



Credidimus caritati
we have put our faith in love

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United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Fertility and Family Planning Section; World Fertility Report 2012. United Nations, New York, 2013.

From the Introduction;

During the last several decades, the world has experienced profound changes in fertility. Between 1970-1979 and 2000-2011, the median level of total fertility of countries and areas in the world fell by more than half, from 5.2 to 2.4 children per woman. Central to these changes was shifts in the timing of childbearing, the incidence and prevalence of marriage and union formation, and the use of contraception."

The report covered 186 countries accounting for 98% of the world population.

Fertility rates are highest in sub-Saharan Africa and lowest in East Asia, Southern and Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, and Brazil.

Fertility has fallen unprecedentedly since the 1970s and in all but 6 of the 186 countries, and is accelerating.

Marriage and parenthood are starting later in life, unmarried parenthood (7.2% in 1970s, 35.9% in the last decade; now also 80.3% in Colombia, 82.6% in Venezuela) and childlessness figures are rising (15.9% in Jordan, 23.1% in Singapore).

In 1976 11% of governments were concerned at their fertility levels; now it is 26%.

Paradoxically, 93% of governments support family planning programmes and the distribution of contraceptives.

Where health conditions are even moderate, a fertility rate of 2.1 is needed for a population to replace itself from one generation to the next; that is to say, in general terms, an average of 2.1 children per fertile

woman. This allows for the relatively small number of early deaths.

Where a population increases moderately in size, economic growth usually follows. Explosive or rapid population growth is very uncommon.

In contrast where population decreases, the average of the population increases, economic and cultural decline follows, and the burden of paying old age pensions and health care for the elderly falls on a shrinking tax-paying working proportion of society. This can harm the quality of life for older people, their health care provision, and even involve pressure towards euthanasia.

Only four of first world countries have replacement fertility rates; for half of developed countries the fertility rate is 1.4. Thirty-eight countries fall below 1.6, and twenty below 1.4.

Objectively, it is extraordinary how few countries are encouraging childbearing and stable family life, and how many are still promoting contraception, and aborting their future generations.

The most densely populated countries are Macau, Monaco, Singapore, Hong Kong, Gibraltar, Bahrain, Malta, Bermuda and Sint Maarten (Netherlands).

The least densely populated (excluding small islands) are Greenland, Mongolia, the Western Sahara, Namibia, French Guiana, Australia with its peripheral population centres, Suriname, Mauritania, Botswana and Libya. This runs counter to the discredited and obsolete Malthusian idea that population density equals poverty and disaster.

The world seems besotted by material wealth while blind to the fact that it is people who create that wealth.

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/dataset/fertility/wfr2012/MainFrame.html>

With thanks to Dr Mark Whitty who prepared this summary of the UN Report.



The body is not a mere tool for the expression of feelings: How to counter dualism



Dr Sr Hanna Klaus

Most of the young couples I meet during Natural Family Planning instructions have never heard of dualism but at some level they are open to rejecting it. One of the classic forms of dualism was Manicheism, according to which there are two powers – good and evil, or God and Satan-- but they were equally balanced. Other forms contrasted the mind with the body. (See for instance <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dualism/>). Today's dualists say that the human body is subpersonal, part of the world that the "person," is called to dominate, that one can manipulate or use one's body to express any desires. While the culture treats fertility as if it were a disease to be isolated or removed chemically or mechanically from the body, those who seek natural methods of family planning obviously are open to learning to understand the couple's cyclic fertility in order to make informed choices about when to attempt conception. Given that their choice flies in the face of the dominant culture's practices, it is instructive to review how we arrived at this position.

Until the Church of England's Lambeth conference in 1930 no religious body made serious efforts to separate sex from procreation, but Lambeth approved the use of then-available contraceptives for married couples. Pope Pius XI soon published *Casti Connubii* which restated the constant teaching which prohibited interference in the conjugal act to make it intentionally infertile., but appeared to subordinate the love-enhancing role of the conjugal act to the procreation of children. Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes* spoke to the two ends of marriage, but John XXIII found it necessary to appoint a commission which reported to his successor, Paul VI. Thirty eight years after Lambeth Pope Paul VI had to issue the encyclical *Humanae vitae* to remind his flock that the use of contraceptives was still wrong.

When *Humanae Vitae* was issued, the only known natural methods for the regulation of births were calendar and temperature rhythm. I had not learned much about either except that they were reputed to be ineffective. My first reaction was to think "it's good to know what we can't do, Holy Father, but what can we

do?" The question was intensified by a patient, a female student at our medical school who wanted to have sex with her fiancé but did not like the pill because it wiped out her affect, and neither of them liked barriers. As she was telling me all this she suddenly exploded and said "why do I have to change myself around to have sex, why can't I be me?" Parenthetically, neither she nor her fiancé were Catholic. I had no advice to offer other than waiting for marriage if she did not want to conceive before she graduated. Providentially, the first American publication of Dr. Billings's book came across my desk soon after, and a charismatic couple and I prayed and cursed our way through it. But it proved that the Billings method was solidly grounded.

At the meeting of Billings Ovulation method teachers in Melbourne, Australia In 1978 John Finnis, professor of philosophy and ethics at Oxford presented the intellectual history of what had become formal dissent to the encyclical. Among others, Professor Louis Janssens of Louvain had begun by advocating the use of the birth control pill during breast feeding because nature sometimes allowed ovulation during this time. Never mind that this drug passes through the milk into the baby and can cause severe damage – theologians are not expected to know these things. His colleagues then suggested that if there was no theological contraindication to temporarily sterilizing a woman, what was the objection to permanently sterilizing her?. He had to acquiesce. But since no method was beyond failure – after all, one does not add anything to the sexual act to make it procreative-- why not allow fail-safe abortion as a backup? By this time Janssens realized he had crossed a line and responded that the problem was physicalism; "We have to assume the biological into the human." As I, a simple obstetrician listened to all of this, it dawned on me that we don't have to assume the biological into the human. It is already there, and has assumed great dignity because of the Incarnation.

When the debate about abortion heated up in the early 70s, I began to talk about embryonic and fetal development to groups. I don't think I impacted many abortion decisions. Later, realizing that conventional contraception had done nothing to reduce the abortion rate, I began to teach the Billings Ovulation Method of natural family planning, thinking that the natural method would be more acceptable than the fertility-suppressing contraceptives. In those days most of the advocates of NFP spent much time talking about the side effects of hormonal contraception, while few other than I spoke about the fact that barriers whether physical or chemical - seriously diminish the marital relationship by attempting to remove half of its meaning. In the process contraception reduces the partners to being means to an end, rather than being nonsubstitutable individuals joined in a covenant relationship.

Some of the women who came for instructions had a history of abortion. The majority of abortion seekers in the 70s were teens and young women. It dawned on me that the only way to stop abortion was to prevent the crisis pregnancy., How to do that? My high risk group of pregnant teens at St. Louis University Hospital was made up of girls 13-15 years of age. I handled their prenatal care, delivered their babies and followed them after delivery. All had known about contraceptives and where to get them; none had used them. Why not? They were not articulate, but the gist was that they did not want to use them. Something about contraception repelled them. .

Thinking about where these girls were developmentally began to shed some light. At puberty each person has a number of personal developmental tasks. Among them and perhaps the most important, is ego identity, of which gender identity is an essential component. When a girl begins to menstruate she knows at some level that she is not only becoming a woman, but that she is biologically capable of becoming a mother. She needs to integrate this understanding into her self-understanding in order to grow toward maturity. She is also at the stage of the personal fable, which Erickson has described as thinking of oneself as being on center stage all the time. In that situation, there are no grays, only blacks and whites. If then the doctor, the "god in white" tells the girl that she needs to take a contraceptive to remove her fertility from her body, what might she "hear?" if she needs medicine against her fertility, her fertility is sick. But she considers it an important part of herself. So she either does not take her pill, or takes it irregularly, and conceives. Parenthetically, the current campaign to reintroduce the IUD is designed to override the daily choice needed to take pills correctly, suggesting that women still resist removing part of themselves from an act meant to signify complete mutual self giving and complete mutual acceptance.

