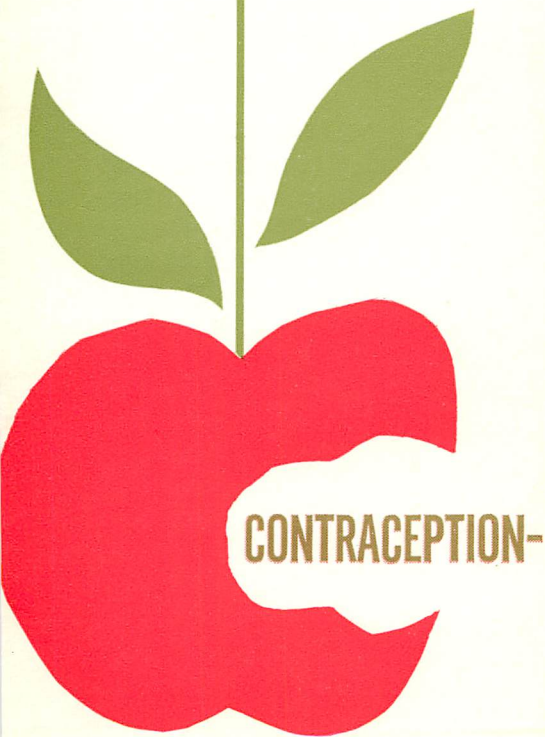


BY Germain Grisez

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**IS IT ALWAYS WRONG?**

We refer this delicate question also to the prudent consideration of those who are competent. Here we only touch upon it to remind you that any act, willfully malicious, which tends to deprive the conjugal union of its reproductive power is gravely culpable.

This is an especially demanding element of God's law.

Married couples should not forget it, nor should those who devote themselves to maintaining health or to instructing the spirit.

—(Pope Paul VI in 1960 when he was Archbishop of Milan.)

**Contraception . . .  
Is It Always Wrong?**

**by  
Germain G. Grisez**

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# Contraception . . .

## Is It Always Wrong?

**G**ERMAIN G. Grisez of the Department of Philosophy, Georgetown University, Washington, D. C., replies to questions asked in an interview by Russell Shaw, free lance writer. This pamphlet is a condensation of four articles that appeared in *OUR SUNDAY VISITOR*.

**Q.** As I understand your position, you consider contraception to be always and everywhere wrong. Could you explain briefly why this is so?

**A.** First, I think, you have to consider a more basic question: are *any* actions always and everywhere wrong?

**Q.** Are they?

**A.** Yes, they are. There is considerable agreement on some of these things. It has been pretty universally agreed, for instance, that it is wrong to kill an innocent person or worship false gods. In the world today you find a growing consensus on the wrongness of racial discrimination. These

are things people have recognized—or are learning to recognize—as wrong for everybody everywhere at all times.

**Q. But mere agreement doesn't of itself prove that such actions are wrong. Why are they?**

**A.** Putting it briefly, the reason is that actions like those I mentioned, when they are willingly performed by a person who knows what he is doing, presupposes an attitude of the will dead set against some fundamental principle that should actually be determining the will's direction.

**Q. Could you explain that notion of the fundamental principles a little more?**

**A.** All men have certain basic drives or inclinations or orientations—call them what you like—and these are what open us up to the whole possibility of human growth and development. Each of these drives has a particular object, and these objects, grasped as such by an insight of our practical intelligence, are the basic human goods. Our practical reason—reason concerned with what we ought to do—finds in these goods the starting points for working out the rules of our behavior.

The outcome of this process is what we call conscience—the conclusion we reach, by reasoning from these starting points, about what ought to be done. An

action that is always wrong is one which requires that the person performing it set his will against one or more of these basic goods, and thereby also turn against one or more of the starting points of his practical reason. For this reason an immoral action of this kind is also fundamentally irrational.

