

Life, Liberty and Law



Nancy Murphy

This week I repeat my recommendation of the small book, "First Do No Harm," by Natalee S. Greenfield. Health teachers and counselors will find it especially rewarding. More on this later...

About the time of the Lambeth Conference some forty years ago, when the Anglican Church relaxed her traditional ban on artificial contraception, scientific researchers introduced the Basal Body Temperature method to avoid or to achieve pregnancy. BBT did not enjoy any degree of popularity. There was no accompanying media blast as there would be years later for the ill-tested pill; no support from the leading minds; no mention in textbooks. Even today, with the pill on its way out (I hope) due to its inherent dangers, and with one government after another implementing "voluntary" sterilization programs for the unwanted, BBT is unheard of except from those of us who stubbornly insist on writing about it without the support of publishers and sex educators who speak fine phrases but refuse to fund or teach NFP.

Basically, this part of Natural Family Planning depends on identification of a woman's temperature elevation, an elevation which characterizes the postovulatory (after ovulation) phase of her

menstrual cycle. During menstruation, when the estrogen level is low, the Basal Body Temperature is low. It remains at a low level until the impending release of the egg from the ovary at which time the temperature will rise usually 4/10 - 6/10 of a degree (orally). Normally, if the higher temperature is sustained for three days, it is seen as an indication of ovulation. Temperature charts are used to record fluctuations.

If the egg has not been fertilized, the BBT will fall and menstruation will begin. If pregnancy has occurred (if the egg has been fertilized) the temperature will remain at the elevated level. NOTE: This temperature shift will not predict ovulation; it simply provides one excellent indication that the egg has been released. BBT should be used in conjunction with other natural indicators, which will be discussed in the coming weeks.

Please note further that the information contained herein is incomplete. It is not a substitute for a Natural Family Planning seminar. I am not an NFP teacher. I am simply pointing out the essentials of NFP 1) because to my knowledge the entire subject is ignored in the Catholic schools, Pre-Cana conferences and adult education programs in our diocese; and 2) because I am obligated to respond to the need for this information as evidenced in my daily mail.

Next week The Ovulation method

Right to Life Seeks Waiver for St. Mary's

Letters on behalf of St. Mary's Hospital were sent last week to the state health commissioner by Right to Life committees of this area and the state. They asked for a religious waiver that would permit the hospital to continue its obstetrical services without penalty.

Both letters to Commissioner Robert P. Whalen, M.D., asserted that, in the words of the Rochester area committee, "the consolidation of all obstetrical units into abortion-oriented units for the ostensible purpose of 'lowering costs' and improving 'quality care' will have the opposite results (to those) intended." The state committee's letter took up the cause for Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in

Binghamton, as well as for St. Mary's.

The need for this demonstration of organized citizen support possibly had passed, as far as St. Mary's is concerned because Gov. Hugh Carey already had assured Rochesterians that the obstetrical unit in their Catholic hospital would not "get the ax." The letters, however, put on the record some ancillary concerns of the Right to Life groups.

The letters referred to personal freedoms—the freedom of choice that should be protected for both patients and medical personnel opposed to abortion. The Rochester letter spoke of the loss to obstetrics that would occur,

through consolidations, of the "many talented, sensitive and humane doctors, nurses and aides who cannot in conscience participate in a pro-abortion unit." The state letter mentioned anti-trust violations and monopoly as inherent in the trend toward consolidations.

Sister DeChantal LaRow,

administrator of St. Mary's, meanwhile went forward with a petition drive initiated before the governor made his statement. Commissioner Whalen had suggested to her, she said, that she apply for a waiver to official penalties, and she intended to present him with evidence of the community's support.

Short-Term Courses Offered at Nazareth

The Nazareth College Continuing Education Department will offer short-term, non-credit courses for the first time beginning with the January semester.

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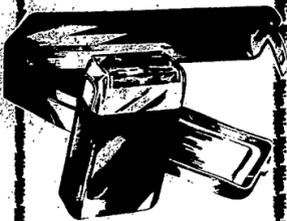
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