At any rate, I thought that if I could teach my girls how to recognize and accept their fertility rather than suppress it, they might behave differently. At the very least, they might refrain from intercourse during the time of recognized fertility. That was the beginning of Teen STAR® (Sexuality Teaching in the context of Adult Responsibility). Instead of limiting their sexual relations to the time of infertility, they abstained, period. Most virgins maintained their virginity, and half the sexually active girls stopped having sex. The program has been extended to males, and, interestingly their behavior is similar to the females'. Once young people begin to understand and value their bodies, they no longer view them as mere tools for implementing the whim of the moment, but see their bodies as the physical expression of their person. Then they behave in ways that tell us that they value themselves by making deliberate behavioral choices rather than behave impulsively.

That's very counter cultural, but after mastering Teen STAR students in many cultures tell us that they have more self confidence, make their own decisions and easily resist pressures to engage in behaviors which they consider inappropriate.

Our culture considers the body as a tool of the (person to carry out any desire. And if our own body can't provide the necessary means, any other one will do. If a woman wants to start a family when her own ova are no longer fertilizable, donor eggs are sought. Genetic continuity is dismissed as unimportant by those who promote this practice. Yet , when insemination with donor sperm is proposed to an infertile couple, the husband who accepts does so most reluctantly. Studies have shown that children conceived by "heterologus" sperm donation a generally do not receive the same paternal guidance as children born from the of their biological parent by children born from donor eggs or sperm is highlighted regularly in natural union of two spouses. On the other hand the almost desperate search for the identity the papers. Even previously closed adoption files may now be opened in several states when the child reaches majority. It's all part of needing to know who we are, and part of that includes our ancestry. And then there are the revelations of up to 150 half siblings having been generated by one donor-father. The seemingly limitless practice of genetic manipulation is reminiscent of a bull in a china shop. People embark on these practices without a thought about their final outcomes. Thankfully, for those who believe, the identity of the ultimate Father of us all is known. But to come to know Him we needed Him to come in a form where we could not only hear, but touch him. So he became man, and taught us that we are all made in His image. Seen in this light both the dignity of the human person and the boundaries of attempts at change become clear. Our bodies are not simply tools for the expression of feelings or for the implementation of desires. We ARE our bodies. Bl. John Paul II referred to our body as the "quasi sacrament of the person" (Laborem Exercens) and our bodies and souls have equal value in God's eyes. St. Thomas Aquinas teaches that we will not reach our full perfection until we are re-united with our resurrected bodies in Heaven. How that will be accomplished no one knows, but as St. Paul says, 'let Him who made the promise see about keeping it.' In terms of assisting infertile couples, anything which assists nature is welcome, but nothing which replaces it. (Donum vitae). But even prior to these legitimate activities in the service of spousal love we need to value ourselves as gifts of God - ambassadors for Christ - and behave accordingly.

The medical literature is replete with studies of discontinuation rates of contraceptive steroids due to side effects, while an analysis of the National Survey of Family Growth 2002 to 2006-8 by Child Trends found that the only family planning method whose use

increased were fertility awareness and natural family planning in the 15-19 year age group . Clearly there is increased appreciation of natural processes. We are our bodies, after all.

See www.teenstarprogram.org for information about the Teen STAR® program.



Ask Dr Mary



A student recently asked Dr Mary Martin, ObGyn, three questions to which we thought others might also like to read the answers:

1. Why is the Huhner's test most highly recommended by the Billings Ovulation Method™? It seems like it's a good test for the combination of the male and female fertility, but less effective if we'd like to investigate male fertility alone, and whether that might be the source of the infertility issue.
2. Are there any ways to balance out the anti-estrogenic effect of Clomid, so that there's still a generous amount of cervical mucus present for conception?
3. What are the best ovulation predictor kits to recommend?

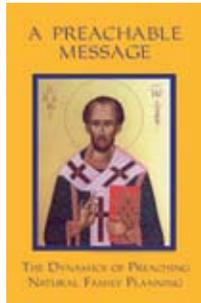
Dr Mary replied as follows:

1. Sending a man into a bathroom with a 'girlie' magazine to masturbate is both demoralizing, artificial and objectifying: it says "you are just a sperm donor." Collecting from the vaginal vault after intercourse during a woman's fertile phase respects the unifying procreative act, does not interfere with conception, if it is in progress, and gives an opportunity to observe sperm motility in an "in vivo" (true life) setting. All one needs to see is 10 motile, normal sperm in a high power field under the microscope to assess normal semen.
2. Professor Odeblad has said that one needs to have at least a teaspoon of mucus to visualize it. We know that far less is sufficient to support, transport and lock sperm into the cervical S mucus crypts.

3. Ovulation predictor kits are a waste of money. They either extrapolate when ovulation might occur, given the rising estradiol levels or mark a Luteinizing Hormone surge which may, or may not be followed by follicular rupture (ovulation). None is as reliable as a developing, changing PATTERN of mucus which ends in slippery and then becomes relatively drier (Prof. Brown's 950,000 urinary hormonal assays confirmed by Prof. Vigil's ultrasounds).



A Preachable Message



BOMA-USA, the American Affiliate of WOOMB International, has recently released a revised 2nd edition of the book, *A Preachable Message*.

In his remarkable foreword to the book, Cardinal Timothy Dolan writes: "We face an incredible challenge to preach the truth and beauty of God's plan for life in a culture increasingly dominated by misinformation, lies and individual freedoms... This second edition of *A Preachable Message* provides an outstanding array of homilies and supportive texts that we can use to bring the wonderful gift of Natural Family Planning (as well as the broader issues of God's gift of sexuality) to our people..." The book includes testimonials, homilies, specific scripture references that can be used to tie the message of *Humanae vitae*/Natural Family Planning into a homily as well as several prayers of the faithful. Each book comes with a bookmark that has a quote from Pope Francis..." Here is another effect of the Holy Spirit: Courage! The courage to proclaim the newness of the Gospel of Jesus to all, with self-confidence, in a loud voice, in every time and in every place."

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Essay on Natural Family Planning

Dr. Charles W. Norris, M.D.



Charles W. Norris, M.D. is a retired Obstetrician/Gynecologist and a graduate of the Georgetown University School of Medicine, class of 1957. This article first appeared in Homiletic and Pastoral Review and is reproduced here with permission. It can be viewed at <http://www.hprweb.com/2014/02/an-essay-on-natural-family-planning/>. With thanks to Fr Joseph Hattie OMI, Spiritual Advisor to WOOMB International, who first brought it to our attention.

The Catholic Church has never opposed family planning, but she teaches through her Magisterium, or teaching authority, that man may not, of his own volition, separate the two meanings of the conjugal act, the unitive and the procreative, because these meanings are willed by God himself.

Natural Family Planning (NFP) as a function of God's will is also a function of the natural law. For years, we have been waging war on our fertility in the practice of artificial birth control to the point that many countries, especially in the West, are demographically below replacement levels. On the other hand, while vast numbers of women are ignorant of the significance of those changing mucus sensations, modern methods of NFP, if the intention is to avoid/postpone pregnancy, are scientifically secure. Natural Family Planning also has several advantages which benefit the marriage. Concluding, the article proposes (read please) that all Catholic physicians begin to conduct "NFP- Only" practices.

Introduction

Following my becoming aware of the Billings Ovulation Method™ in November of 1973, I went through a conversion experience because I saw its value. Since that time, as an obstetrician/gynecologist, I supported, promoted, and taught the method both in, and outside of, my practice. At the same time, I saw no need to become certified because of my in-depth understanding of reproductive physiology. Fast forward 40 years. In July 2013, an opportunity to take formal certification training in the Method presented itself. I did so and was very much impressed with the excellent presentation(s) of the two women trainers, Kim Cole, and Erika Watkins. Conclusion: I only wish I had taken this training 30 years ago!

The doctors John and Lyn Billings (R.I.P.) are two of my heroes. A photograph of both of them graces my bedroom wall. My support and promotion of the Billings Ovulation Method™ stems from its essential simplicity. The Method is based on the sensations a woman feels at the vulva and contains only four rules—three pre-ovulatory and one post-ovulatory. While most women have taught themselves to ignore those changing mucus sensations, once the cause and effect of their existence is suggested to a woman, she can no longer ignore the physiologic symptoms of her fertility. I believe that Dr. John Billings, et al, will go down in the annals of medical research as some of the very greatest.

