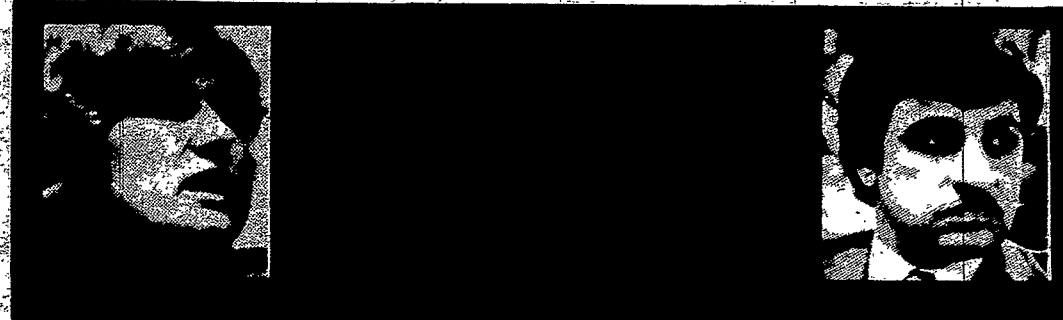


*Wasting Time
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Vatican Waiting Test Tube Baby Viewpoints

New York (RNS)—Catholic theologians and ethicists have responded cautiously to the moral implications of the production of a human being from an egg fertilized in a laboratory.

Bishop Thomas C. Kelly, OP, general secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, distinguished two moral issues: conception outside the womb and the consequent possibility of discarding embryos judged unneeded or defective.

Those who commented neither endorsed nor condemned outright the process by which Leslie Brown gave birth to a daughter last week in England. An egg was removed from Mrs. Brown's ovary, fertilized with sperm from her husband and then implanted in the womb of the mother, who had been unable to conceive naturally.

No official statement has come from the Vatican.

Bishop Kelly said, in

part "Christian morality has insisted on the importance of protecting the process by which human life is transmitted. The fact that science now has the ability to alter this process significantly does not mean that, morally speaking, it has the right to do so."

"The episode," he added, "points to a readiness to implement new technology before its moral implications have been thoroughly considered. The consequences of this mentality—from the atomic bomb to uncontrolled use of carcinogenic pesticides—have become clear in recent years. We should proceed cautiously when the same mentality manifests itself in regard to so sensitive and sacred a matter as the transmission of human life."

Father Bernard Haering, author of *Medical Ethics and Manipulation*, said, "The Church is still in a state of search on this." Noting that Pope Pius XII had spoken several times

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Tioga Program to Aid Poor

Ministry to Unchurched,
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By MARTIN TOOMBS
Southern Tier Editor

Owego—A precedent-setting program has been launched in Tioga County by a partnership of the county's parishes and the Sisters of Mercy.

Sisters Carol Wulforst and Kathleen Flaherty have begun a county-wide project to aid the county's poor, funded by the parishes and the sisters' religious order. The sponsors have committed themselves to a \$15,000 budget for the unique ministerial effort.

The project required a commitment of \$2,600 from St. Patrick's, Owego, St. Margaret Mary, Apalachin, St. James, Waverly, the double parish of St. John the Evangelist, Newark Valley and St. Francis, Catatonk, and from the Sisters of Mercy.

Those involved acknowledge that the effort is both a ministerial program and a demonstration project which they hope will be copied in other areas.

Several factors fell into place to make the project possible, Father Albert Cason, Tompkins-Tioga regional coordinator, recounted; the interest of Sister Judith Heberle, Sisters of Mercy superior general, in such a project; the interest of the two sisters involved, and parish support.



Discussing their roles in the new project being started in Tioga County are, from left, Sister Carol Wulforst, Sister Mary Kruckow, Father Albert Cason, Father Neil Miller and Sister Kathleen Flaherty.

Discussion of such a program began last Thanksgiving, Father Neil Miller, regional Office of Human Development (OHD) staff, noted, with the proposal presented to the pastors during the winter. Tioga County was chosen, he said, because of the county's needs, its workable size for such a project, and the willingness of the parishes to participate.

Father Cason reported that at first the pastors said that such a cooperative effort wouldn't work. Their opinion was that "you can't get five parishes together" for such a project, he said, especially with so much money involved.

But after further discussion, all the pastors accepted the proposal, and it also was endorsed by each parish council.

Father Eugene Weis, pastor of St. John the Evangelist and St. Francis, said the parish councils reacted enthusiastically to the proposal. The vote at St. John's was unanimous, he said, and the St. Francis Parish Council responded that "we are definitely willing to commit ourselves and our money" to the project.

Father Elmer Schmidt, pastor of St. Margaret Mary, reported that parish council reaction was "most favorable."

Father Cason observed that they have achieved the support necessary for the project to start, and now they hope to show that parishes can cooperate successfully on such projects.

Sister Kathleen noted that the area has long been served

by the Sisters of Mercy, and they see the congregation's participation as an extension of their services. Sister Mary Kruckow, regional OHD staff, noted that the Sisters of Mercy take a fourth vow of "service of the poor, the sick, the uneducated," and the Tioga project is an example of such work.

Additional funding for the sisters' work will come from the county's share of the Operation Bread Box receipts, and from OHD. Currently, the use of a car has been donated by a St. Patrick's parishioner, holding down their expenses.

Father Schmidt commented that he sees two advantages presented by the project. The first is that religious will be

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Therese Petracca, director of Natural Family Planning accepts check from Frank Staropoli (center), co-coordinator of the Office of Family Life, and Maurice Tierney, director of Catholic Charities.

Diocese Grant to NFP

BY TERRANCE J. BRENNAN

Natural Family Planning Education of Rochester, Inc. was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Diocese of Rochester at presentation ceremonies last Friday at the Office of Catholic Charities.

"I'm thrilled!" said Therese Petracca, director of the program as she accepted the check from Maurice Tierney, director of Catholic Charities and Frank Staropoli, co-coordinator of the Office of Family Life.

"I'm very happy and grateful to the diocese for this support and I look forward to

bigger and better things," said Petracca.

"I believe that this grant will act as further encouragement for those couples who are trying to find another way. NFP represents that way. It is a non-mechanistic approach to birth control," said Tierney.

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is a scientifically-based method of observing, recording and interpreting the natural changes which occur in the woman's body each cycle. This enables a couple to establish with a great degree of accuracy, the fertile and infertile phases of each cycle.

The trust which a couple builds in the NFP method over a period of time, as well as the communications between husband and wife in applying the method, serves to enrich the marital relationship. The method is gaining strong recognition by the government as a valuable alternative to artificial contraception.

Since opening an office in the Kearney Building of St. Mary's Hospital in January, the organization has coordinated the work of twelve well-trained instructor-couples from throughout the 12-county area. Over 700 couples have been instructed in the past few years.