

The Domestic Church

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The Meaning of Work

A compelling and foundational piece on the meaning of work and the related topic of property and possessions is Working Your Way into Heaven by Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński (Sophia Institute Press, 1998). Originally written in 1946 and first translated into English in 1960, this thoroughly Catholic view of work and related topics was largely eclipsed in the latter 20th century throughout the third world by liberation theology. Had the word gotten out sooner, this view could have offered much to the global debate. As it turned out, the Cardinal's theological treatise on work was a driving force behind the *Solidarity* movement in Poland.

Of the Cardinal's work, Polish President Lech Walesa wrote in 1995, "In the years before *Solidarity* appeared on the scene, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, the spiritual leader of Poland showed us in his pastoral teaching the noble character of work and taught us how to understand our dignity as workers. Then, when we launched our struggle against Communism, his fatherly wisdom inspired us and gave us strength to overcome the great sufferings we endured. Today his teachings continue to guide us and enrich our daily efforts to build a strong and just society." (Preface to Working Your Way Into Heaven)

Written in a style similar to that of another famous writer from the Polish school, Karol Wojtyła; Cardinal Wyszyński begins with the study of a pertinent text in Holy Scripture. He also considers popular culture as he gives a full theological analysis. In fact, it appears that, when it comes to work the Cardinal may have been the teacher and Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II the student; the basis for *Laborem Exercens* was probably inspired by him.

Christ's parable of the laborers in the Gospel of Matthew 20:1-7, according to Cardinal Wyszyński "illuminates the Catholic view" of work. In it, we find that the householder is quite concerned that everyone should work, regardless of his own need of their employ. Further, for those "who do not know how to organize their work, or who have no chance to work, or no will for it": the householder hires, organizes and encourages the labor. Here is a scriptural answer to the problem of unemployment.

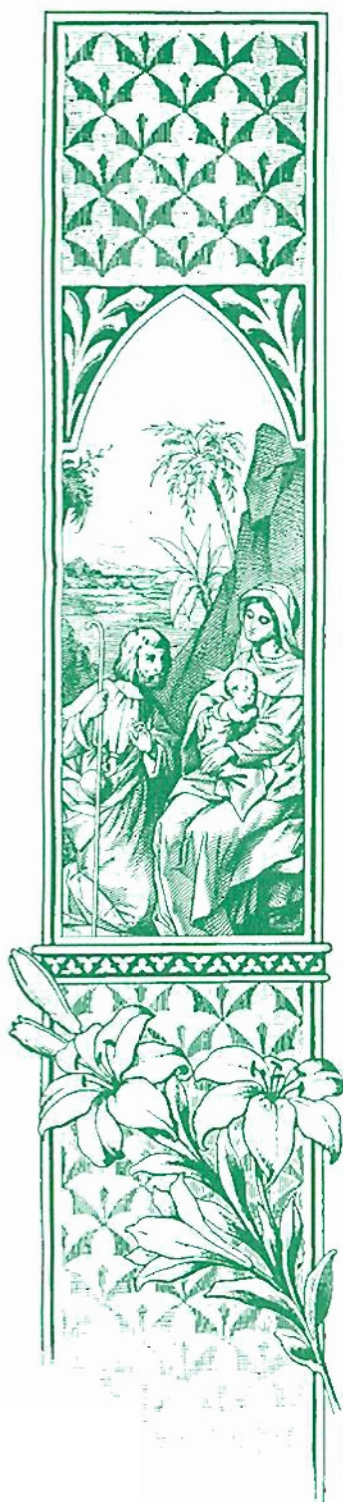
The Catholic view looks to the need. Those who have the means of labor or capital are obligated to give appropriately to the needy. Through almsgiving, the poor eat from the work of our hands. (Working, p.45) Indeed, through the Divine Providence of the heavenly Father, "everyone is continually receiving help, both from those close at hand and from those far off. Man benefits by material goods as much as by the moral, cultural, and national legacy created by whole generations of people of whom he may never have heard..." (Working, p.36)

