

DIPPING INTO THE CATECHISM

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From the Compendium to the Catechism paragraphs: 497-507

WHEN IS IT MORAL TO REGULATE BIRTHS ?

The regulation of births, which is an aspect of responsible fatherhood and motherhood, is objectively morally acceptable when it is pursued by the spouses without external pressure; when it is practiced not out of selfishness but for serious reasons; and with methods that conform to the objective criteria of morality, that is, periodic continence and use of the infertile periods.

WHAT ARE IMMORAL MEANS OF BIRTH CONTROL ?

Every action – for example, direct sterilisation or contraception – is intrinsically immoral which (either in anticipation of the conjugal act, in its accomplishment or in the development of its natural consequences) proposes, as an end or as a means, to hinder procreation.

WHY ARE ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION AND ARTIFICIAL FERTILISATION IMMORAL ?

They are immoral because they dissociate procreation from the act with which the spouses give themselves to each other and so introduce the domination of technology over the origin and destiny of the human person. Furthermore, heterologous insemination and fertilisation with the use of techniques that involve a person other than the married couple infringe upon the right of a child to be born of a father and mother known to him, bound to each other by marriage and having the exclusive right to become parents only through each other.



HOW SHOULD CHILDREN BE CONSIDERED ?

A child is a gift of God, the supreme gift of marriage. There is no such thing as a right to have children (eg. “a child at any cost”). But a child does have the right to be the fruit of the conjugal act of its parents as well as the right to be respected as a person from the moment of conception.

WHAT CAN SPOUSES DO WHEN THEY DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN?

Should the gift of a child not be given to them, after exhausting all legitimate medical options, spouses can show their generosity by way of foster care or adoption or by performing meaningful services for others. In this way they realise a precious spiritual fruitfulness.

WHAT ARE THE OFFENCES AGAINST THE DIGNITY OF MARRIAGE ?

These are: adultery, divorce, polygamy, incest, so-called “free unions (cohabitation, concubinage), and sexual acts before or outside of marriage.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL NOT STEAL

What is set forth by the seventh commandment ?

The seventh commandment requires respect for the universal destination and distribution of goods and the private ownership of them, as well as respect for persons, their property, and the integrity of creation. The Church also finds in this Commandment the basis for her social doctrine which involves the correct way of acting in economic, social and political life, the right and the duty of human labour, justice and solidarity among nations, and love for the poor.

Under what conditions does the right to private property exist ?

The right to private property exists provided the property is acquired or received in a *just* way and that the universal destination of goods for the satisfaction of the basic needs of all takes precedence.

What is the purpose of private property ?

The purpose of private property is to guarantee the freedom and dignity of individual persons by helping them to meet the basic needs of those in their charge and also of others who are in need.

What does the seventh commandment require ?

The seventh commandment requires respect for the goods of others through the practice of justice and charity, temperance and solidarity. In particular it requires respect for promises made and contracts agreed to, reparation for injustice committed and restitution of stolen goods, and respect for the integrity of creation by the prudent and moderate use of the mineral, vegetable and animal resources of the universe with special attention to those species which are in danger of extinction.

What attitude should people have toward animals ?

People must treat animals with kindness as creatures of God and avoid both excessive love for them and an indiscriminate use of them especially by scientific experiments that go beyond reasonable limits and entail needless suffering for the animals.

It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access to these and online or real group sessions contact deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk