

CANFP NEWS is edited and published quarterly by the California Association of Natural Family Planning.  
Produced by: High Rise Designs 831-402-6227 webmaster@canfp.org www.highrisedesigns.com

### CANFP NEWS

is edited and published by the California Association of Natural Family Planning.

To receive future editions become a CANFP member!

E-mail us  
[info@canfp.org](mailto:info@canfp.org)  
or call toll-free  
1-877-33-CANFP

Annual dues:  
\$30 Individual/Family  
\$50 Professional/Clergy  
\$100 Organization/Parish

Join online at  
[www.canfp.org](http://www.canfp.org)  
or

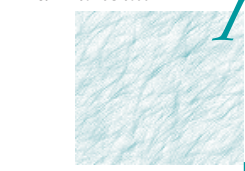
Make check payable to  
CANFP, and send to  
1217 Tyler Street,  
Salinas, CA 93906



Summer 2003

## Why Contraception Produces More - Not Fewer - Abortions

Ed Hurlbutt



In his wonderful encyclical *The Gospel of Life*, Pope John Paul II makes a telling point on the connection between contraception and abortion, one that even many pro-lifers fail to recognize. It is frequently asserted that contraception, if made safe and available to all, is the most effective remedy against abortion," the Pope writes. "The Catholic Church is then accused of actually promoting abortion, because she obstinately continues to teach the moral unlawfulness of contraception. When looked at carefully," the Pope insists, however, "this objection is clearly unfounded."

Newly popular long-term hormonal contraceptives, like Depo-Provera and Norplant, function in this manner as well, damaging the original human environment in which the already-conceived child is trying to live.

Thus the child dies without the mother's body even being signaled that she has conceived.

### Hedonistic Life Style

Pope John Paul also highlights the moral/behavioral connection between contraception and abortion.

"It is true," he writes with pastoral solicitude, "that in many cases contraception and even abortion are practiced under the pressure of real-life difficulties, which can nonetheless never exonerate from striving to observe God's law fully. Still, in very many other instances, such practices are rooted in a hedonistic mentality unwilling to accept responsibility in matters of sexuality...." This results in "a self-centered concept of freedom that regards procreation as an obstacle to personal fulfillment."

Even the contraceptive pill, in the so-called "low dosage" form universally used today, results in a micro-abortion perhaps 10% of the time, according to experts. Most of the time the pill does prevent fertilization, but because of the "low dose" of hormones used (meant to lessen risks to the woman's health) "breakthrough ovulation" - followed by fertilization - occurs about 10% of the time. Thus a "back up" mechanism is included which causes the lining of the womb to become impervious to the embryo's effort to attach there.

In fact, John Paul continues, "despite their differences of nature and moral gravity, contraception and abortion are often closely connected, as fruits of the same tree." Why is that?

**Inside This Issue:**

- Director's Desk 2
- Ask the Expert 3
- Calling All Prayers 3
- No Struggle Will Go Unrewarded 4
- Ninguna Lucha Ira Sin Su Premio 5
- Conference Update 6
- Clergy Corner 7

*Celebrating  
35th  
Anniversary  
of  
Humanae  
Vitae  
July 25th*

*Some "Birth Control" Is Abortion*  
Biologically speaking, some types of contraception are actually forms of very early abortion, as the Pope points out. The Intrauterine Device (IUD), for example, does not prevent conception. It works by physically irritating the lining of the womb to make it inhospitable to a newly conceived, developing embryo trying to attach there. Unable to implant into its first, crucial environment, the child is soon dead.

### TO CONTACT CANFP:

[www.canfp.org](http://www.canfp.org)  
**Executive Office**  
1217 Tyler St.  
Salinas, CA 93906  
**E-Mail**  
[info@canfp.org](mailto:info@canfp.org)  
**Phone**  
831-443-3746  
(voice & fax)  
1-877-33-CANFP  
(toll free)

"The life which could result from sexual encounter thus becomes an enemy to be avoided at all costs," the Pope concludes, "and abortion becomes the only possible decisive response to failed contraception."