**Q.** What are some of these basic human goods? Could you give me some examples?

**A.** Life is one. Truth is another. So are things like friendship, the use of intelligence to direct our actions, and the achieving of a proper relationship with God. I could go on adding to the list, but I think this illustrates what I have in mind.

If you take all the basic goods together, they represent the sum total of possible human achievement. As the fundamental principles and objects of human activity, they are absolutely indispensable in opening the door to personal growth and the advancement of the human community.

**Q.** But what evidence do you have that these things you mention really are basic human goods?

**A.** It's not a matter of theorizing in a vacuum. The evidence exists in the findings of psychology and anthropology. Although they differ among themselves in their ter-

minology and on just what to include and exclude from the list, specialists in these disciplines have come to a remarkable degree of agreement on the existence of a number of basic human inclinations—things like the tendency to preserve life, the tendency to mate and raise children, the tendency to explore and question, and so on.

These are the fundamental human drives, and their objects will be the basic human goods. And to repeat—an action is always wrong if it necessarily presupposes that the person performing it has set his will against one of these absolutely basic goods.

**Q.** Wouldn't you say, though, that one is only obliged to respect these goods up to the point where they are sufficiently and adequately realized in practice? In the case of procreation for example, one surely reaches a point eventually where enough is enough—enough children are enough—and one needn't keep on realizing this good.

**A.** It's true enough that one shouldn't keep on acting in a way that realizes one good when others will be seriously harmed. And yet these basic goods are not merely pragmatic principles—things to be respected and achieved up to a certain "reasonable" point and then dropped. These are basic principles of the will, and they must determine its fundamental and permanent



orientation without regard to day-to-day practical considerations. And so, even if we should not act *toward* them, we may never act *against* them.

Take the case of human life, as a basic good. Our wills must always be oriented toward life and in its favor—we can't ever turn against it directly, without being guilty of evil. And so, for instance, you can't kill one innocent man in order to save a thousand or kill a sick man to end his suffering. The goods may not be sacrificed to so-called "practical" considerations, and that is why an immoral course of action often seems to be a realistic one, while the only morally upright way out of a situation seems to be impractical and idealistic. The basic goods represent the total possibility of human good. And that, after all, means man's fullest participation in infinite goodness.

**Q. Aren't some of the basic human goods more important than others?**

**A. Yes.** Life is more important than the beginning of life. Spiritual goods are more important than material ones. The point is though that all of these goods are equally basic. That is why it is wrong to *turn against* any one of them. It's not a matter of their being equally important—they aren't—but of their being equally fundamental. An immoral action is an action

that invests too much in one good at the expense of another. Because all the goods are equally basic, we simply have no right to play them off against each other that way.

**Q.** I believe you said before that all the goods together make up the highest possible human perfection, which is the fullest participation man can achieve in divine perfection . . .

**A.** Yes, and whenever we treat one basic good as if it were not really basic, we show that we are not completely oriented toward goodness itself—that is, toward God. To put it another way, when we subordinate one of the basic goods to another, we are treating the second good as if it were an absolute. In a way we are acting as if *it* were God. And that, after all, is a kind of idolatry.

Human good does have a transcendent aspect, because it is a participation in the goodness of God. But *all* the goods together embody man's participation in God's perfection, not one or two of them in isolation. If we start sacrificing goods—even for what may look like good and sufficient practical, pragmatic reasons—then we are starting to cut ourselves off from our proper, human share in divine goodness and lovability. That is why we may not use a bad means to obtain a good end, no mat-

ter how important the end may be to us. The starting point of all morality is this—that the lovable is lovable. What gives the human will its right fundamental direction is the love of all of the basic human goods because they reflect and embody—in this world—the lovability of God himself.

**Q.** But why put this emphasis on goods? Don't you agree that what is really basic is the person, or perhaps the community?

**A.** In a sense that's true. The goods we are talking about are *human* goods, realized only in human persons—and, in the long run, most fully realized in the total human community. However, something has gone wrong when people try to set the person over against the basic goods, as if they could be in conflict with each other.

