

ings to do his bit through helping his parish priest. Delving into medical literature, he came across a Dr. Smith's report from the 1850's, on mucus appearing regularly in women's menstrual cycles. He could have cried "EUREKA!," as did Archimedes in his bath-tub. Ever since, the Billings Method has helped - all through Latin America - to make fecundity in marriage more akin to an intelligent application of the biblical injunction "Be fruitful and Multiply!" And Lyn, John's wife, added the feminine touches.

Training

Within the context of a retreat for NFP couples, we invite them to become teachers. In order to prepare them for this delicate task, teacher trainees are submitted to two Teaching Courses.

- 1) A six-month (twice-a-week) course in which such subjects as the following are developed:
 - Anthropology
 - Psychology
 - Interview techniques
 - Teachings of the Magisterium
 - Moral Theology
 - Anatomy and Physiology
 - NFP: history and development
 - Difficult cases
- 2) Practicum by sitting-in with an experienced instructor.

Yearly, instructors are invited to take a "refreshers course." Added to this, they are constantly being enriched with the literature which our Center receives from foreign organizations.

Our future

We feel very often as young David facing Goliath. Both the IPPF agents and the abortion promoters receive so much help to bring down still further our birth-rate that only God's grace keeps us up. But we know that "It is not for us to ask why but to do or die!"

Pedro Richards, C.P., is the Director of Uruguay's NFP Centers.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

The Best Intentions: Unintended Pregnancy and the Well Being of Families—A Review

Charles & Sheila Potter

Every Marathon runner experiences "The Wall" after running 22 or 23 kilometers. Every muscle in the body aches from exhaustion and discouragement, the psyche, the brain are bereft of energy, the three or four kilometers look impossible to finish.

Natural Family Planning teachers in 1996 are empathetic to this condition. We have worked hard, it seems, forever. The couples we are teaching (still only 5% to 7%) don't understand why, often struggle with the essential abstinence, some even have difficulty with how to use NFP. Then, along comes *The Best Intentions: Unintended Pregnancy and the Well Being of Children and Families*, by the Committee on Unintended Pregnancy, Institute of Medicine, published by National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 1995. This is a book of studies and analyses of existing studies. Written by seventeen researchers, it was funded by the National Institute of Medicine.

After 90 or so years of contraceptive use, the most amazing statistic is that over-all unintended pregnancy rate in the United States is 57.3 (pg. 32, Table 2-2). The principle source of many of the statistics come from the national Survey of Family Growth. The analysis of these surveys, done every two years, are comprehensive and used in a number of the chapters on socio-economic status, ages of women, use of contraceptives, family background, etc. The committee spends a good deal of the introduction defining categories of unintended pregnancies,

i.e., mistimed, unwanted, or unintended.

Complicated analyses of the unintended pregnancies (statistics for 1988 specifically) would like to lead the reader to believe that contraceptives are effective. However, just the opposite is the case. Sterilization (of either partner) is the 'best method.' Regarding reversible contraception, stated on page 94: "Unintended pregnancy occurs among women using reversible contraception because contraceptive methods may fail or be used improperly." Yes, 57.3% of the time, apparently. Flipping a coin would give at least a 50% chance anyway. This is after Planned Parenthood has spent billions of dollars on education and research on better methods!

We say to each of you NFP teachers: plow through the whole book. It's worth it. This book demonstrates that contraceptive use, as promoted by Planned Parenthood, is a complete and utter failure. We know that the only family planning which will promote generosity and love is NFP. Only NFP allows husband and wife to cooperate with God's plan for all of us. Perhaps unintentionally, this book has gotten us past "The Wall." After having taught NFP for 32 years, it is the most hopeful sign we've had in many years. ■

Sheila is the director of NFP services for the Archdiocese of New York. Charles, Sheila's husband, is the Associate Director.