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## 15 Years Later

### Humanae Vitae Still Not 'Easily Received' by All

1st of 3-part series  
By James B. Burke

When the encyclical "Humanae Vitae," (On Human Life) was signed by Pope Paul VI 15 years ago, the pope saw it as a possible "sign of contradiction" in light of modern practices.

The encyclical, signed on July 25, 1968, reaffirmed the Church's teaching that human birth cannot be morally regulated by artificial means or by abortion or sterilization.

"We must once again declare that the direct interruption of the generative process already begun, and, above all, directly willed and procured abortion, even if for therapeutic reasons, are to be absolutely excluded as licit means of regulating birth," the pope wrote in the 5,300-word letter.

"Similarly excluded is every action which, either in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as end or as a means, to render procreation impossible."

The encyclical morally approved of natural family planning when "serious" physical, psychological and "external" conditions to space births exist.

Pope Paul acknowledged in the encyclical that his teaching might be controversial.

"It can be foreseen that this teaching will perhaps not be easily received by all: too numerous are those voices -- amplified by the modern means of propaganda -- which are contrary to the voice of the Church," the pope said.

"To tell the truth, the Church is not surprised to be made, like her divine founder, a 'sign of contradiction,' yet she does not because of this cease to proclaim with humble firmness the entire moral law, both natural and evangelical," he said.

Shortly before his death in 1978, Pope Paul referred to "Humanae Vitae" as a "painful document."

In attempting to proclaim the "entire moral law" on the regulation of birth, the pope based his prohibition of artificial birth control on the Church's traditional understanding of married love, which had been reconfirmed by the Second Vatican Council.

He also spelled out a Christian understanding of "responsible parenthood."

"Conjugal love reveals its true nature and nobility when it is considered in its supreme origin, God, who is love," the pope said.

"Marriage is not, then, the effect of chance or the product of evolution of unconscious natural forces; it is the wise

institution of the creator to realize in mankind his design of love."

Married love ought to be, according to the encyclical:

-- "Fully human" or "of the senses and spirit at the same time";

-- "A very special form of friendship in which husband and wife generously share everything, without undue reservations or selfish calculations";

-- Faithful and exclusive until death; and

-- Destined to raise new lives.

Married couples should see themselves as the "minister" of God's design, rather than the "arbiter of the sources of human life," the pope added.

"... (A)n act of mutual love, which is detrimental to the faculty of propagating life, which God the creator of all, has implanted in it according to special laws, is in contradiction both to the divine plan ... and the will of the author of human life," he said.

"To use this divine gift destroying, even if only partially, its meaning and its purpose is to contradict the nature both of man and woman and of their most intimate relationship."

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Marcia Eggert and Luke

## 'Luke' Is Retiring And Seeks a Home

By John Dash

After ten years of faithful service, Luke, a yellow labrador retriever, is retiring his duties as guide to Marcia Eggert; and Marcia, unwilling to place Luke in an institution where he might be "put to sleep," is seeking a good home for her companion where he can enjoy the company of a family who loves him as much as she.

Marcia's problem is shared by a number of blind persons whose guide dogs reach a certain age where they have to be retired, it was learned last week.

The dogs are perfectly healthy, but they deserve retirement after a decade of service.

Unfortunately, two such highly trained animals cannot be housed under the same roof.

Luke must leave Marcia's home by the end of October so that her new guide dog will not feel threatened or uncer-

tain of his place when he arrives.

Marcia, a darkroom technician with the Ide Radiological Group, described Luke as in good health for his age -- very gentle and friendly and good with children.

She also noted however, that after a bout with a virus infection last year, Luke's diet must be carefully monitored. "I want to be honest with people," she said, "but that's the only problem."

Well, that's not the only problem. After such long time, it will be very hard for Marcia to relinquish her affection for her companion who served as her eyes. That is also why Marcia must give Luke up by October. Her new guide dog will not arrive until December, "But I'm going to need a month to get over losing him."

Marcia may be reached by calling 263-6083 during the day.

By Jerry Filteau  
Washington (NC) -- A Vatican agency has unofficially expressed opposition to the practice of Catholics receiving Communion under the forms of bread and wine in United States parishes on Sundays.

For three years now, the U.S. bishops have been trying quietly to dispel the Vatican concern and resolve the issue, but their efforts so far have failed.