The goods *perfect* the person, they aren't opposed to him. It seems to me that when people say, "Let's not talk about basic human goods; let's talk about the person"—what they really mean is, "Let's just concentrate on some particular good that *I* happen to have at heart at the moment." This is what's usually behind arguments in defense of contraception.

**Q.** Isn't it ever right to compromise these basic human goods? Some people would say there are situations that seem to demand it.

A. Situations by themselves don't demand anything. When people say that "the situation demands" something or other, what they mean is that a good is at stake—some good *they* are particularly interested in.

So, when somebody says a particular situation demands contraception, he is making at least two prior assumptions, whose validity needs to be examined. First, that for some reason this particular couple should not have another child at this time—and this certainly can be true in a given case. Second, that regular intercourse is absolutely necessary—and this nobody has ever really proved. Although a great many people have asserted it, Christianity has pretty thoroughly denied it for the last two thousand years.

**Q. No matter what good results might come from one of these always wrong actions, nor how bad the consequences of avoiding it—we still can't perform it?**

A. I'm afraid it takes more than getting good results to make an action morally good. Human goodness isn't decided by whether or not something happens to work out well. The man who cheats and lies his way to success is not a better person than the honest, charitable individual who fails in business.

What is fundamentally required for

moral goodness is a constant orientation toward the basic human goods, *all* of them. Insofar as a person turns against one or more of these goods he also turns against one or more of the possible avenues of his own growth and perfection. And this orientation is a matter of the inner reality, the inner life, of a person and a community, not of outward success or failure.

**Q. How do we know that the procreative good is really a basic good?**

A. People always and everywhere have had children and raised them. People always and everywhere have set up an institution—marriage—for precisely this purpose. But considering how much hardship and sacrifice the begetting and raising of children involves, this really can't be explained adequately unless procreation is one of these goods—unless, that is, men do have a fundamental drive whose object is procreation.

The strength of this drive is most apparent, I think, in the case of childless couples. We all know of people who have been unable to have children and who felt as a result that they were missing something very important, something almost essential to their fulfillment as a married couple.

**Q. But does contraception necessarily**

**involve turning one's will against procreation?**

A. If contraception did anything besides preventing conception, it might indeed be possible for a person to say that he intended *that* result instead of the prevention of procreation. But the plain fact of the matter is that contraception itself just doesn't do anything else except prevent a new life from beginning. If a person chooses contraception, he can't be choosing anything except to prevent procreation. And if he chooses to prevent procreation, he can only be setting his will against it.

**Q. Couldn't a person who practices contraception actually be intending the various other goods involved in marital relations—fostering and expressing the love between husband and wife, for instance—without really setting his will against procreation?**

A. There certainly are other goods involved in marital relations. But the trouble with this argument is that having marital relations is one action, and practicing contraception is another; they aren't the same at all, and you choose each of them independently of the other—in the beginning, anyway. Granted, a person who has gotten into the habit of contraception may have lost sight of the difference, and so may a

whole society that has fallen into the contraceptive mentality. In such a case a man may be so confused that he thinks contraception and intercourse are synonymous. But they aren't, and the evidence is that you can have one without the other.

**Q. Many people maintain that the love between husband and wife is weakened and damaged by not having regular intercourse. Do you think this is true?**

**A.** We often think that all mythology was invented in the distant past. But the truth is there are new myths taking hold of people's minds all the time. I really wonder if this idea about the necessity of intercourse for love isn't just a recent addition to popular mythology. Like most modern myths, a lot of people imagine it has been "proved by science." But I think it needs a long, hard look.

For example, what is this "love" that people are talking about here? Is it the relief of erotic tension, self-indulgence, selfishness? And is that what we *really* mean by conjugal love? And what happens to marriage when intercourse is simply not possible for physical or psychological reasons—for example, sometimes during illness and even in pregnancy? Do husbands and wives in such situations necessarily stop loving each other or love each other less? Obviously they don't. And if a particular

couple do love each other less, is it because it truly *has* to be that way in the nature of things, or because these particular people are at odds with each other anyway or are oriented toward the erotic to the point where they can't imagine, much less experience, love without intercourse?

