

Why does the Catholic Church teach that Birth Control is Wrong?

The Catholic Church teaches that artificial birth control (things like condoms, the Pill, IUD's etc.) is wrong (gravely sinful) for a very simple reason: **because it is a lie about the meaning of sexual intercourse.** The meaning or truth of sexual intercourse is twofold: love and babies. Artificial birth control rips apart that twofold purpose. It separates what God has joined together. Remember, sex is God's idea, and therefore, **SEX IS SACRED.** Sex is "about" family- sex is about faithful love (until death do us part) and the creation of new life. That is why sex is holy only in marriage. That is why artificial birth control, whether in or out of marriage, is a lie.

It is interesting to consider what has happened to our society since birth control became widely available and acceptable back in the 60's: huge rates of abortion, divorce, STD's, pornography, teen pregnancy, promiscuity, sexual abuse, etc. Our Lord Jesus Christ always teaches us that we should see what fruits result from our actions. Birth control has produced a truly horrific harvest of pain, suffering, and death.

But does the Church teach that a married couple has to have as many children as possible? Of course not! The Church urges us to be generous in bringing new life into the world, but also says that for serious reasons a married couple may space their children using **NFP** (natural family planning). NFP is highly reliable and works with the woman's natural cycle of fertility. (It is not the "rhythm" method).

But you might ask, what is the difference between NFP and ABC (artificial birth control)? NFP is to ABC what fasting is to bulimia. With NFP there are no chemicals (most of which can cause abortion) or barriers, but only a period of abstinence which is very good for promoting the positive virtue of self-mastery, similar to what we do when we occasionally fast from food. But ABC is like bulimia: in bulimia the two purposes of eating, nourishment and satisfaction, are ripped apart. The bulimic eats for the satisfaction, and then throws up to avoid the nourishment.

Most of us want eventually to fall in love and get married. The best way to ensure a lasting and loving marriage is to follow the four steps recommended by Professor Janet Smith: 1. Stay away from premarital sex, 2. Get married in the Church, 3. Use NFP if you have serious reasons to do so, and 4. Stay close to Christ through prayer and the sacraments.

Suggested further reading: The Catechism of the Catholic Church
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