



CANFP NEWS

A quarterly publication of the
**California
Association of
Natural
Family
Planning**

Fall 2022

THE BRAVE NEW WORLD POST-ROE

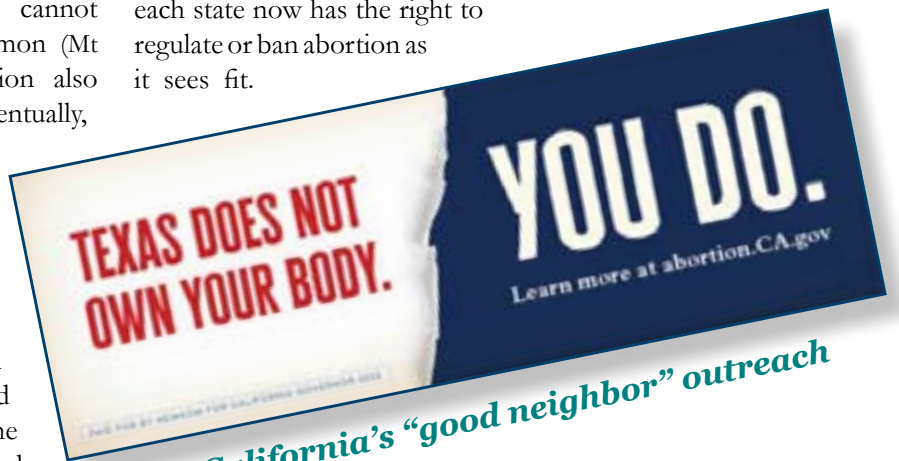
**George
Delgado, MD**



The infamous Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton Supreme Court decisions, that were relegated to the heap of jurisprudence embarrassment by the recent Dobbs decision, remind us that we cannot serve God and mammon (Mt 6:24). Their nullification also demonstrates that eventually, no matter how long “eventually” is, the truth will prevail.

Now that the legal landscape has been reset, we do not have a wholesale prohibition of abortion as many pro-abortion advocates have claimed in their sky-is-falling rants. Rather, each state now has the right to regulate or ban abortion as it sees fit.

It encourages teens to seek abortions and seeks to recruit out-of-state women to California to have abortions.



California’s “good neighbor” outreach

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Roe v. Wade was a house of cards built on a foundation of lies. Dr. Bernard Nathanson, one of the early fathers of legalized abortion in the US (and a later repentant convert to Catholicism), admitted that the statistic of illegal so-called “back-alley” abortions that took place in the US before Roe was a fabricated number pulled out of thin air in order to garner support for legalized abortion.

During the Roe deliberations, Justice Blackmun cited NARAL attorney Cyril Chestnut Means Jr., who falsified the legal history of abortion to make it appear as if abortion restrictions were not imposed until the 19th century and were created then only to protect maternal health rather than the lives of preborn children. Lies from the father of lies, these were.

The country has become even more polarized, politically, ethically and religiously. We have pro-abortion states such as California, Oregon, Washington, New Mexico, Colorado, Illinois and New York. The pro-life states include Texas, Florida, Utah, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and the Dakotas.

California’s Governor Newsom, who has presidential aspirations, has declared that California will be a “sanctuary” state for abortion. His administration has established a website, abortion.ca.gov, that is a state-sponsored propaganda tool for the medical-abortion complex.

Under “Fake abortion information” it states “Search results online may include clinics that do not perform abortions. These “clinics” may provide false, medically inaccurate information online or in person about abortion to convince you not to have an abortion. They are sometimes called crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs).” Apparently, if a clinic does not offer abortion services it is by definition “fake.”

According to Live Action News, Newsom’s campaign has placed abortion-promoting billboards in seven pro-life states. They read, “Need an abortion? California is ready to help.”

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President's Perspective

Fr. Blaise Berg, STD

World View from Silicon Valley

It has been interesting to live in this part of the world that is dubbed "Silicon Valley"



Last July, my bishop asked me to take on a new assignment as a full-time theology professor and formator at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park. Eleven Catholic dioceses and two religious congregations send 73 seminarians to St. Patrick's for discernment and priestly formation. While I have learned much in my few months here about seminary life and how it differs from parish ministry, it has also been interesting to live in this part of the world that is dubbed "Silicon Valley". I have found Menlo Park to be beautiful in many ways: the climate, the scenery and the many options for hiking, walking, cycling and other types of recreation. Menlo Park is close to San Francisco where one can attend concerts, the opera and ballgames. The seminary grounds are especially tranquil and conducive to peaceful walks in between classes or hours of course preparation.

But Menlo Park, in particular, and Silicon Valley, in general, have a dark side. As one of my colleagues noted the other day, we happen to live in the most "transhumanistic" part of the world. To be honest, I wasn't sure what transhumanism was, so I looked it up. According to Wikipedia, transhumanism is: ...a philosophical and intellectual movement which

advocates the enhancement of the human condition by developing and making widely available sophisticated technologies that can greatly enhance longevity and cognition. Transhumanist thinkers study the potential benefits and dangers of emerging technologies that could overcome fundamental human limitations as well as the ethics of using such technologies. Some transhumanists believe that human beings may eventually be able to transform themselves into beings with abilities so greatly expanded from the current condition as to merit the label of posthuman beings. This sounds like rather scary stuff.

