



Msgr. Vincent Foy

# RECOVERING *HUMANAE VITAE* IN CANADA

For forty years Msgr Vincent Foy of the Archdiocese of Toronto has attempted—with great charity—to get the **Winnipeg Statement** of 1968 issued by the Canadian bishops in defiance of Pope Paul VI, retracted. Now, at 95 years of age, this is his latest overview of the issue. --Editor

At the conclusion of their 2008 plenary assembly, which took place at Cornwall from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of September, the Canadian bishops issued a pastoral letter called *Liberating Potential*. In it all the faithful are invited to discover or rediscover the encyclical *Humanae vitae* issued by Pope Paul VI in July of 1968.

This was a giant step towards undoing the rampant dissent from the encyclical which has ravaged the Church in Canada for over forty years and left our Church in suicidal mode. The contraceptive mentality has so devastated the Church that we are reminded forcefully of the truth expressed by Francis Thompson in his poem *The Hound of Heaven*. He puts in the mouth of Christ these words:

*"All things betrayeth thee  
Who betrayest Me."*

The pastoral *Liberating Potential* is only the first step. Not only must truth be affirmed, but error must be refuted. Dietrich von Hildebrand, called by Pope Pius XII "The 20th century doctor of the Church," has this to say in this context: "It does not suffice to present the true position on any matter: one must also refute the errors" (cf. *The Charitable Anathema*, Dietrich von Hildebrand published by Alice von Hildebrand, 1993, p. 81).

## THE PRIMARY IMPORTANCE OF RESTORING *HUMANAE VITAE*

Few Canadian bishops have prioritized the restoration of

*Humanae vitae*. Yet it surely is the most important need of the Church in Canada. Paragraph 17 of *Humanae vitae* details the consequences of artificial methods of contraception. It opens the way to marital infidelity and a general lowering of moral standards. Woman is reduced to an instrument for the satisfaction of lust. It places a dangerous weapon in the state's hands, with the possibility of forcible population control and genetic engineering.

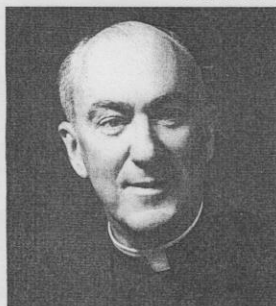
It would take a lengthy article to detail the evil fruits of rejecting the charter of life and love called *Humanae vitae*. Contraception is anti-God, anti-Church, anti-society, anti-family, anti-spousal and anti-self.

Charles Rice, formerly Professor of Law at Notre Dame University, gives this

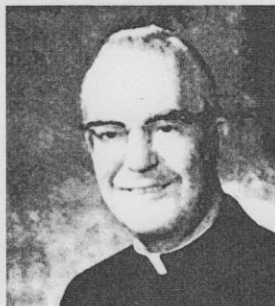
assessment: "Contraception is the defining evil of our time. Its legitimization leads inevitably, not only to abortion and euthanasia, but to a host of evils including promiscuity, divorce, pornography, and homosexuality. The contraceptionist denies to God the right to be God. In this light, the contraceptive movement is diabolic, a replay of the original script."

We read that "Of the multitude of side effects noted over

### FOUR INSTIGATORS



Bishop Gerald Emmett Carter of London, ON (1968).  
Courtesy of the Diocese of London's Archives.



Bishop Alexander Carter of Sault Sainte Marie, ON



Archbishop Joseph-Aurèle Plourde of Ottawa, ON



Archbishop Philip Francis Pocock of Toronto, ON

almost forty years of experience with OC (oral contraceptives), five very serious risks are associated with OC use: increased incidence of sexually transmitted diseases; pelvic inflammatory disease; infertility; cervical and breast cancer; and ectopic pregnancy" (*Abortifacient Drugs and Devices: A Short Review* by Bogomir M. Kuhar, PharmD, Eternal Life, 902W. Stephen Foster Ave., Bardstown, KY, 40004 USA; 1 for \$2US).

We learn from Dr. Bogomir that there are approximately six times as many infant homicides through OC as there are surgical abortions.

Given the horrendous effects of contraception and its potential to destroy the Church, surely its rejection should be a priority in all pastoral initiatives.

### DISSENT

The contraceptive mentality did not spring up overnight like a mushroom. It was the bad result of several years in which many Canadian bishops listened to dissident theologians rather than the magisterium of the Church.

