the spouses. According to Lamont⁴⁴, these words of the Pope indicate that contraceptive act is not procreative and unitive. This is the reason why, any sexual intercourse that is not expressive of the unitive aspect and does not communicate love but uses another person as a means, is not recognizing the other as a person. This has something to do with a dualistic point of view which tends to separate the person from his body.

The Catholic notion on man would not consider the person as only a body or a soul. Human persons are their bodies endowed with rational souls. One cannot say that he is using the body of the person in sexual intercourse, but that he is not using the person himself/herself. Consequently, the Church does not allow the use of contraceptive pills because it fails to express marital unity and falls short in giving due respect to other person. The use of contraceptive pills tends to obstruct the conception of a new human being by suppressing the process of ovulation. In so doing the married couples choose not to be reproductive in their marital act⁴⁵.

Grisez and companions⁴⁶ attest that the practice of contraception and the perversion of conjugal love which have increased since 1960 among Catholics have not resulted happy and stable marriages nor they have expressed the authentic «responsible parenthood». These have brought forth more negative consequences like divorce, infidelity, promiscuity, sterilization and even abortion. That is why the Church invokes the «unbroken tradition» and reaffirms the teaching against contraception.

Lamont⁴⁷ remarks that the present-day practice reveals the widespread use of contraception, especially in industrialized countries, of which these people experience a kind of relationship-building and love-expressing sexual intercourse devoid of its generative finality. However, he argues that such kind of affection and attachment would naturally come from sexual partners, but in the long run would also result in an unstable and even the breaking of relationship. Aside from

this, contraceptive practices in the contemporary society would tend to hinder the realization of the goodness inherent in the procreative sexual intercourse. This confusion can easily lead the people to attribute the good of reproductive sexual intercourse to non-reproductive one. Another negative effect of this contraceptive behavior is its tendency to choose for divorce. In fact, it has been shown that divorce is unusual among married couples, either Catholics or Protestants, who have refused to practice contraception because of being immoral. But the phenomenon of divorce is rampant to those who practices contraceptives⁴⁸.

In the contention of Grisez, what guarantees the good of procreation is its relation to marital unity⁴⁹. Therefore, any act which impedes the coming of a new person contradicts the natural structure of marriage. This involves a contralife character, as what has been affirmed by Grisez et al, in some other times. They argue that contralife character and the immorality of contraception are facts known by human reason⁵⁰.

2.2. Intrinsically Evil Acts against Procreation

There are basic human goods to which every person is directed to. Man has a natural inclination and drive to pursue these basic goods. Some of these are human life, friendship and freedom. The preservation of life marks as the primary of all these human goods. Grisez adds another item which for him should belong to the list of the basic human goods, i.e., the initiation of human life in all its levels—physiological, psychological, moral and spiritual—⁵¹.

Every possible good may not be achievable by a good man, but as a moral agent he should avoid any direct violation to any of these fundamental goods. That is why some human acts are considered intrinsically evil, not only because of the consequences of such immoral actions, but also because of their aversion from the basic good and ultimately from God Himself. Pope Paul VI, alluding to the teaching of Vatican II, has clearly enunciated this matter when he said: «May Christians not be misled by the contrary impression that some things which were once declared intrinsically wrong by the Church are today permitted by the teachings of the Council»⁵². A good act does not proceed from the possible good consequences but from the goodness of the will and the heart of the person who performs the action. On the contrary, «the contraceptive act in and of itself does not promote any good or prevent any other evil»⁵³.

Grisez contends that the evilness of contraception pertains to the domain of the human act which is performed through a free choice by the one doing it. He describes it as a type of human action which prevents the initiation of a new life. In other words, the one who engages in a contraceptive act during sexual intercourse chooses to impede the realization of the procreative good which is one of the basic goods of human life. Precisely, such action is a choice to act contrary to the good of procreation. Grisez does not condemn contraception for the reason of its consequences, but rather on the fact that it violates the basic human good which implies a turning against «Goodness itself»⁵⁴.

A consequence of the contraceptive act is the losing of the purity of the heart. Contraception does not promote marital love but it only makes easier for frequent orgasms which stimulates conjugal intercourse and by no means can be identified with conjugal love. Therefore contraceptive act, by itself, can not be considered an act of free self-giving or an act of love. It tends to obscure the true meaning of conjugal love. Since it violates the basic human good of human sexuality, it offends the virtue of chastity which is indispensable for all significant goods in engaging or in avoiding sexual act⁵⁵.

Grisez argues that the «conception preventing» attitude of a woman who has been sexually violated is morally acceptable because it is understood that her behavior is «self-defensive» and not «anti-procreative». The victim does not place herself within the sphere of procreative good because it does not involve a choice of her own. If someone engages in a sexual act which may result to a conception of a child, that action is already defined under the ambit of procreative good. Any attempt to impede this process of bringing another human being into the world, is «contra-procreative»; hence, violates against the basic good of procreation. Grisez does not question the value of sexual love, for he believes that sexual intercourse within marriage is useful to promote marital union⁵⁶.

In the point of view of Grisez, contraception should be condemned because it does not strengthen conjugal love. It may make it easier to have sexual orgasms in the sexual act but in no way orgasm is identified with love, although, both are not necessarily opposed to each other. Contraceptive sexual act is «an ambiguous act of love» because it is unclear whether it is really the person, with all his freedom, expressing his love or it is his libido that wants a form of release⁵⁷.

Some of the authors like Pruss, Kaczor and Häring discuss the morality of some of the contraceptive methods which do not promote authentic conjugal love between husband and wife. First, Pruss⁵⁸ deals

with the morality of condom in relation to the question of organicity. He holds that this device, which is the placing of a «latex barrier»⁵⁹ between the married couple, evidently removes the possibility of the «organic union» which is supposed to exist between them. The use of condom is an act which establishes an obstacle between husband and wife in the physical sphere. It also involves a spiritual barrier because it does not respect the integral reality present in the person as both body and soul. This author considers the impossibility of attaining the objective union of the sexual act which is performed with a device which keeps them from making such an essential connection.

Second, referring to the morality of the IUD (Intra-Uterine Device), Kaczor cites the argument of Hanna Klaus who describes some disadvantages in using this device. As the term signifies, she says that it includes an insertion of a foreign object into the uterus of the woman⁶⁰. Häring attests that many Catholic moral theologians have been considerably critical about the use of IUD and the so-called «morning after pill». More than being contraceptives, these devices contain an abortifacient character which causes the loss of zygotes «before or during implantation»⁶¹.

2.3. Sterilization and its Moral Implications

It is inconceivable to a number of theologians that sterilization is not permissible even to those couples who have many children and can experience some serious problems for the coming of another child. If they employ sterilization they are charged of going against the fundamental good of procreation. Another point to consider is the affirmation that sterilization tends to reduce the sexual faculty of procreation to a purely biological one. Theologians, who hold that sterilization is morally permissible as a form of «pre-moral evil», tend to reject the absolutization of the «*bonum honestum*» of the faculty to procreate.

Two ethical directives on the morality of sterilization for Catholic hospitals are cited by McCormick. First, he cites the directive 18 which says: «Sterilization, whether permanent or temporary for men or for women, may not be used as a means for contraception». The second one is taken from directive 20 which states that those procedures which persuade permanent or temporary sterility are allowed when «(a) they are immediately directed to the cure, diminution, or prevention of a serious pathological condition and are not directly contraceptive (...) (b) a simpler treatment is not reasonably available»⁶². He admits that

these two directives represent the traditional and official formulation as articulated by Pius XII and is repeated by Paul VI.

The implementation of these two directives has brought about some problems. He mentions the following items: First, there is an increasing practice of sterilization in American society as a means of birth control. Second, there is a division happening in the Church, as occasioned by *Humanae vitae*, on the teaching of contraception and sterilization. Third, there exist diverse conditions of the personnel in the Catholic hospitals and uncertainty as regards the proper knowledge and the morally significant nature of the directives on sterilization. But due to these factors and other influences, McCormick affirms that some of the practices of the Catholic hospitals are contrary to the directives and the official statements of the Magisterium. This is the reason why the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has issued an official statement regarding the subject matter⁶³.

In the analysis of McCormick, two salient points seem to be highlighted by the CDF. First, sterilization is absolutely forbidden which is tantamount to saying that it is intrinsically evil in itself. Second, an appeal to the principle of totality may not be warranted due to the fact that in itself sterilization is an affront to the integral well-being of the person and an attack to his ethical good. The Congregation states that sterilization as an assault to the moral good is due to the deliberate denial of the essential component which goes with the «freely-chosen sexual»⁶⁴ act.

Analyzing these statements, McCormick argues that they involve a kind of a «*petitio principii*» because of the reasons given. He continues that what is unclear in the statement is whether the potential to procreate is an essential aspect of sexual relationships. For him, it is unclear whether to deny this faculty of its intrinsic objective (procreation), through a free and deliberate choice of sexual act, is a direct assault to the ethical good of the person. He holds that this is exactly the point which remains to be proven.

McCormick maintains that to say: the analysis of the CDF on sterilization involves a «*petitio principii*», does not mean an endorsement of direct sterilization. He claims that it is an evil which has to be shunned away as much as possible. But its moral evaluation has to be properly considered within the ambit of circumstances; otherwise, it would remain to be in the pre-moral or non-moral level. The point at issue here is not «‘sterilization is an evil or sterilization is a good’; it is rather ‘direct sterilization is intrinsically evil vs. direct sterilization is not intrinsically evil’»⁶⁵. He asserts that if sterilization is not an

intrinsic evil, then, there exists a conflict of values where it cannot be proven to be morally evil.

McCormick deals the moral implications of sterilization in relation to the pastoral problems. He mentions J. Gründel⁶⁶ who affirms that direct sterilization is considered intrinsically evil by the official Catholic teaching. The reason behind this affirmation is that every conjugal act is directed towards procreation. Direct sterilization goes contrary to this finality and unnatural in itself. This teaching has been taught by the recent three popes namely: «Pius XI (1930), Pius XII (1951), Paul VI (1968), and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1975)»⁶⁷. In the viewpoint of Gründel the argument to support this teaching is not anymore forceful to the contemporary moralists. That is why, as a science, moral theology functions to assess the teaching. The traditional formulation is no longer acceptable in the sense that the truth of the marital act is not absolute for it is at the service of the entire good.

However, in the controversies concerning the morality of artificial birth control and the widespread contraceptive practices, one sector of society suffers the most –the family–.