I think common sense and the experience of many couples indicate that, while prolonged abstinence puts a strain on marriage, it not only doesn't necessarily destroy love but may in fact help to increase it. It's not just a flight of poetic fancy to say that shared adversity can perfect a relationship rather than destroying it—provided the relationship is as sound as the couple can make it, and that they are doing everything they can to keep their love on the road toward maturity—that is, toward perfect unselfishness.

**Q.** Still, there are times, aren't there, when it isn't a good idea for a couple to have another baby?

**A.** Yes. Everybody knows that this is so, and everybody has always known it. It isn't exactly a new discovery. But even though action *toward* procreation isn't always desirable, it's always wrong to act in a way that involves turning directly *against* it. You can compare this to the case of a person suffering from a fatal and incurable illness. It may not be desirable to take ex-



traordinary means to prolong such a person's life, when continued life will only mean more suffering and misery for him. But that doesn't mean you can ever take measures to end his life. To put it another way, you needn't always keep a sick man alive, but you can't ever kill him. In the same way, you needn't always seek procreation, but you shouldn't ever prevent it.

**Q.** But some people say that rhythm—which isn't condemned by the Church—is just another way of preventing conception. Couldn't it be argued that contraception and rhythm are just different methods, different techniques, for accomplishing the same thing?

**A.** For those who understand what they are doing, the practice of contraception and the practice of rhythm can proceed from entirely different attitudes. Contraception begins with the assumption that intercourse is necessary, that more children—or perhaps any children—would be an evil, and that the *consequences* of intercourse therefore have to be controlled.

Rhythm can start from the same assumptions, and then it too is wrong, because it is essentially contraceptive. In the case of rhythm, however, it is possible to begin with a different set of assumptions—respect for procreation and respect also

for such goods to be achieved by intercourse as mutual encouragement and support and the celebration of the couple's unity. The couple then decides whether or not to have intercourse, taking into account the probabilities of conception.

They *respect* the procreative good, and they would never think the beginning of life for a new person could be an evil, although they do not choose to realize it at this particular time. They have not set their wills against procreation, and their actions do nothing to prevent intercourse from leading to a new baby. They do have intercourse during an infertile period, but they don't cause the infertility, and they have intercourse for a good reason such as to comfort and encourage one another. But this is altogether different from the situation in contraception, which, as we've seen, is a form of behavior that just doesn't do anything except prevent conception.

The person who chooses contraception can't help but choose *against* procreation. The person who chooses rhythm can stay in line with the basic orientation of the will *toward* procreation.

**Q.** You say that contraception is always and everywhere wrong. But don't some well intentioned people—good, sincere Protestants, for example—practice contraception?

A. Yes, that's true. It is quite possible for a person to see that procreation is a basic value and also see that one shouldn't violate basic values—and yet at the same time fail to realize that contraception *does* violate this one. You might say that such a person doesn't choose contraception—explicitly he only chooses marital relations. But there is a lot of confused thinking in such an attitude, perhaps even a little self-deception.

The fact is that if you practice contraception you have, somewhere along the line, *chosen* to practice it. And if you really see what contraception is—an activity that does nothing except prevent conception—then you must at some point have made a choice to violate the basic human good of procreation. In saying this, though, I'm not trying to parcel out guilt. After all, I think, honest confusion probably gets a lot of people off the hook in the end.

**Q. The fact that contraception is always wrong doesn't necessarily make it seriously wrong, does it?**

A. No, it doesn't. An action can be always wrong without being seriously wrong. However, contraception is seriously wrong.

The seriousness of an action is determined by the importance that the good it violates would have to the person or group

in whom it would otherwise be realized. In the case of contraception, it is procreation—the very beginning of life—which is violated, and this is clearly a very serious matter. The beginning of life would have been a fundamental good for the person whose life would have begun if we had only allowed it to.