Contraception, in other words, facilitates, and thus greatly increases, casual sexual activity: activity precisely among those least likely to use contraceptives as required and most likely to

*Contraception cont. on p. 6*

# CANFP NEWS

1217 Tyler St. • Salinas, CA 93906

## Director's Desk

Sheila St. John, Executive Director CANFP

**E**ating ice cream with some of my children and grandchildren last month on vacation, hundreds of miles from home, I looked up to see familiar faces at the next table: NFP clients from home, also on vacation. I was commenting later to my son Dylan that every time I have vacationed at Lake Tahoe, I see someone I know, and in fact it always seems to be someone I know through Natural Family Planning! What a small world!

Partake

of

the

Blessings

Dylan, our CANFP webmaster, and his wife Shahera, our CANFP conference registrar, did not miss a beat before responding in unison, "Perhaps that is the only kind of people you know".

I brushed aside the implication that my life, personal and professional, revolves around my passion for sharing NFP (SO????) and dwelled a bit on just how different it was when I was around their age.

I was 26 and expecting my 4<sup>th</sup> child when I began training to become an NFP teacher. Up until entering that program, I don't think I could find among my friends or acquaintances one other couple who used Natural Family Planning.

That quickly changed once I started teaching NFP, for I soon found that NFP colleagues and clients fast become NFP friends! Like a sponge, I soaked up the support I received from frequent contact with NFP couples.

When CANFP was born, 10 years later, I saw my circle of NFP friends expand. Now, as I pass city signs in travels throughout the state, I think of the CANFP members and supporters—my NFP friends—who live there. And when I pass a city limits sign that I do not associate with a CANFP member, I think hmmm, we need to get an NFP Provider for this town!

Being involved in NFP, and CANFP, is a lot of work. Some say it is a thankless job, and certainly there are few material rewards. No stock options, and-- unless one works in one of the few hospital based programs--no health benefits or retirement plan. In fact, for many, no salary—and the injustice of THAT is substance for another article!

But without rewards? Hardly!

Among the many blessings of being involved in NFP are the people we meet, and come to call friend. The greatest joy of working with CANFP is being part of the NFP community around the state: clergy and



Sheila St. John

religious; teachers; doctors and nurses; advocates and users. And a special joy for me—the exceptional people whom I have been privileged to work alongside in the past decade on the CANFP board!

If you are a priest or minister who sometimes feels isolated in seeing the urgency of this issue, or a physician who can relate to the story of Dr. Meraz on page four of this edition, or a teacher craving to share experiences with other NFP teachers, or an NFP couple or advocate seeking fellowship—don't go it alone! You have come to the right place! Discover the blessings of being part of the CANFP community through active membership in CANFP, and consider giving of your time and talent as a CANFP volunteer.

I can say with all sincerity that I have received much more than I have given through my involvement in CANFP. I invite you to partake of the blessings!

### Volunteer Opportunities

#### E-Script Coordinator

Build and track participation in the e-script program which has enormous potential as a funding resource for CANFP

#### Conference Planning Committees

Exhibit	Program and Brochure	Funding
Hospitality	Session Monitor	Environment
Site Host	Set Up / Breakdown	Promotion
Audiotaping	Registration Packets	Audiovisual

## Clergy Corner



Fr. John Warburton, OSJ, a priest for 23 years in the Oblates of St. Joseph, is in charge of the Seminary House of Studies in Oxnard and helps with services at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Bakersfield.

### Prayer for Marriage and Family

Triune Lord of Life and Love,  
Bless husbands and wives with the graces  
To be life-giving lovers and life-loving givers.  
As generous and responsible parents,  
Who respect children as the most excellent fruit of marriage,  
May every marital embrace  
Be free, total, faithful and open to new life.  
May the dark scourge of self-centered anxiety,  
Contraception, sterilization, abortion,  
And every other sin against the sacred meaning of human sexuality,  
Be vanquished by your healing Mercy,  
Coupled with the graces to faithfully live  
The glorious beauty of your purpose for marriage and family,  
In the image of the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph,  
And in your own Image: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.



