



Christian Voices for Life

Weekly Pro-Life

Education

Prayer

Action

This week's Topic: Why does the Catholic Church Condemn Contraception?*

*Christian Voices for Life is an interdenominational Christian organization. We do not endorse any one Christian faith over another. We do encourage dialog to improve mutual understanding and pray for unity in the body of Christ.



Education: Prior to 1930 all Protestant denominations agreed with the Catholic Church's teaching that contraception was sinful. While the Catholic teaching has remained unchanged, many Christian churches now condone the practice, or have no official stand.(1) The popular culture overwhelmingly accepts contraception, and many Catholics do not understand the reasoning for the Church's stand.

Briefly, the Catholic Church teaches that sexual intercourse has two meanings: to unite the married couple in their love for each other, and to cooperate with God in the creation of new life. The two meanings are united in that the mutual gift of

fertility is an integral part of the bonding power of sexual intimacy. Suppressing fertility denies the procreative meaning as well as harming the couple's unity, since to give or accept from the other everything ... except fertility is not true unity. For a more complete explanation in Q & A format, please see a summary of "Married Love and the Gift of Life", published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops(2), or more extensive explanations of the Theology of the Body, from Pope John Paul II (3).

While other medical interventions are intended to restore function, birth control seeks to prevent the healthy body from operating as it was intended by God. Natural Family Planning, on the other hand, works with the God-given rhythms of the woman's body to prevent pregnancy by abstaining from intercourse during the woman's fertile period. Husband and wife come together during infertile times without themselves placing any barrier to procreation.(4)

1. "Birth Control" tract at Catholic Answers: <http://www.catholic.com/tracts/birth-control>
2. available at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/upload/Married-Love-A-Bulletin-Insert.pdf
3. West, Christopher, *Good News about Sex & Marriage*, Servant Books, 2004.
4. www.nfpandmore.org.



Prayer: Dear Lord, the world today presents and promotes a view of sexuality that is very different from Your plan. Please help us all, especially the young, to know and accept Your will for our lives. While different Christian leaders present different interpretations of Your will regarding contraception, help us to prayerfully seek the truth and be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Help us not to be swayed by the pressure of a popular culture that does not follow Your will.



Action: Learn the reasoning and scriptural base for differing points of view on contraception. If you are using birth control, talk to your spouse, your pastor, or a respected friend, about the morality of birth control. Prayerfully seek counsel from the Holy Spirit. If you have loved ones who are using birth control, encourage them to do the same.