As to the spiritual meaning of work, man's work is an extension of God's work in creation. Work makes it possible for man to sustain life, but it also allows each person to fully develop his or her personality. It is the way for him to develop all of his spiritual gifts. (Working, p.26) "Work...is not a punishment but a trust shown in man" by God. (Working, p.24)

The Catholic view acknowledges the value of contemplative work, spiritual or mental. Also, prayer in the midst of any task, even the most menial and the most troublesome reminds us that without God we can do nothing. "God is the prime mover of every intention and act." (Working, p.74) Further, all spiritual powers involved in our work are set in order by prayer. Prayer becomes a remedy for weaknesses of will and emotion as they emerge in our work.

We at *The Domestic Church* offer this brief sample of Cardinal Wyszyński's work and inside, that of the Holy Father and of our Catechism, in hopes that the Catholic view of work presented might provide a guiding light to all people considering the all-important topics of work and the economy in the 21st century. We know that every household is touched and much affected by this topic.

Ruth Andreas
Editor



Family Feature

Work and the Family

by Jay Wonacott

Jay Wonacott has directed the Marriage and Family Life Office of the Archdiocese of Portland since 1998. Jay holds a Master of Theological Studies degree from the John Paul II Institute for Studies in Marriage and Family in Washington D.C. He is married to Michelle and has two daughters: Mary and Cathleen. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

The ongoing economic recession and Enron debacle have turned our attention to issues of moral justice in the workplace. Those with formed consciences may ask: Is it just for thousands of workers to lose their retirement money because a company gambles with its portfolio and makes bad deals? Or is it just for workers to be laid off as easily as they are when the economy goes south? While each of us may or may not be directly affected by the downturn in the economy and the fall of Enron, it does create an opportunity to reflect on God's intention for human work, and how we, particularly as Catholics need to exercise fairness, justice and responsibility in the workplace.

What does our faith say about the nature of human work? What can I do to renew my mind regarding the dignity of human work, and how can I be an example to others in the workplace? Yes, there is something spiritual about work. My comments derive from the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Pope John Paul's teaching in *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work). Quoting the Second Vatican Council, the Catechism teaches that "economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community." (2426). Of course, the value of human work is revealed to us in Scripture: Genesis, chapter one wherein God gives the commandment for man to subdue the

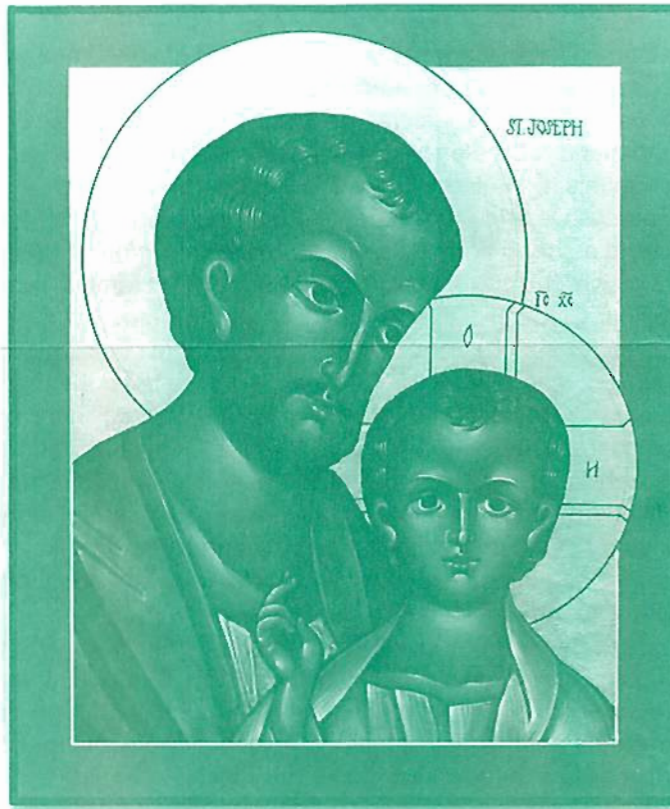
earth. In receiving this commandment, man is to respond to God's creation by participating in the great "co-creation", the cooperation with our Creator in conceiving and raising children--"Be fruitful and multiply" (God doesn't only mean crops in the field here). However, it is

possible to found a family, since the family requires the means of subsistence which man normally gains through work." (*Laborem Exercens* 10).