In 1964 a book was published by Herder and Herder called *Contraception and Holiness*. It was presented as a "balanced and perceptive declaration of Christian dissent." Among the contributors were three professors of St. Michael's College in Toronto: Gregory Baum, OSA, Stanley Kutz, CBS, and Leslie Dewart. There was no condemnation of this book from our bishops.

The Toronto *Globe and Mail* printed an interview with Gregory Baum on April 9, 1966. It was entitled "Catholics may use contraceptives now." He asserted that the traditional norm had become doubtful and therefore could not be imposed. His views got widespread coverage (e.g. *Time Magazine*, April 22, 1966). Letters of support were printed from Leslie Dewart, Mark McGuigan, Cecilia Wallace and others. I spoke to Archbishop Pocock but he saw no need to respond. Unchecked, a year later, Gregory Baum was saying that even if the Pope came out against artificial contraception, his decision would be irrelevant (*The Globe and Mail*, April 12, 1967).

After the encyclical was published on July 29, 1968, dissent in Canada began on July 30<sup>th</sup>. Like termites, dissenters began destroying Church teaching from within. Father Edward Sheridan, SJ, said the encyclical "did not necessarily demand absolute obedience." Gregory Baum said Catholics had the right to dissent. Father Walter Principe, CSB, wrote "I hope that they (the Canadian Bishops) will make clear to all that one who dissents with a well-informed and well-formed conscience is still a loyal

Catholic in good standing" (*The Globe and Mail*, Aug. 9, 1968).

On a CBC coast to coast television program on August 18, Fr. Edward Sheridan SJ, Father Edward Crooker CSB, and Father Walter Principe CSB, attacked the encyclical. Pressure groups sprang up. Among those calling for "freedom of conscience" were the Western Canadian Conference of Priests, the Catholic Physicians Guild of Manitoba, Catholics in Dialogue and fifty-eight "intellectuals" of St. Francis Xavier University (the "cream of Antigonish" their Bishop said). Most significant was that fifteen Directors of the departments at the Canadian Catholic Conference signed a statement calling for a "Vatican II" approach. They said a larger number of Canadian priests were agonizing in acute crises of conscience "because of the apparent directives of *Humanae Vitae*." Even the Christian Family Movement, formerly so devoted to implementing Church teaching on marriage, signed a protest against *Humanae vitae* addressed to Archbishop Pocock of Toronto. It had come under the influence of Gregory Baum.

Many bishops, priests and people had been seduced by

Gregory Baum's claim that the period before *Humanae vitae* was one of doubt and that a doubtful law did not oblige. Pope Paul VI had reaffirmed the teaching of the Church in 1964 and 1966, calling it a time of study and not of doubt.

The Winnipeg meeting of the CCCB was loaded with "periti" who were dissenters. There were Fr. Edward Sheridan SJ, professor at Regis College, Toronto, Fr. André Naud, president of the Canadian Institute of Theology, Fr. Charles St. Ange, director of the French section of the CCC Family Life Bureau, Fr. Ora McManus of the Western Canadian Conference of Priests, and Bernard Daly, director of the English CCC Family Life Bureau, who came to present petitions. They were asked to remain and were brought into the consultation process.

Already many Canadian bishops had given in to the cries of dissenters rather

than the voice of the Pope invoking the authority of Christ (*Humanae vitae* n. 6). Cardinal Leger at Vatican II, on Oct. 29, 1964, advocated that fecundity should be a duty pertaining to the state of matrimony as a whole rather than to an individual act. He said "Confessors are assailed by doubts. They no longer know what to answer." In some dioceses, as in Toronto, in 1964, confessional norms were given contrary to Church teaching. In London in 1967 priests were told "if doctors can be confused about the scientific aspect of the Pill, then priests should be confused about the morality of the use of the Pill." Pope Pius XII had condemned the contraceptive use of the Pill on Sept. 22, 1958.

### FOUR OF MANY DISSENTERS



Dissenters clockwise from the top-left: Gregory Baum, Fr. Edward Sheridan SJ, Bernard Daly and Fr. André Naud.

In Canada dissent remains widespread and rarely checked. Note that Sister Joan Chittister OSB, who had rejected magisterial teaching on many issues, was a speaker at the National Catholic Mission for 2010. The rejection of dissent by the competent authority is essential to the recovery of *Humanae vitae* in Canada.