Living in a location that is home to many tech companies, whose employees are well-compensated for their skills, also means that Menlo Park is a rather expensive place to live. For the most part, the lay teachers at the seminary cannot afford to live here and must commute from other more affordable locations. Indeed, it is revealing to hear from folks who grew up in this part of California and learn how it has changed. Fifty years ago, you could walk down the street to the local store and find the church within a couple blocks from your home. Now, you find housing and restaurants instead. Who needs stores when you can buy something on-line? Who needs God when you have technology to improve your life?



Fr. Blaise Berg, STD, President of CANFP, and Associate Professor of Theology at St. Patrick's Seminary, in Menlo Park, CA., has served on the Executive Board of CANFP since 2003

Those who are practitioners, users and promoters of *Natural Family Planning* understand that striving for transhumanism is a dead-end and relying completely on technology leads to a whole plethora of problems. We know that we can't eliminate God from our lives and that rather than being transhuman, we need to be human. And that means we need to listen to our emotions, bodies and souls and to Our Creator and Redeemer. In our journey through this life, God and we humans are all intertwined in one big beautiful, sometimes awful mess and other times wonderful unity. In marriage, it is a journey that spouses make with other, communicating with each other and with God all along the way, to make the tough calls that need to be made and to grow together in love. By way of example, parents who, on account of their jobs must live in an expensive part of the world, may struggle to discern if it is God's will to have another baby. That's hard work. And that's what CANFP and all of you---our members, practitioners, users, clergy, NFP promoters and benefactors---are here to help with. ■

Director's Desk

Sheila St. John

I love you, California, you're the greatest state of all. I love you in the winter, summer, spring and in the fall. I love your fertile valleys; your dear mountains I adore. I love your grand old ocean and I love her rugged shore.

We have a secret weapon in the battle to build a Culture of Life in California

the past thirty years now to the **California** Association of Natural Family Planning. I think it is safe to say, I am invested in California.

And so it is with profound sadness that I witness the progressive disregard for the dignity of human life---from voters alienating children from their parents by denying parental notification prior to performing abortions on minors, to the issues identified in Dr. Delgado's article in this edition, including, but not limited to, the current aggressive efforts to promote California abortion services nationally.

It brings new meaning to this line from the chorus of our state song--- "*And I know when I die I shall breathe my last sigh for my sunny California*". Only substitute the word "for" with "in"...for all those vulnerable babies in the womb whose only visit to California will be their last.

What a "coincidence" that this same state that is hell bent on becoming a destination for the destruction of life, is also the only state in the country to have a statewide organization entirely dedicated to the education and promotion of the value and dignity of our fertility! We have a secret weapon in the battle to build

California's Secret Weapon

Perhaps my affection for our beautiful state was destined, as I am the only one of my family who is a native Californian (the seven of us---both of my parents and my four siblings---were born in seven different states). In contrast with my birth family, my husband, children, grandchildren, and my great grandchildren, are all native Californians. I have dedicated

a Culture of Life in California! Our individual CANFP members make a profound difference, personally within their families, and some professionally as well---through advocating for/teaching NFP, practicing restorative reproductive medicine, or perhaps preaching and teaching.

Of course, every state has dedicated NFP advocates who are building a culture of life, person by person, family by family.

What makes us unique here in California, then? What is our secret weapon? Our secret weapon is---our collaborative community effort. No matter how tireless and amazing the individuals are, those efforts are magnified and multiplied when united in mission! **CANFP is our secret weapon!** Unlike other states, through CANFP we are united in educating the larger community on the relational, spiritual, social, economic, ecological, and the physical and psychological health benefits of NFP so that couples, physicians, clergy and all people of good will may understand fertility as a normal, healthy, life-giving process.



sheila@canfp.org
Sheila St. John has taught NFP in the Monterey Region since 1982. She served on the founding Board of CANFP in 1992, and continuously since, including five years as President, prior to accepting the role of Executive Director in 2001.

Guttmacher Institute, the research arm of Planned Parenthood, reports there are 9.2 million women of reproductive age (15-49) in California. Or, as Guttmacher refers to these women on their website: "potential pool of abortion patients".

We have our work cut out for us here in California, and we have only just begun. How many of those 9.2 million women have even heard of NFP, let alone CANFP? **Let our secret weapon, be a secret no more!** Let us each consider how we might contribute to this collaboration that is CANFP, combining our gifts, talents and passion, to accomplish a truly magnificent thing: every woman and man, whether single or married, respecting nature's gift of fertility and procreation; cherishing every child, whether born or unborn.

The foundation has been established. The time is now, to mobilize the troops, in this battle for our state. CANFP: together, promoting sex that is 100% natural, sustainable and life-giving. ■

Meet Our Members

[Peggy Stofila](#)

Peggy Stofila, PT, CFCP

Introducing a new feature for our CANFP NEWS

I am introducing a new feature for our **CANFP NEWS: MEET OUR MEMBERS**. I look forward to introducing one of our CANFP members in each edition, and together we will learn more about their interest and involvement in NFP, in their region of California.

I will begin, in this **MEET OUR MEMBERS** debut, by introducing myself!

I am **Peggy Stofila**. My husband Mark and I became members of CANFP in 1997. We were offered a first year free membership when we began charting using the Creighton Model



CANFP exhibit at the Los Angeles Religious Ed Congress--and reading that newsletter!

