

**Misconceptions and Clarifications on Issues Related to Humanae Vitae
and the Reproductive "Health" Bill in Philippine Congress.**

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<p style="text-align: center;">MISCONCEPTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CLARIFICATIONS (<u>underlined</u> texts come from the Reproductive Bill currently [August 2008] filed in Congress; emphasis in bold letters added)</p>
<p>The world is overpopulated. Global population will soar to 11.9 billion by 2050.</p>	<p>"Yet this is not the full story. To the contrary, in fact. Across the globe, people are having fewer and fewer children. Fertility rates have dropped by half since 1972, from six children per woman to 2.9. And demographers say they're still falling, faster than ever. The world's population will continue to grow—from today's 6.4 billion to around 9 billion in 2050. But after that, it will go sharply into decline. Indeed, a phenomenon that we're destined to learn much more about—depopulation—has already begun in a number of countries. Welcome to the New Demography. It will change everything about our world, from the absolute size and power of nations to global economic growth to the quality of our lives." [Michael Meyer, "Birth Dearth," in <i>Newsweek</i>, September 27, 2004, p. 58. Since the 1970's, several demographers, economists, and other experts have been informing the public of these trends.]</p>
<p>Overpopulation is a scientific fact.</p>	<p>Not overpopulation, but population ageing and underpopulation, as seen in these sample article titles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>European Pension Systems Set to Collapse. Low Fertility Blamed</i>, in <i>Friday Fax</i>, May 4, 2000. * <i>Underpopulation, Not Overpopulation, the Real Global Problem</i>, in <i>Washington Post</i>, March 18, 2001. * <i>Developed Nations Warned on Aging Crisis Time Bomb</i>, in <i>Manila Bulletin</i>, Aug 30, 2001. * <i>Have Three Babies to Sustain the Population</i>, in <i>Daily Telegraph</i>, Dec. 12, 2003. * <i>Asian Economies Desperate for Babies</i>, in <i>Daily News Express</i>, Feb. 2, 2004. * <i>Have More Babies, Say the Tories</i>, in <i>Daily Mail</i>, September 22, 2003:

	<p>"Women should have more babies to stave off the looming crisis of an ageing population, the Tories will say today. The call to 'go forth and multiply' comes from work and pensions spokesman David Willetts, who wants couples to send birth rates soaring."</p> <p>* <i>In address to Estonians, President Calls on Citizens to Make More Babies</i>, in <i>New York Times</i>, January 2, 2003: "Worried about a declining population, Estonia's president has urged the country's 1.4 million residents to make more babies. 'Let us remember that in just a couple of decades the number of Estonians seeing the New Year will be one-fifth less than today,' President Arnold Ruutel said in a speech broadcast live on national television Wednesday."</p>
<p>Our population growth rate of 2.04% is extremely high.</p>	<p>The CIA gives a much lower estimate of 1.728% (World Factbook Country Listing of 2008, available on the internet).</p>
<p>We should aim for a Zero Population Growth Rate.</p>	<p>Zero Population Growth Rate will make the Filipino race at first extremely old, and then rare, and finally extinct.</p>
<p>Filipino families have too many children.</p>	<p>"The UN Population Division figures indicate that <i>it is not an exaggeration to say that as early as now the Philippine Total Fertility Rate [children per woman] is already dangerously low</i>. Whereas in the early 1970's the average Filipina had six children, today she has around three, and in another 20 years, only two. Shortly after 2020, or just fifteen years from now, the Philippine TFR will sink below its replacement level of around 2.29."</p> <p>[Rev. Fr. Gregory D. Gaston, STD, <i>World Population Collapse: Lessons for the Philippines</i>, in <i>Familia et Vita</i>, vol. XII (2007) no. 2, pp. 84-113, paragraph no. 22. Henceforth referred to as WPC and paragraph number.]</p>
<p>Having two children should be the ideal family size.</p>	<p><u>SEC. 16. Ideal Family Size.</u> – <u>The State shall assist couples, parents and individuals to achieve their desired family size within the context of responsible parenthood for sustainable development and encourage them to have two children as the ideal family size.</u></p> <p>As of now the Philippines' total fertility rate, or children per woman, is projected to go below replacement (2.29 children per woman) by 2025. After that we will experience the population ageing and collapse taking place today in rich countries, and like them, we will also wish to pay parents to have more children--but unlike them, we will have no money to do so.</p> <p>Pushing for only two children per family will make all this occur even earlier.</p> <p>(Note that two children per family would give a total fertility rate of much</p>