### CONTRACEPTION AND CIVIL LAW

On September 9, 1966, the CCCB submitted to the Canadian House of Commons Committee on Health and Welfare a document on the proposed change in the law on contraception. Until that time, it was a punishable crime to give information about or to distribute the means of preventing conception.

Incredibly, the Canadian bishops did not oppose the legislation although the prohibition of contraception is a moral absolute, binding all, Catholic and non-Catholic. They said that the good of public peace "might well be lost by attempts to oppose it" i.e. attempts to oppose the new legislation. They embraced the error of relativism when they said: "A large number of our fellow citizens believe that this law (the present legislation) violates their rights to be informed and helped towards responsible parenthood in accordance with their personal beliefs." They went so far as to say, "We would easily envisage an active cooperation and even leadership on the part of lay Catholics to change a law which under present conditions they might well judge to be harmful to public order and the common good."

So, our Canadian Bishops became complicit in infant homicides through contraceptives and the prevention of millions of persons who should have been and never will be. This betrayal of Catholic doctrine deserves an apology and correction from our bishops.

### THE WINNIPEG STATEMENT

If Canada is to recover the truth of *Humanae vitae*, our bishops must reject the Winnipeg Statement of September 27, 1968. This was the Canadian Bishops' response to the request of the Holy See to stand firm with the Pope on his presentation of the Church's teaching and "to explain and justify the reason for it." Winnipeg was a grand opportunity to stop the errors already widespread in seminaries, colleges, pulpits and confessionals. Instead, it was an affirmation and confirmation of all the dissent which preceded it.

The full analysis of the errors, double-talk and dissent of the Winnipeg Statement has yet to be written. The worst paragraph is n. 26. When I met Cardinal Pignedoli, former Apostolic delegate to Canada on September 27, 1968, he said to me "Do you not think paragraph 26 is the worst?" Indeed, it was. Here is the text:

"Counsellors meet others who, accepting the teaching of the Holy Father, find that because of particular circumstances they are involved in what seems to them a clear conflict of duties, e.g. the reconciling of conjugal love and responsible parenthood with

the education of children already born or with the health of the mother. In accord with the accepted principles or moral theology, if these persons have tried sincerely, but without success to pursue a line of conduct in keeping with the given directives, they may be safely assured that whoever chooses that course which seems right to him does so in good conscience."

Thousands of times, couples have used this "killer paragraph" to justify their use of contraceptive pills and devices, whether abortifacient or non-abortifacient."

It is not surprising that Bishop Alexander Carter, President of the CCCB, admitted that

Statement was not a formal endorsement of the encyclical. Father Edward Sheridan SJ, one of the "periti" at Winnipeg, wrote: "The Statement contained no general profession of assent

### SIX BISHOPS REFUSED TO SIGN THE STATEMENT



Archbishop Henri Routhier of Grouard-McLennan, AL



Archbishop James F. Carney of Vancouver, BC



Archbishop Joseph Wilhelm of Kingston, ON



Bishop Joseph Ryan of Hamilton, ON



Bishop John M. O'Neill of Grand Falls, NL



Bishop Laurent Morin of Prince Albert, SK



*Cardinal Edouard Gagnon... expressed more than once the opinion that those Canadian bishops who supported the Winnipeg Statement were in schism.*

to the whole teaching of Human life; and nothing that could be interpreted as adding the local authority of the Canadian Hierarchy to that of the encyclical in general."

(Canadian Bishops on "Of Human Life", by Rev. Edward Sheridan SJ, *America*, Oct, 19, 1968, p. 349). No wonder Douglas Roche wrote in the *Western Catholic Reporter* (Oct. 2, 1968): "The issue is over in Canada. Catholics are free to use contraceptives if their informed conscience so prompts them."

Cardinal Edouard Gagnon, P.S.S., (1918-2007), one-time head of the Committee of the Family and later President of the Council for the Family, expressed more than once the opinion that those Canadian bishops who supported the Winnipeg Statement were in schism. In truth, by the Winnipeg Statement, Canadian bishops became promoters of mass murder and complicit in turning thousand of sewers into tombs.

### DOUBLE TALK OR DOUBLE THINK

Double talk is the affirmation of two contradictory positions. It is a destroyer of the truth. It was used in the Winnipeg Statement itself and subsequent Statements to permit contraception.

Many persons saw the double talk in the Winnipeg Statement. One wrote me: "The Bishops are talking out of both sides of their mouth at once." Another wrote: "The whole section (par. 17 of the Statement) is a prime example of double-think, which is the ability to hold two diametrically opposed views in one's mind at the same time and believe both of them" (John C. Caines, *BC Catholic*, Oct 17, 1968).