In 2010, I decided to pursue the Creighton Model education program and became a Practitioner, and so I am now a Professional Member of CANFP.

One of my favorite things about being a teacher is when I meet a couple who has not yet come to know the beauty of the Catholic Church's teaching on love, marriage and human sexuality, and I witness them coming to

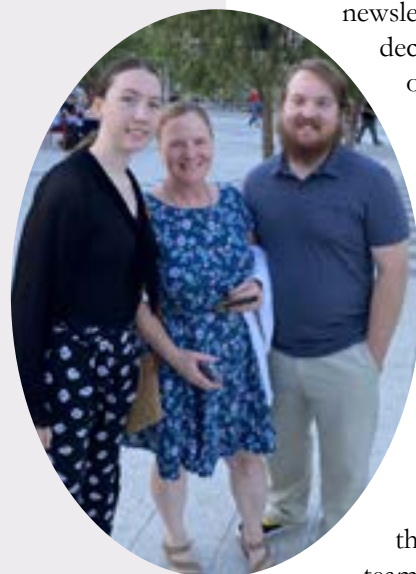


Peggy Stofila is happily married to Mark and they have two young adult children. She lives in Torrance, where she works part time as a Physical Therapist and teaches the Creighton Model FertilityCare System

realize the beauty of the ebbs and flow of the women's cycle. It's as if the "scales had fallen off their eyes and they could see" as referenced in Acts as Paul converted to Christianity. I get to be the first one to see their conversion. Often this takes time, sometimes months but what a privilege it is for me. ■

Question **Peggy, Why are you a Member of CANFP?**

Answer I am a member of CANFP because I believe and support all that CANFP stands for. It reconfirms my beliefs when I read and know that others are pursuing God's work and pursuing God's plan for life and love that is so counter cultural. I like supporting grass roots efforts that don't conflict with my beliefs and I believe CANFP is the only organization of it's kind in the United States.



Over the years, we have enjoyed being active in CANFP, attending conferences and events, serving on the 2015 conference team as exhibitor coordinator, staffing the

GROWING OUR TEAM!

TO EXPAND OUR IMPACT---we need to EXPAND OUR TEAM!



Seeking Committed Team Members!
Part Time Stipended Consultants--as well as Committed Volunteers---to develop existing---and implement new--- CANFP Projects around California!

We are statewide, so YES you can contribute---wherever you are!

Current Projects in Need of Your Passion and Skills: or tell us your interests!

- **Statewide Conference** opportunity to be site host, or contribute on various tasks involved in planning and executing CANFP statewide conference
- **Membership** serve existing members, while expanding the impact of CANFP through identifying and engaging new members.
- **Webmaster** update and maintain new canfp.org launching in 2023
- **Funding & Development** plan fundraising activities and processes
- **Event Planning** part of team that plans and executes CANFP events
- **Parish Liaison** develop parish resources, services and relationships
- **Social Media Coordinator** develop and implement outreach on social media platforms
- **Speaker Training** provide individual and group training to give NFP witness talks
- **Speakers Bureau** identify and coordinate CANFP speakers
- **Virtual Assistant** provide administrative support
- **Youth** develop CANFP youth outreach



Take the LEAD as a Coordinator, or focus on one element as a team member

Bring your ideas, passion, and skills to building NFP in California, on the CANFP Team!



TO EXPAND OUR IMPACT---We also need to invest in an ALL NEW

[CANFP.org](http://canfp.org)

In tech years, our once cutting edge canfp.org is... aged.

It is time for a complete redo of canfp.org

The good news of NFP must be beautifully shared, easily accessed on all devices, with up to date technology to serve our members, and each of our 15,000 monthly visitors from around the globe! It is a big investment in time and finances---it is **vital & exciting!**

Go to [DONATE at canfp.org](http://DONATE@canfp.org) to support a new canfp.org!

Donations also gratefully accepted by mail--- checks payable to CANFP and mailed to 1217 Tyler St.

Salinas, CA 93906

California Association of Natural Family Planning is registered with the IRS and the State of California as a not-for-profit organization. TAXPAYER ID: 68-0301357

over 15,000 visits EACH MONTH!

Invest in making NFP more VISIBLE, ACCESSIBLE, & INVITING!

Medical Matters

George Delgado, MD

THE BRAVE NEW WORLD...cont from front page

“Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater commandment than these.”

What is worse is that under these sentences is the Bible verse, Mark 12:33, “Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater commandment than these.” The blasphemous use of Holy Scripture, in a twisted, demonic way illustrates that the pro-abortion lobby will do anything to further its cause. Perhaps Governor Newsom’s campaign forgot about another Bible verse, Isaiah 5:20, that tells us: “Woe to you that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.”

California has spent \$200 million on promoting abortion, post-Roe, according to Live Action News. The crowning achievement Newsom and his forces seek is the passage of Proposition 1, which would amend the state constitution so that abortion could not be restricted, through all nine months, in the Golden State. Only a simple majority of voters will be required for its passage. In August 71% of voters were in favor of passage, according to a UC Berkeley and LA Times poll (not an unbiased duo, I must add).