### Una Oración Para Matrimonios y Familias

Trinidad Divina, Señor de Vida y de Amor,  
Bendice a los esposos con Tu gracia  
Para que sean amantes que den vida y que den vida amorosamente.  
Como padres generosos y responsables  
Que respeten a sus hijos como los frutos más preciosos de su matrimonio,  
Que cada abrazo matrimonial  
Sea libre, total, fiel y abierto a nueva vida.  
Que la mortificación negra de la ansiedad egoísta,  
La contracepción, la esterilización, el aborto,  
Y cualquier otro pecado en contra del propósito sagrado de la sexualidad humana,  
Desaparezca con Tu Misericordia sanadora,  
Junto a la gracia de vivir fielmente  
La gloriosa belleza de Tu designio para el matrimonio y la familia  
A la imagen de la Sagrada Familia, Jesús, María y José,  
Y en Tu imagen Divina: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. Amen.

Reprinted from *Guardian of the Redeemer Magazine* with permission of the *Oblates of St. Joseph* Cobbled together by Fr. John Warburton, OSJ after a brainstorming session with Tom and Michele Spencer and with some key phrases borrowed from Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*, Kimberly Hahn's book, *Life Giving Love* and Christopher West's book, *Good News About Sex and Marriage*.  
*Two sided English / Spanish prayer cards available from CANFP upon request. Donations appreciated.*

## Contraception continued

Catholics

need

make

no

apology

about any “unplanned” child who is conceived. Studies by contraceptive manufacturers and others show, indeed, that while all contraceptive methods fail to some degree, “contraceptive failure” is actually overwhelmingly “user failure:” a failure to use the methods precisely by careless and irresponsible individuals, who are also those most likely to abort an “unwanted” child. Not only that, but even when successfully used by married couples, contraception can result in an “anti-child” mentality that justifies abortion in the minds of the unmarried and irresponsible.

### Not The First To Notice

Even many pro-abortionists have long acknowledged this connection.

Dr. Malcom Potts, former Medical Director for International Planned Parenthood Federation, wrote in 1979 that “As people turn to

contraception, there will be a rise, not a fall in the abortion rate.” The world’s leading expert on abortion statistics, Dr. Christopher Tietze, has subsequently confirmed Potts’ prediction in numerous studies. He shows that “women who have practiced contraception are more likely to have had abortions than those who have not practiced contraception...” Indeed, says Tietze, contracepting women are highly likely to have repeat – second or third — abortions. “Within ten years, 20 to 50 per cent of pill users, and a substantial majority of users of other methods may be expected to have at least one repeat abortion.”

Carol Everett, former owner of four Dallas abortion clinics but now pro-life, admits that clinic owners deliberately exploit this connection in order to increase profits. “I knew when I went into the schools to talk,” she says, “that every girl I could get on

the pill was good for at least three abortions by the time she was 21.”

Finally, the United States Supreme Court even relied on this connection to justify upholding its infamous 1973 Roe Vs. Wade decision in a 1992 federal case known as Planned Parenthood vs. Casey. “(F)or two decades,” the Court wrote, “people have organized their intimate relationships ... in reliance on the availability of abortion in the event that contraception should fail.”

### No Need To Apologize

Catholics, then, need make no apology to accusations that the Church’s teaching against contraception actually causes more abortions. The biological, sociological, legal, and moral evidence shows just the opposite.



**Ed Hurlbutt,**  
President, Right to Life  
of Central California

## Rewards cont.

overcome and many more persons we need to recruit to serve as instructors.

As I begin my fourth year as a Family Practice doctor, I hope and pray I can do God’s will. Though I’ll be starting in an NFP-only practice, I know I will continue to confront many pro-life struggles in my career. I also know the persecutions will only continue. As a Missionary of Charity sister once told me, however, no struggle will go unrewarded.

