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Pope: Humanae Vitae Applies to All

Vatican City (NC) — Pope John Paul II said July 18 that the church's teaching on marriage and sexuality is valid for all people.

"The rule of the encyclical 'Humanae Vitae' (Of Human Life) regards all people, because it is a rule of the natural law and is based on agreement with human reason," the pope told an estimated 10,000 people in St. Peter's Square. "It respects the laws inscribed in the very being of man and woman," he said.

At the end of a weekly audience talk on Pope Paul VI's encyclical, which spells out the church's teaching against artificial birth control, the pope asked all theologians to reread and seek a better understanding of the document.

It was the second in a series of about 12 general audiences that Pope John Paul said will be devoted to the 1968 encyclical.

The pope again stressed a key point of the encyclical, that the conjugal act must be "open to the transmission of life." He said that doctrine belongs to "the natural law."

The pope noted Pope Paul's statement that "men and women of our time are particularly capable of understanding the deeply reasonable and human character of this fundamental principle."

Pope John Paul said that because the moral norm expressed in Humanae Vitae is bound to moral values, "it follows that the acts that conform to the norm are morally correct, and acts contrary are intrinsically illicit."

The church teaches this norm, he added, even though it is not literally expressed in Holy Scripture. "It does so in the conviction that the interpretation of the precepts of the natural law belong to the competence of the magisterium (church teaching authority)," the pope said. The norm also corresponds to biblical teachings taken as a whole, he said.

While church teaching on birth control is valid for all men and women, the pope said, it particularly concerns Catholics because it is based on the sacramental nature of marriage and the theology of human love.

"These are all reasons why every believer, and in particular every theologian, should reread and understand more deeply the moral doctrine of the encyclical in this complete context," the pope said.

The pope has asked for a theologian to be available to brief journalists after each weekly audience dedicated to Humanae Vitae, said Msgr. Carlo Caffarra, president of the Pontifical Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family, and a member of the Vatican's International Theological Commission.

Msgr. Caffarra has briefed reporters after the two audiences thus far in the series on the encyclical.

Following the July 18 audience, Msgr. Caffarra was asked why theologians were assigned to explain papal talks on birth control, but not on other issues.

He said it might be "the beginning of a tradition, that when doctrinal texts of the church are being discussed, there be a theologian present."

Rochester Sisters Join with Bishops In Boston Parley

Boston — Sister Elizabeth Anne LeValley, SSJ, superior general of the Rochester Sisters of St. Joseph, and Sister Muriel Curran, SSND, diocesan vicar for religious, were among 100 participants at a conference for bishops and leaders of men and women religious last month at Boston College.

The theme of the event was "In the Service of the Church," and drew attendants from all parts of the country.

In the opening session, Father James Hennessey, SJ, highlighted two points around which the conference was designed: a sense of community through common sharing; a working together to foster communications. Father Hennessey is author of "American Catholics."

Some of the topics addressed during the conference were: the historical perspective of religious life

from early Christian times to the 20th century; the history of religious life in the United States, the theology of "Essential Elements." The last is a document of guidelines for religious recently received by the U.S. bishops from the Vatican.

Sister Maria Augusta Neal, SND, a sociologist, spoke on her extensive research of changes and renewal in women religious congregations over the past 20 years. The results of her study are available in a recently published book: "Sisters in Transition."

Father Howard Gray, SJ, a theologian, and Sister Elizabeth McDonough, OP, a canon lawyer, presented directions and shapes religious life might take in the future.

Sister Elizabeth stressed that "good law sets the foundation for evolution and

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Nicaraguan Jesuit Told: Reject Post

Rome (NC) — The Jesuit superior general has ordered Father Fernando Cardenal, a Nicaraguan Jesuit, to decline a position as Nicaragua's minister of education, Vatican Radio reported July 16.

Superior General Father Peter Hans Kolvenbach warned Father Cardenal that taking the job would be incompatible with his role as a priest, reported Vatican Radio, which is run by Jesuits.

Father Kolvenbach also called the Jesuit's assistant provincial for Central America, Father Juan Ochagavia, to Rome for consultation about the situation in Nicaragua, particularly concerning Jesuits who have publicly criticized the Nicaraguan bishops, according to the radio report.

Father Cardenal has been director of the Sandinista Youth Movement and an

adviser on a government literacy campaign. He is the brother of Father Ernesto Cardenal, a diocesan priest who is Nicaragua's minister of culture.

The brothers have been criticized by Nicaragua's archbishops for their roles in the Sandinista government. In 1981, the Cardenals and other priests in government positions agreed with the bishops to suspend exercise of their priestly roles while holding office.

The bishops in 1979 gave priests permission to temporarily take government positions until "the exceptional circumstances" following the Nicaraguan revolution were overcome and civilians could be found for the jobs.

The new Code of Canon Law, which took effect November, bars clerics from assuming public office when it involves exercising civil powers.



Photos by Terrance J. Brennan

Mt. Carmel Parishioner Honored

Pedro Nunez, above, holds high the award presented to him by Brother Luis Ruberte, director of the Spanish Apostolate, after Mass Sunday night at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Nunez was feted for his contributions over the years to the Woodward Street parish, celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. The evening Mass, attended by more than 500, was also the culmination of Santa Mision in Rochester, a program that began three weeks earlier promoting "working for a world more unified." Featured speaker during this mission was Brother Rocabel Chamorro, right, who gave the homily Sunday.