We need people of good will to convince Californians to vote no on Proposition 1. See more information at <https://cacatholic.org/prop1>. If God be for us who is against us? (Rm 8:31)

More lies flow from the pro-abortion side. Abortion



South Carolina news station reports ... **“a billboard in South Carolina now advertises abortion access in California”**

supporters claim that states that do not allow abortion will criminalise legitimate medical treatments for miscarriages, choramnionitis (infected pregnancies) and tubal pregnancies. Nothing could be further from the truth. Abortion is a process that is designed to end the life of an innocent preborn human being. Treatment for miscarriage does not involve a living preborn human; the baby has already died. Treatments for infected or tubal pregnancies are directed at the diseased part of the woman’s body. An unintended consequence is the ending of the life of the preborn baby — if he or she is still alive at the time of treatment.

Already, we are seeing an increase in the numbers of medical abortions procured by mail order or telemedicine. Current estimates are that 50-60% of all abortions in the US are mifepristone-misoprostol medical abortions.

In mail order abortions, women or men legally or illegally purchase mifepristone and

misoprostol online with little or no screening. Telemedicine abortions involve “virtual” video visits with a medical practitioner.

The potential adverse effects (besides the ending of the preborn’s life) of mail order and telemedicine abortions are significant and potentially lifelong. The medical risks include incorrect pregnancy dating, non-pregnant women taking mifepristone (because of misinterpreted pregnancy tests), and the consumption of tainted or counterfeit drugs.

The lack of a pre-abortion ultrasound could have disastrous consequences. A woman might forget she has an IUD (intrauterine device) in place. The mifepristone use is contraindicated in a woman with an IUD.

About 1-2% of pregnancies in the US are tubal, with the embryo implanted in the tube

Women deserve a second chance at life

instead of the uterus. A tubal pregnancy is at high risk of rupture, which can lead to catastrophic and fatal blood loss of the mother. The only way to exclude the possibility of a tubal pregnancy is by ultrasound. Without a pre-abortion ultrasound, a woman is taking her life into her own hands. Bleeding from a ruptured tube will easily be misinterpreted by her as the expected heavy bleeding associated with a medical abortion. Lost time at home due to false assumptions will cost mothers their lives.

Without ultrasound, a woman with an advanced gestational age may take mifepristone inappropriately, possibly leading to a failed abortion and significant bleeding. Additionally, the woman might presume she has aborted and not know she has an ongoing pregnancy.

Women receiving their abortion drugs by mail order and telemedicine will not be tested for Rh factor. A pregnant woman who is Rh negative should receive a shot of Rho immune globulin (RhoGam) at the time of an abortion to prevent an immune response by the mother against Rh positive blood, according to the American College of Obstetrician and Gynecologists. If the mother does not get the shot and her immune system is sensitized, she could be doomed to complications, including stillbirth, in future pregnancies where the preborn baby has Rh positive blood.

The social risks of mail order and telemedicine abortions include coercion by others, forced abortions, and surreptitious placement of drugs in food or drink. Mail order and telemedicine abortions will become the tools of child molesters, rapists and sex traffickers.

With mail order and telemedicine abortions, we may be seeing more women who make hasty decisions which they later regret. These women will be asking for a second chance at life.

Fortunately, we have abortion pill reversal, a process pioneered by myself and others, that utilizes bioidentical progesterone to reverse the effects of mifepristone abortions. With our best protocol, reversal rates are 68%.



<https://stenoinstitute.org>

I founded Steno Institute in order to increase the awareness, education and research around abortion pill reversal. Our goal is that any woman who starts a medical abortion know that there is an option for her to reverse that abortion, if she changes her mind.



George Delgado, M.D., President and Founder of Steno Institute and Medical Director of Culture of Life Family Services (COLFS), San Diego, is a Professional Member / Supporter of CANFP. Board certified in both family medicine and hospice and palliative medicine, Dr. Delgado received his medical degree from the University of California, Davis, and completed his residency at Santa Monica Hospital/UCLA. Dr. Delgado is a Natural Family Planning Medical Consultant, trained in NaProTechnology.

Additionally, we want all medical practitioners to be aware of abortion pill reversal and be confident in recommending it to women who want a second chance at life.

Currently we are planning two studies that will help us perfect our protocols and hopefully lead to increased acceptance of abortion pill reversal by medical professionals.

We are also collaborating with Dr. Stephen Sammut, a researcher at Franciscan University of Steubenville. He has developed a rat model of abortion pill reversal.

To learn more about abortion pill reversal and Steno institute, visit <https://stenoinstitute.org>. Women deserve a second chance at life. ■

TWISTS & TURNS IN MY JOURNEY TO LEARN NFP

Michelle Borba

I nervously went to the meeting feeling both desperate to get it right this time and also a bit defeated because my methods hadn't worked

As I reflect on my married life and think about all the extreme viewpoints I've had in regards to NFP, I can't help but laugh at myself a bit. If I was truly honest, I'd admit I've been all over the place on this topic and have made it much harder than it needed to be.



Early on in my marriage I knew very little about natural family planning. I remember hearing a little about it at our Engaged Encounter weekend, but I got the impression it was out dated and not something anyone really practiced anymore. As I learned more about the teachings of our faith I saw the importance of NFP, but never knew how to make it work for me or even where to go for help. I scoured the internet looking for explanations and apps, subscribed to blogs and podcasts, used ovulation test strips and even purchased an automatic temperature reader with a monthly fee. I didn't think I had time for a consultation or teacher and I didn't want to admit I needed one.