Natural Law

“Thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven.” Thus reads the fourth clause of the Our Father. The problem is that his will is not being done on Earth. While this may sound somewhat rudimentary, it is the truth. But how do we know the will of God? St. Thomas Aquinas, following the lead of St. Augustine, defined three types of law that define the will of God: Eternal Law, Divine Law, and Natural Law. There is another kind of Law: Human Law, which is valid only when just. This paper will focus on the Natural Law and its implications for mankind. But what is Natural Law? Natural Law is a rule of reason, promulgated by God in man’s nature, whereby man can discern how he/she should act so that good is to be done, and evil is to be avoided. In its simplest form, Natural Law commands us: “to do good and avoid evil”, and St. Augustine maintained that this law is written on the heart of every person.

If the first of God’s gifts to us is the gift of life itself, then one may argue that our second most precious gift is the gift of our fertility. God’s first command to Adam and Eve after the fall was to “be fruitful and multiply.”

In a previous article², we maintained that while pregnancy is not a disease, more fundamentally, neither is our fertility, which is a healthy physiologic component of the sexually mature person. Given the present milieu, it seems that we are waging war on our fertility in the practice of contraception, i.e., artificial birth control. While this may sound countercultural, this war is attested to by the current armamentarium of barriers, chemicals, abortifacients, and even the knife. The medical profession is undeniably active in promoting this war. Under these circumstances, the furnishing of these modalities which treat a normal physiologic function of the sexually mature human being as a disease, must be a violation of the Natural Law and, therefore, evil and opposed to the will of God. Furthermore, one of the results of this war is that many countries, especially in the West, are demographically below replacement levels. While our non-Catholic brethren in the medical profession do not necessarily see this evil for what it is, Catholic physicians should

have no problem seeing the logic of this position.

What has the “sexual revolution,” which began over 50 years ago, wrought with the availability of the birth control pill? It encouraged infidelity, increasing divorce rates, increased out-of-wedlock pregnancies, pornography, blatant homosexuality, promiscuity of all sorts, the spread of sexually transmitted disease, and massive abortion and contraceptive industries.³

Perhaps, the greatest evil of the contraceptive culture in which we live is that it allows men to avoid their responsibilities, and also enables men to use women as objects for the man’s own sexual pleasure. This denies women the dignity and respect that they are entitled to as our wives and the mothers of our children, not to mention the denial of their normal cyclic fertility. For his own reasons, our heavenly Father placed in the hands of women the key to the control of human fertility. Therefore, today, to refer to the HHS mandate as an issue in “women’s health care” is the height of duplicity. It is clear that contraception acts as the gateway to the culture of death. I have little confidence in a legislative, political, or judicial solutions to the abortion controversy. I believe abortion will stop. But it will not stop until all people take on their own shoulders the responsibility for the control of their own fertility in the practice of some modern method of NFP.

Natural Family Planning

The Catholic Church has never opposed family planning, but she teaches through her Magisterium, or teaching authority, that man may not, of his own volition, separate the two meanings of the conjugal act, the unitive and the procreative, because these meanings are willed by God himself (*Humanae Vitae* §12). Over the years of his pontificate, and even before, Blessed John Paul II, the Great, spoke and wrote extensively on the subject of human sexuality. Two areas in which he spoke on the subject are in sections 118 to 131 in his *Theology of the Body*⁴ and in a work entitled “*The Foundation of the Church’s Doctrine Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life*,”⁵ published in 1966, in which Karol Cardinal Wojtyla was the primary director of research.

The title of Part 1 of “*The Foundation of the Church’s Doctrine*” reads: “The Natural Law as Foundation for the Condemnation of Contraception by the Magisterium of the Church, i.e., on natural morality. This statement revolves around the following three questions:

1. “Does the Church have the right to make authoritative pronouncements on matters of morality and natural law?”;
2. “Is her teaching on this subject infallible or not?”; and,
3. “Can this teaching change?”

Those in favor of allowing contraception answered the first two questions in the negative, and the third question in the affirmative.

On the other hand, those who upheld the constant teaching of the Catholic Church answered the first two questions in the affirmative, and the third question in the negative; they “emphasize(d) that the immutability of human nature provides an objective foundation to natural law” as upheld by the ordinary Magisterium. Furthermore, beginning in the 19th century, under the pontificate of Pope Pius IX in 1854, no less than 29 documents attested to the Church’s position on this matter based on natural law.⁶

Following on these documents, three conclusions may be drawn:

1. The Church, in her official teaching, condemns contraception as being morally evil and impermissible;
2. The teaching on this subject is consistent from Popes Pius XI to Paul VI (even before *Humanae Vitae*), the latter having neither revoked nor questioned it; and,
3. The condemnation of contraception from the point of view of morality is considered by the Church as a norm of natural law and, therefore, an objective norm flowing from nature, immutable and obligatory for all, and not only for Catholics. In the long run, when everything is said and done in the contraception, sterilization, abortion controversy, the Catholic Church will come out smelling like a rose.

A true method of family planning must be a method that can be used to either achieve or avoid pregnancy. In a very real sense, methods of Natural Family Planning, and fertility awareness, are the only true methods of family planning for the simple reason that they are the only methods that can be employed either to achieve or avoid pregnancy. All other methods can only be used to prevent pregnancy. An excellent article⁷—which one can heartily recommend, by Pilar Vigil, M.D., Ph.D., (and others) and which describes the values of fertility awareness and NFP— appeared in the November 2012 issue of *The Linacre Quarterly*. Fr. Matthew Habiger, Associate Director of NFP Outreach stated: “It is the natural right of all women of childbearing age to be aware of those symptoms of fertility awareness.” Additionally, Dr. Hanna Klaus also has perfected a curriculum, entitled “Teen STAR,” which teaches youngsters to hold their sexuality and fertility in profound respect.

How does the Church justify its condemnation of contraception? First of all, this condemnation is based on the human person: the individual’s dignity, rights,

and values. Secondly, the person’s power of co-creating (transmitting life) is a gift of God, but human intellect has discovered biologic laws which command the person to follow the dictates of *Humanae Vitae*, which is grounded in truth. Next, the natural law demands that a person should never be used as an object for one’s own ends, egged on, so to speak, by concupiscence. Rather, the virtues of justice and love should govern relations between persons and that the marital embrace be guided by the virtue of chastity. In fact, John Paul II asserted in his *Theology of the Body* that the practice of Natural Family Planning in marriage is the practice of conjugal chastity, and defined periodic continence as a virtue.

Furthermore, the “*Foundation for the Condemnation of Contraception*” asserts that both man and woman enjoy an equality in marriage, i.e., in their nature, in their right of contracting marriage, but also marked by the differences in the sexes. While the normal sexually mature male is continuously fertile from puberty, the woman is only periodically fertile through relatively short but relatively frequent periods of time. In this regard, contraception makes no contribution to the woman’s personal rights, and primarily benefits the male, as stated above, relieving him of his responsibility.

In both the “*Foundation for the Condemnation of Contraception*” and Blessed John Paul II’s *Theology of the Body*, he makes the assertion that the sexual instinct in man is “without a doubt, one of the strongest instincts” and taught that periodic abstinence, i.e., continence, is a virtue. In addition, he pointed out that the willingness to abstain from the marital act on occasion can be a greater act of love than the act itself.

So, Why NFP?

First and primarily, NFP is a function of the natural law and the will of God. This is so because God created man and woman in his image and likeness with an intellect, a will, and a memory. God, therefore, also created human sexuality, and with it, fertility; and ordained that this fertility provide a unitive and procreative meaning to the marital embrace. We are all called to lead chaste lives. Blessed John Paul II defined NFP as the practice of chastity within marriage. The practice of NFP requires precisely the same kind of commitment as marriage itself. The practice of NFP obligates the couple to discuss with one another, among other things, the availability, or not, of the marital embrace, thus increasing loving communication between the spouses.

While the divorce rate in this country, for Catholics and Protestants alike, is estimated at 50 percent, the divorce rate among couples using NFP is between 2 and 5 percent.⁸ In other words, if you want your marriage to survive, you cannot contracept.

When feminists finally figure out how badly they have

been deceived by the contraception industry, there is going to be an immense amount of anger, especially when they realize who their true friend has been.

When a wife sees that her husband is willing to deny himself for their mutual benefit, and the benefit of the family, this increases her love for him. It, on occasion, can be a greater act of love to abstain than to engage in the act itself.

While this may seem overly simplistic, there are only two essentials in the practice of NFP if the intention is to delay/avoid pregnancy: (1) that the woman temporarily defines the limits of the fertile phase of her reproductive cycle, and (2) that the couple willingly abstains from all genital contact during that time period.