Another consideration is pertinent here too. Contraception, after all, only prevents the beginning of something—life—which murder later interrupts. While contraception isn't murder, the two things are rather closely related, just as procreation and life are closely related.

Finally, I think it's worth considering the fact that conception is a three-way affair that involves God as well as the husband and wife. For each human conception God creates a new soul, and from this point of view the human cooperation involved is something very special. Ordinarily at any given time there is no obligation for a particular husband and wife to start this process, but once they do, the special cooperation with God that they undertake seems to me to increase the seriousness of anything they do to prevent their marital act from leading to conception.

**Q.** Surely though one can't violate the right to life of a child who doesn't even exist yet?

A. No, but on the other hand morality is not exclusively a matter of rights and duties. Things can be moral or immoral without anybody's rights being involved. Contraception, for example, is immoral because it violates a basic human good, not because it infringes on the rights of a child who doesn't yet exist. In mentioning the child I was showing the *seriousness* of the issue—for him, after all, it's literally a question of existing or not existing—but I wasn't arguing from the seriousness to the wrongness of contraception.

**Q.** What about cases where there are real conflicts between real goods? For example, suppose it's a choice between practicing contraception or seeing the love between husband and wife weaken and die?

A. There certainly can be genuine conflicts. However, without wanting to sound harsh, I think it has to be said that many such conflicts, including those in which the alternatives are the ones you mention, arise because of the carelessness and neglect of the people involved, and can be removed if they are willing to make the required effort.

Also, one needs to look very closely—as I've said before—at the nature of this "love" that we're talking about here. Perhaps what has happened in such cases is that the couple have narrowed down their

relationship to the point where there really is no significant bond between them besides sex. And when they give up sex, then *nothing* is left to hold them together. What is needed, of course, is for them to put their relationship on a richer, broader basis, so that sex isn't the only thing keeping them together. This takes effort, self-sacrifice, a willingness to be interested in somebody besides oneself. But this after all has always been the formula for the growth of married *individuals* into a perfect married *couple*.

**Q.** Well, what about a case where contraception doesn't seem so bad compared to the troubles that will come from abstinence—permanent or periodic—on the one hand, or, on the other, having another child?

**A.** It's possible that such a judgment may really be correct. But just the same we are not allowed to weigh one evil against another and choose the smaller one.

Take a case where all you would have to do to save a hundred innocent men would be to kill one innocent man. Can you kill him? No, because an always wrong action is still wrong no matter what its good results might be. Of course, preventing life isn't as serious a matter as taking life. But contraception is, as we've already established, an action that is always wrong

and seriously wrong, and so nobody can be justified in practicing it.

After all, there are situations where one simply has to stick by principle, even in the face of very hard consequences. We are obliged to trust in our reason and act according to what it shows us to be right, because this is the means God has given us for directing our actions. And when acting according to principle brings on undesirable consequences—we simply have to believe that God is not a malicious God playing us a dirty trick but a good God who has arranged things in what is, ultimately, the best way for us.

**Q. Doesn't this tend to rule out prudence in planning one's family?**

**A.** No, not at all. But such prudence must always operate within the limits of what is permitted by respecting the basic goods. If you take complete "trust" in God as one extreme and merely human "prudence" as the other, it seems to me that we have gone from one extreme to the other—from all "trust" in the past to all "prudence" today. What is needed is a middle position between the two. We should be prudent within the limits of what is morally right. But when the demands of morality require us to do what is considered foolish by those who don't believe in anything above man, then we can only trust in God.

**Q. Do you think science offers hope of any morally acceptable solutions in this area?**

A. Well, there are reports that the rhythm method will be greatly improved soon, although I'm afraid improvement may not come soon enough for everybody who has problems right here and now. Personally I think that discoveries in this area could come much faster if the Church herself backed such research and if we American Catholics pressed for government support for these investigations.