**NFP  
For The  
Health Of It!**

**11<sup>th</sup> Annual  
CANFP  
Conference**

**March 27<sup>th</sup>  
2004**

**Southern  
California**

## Continuacion de Premio

metodo de planificacion familiar espiritual, sino tambien como el metodo eficaz para espaciar y concebir bebes que es. Mientras tanto, hay muchas misconcepciones que necesitamos sobrepasar y necesitamos de muchas mas personas que sirvan como instructores.

Mientras yo empiezo mi cuarto año como un doctor de Practica Familiar, espero y pido a Dios que pueda hacer su voluntad. Aunque empezare en una practica donde solo se usa NFP, yo se que continuare enfrentandome con muchas luchas de pro-vida en mi carrera. Tambien se que las persecuciones solo continuaran. Sinembargo, como me dijo una hermana Missionera de la Caridad una vez, ninguna lucha ira sin su premio.

*El Dr. Antonio Meraz y su esposa, Rocio, son padres de dos ninios. Esperan su tercer bebe en 2004. El Dr. Meraz estara trabajando en una clinica familiar de NFP en Kissimmee, FL empezando en septiembre del 2003*

## Ask the Expert

Ask The Expert questions can be submitted through our web site, sent to the CANFP office, or emailed to [experts@canfp.org](mailto:experts@canfp.org)



### Question

My husband and I have been practicing NFP for the past 9 years. When my period returned after the birth of our fourth child two years ago, I started experiencing some very heavy bleeding during my periods. The heavy bleeding is usually accompanied with large blood clots. My physician suggested that I take the birth control pill to regulate the flow. I am 36 years old and my periods have always come regularly. Is there some way to take the pill and still avoid the possibility of a “micro-abortion?” What would you suggest that I do?



**Dr. Mary  
Davenport**

### Answer

There are several possibilities as to why your periods may be heavier after your fourth child. One reason is chronic endometritis, an inflammation of the uterus sometimes occurring after birth. Although two years has passed, occasionally this condition can persist. It can be diagnosed with a biopsy of the uterus, or

sometimes “empirically” treated with a course of antibiotics such as doxycycline for ten days or so. In some women improvement is dramatic. Another possibility is a fibroid, polyp, or other anatomical condition of the uterus. An ultrasound or biopsy might reveal a condition such as this. However, the most likely cause, especially if you are over 35 and your doctor wanted to try birth control pills, is a minor hormonal problem in which progesterone is deficient. This can be treated by using progesterone in the luteal phase, the last half of the cycle. The best therapy, if you are using NFP, is to use progesterone vaginal capsules in a fairly high dose (600 mg), three days after the peak to twelve days after the peak, or from cycle day 18-27. These capsules are available by prescription from Kubat pharmacy in Omaha (1-800-782-9988) and are not expensive. They are much less messy than progesterone vaginal suppositories. Alternatively,

Crinone, a vaginal gel of natural progesterone can be used during the same time period, but may interfere with your mucus readings. If the vaginal preparations work, you could try decreasing the dose to 400 mg. and eventually switching to oral micronized progesterone. You could also try oral micronized progesterone right away, but the vaginal preparations will have a stronger and more reliable effect on the uterine lining.

I do not know of any way to take oral contraceptives and avoid the abortifacient effect, other than abstinence. Some have suggested abstaining on “fertile mucus days”, but this has never been studied. The pill’s effect on the mucus will distort your perception of the potentially fertile days of breakthrough ovulation and you will not know when they are occurring. Cooperative progesterone therapy in the forms mentioned above is an excellent alternative to birth control pills for this problem.

*Response by Dr. Mary Davenport, an Obstetrician-Gynecologist and NFP Medical Consultant in private practice in El Sobrante, California. A graduate of Tufts University School of Medicine, Dr. Davenport completed her residency at the University of California, San Diego, is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and on the Advisory Board of CANFP.*

## Calling All Prayers

If you are reading this now, you are no doubt a CANFP supporter. One of the ways you can support CANFP is by putting your prayers to work together with our prayer team. Our team was assembled to focus our prayers on the specific needs and blessings of CANFP.