	<p>lower than two, since women without children would have to be included in the computation of "children per woman," or total fertility rate.)</p>
<p>Intensified population control programs will slow down population growth, improve the economy soon, and thus solve poverty.</p>	<p>"The effect desired by population controllers, the slowing of population growth, will not immediately take place, due to population momentum, decreased mortality and longer lifespan. By the time population growth will have slowed down, the Total Fertility Rate will be way below the replacement level, and the average population age will be extremely high. In other words, the solution proposed to solve poverty, that is, population control programs, will just create more economic difficulties in the long run. Nor may one say that we should limit population growth now, hope for rapid economic development, and finally try to solve whatever problem might come up in the future. It will simply be too late by then. Countries that were already rich 30 to 40 years ago when their TFR's started to decline, and are now ageing, encounter extreme difficulty in solving their economic problems today. Their efforts to encourage their citizens to produce more children have not yielded acceptable results after a decade. They depend on immigration to maintain their population growth. The Philippines is not a rich country today, and may or may not be rich within 50 years. How will it support its ageing population? Will it also invite workers from other countries to replace its dwindling workforce? How will it attract immigrants if it has no jobs to offer to its people in the first place? Even if it becomes rich by then, it will have to face the same problems rich countries face now, and will have to tell the people to raise more children. We simply cannot afford to fall into the trap rich countries have fallen into 30-40 years ago, and from which they desperately try to escape today. <i>Graphically speaking, we cannot afford to have in the future a population pyramid like theirs now, and then, like them today, wish to regain the population pyramid we have now.</i>" [WPC 26]</p>
<p>In ruling out population control as a solution to poverty, the Catholic Church teaches that the people should beget as many children as they can, following God's command, to "go forth and multiply."</p>	<p>"'Ruling out population control' simply means not encouraging people to have few children, which is <i>entirely different from telling them to have all the children they can possibly produce.</i> Parents should instead be guided and supported to attain the number of children they can generously and responsibly raise and educate. For some spouses, this means having one child or two; for others, five, ten, twelve, fifteen or even more. Neither the government nor the Catholic Church may compel, instruct, or encourage spouses to raise a specified number of children, as what population control programs definitely try to do, either through massive propaganda, or through deceptive and coercive policies. Rather, the government and the Catholic Church should form and guide the people to reflect on their actual circumstances, and to freely, generously and responsibly decide whether to have another child now, or not to have another child for the time being or indefinitely. This is one aspect of responsible parenthood, which the Catholic Church has always taught, and which takes into account both the real capacities of individual spouses and the national demographic situation." [WPC 27]</p>