Meantime, of course, rhythm does work a lot better than most people realize—including some doctors. There is at least one excellent book available on the subject—Dr. John Marshall's *The Infertile Period*. I strongly recommend it to anybody who wants to know what rhythm is all about.

**Q. What other consolation is there for people who want to do the right thing but find themselves in real difficulties?**

A. Well, there is a point where philosophy can't really give an adequate answer and a couple simply must turn to their Christian faith. It can remind us that the crucifixion had to come before the resurrection—and that *we* must be crucified with Christ before we can rise with Him. Perhaps our troubles, our sufferings, would



be more bearable, or at least would seem less meaningless, if we could keep this in mind.

It's also important—and consoling—to think that objective success in being a “good” person isn't what counts. What matters is that we do what we *can*. The person who falls repeatedly but keeps on trying may turn out in the end to be a greater saint than someone who has less severe temptations. But the important thing is to go on trying.

When Christ rose from the dead, He hadn't lost the marks of His wounds. His wounds were still there—although glorified in His glorified body. There's meaning and there's consolation in that for Christians who know that it will be the same with them if, in spite of all their troubles—even moral troubles—they remain steadfast in faith and hope and so on to the end trying to live up to Christ's law of charity. Of course, this isn't easy, for as Christ Himself said, if we love Him we must keep His commandments. We couldn't do it by ourselves, but He also promised us that He will never fail to help us with His grace.

**Q.** Can't there be a responsible use of contraceptives? Contraception doesn't lead to other evil practices of itself, because there are some good, upstanding people who practice it.

A. Yes, there are. It's quite possible for people who are already mature and thoroughly formed, intellectually and morally speaking, to adopt a single practice like this in violation of a fundamental principle without necessarily going on to other objectional practices. The real problem, though, is not with the present generation but with the next, whose values are still in flux. The full implications of the moral choices which *this* generation makes are going to become apparent, for good or ill, only in the *next*.

**Q. Do you know of an example that illustrates this?**

A. I think there is a very clear demonstration of the truth of it in the evolving attitude of the Anglicans on questions of sexual morality—and in saying this I don't mean to cast stones at the Anglicans or question their good faith but only to record some facts of history. Up to 1930 the Anglican Church ruled out the practice of contraception on moral grounds. Then, at the famous Lambeth conference of 1930, the Anglicans condoned the use of contraceptives in a very restricted, "responsible" manner. And what is the situation now, a generation later? You find some influential Anglicans suggesting in all good faith that perhaps certain circumstances allow room for "responsible" premarital sex or "respon-

sible" homosexual relations. As far as historical parallels are concerned, I think there is a remarkable degree of similarity between some of the pre-Lambeth agitation in Anglican circles and some of the statements being made by Catholics today who advocate a change in the Church's teaching.

**Q.** But does this sort of development really have to occur—logically speaking, I mean?

**A.** Logically speaking, it almost certainly does. Once you have separated intercourse and procreation—once, that is, you have said that a man can directly suppress the procreative aspect of the sexual act, for what he considers a good reason, while still engaging in the act itself—there simply *are* no compelling reasons to stop at contraception. The door is open to every arbitrary use of sex one wants to make of it. The moral link between sex and procreation is all that keeps that door closed, and the approval of contraception breaks this vital link.

**Q.** If contraception is always wrong, what about those nuns in the Congo who took pills to prevent conception when they were in danger of being sexually molested?

**A.** There's nothing really new here.

Moralists have generally approved the idea that a woman can use conception-preventing measures to defend herself against the effects of rape. In a case of sexual assault, after all, a woman has not *chosen* intercourse, and she is therefore under no obligation to suffer the results of an unjust attack. What she does that prevents conception *really is self-defense*.

**Q.** What about the pill? Its use is sometimes good, isn't it?

A. Well, there are different kinds of pills and they do different things. Moreover, a particular pill isn't good or bad in itself—it is the use we make of it that is good or bad. This is a complicated subject, but I think the general principle that applies is this: if one uses a pill for a contraceptive purpose—with the direct intention of suppressing the procreative good—then the pill is, morally speaking, just the same as other kinds of contraceptive.

