

# Catholic Family Size Dropping 'Sharply'

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — Roman Catholic parents are sharply reducing the size of their families and indications are that, despite Church sanctions against artificial birth control, Catholic couples are using the pill and other contraceptive devices to an increasing degree.

According to the first report on a 1970 National Fertility Study sponsored by the federal government, the number of children Catholics are having or intend to have is rapidly approaching the number of births among non-Catholic families.

There was a strong decline in births expected by all groups in U.S. society during the period 1965 to 1970, the study observed,

but the fastest decline was among Catholic parents, especially in the 20 to 24 age span.

The report on the study, which was conducted by two Princeton University demographers, Norman Ryder and Charles Westhoff, was submitted to the Presidential Commission on Population Growth and the American Future. It is the first formal analysis of the 1970 study. One of the first news summaries was prepared by the Washington bureau of The New York Times.

Father Walter Imborski, director of Chicago's Cana Conference and a leading Catholic expert on family life, told Religious News Service that he could not comment on the report be-

cause he had not read it. But he said he was "not surprised" by the figures showing an increasing decline in Catholic births.

Msgr. James T. McHugh, who heads the U.S. Catholic Conference's Division on Family Life, was unavailable for comment on the study's report.

In its conclusion, the report by the Princeton demographers said that couples in the U.S. "have changed their reproductive behavior radically over the course of the past five years (1965-1970), adjusting their fertility goals sharply downward and increasing substantially their ability to stop child-bearing at a wanted level."

The report declared that, as it stands now, the goal of stabilizing the size and growth of the nation's population is now within reach.

The projected over-all total fertility rate figure in the study is 2.19 children, while the total fertility rate figure of 2.11 is what some experts call the "magic number" or basic population replacement level. If the 2.11 figure could be maintained for 70 years, the U.S. would reach Zero Population Growth.

The study used a national sample of married women under 45 to measure the number of children wanted and the number of children born but not wanted.

It found that birth expectations are dropping much faster for Catholic parents than for other groups at all age levels. In 1970, non-Catholic women said they wanted 9 per cent fewer births than in 1965, but Catholic women indicated they wanted 20 per cent fewer children.

The report noted that the birth-expectation decline and unwanted births were even more pronounced among Catholic women who attended college.

The two demographers, asserting that the findings indicate increasing use of contraceptive devices by Catholic women, despite Church opposition, said: "We are now developing data that confirms this."

They said the data will show Catholics are joining non-Catholic parents in the wider use of the pill and other contraceptives.

## Two Churchmen Protest Speech By Rockefeller

New York — (RNS) — Two Roman Catholic churchmen, both episcopal vicars in the Bronx, walked quietly away from a Catholic Interracial Council dinner to protest Gov. Nelson Rockefeller's recent veto of a strict abortion bill and his comments on alleged Catholic "villification."

Auxiliary Bishop Patrick V. Ahern of New York and Msgr. Gistav J. Schultheiss walked off the dais at the dinner on May 25 after discovering that the governor was present and scheduled to speak.

Bishop Ahern said he and Msgr. Schultheiss felt it was not "right" to remain on the dais in view of the governor's veto and because of his charges that Catholics in New York attempted to vilify and coerce state legislators to pass a strict abortion bill.

This was the first Catholic event Gov. Rockefeller attended since his veto of the bill, which, in effect, would have repealed the liberalized abortion law.



## Heavyweight Charity

Heavyweight boxing champion Joe Frazier accepts a check for \$1,117 to go to sickle cell anemia research, from Father Carl Reinert, SJ president of Creighton University in Omaha. The money come from admissions charged to the champ's training sessions at the Creighton gym during the week prior to his fight with Ron Stander. Frazier donated also a portion of his fight receipts, as did the challenger, to the sickle cell anemia fund. The champion successfully defended his title against Stander, scoring a fifth round knockout. (RNS)



## K of C Awards Donovan

State Senator James H. Donovan of Chadwicks, (right) was awarded the New York State Council, Knights of Columbus "Americanism Award". Making the presentation are, State Deputy James A. Ruh and Cardinal Terence Cooke, State chaplain. Senator Donovan was sponsor of the recently vetoed bill to repeal New York's liberalized abortion law.