<p>The Catholic Church has always recognized the existence of a "population problem," and the government's intervention in the decision-making of spouses as to the number of children they beget.</p>	<p>In recognizing that it is legitimate for the state "to intervene to orient the demography of the population," it immediately adds that, "This can be done by means of objective and respectful information, but certainly not by authoritarian, coercive measures. The state may not legitimately usurp the initiative of spouses, who have the primary responsibility for the procreation and education of their children. In this area, it is not authorized to employ means contrary to the moral law" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2372).</p> <p><i>Humanae Vitae</i> (no. 2) describes some changes taking place in 1968. "In the first place there is the rapid increase in population which has made many fear that world population is going to grow faster than available resources, with the consequence that many families and developing countries would be faced with greater hardships."</p> <p>Note that while <i>Humanae Vitae</i> in this point observes that there is the rapid increase in world population, it merely expresses the fear of many, without owning that fear, that world population is going to grow faster than available resources. Today, forty years later, we can see for a fact that while population has grown, food production has grown even more.</p> <p>"Since 1965 to 1994 the population of the world has nearly doubled, but food production has kept well ahead... United Nations figures show there has been a rise of over 30% in the period 1951-92 in food production per capita, that is to say the amount of food which would be available to each person in the world if it were divided equally. This has occurred in spite of the fact that Western farmers are paid millions of dollars a year to keep land out of production. If these European and American farmers were to produce to their capacity, food prices would collapse as a result of the glut (<i>Population Facts and Myths</i>, published on the Internet in 1994 by the National Association of Catholic Families in the UK). The problem then is not food production but proper distribution. Hence the solution should not be to reduce the number of consumers, but social justice.</p> <p>In recent years, Church documents have focused greatly on the <i>fall of fertility</i>, which, "very significant in almost all parts of the world, is irrefutable and evident from the facts published by specialized organizations. It is, nonetheless, frequently disregarded (Pontifical Council for the Family, <i>The Ethical and Pastoral Dimensions of Population Trends</i>, March 25, 1994). Such fall in fertility is the real "population problem" today.</p>
<p>The Catholic Church is not concerned with the plight of the poor in the country.</p>	<p>The Catholic Church dedicates a huge part of its efforts at the service of the poor, helping the government: education, microlending, presence in slum areas and garbage, orphanages, feeding programs, social action projects, calamities, opposition to destructive mining and destructive logging, Pondo ng Pinoy, Caritas, environmental ecology concerns, human ecology, family empowerment.</p>

	<p>Whenever the Church talks against graft and corruption, she does so also out of concern for the poor. Poverty will be very quickly eradicated if graft and corruption are eradicated, so that taxpayers' money will go to the poor (especially in terms of education, which is the long-term solution to poverty, and livelihood programs) and not to those rich who steal from the poor.</p> <p>"Each time poverty is blamed on the 'population problem,' its real and root causes are conveniently tolerated or covered up: graft and corruption in the public and private sectors, burden of foreign debt servicing, and bad governance, resulting in failed development programs" (<i>A Manifesto of Filipino Families</i> on July 25, 2008).</p>
<p>Contraceptives should be listed as essential drugs.</p>	<p>They should not be listed as essential drugs, but as dangerous drugs and devices. Pills have been shown to cause abortion of a 5-day old baby, cancer, premature hypertension, heart disease, etc. IUD's are abortifacient and may cause intrauterine trauma, pelvic infections and ectopic pregnancy. Condoms have high failure rate even against pregnancy and thus do not guarantee protection against AIDS and other STD's. Tubal ligation and vasectomy (especially targeting the poor) leave couples without the chance to have more children (for example, in case of improved economic situation, or death of their present children) and little or no support in their old age.</p> <p>Hence, it is the right of the citizens to be forewarned of these, even in the form of government warnings, as in the case of cigarette smoking ("is dangerous for your health"), alcohol ("drink moderately"), and infant milk formulae ("mother's milk is best for babies under two years old")—not out of religious concerns, but as part of consumers' rights.</p> <p>Possible warnings could state: "CONDOMS DO NOT GUARANTEE PROTECTION FROM AIDS AND OTHER STD'S", "PILLS HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO CAUSE CANCER AND ABORTION OF 5-DAY OLD BABIES," and, "IUD'S MAY CAUSE TRAUMA OF THE UTERUS AND ABORTION OF 5-DAY OLD BABIES," etc.</p> <p>(For the medical data on these dangerous drugs and devices, see also John Wilks, <i>A Consumer's Guide to the Pill and Other Drugs</i>, 3rd Ed., National Bookstore, Inc., Manila 2000.)</p> <p>Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II, in denouncing sustematic anti-childbearing campaigns, described posoning the lives of defenseless human beings as similar to a form of "chemical warfare" (Paul VI, <i>Address to the participants of the World Food Conference</i>, Nov. 4, 1974. Pope John Paul II, <i>Centessimus Annus</i>, no. 39).</p>
<p>Condoms have no holes. They</p>	<p>"Condom manufacturers in the United States electronically test all condoms for holes and weak spots. In addition, FDA requires manufacturers to use a</p>

