

BLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHING

The Second Vatican Council

1965. Pope Paul VI. *Gaudium et spes* [*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*]. Vatican Website, December 7, 1965.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

One of the 16 documents composed at the Second Vatican Council, this pastoral constitution articulates fundamental Church teachings on the role of the Christian in modern society. Covering a broad range of political, social, economic, and theological topics, the Council fathers devote an entire section to marriage and the family.

The sections on marriage and the family are available at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/upload/Gaudium-et-Spes-NFP-Notes-on-Marriage.pdf>.

Papal Teaching

2016. Pope Francis. *Amoris laetitia* [*The Joy of Love*]. Vatican Website, April 8, 2016.

https://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf.

This apostolic exhortation is the result of Pope Francis's prayerful reflection on the discussions and outcomes of two synods of bishops held in Rome October 2014 and October 2015 on marriage and the family. Paragraphs no. 80-85, treat the Church's teaching on "The Transmission of Life and the Rearing of Children."

2005. Pope Benedict XVI. *Deus caritas est* [*God is Love*]. Vatican Website, December 5, 2005.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html.

This papal encyclical reflects upon the theological virtue of love or Christian charity which is central to the whole of the Christian faith. While broadly teaching about love, the work is nevertheless applicable to all facets of the Christian life, including that of marriage. This encyclical provides fundamental principles for understanding the true nature of love that helps in grasping the anthropology behind the Church's teachings about conjugal love and responsible parenthood. Recommended paragraphs are nos. 2, 5, 6, 8 and 11.

1995. St. Pope John Paul II. *Evangelium vitae* [*The Gospel of Life*]. Vatican Website, March 25, 1995. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html.

This papal encyclical teaches about the gift and value of human life. Threats to the value of life are discussed and Christians are urged to create a new Culture of Life, fostering a deeper appreciation and respect for all men and women. Included in the discussion of threats to human life is the subject of contraception [see nos. 13, 16, 17, and 91] which is

described as against God's design for married love. In the text the goodness of the methods of Fertility Awareness Based Methods of family planning is discussed [see nos. 88, and 97].

1994. _____. *Gratissimam sane* [Letter to Families]. Vatican Website, February 2, 1994. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_02021994_families.html.
1993. St. Pope John Paul II. *Veritatis Splendor* [The Splendor of Truth]. Encyclical. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html.
This encyclical corrects numerous deviant moral theologies of the modern period. Among the subjects the Holy Father discusses are: the proper understanding of human freedom, conscience and its valid formation, the moral law (including the category of "intrinsic evil"), and the truth expressed in *Humanae Vitae*. Of particular interest are nos. 55, 56, 63, 64, 67, 68, 75, 76, 79-81.
1988. _____. *Mulieris Dignitatem* [On the Dignity and Vocation of Women]. Apostolic Letter. Vatican Website, August 15, 1988. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19880815_mulieris-dignitatem.html.
1981. _____. *Familiaris consortio* [The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World]. Vatican Website, November 22, 1981. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio.html.
This Apostolic Exhortation addresses the place of the Christian family both in the Church and in the modern world. At the service of both life and love, the Christian family must seek its identity in the Divine Creator, participate in the mission of the Church, and work to effect change in society. Catholic teachings on marriage, conjugal love and responsible parenthood and the methods of Natural Family Planning are also discussed (see especially nos. 11, 28-36.).
- 1979-1984 _____. *Theology of the Body*, Papal Addresses. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/theology-of-the-body.cfm>.
Theology of the Body is the title given to the collection of papal talks [addresses] on God's design for human sexuality by Pope John Paul II during the course of five years. Appealing to the individual's experiences of truth, the Holy Father discusses both Sacred Scripture and Catholic Tradition on the subject. This approach seeks not only to make understandable the rich theology of Catholic teaching on the nature of humanity created as man and woman, but also to communicate the truth and beauty of God's design of human sexuality. Included in this series is a substantial reflection on the papal encyclical, *Humanae vitae* [Of Human Life] which treats married love and responsible parenthood.

See also Pope John Paul II. *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*. Translated by Michael Waldstein. Pauline Books and Media, 2011.

1977. Blessed Pope Paul VI. *25th Allocution to the General Assembly of Pharmacology*.
The Holy Father discusses the importance of the knowledge of the “biological laws of human fertility” which can help married couples healthfully regulate births when using the natural methods. He urges further scientific research in this area.
1968. _____. *Humanae vitae [Of Human Life]*. Vatican Website, July 25, 1968.
http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html.
This papal encyclical teaches about God’s design for married love and the gift of life. The important modern question about spacing and limiting births in marriage is considered within the context of God’s design for marriage. Included in the teaching is a discussion of the immorality of contraception, direct sterilization, and abortion [which are intrinsically evil] and the morality of Fertility Awareness Based Methods of family planning.
1958. Pope Pius XII. *Address to Hematologists*.
Included in the discussion of the Holy Father is the topic of the immortality of steroidal/hormonal contraception. He does, however, mention that such medical drugs may licitly be used to treat serious organic dysfunction.
1951. _____. *Allocution to Midwives*. October 29, 1951.
<https://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/P511029.HTM>.
This allocution treats the nature of the midwife’s profession which includes a profound respect for human life. Among the points made are those of the immorality of contraception and abortion.
1932. Pius XI. *Address to Physicians*.
The Holy Father discusses his hope that physicians would take on the task of studying the problems as addressed in his encyclical, *Casti connubii*.
1930. Pius XI. *Casti connubii [On Christian Marriage]*. Vatican Website, December 31, 1930.
<http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/it.html>.
This papal encyclical teaches about the virtue of marital chastity. Included is a reflection on the threats to marriage. The dignity of marriage and its spiritual benefits are also treated.