The national fertility rate has never fallen to the "magic" 2.11 children per family mark. But the birth rate reported in March, 1972, had the figure at about 2.13, the lowest ever.

Factors involved in the dropping birth rate, according to the demographers, include improved contraceptive aids, increasing

use of abortion and sterilization, more single persons, a higher marriage age, working wives and growing concern over the impact of population growth on the environment.

The 1970 fertility study is based on a sample of 5,600 women under 45 and was carried out under contract with the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md.

## Priest Blasts Leaders For Boys Town Woes

Omaha — (RNS) — A priest-columnist for the Catholic archdiocesan weekly asserted that Boys Town, the famed refuge for homeless boys, is beset with internal problems and needs "new leadership more in touch with the times."

He said the home, which was described by the Sun Newspapers of Omaha as having financial resources in excess of \$200 million, should be "more professional in its approach to the problems of youth and more sensitive to the rights and needs of the Boys Town staff."

Father Clifford Stevens, who writes for the Catholic True Voice of Omaha, said during a press conference that Boys Town has failed to meet its "professional and educational mission" which is "inexcusable" in the light of the institution's resources.

Msgr. Francis P. Schmitt, director of the Boys Town choir and assistant director of the home, said during the same press conference that Father Stevens was guilty of "muckracking" and by implication had made the home's director, Msgr. Nicholas Wegner, look bad.

Msgr. Schmitt, who acknowledged that Father Stevens had a diploma from Boys Town, said the priest was only there a few years and really did not know enough about it. He charged that Father Stevens was "being used by others."

In his statement, Father Stevens said Boys Town is wracked by internal conflict, petty power struggles, and demoralization that threatens to destroy the very work of the institution. "I feel there are problems at Boys Town that haven't been faced," he said. "I am speaking as a matter of conscience."

## BOB CONSIDINE On the Line



If it's obscurity you're looking for, arrange to be the brother, half-brother, or sister of almost any world figure.

There wasn't a single mention in any communique during President Nixon's recent trip that anyone had inquired. "How's your brother Ed? Still with Boeing and working on the campaign? And what's with brother Don? How's he doing at Marriott?"

Not many Americans ever knew that Lyndon Johnson had a riotously colorful brother, Sam Houston Johnson, until brother burst out with a book — without the President's consent. LBJ raised hell with him, and nothing much has been heard from old Sam since, alas.

President Truman's brother Vivian more or less had to show his pass to get into the White House when his famous brother was there. President Eisenhower's four brothers occasionally surfaced during his eight years in office, notably his kid brother Milton. President Kennedy's brothers, of course, were the great exceptions.

Churchill had a discreetly withdrawn brother, Army chaplain named Jack. So did De Gaulle. Pierre De Gaulle, taller, leaner and infinitely humbler than the proud bearer of the Cross of Lorraine, was quite content to ascend as high as the post of Mayor of Paris. He liked to dance.

There wasn't much chance for his Imperial Majesty Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlevi to trot out his family while the President

was taking bows and more or less dodging bombs in Tehran. The 52-year-old Shahinshah is a twin of Princess Ashraf Pahlevi, indefatigable traveler, worker for the Red Lion and Sun Society (Red Cross), twice divorced, same as twin.

Then there's his older sister, Princess Shams Pahlevi, active in Red Lion and Sun, only once divorced, plays harp. The Shah also has four half-brothers who were not seen in the reception lines.

Interpreters swarmed all over the places where the President trod. Some good, some bad. I found a bad one in an interview with Lenin prize winner academician Boris Petrov, the Soviet space wizard.

Dementedly, I tried to tell him a familiar astronaut-story. Seems that the late great Gus Grissom, who died in an early Apollo command module test, after flying Mercury and Gemini missions, was once asked what went through his mind as he heard the awesome countdown while chained to his contour couch.

Gus replied that it was his custom to look through the visor of his space helmet and realize that, unhappily, everything he could see in the space vehicle was "made by the lowest bidder."

Petrov looked flabbergasted when the interpreter finished his story.

"What is meant by 'lowest bidder'?" he asked.