Blessed John Paul II the Great also mentioned in the Theology of the Body that NFP is not without its difficulties. At the same time, it promises the couple both a courtship and a honeymoon each month.

And last but not least, the practice of NFP experientially teaches four virtues: Patience, Generosity, Self-Control, and Sexual Maturity.

Conclusion

Having said all of the above, there remains the proposal or plea, nay, the obligation, that all Catholic physicians commit to conduct "NFP Only" practices in obedience to the teaching of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Nothing short of this will act to defeat the culture of death in which we live.

The Linacre Quarterly previously published significant portions of this essay as an editorial entitled "Why NFP" in Vol. 80, number 3, August 2013. The Linacre Quarterly is published by Maney Publishing on behalf of the copyright holders, the Catholic Medical Association. The Catholic Medical Association retains all rights, title, and interest in the copyright throughout the world for the above editorial for the full legal term of copyright. The Linacre Quarterly can be found online at: www.maneypublishing.com/journals/lnq and www.ingentaconnect.com/content/maney/lnq.

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2. Peck, R., Norris, C., "Significant Risks of Oral Contraceptives (OCP's) Why This Drug Class Should Not Be Included in a Preventive Care Mandate." Linacre Quarterly Vol. 79, No. 1 (2012): 41 -56.
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4. Ibid.: No.118 -131.
5. Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, et al., "The Foundation of the Church's Doctrine Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life." Nova et Vetera, English Edition, Vol. 10, No.2 (2012): 321-59.
6. Ibid., p.325.
7. Pilar Vigil, M.D., Ph.D., Leonard F. Blackwell, Ph.D., and Manuel E. Cortes, Ph.D. "The Importance of Fertility Awareness in the Assessment of a Woman's Health. A Review." The Linacre Quarterly 79(4) (November, 2012): 426-450.
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News Around the World

Italy

The Centre for Study and Research on Natural Fertility Regulation, at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Rome, is the promoter of the Billings Method in Italy, where, at present, there are around 500 Billings Ovulation Method™ Teachers.

Since our last report (October 2011) we have conducted two Teacher Training Programs in Rome, particularly addressed towards medical doctors and health care workers.

Others Billings Ovulation Method™ Teacher Training Programs have been organized around Italy, by regional Billings Ovulation Method™ Centers.

Twice a year we have regular meetings with Regional Coordinators and every year with all Italian Teachers Trainers. In every region, the Regional Coordinator provides an inservice/updating meeting for Billings Ovulation Method™ teachers three times per year.

In April 2013, we completed the Final Session of the Teachers Training Program in Romania, doing the final exams and giving them the Billings Ovulation Method™ Teacher accreditation.

We continue the cooperation with the Italian Confederation of Centers for Natural Fertility

Regulation, with the aim of improving mutual respect among all Natural Methods and reinforcing the teachers' philosophy and motivation. Inside of the Confederation, we have the responsibility of Scientific committee and we carry out some studies, particularly a New Study Protocol on NFP and Infertility.

We also continue the cooperation with the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family, where, since 2011, a two-year Master in sexuality and conjugal fertility has been conducted, for both Italian and French people, attended by a number of Billings Ovulation Method™ teachers.

Many Academic Courses on Natural Fertility Regulation are carried out at the Catholic University (Faculty of Medicine), at the Pontifical University Saint Thomas (Angelicum) and at the Camillianum Institute of the Lateran University, in Rome.

Recently, we began a cooperation with the Italian pro-Life Movement and organized a Course on Billings Ovulation Method™ for operators of the "Centers for the help of Life" throughout Italy. The Course aims to give operators a basic knowledge about Billings Ovulation Method™ scientific basis, philosophy and educative value, promoting, at the same time, a connection between them and Billings Ovulation Method™ teachers.

We have an important presence in the Ecclesial context: at a local level, many of the Billings Ovulation Method™ teachers are involved in pastoral care for the family; at National level we are have representation on Committees of the Italian Bishops Conference.

We presented recently some scientific contributions:

1. Lecture at the Diamond Jubilee Conference of the Billings Ovulation Method™, Kuching – Malaysia, 26-28 April 2013:
 - E. Giacchi, *The Billings Ovulation Method™ and monitoring reproductive health*
2. In the form of posters at the 2013 IEEF Congress in Paris:
 - Saporosi, E. Giacchi, A. Mancini, R. Marana, *Infertilité: rôle des méthodes naturelles: La Méthode d'Ovulation Billings dans le suivi de la santé reproductive et la prévention de la stérilité.*
 - Saporosi, E. Giacchi, S. Raimondo, R. Marana, A. Mancini. *La Glaière Cervicale et la fonction Ovarienne: Son rôle dans la diagnostique et le traitement de l'hypothyroïdisme subclinique.*
 - Mancini, L. Masucci, A. Saporosi, S. Raimondo, C. Di Segni, G. Gadotti, M. Cammarano, G.A. Morandotti, E. Meucci , E. Giacchi, *Paramètres spermatiques*

et capacité antioxydante dans l'infection génitale masculine: corrélations avec les agents microbiologiques

New books published:

1. Editor E. Giacchi, S Lanza, *Humanae Vitae: Attualità e profezia di un'Enciclica..* Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2011.
2. Editor A. Saporosi, S. Giroto, *La ricerca della gravidanza nell'infertilità di coppia. Percorso clinico fondato sulla conoscenza della fertilità con i metodi naturali.* Edizioni Libreria Cortina, Verona 2011.
3. Editor P. Pellicanò, Giovanni Paolo II - *Mandato d'amore.* Edizioni S. Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo 2012.
4. Translation of E. Giacchi, A. Saporosi, P. Pellicanò, Billings EL, Billings JJ. *Insegnamento del Metodo dell'Ovulazione Billings. Parte 2. Variazioni del ciclo e Salute Riproduttiva.* 2a Edizione italiana, Domograf Ed. Roma 2011.

Timor Leste

Our new office, close to Cathedral in Dili, has occupied a great deal of our time recently. The project was a little bit late because the money from Diocese was late, but we managed to finish the building and have started obtaining the necessary equipment.

Recently we had the first formation of the couples in the office and will shortly plan for another group. We are now thinking to establish private consulting with couples in the office. Mira and Joana are taking responsibility for the office.

Our visit to parishes with trainings is still continuing. Last month we visited one parish and one religious community. Besides that the three members here are working separately in promoting the method in the country.

January and Joana have been involved in the socialization program to the communities on Family Planning in rural areas run by Ministry of Health in which Áurea is the Director. She invited Joana and January to talk on NFP program especially on the Billings Ovulation Method™. They have already taken this program to four sub-districts. Joana continues work with the Ministry of Health team and Mira has been involved in the center of formation for families run by Fr. José Taçain's group since we returned from Kuching.

Áurea has asked our team to present our proposal to government for the next year's program and to run our office. Further planning is continuing on our program and the proposal. We plan to formalize the National Billings organization and decide how to run

our office which will be a public service, recognized by the Government. Sr. Carolina has been to visit our new office, but she is very busy with her own programs.

Sr. Lúcia is working in her community and offering support in the parish close to the community. She has been “banned” to work in the Diocese on the Billings program by her superior here since early this year. But things are getting better and she now can support the work in the parish. It is still hard to her to support in the Diocese. We hope to find more people to help the team especially JMira and Joana to attend the private couple who they assist.

I attach here some photos of our new building and the first training run in the new building. We discussed our logogram last week and we now prepare the Banners of the name of our office to put on the front side of Building (top side). The building is for the National Center of Billings Ovulation Method of Timor Leste.

Fr Ludgerio da Silva



United States of America

BOMA-USA welcomes new Board members:

At the annual in-person Board meeting of BOMA-USA recently held in Chicago, the following were elected to the Executive Board: Clara Urias of Tempe, AZ as president; Eileen Wood of Tewksbury, MA as vice president; Tessa McEwen of Chicago IL as secretary and Bernadette May, RN of Dallas, TX as treasurer. In addition, Maria Garcia of Chicago was appointed as our new education chair.

Clara replaces Kay Ek of Lilydale, MN who has served as our Board president since 1996. Kay was in the first Billings Method teacher training that was ever held in the United States in 1972. She is considered a pioneer in the Billings Ovulation Method™ worldwide and was preceded by Hanna Klaus, M.D. of Bethesda, MD another pioneer who served as the first president of BOMA-USA.