3. THE FAMILY IN THE CONTRACEPTIVE CULTURE

The effect of sexual revolution and contraceptive mentality has left tremendous changes in the social climate. These changes have been pointed out by Thomas who asserts that in those developing countries where rapid social changes occur have affected the traditional family structures. He observes that lowering of the infancy mortality rates, the increased of population, and the insufficient social assistance have fostered some practices of abortion, abandonment of children and the widespread contraceptive practices. Coupled with this is the desperate situation in which daily means of subsistence or of basic needs take priority than the stability of marriage or the realization of the responsibilities of parents⁶⁸.

Hurley has been foretelling that the practice of contraception and abortion would soon become widely spread all throughout the world. It would become part of the cultural climate of the people. The consequence of this would be a change of mentality. It would mean that those who do not accept it would be considered as mere curiosities or survivors of another age. As a consequence, the majority of the population of the world would not comprehend the religious and moral principles of the nonconformist minority. But he also asks about how many percent of

this minority are really resolved in following their religious conviction. He speculates that some may simply hold a non-contraceptive attitude «largely on the authority of its religious leaders»⁶⁹.

J. Milhaven⁷⁰ affirms that the subject on «conjugal sexual love» continues to abound in many «moral theological literature» in the past years. The subject which has been recently given more emphasis among moral theologians is centered on the non-reproductive aspect of sexuality. Inherent in the discussion are the questions concerning the conditions which permit married couple to engage in a non-procreative sexual act. Common to all moral theologians is the recognition of the «non-procreative sexual values» to which married couple should achieve. These values become the source of debates in favor or against the practice of contraception.

Thomas points out that the sexual faculties of the marriage couple, the cyclic nature of the process of ovulation, the inability to attain an exact knowledge of the ovulation during the monthly period, make one to conclude that reproduction is not a result of the individual sexual act. It is rather achieved through the method of «operations and exchanges normally shared by the cohabiting couple during each cycle»⁷¹. He continues that this process of conjugal relationships as designed by nature aims not only for procreation but also for marital union of the entire married life. Sexual relationship fosters marital intimacy and conjugal friendship. Consequently, he claims that obligatory and prolonged practice of conjugal abstinence would, in the long run, endanger the «essential 'goods' of marriage (*fides, proles, sacramentum*)»⁷².

There is a need to achieve a balance perspective concerning the reality of sexual relationship in fostering marital relationship. In this regard, Thomas explains that it is based on the revealed truth, reason and experience that sexual relationship is meant to unite two individuals for the good of the human species. For this reason, sexual act is only proper to married couple who have irrevocably committed themselves in a lasting and exclusive relationship of «love and life» and reciprocal happiness, wherein suitable atmosphere for the bringing up of new life is fittingly provided for⁷³.

3.1. A Need for a Renewed Moral Reflection

It is affirmed that there is now a «lacuna» in the contemporary morality which is manifested through the crisis of marriage in the Western civilization. This phenomenon needs a deep theological discourse

in order to provide ample reflection on sexual morality. The positive contribution of the twentieth-century moral theology is focused on the area of human sexuality, especially in the sphere of conjugal relationship. In this respect, sexuality is ought to be an expression of the complete and mutual self-giving of both husband and wife, at the same time procreative in character⁷⁴.

Nevertheless, questions concerning the distinctive character of the expression of marital love are not sufficiently defined. The new dimension of human sexuality does not give distinction between sexuality from other expressions of love. This is the reason why, «the new moralists have not established the meaning of human sexuality determinative of its moral use»⁷⁵. Milhaven points out that the new theological trend is to make allusion to the book of Genesis⁷⁶ which has been repeated in the NT. There is a need to adequately answer the unique character of the sexual expression of love from other types of love.

First, sexual communication of love is personal and is considered to be not the highest form of love. It is also called «sexual love» or «erotic love»⁷⁷. The value of «erotic love» which is neither purely spiritual nor physical has been generally disregarded among theologians and the authorities of the Church in the twentieth-century. This neglect has been attributed to the medieval viewpoint that erotic love belongs to the realm outside marital relationship. Milhaven purports that Vatican II⁷⁸ underlines the highest Christian value inherent to the conjugal love and the intrinsic good of the «conjugal physical sexuality». But he observes that the Council stresses the spiritual dimension of marital love and sexuality.

Some theological investigations give affirmation regarding the positive importance of human sexuality and the erotic love and state that they are in no way contrary to the Gospel. There is now a growing consciousness apropos the values of inherent pleasure in marital relationships. However, there are also other moral theologians who reject the notion of the «theological affirmation of erotic values»⁷⁹. Milhaven affirms that some theologians would resort to the Bible in order to show the positive meaning of erotic love. The experience of the contemporary Christians serves as a spring board for further theological investigation concerning the values of this type of love.

As to the question whether erotic love is capable of becoming an expression of other-oriented form of Christian love or an expression of agape, some theologians hold that it is not possible. However, Milhaven holds that human experience would show the «other-directed and the self-directed dimension of all sexual love»⁸⁰. For this reason, he

considers it pastorally dangerous to deny in the Catholic moral theology the dimension of the self-love in the married sexual life. There is an intrinsic connection between self-love and the love of the other in a good marriage. For after all, it is a Christian mandate to love others as oneself.

3.2. Sexual Pleasure and Procreation

It is the contention of Pruss that the seeking of pleasure in the married life should not be taken as an end in itself. Consequently, he asserts that «for unity not to be cliquishness, for a unity to be a *genuine* unity, it must be constituted in an action directed at an end outside the limits of those finite beings who are united»⁸¹. He continues to say that the nature of conjugal act is the principal act which makes up the unity of the married couple. If this act is only sought after for pleasure's sake, then it fails to achieve a transcendental union and so decreases the level of both the spiritual and personal union of husband and wife⁸².

The end of pleasure is not in itself transcendent. But the end of reproduction is transcendent because it goes beyond the husband and wife through the coming a new human being. For this reason, any act that increases pleasure but decreases the fertility is unlawful. The transcendent end of procreation promotes marital unity, which is closely connected to the spiritual and personal union of the couple. The seeking of pleasure for its own sake is a form of selfishness. Although what the couple seeks is the pleasure of the spouse, still their act as a whole is an intrinsically selfish act⁸³. This kind of act does not promote marital friendship and does not produce spiritual unity and therefore detaches them from the involvement of God in their conjugal act. P. Cahall⁸⁴ states that it is in line with the idea of St. Augustine that the union of «minds and wills» is more deep and intense than the physical union.

It should be noted that sexual pleasure is not opposed to conjugal love⁸⁵. What is crucial here is that sexual intercourse should not go against its natural ordination to procreation⁸⁶. In this connection, it is worth mentioning the theology of St. Augustine on sexual pleasure in relation to procreation. Commenting on this aspect, Cahall attests that St. Augustine is not against sexual intercourse nor does he consider sexuality as evil. What he is opposed with, is the search for pleasure apart from love. This would render a person a mere object of sexual pleasure. It is indeed a selfish pursuit for it tends to ignore

the other person; hence it contradicts the love of God and neighbor. It is the teaching of St. Augustine that conjugal pleasure is proper to spouses. The love between them includes the integral aspect of their person, i.e., body and soul⁸⁷.

The striving for pleasure alone ignores the ontological and phenomenological element of the sexual union; hence, at a wrong level. Thus Pruss remarks: «*For a genuine union between husband and wife, the sexual act cannot be modified in order to decrease its natural fruitfulness*»⁸⁸. But some authors would tend to refute this view. For instance, A. Regan⁸⁹ points out that what St. Augustine means when he says that spouses are guilty of venial sin if they only pursue pleasure devoid of any intention of procreation, is only a kind of «a moral imperfection» not a formal sin. Therefore, the couple who pursue this act apart from procreation is guilty only of a «daily sin» which is so slight that it can be forgiven by just reciting the Our Father⁹⁰.

There is a need to properly understand the difference between the two levels here. The first level is when the married couple willfully put a barrier of the coming of another child through some evil device; hence, a contraceptive sexual act. The second one is when the couple who may not intentionally will that a conception follows from their sexual intercourse, but are not also against of the coming of a child⁹¹.

Following the mind of St. Augustine, the first couple who engages in a contracepting intercourse is guilty of sin by doing against reason and performing a contralife act. The second couple without moral fault of their own may not conceive a child, yet do not act contrary to reason because they do not perform an act that would alter the design of God for human sexuality. Sexual intercourse can render service to the conjugal love, and the pleasure which is obtained from it can be used as a means to strengthen marital friendship, fidelity and love.

For St. Augustine, the ideal use of sexual act in marriage is with the intention of procreation. But he also acknowledges that the pursuit of marital intercourse out of incontinence can still support marital bond of fidelity, granted that conception of a child is not intentionally removed from their act through any device. Cahall notes that the proper use of sexual act in marriage for St. Augustine is to manifest how the conjugal act serves conjugal love. The distorted desire can have a negative repercussion on the marital love⁹².

Pruss⁹³ holds that the sexual pleasure does not bring about the unity of husband and wife but only a kind of «organic unity», which is directed towards procreation even if at times it is rendered impossible due to the natural cycle of the woman's body. The non-realization of

reproduction does not hinder the striving for a transcendent end in the biological and in the spiritual level. It is explained by the fact that the transcendent end is brought about by the procreative act of the couple as a biological organism and also as persons who want to fulfill their spiritual calling

It is the contention of some dissenters from *Humanae vitae* that the Church employs a biological notion of marriage in its insistence to protect the integrity of the sexual act. However, it is worth noting that the Church considers the body as an essential component of the person. It is important to know that the insistence of the Church about the biophysiological character of the sexual act does not reflect any kind of repugnance to the marital intercourse in the physical and spiritual sphere. Following the teaching of the Church, Pruss remarks that the human body is an «integral part of the person, as an essential part of the human being's humanity, and sees that the actions of the body bear spiritual meaning»⁹⁴. In this manner, bodily action always bears with it a spiritual undertone. This is the reason why those who advocate separation between the meaning of the physiological sexual act and the meaning of the union in the spiritual domain have committed a fake dualism.

To understand the inseparable connection between human sexuality and marriage, the next chapter will discuss on the personalist view of Christian marriage.

Chapter Two

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD

A more personalist view on Christian marriage has been developed after Vatican II. It is seen as a way to enrich the understanding of the complex and dynamic reality that has engulfed over the community of persons. G. Martinez⁹⁵ offers a comprehensive anthropological vision of Christian marriage believing that it takes its shape from a concrete «historico-cultural context». Theological reflection on marriage must be rooted in the richness of the meaning in the community of love which is open to transcendence. To understand human values would show how the experience of marriage touches the lives of the people. Consequently, to comprehend the work of redemption would unveil how the sacrament of marriage pertains to both the order of creation and of redemption.

