



si si no no

"But his own speech he: 'Yes, yes,' 'No, no,' and whatever is beyond these comes from the evil one. (Mt. 5:37)"

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Contraception Under Cover of Asceticism

THE "ASCETICS" OF THE SO-CALLED "NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING METHOD"

The headline of the article on page four of the Italian newspaper, *Fibrage-Filo diretto con*, caught our attention: "Natural family planning methods as a way to humanization." After having affirmed "the precision as well as the validity" of the so-called natural methods of contraception, the article goes on to illustrate the "...depth of the value of these methods, which are not to be considered as a simple technique, free of side effects, (and) specifically meant to avoid procreation."

As a matter of fact, the article explains, these methods constitute, or are to be understood as being methods of asceticism: methods favoring:

- ...the exercise of self-control, that is, the ability to restrain our instinctive sexual urges, not for the sake of repressing them outright, but...in order to submit them to the control of reason and to direct them in view of that which is good.

And what is that "view of that which is good"? It is simply that interpersonal love shared by the spouses themselves, "...only he or she who is able to dominate his or her sexual urges is able to love," since, "...those instinctive sexual urges press every human being to satisfy both his physical and emotional needs, and to come together in fruitful union of his beloved spouse."¹ And this is why it is necessary:

- ...to exercise self-control which is able to achieve a self-renunciation in favor of a much higher and greater good: the love shared by the husband and wife.... This interior attitude predisposing one to sacrifice in view of a higher good is a characteristic mark of a liberated person: free of external as well as of internal (sexual urges) conditioning and also free to fulfill their love-centered way of "conjugal" life.

Conclusion:

- Natural methods, therefore - being much more than a form of birth control technique - consist in a couple's way of life with regard to their sexuality... People can become educated to this lifestyle by instruction in these natural (birth control) methods, which thus become an opportunity for (spiritual) growth for those married couples who take this road with commitment and who place themselves under the direction of qualified counselors for guidance in these methods....

And so, here we are in the presence of a Malthusian mentality which considers the "good of posterity" (*bonum proliis*) as an evil to be avoided, a mentality presently spread unchecked far and wide in that Catholic world which is now becoming more and more "an exercise of the Cross" (St. Paul). Moreover, this contraceptive mentality is now going about disguised, all the better to seduce souls, in the habit of an ascetic.

In this way, birth control is presented *sub specie boni*, that is to say, under the facade of respectability and of righteousness. However, under the "ascetic's" garb, flashes a devil's tail: for, in fact, this is a question of an "asceticism" which flies in the face of the most elementary principle of true Catholic asceticism, a false austerity taking no account whatsoever of the Magisterium of the Church and which is unmistakably oriented towards...contraception!

ASCETICISM: Rightly understood, this is self-discipline in all its forms, particularly those voluntarily undertaken out of love of God and desire for spiritual improvement.

AN INAPPROPRIATE AND UNJUSTIFIABLE PROPAGANDA

We do observe, however, right from the outset, that the "apostles" of conjugal "asceticism," with their undiscerning and, even worse, unconditional propaganda of so-called "natural methods," are trudging wearily along a path long ago condemned by the Magisterium.

Pope Pius XII, tackling the problem of the licit or illicit nature of those "natural methods" in his famous address to midwives (Oct. 29, 1951), alerted and strongly warned the faithful against letting themselves "be carried along by an inappropriate and deceitful propaganda" of such methods. And the reason for this is clear as crystal: such methods are deemed licit "only in cases of absolute necessity" (Pius XII, *ibid.*), cases the gravity of which must be examined most attentively, given the danger, for the majority of spouses, of widening beyond measure those motives being invoked in favor of periodic continence. Flushing up the truth of these motives as well as their gravity, which alone can justify or make licit what are known as "natural methods," simply constitutes an incitement to a life of sin under the pretext of "asceticism."

DECEITFUL LANGUAGE

These "natural methods," we are told, are not to be considered as just a technique specifically aimed at avoiding procreation (*i.e.*, avoiding having children), without the risk of side-effects.