Dr. Klaus has traveled the world extensively with her TeenSTAR program. Maria is one of the Directors of WOOMB and replaces Dolores Clark of Fort Worth, TX. Many of our teachers have been trained by Dolores who is a retired nurse practitioner and faculty member of the University of Texas at Arlington. She served as education chair for over 20 years.

We will always be grateful to Kay, Dolores and Hanna for their many years of untiring service!

Both Kay and Dolores will continue to serve as consultants to the Board along with fellow consultants; Mary Martin, M.D. of Oklahoma City, OK and Father Daniel McCaffrey, S.T.D. of NFP Outreach in Oklahoma City. Other Board members include John Worden, M.D. of Gardner, MA and Kristin Putnam of Tulsa, OK.

“There is a rich history of the Billings Ovulation Method™ around the world,” said Clara. “I’m pleased to be a part of a dynamic board that is eager to work toward making the Billings Ovulation Method™ better known and more easily accessible in the United States.”

During the meeting, the Board focused on redefining our Mission and Vision Statements:

Mission Statement:

BOMA-USA provides the simplest and most personalized care in fertility education with a legacy of evidence-based effectiveness.

Vision Statement:

Through the Billings Ovulation Method™, BOMA-USA empowers individuals to discover freedom through knowledge and thereby experience healthier, happier lives.

Through monthly teleconference calls and the annual in-person meeting, the coming year will find the Board focusing on improving our Teacher Training Program and renewal of certification process as well as branding (marketing) so the Billings Method becomes better known in the United States.

Newly established Regional Teacher Support Coordinators:

We're pleased to tell you that we have recruited a wonderful group of Billings teachers to represent different regions of the United States in order to help us communicate more effectively with teachers. They have been dubbed "Regional Teacher Support Coordinators". They will help us update our records, learn how things are going with teachers and offer support to them.

Sue Ek
Executive Director
BOMA-USA

Pakistan

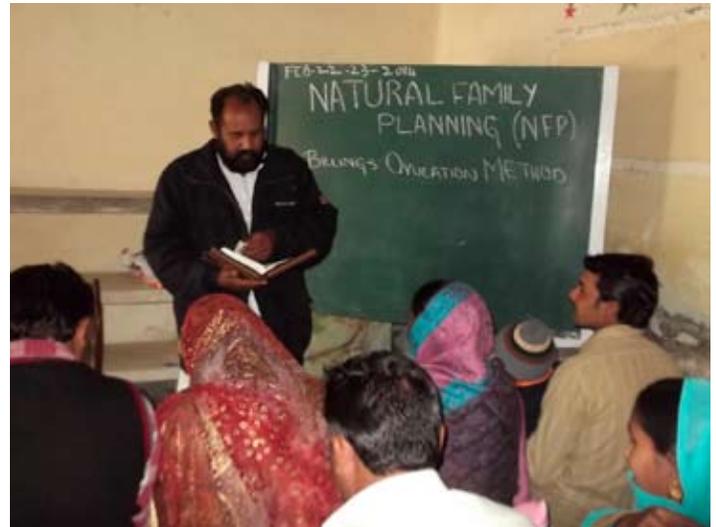
Report of two training programs of Natural Family Planning (Billings Ovulation Method™) at St. Joseph's Parish, Chak 36/SB, Sargodha and St. Anthony's Parish Chakwal, on 22nd and 28th February 2014

Training program on Natural Family Planning (Billings Ovulation Method) was held at St. Joseph's Church Chak 36/SB, Sargodha. Eighteen couples from different nearby villages participated in this program.. The resource persons for the program were Mr. & Mrs. Pervez Roderick, and Mrs. Nazli.



The program started with the prayer by Fr. Tariq Bhatti followed by the talk on spirituality of marriage and Family Life. In a very simple way Mrs. Catherine also imparted God's plan for marriage and the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage and family life. BOM trainings are always combined with the Spirituality

of marriage so that participants are receptive for the technical part.



This training was in connection with our plan to produce some local couples as teachers of BOM in the parish to work with families as well as pre-marriage counselors. Most of the couples were illiterate or semi-literate; this is why we adopted the simplest way to impart BOM to these couples. There was a special separate session in which participants openly asked many questions about reproductive health and Natural Family Planning.



At the end, it was decided that the team from the National Office will select two couples of the parish as teachers of BOM whom we will work further with so that later they can work with the couples of the parish to provide them with a door-to door service of far villages in the parish. In this regard, Fr. Tariq is also ready to give them a room in the premises of parish where they will meet various couples and also they will provide separate pre-marriage counseling session to those who are coming for the announcement of their wedding bands. The two couples selected will be invited to participate in further training in coming months.

At the end of the program, a set of booklets of BOM in the Urdu language were distributed among the literate couples of the program.

Another training program Billings Ovulation Method (BOM) was held in St. Anthony's Parish Chakwal on 28th February. Total 22 couples participated in this training. Fr. Sylvester started the program with prayer and he then imparted the spirituality of marriage. As usual, the BOM training was also started with the Spiritual aspect; couples were informed of the social teachings of Church on various issues. There was a separate session of husbands and wives in which they asked many questions.



Pervez Roderick
WOOMB Pakistan



This training was also in connection with our plan to produce some local couples as teachers of BOM in Chakwal parish to work with families as well as pre-marriage counselors.



At the end, Fr. Sylvester concluded the training program in which he urged the need to have these kinds of programs so that couples will be informed about the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage and Family Life.

Mexico

Activities of WOOMB de México, A. C. , made during the period November 2012 - November 2013.

1. Certifications. - We continue with the evaluation and certification of instructors based on the real BOM. When some of them fail, a personal letter is given to those who do not approve, with the points to be corrected and studied. Many of them, in a second chance approve.
2. Annual Congress. - In November 2012, we had our annual Congress in the city of Toluca, with an attendance of over 300 people, with related conferences about the dignity of the Life, and special teaching lessons of some of the subjects more important or the authentic BOM.
3. Annual Assembly of Mexico WOOMB Directors, A. C. - In the month of March 2013, we had our annual meeting of Provincial Directors , with the assistance of two bishops , in which was re-elected the president of the Association. We also established the Training and Education Committee, with four of our best teachers in the Country. Evaluations about the BOM were applied to the Provincial Directors in order to have a feed back of their level of the BOM knowledge.
4. According with the petition of the Mexican Episcopate we created the "Certificated Instructors Directory" , now in internet so that the priests and the general public may request training only to certified and updated instructors, and maintain the prestige and effectiveness of the BOM.
5. We participated with a lecture in the " First Congress

to Priest and Seminarians about the Life". It was very well accepted so then in another similar Congress in Aguascalientes City, we were invited again with the same lecture, in which the BOM was explained with its scientific basis and good results in the world and in China. At first, many of the people were still confused with the Rhythm Method.

6. Three hundred books of The Teaching The BOM part 2 were purchased in order that all the instructors and potential instructors may have them and improve the quality of the teaching.
7. In this moment we are working in the Annual Congress now in Queretaro City. We hope to have and attendance of more or less of 400 to 500 people. A special program to young people was prepared too.
8. We are participating in the meetings through Skipe with WOOMB Latinoamerica in looking forward the Conference in Sao Paulo in 2014.
9. It was the 8th year in which the BOM was taught to the students of the Medic School and the 2nd in the Nursery School in the Universiad Panamericana , (the best university in medicine in the country).

Benjamín Zamudio and Graciela de Mária y Campos
General Directors of Training and Education
WOOMB de México, A. C.

Canada

OUR WOOMB CELEBRATION SONG
ITS BACKSTORY AND POTENTIAL SPIN OFFS
Doreen Beagan, Past President of WOOMB Canada.

WOOMB Canada realized a couple of years ago that 2013 was especially significant for the Billings movement.

It would be 60 yrs since Dr. John Billings began his research that led to the BOM, and 45 years since Humanae Vitae was issued and led to the formation of an international organization to train people to teach and promote the method. Sixty years and 45 years – that definitely called for celebration.

But we simply weren't able to get started on the planning. So as June 2013 and our annual WOOMB Canada meetings approached, we had nothing set up. Still I was determined that we would not ignore the opportunity to mark those important events. But what to do???