This consideration makes Martinez to conclude that it is essential to have an anthropological approach to marriage. He also claims that the deficiency of personalist anthropology in dealing the reality of marriage and the inadequate theological reflection over human sexuality become the cause of the defect in the traditional approach on marriage. Through the aid of sciences, especially anthropology, there is now a shift in the understanding of marriage from abstract ideas to a more «personalist and existential vision of humanity and its destiny»⁹⁶.

1. PERSONALIST VIEW ON MARRIAGE: A MODERN APPROACH

The approach of a modern anthropology intends to bring a more historical and dynamic vision of the whole man in conformity to the Christ-centered and eschatological perspective of the human person. Three key aspects are given enough consideration namely: person, body and image of God.

First, the person is a being with a freedom in relationship with others. This person possesses «autonomy, dignity and rights» which make him or her capable of establishing a relationship and of forming and living a life within a community. It is only in an encounter of a true loving relationship within the framework of a community that one can become an authentic person.

Second, the body expresses the entire person as an embodied spirit. This is why a dualistic conception of the person as body and as a spirit does not exemplify the Christian anthropology⁹⁷. It is the sexual dimension of the body which creates a connection and establishes a relationship with other persons⁹⁸.

Third, man as created in the image and likeness of God reflects the continuing presence of God in and through an interpersonal relationship which is concretely manifested in the community of two persons in marriage⁹⁹.

The normative criterion of moral theology which is based on the personalist approach i.e., «person adequately considered» is said to be identical with the words of St. Thomas which affirm: «we do not wrong God unless we wrong our own good»¹⁰⁰. In this connection, McCormick takes human sexuality as an example in which the traditional approach of assessing moral criterion is based on procreation. He affirms that the traditional criterion views sexual act as «procreative act». In this respect, any act which departs from the realization of

this end is considered to be immoral. For him this manner of making moral judgment fails to substantiate the disciplines in «sexual morality». He points out that the «person adequately considered» goes beyond mere biological considerations.

The manner in which past concepts are used has created an atmosphere of restraint from other disciplines on sexual morality. McCormick affirms that the failure to adequately take into consideration the statement of Vatican II would lead to a certain «vacuum» and the tendency to consider scientific data simply as opinions, and would result to the disintegration of scientific investigation¹⁰¹.

1.1. The Image of the Person

Crotty¹⁰² maintains that quite recently there has been a change of the outlook of the image of man among Catholic moral theologians. Those who departed from the natural law tradition have criticized the static conception of nature of the traditionalists. In the traditional fashion, creation is viewed as something given; hence, an unchallengeable nature is embodied in the person. As a result, immutable moral norms are articulated and applied independent of the historical situation of man. For this reason, a rigorous boundary is stipulated regarding the moral acceptability of any form of intervention towards nature. A concrete example is shown in the so-called «physicalist approach» which is obviously seen in the consideration of the sexual ethics, specifically on the birth control debates.

McCormick analyzes the statement of *Gaudium et spes*¹⁰³ which underlines the importance of making the activity of the person, in all his integral dimension, as the approach in moral theology. From this conciliar statement there arise different interpretations. First, there are those like Janssens who asserts that the person to be adequately considered would mean an «ethics of responsibility»¹⁰⁴ which is based on a personalist approach. For McCormick, the crucial moral consideration is the proportionate reason in a responsible moral decision, which necessarily involves values and disvalues.

These authors claim that there is a need to consider the human action in all its dimensions, namely: the external, the intention and the circumstances. According to McCormick, this is the reason why Janssens believes that the repudiation of the artificial insemination by husband or AIH by Pope Pius XII has been repeated by *Humanae vitae*. In the opinion of Janssens, this position is not consistent and does

not adequately express the «personalist criterion» as held by Vatican II. McCormick explains that in the mind of Janssens, a personalist approach would necessarily examine the intervention in the light of fostering the human person and all aspects involved. In this regard, both Janssens and McCormick accept the legitimacy of AIH¹⁰⁵.

1.2. Traditionalist and Revisionist's Viewpoints

An author who discusses in depth the personalist tendency of marital and sexual morality is L. Cahill¹⁰⁶. According to her, for the last 50 years, Catholic literature is going towards this direction. The personalist values are upheld both by revisionists¹⁰⁷ and traditionalists¹⁰⁸. The revisionists¹⁰⁹ tend to criticize the traditional emphasis on the procreative finality as too «biologistic». The traditionalists, on their part, defend the traditional teaching on human sexuality and human nature.

There is a tendency of the traditional approach to view the physical dimension of the sexual actions as something which calls for a due regard and respect to the procreative function of the bodily nature. But the modern approach holds that physical sexual acts are subsidiary to the needs of the persons and to their social responsibilities. These differences of views lead to the ongoing conflict over the moral questions of artificial birth control.

The personalist¹¹⁰ approach has contributed to the sudden change of the traditional view concerning the finality of sexual acts. The modification of the usage of the terms from primary end (procreation) and secondary end (union) of marriage has been noticeable in *Gaudium et spes* and *Humanae vitae*¹¹¹. According to Smith, the reason of the omission is that both terms are out of date and are not sufficiently conveying the «personalist' values of marriage»¹¹². Cahill points out that this personalist view of sexuality has been employed on the teaching of sexuality especially by John Paul II. It is also manifested in the 1983 Code of Canon Law which aims to replace the definition of marriage as a form of contract in the 1917 Code. The new Code highlights the indispensable element of a life-partnership. This shift of emphasis leads Cahill to conclude that the Catholic sexual ethics is undertaking another direction, i.e., the positive reception «of the interpersonal dimension as primary, with procreation in a secondary place»¹¹³.

Cahill gives account to the personalist approach of John Paul II on sexual morality. She attests that the Pope has been specifically forceful

in promoting both a personalist and biblically related dimension of sexuality by using the symbol of language and body¹¹⁴. The Pope uses biblical passages to ground the relationship between a male and a female. This relationship is equally treated in order to have a reciprocal self-giving, a kind of relationship which unlocks the «ideal of Christian self-offering love»¹¹⁵. But Cahill questions the basis of procreation which can make marital relationship achieve its purpose through the «conjugal love». She is also in doubt whether the mutual giving of self is really perceived equally in a man-woman relationship.

The theme on mutual self-giving should be seen against the background of gender role playing, specifically in relation to the primacy of the motherhood which plays an important role in the theology of marriage of John Paul II. Cahill points out that there is a need to establish the meanings of sexual relationship and parenthood in an understandable language. In her point of view, this «sexual-marital partnership» is not morally described nor is it fully expressed in every sexual intercourse. «Hence the tie of love, sex, and procreation must be construed *primarily* in view of the couple's total partnership»¹¹⁶.

In this point of view, conjugal love is not merely confined to one's passion or sentiment but something which expresses «a complete, total, and free self-gift, characterized by unity and indissolubility»¹¹⁷. As a consequence, it excludes the practice of contraception because such act rejects not only the life giving sexual activity but also the love-giving of that act. Contraception places some forms of reservation in their act and hence does not truly reflect mutual self-giving. However, she observes that the language of this «free mutual self-gift» has been detached «from the social practices within which individual subjectivity is constituted»¹¹⁸. Cahill argues that the rigorous sexual moral norms as taught by the Church are detached from the experiences of many people and so fail to evangelize a new generation.

To go deeper into the personalist approach of marriage, it would be helpful to know the image of marriage as a covenant.

2. MARRIAGE AS A COVENANT

Marriage as an expression of a covenant between two persons is one of the emphases of the personalist vision of marriage. The Genesis account of Adam and Eve reveals the «unconditional value of the total person as male and female, originating and intersecting in the creative act of divine agape»¹¹⁹. Martinez points out that in this biblical

account dualism has been rejected. This story manifests a kind of a loving partnership and is communicated in the «prophetic covenant». The concept of the «person» has been given a higher consideration in the NT. Unluckily, the covenantal aspect of marriage, as found in the Sacred Scripture and in the Patristic period, fails to develop due to the too much emphasis given to its juridical characteristic, especially in the Middle Ages¹²⁰.

The dialogue between theology and culture makes it possible for the realization of a much fuller concept of the «person». The «person» is seen as a being whose development depends on his openness and communication with the other, through love. In this respect, Ebner and Buber offer a more personalist theology and a deeper understanding of marriage¹²¹. The renewed conception of the reality of the human person has been widely discussed. In fact, some of the important elements are being highlighted such as: human freedom, love, relationship, fidelity and communion of love. This profound interpersonal relationship can make marital communion and human sexuality opportunities for a transcendent encounter with one another and with God as reflected in the biblical concept of covenant, and as the foundation of marriage.

This highest form of interpersonal relationship takes its concrete expression in the love between husband and wife. The marital community is a full manifestation of those mutual and full complementarities in the reciprocal giving of oneself¹²². The sharing of ones «interiority» and «intimacy» in the community of mutual support is where a person is called for. Martinez remarks: «Being equal but different, spouses are called to live within a relationship of freedom within and in relation to the other and to achieve a kind of balance therein»¹²³. This is where the lasting commitment of fidelity to one another comes in.

The mutual giving and receiving of commitment in marriage are challenged by the different realities of the marital relationship. But since marriage is a journey with various cycles of life, possible crisis and opportunities for growth would necessarily come along the way. The growth in marriage is an important element of human life which would also mean a growth of faithfulness¹²⁴.

2.1. Conjugal Covenant in Vatican II

It surprises P. Palmer that the Vatican II Fathers do not use the term «contract» in their discussion on marriage. What has been central in

their discussion is the «conjugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent»¹²⁵ that reflects and participates in the covenant which unites Christ and the Church. It is also equated with the loving and faithful covenant which God has established with the chosen people in the OT. For this reason, the word «covenant»¹²⁶ is biblically based than the term «contract» and at the same time expresses the truth of a Christian marriage which is «monogamous», «exclusive» and permanent.

Palmer points out the different usage of the word covenant down from the primitive societies up to the OT. Common to the ancient peoples in establishing a covenant are the elements of «divine sanctions» for the Akkadian truce, and «sacred commitment» for the Roman people. It can also be observed that covenant as employed in the succeeding periods is more embracing in contrast with the «restrictive» nature of contract. For this reason, covenant is considered to be an expression reciprocal to «trust and fidelity».