In the wake of much criticism of the Winnipeg Statement the CCCB set up a special "ad hoc" committee to reply to this criticism. Its purpose was "to follow up the Canadian Bishops September 1968 Statement on *Humanae vitae*." The report of the Committee was adapted by the General Assembly of Canadian Bishops on April 18, 1969. In part, it read:

"Nothing could be gained and much lost to rephrase what we have said in Winnipeg. We stand squarely behind our position but we feel it our duty to insist on a proper interpretation of that position."

At the same time they said "We wish to reiterate our positive conviction that a Catholic Christian is not free to form his conscience without consideration of the magisterium, in the particular instance exercised by the Holy Father in an encyclical letter." They omit to say that there is an obligation not only to consider the Church's magisterium, but to **conform** to it (cf. Vatican II, *The Church in the Modern World*, n. 50). This double-talk led to the widespread acceptance of the death-dealing paragraph 26 of the Winnipeg Statement.

In December of 1973, the Canadian Bishops published a lengthy *Statement on the Formation of Conscience*. It was a good Statement. The late Msgr. William Smith, a much respected moral theologian and professor at Dunwoodie Seminary, told me that it was likely the response to a request from the Holy See.

The problem was that, though it spoke of moral absolutes and the obligation of conforming one's conscience to the magisterium of the Church, it made **no** reference to the Winnipeg Statement or contraception. It had no appreciable effect in correcting the Winnipeg error. The main writer of the Statement continued to support the Winnipeg Statement. After that Statement, an Archbishop wrote to me that he did not waver in his support of the Winnipeg Statement, but hoped that would not affect our friendship. In effect, this Statement on Conscience became nothing more than double talk.

The Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops issued *Guidelines for Family Life Education* on May 11, 1977. It repeated paragraph 26 of the Winnipeg Statement. We are told, "This Statement cannot be understood as lessening the full force of the Church's teaching against artificial contraception" (p.11). How else could it be understood?

On November 1, 1983, the Bishops of Ontario issued more guidelines. Again they re-affirmed par. 26 of the Winnipeg Statement. Once more, we have double-talk.

There has been much double-talk in Marriage Preparation courses. One, called *Mosaic*, published by Novalis (1980, 1986), calls the teaching of *Humanae vitae* an "ideal" and "views." It is replete with other double-talk, including par. 26 of the Winnipeg Statement.

### THE CCCB'S WORKING PAPERS ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

In 1978, Father Dennis Murphy, General Secretary of the CCCB, announced that the theme of Christian Family Life would be the future work of the Canadian Conference. He described the plight of the family in Canada as extremely serious (*Catholic Register*, July 22, 1978).

The first step in this recovery of the family was a CCCB Working Paper on *Marriage and the Family*. It was a text of 190 pages. Amazingly, there is no mention of *Humanae vitae*. It relies largely on theological opinion, including that of Schillebeeckx, Rahner, Fuchs, Boff and others. It talks of "A New Style of Church." It criticizes those who "continue to stress the clerical character of the Church. It confirms the Winnipeg Statement by recommending gravely defective marriage preparation courses such as "Projet Marriage" and "Mosaic."

A second working paper called *Responsible Procreation* was issued in 1983. It was part of a kit called "Responsible Parenting." It was Canada's response to the Synod on the Family, but refers to the Vatican's *Familiaris consortio* only once. It follows the syncretic approach of quoting from dissenting hierarchies and dissenting theologians e.g. Curran, Rahner, Shannon, Häring, as well as some orthodox sources. It creates an impression of uncertainty and confusion. It concludes, "To state that it is possible for everyone to carry out this law (against contraception) would risk creating in the faithful a feeling of despair and guilt" (p. 52).

These disastrous working papers did nothing to stop the deterioration of family life in Canada. **Are Catholics not entitled to an orthodox correction of errors?** Should there not be an investigation by the CCCB on how these anti-magisterial views could be presented as truth to the Canadian people?

### SPIRITUAL MEANS

The contraceptive mentality underlying the culture of death is first of all a spiritual problem and the extermination of this spiritual plague demands a spiritual solution.

Our primary source of grace is the Eucharist. Of immense value are Masses for Life. Bishops could order or request diocesan programs of Masses for Life. Priests in their parishes could have Masses for Life. The laity could offer Masses for Life. A multitude of Masses for Life, against abortion and contraceptive practice would bring a multitude of blessings.