About May 1, I had a brainwave.... We were meeting near a lake, and some of our BOD (perhaps including Fr. Joe) would love to go fishing. So on the day before our meetings began, they would go fishing in the lake, and that evening we would have an outdoor fish fry &

campfire (very Biblical) and a singsong, since singsongs always go with campfires. BUT this time the songs would all be related to the two events we were trying to celebrate.

Which meant they had to be new compositions. So we set out to get some themed campfire songs composed, but soon realized that wasn't working out. Then with only a couple of weeks to go, another brainwave: I pressured each Board member to come up with at least 1-2 verses, using the melody of a familiar children's song. They did. And we finally had a campfire song to celebrate the two important events. (We tried to work in the names Erik Odeblad and James Brown, but didn't succeed.)

On the actual day, no one went fishing, there was no fish fry, there was no camp fire, and no one had musical instruments. But we did have a lovely indoor supper, birthday cake, balloons, toasts (with wine!!). I am attaching some pictures.

And we sang our lovely newly composed celebration campfire song, with great gusto. I'm attaching it too. Not because it's so wonderful. But in the hope that others elsewhere in the Billings family might pick up on the idea and produce something much better than we were able to do.

And I have another set of related ideas to tell you about. It seems to be increasingly difficult around here to get our message out. And as I've been looking for solutions, I've been reflecting on how 'catchy' songs and music can be, and how useful a catchy song can be in getting important messages out. If you can get a lot of (young?) people humming and singing an important message, that's a great way to evangelize, raise awareness, etc. And if they can sing about war, or peace, or love, why not about NFP, chastity, etc. If it's good quality musically, and catchy enough, they'll sing it.

If I had had this particular brainwave soon enough, I would have urged our Board to set up some kind of national or regional song writing contest for high school students, with suitable prizes and recognition for the winners. I'm guessing we'd have tried to persuade various groups or individuals to sponsor the contest, provide prizes, etc. And all the while, all of them would be getting educated. AND... afterwards, there'd be a good excuse to write (or give a talk) to a sponsoring group, about the contest, and the topic of the contest.

I'm a writer myself, often writing for national church and family and pro life publications. And I know there'd be lots of opportunities to promote the themed song contest in those publications: an article explaining about the contest, an article interviewing the winner(s), the winning song published in the magazine.... And then there'd also be opportunities to write in the

home town press about the winners.... And not just written articles, but maybe local TV coverage. And the winners in turn could be invited (or offer, as a thank you) to speak to their local parish council, teen group, Knights of Columbus group, Catholic Women's League, etc. Who could in turn promote more of the same. All the time, becoming educated themselves, and helping to spread the good news of NFP.

As an English teacher, I'm particularly aware of the lyrics and words, but because my husband and all 3 of my daughters have always been involved in music – vocal and instrumental, as performers and teachers – I've also become more aware of the role of the music too. And there are lots of young people out there who might not be yearning to promote NFP and respect for fertility, but whose musical gifts could lead them to learn more about those important aspects of life... and to influence their peers for good. Also, I think that it might be possible for all the top performers in a contest to put together a CD.... That could be promoted by youth leaders, etc. And (though I'm not that technically savvy), I suspect some of these 'productions' would be appropriate for U-tube and reach many more people.

I'm more familiar with drama than U-tube, and I hope that somewhere down the road, someone might make the Billings story into a play, or a TV story, or even a musical.... More ways to spread the word.

I didn't set out to write such a long treatise. I really just wanted to tell you about the genesis of the attached campfire song. It's sung to the children's song "The Farmer In the Dell" – which I hope is known in Australia. (If not, the music is on Google.) But because it has a simple rhythm pattern, it could be sung to other songs as well. Parts work well with "Tom Dooley." Keep in mind that we know it's a hasty team effort, and definitely not a polished work of art. But it's a start. We'd love to see someone produce something much better than our little creation.

Fr. Catarinich made an appeal.
Fr. Catarinich made an appeal.
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Fr. Catarinich made an appeal.

Our couples want help, he said,
Our couples need help, he said,
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Our couples want help, he said,

John Billings heard the call.
John Billings heard the call.
Hi Ho the Derry-o
John Billings heard the call.

The months turned into years,
The months turned into years,

Hi Ho the Derry-o
The months turned into years.
(And years and years and years.)

Jim Brown began to help,
And Erik Odeblad too,
Hi Ho the Derry-o
They both began to help.

But woman's touch they needed,
A woman's touch was needed,
Hi Ho the Derry-o
A woman's touch they needed.

Lyn Billings joined the team.
Lyn Billings joined the team
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Lyn Billings joined the team.

Soon a-charting we could go,
A charting we could go,
Hi Ho the Derry-o
A charting we could go.

They traveled near and far
They traveled near and far
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Helped women near and far.

The natural way is best ...
The natural way is best...
Hi Ho the Derry-o
The natural way is best.

BOM can pass the test.
BOM can pass the test.
Hi Ho the Derry-o
BOM can pass the test

No, you don't need the Pill
No, you don't need the Pill
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Cause Billings fills the bill

They helped women here
They helped women there
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Helped women everywhere.

Even Canada heard the call
Canada heard the call
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Canada heard the call

WOOMB Canada came to be
WOOMB Canada came to be
Hi Ho the Derry-o
WOOMB Canada came to be

Trained teachers for us all
Trained teachers for us all
Hi Ho the Derry-o
Trained teachers for us all

Yes, Billings fills the bill
Yes, Billings fills the bill
Hi Ho the Derry-o
We don't need the Pill

This legacy they left
This legacy they left
Hi Ho the Derry-o
This legacy they left

John's gift goes on and on
Lyn's gift goes on and on
Hi Ho the Derry-o
It's known throughout the world.

A Pope called John a Knight,
A Pope called Lyn a Dame,
Hi Ho the Derry-o
We love them both the same

John's up for sainthood now,
John's up for sainthood now,
Hi Ho the Derry-o
He's up for sainthood now.

We thank you Dr. John
We thank you Dr Lyn
Hi Ho the Derry-o
We think you both were saints.

LeeAnn's chorus to intersperse wherever
we want to. (With gusto!)

A charting we will go,
A charting we will go,
Hi Ho the Derry-o
A charting we will go.



Fr Hattie and Lou Specken cut the celebration cake

Trinidad and Tobago

We in Trinidad & Tobago are very happy to finally achieve Affiliation with WOOMB International to provide this excellent and beautiful Billings Ovulation Method™ to our people. We became a Non-Profit Company however we still exist under the auspices of the Archdiocesan Family Life Commission and we are very grateful for their kind support of our work. We are especially pleased that they have hired Pauline Phelps, our current Coordinator, on a full-time basis to promote the Method. We now have three Accredited Teachers in our country and look forward to the remainder of our Teachers-in-Training attaining Accreditation.

Susan Henry, the founder of BOMA-TT and previous Coordinator, has provided us an excellent Presentation on Catholic Church's teaching on the basis of Natural Fertility Regulation. We have packaged this Presentation into an adult programme called "Love, Sex & Fertility: God's Plan for Families" and is currently being presented to the Vicariates of the Archdiocese of Port-of-Spain. Susan and Lisa Price, our first Accredited Teacher who has migrated to Canada, also put together an effective Chastity Programme for Secondary Schools called "Is Love Forever?" that we continue to present in schools, youth groups and post-confirmation groups. Within this programme we introduce the Billings Ovulation Method to provide the truth about fertility to our youth in the very Westernized culture that we live in.

Our teachers continue to volunteer their time in teaching the Method at Marriage Preparation programmes across the country where we obtain some clients. Advertising in the Catholic News has also provided some response from our people. We also plan on advertising to the wider community soon.

We were hoping to enter the Health Centres and teach the Method as we used to years ago when Billings was first introduced to our country. We however have come across significant opposition to the tenets of the Method, where Ministry of Health Officials believe that self-control is an issue for our people and are convinced that the Method would fail. We plan on working on local statistical data to present to these officials at a later date.

The future of BOMA-TT will look to obtaining new teachers of the Method through a comprehensive Teacher Training Programme. It is our hope and prayer that we obtain more physician-support for our teachers and clients through Pauline's physician office visits. Finally we plan to spread the awareness of the Method throughout our country through advertising in a bigger way.

Philippines

Training Course on Billings Ovulation Method™

March 8-9, 2014

The venue of the Training course is in Bantayan Islands specifically Botok Island which is located in the Province of Cebu.