I googled and subscribed my way through about ten years of poorly executed and haphazard NFP but never actually charted. I thought I knew my body and I'm fairly private so

I wanted to do it on my own. I'd have seasons where I'd be doing well, being faithful to whatever method I was trying, but inevitably I'd get confused by my observations and extremely frustrated. Between irregular cycles, breast feeding and all the other life juggling I was doing, it just never really made sense. In an effort to go high tech I bought a wearable digital temperature reader and subscribed to the app and blogs that accompanied it. I thought with today's technological advances I could rely on it to do the work for me. I quickly grew very frustrated with the lack of solid information and

how it really applied to me. The app had secret proprietary algorithms which interpreted my daily basal body temperature, but I had no idea how it came to those conclusions. I knew it wasn't taking into consideration how many times I nursed my baby each night.

Many mornings I'd wake to review my sleep patterns only to see that it had missed times of feedings.

I have been abundantly blessed with my large family, and would not have had it any other way! I was finding myself, at 42, in a season of my life where I really felt a need to get this NFP thing down right.

It was about this time that our church had an informational meeting about NFP. God is so good! If we're open to His will He always gives us what we need. I nervously went to the meeting feeling both desperate to get it right this time and also a bit defeated because my methods hadn't worked.

California NFP Professionals are ready to assist you, in person or remotely. See [Professional Directory](#) at [canfp.org](#)

I hope my story encourages women to find a teacher to guide them

As I listened to the speaker, Sheila, explain the science and beauty of the different methods I quickly realized I really knew very little. I had hoped that after all the time I'd spent googling and subscribing to what I found online I was fairly informed. But sadly, I had just wasted a lot of time and energy. My time would have been much better spent seeking good, solid instruction from the beginning.

I signed up with Sheila right after the informational meeting and in five months and six consultations I have navigated the return to cycles from breast feeding, and progressed from learning the method, to following the rules and most recently actually understanding my body. This last month of charting is the first time I could say with confidence I knew not only when I ovulated, but also saw the changes in my body for days before.

The companionship and fellowship of the process that I had deliberately avoided for so long was 100% necessary for this achievement. Once I overcame my pride and fears, and asked for personal help, I discovered it was a much better use of my time and efforts. I understand women's desire to do this independently in this digital age when you can learn almost anything from you tube. But for me, and I'm guessing many others like me, nothing I found took into consideration all my individual variations. The time I set aside to talk to my NFP teacher about my personal questions and situations has proved invaluable.

Planning a family and having children is a unique and complex decision. Equally unique and complex is the women's body. What works for others may not work for me, and what works for me may



Michelle Borba has been married to her husband Daniel for 16 years, and together they have had eight children. They are active members of their church and farming community, in the Stockton region. Michelle has found being a mother both the greatest gift and the greatest challenge of her life.

not be ideal for others. But I'm so very thankful to my priest for inviting Sheila to come speak and that her visit coincided with my readiness to listen and give charting a fair chance. I hope my story encourages women to find a teacher to guide them through their charting process and get the answers to the questions they undoubtedly will encounter as they navigate what NFP means for them. ■

ON THE ROAD AGAIN...

Fall brought with it many invitations to share the good news of NFP/CANFP!

- **SEPT. 5, 2022:** Share NFP resources at Respect Life exhibit at *Monterey County Fair*
- **SEPT. 11, 2022:** Exhibit at *Parish Ministry Fair* in the Monterey Region
- **SEPT. 24, 2022:** **Fr. Blaise Berg** (*President, CANFP*) and **Andrea Arevalo** (*CANFP Professional Member*) speak at *Sacramento Ministry Days*
- **OCT. 15-16, 2022:** Exhibit at *Marian Eucharistic Conference* in the Monterey Region, featuring CANFP Board Member **Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone** as speaker
- **OCT. 22, 2022:** Exhibit at *Together in Holiness* conference in San Francisco Region

SCHEDULING NOW FOR 2023!

Would you like to bring CANFP to your region?

Inviting CANFP Members to help staff the exhibit at one of these coming events:

- **JAN. 22, 2023:** West Coast Walk for Life, *San Francisco Region*
- **FEB. 24-26, 2023:** Los Angeles Religious Education Congress, *Orange Region*



Join the Fun!

Clergy Corner

Fr. Michael Moore

Contraception and Confession

people need not only forgiveness but guidance

Certainly one of the most dramatic moments in the lives of the apostles came on Easter Sunday evening. They had spent three years with our Lord in his ministry. They then experienced the tumult in Jerusalem that ended with Jesus' death. On Sunday morning they heard rumors of Jesus' resurrection. Peter and John told them that the tomb that held Jesus' body was empty.

Now Peter tells them that Jesus, risen from the dead, appeared to him. So they gather.

Then it happens. Jesus, despite the locked doors, is suddenly with them.

Catholics believe that Jesus is giving them the authority to forgive sins in confession. But why did he do this?

I have to believe he did it because he expected people to come to the apostles for forgiveness of sins. In the Old Testament the Israelites would come to the Levite priests with certain animal sacrifices as sin offerings after they committed sin. People confessed their sins to John the Baptist before receiving baptism at his hands. Now people are to come to the apostles and their successors for forgiveness. Why? Certainly because people need not only forgiveness but guidance.



The first thing he says to them is:

"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

Then he breathes on them and says:

"Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them; whose sins you retain are retained."