Next come Holy Communion for life: for children in the womb, for pregnant women, for those who have had abortions, for broken families, for those preparing for marriage, for the courage to have large families, for the grace to forego contraception. These are some of the intentions for which Holy Communion could be offered.

During World War II, many bishops ordered an extra prayer at Mass for peace. It was called an "oratio imperata". Such an *ordered prayer* could be added to every Mass – for the end of abortion. It should be remembered that more lives have been lost through abortifacient contraception and surgical abortions than by all the wars of history.

Next come sacramentals: means instituted by the Church to bring grace. There could be Rosaries, Signs of the Cross with holy water, candles lighted, statues honoured, relics venerated, Stations of the Cross made, medals worn, scapulars and many more – all for the Cause of Life.

No prayer is unanswered. St. Alphonsus said that the difference between a soul that is saved and one that is lost is that one prayed and the other did not. Prayer can mean the difference between a culture of life and a culture of death. Prayer for Life is a major armour in the present great cause: personal prayer, Novenas and Rosaries for Life, informal prayers and prayers from prayer cards. Every individual can participate in the Great Prayer Crusade. A morning offering can transform every good action during the day into a life-saving prayer.

Mortification, sacrifices and suffering have their important role. Sickness and infirmities are spiritual gold, to be offered for the Life cause.

Almsgiving brings its own graces. Nearly everyone in a small or large way can contribute to the great glorious struggle for the recovery of *Humanae vitae* in Canada.

So, by all these and other spiritual ways the great spiritual arms of the People of God can and must be enlisted in stopping the slaughter of the innocent.

### CATHOLIC HOSPITALS

An essential factor in the recovery of *Humanae vitae* in Canada is the reform of Catholic hospitals.

In 1970, a *Medico-Morals Guide* was approved by the Canadian bishops for use in Catholic hospitals. While it opposed contraception (article 19) and sterilization as a means of contraception (article 18) it included the addendum: "Reference should be made to the Canadian bishops' documents on the practical application of this general directive." This double-talk was the death-knell for our Catholic hospitals. Soon they went the Winnipeg way.

My own introduction to what was happening came in the Fall of 1972. A distraught husband came to me to complain that his wife was going to be sterilized in a Catholic hospital. It seemed quite incredible. I contacted the doctor in person and went over with him the Church's teachings. He listened politely and said: "You should not be talking to me but to your Archbishop." I visited the Superior of the hospital, a widely respected religious. Her reply was, "Whom should I follow: you or the Archbishop? The Archbishop tells me that what we are doing is in accord with the thinking of the Canadian bishops." I said I thought the hospital should follow the teaching of the Church. I wrote my Archbishop but knew from the reply that nothing would be done.

Among other fruitless efforts, about 1991, I visited the head of the Cardinal Carter Bioethics Institute, who had some influence on hospital ethics. He did not know of the decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of March 13, 1975, forbidding contraceptive sterilization in Catholic hospitals, and asked where it might be found. Again, no results. A letter to Cardinal Carter elicited surprise at the situation, but on the advice of his public relations consultant, nothing was done.

We now have a situation in Catholic hospitals inconceivable before the Winnipeg Statement. A Catholic doctor, now deceased, told me that he was ridiculed for refusing to perform, or to assist, at direct sterilizations in St. Michael's Hospital.

St. Michael's hospital is one example of the practice of moral relativism. Others could be named. Nurses have been pressured to assist at immoral procedures. In Quebec, statistics affirm that one-third of women of marriageable age have been sterilized by tubal ligation.

With the loss of integrity has gone the joy and pride of practising medicine according to the mind of Christ the Great Physician.

It is obvious that to recover *Humanae vitae* in Canada there should be a survey of Catholic hospitals. Their reform is the responsibility of our Bishops. If that cannot be done, the hospitals should be declared no longer Catholic and the reasons given. We have as an example Bishop Robert Vasa of Baker, Oregon. In *The Catholic World Report* of April 2010 we read that the diocese of Baker is ending its sponsorship of St. Charles Medical Center, Bend because the hospital persists in performing tubal ligations. The bishop said: "It is my responsibility to ensure the hospital is

following Catholic principles in name and in fact.”

