

Did you know . . .

50th Anniversary of *Humanae Vitae*

Wednesday, July 25 marks the 50th anniversary of *Humanae Vitae*, Blessed Pope Paul VI's encyclical on human life. The encyclical is notably known for upholding Church renouncement of contraception. It followed 8 years after the 1960 U.S. Food & Drug Administration approval of the first birth control pill.

Pope Paul VI stood firm in the midst of the moral permissiveness which came under the guise of "freedom" in the 1960s and boldly proclaimed the truth of married love. Not only did Pope Paul say that contraception was bad; he said it would have bad consequences, which proved correct.

Dale Ahlquist (author, public speaker, Evangelical convert to Catholicism, and Catholic apologist.) observes: "The Holy Father had upheld the truth, upheld the teaching of the Church. He had gone against the tide and was paying an awful price. The rest of the world wanted sex without consequences. But sex without consequences...has consequences. And the Pope knew it, and since then he has been proved right a million times over. All of his predictions about birth control leading to divorce, leading to abortion, leading to perversion, were absolutely correct, but no one listened at the time."

In *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI asserts the widespread use of contraception would "lead to conjugal infidelity and the general lowering of morality." No one can deny that 50 years later there has been a sweeping decline in morality throughout the world. The vast increases in divorce and children born out of wedlock, the tragedy of abortion being procured on a horrifying scale, and the perversion that pervades contemporary popular culture all testify to this fact.

Pope Paul suffered greatly for proclaiming the truth on the nature and purpose of married love. The encyclical was received with almost universal scorn and condemnation from the world, including many within the Church. Numerous bishops and priests spoke out against the encyclical. The impact was so great that Pope Paul did not issue another encyclical in the remaining 10 years that he was pope. Today, the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* are considered the most disobeyed doctrines of the Catholic Church.

It is fitting that Pope Francis will canonize Blessed Pope Paul VI following the conclusion of the synod of bishops on young people in October. Paul VI guided and brought the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) to a conclusion and subsequently established the Synod of Bishops at its request. And it is also fitting to be happening on the 50th Anniversary of *Humanae Vitae*.

Judy Pearson

50th ANNIVERSARY OF

Humanae Vitae

*Celebrating Married Love
and the Gift of New Life!*

Blessed Pope Paul VI,
Prophet for our times,
Pray for us!