"Natural methods"? And why not come out with it in all honesty and admit frankly that they are, in fact, speaking of "natural methods of contraception"? Because, in the final analysis, this is what is really meant when a couple sets about calculating, with contraceptive intent, the wife's monthly fertile and infertile periods in order to avoid the first while taking advantage of the latter: the systematic abstinence from conjugal relations, limited to the married woman's fertile period, is a clear indication of a will not to procreate, that is, of not wanting to fulfill or accomplish the primary ends of matrimony.²

"The sacrament of Matrimony is a contract between a man and a woman, both of whom are baptized and free to enter into the contract, to live together for the purpose of begetting and rearing children, and of cherishing one another in a common life. The ends of matrimony are, therefore, primarily the procreation and bringing up of children; secondarily, mutual support and affection and the satisfaction of desire. - *Translator's note.*

Now, if this will of the couple is not justified through a moral or physical impossibility of fulfilling this duty (an essential condition "swept under the rug" by our "ascetics"), the so-called "natural methods" remain precisely "a simple technique, free of any side-effects, of avoiding having children" and the alleged effort at this type of "asceticism" finally reveals itself for what it really is indeed: a selfish plan, as well as a systematic seeking after free and unfettered sensual pleasure; in a word, the sin of "hedonism" presented under the guise of a pseudo-mysticism."³

If, however, according to a reasonably and equitably formed judgment, there are no such serious reasons, personal or deriving from external circumstances, the will habitually to avoid the fecundity of their union, though continuing fully to satisfy their sensuality, may only derive from a false evaluation of life and from motives not in harmony with sound ethical canons (Pius XII, *Address to Midwives*).

A far cry, indeed, from an ascetic "lifestyle"!

ASCETICISM OR SHARED SELFISHNESS?

Just what kind of "asceticism" is this, anyway - we are still wondering - which seeks the perfection not of the love of God, but of a puny self-centered love? Of course, one's love for his or her spouse, when raised to the level of Christian charity, does become a means of elevating oneself to the perfect love of God, but it remains a means, not an end in itself, and often tends to become, as a consequence of original sin, an obstacle to our love for God: "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come" (Lk. 14:20); whence the evangelical counsel of perpetual chastity.

Making the love of one's spouse "the be-all and end-all" of one's asceticism is simply putting a creature in God's place: this is nothing but a form of idolatry, not of love, and pleasure. Within the "couple's willfully barren union" meant to constitute an "exercise in self-control" through "natural birth control methods," there is no place for children [this is quite logical, since we are dealing with natural methods of contraception - *Ed.*]. Who has not heard the refrain over and over again: "the beloved you"; that "love" for one's husband and for one's wife; freedom for the starry-eyed spouses to lead a life of endless paradisaical love, *etc.*.... As though the love between husband and wife is rekindled and cemented not by a generous attitude regarding procreation, but by a selfishness bent on avoiding having children in the first place! And, above all, as if conjugal love had its own grounds for existence in itself and not in the procreation and education of children.

Quite the contrary, it is precisely in procreation, and not in a shared sterile and selfish sexual satisfaction that:

- ...egoism suffers a salutary defeat as the couple concentrates its attention on a third person who is also the weakest and most fragile of all (the new baby). Thus will love become more binding, there will be less sensual attraction; there will be a greater unity of souls, of hope and of intentions.⁴

And this same communion of souls will, in turn, serve to carry out a task transcending the persons making up the couple:

- Not only their common task of an exterior life, but also all of that personal enrichment, including all that is most profound and spiritual in wedded love as such, has been placed, by the will of nature as well as that of the Creator, at the service of the couple's offspring.

By its very nature, perfect married life also entails the spouses' complete self-sacrifice for the children's benefit, and that conjugal love, in all of its strength and tenderness, constitutes in itself a prelude of a most sincere solicitude with regard to the children as well as a guarantee of its fulfillment (Pius XII, *ibid.*).

BEHIND THE ROMANTIC TALE: AN ERROR ALREADY CONDEMNED

With this pseudo "asceticism" of "natural methods" of birth control, we are facing the full-fledged error of "personalism," an error which, contradicting the traditional doctrine of the Church, places the primary end of marriage in the personal satisfaction and development in the couple's mutual love. In this mistaken perspective,

- ...if, from this complete union of the spouses, a new life is generated, this is a result which remains outside, or, at best, only at the surface of the "growing baby's personal worth or value"; a result although not refused, but which many do not want to consider to be at the very heart of the spouses' sexual relations (Pius XII, *ibid.*).

This error, which first appeared in Germany in the first half of this century, has been promoted and encouraged by numerous present-day authors of the "new theology."