### THE HOMILY

Since *Humanae vitae* and the Winnipeg Statement, the pulpits in Canada have, in the main, been silent about the great evil of contraception. In some dioceses, condemnation of the subjective conscience was met with reprisals. I could give details of how a pastor lost his parish when he publicly corrected his assistant, who told the congregation that the Canadian bishops gave Catholics the freedom to decide for themselves whether to use contraceptives. The associate pastor was promoted to a larger parish. In another instance, a priest preached that the Church was like a mother: we love her but we could differ with her, as in the case of contraception. I reported this to a bishop and was told, “I support the Winnipeg Statement.”

A great step forward would be made if more homilies were given on the prophetic truths of *Humanae vitae*. A correspondent to the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* (Feb. 2009) wrote, “Until priests preach the eternal problems that result from the ugly sin of contraception things are not going to get better.”

Before the dissent following the discovery of the contraceptive pill, homilies were regular and faithful to the truth. Even during the Depression when non-Catholic denominations gradually followed the Anglicans in permitting contraception, Catholics in the great majority remained faithful and family life flourished. There was no double-talk. Consider this admirable excerpt of a Pastoral letter of Archbishop (later Cardinal) Hayes given on Christian Family Life in 1921:

“Heinous is the sin committed against the creative act of God, Who through the marriage contract invites men and women to cooperate with Him in the propagation of the human family. To take life after its inception is a horrible crime; but to prevent human life that the Creator is about to bring into being, is satanic. In the first instance, the body is killed, while the soul lives on; in the latter, not only a body but an immortal soul is denied existence in time and eternity. It has been reserved to our day to see advocated shamelessly the legalizing of such a diabolical thing.”

Cardinal Hayes could not visualise that one day Canadian bishops would offer to assist in the legalization of contraception, rightly called a diabolical thing.

While all those who preach may expound the multiple evils of contraception and the multiple blessings following the observance of God’s law of life, diocesan instruction on this matter would be of considerable help.

### THE PRENUPTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Prenuptial questionnaires must be filled out before every marriage. The purpose of the prenuptial investigation is primarily to determine whether there is any impediment to the marriage. The questions are approved by the local bishops.

Until *Humanae vitae*, it was customary to inquire whether the

couple intended to abide by the teaching of the Church regarding birth control. This gave the priest the opportunity to explain that teaching. If the answer was in the negative, pastoral care required counselling to obtain enough information to determine whether the intention was illicit or invalidating. If the latter, of course, the priest could not assist at the marriage.

In later years in many dioceses, the question asked is, “Do you intend to have children of your marriage?” If the answer is yes, no further question is asked. Yet even though the answer is yes, the intention could be either sinful or invalidating. The priest must determine whether the intention was either an abuse of the marriage, or an intention to exclude the right to offspring. The exclusion of the right to have children, unilateral or bilateral, for always, or for a time, would **invalidate** marriage consent.

The restoration of the Culture of Life in Canada requires a careful review of the pre-nuptial questionnaire, and questions to be asked, to determine the validity of the consent and the pastoral advice to be given.

### CATHOLIC GROUPS AND SOCIETIES

Every Catholic group and society should be marshalled in the struggle for life. Primary are groups whose main purpose is to re-establish a culture of life. We are fortunate in having *Sisters of Life* in Canada. They deserve the support of bishops, priests and laity. Like support should be given **Priests for Life** in their noble pursuit of pro-life values. There are other commendable groups like *Campaign Life Coalition*. Every Catholic society should be involved in the struggle for life through many and varied projects. The *Catholic Womens League*, *Knights of Columbus* and many others can all do their share.

The Catholic press and media should give primary place to the promotion, spread and catechesis of every conceivable means to build up pro-life values and defeat anti-life policies and groups.

So, step by step society will be permeated with the noble projects and efforts to restore to Canada its divine call to support Family and Life and Love.

### SACRILEGIOUS HOLY COMMUNIONS

Statistics vary slightly on the percentage of Catholics of child-bearing age using contraceptives. The percentage is in the neighbourhood of 80%. Although many have lost their Faith, many contracept and receive Holy Communion sacrilegiously. This spiritual evil is a significant factor in the decline of the Church in Canada. A number of American bishops have asked that those using contraceptives not receive Holy Communion. The caution should be announced in every diocese and every parish. This caution would be a factor leading some to repentance and to the valid reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. An end or near end to sacrilegious Holy Communions is an imperative to the spiritual life of Canada.