<p>provide truly safe sex, as advertised.</p>	<p>water test to examine samples from each batch of condoms for leakage. If the test detects a defect rate of more than 4 per 1,000, the entire lot is discarded. The agency also encourages manufacturers to test samples of their products for breakage by using an air burst test in accordance with specifications of the International Standards Organization.' [Mike Kubic, <i>New Ways to Prevent and Treat AIDS</i>, in <i>FDA Consumer</i>, Jan-Feb 1997 (revised May 1997 and Jan 1998; available at http://www.fda.gov/fdac/features/1997/197_aids.html).]</p> <p>"If four leaking condoms are allowed in every batch of 1,000, there could be hundreds of thousands or even millions of leaking condoms circulating all over the world, either sold or distributed for free, and most probably contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS and STD's. Does the public know this? Does the public know that the risks increase the more often and the more promiscuously one is exposed, considering the cumulative risk factor, as explained earlier?"</p> <p>[from <i>Family Values Versus Safe Sex</i>. A Reflection by His Eminence, Alfonso Cardinal López Trujillo (then President of the Pontifical Council for the Family), December 1, 2003. Note that the first paragraph above came from the US Food and Drug Administration website.]</p>
<p>Condoms are effective in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in a country.</p>	<p>"In Thailand and in the Philippines, the first HIV/AIDS cases were reported in 1984; by 1987, Thailand had 112 cases, while the Philippines had more, with 135 cases. Today, in the year 2003, there are around 750,000 cases in Thailand, where the 100% Condom Use Program had relatively great success. On the other hand, there are only 1,935 cases in the Philippines - and this, considering that the Philippines' population is around 30% greater than Thailand's! Relatively low rates of condom use by the people in general, and staunch opposition from the Church and a good number of government leaders against the condom program and sexual promiscuity, are well-known facts in the Philippines."</p> <p>[from Cardinal Alfonso López Trujillo (then President of the Pontifical Council for the Family, Vatican), <i>Family Values Versus Safe Sex</i>, December 1, 2003. The quoted text cites the following references: Rene Josef Bullecer (Director of AIDS-Free Philippines), <i>Telling the Truth: AIDS Rates for Thailand and the Philippines</i>; Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, Pastoral Letter on AIDS: <i>In the Compassion of Jesus</i>, January 23, 1993; and Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, Pastoral Letter on <i>Subtle Attacks against Family and Life</i>, July 9, 2001.]</p>
<p>The Catholic Church teaches that contraceptives, including condoms, cause</p>	<p>Abortion is the termination (killing) of life, not simply of pregnancy. Life begins at conception when the sperm and the egg meet. Killing the new life at any moment after this, and before it is born, is considered abortion. The new life develops as it goes down the fallopian tube, and implants onto the mother's womb when the tiny baby is around five days old.</p>

