

# ***Humanae Vitae* at 50 - July 25, 2018**

We, the undersigned, honor the 50th anniversary of the prophetic *Humanae Vitae* encyclical by Blessed Paul VI by affirming its teachings and committing ourselves to the fullness of its truth and natural beauty. *Humanae Vitae* noted the moral and cultural perils of contraception, and their contradiction of God's will for each husband and wife to perfect one another and cooperate in the generation and rearing of new life.

In the fifty years since the promulgation of *Humanae Vitae*, the Church's teaching has been challenged, rejected, and even ridiculed by the secular culture. But, as Archbishop Charles Chaput recently noted, "*Humanae Vitae* remains a powerful counter-witness to the widespread sexual dysfunction of our age as other Christian communities, and even many Catholics, have collapsed in their defense of sexual integrity. *Humanae Vitae* has remained a testimony to the truth."

By contradicting God's plan that links conjugal love to procreation, contraception has become the root of the Culture of Death. It has resulted in increased infidelity, the general lowering of morality and a growing disrespect for women. Pope Paul VI foresaw these consequences and warned against them in *Humanae Vitae*.

Our society suffers from its failure to heed this prophetic warning. Today, more than four out of every ten American children are born out-of-wedlock. Divorce is rampant. Violent crimes against women have vastly increased. And pornography degrades both men and women. But the most tragic consequence has been that the medical profession has normalized the use of contraception as a medical necessity, ignoring its abortifacient capabilities and detrimental effects on women's health. This use has led to millions of unborn children being killed by abortion as the "back-up" when contraception fails.

*Humanae Vitae* warned that governments would take coercive measures to impose contraception on their citizens. Certainly, tyrannical governments have done so, and some Western nations impose these measures upon Third World nations as a requirement for foreign aid. Our own nation recently witnessed the Affordable Care Act Mandate coercing the Little Sisters of the Poor, and other Christian educational and service agencies, to fund contraceptive and abortifacient drugs.

Contraception distorts the great gift of our sexuality and leads us to objectify those we claim to love. The contraceptive mentality is inherently flawed because it convinces us that we, not God, are the authors of human life. We become self-absorbed by pursuing our desires instead of God's will for our lives.

By changing the nature of the conjugal act, contraception strips the marital act of its beautiful procreative purpose, and therefore deeply offends God. Until 1930, all Christian denominations rejected contraception and Protestant leaders, such as Luther, Wesley and Calvin, all spoke out against the immorality of contraception.

We join in praising *Humanae Vitae* "to celebrate the Catholic proclamation that truth, goodness and beauty go together." We call for *Humanae Vitae*'s full understanding and pray for its acceptance in every heart.