In this way, work is a means to an end, but the Church also teaches us that work is to be ordered to perfecting the dignity of the human person. It is here that the Holy Father John Paul teaches us about the "subjective" dimension of human work. Whereas the "objective" dimension of work describes the development of methods and technologies through the centuries to perfect the "subduing of the earth", the subjective dimension of work taps the ethical considerations of work. In the teaching of Pope John Paul "man is the proper subject of work: As a person works, he performs various actions belonging to the work process; independent of the objective content, these actions must all serve to realize his humanity; to fulfill the calling to be a person that is his by reason of his very humanity" (*Laborem Exercens* 6).

Further on in the text, he sums it up by stating, "...in the first place work is 'for man' and not man 'for work.'" In short, the so-called "bottom line" for the Church is not the profit margin but the dignity of the human person.

When one reads the social encyclicals of the Church, one must remember that the Church presents principles that can challenge our American economic mindset. While the Church was critical of Marxist socialistic systems that undermine



implied that the other "work", the work of the land is necessary for one to sustain the "greater" work of raising a family. Families know the tension that the "greater" and "lesser" work can cause in family life. Any authentic family knows the struggle of keeping the "greater" work of family life in focus. After all, we work so that we might cultivate the lives of our families. "Work constitutes a foundation for the formation of family life...work is a condition for making it

the dignity of the human person, the capitalistic systems often undergo similar criticisms for materialism and consumerism, which also dehumanize people. While the Church recognized the freedom that people benefit from in democratic systems, the Church is also cognizant of the trends toward seeing the whole of reality through a materialistic lens. In this way, the Church is aware that the worker is not respected as a human person, but rather becomes part of a larger mechanized worldview that forgets that work is for man and not the opposite.

One example of the Church addressing a particular issue in its varied dimensions is the issue of the just wage. The Church challenges us to consider our relationship to our employer and vice versa. There is no more important way of securing a just relationship between the worker and the employer than that constituted by remuneration for work" (*Laborem Exercens* 19). One of the primary principles of the social order is the common use of goods. Pope John Paul points out in his teaching that remuneration for work is a practical means whereby the vast majority of people can have access to those goods, which are intended for common use. "The just wage is a concrete means of *verifying the justice* of the whole socioeconomic system and, in any case, of checking that it is functioning justly" (*Laborem Exercens* 19; emphases are the Pope's). Another check on the justice of a wage is to see if it suffices to establish and maintain a family and provide for its future security. The family wage is defined as a single salary given to the head of a family for work. This is sufficient for the

needs of the family without the other spouse having to take on gainful employment outside of the home.

Many of us know families who are

mothers face as they struggle to balance the spheres of work and home. We also must not forget the need for working fathers to contribute in substantial ways to the home environment. The Church respects the "nature" of woman by defending those women who believe that children need the devotion and love of a full time mother. What greater unpaid and under-respected work exists than that of a mother who decides to stay home from the world of work to engage in the work of raising and nurturing young souls--the future of humanity passes by way of the family.

Finally, with the consideration of the just wage, the Pope suggests that the relationship between the worker and

the employer is strengthened when benefits, right to rest, insurance and a safe working environment are ensured. Benefits such as health care insurance are often part of one's total package of reimbursement. However, there are millions of Americans without health insurance. Employer contributions to pension plans for futures savings in old age are also part of creating a just working situation. Many lose their pension savings when employers manipulate the system (e.g. Enron). Many workers are working longer hours and often do not benefit from a day of rest. God commands the weekly rest on the Sabbath.

Building a just society and workplace is not merely a political or economic reality; it is an ethical and spiritual one. Catholic social ethics provides believers with a firm foundation upon which they can build a just society and defend the dignity of the human person.