<p>abortion.</p>	<p>Condoms do not directly cause abortion because they prevent conception—if there is no conception, there is nothing to kill in the first place. But they can lead to abortion if, because of high condom failure a woman gets pregnant, she decides to kill the baby in her womb.</p> <p>Pills and IUD's make the womb's lining uninhabitable for the new baby. ; hence, in case they fail in their contraceptive actions, the five-day old baby will be unable to attach to his or her mother's womb. This has to be called "abortion," for the five-day old baby dies in the process, and such action of pills and IUD's is called "abortifacient."</p>
<p>Natural methods are not effective.</p>	<p>The modern natural methods (e.g., Billings, Sympto-Thermal, Basal Body Temperature) can be more effective than contraceptives, if they are learned and practiced as a way of life and not as "natural contraceptives." Hence, communication, love, respect, self-discipline, and formation in the values are necessary for the natural methods to work—values that are not exclusively religious, but very human and natural as well, and values that are not necessary in the use of contraceptives.</p> <p>The obsolete calendar and the rhythm methods, and their modern repackagings, should not be taught (including by the DOH) because of their high failure rates. Withdrawal is not a natural method, and has extremely high failure rates.</p> <p>It is sad that many doctors (including Ob-Gyn's) are not even familiar with many of the facts regarding benefits of the natural methods and the medical ills of contraceptives.</p>
<p>The Catholic Church teaches that in each sexual act, the couple should aim for a new child.</p>	<p>No. Rather, the Catholic Church teaches no action, whether before, during or after the sexual act, should close the possibility of new life or kill the new life that arises.</p> <p>Hence, in the woman's infertile periods, or if one of the spouses is sterile, the couple may still perform the sexual act since they do not do anything to prevent the possibility of, or kill, new life.</p>
<p>The Reproductive Health bill does not promote or pave the way to abortion, since it even states that abortion remains illegal in the</p>	<p>The bill does not legalize surgical abortion, but it does PROMOTE all types of abortion, and DOES LEGALIZE abortion of 5-day old babies.</p> <p><u>SEC. 4. Definition of Terms.</u></p> <p><u>h. Reproductive Health Education – is the process of acquiring complete, accurate and relevant information on all matters relating to the reproductive system, its functions and processes and human sexuality; and forming attitudes and beliefs about sex, sexual identity, interpersonal relationships, affection, intimacy and gender roles. It also includes developing the necessary skills to be able to distinguish between facts and myths on sex and sexuality;</u></p>

<p>Philippines.</p>	<p><u>and critically evaluate and discuss the moral, religious, social and cultural dimensions of related sensitive issues such as contraception and abortion.</u></p> <p>To "<u>critically evaluate and discuss the moral, religious, social and cultural dimensions of related sensitive issues such as contraception and abortion</u>" paves the way to abortion because it will present abortion as a hypothetical (hypothetical as of now in the Philippines, while practical in other countries) solution to an unplanned pregnancy. The next step will be to push for safe and legal abortion.</p> <p>This reflects the mentality presented in some sex education modules, which could very well go this way:</p> <p>"Ang pagkontrol sa kakayahang mag-anak ay isang karapatang makabago para sa kababaihan... May dalawang uri ng batas na nagkakaroon ng impluwensiya sa gawaing ito. Ang una ay may kinalaman sa paggamit ng kontraseptibo, kusang-loob na pag-papa-opera upang hindi magkaanak at paglalaglag ng sanggol. Ang ilegal na paglalaglag ng sanggol ay ipinagbabawal ng batas sapagkat hindi makabubuti sa kalusugan ng ina. Ang pangalawa ay nagbibigay ng karapatan sa kababaihan sa pagpapalano ng pamilya."</p> <p>Note than in such a formulation, illegal abortion is considered wrong because it is bad for the woman's health. The child being killed is insignificant. The solution insinuated is to legalize abortion so that it could become "safe"--safe for the mother (they claim, though abortion is always traumatic for her), but not for the baby.</p> <p>Some candidly say that if legislators and teachers insist on asking their student to discuss the pros and cons of abortion, then parents should also insist on discussing the pros and cons of killing legislators and teachers (for example, if they are inefficient, involved in graft and corruption, etc.).</p>
<p>The Reproductive Health bill does not promote sexual promiscuity.</p>	<p>SEC. 4. Definition of Terms</p> <p><u>c. Reproductive Health – the state of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes. This implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so, provided that these are not against the law.</u></p> <p>The law will guarantee children and teenagers (since they are "people") the right to have a satisfying and safe sex life with anyone, and to decide if, when and how often to reproduce. Hence children have the right to have information and access to contraceptives, and to learn all possible options in case they get pregnant--including abortion, which "unfortunately" (as they</p>