There are different contexts and conditions of marriage as a covenant. First, in the OT common to all the writings is the consideration of the marital covenant as an expression of love and faithfulness. Second, marriage covenant in the NT underlines its indissoluble character and at the same time represents the love and fidelity of Christ to His Church. Third, in the Roman Empire covenant employs various terminologies to describe marriage as partnership, agreement, consent, sacrament, etc. Fourth, among pagan societies there has been an inclination to regard marriage as a covenant through various means like the giving of dowry. Fifth, among Christians, they emphasize the importance of the promise of faithfulness and love in the marriage covenant¹²⁷.

The implication of a Christian marriage goes beyond its mere consideration as a loving and faithful covenant. The Vatican II Fathers would like to show that it is a real participation of the loving covenant which exists between Christ and the Church. That is why, as Palmer would call it, Christian marriage is a «graced covenant» which means a «sharing in the grace that unites Christ and His Church, a grace that has particular application to those who ‘marry in the Lord’»¹²⁸.

Orsy also discusses the covenantal aspect of marriage as pointed out by Vatican II. But he purports that it is not an ordinary covenant because there is «another Person standing by and taking part in it; He is the Father of all who made human beings male and female and wants to join them together»¹²⁹. He establishes a personal covenant with the couple. In this regard, in the Christian marriage it is God who first forms the covenant with the couple before they make a covenant to one another.

Cahill¹³⁰ mentions five major documents of the Church which set the current teaching on marriage. The emphasis laid by *Gaudium et spes* on marital morality is about the dimension of a covenant relationship which is directed toward begetting and raising of children. It also consists of the mutual giving of self by the Christian spouses. It is on this orientation that the encyclical of *Humanae vitae* reflects on the theme of birth control. Cahill mentions some salient points which present the «dignity of a woman», and her role in the society and also the preeminent place of marital love and the «relationship of conjugal acts to this love»¹³¹. This conjugal love is specified by the encyclical's entire expression of that marital relationship as characterized by faithfulness and exclusivity and in which procreation of a new life is a necessary consequence¹³².

The fundamental element of the marriage covenant between husband and wife is love.

2.2. Marriage as a Covenant of Love

Love is always regarded as an essential aspect of marriage. But recently there is a growing consciousness vis-à-vis charity as an expression of love without any discrimination. There is a need to go into the depth of the meaning of marital love as a distinct form of love. Since the time of St. Augustine until recently there has been a kind of dichotomy with reference to the spiritual and carnal expression of human love. This is the reason why St. Augustine considers «marital love as an obstacle even to the perfection of human love»¹³³. This idea has persisted even in the Scholastic period.

A question has been raised as to what degree a husband can love his wife in comparison with his love for his parents. St. Thomas holds that as to the question of good, the love of parents comes first because it represents a superior good. But in relation to «intimacy», the love of wife should be preferred for the reason that they are united into one flesh through the sacrament of marriage. For this reason, a man needs to love his «wife more intensely but should show greater reverence for his parents»¹³⁴.

According to Palmer, this text of St. Thomas fails to harmonize human love with its sexual expression and fails to give appreciation of the distinctive nature of marital love even in the spiritual sphere. It is worth noting that marital love is not equivalent to charity, albeit the precept of charity stipulates that the love between married couples

should be marital. But this type of love should be equated with the love one has for his neighbors. «Married love is as exclusive as charity is inclusive, for the simple reason that marital love is covenant love»¹³⁵. Marital love is exclusive because it is founded on one's choice or election.

The Council Fathers do not talk about marriage using the traditional terminologies of the primary and the secondary ends of marriage. The emphasis given to this sacrament is the covenant of love which also embraces long lasting relationship and exclusivity. Hence, it also includes «the right to love, the promise to love»¹³⁶, with undivided affection to one another. The life long partnership in marriage covenant is explicitly expressed in Vatican II, viewing it as an intimate companionship of «life and love»¹³⁷. But it should be noted that marriage covenant not only considers love as a formal object but also the fidelity of the spouses to one another.

2.3. Marriage as a Covenant of Fidelity

The term covenant implies the idea of fidelity. In the Roman society divorce has been permitted on the ground of unfaithfulness of the husband or the wife. The Eastern Orthodox Churches, although they consider the inviolability of marriage as a covenant of grace, also permit divorce for the reasons specified by emperor Justinian such as: «adultery, desertion, prolonged absence, insanity or mental death, and apostasy or spiritual death»¹³⁸. But it is interesting to note that both the Churches in the West and in the East uphold the absolute indissoluble character as ideal for Christian marriage. For this reason, acts of divorce or of remarriage fail to manifest the covenantal love as expressed by the relationship of Yahweh to Israel and of Christ with His Church.

However, the Roman Catholic Church does not only consider covenant as something ideal but it also deems it as an expression of the New Law. This idea has been continually challenged by progressive theologians who regard this position as a hindrance for the spirit of ecumenism. That is why in the mind of Palmer, all marriages which express a covenant of fidelity to one another make God as the ultimate origin¹³⁹.

When the Council Fathers speak of marriage as directed towards generation of offspring, they want to articulate a marriage which is an expression of the covenant of love and fidelity, wherein the procrea-

tion of children serves as the fruit of that covenant. Marriage is not only designed for generation of children. But it also speaks of the mutual love which is articulated by the very covenant the married spouses have entered into¹⁴⁰. In the contemporary society, there has been a loss of the covenantal idea which results to the growing practice of remarriages even among baptized Catholics. It is the contention of Palmer that the shift from a covenant concept of marriage into an idea of contract has resulted to a collapse of marriage and the increasing number of unbearable marital situations nowadays.

The meaning of marriage as a covenant is specified by the teaching of *Humanae vitae* on conjugal love. In this way, it helps to deepen one's understanding of the importance of the love between husband and wife.

3. THE MEANING OF CONJUGAL LOVE

The encyclical *Humanae vitae*¹⁴¹ gives a definition of the conjugal love which underlines its nature and the source of its nobility from God who is Love. Man who is called to love and to establish in an interpersonal relationship is concretely expressed in the community of love between husband and wife. The biblical foundation of this «conjugal unity» is seen in the Genesis account¹⁴² wherein the complementarity of man and woman is seen as a means in forming a community of communion and togetherness. The account of Song of Songs which speaks of the parable of the love of God for his chosen people is also communicative of the love between the married couple as expressed in fidelity and in a creative way. Martinez notes: «In the dynamic reality of conjugal love, the other person is embraced and the infinite human longing is fulfilled so that love conquers the fear and fact of death»¹⁴³. The author explains that the fulfillment of this human longing in married life can only be made possible through and by corresponding to the «original love» as presented in the book of Genesis which is exemplified by an authentic «freedom», «profound intimacy», and «fidelity».

Similarly, Cahall in commenting the notion of St. Augustine about conjugal love, maintains that the love of friendship involves the elements of «reciprocity», «equality», «benevolence», and «openness and is founded in truth»¹⁴⁴. He affirms that the theology of marriage of St. Augustine tends to connect the love between spouses to the divine love. The true love of the spouses is a participation of the Trinitar-

ian love¹⁴⁵. Thus the conjugal act is at the service of conjugal love and other elements of marriage as well. It would also bring about the communion of persons which reflects the communion of the Trinity. In this regard, conjugal love does not only echo the divine life but is identified with it¹⁴⁶.

Martinez¹⁴⁷ elaborates the three characteristics of the conjugal love. First, the element of freedom in the conjugal love means that a person is free. He can shape and create meanings of his life. In the process of acquiring meaning, a person should choose love, for it can express human values and is closely connected with freedom and so can liberate him from the experience of loneliness. But conjugal love entails a process of growth into a genuine love through an established relationship.

Outside factors may be detrimental to the true expression of freedom in the conjugal love. Consequently, it calls for a personal decision and assumes a kind of personality which is open to oneself and to the other. Love is at the core of the conjugal relationship which requires a reciprocal sharing. In contrast to this «life-giving love in freedom», is the romantic and idealistic form of love which places the relationship in the sentimental level. In this manner, it hinders the realization of the full expression of freedom in that kind of relationship. However, the true expression of human freedom and love directs to the human mystery and discloses the strength and weakness of human love¹⁴⁸.

Second, the element of intimacy in marriage is used to express the complete meaning of love. It involves the physical and passionate aspects and the implication of a kind of «unconditional love (agape)» and the marital «friendship (philia)». This is the reason why the intimacy in the married life is a type of sexual love being reflected to the whole domain of marital relationship. This conjugal intimacy can be developed through reciprocal openness, mutual trust, and through «personal reassurance»¹⁴⁹.

What makes sexuality a truly symbolic communication is when the act of love forms into an intimate connection in a significant manner. This intimate sexual intercourse necessarily includes both a fulfillment of the sexual aspects of the couple and an intrinsic giftedness of a new human being. The reciprocal self-giving of the married couples and their intimate union in marital intercourse contain a procreative dimension which would be enriched and perpetuated through the coming of a new human being¹⁵⁰.

Third, the aspect of fidelity is an integral part of the intimate and personal relationship between husband and wife. Faithfulness in lov-

ing entails mutual commitment from person to person. Furthermore, fidelity in love forms as a vital part of being a person which always involves that openness to the mystery of the other person. In the case of marital relationship both fidelity and love complement to each other as essential aspects all throughout the process of marriage life. Even in the ordinary expression of conjugal relationship, these two elements express dynamism and creativity in the course of the human journey. This fidelity which entails unconditional love and a lasting commitment serve as intrinsic requirements of the stability of the marriage covenant¹⁵¹.

These three dimensions present in the Christian marriage, namely: love, freedom and intimacy are inseparably connected. These are integral aspects of mutual commitment established by two persons who are in love to one another. This covenant which is formed by a woman and a man in love is a manifestation of the presence of God in the conjugal community. This conjugal community expresses its openness to the coming of another human being.

3.1. The Goods of Marriage in the Mind of St. Thomas

It is Reich who discusses in depth the point of view of St. Thomas regarding the essential connection between the «sex act» and the «marriage act»¹⁵². Marriage formally and essentially realizes the union of love and life which is directed towards the procreation and education of offspring through the sex act. The other ends of marriage, together with their spiritual values, help the end of procreation and education, as for instance, «mutual aid»¹⁵³ which belongs exclusively to human beings. The love between the married couple is the fruit of their common life. The marital union of life and love reflects the union between Christ and the Church. This union is directed towards procreation and the education of offspring as the principal purpose of marriage.