**Q.** What about the population explosion?

A. I'm a philosopher, not an economist or a demographer, so I can't answer in the language of those disciplines. As a matter of common sense, I think it is obvious that these wild fears of the world becoming so crowded that we all have to stand on each others' shoulders just don't have any basis

in reality. Before things get that bad or anywhere near it, people will take steps to prevent it. What steps? Well, later marriage, abstinence, rhythm, contraception, sterilization, abortion, infanticide. Obviously, some of these things are morally acceptable and some are not. Speaking realistically, I expect that all of them will be done, because that is the way people operate. Speaking idealistically, I think the moral solution to the problem is to limit intercourse when that is necessary to cut down on population growth. The main point is that the population explosion doesn't prove anything about the morality of contraception. The mere fact that a problem exists doesn't prove that a particular solution to it is therefore morally allowable.

**Q.** If the Church is not going to change its teaching on contraception, why hasn't it spoken out clearly on the matter?

**A.** As a matter of fact it *has* spoken out clearly—in Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Casti Connubii*, for instance, and in several statements by Pope Pius XII. In view of what these popes have said, I don't think contraception can really be considered an open question for Catholics any more.

As for the present moment, I think there is evidence of a certain bewilderment and hesitation on the part of officials in

the Church—which is not surprising in view of the seriousness and complexity of the subject as well as the amount of propagandizing and agitation being carried on. I think, too—and this is certainly a healthy thing—we are seeing the results of a development in the Church toward consultation and discussion on matters of general concern, rather than mere unilateral pronouncements. It's important to bear in mind, however, that the mere fact that this subject is being examined does not in itself mean the Church will change its teaching.

In fact I believe that the result of the current study will be a very clear understanding on the part of the Church that it cannot possibly change its position on contraception, because the Popes who condemned it were only speaking for unbroken Christian tradition, and they couldn't have done anything else. To some extent, of course, Pope Paul has put the problem of the "pill" in a special category by appointing a special study group. But this doesn't open up the question for everybody to make his own private judgment. On the contrary, last June the Pope said specifically that, unless and until some new viewpoint is reached, Pope Pius XII's teaching on the "pill" still stands. And Pope Pius ruled out the use of drugs as a method of preventing marital intercourse from leading to conception.

**Q. Supposing rhythm is dramatically improved. Will that automatically solve the problems Catholic couples face in this area?**

A. Rhythm is only a technique, and a technique is not enough by itself to solve really human problems. What is truly needed is for people to achieve the virtue of chastity as an expression of charity. We have to learn the practice of chastity as a way of combating our sexual self-centeredness, our tendency to try to exploit others for our own benefit. Contraception does nothing to foster this spirit of generosity and forgetfulness of self—it only makes it possible to defer coming to grips with the real issue, which is the challenge to achieve the positive virtue of chastity.

**Q. What future do you think the ideal of chastity has?**

A. I believe—and this is a testimony of belief, not a prediction based on current trends—I believe that eventually chastity will be something achieved by the many rather than the few. I believe in its realization, just as I believe men will some day realize the Christian ideal of peace. Only a few years ago it was hard to believe that racial discrimination ever would end, but we see it ending here in America and all over the world.

Actually, I think, there is a definite bright side to the current controversy over contraception. It suggests that we are no longer willing to accept a gap between the ideals we profess and the lives we live. Right now, of course, pressure is being exerted for a "solution" to the dilemma that would mean abandoning our ideals. But when it becomes clear that this can't be done, then I think our growing hunger for sanctity will cause us to change our lives instead, in order to bring them into line with our ideals—in this case, with the ideal of Christian chastity.



**Readers desiring a more extensive treatment of the problems related to the morality of contraception may be interested in obtaining Dr. Grisez' book, *Contraception and the Natural Law* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Bruce Publishing Co., 1964).**