Most of us have a tendency to justify particular sins we feel drawn to, and we need guidance--and sometimes correction--from spiritual leaders.

Brothers in the priesthood, we are called to provide that guidance -- and sometimes correction. I know that for me, the thought of hearing confessions was what made me most nervous as I approached ordination. I had had plenty of



Fr. Michael Moore, a Professional Member / Supporter of CANFP, became Catholic during his freshman year of college at Oregon State University. He was ordained a priest in 1997 in Roznava, Slovakia, and now serves the Diocese of Fresno as pastor of St. Peter's Church in Lemoore, California.

practice preaching and felt I could craft fairly good homilies for different occasions. I knew the rubrics of the Mass and other sacraments and felt joy at the thought of giving people the sacraments. But confession?

Shortly before ordination a classmate and I were talking with a medical student nearing graduation. She expressed anxiety at the thought of receiving patients and having to diagnose them on her own. We told her we felt the same about confession.

We all experience confessions of devotion, in which people confess light sins, not seeking profound advice, but wanting the ongoing grace of the

offer them instruction in which they can keep God's law in their state in life

sacrament. We know we do not have to spend a lot of time counseling these penitents. We also hear confessions of sins of passion or addiction. We give absolution, but if the person comes back repeatedly we consider guiding him to a 12-step program or anti-pornography ministry.

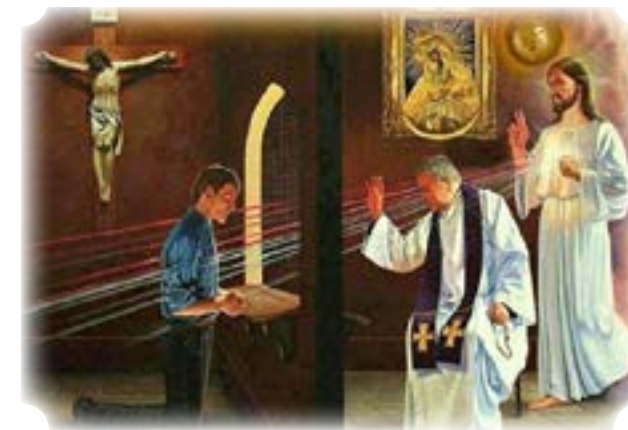
I would submit to you that sins of contraception represent a third category. They are not sins of passion, as they involve calculation. Nor are they light sins. Penitents confessing ongoing contraception need to be challenged to change or not receive absolution.

Does this make us guilty of the criticism our Savior directed at the scribes and Pharisees: *"They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them"?*

I would say no, for two reasons.

First, we dedicate ourselves to a celibate life of service to the people. We give, hopefully, a good example of men who live celibacy for the kingdom. In this way we show that the virtue of chastity is possible.

Second, we offer people the benefits of Natural Family Planning. We strive to accompany our parishioners spiritually and offer them instruction in which they can keep God's law in their state in life.



Thank you CANFP for providing encouragement and training for couples to instruct others in NFP. You are filling one of the paramount spiritual needs of our society. It is a real pleasure for me to be able to refer people to teaching couples in any area in California, in English or Spanish.

May God bless you to persevere in your great work, and may God guide and bless all priests as we strive to work for the kingdom Jesus established. ■

California NFP Teacher Training 2022

Feeling called to become an NFP Teacher?

You can be teaching NFP by the end of this year, without ever leaving California for training!

Application Deadline:
Nov. 5, 2022
to avoid late charge of \$200

EDUCATION PHASE I:
Dec. 7-14, 2022

EDUCATION PHASE II:
June 12-17, 2023

Christ the King Passionist
Retreat Center
6520 Van Maren Ln
Citrus Heights, CA 95621

35-minute drive from downtown Sacramento

[Information/Application Materials](#)

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Ask the Expert

Discerning Expanding Our Family

Question

My wife, age 46, and I have faithfully practiced NFP for almost 20 years (although never formally trained), and we have been blessed with seven children, all born vaginally and without incident. After the seventh child was born, my wife became convinced (on her own) that another pregnancy and birth would jeopardize her health, and we've chosen to avoid pregnancy (successfully) since then.

&

Lately, she's been having second thoughts about this. Last night, she wondered out loud if we should try to have another baby, later attributing her desire to, perhaps, a natural instinct as menopause approaches. She is in good health, although routinely low on energy from a full house and homeschooling! Also, her menstrual cycles remain regular.

Answer

First of all Tim, what a blessing that you have received the gift of seven children and have been faithfully practicing NFP for so long. As your question indicates, you and your wife both appear to approach the gift of fertility with much faith and trust in God and deep prayer.