In discussing the goods of marriage, St. Thomas connects them to its ends¹⁵⁴. He considers «procreation-education» of offspring as both the primary end and the «essential good of marriage». Lamont¹⁵⁵ points out the non-inadequacy of the consideration of procreation as a primary end of marriage to most of the Catholic moral theologians. But he affirms that there is a failure on the part of these moral theologians to give sufficient explanation regarding the connection between unitive and procreative ends of marriage. Lamont argues that the procreative function of marital intercourse is primary for the rea-

son that the «unitive good» depends on the «reproductive good». The generative function of marital intercourse is that which makes the act of sexual intercourse a truly «unitive act». He asserts that unitive act is that which is expressive and which fosters love between individuals, because it is only the generative sort of act that can make it unitive, as it belongs to its nature itself.

Similarly, it is the contention of Pruss¹⁵⁶ that the Genesis narrative (Gn 2:24) of the sexual act of a man and a woman that results to the union of one flesh is given another dimension by St. Paul (cfr. Rom 12: 5) through his concept of one body. The transition from a flesh to body reflects the interpretation of St. Paul to the book of Genesis as to mean the union of one living body. So the sexual act of husband and wife becomes normative in the union of one flesh and hence both become «*one organism*» in that particular act. The author continues to point out that in the biological domain what constitutes the end of this organism is procreation which necessarily involves a «biophysiological action»¹⁵⁷ of which both the husband and wife are united.

The sexual act which ensures the union of one flesh and one body is central in the phenomenological point of view. But this union must be grounded in the ontological reality. This consideration of the ontological grounding is present in the teleological orientation of procreation¹⁵⁸. He further elaborates that for this sexual action to contain an element of organic unity on the biological sphere it should be open to reproduction. Otherwise, any attempt to modify or eliminate the sexual act from its openness to the coming of a new life obstructs the unitive component of this act in the biological domain.

Pruss also points out that the obstruction to conception attacks against ontological union which constitutes the binding of one flesh and one body directed to procreation. He contends that contracepting persons «are making sexual union into an aphysical and abiological process, which is contrary to the basic phenomenology of the sexual act as a biological process and a physical union»¹⁵⁹.

3.2. Inseparable Connection between Unitive and Procreative Dimensions

Pope Paul VI¹⁶⁰ clearly teaches the inseparability of the two meanings of conjugal act. Thereby, the close connection between the «love making and life giving in marriage»¹⁶¹ should not be broken through contraceptive acts. An example of the breaking of the connection be-

tween union and procreation is «by *in vitro* fertilization»¹⁶². To produce a baby apart from sexual intercourse is considered «subpersonal» for the reason that it fails to realize the interpersonal communion whom every person deserves in accordance with his or her human dignity.

The subject on the inseparable connection between the unitive and procreative ends of marriage is profoundly discussed by Smith. She affirms that God has entrusted to the married couple the mission to bring new life on earth in order to share the goods in His kingdom. The couple who are given this noble task by performing the responsibilities of their married life can benefit from it. They can strengthen their conjugal relationship through marital intercourse and they can attain the good of having offspring. In Christian marriage, both the unitive and procreative goods also benefit the Kingdom of God by the flourishing of the conjugal friendship achieved through sexual intercourse and the coming of more souls for God's kingdom¹⁶³.

God designs both «human fertility» and «human sexuality» for the married couple to enjoy having marital intercourse both in those fertile and infertile periods in order to foster conjugal unity. However, they also need to be generously opened to the coming of a new life, by judging what is best in a given situation and by trying not to abuse the «*munus*» they have received from the Lord. In the light of this argument, the choice not to have children and to engage in a contraceptive sexual intercourse would break the promise of their marriage call and also reject their own gift of fertility. In this respect, they pursue pleasure at the expense of the good of procreation which is not expressive for an authentic union because of their contraceptive attitudes.

Since contraception is always morally wrong, a conclusion can be made that «the only morally acceptable way to engage either in love making or in life giving is by engaging in sexual intercourse which is open to new life»¹⁶⁴. These two meanings of sexual intercourse are derived from their natural and inseparable connection. For this reason, it is always morally wrong to break this connection. The structure of this inseparable bond is God-given in which no one should break it through its own initiative¹⁶⁵. This natural indivisible connection between the unitive and procreative meanings can only be fully respected and realized through the conjugal acts of the two persons. The conjugal love is the tie which comprises the reciprocal commitment and which is nourished through mutual fidelity and that which makes the married couple, not only as one flesh, but also as one person through their conjugal acts¹⁶⁶.

Married couples may be at times tempted to pursue only one of the basic goods of marriage. For instance, they may simply choose

to engage in a non-procreative sexual act. But in so doing, they only achieve «a superficial union through contraceptive intercourse; they do not achieve the union appropriate to spouses»¹⁶⁷. This is what *Humanae vitae* teaches about the inseparability between the unitive and procreative goods of marriage. The encyclical considers both of these marriage goods as totally intertwined in an unbreakable connection. This shows that married couple cannot achieve authentic marital union by excluding procreative act for it would mean an infringement on the real sense of the conjugal act. In other words, for the marital intercourse to be truly unitive it must be procreative and for it to be authentically procreative it must be unitive as well¹⁶⁸.

3.3. Non-procreative Marital Act is contrary to Total Self-Giving

The marital intercourse which is deprived of its procreative dimension is not communicative for the real marital union which entails total self-giving. The act of contraception which intends to hold back the gift of fertility and the openness to a new life does not create a bond which is proper to the marital intercourse. The married couples' openness to a new life signifies that they should not do anything to strip off their sexual act from any possibility of engendering another child. This also explains why those in the state of infertility, either through the advanced age or physical anomaly and women during their infertile periods, do not deny the procreative significance of their marital intercourse. Their marital sexual relationship is still communicative of their conjugal union which necessarily includes the possibility of having children. In this case, the procreative meaning of their sexual act may only be present «symbolically», nevertheless it is there¹⁶⁹.

The bond that connects between the married couple creates a certain kind of marital friendship whose union of the flesh brings forth the initiation of a new life¹⁷⁰. In the case of a married couple who are barren and engage in a marital intercourse during sterile periods, they may not be able to fully realize their unity which is the procreation of another human being. But in no way their conjugal act is a false expression of their marital union. «In accepting the nonbeing of the baby as a side effect of abstinence on fertile days, they also accept the side effect of the limitation of their marital communion»¹⁷¹. But by no means can this hinder in achieving it. This explains why, the contracepting married couple do not express their marital communion

because they choose to impede the completion of their union, which is the procreation of another person.

The choice to contracept does not only assault the initiation of the new human being but also destroy the conjugal love and the integration of the person who performs it. Aside from being an act of unchastity, contraception disturbs one's admiration to the transcendence and the value of the human body and so endangers one's faith and hope¹⁷². Thus it is always wrong for the married couple to engage in a sexual intercourse just for the sake of pleasure by depriving the goods of fertility and the procreative meaning. The contracepting couple does not only violate the natural law but it also denies the mission entrusted to them. It is true that they do not have the obligation to perform a sexual intercourse anytime, but when they do so no interference should be done to the divine mission given to them¹⁷³.

An act of not willing to achieve the teleological meaning, which makes up the «biological union», means that such union does not adequately express the act of the person. It also fails to achieve unity in the personal and spiritual level. An attempt to make use of the sexual act to attain spiritual union and at the same time trying to impede the act to be a truly biological union makes this act «superfluous» and even worse than this. The intentional alteration of the sexual act, by making it less expressive of the biological unity of the married couple, shows their unwillingness¹⁷⁴ to become more united to one another.

CONCLUSIONS

The contraceptive mentality which has pervaded into the U.S. is caused by different factors, such as the demand for an industrialized society, cultural changes, social pressures, economic pursuits which tend to regard children within the ambit of advantages and disadvantages and the freedom to choose the kind commitment towards procreation and the raising of children.

Authors of the two journals, *Theological Studies* and the *Thomist*, who are involved in the moral discussion on the contraceptive practices in relation to the moral teaching of the *Humanae vitae*, offer salient points apropos the morality on contraception. On one hand, those authors who express their reservation to the moral teaching of encyclical uphold the revisionist position which tends to approach morality through the proportionate reason, denial of moral absolutes and the exclusion of moral authorities or the Magisterium of the Church.

Some of these authors like McCormick, Curran and Janssens, have a tendency to consider sexual acts as subsidiary to the needs of the person and to the social responsibilities. They criticize *Humanae vitae* as committing an error of «physicalism» in dealing with the moral aspect of the conjugal act. For this reason, they confront the moral teaching of the encyclical by resorting to the proportionalist position and by calling some exceptions through the use of contraceptives in the conjugal act of the couple.

Moreover, these authors consider contraceptive acts as not belonging to the realm of moral evil. For example, McCormick considers the choice of contraception as pertaining to the «hierarchy of values» which aims at preserving marital love, mutual life, well-being of the whole family, and so cannot be considered as moral evil but only a form of «disorder». Curran regards contraception as not a violation of the ideal but only falls into the sphere of «pre-moral evil». He also blames the banning of artificial birth control by the *Humanae vitae* as the cause of the widespread dissent and pluralism within the Church. Janssens emphasizes the importance of the ethics of responsibility, which stresses the significance of the proportionate reason in the moral decision making of the married couple.

On the other hand, the traditionalist's position, as represented by Cahill, Grisez, Kaczor, May, Smith, Pruss, etc. defend the traditional teaching of the Church concerning the inseparable connection between the unitive and procreative dimensions of the conjugal act. These authors underscore the immorality of contraception as a violation of the basic good of procreation, a turning against God Himself, not promoting an authentic conjugal love, resulting to the loss of the purity of the heart and so offends the virtue of chastity, not expressive of an authentic responsible parenthood, a failure to foster total and mutual self-giving of the married couple and a hindrance for the attainment of the true marital and spiritual union between spouses.

Aside from being contralife, contraception does not result in stable marriages. It causes unstable relationships, divorce, infidelity, promiscuity, sterilization, abortion and impedes the completion of the procreative good which is inherent to the sexual act of the married couple. This shows that the practice of contraception is contrary to the good of marital unity and fertility, and so fails to express the real meaning of love. For this reason, the traditional position has a strong basis against the revisionist, for it is founded not only on good reasons but also on the teaching of the Magisterium of the Church concerning the inseparable link between the good of marital unity and the

procreation of children. No one through his own prerogative should alter this essential connection. This is the reason why the contracepting couple violate the natural law and deny the mission entrusted to them by the Lord.

