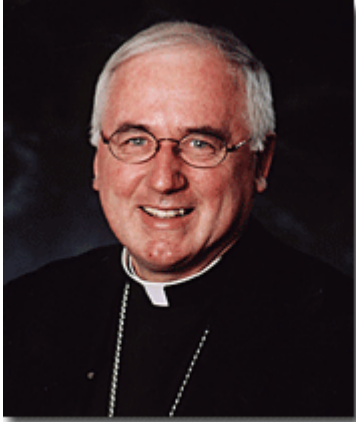


Archbishop: For the Clergy, Obedience to Church "Requires Preaching About the Moral Evil of Contraception"



Archbishop Prendergast

By John-Henry Westen

BARRY'S BAY, May 13, 2008 (LifeSiteNews.com) - The Archbishop of the Canadian capital city of Ottawa addressed the convocation of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy in Barrys Bay Ontario last week, leaving attendees awestruck. The speech focused on Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Faithful Catholics leaving the event told LifeSiteNews.com "I've been waiting 35 years to hear that from a Canadian bishop."

Archbishop Terrence Prendergast described for the graduates and their families the tumultuous times of the 60's when *Humanae Vitae* was published (July 25, 1968). He recalled that many expected a "green light" on contraception from the Vatican and were "thunderstruck" when the encyclical was published.

"In the midst of the chaos caused by the sexual revolution and the arrival of the birth control pill, many Catholics felt unsure of the Church's position on artificial contraception," said Archbishop Prendergast. "The Church responded to this urgent need for clear teaching and sound pastoral guidance when Pope Paul VI released his encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* (Of Human Life) in 1968."

"We celebrate this year the 40th anniversary of that prophetic document," said Prendergast. "Time has shown it to be a gift from Christ to men and women everywhere. The late Edouard Cardinal Gagnon, former President of the Pontifical Council for the Family and one of Canada's great churchmen, called *Humanae Vitae* 'one of the most important documents in the history of the Church.'"

He explained: "The encyclical gives the Church a deeper understanding into the beauty of married love and responsible parenthood. It offers a clearer understanding of the harm of contraception and the great value of Natural Family Planning (NFP). Further, it challenges married couples, healthcare professionals and clergy to live and teach these profound truths about human sexuality and dignity."

Archbishop Prendergast's approach to the matter was refreshing and new, while he did not shy away from the fact that Catholics must obey Christ on the matter, he pointed out that embracing the teaching had tremendous benefits. "Should Catholics embrace this teaching just because the Church tells them they must? While obedience is a necessary virtue, the benefits of learning and living *Humanae Vitae* should convince couples of its wisdom," he said. One of the many blessings he listed as coming from couples embracing the teaching was, "Having happier children within stronger families."

Moreover, he said that obedience to *Humanae Vitae*'s teaching fell not only on married couples but also the clergy. "For the clergy," he said, "this same obedience and submission of will and intellect requires preaching about the moral evil of contraception and how it violates God's plan for marriage, human happiness, and the dignity each person."

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