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living within their means but who are not being paid a family wage. We know of other families who complain about their income, but also cater to their many wants and are up to their eyeballs in consumer debt. If it is in their means, employers have the responsibility of paying single salary workers a family wage, and families in turn need to live within their means and not squander a decent income on selfish living.

Another issue that the Church suggests for evaluating the justice of a family wage is the evaluation of a mother's role and the respect given to the work of full time mothers. With the utmost respect, the Church believes that the true advancement of women "requires that labor should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them and at the expense of the family, in which women as mothers have an irreplaceable role" (*Laborem Exercens* 19). We are all familiar with the issues that working

Spiritual Fatherhood

A just wage for those employed by the Church?

Fr. Todd Molinari

Fr. Todd Molinari is a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon.

In recent months, the press has given extensive coverage to issues relating to justice in the workplace and the living wage. One only needs to glance at articles on the economic downturn, the budget deficits in state and federal governments, the healthcare insurance industry and retirement, to hope that the Gospel teachings on justice and the Church's *social doctrine* can throw some light on the current darkness. The Church's teachings on the living wage, I believe offer special insights and practical wisdom, which focus on the real needs of people today and which can help stabilize family life and the economy in our society.

Although the genre of papal encyclicals and apostolic letters may seem to be removed from everyday life, it is important to point out that the social doctrine of the Church, usually expressed in them is greatly concerned with the social and economic needs of all people, especially the poor. Beginning with Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Rerum novarum*, the Church has expressed her concern that all who labor should be justly compensated. The conventional wisdom within Catholic theological circles at that time considered the just wage to relate to the compensation of workers within secular life. The doctrine concerned itself mainly with the issue of the just treatment of workers during the industrial revolution, as a way of trying to recover the working class to the Catholic Faith.

Almost a century later, Pope John Paul II, in *Laborem Exercens* develops the Church's social doctrine within a new historical context. He acknowledges that, while the circumstances necessitating the teaching on the just wage are different from the time of his predecessor Leo, the truth of the doctrine remains valid, and even more so within a society

facing rapidly-developing social and economic forces. Pope John Paul II also deepens the understanding of the just wage by discussing it within the dual framework of justice and the dignity of the person. Based on this treatment of the just wage, an unanticipated yet important issue develops: the remuneration of a just wage to religious, clerical and lay members of the Faithful who work in and for the Church and her apostolic ministries.

The issue of conveying a just wage to those employed by or engaged in apostolates within the Church is more complex than it may first appear. One enters into a debate that raises numerous questions going back to the time of the Apostles: should the laborer in the vineyard earn his keep? Who determines, within the Church's ministries the remuneration for service to and for the Church? Would there be a difference in how a religious, cleric or layperson is remunerated - would a just wage depend on the work done, or on the worker's Christian state in life? Is remuneration of a just wage, assuming it compensates for completed labor and is destined for the necessities of living, in contradiction to the vow of poverty or is it a fulfillment of that vow? Can one attach a monetary value to apostolic, spiritual or sacramental ministry? And if so, what norms does one use in determining a just wage for such activities - and would such norms be the same throughout the world or would they differ according to where a local Church is located? How should funding for a just wage within the Church's ecclesiastical ministries be obtained: through Sunday collections of the local parish; through endowments or benefices; through a centralized diocesan system of remuneration; through separate fundraisers; through the labor of the

Church worker in secular employment?

To attempt to answer all of these questions would require an exhaustive historical and moral theological study on the issue, with all of its canonical implications. I do not pretend to make such an attempt here. I only raise the questions as a starting point for reflection and discussion. I will limit my comments to one brief point that affects many within the Church today: a just wage for faculty and staff employed in a Catholic school. These religious and clergy often received a minimum stipend for their labor. Hence, the personnel costs for the average Catholic elementary and secondary school were minimal. That has all changed. Now the majority of faculty and staff at a Catholic school are lay teachers and support staff. Catholic schools struggle to cover personnel costs, which include health benefits, retirement accounts and stipends for continuing education and professional development. This is the morally right thing to do: Catholic schools ought to follow the social doctrine of the just wage for all of their employees. Yet, part of the struggle involves adjusting the entire structure of the Catholic school - everything from development to capital campaigns, to tuition, budgeting, and fundraising, to communication with parishioners in the pews and with the pastor in the rectory - to be just to all employees in compensation for a day's labor.