The encyclical *Humanae vitae* teaches and defends the essential aspect of the covenant in marriage as shown by the couple's reciprocal self-giving and openness to the coming of the new human being. In the marriage covenant, the couple are called to establish an interpersonal relationship which expresses the community of love and life between them. Consequently, conjugal love should express the total and free gift of oneself. The mutual self-giving is oriented towards the begetting and the raising of children. Any attempt to hinder this orientation for the coming of another human being, obstructs the unitive aspect of the conjugal act in the biological domain. At the core of this moral consideration is the fact that, for the marital intercourse to be truly unitive it must be procreative and for it to be genuinely procreative it must be unitive as well. That is why the choice to contracept is not only an assault to the human person in the process of its initiation but also destroys the conjugal love and the integral well-being of the person who performs it. All in all, the moral consideration vis-à-vis the inviolable connection between the unitive and procreative dimensions of the conjugal act, manifests the essential vocation that married couples received from the Lord, i.e., to be responsible parents.

NOTES

1. Cfr. J. L. THOMAS, *Family, Sex, and Marriage in a Contraceptive Culture*, TS 35 (1974) 139.
2. American society here refers to the United States of America.
3. J. L. THOMAS, *Family, Sex, and Marriage...*, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
4. Dr. Cashman is an «English physician and former medical advisor to the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council».
5. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1978*, TS 40 (1979) 83.
6. Cfr. L. B. PORTER, *The Theologian of «Humanae Vitae»*, Thom 42 (1978) 464-509.
7. Gustave Martelet is regarded by Porter as the theologian who has a great influence in the formulation of *Humanae vitae*.
8. Cfr. A. McCORMACK, *Humanae vitae Today*, Tablet 232 (1978) 676. Cfr. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1978*, TS 40 (1979) 83.
9. For McCormick, the term «disorder» is equivalent to disvalue, nonmoral evil or ontic evil.
10. Cfr. C. E. CURRAN, Ten Years Later: Reflections on the anniversary of «*Humanae vitae*», *Commonweal* 105 (1978) 425-430.
11. Cfr. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1978*, TS 40 (1979) 84-85.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
13. Cfr. S. J. JENSEN, *A Defense of Physicalism*, Thom 61 (1997) 377. The author describes physicalism as something in which the morality of an action, whether good or evil, can be known through «physical features», as being contrasted to those acts of the will.
14. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 385. The material of an action is not the same as the end or an effect but «that which is acted upon». See STh I-II, q. 18, a. 2, ad 2. For instance, in the act of adultery the material of an action is specified by «another's spouse». See STh II-II, q. 154, a. 1.
15. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 386. Jensen claims that the specification of an action through the material element is the idea of St. Thomas. For instance, the materiality of the act of fornication rests on the «unmarried woman» which points out that the act itself is not oriented towards the education and the raising of offspring.
16. B. M. GUEVIN, *Aquinas's Use of Ulpian...*, *op. cit.*, p. 627.
17. *Ibid.* This author explains that St. Thomas does not commit «a naturalist fallacy», which means «deriving the 'ought' to avoid non-generative activity from the 'is' of the natural pattern of human sexuality. Rather, the 'ought' is a recognition of and a response to the God who reveals his sovereign will for humankind and expresses it, in this instance, in the realm of biology».

18. Cfr. S. J. JENSEN, *A Defense...*, *op. cit.*, p. 403. Jensen quotes the words of St. Thomas concerning the nature of sins which he believes would address the issues being raised. «For some sins the exterior actions are not evil in themselves, but only because they arise from an evil intention or will, for example, when one gives alms for vainglory. For these sins it is plain that in every way the sin is primarily in the will. But there are some sins in which the exterior acts are evil in themselves, as with theft, adultery, murder, and so on. Regarding these sins two distinctions should be made. First, the word 'primarily' has two senses, either what is first or what is most completely. The second distinction concerns the exterior action, which may be considered in two ways, either as it is conceived according to its essence or as it is actually performed. (...) In summary then, if we consider the exterior act conceived then evil is in the exterior act first of all, but if we are speaking of the exterior act performed then evil is first of all in the will». Cfr. *De Malo*, q. 2. 3.
19. Cfr. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology 1977: The Church in Dispute*, TS 39 (1978) 95. McCormick quotes the Pope: «Serious motives, such as those which are frequently present in the so-called 'indications' –medical, eugenic, economic and social– can exempt from this positive, obligatory prestation (*prestazione*) for a long time, even for the entire duration of the marriage». PIUS XII, AAS 43 (1951) 835-54, at 845-46.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
22. Cfr. W. E. MAY, *Sterilization: Catholic Teaching and Catholic Practice*, Homiletic and Pastoral Review 77 (Aug.-Sept. 1977) 9-22, [Online] Available: <http://www.Catholicculture.org/library/view.cfm?recnum=5234> (last checked: Feb 14, 2008)
23. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology 1977: The Church in Dispute*, TS 39 (1978) 95.
24. G. G. GRISEZ, *A New Formulation...*, *cit.*, p. 361.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 360.
26. Cfr. L. DEWAN, *Jean Porter on Natural Law: Thomistic Notes*, Thom 66 (2002) 304. Dewan quotes St. Thomas saying: «It is evident from this that every emission of semen, in such a way that generation cannot follow, is contrary to the good for man. And if this be done deliberately, it must be a sin. (...) Likewise, it must be contrary to the good for man if the semen be emitted under conditions such that generation could result but the proper upbringing would be prevented». Cfr. ScG III, c. 122, 5-6.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 305.
28. STh II-II, q. 154, a. 12, 1. The text states: «The more a sin is against charity the worse it is. Now adultery and seduction and rape harm our neighbor, whereas unnatural sin injures nobody else, and accordingly is not the worst form of lust».
29. STh II-II, q. 154, a. 12, 4. In the reply of St. Thomas, he explicitly expresses this idea. «Since, then, unnatural vice flouts nature by transgressing its basic principles of sexuality, it is in this matter the gravest of sins. (...) The developed plan of living according to reason comes from man; the plan of nature comes from God, and therefore a violation of this plan, as by unnatural sins, is an affront to God, the ordainer of nature. (...) We have contended that sins against nature are sins against God. And they are graver than the depravity of sacrilege to the extent that the order of nature is more basic and stable than the order of reason we build on it».
30. ScG III, c. 122, 9. The text declares: «Nor, in fact, should it be deemed a slight sin for a man to arrange for the emission of semen apart from the proper purpose of generating and bringing up children, on the argument that it is either a slight sin, or none at all, for a person to use a part of the body for a different use than that

- to which it is directed by nature (say, for instance, one chose to walk on his hands, or to use his feet for something usually done with the hands) because man's good is not much opposed by such inordinate use. However, the inordinate emission of semen is incompatible with the natural good; namely, the preservation of the species. Hence, after the sin of homicide whereby a human nature already in existence is destroyed, this type of sin appears to take next place, for by it the generation of human nature is precluded».
31. L. DEWAN, Jean Porter on Natural Law..., *op. cit.*, p. 307.
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 308.
 33. *Ibid.*
 34. Cfr. B. HÄRING, *New Dimensions of Responsible Parenthood*, TS 37 (1976) 128.
 35. These would include «*coitus interruptus*, masturbation, homosexual acts, bestiality, etc.». Cfr. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
 36. Pruss argues that this is an «unnatural sexual act» in the sense that it fails to promote an authentic biological union between the couple. Their sexual act only manifests a resemblance of a biological union and therefore a kind of a deceitful union because there is no united organism which strives towards the end of procreation. Hence, theirs is not a spiritual union.
 37. Cfr. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
 38. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 100. The author explains that an act which does not express unity is but an act of hate and therefore, it is not an act of love.
 39. Cfr. G. G. GRISEZ et al., «*Every Marital Act Ought to be Open to New Life*»..., *op. cit.*, p. 365-426. To substantiate their claim these authors (G. Grisez, J. Boyle, J. Finnis and W. May) mention some of the important documents of the Church like the canon, *Si aliquis, Decret. Greg. IX, lib. V, tit. 12, cap. v; Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. A. L. Richter and A. Friedberg (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1881), 2, 794; which mention about the consideration of a contraceptive attitude as to be held as homicide. *Casti connubii*, of Pope Pius XII, deals on the contraception within marriage.
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 371.
 41. *Ibid.*, pp. 374-375.
 42. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 377. It must be noted that word reason or reasons here, as Grisez, Boyle, Finnis and May would like to imply mean: «reason or set of reasons, however complex».
 43. FC, n. 32. The text declares: «When couples, by means of recourse to contraception, separate these two meanings that God the Creator has inscribed in the being of man and woman and in the dynamism of their sexual communion, they act as 'arbiters' of the divine plan and they 'manipulate' and degrade human sexuality and with it themselves and their married partner by altering its value of 'total' self-giving».
 44. Cfr. J. T. LAMONT, *On the Functions...*, *op. cit.*, p. 577.
 45. *Ibid.*, pp. 577-578.
 46. Cfr. G. G. GRISEZ et al., «*Every Marital Act Ought to be Open to New Life*»..., *op. cit.*, p. 417. In the footnote n. 22 of their article, these authors present the teaching of Pope JOHN PAUL II on the moral norm concerning contraception that it «belongs not only to the natural moral law, but also to the *moral order revealed by God*: also from this point of view, it could not be different, but solely what is handed down by Tradition and the Magisterium». (General Audience, 18 July 1984).
 47. Cfr. J. T. LAMONT, *On the Functions...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 577-580.
 48. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 580. In his article, Lamont mentions in the footnote n. 14 the following study of the subject of the practice of contraception as an occasion to the widespread practice of divorce. He cites the works of J. McCarthy, *Religious Com-*