Romano Guardini, Max Scheler, *etc.*⁵ This same error was also condemned by the Holy Office (March 29-April 1, 1944) which repeated:

- That which is manifest by the internal structure of natural disposition, also that which forms a part of Christian tradition together with that which has so often been taught by the sovereign pontiffs (Pius XII, *ibid.*)...

...that is, that the primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of children, while the secondary end of marriage (fulfillment and mutual love of the couple) is oriented toward and subordinated to the primary end of matrimony.

Pope Pius XII, who had already sounded the alarm against the "deadly consequences" of the "personalist" novelties in his Allocation before the Sacred Roman Rota (Oct. 3, 1941), personally took up the same question once again in his famous *Address to Midwives* on Oct. 29, 1951:

- Now, the truth of the matter is that marriage, as a natural institution and in virtue of the Creator's holy will, has as its primary and most intimate end, not the spouses' personal fulfillment, but the procreation and education of new life. The other goals in marriage, although also designed and intended by nature, are not to be found at the level of the primary end of marriage and, even less, are they to be considered superior to them, but are indeed *essentially subordinated* to them.

- This holds true for each and every marriage, even when barren or infertile; just as in the case of every eye we may affirm that it has been formed and destined for sight, although some unusual cases do sometimes occur where, through some circumstances, either interior or exterior, it happens that an eye may be struck by blindness.

In the case of the "personalist" error, on the other hand:

- ...the selfish couple will have recourse to a novel litany of enticing remarks and observations as a foundation to a rosy pipe dream of a married life wherein the spouses wastefully use up a whole wealth of particular natural gifts, qualities and energies which nature, together with God's grace, have so evidently designed and directed toward the continuation and multiplication of human life.⁶

Again, beneath the "romantic" veneer of such a "love life" with one's "beloved," it is easy to perceive the miserable reality of the double-headed monster of twofold selfishness against which Pius XII alerted newlyweds as being "the greatest enemy," "the deadliest poison" of conjugal love:

- This shared selfishness on the part of the spouses abhors the very thought of self-sacrifice and prevents the establishment between husband and wife of that holy friendship where they share the same ideals, where they hold everything in common, pain and joy, comfort and sorrow, need and help. Pride leads to dissension between the spouses; and if the selfishness of the husband is not equal to that of his wife, the upshot will be that these two egotisms will form an alliance in this grievous fault.⁷

And this is exactly what can be expected when a married couple resorts to the use of *unjustified* natural methods of contraception.

DISCREDITING AND DEFAMATION OF MARRIAGE

To hear the "ascetics of natural birth control methods" speak, those who do not systematically resort to such "methods" but who, on the contrary, give life to children wanted by God as He wants, would not have the opportunity of "growing," nor a chance of exercising their "self-control," and would therefore be destined to remain at the mercy of their "sexual urges" without the possibility of "submitting them to the control of reason" and of directing them towards that which is good.⁸

Just what idea do these "ascetics" have regarding marriage, and especially marriage as a sacrament? Do they see marriage as an authorization favoring the unbridled gratification of their "sexual urges"? Marriage, already seen as a simple natural contract, constitutes a victory of reason over instinct, because it subjects those sexual urges to the law of morality, precisely "...not to reject them, but to subject them to the control of reason and to channel them in the direction of that which is good..." a good which is not the couple's selfishness, but the *bonum proliis*, the good of those children whom the "natural methods" seek to limit, if not to eliminate altogether. It was not without reason that Jean-Baptiste Vico, whose philosophy was recalled by Ugo Foscolo in *I Sepolcri* (*The Tombs*) - "Marriage, tribunals, and the altar have made humanity charitable towards itself and neighbor" - places marriage as one of the fundamental steps in the process of civilization by which man subjects instinct to reason, and from a "savage," he is made human.

But Christian marriage is yet much more: it is a sacrament conferring upon the spouses an increase in sanctifying grace together with a right to all of the essential actual graces needed to lead a holy life in the state of matrimony. And it is that sacramental grace in particular - and not the so-called "natural methods" - which enables the couple to acquire the virtue of self-control.

- With the Christians we are able to behold a sound as well as sensible self-control, continence is exercised, monogamy (one wife, one husband) is observed, and chastity is esteemed and practiced....