Many of the challenges are and will be practical: how to maintain a quality Catholic education while paying a competent staff and faculty a just wage, all the while ensuring that the tuition does not exceed the ability of Catholic families to pay the tuition. There are several promising pathways a Catholic school can take; first, the establishment of long term endowments for each Catholic

Sacred Dwellings

by Ruth Rost

One day several workers were excavating a city block. Rubble was being hauled away. Heavy equipment carved the exposed earth. Fresh foundation would soon be laid, and the old building would give way to the new. When asked what it was they were doing, one worker answered, "I'm cleaning up a big mess." Another replied, "I'm making a living." It was then a third worker who offered, "I'm helping to build a great cathedral." Only one of the workers allowed the perspective of what he was doing to come to life within the framework of a larger divine vision.

Blessed is the heart which honors his or her work for what it truly is: a gift and grace from God. Fidelity to one's labors expressively witnesses to the truth that life's works are bestowed by God. Our labors are in harmony with a divine call "to prolong the work of the Creator by subduing the earth, both with and for one another" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2427). It is, then the toil of each moment which helps to create a larger human benevolence, a "more" for which we are called to strive. This elevated perspective of work helps us to appreciate that the personal effort within one person's laboring contributes to a greater wholeness, one that ultimately benefits life in our world as God has ordained.

Although at times our labors seem to be unrecognized, unseen or quite unimportant, it is the larger, Divine view of them which holds our hearts steady. Our acknowledgement of the unerring, divine commission of our work magnifies our sense of its value. Each effort *does* matter. No task is "more spiritual" than another, for there is holiness in all we work at, when it is done as a gift of ourselves.

As the Catechism of the Catholic

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C h u r c h clarifies, "in work, the person exercises and fulfills, in part, the

potential inscribed in his nature." (2428) Thus, the Divine vision which we are called to activate with our labors comes into clearer focus.

This life-giving vision of work asks for our critical consideration. Indeed, every worker, prompted by this vision of Divine intent regarding human labor, verifies a union with Christ Himself, whose will on earth is ever "to do the work of the One who sent Me." (John 4:34).

Quite early in life, the vision of work just described can be instilled in our children, as they are helped to regard their household tasks as being offered for the love of God. Indeed, little ones can think of their *works* as "hugs for God". True, what often

starts out as delight in the discovery of a new ability translates for the young child into "playing grown-up". But, when the day comes that novelty turns into drudgery the time is ripe for the "bigger picture" described.

It is then, when led to see interiorly that the young worker can consider the task as much more than a boring duty and habitual charge. Now, as the child grows into a larger vision of what he or she is doing, work can be offered, for example for another child's well-being or healing. Such simple sacrifices begin to mold the young heart in compassion in a truly "hands on" way. As blankets are tidied and pillows are fluffed in the morning, these works can become little ceremonies of service from a young heart in communion with Christ. This vision of work can carry over to the teen-age years also and to early overtures into the job world, when the holy value of work has been learned early on.

Surely, for parents the countless works of service they perform in the home can serve well as examples of *work as prayer*. Daily tasks lovingly undertaken can become petitions for grace upon those who receive our efforts. Ultimately, from within our domestic churches the work of Christ will continue and others will benefit as we share in the Church's ongoing work of redemption. Simply put, our labor unites with His love.

school. This option has been utilized by Catholic universities for many decades, and it is time for the Catholic elementary schools to do the same. Another possibility is to focus fundraising efforts on what brings in significant income for reasonable effort and time. This can be done by having the PTA or Parents' Club undergo an annual audit and analysis of their fundraisers. The question should be asked: "Is this fundraiser worth it, even though we have been

doing it for x number of years?" Too many school fundraisers are "nickel-and-dime" affairs, where a small group of committed parent volunteers labor for hours but have little to show for their hard work - either because the fundraiser has run its course in popularity or because the expenses begin to erode at potential profits.