My suggestions to your question are the following. Keep praying! Prayer is always essential in any discernment process. Continue to discuss this issue between yourselves in a spirit of trust and openness. Thanks be to God, your wife is in good health. I would encourage your wife to see her doctor to see if there are any real health concerns of which she should be aware. (If the doctor even hints at birth control or sterilization as possible remedies, kindly smile, thank him or her, and run out of there as fast as you can and find a new doctor who shares your Gospel values.) Also, although you have practiced

In addition to prayer, how might we discern whether or not God is calling us to cooperate with Him in a new creation? Could He be doing so through her (and my) natural yearnings? Also, what does the Church teach regarding the decision to practice continence during the fertile period? From reading some of your answers to other questions, it appears to be a deeply personal decision based on a complex set of factors. We do not seem to meet any of the obvious justifications for avoiding pregnancy, other than, perhaps, the risk to my wife's health because of her age. Thank you. *Tim*



Fr. Sam Ward was ordained in 2003 as priest of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Currently, he is Pastor at St. Raymond Church in Downey, CA. Previously, Fr. Ward was Vocation Director and Pastor of St. Helen Church in South Gate, CA. For 19 years, he has been a member of the Confraternity of Catholic Clergy

is not His will; perhaps it is. So even if you optimize your chances to conceive, there are no guarantees. The one thing that NFP ensures, practiced of course according to God's design and according to the mind of the Church, is that the married couple does nothing to intentionally thwart God's will.

NFP for many years, some formal training, especially in the moral and spiritual aspects of NFP, could be very helpful. I recommend finding a certified NFP trainer that is particularly knowledgeable about the health risks for women in their mid-forties. I am sure that CANFP can help you locate someone in your area.

Since your wife has been "wondering out loud" that perhaps you should try to have another baby, you should both take that into consideration in your prayer and discernment. Are you wondering the same thing? Your natural (physical and spiritual) yearnings, part of the gift of how God has created you male and female, will also help guide you in this process. However, our physical and spiritual desires must always be guided by reason and enlightened by grace. And God will always have a say in this anyway. Perhaps your desire to have another child

our physical and spiritual desires must always be guided by reason and enlightened by grace

Ask the Expert

Desire Sibling For Our Four Year Old

Question

Good Morning. My husband and I are parents of a four year old girl and have been trying to conceive again unsuccessfully for two years. My periods have been erratic and I started charting my temperatures. I discovered that my luteal phase lasts only ten days max. I start spotting on day eight and nine and than full bleeding starts on day ten. We are currently living overseas and there are no fertility doctors at this place, only one U.S. health practitioner. We tested my progesterone level on day three after ovulation and the level was 15, than again on day ten when it dropped to 1.5 which was according to HP extremely low. He prescribed Cyclogest 200mg that I have to supply from the neighboring South Africa.

&

Answer

Dear Natalie,

A 200mg. Cyclogest pessary used for ten days in the luteal phase is adequate therapy for luteal phase defect due to low or rapidly dropping progesterone. However, one can not be certain that that is your problem, as your luteal phase was not tested for progesterone at the optimal times. It is best to test for progesterone deficiency at least three times; ideally five, seven and nine days after ovulation (or peak day, according to some natural planning methods). Ideally estrogen (estradiol)

levels should be obtained at these times also, as low estrogen can cause a thin and inadequate uterine lining. Low thyroid and mycoplasma/ureaplasma bacteria are also treatable causes of miscarriage. Ultrasound can sometimes delineate cervical polyps or fibroids, which can cause intermenstrual spotting.

That being said, your spotting and low temperature could be due to low progesterone, and a trial of Cyclogest therapy would be reasonable in your situation
Mary L. Davenport, M.D



Mary Davenport, MD, MS, CFCMC, Professional Member and on the Advisory Board of CANFP, is an obstetrician gynecologist in the East Bay area of Northern California. She is available for telehealth consultations at MyCatholicDoctor.com

Discerning....cont from p. 12

As regards your question about practicing continence during fertile periods, *Humanae Vitae* states in paragraph 16, "If, then, there are serious motives to space out births, which derive from the physical or psychological conditions of husband and wife, or from external conditions, the Church teaches that it is then licit to take into account the natural rhythms immanent in the generative functions, for the use of marriage in infecund periods only, and in this way to regulate births without offending the moral

principles which have been recalled earlier"[in this Encyclical].

In your specific situation, if there were to emerge definite health risks for your wife, you would be morally justified in have recourse only to infertile periods. Also, depending on the ages and needs of your seven children, the energy level and health of your wife, and your duties (vocation) in home schooling, you may discern that you have legitimate serious motives and that conceiving another child may not be desirous at this time. These

factors can and may fluctuate, causing you to revise your previous decisions. Remember, the Church calls parents to responsible parenthood, which both implies all aspects of fertility and being able to provide for the moral and physical wellbeing of themselves and of their current children. A helpful guiding principle to ensure that your recourse to infertile periods does not arise from any selfish motives at all, it would be advisable (and spiritually enriching) to practice periodic abstinence during both fertile and infertile periods. *Father Samuel Ward*

1,000 Questions, with Responses from our CANFP Experts, can be found at <https://canfp.org/ask-the-expert/>

GIROS Y VUELTAS EN MI TRAYECTO

de Michelle Borba

Acudí a la reunión sintiéndome nerviosa y desesperada por hacer las cosas bien esta vez y también un poco derrotada porque mis métodos no habían funcionado

Cuando reflexiono sobre mi vida de casada y pienso en todos los puntos de vista extremos que he tenido con respecto a la PFN, no puedo evitar reírme un poco de mí misma. Si fuera realmente sincera, reconocería que he tenido muchos puntos de vista sobre este tema y que lo he complicado más de lo que es.