The Vatican's Congregation for Sacraments and Divine Worship has said unofficially that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops acted improperly in 1978 when it authorized U.S. bishops to allow distribution of Communion under both kinds at certain parish Masses on Sundays and holy days.

When it learned of the Vatican opposition in 1980, the NCCB replied that it had acted strictly within its rights and in accord with the law.

After the Washington Post ran a story on the situation in July, Father Ronald Krisman, associate director of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, was asked for the NCCB stance on the issue.

A similar inquiry to the Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship brought no immediate reply. An official said questions would have to be directed to the congregation's adjunct secretary for divine worship, Archbishop Virgilio Noe, who was on vacation until July 25.

Father Krisman said the central issue raised by the congregation is whether a

bishops' conference had the authority, under existing rules, to authorize bishops within the conference to use their own discretion in giving permission for the practice of receiving Communion under both kinds at Masses on Sundays and holy days.

The Vatican congregation, he said, has said that such authorization requires approval from the Holy See, although the published rules make no mention of such a requirement.

The rule at issue was first published by the congregation in an instruction dated June 29, 1970. In 1975 it was incorporated into paragraph 242 of the second official edition of the 1970 General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

After listing 14 cases in which Ordinaries (heads of dioceses) anywhere in the world can at their own discretion permit reception of Communion under both kinds, paragraph 242 states:

"Further, the conferences of bishops have the power to decide to what extent and under what considerations and conditions Ordinaries may allow Communion under both kinds in other instances that are of special significance in the spiritual life of any community or group of the faithful."

Father Krisman pointed out that certain other liturgical norms, such as the Holy See's rules governing the adoption of liturgical texts by bishops' conferences or permission for the practice of receiving Communion in the hand, explicitly require each bishops' conference to receive confirmation from the

Holy See before it can put such texts or rules into practice.

But in this case "the law itself gives the faculty to the conference to do this without requiring confirmation from the Holy See," he said.

In November 1970, following the instruction issued on June 29 of that year, the NCCB adopted five extensions of permission for reception of Communion under both kinds beyond the 14 listed by the Vatican.

Among these were permission for the practice at funeral Masses and at weekday Masses in general. The bishops also extended the permission to receive Communion under both kinds to all participants at any Mass on the Vatican list -- in several of the cases listed, the Vatican rules specified only certain participants to whom the practice was allowed.

"There was no question at all with the 1970 decision (by the NCCB)," said Father Krisman. "It was not sent to the Holy See for confirmation... Rome certainly was made aware of the decision, but it did not say, 'Hey, you have to send the vote over for confirmation.'"

In 1970 the bishops also considered extending permission for Masses on Sundays and holy days, but they voted it down. That extension was brought to a vote again in November 1978, and this time the bishops approved it. As with the 1970 extensions, "again they did not send it over (to Rome) for confirmation," Father Krisman said.

He said that the "first hint" the NCCB received of Vatican disapproval of the 1978 action came in February 1980, when "in informal communications the Holy See expressed the view that confirmation on this vote was required."

Father Krisman declined to make copies of the private correspondence available. But he responded to an inqui-

ry about the origin of the Holy See's concern, by saying that some Catholics upset at the practice had written directly to the Vatican congregation and had received private replies.

The Holy See received complaints about irreverence occurring because of the practice, and it was only then that it raised the question of the authority of the bishops' conference to have introduced the practice without Vatican confirmation, he said.

Father Krisman did not address the issue of whether there have been instances in which distribution of Communion under both kinds in the United States has been an occasion of irreverence. If such instances occur, he said, they should be brought to the attention of the local bishop, who is responsible for preventing liturgical abuses within his diocese.

He noted that the 1978 motion allowing Communion under both kinds at Masses on Sundays and holy days specifically said that the permission could be granted "if, in the judgment of the Ordinary, Communion may be given in an orderly and reverent manner."

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## Holy Smoke!

Vatican City (NC) -- The Diocese of Urgel in Spain may be on its way to becoming the world's first smoke-free diocese.

In a recent letter to local priests, Bishop Juan Marti Alanis of Urgel banned smoking at all diocesan meetings, according to a Vatican radio report July 20.

The 54-year-old bishop, who has headed the Spanish diocese since 1971, also told priests who smoke to quit, for their own health and as an encouragement to other smokers.

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