The social doctrine of the just wage, as taught by Leo XIII and John Paul II clearly includes those who work in Catholic schools and

parishes. The Church can give a shining example to the world of a workplace that treats its workers and staff with respect, dignity and justice. If we hope to evangelize our culture with the Gospel, there is no better way than to preach through example. Compensating teachers and staff at Catholic institutions and apostolic ministries with a just wage enhances the credibility of the Church's witness to Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Cont from 4

Gifts from the Magisterium

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition Article 7

2402

In the beginning God entrusted the earth and its resources to the common stewardship of mankind to take care of them, master them by labor, and enjoy their fruits. The goods of creation are destined for the whole human race. However, the earth is divided up among men to assure the security of their lives, endangered by poverty and threatened by violence. The appropriation of property is legitimate for guaranteeing the freedom and dignity of persons and for helping each of them to meet his basic needs and the needs of those in his charge. It should allow for a natural solidarity to develop between men.

2404

"In his use of things man should regard the external goods he legitimately owns not merely as exclusive to himself but common to others also, in the sense that they can benefit others as well as himself." The ownership of any property makes its holder a steward of Providence, with the task of making it fruitful and communicating its benefits to others, first of all his family.

2407

In economic matters, respect for human dignity requires the practice of the virtue of *temperance* so as to moderate attachment to this world's goods; the practice of the virtue of *justice*, to preserve our neighbor's rights and render him what is his due; and the practice of *solidarity*, in accordance with the golden rule and in keeping with the generosity of the

Lord, who "though he was rich, yet for your sake...became poor so that by his poverty, you might become rich." (2 Cor. 8:9)

2430

Economic life brings into play different interests, often opposed to one another. This explains why the conflicts that characterize it arise. Efforts should be made to reduce these conflicts by negotiation that respects the rights and duties of each social partner: those responsible for business enterprises, representatives of wage-earners (for example, trade unions) and public authorities when appropriate.

2443

God blesses those who come to the aid of the poor and rebukes those who turn away from them: "Give to him who begs from you, do not refuse him who would borrow from you; "you received without pay, give without pay." It is by what they have done for the poor that Jesus Christ will recognize his chosen ones. When "the poor have the good news preached to them," it is the sign of Christ's presence.

2444

"The Church's love for the poor...is a part of her constant tradition." This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor. Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to "be able to give to those in need." (Ephesians 4:28) It extends not only to material poverty but also to the many forms of cultural and religious poverty.

2448

"In its various forms - material deprivation, unjust oppression,

physical and psychological illness and death - *human misery* is the obvious sign of the inherited condition of frailty and need for salvation in which man finds himself as a consequence of original sin. This misery elicited the compassion of Christ the Savior, who willingly took it upon himself and identified himself with the least of his brethren. Hence, those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a *preferential love* on the part of the Church which, since her origin and in spite of the failings of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defense, and liberation through numerous works of charity which remain indispensable always and everywhere."

FOR SOLACE:

The Church knows that unemployment often "wounds its victim's dignity and threatens the equilibrium of his life." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2436) Go to our beloved St. Joseph, who is a model and patron of workers. His work, like that of many men today was not without sorrow or difficulty; he understands especially well the trials of husbands and fathers. "God chose a carpenter to be the foster father of Jesus to show us how much He honored work." (Good Saint Joseph, Father Lawrence G. Lovasik)

The Family Bulletin Board

The foundations of the family, the basic cell of society are: the sacramental marriage and the fecundity (or ability to produce offspring) of that marriage; the work of having a family and perpetuating life. This is an obvious truth, and yet it is missed by many today as our culture plays with the definition of family, and as young people are discouraged in one way or another from having children.

In the Church's view, each husband and wife must be allowed, in full freedom to choose to have children and to choose how many. This is a God-given freedom. The couple's answer should be the product of prayer and of a true desire to integrate their lives responsibly with and, as John Paul II has said in "generosity" to children.

My jaw dropped recently while listening to a movie dialogue between Cary Grant and Ginger Rogers in: "*Once Upon a Honeymoon*", an old wartime flick filmed in 1942. In one scene, married couples were being registered by the Nazis and directed to a room in which doctors would decide whether or not the wife would be operated on...

Ginger Rogers: "What's he talking about?" (referring to the Nazi soldier behind the registration desk)

Cary Grant: "He says there are Nazi's in there who decide whether or not they are going to let people have children."

Ginger Rogers: "You mean it's up to Hitler who can have babies and who can't?"

Cary Grant: "Yes. It used to be the will of God. Hitler doesn't like that. Too many people might be born who wouldn't agree with him."

It would be easy to write off the essence of this dialogue as something far from reality; the truth is that it resonates in the "culture of death".

With this as a backdrop, we print the following current news story and invite further reflection upon what, outside of Catholicism seems to be a

very well-kept secret: natural family planning. Few matters are more intimately bound up with a woman's health and freedom than reproductive ones. Natural family planning is all natural, inexpensive, very effective when practiced correctly, and it appeals to a woman's sense of dignity. Whether in the first world or the third world, every married couple has a right to know about natural family planning. EDITOR

The following is printed with permission from:

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Natural Family Planning Gains Adherents in Bangladesh, Says Doctor

When offered the option, many women in Bangladesh select natural family planning over artificial means of contraception, according to Dr. Hanna Klaus, Executive Director of the Natural Family Planning Center of Washington D.C. This information undermines the conventional wisdom of most international family planning and population control agencies that hold that artificial means of contraception are the only realistic options for the poor, uneducated women in the developing world. These agencies favor long-term methods of artificial contraception, such as intrauterine devices (IUDs), as well as permanent methods of chemical and surgical sterilizations.

Klaus says these beliefs show a disregard for the capabilities of poor women to make choices for themselves...The actions of these agencies also illustrate an "elitist" condescension, a prejudice that poor families will not be able to understand fertility, or that husbands cannot control themselves and "will simply not be able to abstain during periods of fertility."

Writing in a recent edition of the medical journal "Lancet", Klaus records both the widespread popularity of natural family planning (NFP) and the effectiveness of the method. According to Klaus, the "program of natural family planning was offered through Caritas, a Catholic agency, but only 34% of the acceptors were Catholic, the rest were Muslims and Hindus." And, once the method was taught to women, "there were no method-related unplanned pregnancies in Bangladesh," says Klaus.

In light of the immense pressure placed upon women in Bangladesh to adopt artificial means of contraception, the success of NFP in Bangladesh may be considered surprising. In an interview with the Friday Fax, Klaus described instances in which family planning officials followed NFP teachers on their rounds. Because the officials were "desperate to get acceptors of artificial contraceptives--they had quotas to fill in order to keep their jobs", they would record the women who accepted NFP, then return later to attempt to convince them to change their minds.

Klaus also cited the large influence of money. NFP is free, whereas pharmaceutical companies look to reap billions of dollars of profits on artificial contraception. They therefore offer monetary incentives for family planning officials. Despite these pressures, many Bangladesh women embrace NFP, a fact that teaches important lessons, according to Klaus. Klaus believes that the Bangladeshi experience shows that NFP should be considered a modern method of family planning, because it works. And it should be considered the first, most appropriate method of family planning for the developing world for a number of reasons: it costs nothing, it results in no serious medical complications, and most importantly, it shows respect for people. Klaus concluded, "When people are respected, they respond."

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our website at
www.domesticchurch.us

Thank You to Katie
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on the site.

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Congratulations to Erin and Jason Rapp!!!
They have a new baby boy born on May
30th. His name is Owen Gabriel Rapp.
Please keep their family and new baby in
your prayers!

God Bless!!

Mission Statement
Founded in January 1995, St. Joseph's Center for the Domestic Church is a
Catholic apostolate dedicated to serving the family. Our mission is to help families
recognize their role as the "domestic church," the Church at home, and to re-
establish the home as a sacred refuge. 503 864 9547

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