We regularly give thanks for the gift of CANFP as well as pray for help regarding the challenges encountered in running such an organization. If you would like to sign up to be part of our team, or if you have any questions, please contact Tara Lutman Agacayak by email at [Tara\\_Lutman@yahoo.com](mailto:Tara_Lutman@yahoo.com).

**Thank you and God Bless!**

# No Struggle Will Go Unrewarded

Antonio Meraz, MD

**T**hough born and raised Catholic, I did not begin to understand the teachings of the Church until my college years. Of course, one of the more difficult teachings of my faith concerned the illicitness of artificial birth control, as explained in the encyclical *Humane Vitae* and on numerous occasions by Pope John Paul II.

*I hope*

*and*

*pray I*

*can do*

*God's*

*will*

As my understanding and acceptance of my faith grew, however, I realized I had a choice to make: Would I be completely faithful to the Church or not? In other words, would I adhere to the "strict" guidelines of the Church concerning family planning? In the end, the choice was clear, and natural family planning (NFP) became part of the relationship between God, my wife, and myself.

After graduation, I entered medical school. As I trained to become a physician, I continued to adhere to the Church's teachings. Fortunately, medical school did not require me to prescribe contraceptives (much less any medications). Indeed, the only resistance I met was when I failed to answer test questions regarding abortion counseling.

When it came time to do my Family Practice residency, however, things were different since I now had to prescribe medication. I told my program director I could not in good conscience prescribe artificial birth control, much less recommend it. He was

understanding and set a policy where I would offer my female patients all options available to them. Then, if a woman chose contraception, another physician would write the prescription.

It wasn't long before my principles aroused various misunderstandings. Some thought I wanted to get all my female patients pregnant. Others thought I was promoting the rhythm method. Still others thought I shouldn't be encouraging abstinence as an option "since it didn't work anyway." After all, they were going to have sex anyway, right? I found out about these rumors, misconceptions, and objections through my advisor, who admired my perseverance, even though he didn't agree with it.

Another challenge I faced was offering NFP as an option to a Spanish-speaking population in a community where there were no Spanish-speaking NFP instructors. Cumulatively, these little trials became some of the biggest crosses of my career.

I figured once I had graduated from my residency program, the criticisms would eventually dissipate. I soon discovered I was mistaken. I found my views made applying for a post-residency job extremely difficult. Some employers would not call me back. Others were simply reluctant to consider me as a candidate. Once again the "rhythm method" bugaboo reared its ugly head. Most potential employers told me



*Antonio Meraz, M.D. and his wife, Rocio, are parents of two children and anticipating the arrival of their third in 2004. Dr. Meraz will be joining an NFP only Family Practice Clinic in Kissimmee Florida in September 2003.*

they thought I would effectively deny women their rights.

In the end, through much prayer and patience, I found work at a practice that respected my refusal to prescribe artificial birth control. My current position also offers me the ability for my wife and I to become an NFP instructor and consultant, respectively, fulfilling a fervent desire of ours.

As I carry out my duties, my constant prayer is that God's will be done. Of course, I cannot be responsible for the actions of others, whether they choose to persecute something they don't understand or knowingly choose contraception as something "good." I can only continue praying that I may set an example for my patients and my peers, especially my fellow Catholic physicians.

I hope and pray that NFP eventually becomes widely accepted, not only as a spiritually-based method of planning a family, but as the reliable method of spacing and conceiving children that it is. In the meantime, there are many misconceptions we need to

*Rewards cont. on p. 6*

# Ninguna Lucha Ira Sin Su Premio

Antonio Meraz, MD

**A**unque nacido y criado Catolico, no empecé a entender las enseñanzas de la Iglesia hasta mis años universitarios. Por supuesto, una de las enseñanzas más difíciles de mi fe consistió en el uso ilícito de los anticonceptivos artificiales, como explicado en el encíclico *Humane Vitae* y en numerosas ocasiones por el Papa Juan Pablo II.