...declared, without fear of contradiction, the apologists to the pagans,⁹ and those Christians were innocent of such "natural methods," while simply following St. Paul's teachings:

- But for fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render the debt to his wife, and the wife also in like manner to the husband.... Defraud not one another, except, perhaps, by consent, for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer [This is the only "periodic continence" or rather, temporary continence, allowed by the Apostle - *Ed.*]; and return together again, lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency (I Cor. 7:2-5).

In this way - yes, a natural way - as well as by the heroic way of true ascetic continence, the first Christians together with all good Christians were able to attain to a sound self-control, exercised continence, practiced chastity according to their state in life, and thus succeeded in transforming a pagan society into one steeped in Christianity. And if today, this state of affairs no longer holds true, the reason is that Christians, no longer living their Christian life, have also neglected and put aside Christian marriage.

Be that as it may, marriage does not consist in giving free rein to one's unbridled sexual instincts, but in controlling them in view of the end for which God created human sexuality, which is the procreation and education of those children of whom - in contracting marriage - the spouses assume such an important responsibility before God and man. And herein indeed do we have the "responsible parenthood" which is light years away from the "natural methods" of birth control. In marriage, the means (sexual urges) are ordained to their end (procreation). With the systematic use of "natural methods," on the contrary, we have disorder entering the scene and separating the means from their natural end. All of which has absolutely nothing to do with heavenly-minded asceticism!

DEPRECIATION AND BELITTILING OF FRUITFUL MARRIAGE

Just what is, therefore, such an asceticism which teaches married couples to avoid the accomplishment or, at least, the generous accomplishment of their duties in the married state?

Asceticism is not an end in itself, it is but a means: its goal is to dispose the faithful to respect and carry out God's will, even when this costs a personal effort or sacrifice. The love of God, however, does not lie in an "exercise in self-control," but rather in the accomplishment of God's holy will.

Now, then, where we do find significant, expressed and concretely manifested this same God's will for each person? This is known or, at least, it should be: God's will is concretely expressed and manifested in each person's duty of state in life, which determines for every soul *how* to observe, in a concrete manner, the commandments of God, and in *which measures* we are to practice the evangelical counsels, which even lay people must, in a certain measure, love and practice in order to save their souls. And this is precisely the measure dictated by one's own duties of state in life.

Now, the spouses' duties of state, their "specific obligations," consist in becoming authors and educators of new lives¹⁰ and it is along this path that they are to attain their sanctification and salvation "He who remains a slave to his instincts does not love," declare the "ascetics" of natural (birth control) methods. True enough, but it is also true that each and every married person is called to liberate himself from his instincts and egoism (or selfishness) through the procreation or generation and education of children (c.f., 1 Tim. 2:15). This liberation is realized according to the measure of generosity with which we take up our daily cross of responsibilities, of burdens and sacrifices involved in fatherhood and motherhood, and certainly not in resorting to those so-called "natural methods" which are meant, on the contrary, to avoid or at least to limit those responsibilities, burdens and sacrifices. The pretended "exercise of self-control" based on "natural methods" is thus seen for what it really is: a thinly veiled pretext to shrink - those duties pertaining to the married state, in which God has placed a superabundance of occasions for the spouses to exercise "self-control." Such "self-control" can include that temporary continence due to pregnancy and childbirth, and which can even go so far as to require the sacrifice of the mother's life, and even up to the very last act of love for her children, thus crowning a life spent for them in the generous giving and forgetting of self.

LIES AND ILLUSIONS

Conjugal life, the indissoluble bonds of marriage, require from the spouses that they sacrifice their pride on the altar of duty and of the love of God. They are to sacrifice their self-esteem to that love of God. Who has elevated and meant to beatify the hearts of those "indications" (eugenic, medical, social) referred to by Pope Pius XII, while also the priest's and heaven's blessing.... Before your child's cradle, dear young married couples, may your love receive a new consecration in the sacrifice of your pride and of all its dreams (Pius XII, *Address to Young Married Couples*, June 17, 1942).

In actual fact, the very essence of our love for God is really unique, both for spouses in the married state and for those consecrated to the religious life, and it consists in sacrificing one's own will, one's own selfishness, in order to embrace the will of God in the fulfillment of one's duties of state in life.

