

# LETTERS

Letters to the editor should be addressed to the editor, Courier-Journal, Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced. Names and addresses should be included. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.

## Birth Control

Editor:

Father Hohman's answer to a question regarding "The Pill" (11/23/72) forced me to turn to the wisdom of "The Teaching of The Catholic Church" in two volumes, edited by Canon George D. Smith and published by The Macmillan Co. N.Y. 1950.

There on Page 1089 of its second volume we can read these words: "The most universal and most elementary test in distinguishing between moral good and evil consists in determining whether a human faculty is being used in a natural manner, and in subordination to its natural object. For it is the immediate object of an action which primarily gives it a moral goodness or badness. No amount of good intention, no wealth of pressing circumstances, can ever justify an

action which is bad from its object."

The key words of this "test" not only make its meaning clear but also thrust its full weight against any unlawful use of the "Pill." "A human faculty" can only declare the power which God has put into the body and mind of man to achieve His divine purpose. Human procreation is an example of such a "faculty." "Natural" is opposed to "artificial." An "object" has to be something tangible and stable in form which the human senses perceive before the human mind can discover a purpose. Human genitalia surely conform to this meaning of an "object." Finally if "immediate" implies no time lapse between cause and effect, then any contrived barrier between the sex act and conception must constitute a deliberate and serious sin.

The same volume on Page 1091 says:

"It is sometimes alleged that the Church has failed to impose

this doctrine on birth-prevention upon the faithful as a whole. If by this is meant that the ruling is not accepted by people who are nominally Catholics, but who from indolence and indifference do not practice their religion, the statement may be true. But if it means that a Catholic can practice his religion, frequent the sacraments regularly, and yet defend this malpractice the

statement is completely false.

The doctrine (Page 1092) is not the opinion of a few rigorous theologians, but the considered and universal teaching of an authority which every Catholic knows cannot err in matters affecting Christian morals.

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FR. ALBERT SHAMON

## Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Sir. 3:2-6, 12-14. (R2) Col. 3:12-21. (R3) Lk. 2:22-40.

On the feast of the Holy Family, we might well ponder what youth needs most and what parents most need to do.

Youth's great need today is for patience! Youth wants instant change, instant solutions. Yet good things take time. One of the most consoling and oft-repeated expressions about God in the Old Testament is that He is "slow to anger." God always takes His time. He can make a mushroom overnight, but when He wants to make an oak, He takes a lifetime.

When God sent his Son into the world he could have sent him as a full grown man. Adam was. Infancy, childhood, adolescence are very humbling conditions — they take so long! Yet Jesus went through them to teach that the great virtues of life need the slow years of childhood.

So Christ spent 30 years in Nazareth — 30 years! He must have dreamed of leaving home before that. When he was twelve, the incident in the Temple betrays a certain restiveness. Yet he waited it out — 30 years! He settled down to the relationships of home and of village — for 30 years! His home wasn't the richest of homes — it wasn't even rich. So he pitched in and learned the carpenter's trade. It all helped him. For He grew. He didn't stand still.

There is no such thing as premature maturity. Youth can not jump the gun; he can drop out of school, marry too soon, give up Sunday Mass or get involved in politics when he should be learning. But all that can spell failure. The prodigal son became prodigal because he left home too soon. Growth takes time. You cannot make a tulip grow faster by tugging at the stem. You destroy it. Youth is the time of building character. That takes time, and time demands patience.

As for parents, what they need most to do for youth is create a climate of love for them at home.

A child needs love even more than food. Frederick II of the 13th century brought together a number of abandoned children and put them in the care of nurses. He instructed the nurses never to speak a word to the children, nor show any facial emotions or gestures of love. Frederick wanted to find out what language they would speak. The experiment failed. All the children died, and they died for want of love.

Love means to believe in. When children reach the teen years, they begin to feel independent. They are stronger, they stay up later, they choose their own friends. They begin to feel "grewed up." So what do they do but try out their new-found powers. And, you know, the first ones who get it are the parents. It was Ogden Nash who wrote:

Youth won't be happy  
With nothing to ignore;  
So that's what parents  
Were created for.

If youth needs patience, parents need more patience. Parents are the bow; children, the arrows. The target is heaven. Sometimes children are sent to school when it is too late to have them taught. The real training begins in the home.

May I offer four hints to form a Christian family:

1. Every evening gather together, read some verses from one of the Gospels, then allow a few minutes time for silence and prayer.

2. Say grace before and after meals.

3. Parents must be in their hearts what they want their children to be in life.

4. Each day, let each member of the family make an act of self-denial. A holy family will be a happy family!

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Vol. 87 No. 35 December 27, 1972

Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 10¢. Yearly subscription in U.S. \$6.00. Canada and South America \$8.50. Other foreign countries \$9.50. Offices: Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St. Rochester, N.Y. 14604. (716) 434-7050. Second class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

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