It takes 1hr and 30 minutes via plane from Manila to reach Cebu Mactan International Airport. From Mactan Airport we took a bus and it takes 4 hours to reach the Port. From the Port we took a ferry boat to Bantayan Islands.



It took us 2 hours to reach the Main Island of Bantayan. The following day, after breakfast in the Main Island we took a small boat to reach the Island of Botok which is the venue of the training course for Billings Ovulation Method™.



I am holding the slide rule which is my most important tool to teach the method.

This is the scenario of the island. Houses are still down due to typhoon YOLANDA and no electricity.





I am emotionally touched with the welcome sign. The people took time to make this.

most especially when I asked them to do the charting on the board. Men are the most active in the training.



No electricity so I just rely on the power of the slide rule. I print the power point presentation and we use plywood because NO black board

I stayed here for two days and tears were flowing from my eyes as I left them in the afternoon of March 9, 2014. I will be back after Holy Week for follow up sessions.

The local government promised them that they will have electricity by December of 2013 but up to now no electric current and no water to drink.

The Catholic Missionaries are the ones feeding them everyday since December 2014. These Missionaries are the ones who helped them in constructing their homes.



That small hut is the venue of the training.



At the same time these people are the ones who invited me to teach Billings Ovulation Method TM to their community because some organizations are already planning to give contraceptives to the community and the Missionaries are afraid. They are very grateful when I responded to their invitation and the community sees the Billings Ovulation Method as a good news to them.



The training runs smoothly. The people are very attentive and very appreciative. They are participative

England

Posters and websites have been prepared to advertise our presence and the service we offer. We get referrals from couples and individual who have previously learnt the Method. Distance learning is offered where there is no local teacher and this seems to be quite successful. Fertility Pinpoint may prove to be the way forward for many, especially young professional couples.

We ask our teachers to always keep to the Aims and Objects of WOOMB International and that their teaching skills should be of a high standard so as to maintain a good reputation. Area coordinators organise teacher upskilling days when charts are discussed and good teaching practice reviewed, such as asking the right questions and recharting correctly to help the couple.

A NFP Meeting was held in Manchester at which Dr Angela McCallum from Glasgow spoke about the Schools Program which Fertility Care Scotland has developed. Some of our teachers attended the Fertility Show which resulted in 49 couples to follow-up.

Attendance at 'Towards Advert' - an annual festival of Catholic Culture, which afforded some excellent opportunities for networking, and a presentation at a Morning Coffee in a church hall in Suffolk on the topic *Where does the Church's teaching come from in respect of Responsible Parenthood?* This provoked many questions and a suggestion that a similar talk be held in another town in the future.

Veronica Pierson
Chairman
The BOM Trust

Vietnam

Some photos of training programs held in Vietnam - though we can't read the report (in Vietnamese) just the numbers being trained is impressive!



Knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding conception and fertility: a population-based survey among reproductive-age United States women

Lisbet S. Lundsberg, Lubna Pal, Aileen M. Gariepy, Xiao Xu, Micheline C. Chu, and Jessica L. Illuzzi

Published in *Fertility and Sterility*

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Summary prepared by
Dr Mark Whitty

Associate Director, WOOMB International

This on-line USA survey of 1000 women age 18-40 found that 40% of women had some concern about being able to conceive, yet 33% were ignorant of what might harm their fertility, 40% "were unfamiliar with" their ovulatory cycle*, younger women knew less, and older women tended towards mistaken ideas.

58% had children, 7% were pregnant, 9% were trying to conceive, 46% acknowledged the possibility of future motherhood, 15% ruled this out.

50% were married, 80% were sexually active, 7% said they were gay or bisexual.

Women's health care providers were identified as the main sources of information by 75%, and websites by 40%.

Of women with children 60+% said "slippery, clear vaginal discharge" was a sign of imminent ovulation; of those trying, 70% said the same, yet only 30% of them timed their intercourse accordingly.

*95% properly described ovulation as "an egg being released from the ovary" but the researchers clearly thought "ovulation usually occurs 14 days before menses [and] clear mucous vaginal discharge is a sign of impending ovulation".

Over 90% of women "identified stress as a contributor to infertility", whereas the researchers quoted one meta-analysis as rating this as at best equivocal.

Given what the Billings Ovulation Method™ reveals of the facts of fertility, we cannot rely on the 40% figure identified as not knowing about their fertility, and the "clear, mucous discharge" indicates little or no acquaintance with the Billings Ovulation Method™.

The Australian experience suggests that closer to 80% are ignorant of their fertility.

Waiting for the days of slippery sensation, and perhaps making use of the two days after the Peak day, is still



the best advice. Similarly, we are aware that the women were intuitive in regarding stress as significant in trying to conceive.

The researchers usefully repeat that ejaculation more than once a day reduced sperm count, but repeating results that “sperm reach the cervical canal within minutes of ejaculation” shows their ignorance of Professor Odeblad’s meticulous research beyond this simple fact, and of the physiological, clinical and hormonal correlational corroboration achieved by the giants of science who gave decades of world-class work to the service of women via the Billings Ovulation Method™.



IVF technology is overused and has health risks for babies, landmark article in British Medical Journal argues

Source: News Limited

A landmark article published in the *British Medical Journal* claims IVF technology is overused. WOMEN should ensure they have exhausted all options before resorting to IVF, according to international experts concerned the procedure is being overused.

A landmark article published today in the *British Medical Journal* warns of risks of the technology now commonly used to help struggling couples have a baby.

Fifteen global experts, including the University of Adelaide’s Professor Ben Mol, co-wrote the article expressing concern over what they say is the liberal use of IVF in many countries.

IVF was developed for women with fallopian tube disorders and severe male infertility, but in recent years it has been applied to wider conditions, including unexplained infertility, writes lead author Dr Esme Kamphuis, of the University of Amsterdam.

The experts argue evidence underpinning the use of IVF for wider conditions is weak, and question whether IVF is equally effective in these conditions and if the long-term health risks for IVF children can be justified.

Unexplained infertility accounts for up to 30 per cent of all couples presenting for IVF, but many conceive if treated immediately.

The authors point out much IVF research often does not mention how long couples have been trying to conceive.

The article warns extended use of IVF increases the risk of harm, with multiple pregnancies associated with complications for mothers and infants, and even single babies born through IVF, who have worse outcomes than those conceived naturally.

Concern has also been raised about the long-term health of children born through IVF, the article notes.

Children conceived by IVF may have higher blood pressure, body fat distribution, glucose levels, and more generalised vascular dysfunction than children conceived naturally.

“Until these concerns are resolved, there should be caution about using IVF in couples when the benefit is uncertain or the chances of natural conception are still reasonable,” say the authors.

They say there is “a lack of will” to question the perceived success of IVF.

“As a society, we face a choice,” they conclude.

“We can continue to offer early, non-evidence based access to IVF to couples with fertility problems or follow a more challenging path to prove interventions are effective and safe and to optimise the IVF procedure.”

Adelaide’s Fertility SA specialist Dr Jodie Semmler said though the research made some relevant points, it was not possible to generalise.

“At Fertility SA our specialists evaluate each couple’s case individually,” she said.

“In cases of truly unexplained infertility we will often counsel patients to try for a bit longer on their own before doing IVF.

“We also recommend less invasive treatments, such as monitored ovulation induction or artificial insemination, if appropriate.

“At the end of the day, however, we want to give every one of our patients the best chance of having a family.

“If a couple wait too long before proceeding to IVF they may ‘miss the boat’ as their chance of conceiving will drop due to age factors, particularly female age.

“Ultimately we make the decision jointly with our patients as to when it is best to proceed to IVF.”



Popular devotion key to whole process

Catholic Times : 16 February 2014

Vatican Letter : Cindy Wooden

We know that many friends of WOOMB International around the world are praying for the recognition of the late Drs John and Evelyn Billings by the process we know as Beatification. This article may be of assistance in explaining the process and why it will likely take more time than those who are impatient for the outcome would wish. The Directors of WOOMB International ask that anyone with copies of correspondence they had with the Drs Billings or talks that they gave, please send scanned or hard copies to the address on page 24.



The sainthood process is long and technically complicated, and ultimately requires the approval of the Pope, but the whole procedure is driven by Catholics in the pews and, especially, those on their knees.

The Congregation for Saints' Causes and the official promoters of causes – known as postulators do the paperwork, but if there is no evidence of wide-spread devotion to a candidate, no visits to the person's grave, no reports of favours and even miracles received through the potential saint's intercession, the cause just sits there. Even for centuries.