- mitment, Affiliation, and Marital Dissolution*, and C. F. Westoff, *The Blending of Catholic Reproductive Behavior*, in *The Religious Dimension: New Directions in Qualitative Research*, R. Wuthnow (ed.) Academic Press, New York 1979.
49. Cfr. G. G. GRISEZ, *A New Formulation...*, *cit.*, p. 359. He affirms: «So good is marital unity directly and of itself that marriages for which procreation happen to be impossible nevertheless share the true nature and value of marriage. Their moral relation to procreation suffices, and this relation consists in the fact that in marrying the couple consent to a mutual, exclusive, permanent exchange of rights to engage in conjugal acts, i.e., acts which in their structure *as human acts* are suited to procreation».
 50. Cfr. G. G. GRISEZ et al., «*Every Marital Act Ought to be Open to New Life*»..., *op. cit.*, p. 420.
 51. Cfr. G. G. GRISEZ, *A New Formulation...*, *cit.*, p. 348.
 52. PAUL VI, Allocation to the Redemptorists, 24 Sept. 1967. Cfr. N. HALLIGAN, *The Church as Teacher...*, *op. cit.*, p. 707.
 53. G. G. GRISEZ, *A New Formulation...*, *cit.*, p. 357.
 54. *Ibid.*, p. 353.
 55. Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 355-356.
 56. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 358.
 57. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 359.
 58. Cfr. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
 59. *Ibid.* The author argues that the main reason why the use of condom is wrong is because it contradicts the «organic nature of sexual union» which is oriented towards the procreation of a new person. He also refers to the Code of Canon Law n. 1061, §1 which seems to signify that the performing of a sexual act with the use of condom does not make up of a «valid consummation of marriage».
 60. Cfr. C. KACZOR, *Proportionalism and the Pill: How Developments in Theory Lead to Contradictions to Practice*, Thom 63 (1999) 275. «Plastic IUDs were primarily abortifacients. Later copper devices would prove to have a mixed action. Initially the copper produces a toxic fluid in the uterus which destroys spermatozoa in transit to the tube, and washes into the tube to destroy any ova. If the gametes succeeded in uniting, the embryo was usually destroyed before embedding. The IUD also interferes with normal tubal motility... If the device is not inserted skillfully, the woman's uterus can be perforated. Even when properly placed, it can be the channel for bacteria or viruses to enter the uterus and cause pelvic infection». H. KLAUS, *The Reality of Contraception*, Catholic Dossier 3, n. 5 (sept.-oct. 1997) 42.
 61. B. HÄRING, *New Dimensions...*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
 62. R. A. MCCORMICK, *Sterilization and Theological Method*, TS 37 (1976) 471.
 63. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 472. McCormick quotes the statements of the CDF as the following: «And indeed the sterilization of the faculty itself is forbidden for an even graver reason than the sterilization of individual acts, since it induces a state of sterility in the person which is almost always irreversible. Neither can any mandate of public authority, which would seek to impose direct sterilization as necessary for the common good, be invoked; for such sterilization damages the dignity and inviolability of the human person. Likewise, neither can one invoke the principle of totality in this case, in virtue of which interference with organs is justified for the greater good of the person; sterility intended in itself is not directed to the integral good of the person properly understood (*recte intentum*), 'the proper order of good being preserved,' inasmuch as it damages the ethical good (*bono ethico*) of the person, which is the highest good, since it deliberately deprives foreseen and freely-chosen sexual activity of an essential element».

64. Cfr. *ibid.* The term as expressed by the document of the CDF indicates exclusion to any sterilization activity, either temporary or permanent, as a means to protect from any sexual act that is not deliberately chosen, as in the case of rape.
65. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 475.
66. Cfr. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1981*, TS 43 (1982) 103. See J. GRÜNDEL, *Zur Problematik der operativen Sterilisation in katholischen Krankenhäusern*, *Stimmen der Zeit* 199 (1981) 671-77.
67. *Ibid.*
68. Cfr. J. L. THOMAS, *Family, Sex, and Marriage...*, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
69. D. E. HURLEY, *Population Control...*, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
70. J. GILES MILHAVEN, *Conjugal Sexual Love and Contemporary Moral Theology*, TS 35 (1974) 692-697.
71. J. L. THOMAS, *Family, Sex, and Marriage...*, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
72. *Ibid.*
73. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 152.
74. Cfr. J. GILES MILHAVEN, *Conjugal Sexual Love...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 693-695.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 696.
76. Gn 2:24 «That is why a man leaves his father and mother, and clings to his wife, so that they form one flesh».
77. Milhaven asserts that «erotic love» may not be the highest kind of personal love but it does not also mean a purely physical sexual act. It is not equated with a love which comes from physical sex. Those theologians who investigate along this line do not claim that this kind of love comprises the essential element of conjugal love. However, this is the constituent part of married love which has been historically neglected by theologians and the authorities of the Church who, instead, has given emphasis on the spiritual dimension of the love between husband and wife.
78. Cfr. GS, n. 49.
79. J. GILES MILHAVEN, *Conjugal Sexual Love...*, *op. cit.*, p. 701.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 704.
81. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
82. See K. WOJTYLA (POPE JOHN PAUL II) *Love and Responsibility*, Eng. trans. by H. T. WILLETS, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1993.
83. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 92. The author argues that even if the husband and the wife are not selfish but «the man-woman organism would, considered as a whole, be intrinsically selfish and its unity would consist in its selfishness». This act will not lead to a spiritual unity but only tends to separate the couple from God.
84. Cfr. P. J. CAHALL, *St. Augustine on Conjugal Love and Divine Love*, Thom 68 (2004) 362.
85. A. SARMIENTO, an Ordinary Professor of Moral Theology in the Universidad de Navarra, Pamplona, in his book: *El Secreto del Amor en el Matrimonio*, Ediciones Cristiandad, S.A., Madrid 2003, p. 88; clearly expresses this idea. «Ese placer ha sido querido por Dios para facilitar las operaciones rectas. En la relación conyugal está ordenado a descubrir y manifestar la recíproca corporalidad. Por eso precisamente, en ningún caso se puede hacer de él la razón última de la unión sexual en el matrimonio».
86. Cfr. P. J. CAHALL, *St. Augustine on Conjugal Love...*, *op. cit.*, p. 350-351. See D. BURT, *Friendship and Society: An Introduction to Augustine's Practical Philosophy*, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1999, p. 114.
87. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 355-356. Cahall quotes St. Augustine saying that «pleasure is a necessary accompaniment (...) of sexual intercourse with a view of procreation». See

- AUGUSTINE, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, Henry Bettenson (trans.) Pelican Books, London 1972; Penguin Books, 1987, 19.1; *De civitate Dei* 19.1 (CSEL 40).
88. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 96. (The emphasis is from the author).
 89. A. REGAN, *The Perennial Value of Augustine's Theology of the Goods of Marriage*, 364. Cfr. P. J. CAHALL, *St. Augustine on Conjugal Love...*, *op. cit.*, p. 358.
 90. Cfr. P. J. CAHALL, *St. Augustine on Conjugal Love...*, *op. cit.*, p. 359. See D. HUNTER, *Augustine, Sermon 354 A: Its Place in His Thought on Marriage and Sexuality*, *Augustine Studies* 33, no. 1 (2002) 46, 49.
 91. The author mentions those circumstances beyond their control which would render infertile their sexual act like: «intercourse during pregnancy, postmenopausal intercourse, or intercourse during infertile days of a woman's menstrual cycle» and therefore would make it impossible the conception of a new child.
 92. Cfr. P. J. CAHALL, *St. Augustine on Conjugal Love...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 360-361. He also adds that in the mind of St. Augustine, the «marriage of Mary and Joseph was based upon a deep spiritual love (...) free of carnal concupiscence, and *not* primarily because they abstained from sexual intercourse» that their marriage was considered as an ideal Christian marriage and hence «possessing the fullness of conjugal love...».
 93. Cfr. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
 94. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
 95. Cfr. G. MARTÍNEZ, *An Anthropological Vision of Christian Marriage*, *Thom* 56 (1992) 451-472.
 96. *Ibid.*, p. 453.
 97. A. SARMIENTO, *El Matrimonio Cristiano*, Eunsa, Pamplona 1997, p. 38. Professor Sarmiento affirms: «Esa unidad y diversidad se explican, según enseña la filosofía y la antropología, porque, si bien el ser humano está compuesto de alma y cuerpo, entre uno y otro componente se da una unidad substancial. Lo que significa, dicho en forma negativa, que del ser de la persona se excluye cualquier forma de dualidad: una forma que correspondería al cuerpo y otra que correspondería al espíritu.
 98. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 42.
 99. Cfr. G. MARTINEZ, *An Anthropological Vision...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 454-455.
 100. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1981*, *TS* 43 (1982) 71. McCormick explains that the very phrase: «our own good» is similar to the expression: «person adequately considered». He compares the text of GS, n. 51 which underscores the importance of personalist criterion of moral judgment and the text of ScG III, 122 of St. Thomas which states «our own good».
 101. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 72.
 102. Cfr. N. CROTTY, *The Technological Imperative: Reflection on Reflections*, *TS* 33 (1972) 441.
 103. Cfr. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1981*, *TS* 43 (1982) 69. GS, n. 51 states that «moral aspect of any procedure must be determined by objective standards which are based on the nature of the person's acts».
 104. Cfr. L. JANSSENS, *Artificial Insemination: Ethical Considerations*, *Louvain Studies* 8 (1980) 3.
 105. Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 17-25. Cfr. R. A. McCORMICK, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1981*, *TS* 43 (1982) pp. 70-71.
 106. L. SOWLE CAHILL, *Catholic Sexual Ethics and the Dignity of the Person: A Double Message*, *TS* 50 (1989) 120-150.
 107. Revisionists call for a new approach of the moral discourse. They do not consider morality as a static reality with a moral agent conforming to the order of nature.