*Espero y*

*pidó a*

*Dios que*

*pueda*

*hacer su*

*voluntad*

Sin embargo, mientras que el entendimiento y la aceptación de mi fe crecieron, me di cuenta que tenía que tomar una decisión. Sería yo completamente fiel a la Iglesia o no? En otras palabras, ¿me adheriría a las guías "estrictas" de la Iglesia en cuanto a planificación familiar? Al final, la decisión fue clara, y La Planificación Natural de la Familia (NFP) formó parte de la relación entre Dios, mi esposa, y yo.

Después de graduarme, entre a la escuela de medicina. Mientras que me entrenaba para ser un médico, continúe adhiriéndome a las enseñanzas de la Iglesia. Afortunadamente, la escuela de medicina no requería que yo prescribiera anticonceptivos (mucho menos otros medicamentos). En realidad, la única resistencia que encontré fue cuando no contesté las preguntas sobre la consejería de abortos en los exámenes.

Cuando llegó el tiempo de hacer mi residencia en Práctica Familiar, sin embargo, las cosas fueron diferentes puesto que ahora yo tenía que prescribir medicamentos. Le dije al director

de mi programa que no podía, en buena conciencia, prescribir anticonceptivos artificiales, mucho menos recomendarlos. El fue comprensivo y puso en pie una póliza en la cual yo ofrecería a mis pacientes todas las opciones. Después, si una mujer escogiera anticonceptivos, otro doctor escribiría la prescripción.

No paso mucho tiempo antes de que salieran a la luz varios malentendidos en cuanto a mis principios. Algunos pensaban que yo quería que todas mis pacientes estuvieran embarazadas. Otros pensaban que estaba promoviendo el método del ritmo. Aun otros pensaban que yo no debería de animar a mis pacientes a usar la abstinencia como una opción "porque de todas maneras, no funcionaba." Después de todo, ellas de todas maneras iban a tener relaciones, ¿verdad? Me di cuenta de los rumores, mal interpretaciones, y objeciones a través de mi consejero, quien admiraba mi perseverancia, aunque no estaba de acuerdo con mis principios.

Otro de los retos que tuve que encarar fue ofrecer NFP como una opción a una población que habla español, en una comunidad donde no hay instructores de NFP que hablen español. Adjuntas estas pequeñas pruebas fueron algunas de las cruces más grandes de mi carrera.

Pense que ya que me graduara de mi programa de residencia, las críticas eventualmente

desaparecerían. Pronto me di cuenta que estaba en un error. Encontré que fue muy difícil aplicar para un trabajo después de mi residencia, por mis principios. Algunos empleadores no regresaban mis llamadas. Otros simplemente reusaban a considerarme como un candidato. Una vez más el "método del ritmo" asomó su cabeza. La mayoría de los empleadores potenciales me dijeron que pensaban que yo les negaría a las mujeres sus derechos.

Al final, a través de mucha oración y paciencia, encontré trabajo en una práctica que respetó mi rechazo a prescribir anticonceptivos. Mi posición también me ofrece la habilidad para que mi esposa y yo nos entremos como instructor y consultante de NFP, respectivamente, realizando uno de nuestros fervientes deseos.

Mientras que cumplo con mi trabajo, mi oración constante es que se haga la voluntad de Dios. Por supuesto, no puedo ser responsable por las acciones de otros, ya sea que decidan perseguir algo que no entienden, o sabiendo escogían anticonceptivos artificiales como algo "bueno." Solo puedo continuar orando que yo pueda ser un ejemplo para mis pacientes y mis colegas, especialmente mis compañeros doctores católicos.

Yo espero y rezo que NFP eventualmente sea ampliamente aceptado, no solo como un

*Continuación de Premio en la pg.6*