	<p>will be made to feel), is still illegal.</p> <p>Parents who object to this "right" act against the law, a law which of course goes against the parents' inherent right to educate their children.</p>
<p>The Reproductive Health bill will strengthen parental rights in forming and educating their children.</p>	<p><u>SEC. 3. Guiding Principles.</u> <u>L. Respect for, protection and fulfillment of reproductive health rights seek to promote not only the rights and welfare of adult individuals and couples but those of adolescents' and children's as well...</u></p> <p><u>SEC. 4. Definition of Terms</u> <u>d. Reproductive Health Rights – the rights of individuals and couples to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children; to make other decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence; to have the information and means to carry out their decisions; and to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health.</u></p> <p>In the Bill, children and adolescents have the right to have a "<u>satisfying and safe sex life,</u>" and "<u>to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children.</u>" In such a case parents (and teachers, public authorities, priests, etc.) who do not want children to have sex with classmates will be going against the children's rights, and hence they can be considered as "coercing" the children to stay away from sex. Earlier bills have even proposed fines and/or imprisonment for similar acts; this is indicative of their real intentions.</p> <p>In some countries, school clinics are prohibited from informing parents if their child seeks or has undergone abortion, whereas they are required to do so for treatment of a minor wound.</p> <p>Reproductive health rights will therefore weaken parental authority and rights over the upbringing of their children. Children are brainwashed into this promiscuous, anti- parent, and anti-authority mentality through Value-free sex education modules.</p>
<p>The Reproductive Health bill is an original idea of Filipino Congressmen.</p>	<p>Reproductive Health bills are pushed by the PLCPD (Philippine Legislators' Committee for Population and Development), a <i>foreign funded</i> NGO with offices questionably located in Congress, precisely where our laws are made. This is in <i>complete violation of our national sovereignty and our pro-family and pro-life Constitution.</i> PLCPD has access to formidable financial resources (including the P2 billion budget this year), and is backed by a powerful conglomerate of NGO's (see <i>A Manifesto of Filipino Families</i> on July 25, 2008).</p>
<p>The</p>	<p>"We would rather call them the '<i>reproductive death</i>' bills. They are totally</p>

<p>Reproductive Health bill promotes health.</p>	<p>silent on the aforementioned ills which will bring <i>DEATH not only to the body, but to the person, family and society</i> as well: D-ivorce E-uthanasia A-bortion T-yrannical population control H-omosexual unions" (<i>A Manifesto of Filipino Families</i> on July 25, 2008).</p>
<p>Filipino families cannot do anything to stop the Reproductive Death bills.</p>	<p>"A Call to Defend the Filipino Family against the Reproductive 'Health' Bills</p> <p>We call on all Filipino Families to <i>defend ourselves by defending life</i>. We have so far succeeded in foiling many of the attempts of our lawmakers to enact reproductive health statutes. We believe they are being enticed by <i>monetary and other compensations</i>, but we hope that they will see the grim reality behind reproductive 'health'. But now could be <i>our last chance</i>. Many countries have fallen into the subtle and the blatant attacks against their families. It is time to <i>organize ourselves better and pressure our leaders</i> to come up with <i>pro-family and pro-life legislation and programs</i>.</p> <p>We call on all men and women of good will, <i>of all creeds, social standing, and political affiliations</i>, to further promote the family. Let us <i>patronize family-safe establishments</i>, and <i>complain to our civil authorities</i> against those offering drugs, gambling, pornography and prostitution, especially those surrounding our homes and our children's schools. Let us <i>boycott</i> products and services that <i>degrade sex and women</i> in their advertisements. Let us <i>review the textbooks</i> used by our children for <i>promiscuous and anti-parental content</i>. Let us make the TV stations know that we want <i>wholesome family entertainment</i>.</p> <p>Recovering the Family's True Nature.</p> <p>We hope that in the end, <i>children may see their parents as role models</i> of family warmth and citizenship, and that <i>parents and grandparents may experience the appreciation and respect of their children</i> whom they have truly loved and guided. <i>Humanae Vitae</i> prophetically warned that we could lose our values if we go against God's design on the responsible transmission of life within the family.</p> <p>May the Filipino Family, which is the <i>sanctuary of life and love</i>, rediscover and reclaim the peace and joy that rightly belong to us."</p> <p>(<i>A Manifesto of Filipino Families</i> on July 25, 2008).</p>