Documents of the Holy See

2014. *Instrumentum Laboris [The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization]*. III Extraordinary General Assembly, Synod of Bishops. Vatican Website, June 26, 2014. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20140626_instrumentum-laboris-familia_en.html.
This document provides a reflection on the major challenges facing the family in the early twenty-first century. The text serves to articulate the agenda of the 2014 Extraordinary General Assembly of bishops held in Rome.
2008. *Dignitas personae [On Certain Bioethical Questions]*. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Vatican Website, December 8, 2008.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20081208_dignitas-personae_en.html.

This document grapples with a number of bioethical questions raised in response to modern technological advancements in the field of human fertility and infertility. Using the principles of Catholic moral teaching, the document brings clarity and truth to the debates surrounding both procreation and genetic manipulation.

1997. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Vatican Website.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM.

This comprehensive treatment of the Church's teaching touches upon every facet of the Christian faith. The *Catechism* is divided into four main sections: the profession of faith [the Creed], the celebration of the Christian mystery [the Liturgy], life in Christ [the moral life], and Christian prayer. While references to marriage and family can be found throughout the entire book, one may find paragraphs 1601-1666 and 2331-2400 to be particularly applicable for education on marriage and conjugal morality.

1997. *Vademecum for Confessors Concerning Some Aspects of the Morality of Conjugal Life*.

Pontifical Council for the Family. Vatican Website, February 12, 1997.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_12021997_vademecum_en.html.

This brief document provides guidelines for the administration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in difficult moral circumstances (particularly those concerning married life). Although addressed to confessors within the clergy, the document serves as a standard to guide all Christians in carrying out the call of Christ to live the virtue of chastity.

1995. *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education within the Family*.

The Pontifical Council on the Family. Vatican Website, December 8, 1995.

1988. *Submission of the Catholic Church to the XXII Council for the International Organizations of Medical Sciences Conference on Ethics and Human Values in Family Planning: An International Dialogue on Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals and Societies*. The Holy See. June 19-24, 1988. Reprinted in *The International Review of Natural Family Planning* 12 (Summer 1988): 87-105. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/upload/intl-review-NFP-1988-VaticanStatement-Ethics-and-Human-Values.pdf>.

This statement notes that there are no value free methods of family planning. It then lists six ethical challenges of contraception, drawing on examples. The document also explains that though the world sees a family planning crisis, the Church sees the real problem as one of ethics. (*Note: The name of the Vatican Dicastery is not provided in this reprint.*)

1987. *Donum vitae [Instruction on Respect for Human Life]*. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Vatican Website, February 22, 1987.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html.

Written in the midst of significant medical innovation on assisted reproductive technology,

this document defends the gift and dignity of human life [particularly in its earliest stages], against the onset of intrusive and immoral scientific innovation..

1975. *Persona humana* [*Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics*]. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Vatican Website, December 29, 1975. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19751229_persona-humana_en.html.

Catholic Episcopal Conferences

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

2009. *Life-Giving Love in an Age of Technology*. Pastoral Letter. USCCB Website, November 17, 2009. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/upload/Life-Giving-Love-in-an-Age-of-Technology-2009-2.pdf>. This pastoral teaching on marriage and infertility brings Catholic moral principles into the discussion on modern reproductive technologies. The bishops defend the dignity of procreation, reserving it to the conjugal union of spouses. The moral and immoral means of remedying infertility are clearly discussed..

2009. *Ethical Directives for Catholic Hospitals*. 5th ed. USCCB Website, November, 2009. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/health-care/upload/Ethical-Religious-Directives-Catholic-Health-Care-Services-fifth-edition-2009.pdf>. This document provides instruction for health care professionals regarding the mission and scope of their work. Addressing both pastoral and moral issues alike, the bishops provide guidance on the standards expected of those in Christian health care. The *Directives* include instruction on specific moral dilemmas encountered in the health care field including those that pertain to human fertility and life.

2009. *Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan*. Pastoral Letter. USCCB Website, November 17, 2009. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/love-and-life/index.cfm>.

This pastoral letter provides a summary of Church teaching on marriage as a natural institution and as a sacrament. It includes a discussion on the ethical transmission of life in marriage.

2006. *Married Love and the Gift of Life*. Pastoral Resource. USCCB Website, November, 2006. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/upload/Married-Love-and-the-Gift-of-Life-English-version.pdf>. This document summarizes Church teaching on marriage, conjugal love, and responsible parenthood in an easy to read question and answer format. NB: Audio files in English and Spanish are at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/index.cfm>.

1993. *Human Sexuality from God's Perspective, Humanae Vitae 25 Years Later*. A Statement by the USCCB Committee for Pro-Life Activities. USCCB Website.

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/catholic-teaching/upload/Human-Sexuality-from-God-s-Perspective-Humanae-Vitae-25-Years-Later.pdf>.

This short anniversary statement revisits the teachings of *Humanae vitae* on its twenty-fifth anniversary. It emphasizes the reverence due to human life and the responsibility of parents to defend such an invaluable gift. In protecting the great worth of human sexuality in God's plan, the document has a section devoted specifically to Natural Family Planning.

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