## SEMINARIES

Many older priests were taught by seminary professors infected by the Winnipeg Statement. When Fathers D'Amico and Daly were expelled from St. John Vianney Seminary in Buffalo for dissenting from *Humanae vitae*, they were welcomed to Toronto and taught at St. Augustine's Seminary. When I was pastor of St. John's parish in Toronto (1966-1973), a seminarian came to me and asked where he could find a good seminary. He said that a professor professed not to accept *Humanae vitae* but asked that his views remain private.

When I was on a bus with priests and seminarians returning ciboria of Hosts after the Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II in Toronto in 1984, I was seated next to a senior seminarian. I asked him about the teaching on *Humanae vitae*. He said they were told it was a wonderful ideal but of course one could not insist on it in the confessional: penitents had a right to freedom of conscience.

For many years, seminarians at St. Peter's Seminary in London were taught that the Winnipeg Statement was both magisterial and collegial, when it was neither. They were taught that *Humanae vitae* could be changed, when three Popes had declared that the law against contraception could not be changed because it is divine natural law.

Many persons over the years have told me that priests in the confessional have told them that for sufficient reasons they could use the Pill.

In the Winnipeg Statement we read: "The difficulties of this instruction have been felt by the priests of the Church, and by many others. We have been requested to provide guidelines to assist them, thus we will endeavour to accomplish in a subsequent document" (n. 19). That document was never written. It would seem important for bishops to ensure that the present teaching in our seminaries is orthodox.

It is important to note that I am not here imputing the present teaching in our seminaries. I simply do not know what is being taught. I have reason to believe that there is excellent leadership and guidance at St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto. I suggest only that the importance of educating seminarians to become good confessors merits a serious review.

## BISHOPS

To our bishops, our chief shepherds, our own successors to the apostles, belongs the arduous task of restoring *Humanae vitae* to Can-

ada. To them Pope Paul VI addressed these words in the encyclical:

"We implore you to give a lead to your priests who assist you in the sacred ministry, and to the faithful of your diocese, and to devote yourselves with all zeal and without delay to safeguarding the holiness of marriage, in order to guide married life to its full human and Christian Perfection. Consider this mission as one of your most urgent responsibilities at the present time." (n. 30)

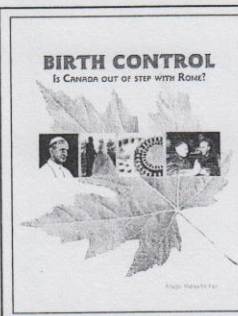
Tragically, Canadian bishops as a group betrayed God, Church and family in their Winnipeg Statement and in other ways. The individuals responsible have gone to face God in judgment. Now we are fortunate in having many ardent faithful pro-life bishops. It is for them to undo as far as possible the errors of the past.

We ought to support with prayers and thanks every pro-life word and action of our bishops. May they be faithful to the admonition of St. Paul to Timothy as they "impart the Word of truth without deviation" (Second Letter of Paul to Timothy 2:15). As I wrote on the twentieth Anniversary of *Humanae vitae*, "Those bishops who withdraw the Winnipeg Statement and replace it with the life-giving, grace-giving and peace-giving teaching of the Church will be forever honoured."

## END NOTE

This article is not a complete analysis of the Canadian tragedy. There are many other factors which brought the culture of death to Canada. Catechesis in general has been defective. Children in grade school learned of all the means of contraception. Dissent has been rampant in Catholic schools and colleges. For years errors were sold in Catholic churches through the dissenting *Catholic New Times* and some Catholic newspapers. Conferences sometimes featured dissenting speakers. Arch-heretic Gregory Baum was invited to speak in Catholic universities. Marriage preparation courses have been defective. Hundreds of thousand of texts supporting the Winnipeg Statement were sold in Canada, the US and even Australia. My aim has been to write an introduction to a great tragedy and to suggest some of the means of restoring the truth about Life and Love given to us through the Church with the authority of Christ (*Humanae vitae* n. 6).

*Msgr. Vincent Foy, in his mid-90s now, is a canon lawyer and catechist who has written widely on Humanae vitae. Ω*



## THEOLOGY FOR THE LAITY

Ever since the Canadian Bishops issued their equivocal response to Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae vitae*, Monsignor Vincent Foy has been their persistent and indomitable critic.

Here he documents that the Winnipeg Statement, even decades after it was issued, continues to confuse the faithful, and ought to be withdrawn once and for all. Contraception does not deserve a defence.

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