- What is crucial in the moral decision making is the judgment of the moral agent weighing good and evil in conflicting situations. First, the Revisionists consider the overall aspects of action-effects of human actions before a moral definition is given. Second, the Revisionists would allow the causing of some evil in order to attain a proportionate good end and when the other option would inflict a worse evil. Third, they would possibly exclude the role of the moral authorities i.e., the teaching of the Magisterium, in the moral evaluation. Cfr. K. R. MELCHIN, *Revisionists, Deontologists, and the Structure of Moral Understanding*, TS 51 (1990) 396-402.
108. For the purpose of this work, «traditionalists» here would mean those theologians who defend the traditional teaching of the Church concerning the morality on contraception.
 109. W. May affirms that central to the arguments of the Revisionists in their denial of the moral absolutes, is their approach to the so-called «totality of human acts». For example, a contraceptive act is only one aspect of the total series of «contracepted conjugal acts» and this action receives its moral condition from the other end of marriage such as conjugal union or the whole well-being of the married life. Cfr. W. E. MAY, *Moral Absolutes...*, *cit.*, p. 22.
 110. Cahill attests that this personalist view has taken its impetus in the person of H. Doms in the year 1930, who dealt the marital relations as starting point for moral discourse. This approach is considered a modern phenomenon which emphasizes the human subject as the main focus of the moral consideration. This is the reason why, the interpretation it has given to sexuality is largely based on intersubjective values.
 111. Cfr. L. SOWLE CAHILL, *Catholic Sexual Ethics...*, *cit.*, p. 121. Cahill contends that GS, n. 51 underlines the need for harmony between the «conjugal love» and the «responsible transmission of human life». The encyclical HV, n.14, while following GS, underscores the «inseparable connection» of the union and procreation of every marital sexual intercourse forbidding the recourse to any «artificial contraception».
 112. J. E. SMITH, *The Munus of Transmitting Human Life...*, *cit.*, pp. 413-414.
 113. L. SOWLE CAHILL, *Catholic Sexual Ethics...*, *cit.*, p. 122.
 114. Cfr. K. WOJTYLA (Pope JOHN PAUL II), *Love and Responsibility...*, *op. cit.*, p. 97. In this book Wojtyla states: «The fullest, the most uncompromising form of love consists precisely in self-giving, in making one's inalienable and non-transferable 'I' someone else's property. This is doubly paradoxical: firstly in that it is possible to step outside one's own 'I' in this way, and secondly in that the 'I' far from being destroyed or impaired as a result in enlarged and enriched –of course in a super-physical, a moral sense–. The Gospel stresses this very clearly and unambiguously –‘would lose– shall find again’ ‘would save –shall lose–’».
 115. L. SOWLE CAHILL, *Catholic Sexual Ethics...*, *cit.*, p. 145.
 116. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
 117. L. SOWLE CAHILL, *Marriage: Developments in Catholic Theology and Ethics*, TS 64 (2003) 86.
 118. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
 119. G. MARTÍNEZ, *An Anthropological Vision...*, *op. cit.*, p. 456.
 120. Cfr. *ibid.*
 121. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 457. It is the conviction of Ebner that «personal fulfillment and authenticity are possible only in the word-and-love dialogue of communion between two people and their relationship with the personal God. Word and love are the keys to a relational understanding of the person and his/her mystery». On his part, Buber has «insisted on the relation of dialogue and reciprocity, the ‘I-Thou,’ by

- which a person is constituted and is present to the other. The other level of relation, the 'I-It', only produces alienation because it reduces the person to an object of manipulation. The interpersonal relation of mutual self-revelation stems from God's calling the human being to existence and to a relationship of dialogue with Him».
122. A. SARMIENTO, *Al Servicio del Amor y de la Vida: El Matrimonio y la Familia*, Ediciones RIALP, Madrid 2006, p. 108. Professor Sarmiento attests: «La "reciprocidad" es, por tanto, un elemento esencial del amor que ha de caracterizar al "nosotros" que realiza la apertura a los demás propia del ser personal. El amor verdadero busca ciertamente el bien del otro y se manifiesta en la donación sincera de sí mismo, pero, por eso mismo, es recíproco».
 123. G. MARTÍNEZ, *An Anthropological Vision...*, *op. cit.*, p. 459.
 124. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 460.
 125. P. F. PALMER, *Christian Marriage: Contract or Covenant?*, TS 33 (1972) 618. Cfr. GS, n. 48.
 126. Cfr. *ibid.* Palmer holds that the term «covenant» comes from the Latin word «*conventio*» or «*conventus*», which is originated from the Latin verb «*convenire*», which denotes «to come together or to convene». To apply this in the present context would mean: «to form a covenant (*foedus*) or an alliance (*societas*) or a pact (*pactum*)» terms which make reference to the «covenant».
 127. Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 629-630.
 128. *Ibid.*, p. 640.
 129. L. ORSY, *Faith, Sacrament, Contract, and Christian Marriage: Disputed Questions*, TS 43 (1982) 382.
 130. Cfr. L. SOWLE CAHILL, *Marriage...*, *cit.*, pp. 84-85. These Church Documents are the following: GS, LG, HV, FC, and the 1983 Code of Canon Law.
 131. HV, n. 2.
 132. Cfr. HV, n. 9.
 133. P. F. PALMER, *Christian Marriage...*, *op. cit.*, p. 643. Cfr. *De bono coniugali* 3 (CSEL 41, 191).
 134. STh, II-II, q. 26, a. 11.
 135. P. F. PALMER, *Christian Marriage...*, *op. cit.*, p. 644.
 136. *Ibid.*, p. 646.
 137. GS, n. 48. «The intimate partnership of life and love has been established by the Creator and qualified by His laws, and is rooted in the conjugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent».
 138. P. F. PALMER, *Christian Marriage...*, *op. cit.*, p. 649.
 139. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 650.
 140. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 658.
 141. HV, n. 8: «Married love particularly reveals its true nature and nobility when we realize that it takes its origin from God, who «is love», the Father «from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named».
 142. Cfr. G. MARTÍNEZ, *An Anthropological Vision...*, *op. cit.*, p. 464. In the Genesis account, Martínez holds that the «foundation of the conjugal unity is seen in the two complementary poles of unerasable sexuality. Adam welcomes Eve as man's rib, as the answer to his innermost needs and desires. This has been called 'the first song of love.' The relationship that is established is as important as the two differentiated sexes themselves. The two of them, individually and together, are God's image (Gen 1:26) and consequently of equal dignity in their mutual complementarity. They can only fully discover their individual identity in dialogue with the other and for the other».
 143. *Ibid.*, p. 465.

144. P. J. CAHALL, *St. Augustine on Conjugal Love...*, *op. cit.*, p. 369.
145. Cfr. *ibid.* This idea is also sustained by J. Selling who declares: «More specifically when we come to sexual intercourse, it reflects the inner world of Trinity in that the Trinity expresses the relationships of persons, the Father and Son, whose fruit is the Spirit of love, and who are essentially one but are completely separate persons. We find in sexual intercourse an interpersonal union of love in which, at the moment of consummation, the spouses are one and yet at the same time they are separate persons». J. A. SELLING (ed.), *Embracing Sexuality: Authority and experience in the Catholic Church*, Ashgate, Burlington USA 2001, p. 20.
146. Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 369-371.
147. Cfr. G. MARTÍNEZ, *An Anthropological Vision...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 465-471.
148. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 466.
149. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 468. In the point of view of Martínez: «The richness of conjugal love and its potential for growth are rooted precisely in this existential self-giving...».
150. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 469.
151. Cfr. FC, n. 32 declares: «Consequently, sexuality, by means of which man and woman give themselves to one another through the acts which are proper and exclusive to spouses, is by no means something purely biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such. It is realized in a truly human way only if it is an integral part of the love by which a man and a woman commit themselves totally to one another until death. The total physical self-giving would be a lie if it were not the sign and fruit of a total personal self-giving, in which the whole person, including the temporal dimension, is present: if the person were to withhold something or reserve the possibility of deciding otherwise in the future, by this very fact he or she would not be giving totally».
152. Cfr. W. REICH, *Responsible...*, *op. cit.*, p. 366.
Aquinas considers that if the «sex act is a procreative act, and since marriage is a prerequisite for performing the act of sexual union, any subsequent mention of the procreative act will be taken to mean the marital act, and vice versa».
153. Cfr. *ibid.* The Latin original translation of the mutual aid is «mutuum obsequium» in which a man is naturally inclined to «marital companionship and the mutual exchange of domestic life».
154. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 367. Reich presents the idea of Aquinas concerning the goods of marriage in this manner: «To the first (*bonum prolis*) corresponds procreation-education; to the second (*bonum fidei*) correspond both *remedium concupiscentiae* and *mutuum obsequium*; and to the third (*bonum sacramenti*) corresponds the imitation of the unity of Christ and his Church as a purpose of marriage. The *bonum sacramenti* is rated first in the order of dignity, but the *bonum prolis*, at least if it is understood as the *intentio prolis*, is the most essential good of marriage».
155. Cfr. J. T. LAMONT, *On the Functions...*, *op. cit.*, p. 561.
156. Cfr. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 82. In the viewpoint of the teleological organicity, «to say that a man and woman jointly constitute one organism is to imply that they are united in a single action oriented in the direction of an end, and it is this teleological cooperation or striving that constitutes the organism's principle of unity».
157. Cfr. *ibid.* According to Pruss, what is being described in here is the «*biophysiological union*» because sexual intercourse is a «biological act».
158. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 84. Pruss elaborates this idea saying that it is vital to the phenomenology of the sexual act that the union of the organism effected through by the sexual act should not just be a mere projection but should correspond to the ontological reality, which would mean reproduction.

159. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 86.
160. HV, n. 12: «This particular doctrine, often expounded by the Magisterium of the Church, is based on the inseparable connection, established by God, which man on his own initiative may not break, between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act».
161. G. G. GRISEZ et al., «*Every Marital Act Ought to be Open to New Life*»..., *op. cit.*, p. 410. See also the explanation of J. T. LAMONT, *On the Functions...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 561 and 568.
162. Cfr. *ibid.* This argument is taken from the proposal of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum vitae* (1987), II.B.4-5, in which these authors (Grisez, Boyle, Finnis and May) intend to articulate.
163. J. E. SMITH, *The Munus of Transmitting Human Life...*, *cit.*, pp. 410-412.
164. G. G. GRISEZ et al., «*Every Marital Act Ought to be Open to New Life*»..., *op. cit.*, p. 412.
165. Cfr. HV, n. 12.
166. Cfr. G. G. GRISEZ et al., «*Every Marital Act Ought to be Open to New Life*»..., *op. cit.*, p. 413.
167. J. E. SMITH, *The Munus of Transmitting Human Life...*, *cit.*, p. 417.
168. See also the explanation as regards the inseparable connection between unitive and procreative goods by J. T. LAMONT, *On the Functions...*, *op. cit.*, p. 564.
169. Cfr. J. E. SMITH, *The Munus of Transmitting Human Life...*, *cit.*, pp. 417-418.
170. A. SARMIENTO affirms: «La apertura a la transmisión de la vida es una exigencia del carácter interpersonal y de totalidad propias de la comunión conyugal». Cfr. *El Secreto...*, *cit.*, p. 73.
171. G. G. GRISEZ et al., «*Every Marital Act Ought to be Open to New Life*»..., *op. cit.*, p. 415.
172. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 420.
173. Cfr. J. E. SMITH, *The Munus of Transmitting Human Life...*, *cit.*, p. 420.
174. Cfr. A. R. PRUSS, *Christian Sexual Ethics...*, *op. cit.*, p. 87. The author argues that the spiritual union of this contracepting couple, except if they are invincibly ignorant of what they are doing, would be affected. That is why it is but «self-defeating to use spiritual union as a justification for contraception». He explains further that «in its intrinsic natural meaning the biological unity in the sexual act signifies the spiritual unity of persons. Therefore, the intrinsic meaning of a deliberate decreasing of the biological unity in the sexual act is the decrease of the spiritual unity. This active decreasing of the biological unity is thus a sin against the dignity of marriage».

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