Al principio de mi matrimonio sabía muy poco sobre la planificación familiar natural. Recuerdo haber oído hablar un poco de este tema en nuestro fin de semana de encuentro de novios, pero tenía la impresión de que era algo anticuado y que realmente ya no se practicaba. A medida que aprendí más sobre las enseñanzas de nuestra fe, vi la importancia de la PFN, pero nunca supe cómo hacerla funcionar en mi caso, ni siquiera a dónde acudir en busca de ayuda. Recorrí las páginas de Internet en busca de explicaciones y aplicaciones, me suscribí a blogs y podcasts, utilicé tiras de prueba de ovulación e incluso compré un lector automático de temperatura con una cuota mensual. No creía tener tiempo para una consulta o un instructor y no quería aceptar que lo necesitaba.

Busqué en Google y me suscribí a lo largo de unos diez años de PFN mal ejecutada y desordenada, pero nunca hice una gráfica. Pensaba que conocía mi cuerpo y soy bastante reservada, así que quería hacerlo por mi cuenta.



Tenía temporadas en las que me iba bien, siendo fiel a cualquier método que estuviera probando, pero inevitablemente me confundía con mis observaciones y me sentía extremadamente frustrada. Entre los ciclos irregulares, la lactancia materna y todos

los demás malabarismos de la vida que estaba haciendo, nunca tuvo sentido realmente. En un esfuerzo por utilizar la alta tecnología, compré un lector de temperatura digital portátil y me suscribí a la aplicación y a los blogs que lo acompañaban. Pensé que con los avances tecnológicos de hoy en día podría confiar en que haría el trabajo por mí. Rápidamente me sentí muy frustrada por la falta de información sólida y por cómo se aplicaba realmente a mí.

La aplicación tenía algoritmos secretos patentados que interpretaban mi temperatura corporal basal diaria, pero no tenía ni idea de cómo llegaba a esas conclusiones. Sabía que no tomaba en cuenta cuántas veces amamantaba a mi bebé cada noche. Muchas mañanas me despertaba para revisar mis patrones de sueño sólo para ver que había omitido horas de alimentación.

He sido muy bendecida con mi familia numerosa, ¡y no lo habría querido hacer de otra manera! A los 42 años, me encontraba en una etapa de mi vida en la que realmente sentía la necesidad de hacer bien este asunto de la PFN.

PARA APRENDER LA PFN

Espero que mi historia anime a las mujeres a buscar un instructor(a) que las guíe

gracias
to translator:
Maricela Miotto

Fue por esta época que nuestra iglesia tuvo una reunión informativa sobre la PFN. ¡Dios es tan bueno! Si estamos abiertos a su voluntad, siempre nos da lo que necesitamos. Fui a la reunión sintiéndome nerviosa y desesperada por hacerlo bien esta vez y también un poco derrotada porque mis métodos no habían funcionado.

Mientras escuchaba a la presentadora, Sheila, explicar la ciencia y la belleza de los diferentes métodos, me di cuenta rápidamente de que realmente sabía muy poco.

Tenía la esperanza de que, después de todo el tiempo que había pasado buscando en Google y suscribiéndome a lo que encontraba en Internet, estaba bastante informada.

Pero, lamentablemente, acababa de perder mucho tiempo y energía. Habría sido mucho mejor emplear mi tiempo en buscar una instrucción buena y sólida desde el principio.

Me inscribí con Sheila justo después de la reunión informativa y en cinco meses y seis consultas he surcado la vuelta a los ciclos desde la lactancia materna, y he pasado

de aprender el método, a seguir las reglas y, más recientemente, a entender realmente mi cuerpo. Este último mes de gráficas es la primera vez que puedo decir con confianza que sabía no sólo cuándo ovulaba, sino que también veía los cambios en mi cuerpo durante días antes.

El acompañamiento y el sentimiento de solidaridad del proceso que había evitado deliberadamente durante tanto tiempo era 100% necesario para este logro. Una vez que superé mi orgullo y mis miedos, y pedí ayuda personal, descubrí que era una forma mucho mejor de utilizar mi tiempo y mis esfuerzos. Entiendo el deseo de las mujeres de hacerlo de forma independiente en esta era digital en la que se puede aprender casi cualquier cosa en YouTube. Pero para mí, y supongo que para muchas otras como yo, nada de lo que encontré tenía en cuenta todas mis variaciones individuales. El tiempo que dediqué a hablar con mi instructor de la PFN sobre mis preguntas y situaciones personales ha resultado muy valioso.

Planificar una familia y tener hijos es una decisión única y compleja. Igualmente único



Michelle Borba lleva 16 años casada con su esposo Daniel, y juntos han tenido ocho hijos. Son miembros activos de su iglesia y de la comunidad agrícola, en la región de Stockton. Michelle ha descubierto que ser madre es tanto el mayor regalo como el mayor reto de su vida.

y complejo es el cuerpo de la mujer. Lo que funciona para otras puede no funcionar para mí, y lo que funciona para mí puede no ser ideal para otras. Pero estoy muy agradecida a mi sacerdote por haber invitado a Sheila a venir a hablar y porque su visita coincidió con mi disposición a escuchar y a dar una oportunidad justa a la planificación familiar. Espero que mi historia anime a las mujeres a encontrar un instructor(a) que las guíe a través de su proceso de elaboración de gráficas y obtenga las respuestas a las preguntas que indudablemente encontrarán mientras exploran lo que la PFN significa para ellas. ■

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DISCERNING EXPANDING OUR FAMILY *Fr. Sam Ward*

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