

December 11, 2011 – Homily Notes

“Lord, sanctify us in Your Truth: Your Word is Truth. Amen.”

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today it is our heartfelt desire to be drawn by the Holy Spirit as deeply as possible into the world that is coming,

 into the world healed by God and fully alive
into the world in which each person fits the masterful description which Paul provides in the closing benediction of his First Letter to the Thessalonians, today’s Second Reading:

“May the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit & soul & body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, & He will do it.”

Yes, at the coming of the Lord,

 this harmony of spirit, soul, and body will be true of **everyone**.
But St. Paul says that it can and should be true NOW of US.

In the midst of a fragmented world,

 where the norm is people living lives that are terribly broken-down
 and fragmented,
you and I have been called by God to “get it together”,
 and we’ve been given the ability to do it,
even if we ourselves have been fragmented for years.

You heard it yourself:

“He who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.”

Last week we heard how horribly fragmenting pornography is, for people of all ages,

and we received resources for freeing ourselves and our families from this diabolical curse that only ever destroys people.

Today I want to lift up Natural Family Planning, NFP, as God's way to combat the curse of artificial contraception with all of the lies and myths that surround it.

How?

By replacing it with something that is incomparably better because it honours the fact that spirit, soul, and body constitute who a person is, and you can't do violence to the body God gave you without also doing violence to the spirit and the soul.

NFP honours all three,

and that's why people who discover NFP after trying to do it the world's way and while still wanting to practise the Faith tell us they didn't know life, marriage, and intimacy could be so good.

Now, once again, a homily is no place to go into the details,

but it is the right place to cite a few pertinent facts about what's **wrong** with cooperating with the world's way and what's **right** with cooperating with God's way and to invite you to learn more and discover for yourself how good it can be.

You can learn a lot more important details about it from the CD's we have for you as you leave today.

In 1968 Pope Paul VI issued his encyclical “*Humanae Vitae*” in which he described what marital intimacy is intended by God to be, and went on to outlaw artificial contraception for Catholics both because of what it **destroys** between husband and wife and because of its foreseeable consequences in society.

At the time, most people thought he was wrong on both accounts. Today, even thoughtful non-Catholics herald him as a prophet we should all have been listening to.

In his Theology of the Body Pope John Paul II showed how right his predecessor was on the first point, and anyone over 60 years of age knows from their own experience how right he was on the second point.

In brief, he said that with wide-spread use of artificial contraception, sex would cease for most people to be the sacramental seal of a committed life-long relationship that gets better with the years, and be dumbed down to a recreation sport that leaves people empty, unfulfilled, and perpetually stuck in all the anxieties of early adolescence.

He said that women would become objects of lust, and come to **see** themselves only as such to their own great loss, rather than co-equal but complementary companions of the heart. And this at the cost of doing terrible violence to their own bodies!

And that men would define themselves in terms mainly of their lusts, and not as husbands and fathers in the image of God, to their inestimable personal loss and to the detriment of society.

And, he said, the greatest losers of all would be the children,
both the born and the unborn.

He defined in 1968 what modern Western society has become without ever having seen it except by prophetic vision and by drawing out the logical consequences of artificial contraception among sin-prone humans

In the bulletin for today you have an introductory brochure to NFP.
It's very very exciting: Why?

- 1) It works, both for restricting family size and for increasing it.
- 2) It is more effective than artificial contraceptives.
- 3) It does no violence to a woman's body.
- 4) There are two or more effective approaches to doing it that work separately or in combination (This is NOT the old "rhythm method" otherwise known as "Catholic roulette").
- 5) The divorce rate among couples who practise it ranges from 1% to 5% compared to over 50% for the general population.
- 6) Sexual intimacy never loses its sacramental quality or its ability to satisfy, because it is in the service of committed love and genuine care for the partner.
- 7) The Couple-to-Couple League provides first class material online, plus an online mentoring service to couples just getting started.
- 8) The experience in India proves that it works on a grand scale.

For all these reasons and more, the Archbishop is determined to make NFP available to all of our families. The lies of our lost culture need to be unmasked. The beautiful truth of our Faith needs to replace them.

And it needs to happen NOW, for the good of all concerned.