- Our poor duties of state!...How often they are ignored!...and so poorly understood!...distorted and even perverted by illusions caused by self-interest!...How often do people invent and impose upon themselves special duties, not at all legitimate, and while putting off or brushing aside their certain and well-grounded duties! Ah! if only I knew very well the duties of state in my life.... Is God's will not wholly contained in my own duties of state? And outside my duties of state, what am I seeking if not my own will while neglecting God's will?...Herein lies the treachery of the devil combined with the stupidity of my own pride. Presented in the false light of a greater good, I am persuaded to do my own (selfish) will while losing sight of that one and supreme law grounded on the will of God.¹¹

It is by these means of illusion and lies that the "ascetics" of "natural methods" shrink and teach others to shrink that total self-denial required in raising a large family, if such be God's will, with all of the sacrifices (including the economic ones) involved. We are looking here, therefore, at an "asceticism," known as "natural methods," which is actually at the service of selfishness, and which even dares pretend its "self-control" is superior to that of those married couples who, generously and in a Christian manner, faithfully fulfill their duties of state, without seeking to avoid responsibilities, expenses and sacrifices.

How far such a mentality - we declare together with Pope Pius XII - is opposed to God's ways and thoughts as well as to the language of Scripture, and even to sound reason and to natural human feelings! If there arise conditions and circumstances where parents, without violating God's laws, are allowed to avoid the blessing of bringing children into the world, it must always be kept in mind that such cases of absolute necessity do not authorize anyone at all to pervert ideas, to depreciate or belittle moral values, nor to ridicule and sneer at the mother who has had the courage and honor of giving birth to each and every one of those children wanted by God.¹²

MALTHUSIANS, NOT CHRISTIANS

When Pius XII, on Oct. 29, 1951, delivered his famous address to midwives, he closed down that "wide road" which certain "theologians" wished to leave wide open by approving the systematic use of natural methods of birth control, simply because they are natural.¹³ Pius XII explains:

- The specific fact that the spouses do not violate the nature of the act of procreation and are even ready to accept and raise a child who, despite their precautions, should be born, is not in itself able to guarantee the rectitude or rightness of their intentions nor of the absolute morality of such motives (Pius XII, *Address to Midwives*).

Indeed, it is possible to respect the laws of nature, yet sin against the duty of procreation; it is possible to not sin in the means, while sinning with relation to the end in mind. Marriage, Pius XII repeats, is not to be practiced because it imposes the duty of procreation, which is exclusively proper to the married state, and consequently spouses are excused from this duty as from any other duty, only in those cases where, despite all of their good will, they find themselves in the physical or moral impossibility of meeting this particular obligation.

But those theologians in favor of the "wide and easy road" have banished from their minds Pius XII's wholesome reminder of the bounden duty of procreation inherent to the married state, where the large family is meant to be the rule, except in "cases of absolute necessity."

Result: Today's conjugal morality has been reduced to the one problem of family "planning," that is, how to limit the number of children by reconciling morality, convenience, and pleasure. With this goal in mind, more and more married couples are having recourse to the duty of procreation, which is exclusively proper to the married state, and consequently spouses are excused from this duty as from any other duty, only in those cases where, despite all of their good will, they find themselves in the physical or moral impossibility of meeting this particular obligation.

This peculiar mentality of the "absolute minimum to be believed and practiced" (Cardinal De Laia) is nothing short of the "broad way that leadeth to destruction, and many there who go in thereto" (Mt. 7:13).

When our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect," He was not only speaking to the clergy and religious: He was speaking to absolutely everyone, including married couples.

When He says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit!...Blessed are the clean of heart...Blessed are the meek," He is not speaking only to those living in convents and monasteries. No, He is speaking to *everyone* indeed, including those living within the bonds of marriage. All Christians, even married couples, must, in order to be saved, love and practice, not the three religious vows, but the three virtues to which religious tend through their vows: poverty, without renouncing possessions and property; chastity, without renouncing the state of marriage; obedience, without giving up one's legitimate independence. And, everyone, in order to be saved, must love these virtues since they combat the three great concupiscences of worldly goods, of the flesh and of the pride of life, virtues which preserve us from sin as they sweep away the three obstacles especially opposed to the love of God and of our neighbor, and through to our own eternal salvation. Consequently, if the number of children obliges a family to eliminate unnecessary luxuries and unjustified expenses, truly Christian spouses will accept this situation as an occasion for practicing the virtue of poverty according to their state in life, while carefully avoiding having recourse to the non-existent pretext of a "socio-economic indication" (*i.e.*, excuse).