Jesuit Fr Marc Lindeijer, assistant postulator of sainthood causes for his order, says he has no problem waiting.

On the contrary, as far as the Dutch priest is concerned, the more time passes, the more certain the Church can be of the lasting importance of a candidate's witness.

"I think the process has to be long and complicate," he said. The solemn declaration that a specific person is in heaven with God and is worth of global Catholic devotion "has to be treated with care".

"It's not as if the Vatican is asking for a canonisation, it's the people," he said.

Nothing happens without grass-roots pressure at the start.

That helps explain why members of religious orders occupy the Church's calendar of saints, and why lay saints are so few.

"One could say a religious order is a mightier lobby for a cause," encouraging its members and the people they serve to pray to the habited holy one and report back any favours received, Fr Lindeijer said.

Generally for canonisation, the Church requires a demonstration that the popular devotion to a candidate has extended over a long period of time.

Canonisation, Fr Lindeijer said, "is not a stamp of approval" for how someone lived his or life, but is a way for the Church to hold that person up as an example for today's Catholics and the Catholics of tomorrow.

For example, the Diocese of Macerata, Italy, recently concluded the preliminary phase of the cause of its native son Jesuit Fr Matteo Ricci, the 16th-century missionary to China.

The cause also has received strong support from Chinese bishops, Fr Lindeijer said.

However, he worries that outside of Macerata and China, Fr Ricci is admired for his scholarship and culturally sensitive approach to missionary work, but not necessarily venerated as holy.

To promote his cause successfully, Fr Lindeijer will need to answer the question: "Are people praying to Matteo Ricci?"

"Massive popular devotion" is even more important than verified miracles in deciding whether or not to canonise someone, Fr Lindeijer said.

When "the cult is clear and many people receive many graces praying to them", the Pope can waive the requirement of a miracle attributed to the candidate's intercession.

For instance, Pope Francis will canonise Blessed John XXIII on 27th April even though there is no papal decree recognising a specific miracle; he is expected to do the same later this year with Blessed Jose Anchieta, a late 16th-century missionary to Brazil, and Blesseds Marie de l'Incarnation and Francois de Laval, who were missionaries in Canada in the 1600s.

Fr Lindeijer said he considers setting aside the miracle requirement a less serious exception than shortening the waiting period after a candidate's death.

The 1917 Code of Canon Law stipulated that a sainthood cause could not open until 50 years after the candidate's death.

Pope John Paul shortened the period to five years, but set even that aside for Mother Teresa of Kolkata.

A month after Pope John Paul's death, Pope Benedict XVI announced he had set aside the waiting period for his predecessor's cause.

"I've never believed in 'santo subito', Fr Lindeijer said, referring to the calls for Pope John Paul's canonisation immediately after his death.

"Fame comes and goes, and fame of sanctity, as Pope Benedict rightly said, is something that should be growing," he said.

"When that phenomenon can be proven, it shows that the Holy Spirit is at work."



Book Review

Sweetening the Pill: Or How we Got Hooked on Homronal Birth Control

by Holly Grigg-Spall

(available from thesundaytimes.co.uk/bookshop)

Ovulating is good for you! The endocrinologist Dr Jerilynn Prior has studied menstruation and ovulation for more than 40 years. Her research, as director of the Centre for Menstrual Cycle and Ovulation Research at the University of British Columbia, suggests regular menstruation is the key to good heart, bone and breast health.

Sustaining ovulation through the fertile years can also help women avoid conditions such as heart disease and breast cancer. "Menstruation disturbances tell us the person is not health," she says. "Ovulation is the canary in the coalmine for women's health."

Teenage girls who are not menstruating may have eating disorders, stress or physical issues such as polycystic ovaries, thyroid dysfunction or Cushing's disease. Although a woman may experience regular cycles, she may not be ovulating, even when not on hormonal contraceptives. Addressing these ovulatory disturbances is the core of Prior's work, and she feels, the key to a long and health life.



Website News

www.woombinternational.org

www.thebillingsovulationmethod.org

www.fertilitypinpoint.com

Have you visited the official websites of WOOMB International, the Billings Ovulation Method™ and Fertility Pinpoint - the WOOMB-approved online charting app?

Each of these websites is subject to ongoing development, so check back from time to time to see what is new, and let us know of anything you would like to see on the websites which is not there currently.

The domain names www.woomb.org, www.billingslife.org and www.billings-ovulation-method.org are also now 'pointed' to these official sites and we enjoy a great deal of 'traffic' to our sites - in the order of >22,000 visits and >74,000 page views to the Billings LIFE site and close to 4,000 visits and 7,000 page views to the WOOMB International site.

On the official Billings Ovulation Method™ site you will find information about the Method for achieving and postponing pregnancy and monitoring reproductive health. There are details about our services including how to contact teachers of the Method all around the world. There are free ebooks available for download and resources available for sale. Soon we will have our own online shop where you can easily purchase books, CDs, etc using PayPal.

Fertility Pinpoint is our latest addition to online information and is growing in popularity. It is currently enjoying in excess of 3,500 visits and more than 9,000 page views. The site offers access to online charting which can be self-directed or involving a teacher. We are just now trialling using it as an online teaching system which is proving very successful.

On the WOOMB International website you will find articles about the scientific validity of the Billings Ovulation Method™ and philosophical articles about marriage and sexuality. You will also find copies of previous editions of our *Bulletin*. There is information about the Teacher Training Correspondence Course and we will soon have details of training programs and conferences being conducted in many countries around the world.

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We know that many centres around the world have also developed websites - two lovely ones we have seen recently are www.billingslife.fr and www.billingsmethodsouthwest.org.uk. The Directors of WOOMB International are delighted to see that you are promoting your services in this way in this technological age but we ask that for information about the authentic Billings Ovulation Method™ you please link to the official site, www.thebillingsovulationmethod.org. This way you will be sure to always have the latest and most up-to-date material. This has been done very successfully on the French and English sites mentioned.



*Wishing all our readers
a blessed and joyful
Easter*

WOOMB International Ltd

Aims to promote the authentic Billings Ovulation Method™ in support of couples, the family and society, and to undertake and pursue all such other similar, related or compatible objects as may from time to time be considered appropriate by the Company.

To this end, and in furtherance of the vision and the Aims and Objects of the original WOOMB International Inc, and of the founders of the Billings Ovulation Method™, Drs John and Evelyn Billings:

a. WOOMB International Ltd, will actively seek to enrich the union between husband and wife for their mutual benefit by giving them knowledge of the Billings Ovulation Method™ that they can use to develop love and fidelity within the marriage.

b. Through teaching the Billings Ovulation Method™ to men, women and young persons WOOMB International Ltd will encourage parents and future parents to meet their mutual responsibilities to each other and their children by giving them insights which can be used to develop unselfish love.

c. Knowledge about fertility regulation, using the Billings Ovulation Method™, will be directed at:

- i) helping couples who wish to have children;
- ii) helping couples who wish to avoid pregnancy.

iii) helping women to understand their fertility and to monitor their reproductive health.

d. WOOMB International Ltd, through the Billings Ovulation Method™, aims to teach all who seek the information, how to make the observations and interpretations necessary for the identification of fertility, infertility and reproductive health.

e. WOOMB International Ltd aims to impart to men the knowledge necessary to exercise a supportive and collaborative role in the application of the Billings Ovulation Method™.

f. WOOMB International Ltd, through information and encouragement, will promote an acceptance of a pregnancy not deliberately planned, so that the child will be welcomed and loved.

g. WOOMB International Ltd believes that husband and wife have the sole right to determine in conscience the number of children of their marriage.

h. WOOMB International Ltd aims to encourage ongoing research into the Billings Ovulation Method™, human fertility and reproductive health.

The *Bulletin of WOOMB International Ltd* is produced 3 times each year. It is a medium for the publication of medical and scientific articles about natural fertility and related topics. It also publishes theological and philosophical articles pertaining to sexual morality and marriage which are in accord with traditional morality and with the teachings of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

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Your donation

will help us to continue to bring the good news of the Billings Ovulation Method™ to women and families throughout the world. Please send bank cheque in Australian dollars or credit card details (VISA or Mastercard) to the offices of WOOMB International Ltd or donate using *PayPal* at www.woombinternational.org



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