And to prove that such a "socio-economic indication" is, as a general rule, non-existent, we only need to think about this: How come a large family did not frighten our materially much poorer grandparents? While their present-day grandchildren, although much better off materially speaking, are terrified at the very prospect of raising a large family? Why is this? Evidently, the reason lies in the fact that their grandchildren have set their hearts on their physical comforts and are therefore fearful of bringing children into the world because they are afraid of no longer being able to afford their dream automobile (or their several autos), their modern conveniences, expensive holidays, *etc.*.... In a word, they fear not having enough money nor liberty in order to enjoy this earthly life to the fullest possible extent.

And the same may be said with regards to what is called the "medical indications" (*i.e.*, excuses). How then explain that numerous pregnancies did not frighten our grandmothers who nevertheless could not count on medical or hospital assistance when they gave birth, and that granted newdays? Obviously, because our grandmothers were more generous and more willing to sacrifice themselves than their grandchildren are at the present time.

We are not discussing here about pathological cases, and therefore truly *exceptional* cases diagnosed by a qualified Catholic doctor and in which sincere Christians will perceive a call, even heroic, to the virtue of chastity according to their state in life (see Pius XII, *Address to Midwives*).

Not to mention, either, that pretext of not being able to provide their children with a suitable "education," a pretext beneath which lurks a fatherly as well as a motherly pride whose ambition is to see their children setting out on a future lifestyle outside of that which was marked out for them by Divine Providence, often with the temporal ruin of those same sons and daughters. The same may be said about the pretense termed the "eugenic indication"* an excuse utterly opposed to the truth: "...that men are born not for this earth nor for fleeing time, but above all for heaven and eternity" (Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*).

* A likelihood of having sickly offspring. - *Translator's note.*

We do not deny the possibility that that sort of those exaggerations of a "science" too often atheistic and puffed up with pride, there can be, and, in reality, there are cases which need to be examined with the seriousness owed to science, but also and especially to the light of superior moral norms.

We must, however, emphasize once more that such cases constitute an exception, and not the general rule, and that, therefore, when these various economic, social, medical and eugenic "indications" are advanced by most people, not to say by everyone, we are led to believe that Christians are no longer Christians, but Malthusians: Malthusians in their hedonism (*i.e.*, pleasure-seeking or sensuality), and Malthusians in their lack of trust in Divine Providence:

Before categorically affirming or declaring an impossibility in their domain, we must make sure whether selfishness, the birth of a quiet undisturbed life, yielding to the instinct of sensual pleasure and to the law of the least effort are not, when all is said and done, the determining causes of so much birth control.¹⁴

In cases of genuine, "absolute necessity," the feeling of good Christian spouses, the sure sign of their "good will" and of their sincere willingness to fulfill God's will in their marriage, this feeling of theirs will be one of deep regret, just as in the case of those couples suffering from a physical impossibility of having children.

As Duval-Aumont so aptly put it:

To rejoice in being able to avoid, thanks to natural methods (of birth control), those whom the self-indulgent language of our modern world labels as so many "burdens," is not the characteristic of good Christians...¹⁵

...but of thoroughgoing Malthusians.

Paulinus

(*From Courier de Rome, Jan. 1998*)

For a further treatment of this issue see article "Rhythm the Unhappy Compromise," *The Angelus*, May, 1993, p.12; also included in, *Raising Your Children*, p.91. [Both are available from Angelus Press.]

1. P. Palazzini, I SaCtament, A Piantoni, ed. Coletti, Rome, 1959

2. *Ibid.*, p.770.

3. *Ibid.*, p.728, note 19.

4. *Ibid.*, p.729.

5. Pius XII, *Address "Se grande"* to Newlyweds, June 17,1942.

6. Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autol*, III, 15; cf. Minucio Felice Octavius, 31,5.

7. See Pius XII, *Address to Midwives*.

8. F. Pollien, *la vita interiore semplificata e ricondotta al suo fondamento* [*The Interior Life Simplified and Brought Back to Its Fundamental Principle*].

9. *Address to Midwives*.

10. Cf. G.B. Guzzetti, *Matrimonio, Famiglia, Verginità*, ed. Marietti, 1957, pp.319 sq.

11. A. Christian, *Focolare, casa di Dio*, trans. Italian, Marietti, Turin, 1956, p.187.

12. Duval-Aumont, *I problemi della natalità nella famiglia*, ed. Paoline, Alba, 1950, p.7..