PASTORAL GUIDELINES AND CORE VALUES IN PROMOTING NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

Antonio J. Ledesma, S.J., D.D.
Archbishop of Cagayan de Oro
RH Bill issue: Protest rally
RH Bill issue:

NO to RH!

YES to ALL-NFP!
WELCOME!

7th Anniversary
"Mapadayong pagtuturo, pagtuturo sa KAHIBALO alang sa malangkubon nga pag alagad sa famiha.”
Responsible Parenthood and All-Natural Family Planning
Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro

NFP MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS ASSEMBLY
Patrick Cronin Formation Center
St. Agustine Cathedral Compound, Cagayan de Oro City
June 22, 2013
CWL – also Hapag-Asa & Caritas Manila
PASTORAL SITUATION:

Majority of couples today have three felt needs:

1. They want family planning – re family size and spacing of births.
Three felt needs:

2. They prefer natural family planning – if given adequate information on fertility awareness and NFP methods.
Three felt needs:

3. They want to choose among NFP methods – to suit their own circumstances and preference.
Current use of contraception and family planning among married women, age 15-49, 2011 Family Health Survey, Philippines

- No Methods: 51.1%
- Modern NFP: 0.6%
- Traditional Methods: 12.0%
- Modern Contraceptives: 36.2%
Table 1. Wanted and actual fertility rates of Filipino families by wealth quintiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wealth Quintile</th>
<th>WANTED Fertility Rate</th>
<th>ACTUAL Fertility Rate</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Demographic and Health Survey of 2008
## Education and Health Expenditure by Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Mean educ. expenditure per student</th>
<th>Mean health expenditure per sick/injured member</th>
<th>Mean health expenditure per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5,558</td>
<td>2,437</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,135</td>
<td>1,969</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,243</td>
<td>2,124</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,787</td>
<td>1,464</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,558</td>
<td>1,454</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) **PRO-LIFE** (First Principle)

(3) **NATURAL (NFP)**

- BBT – Basal Body Temperature
- BOM – Billings Ovulation Method
- STM – Sympto-Thermal Method
- LAM – Lactational Amenorrhea Method
- SDM – Standard Days Method
- TDM – TwoDay Method

(2) **RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD**

   a) procreation
   b) education

(4) **INFORMED & MORALLY RESPONSIBLE CHOICE**

(Context: Pluralistic society)

---

**Four Pastoral Guidelines for an RP-NFP Program**
I. We are Pro-Life.
We are Pro-Life.

1) The human person is created in the image of God.
GOD’S CREATION

“It was you who created my being, knit me together in my mother’s womb. I thank you for the wonder of my being, for the wonders of all your creation.”

- Psalm 139
We are Pro-Life.

2) The human person is created by God in unity of body and soul.
BODY AND SOUL

“Already you knew my soul. My body held no secret from you when I was being fashioned in secret and molded in the depths of the earth.”

- Psalm 139
We are Pro-Life.

3) The human person is open to transcendence: he is open to the infinite and to all created beings.
We are Pro-Life.

4) The human person is endowed with a moral conscience that enables him to recognize the truth concerning good and evil.
DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

**Nature**
- Reason
- Free Will
- Conscience
- Body

**Means**
- Reason: Know
- Free Will: Love
- Conscience: Should do
- Body: Basic needs

**Natural End**
- truth
- good/beautiful
- moral good
- health/life

**Supernatural End**
- Truth
- Summum Bonum
- Beatitude
- Eternal Life

**Human Rights and Duties**
We are Pro-Life.

5) The human person is essentially a social and relational being.
Fig. 3. RELATIONSHIPS OF A HUMAN PERSON
We are Pro-Life.

6) The Christian view of the human person balances the mystery of sin with the universality of salvation in Jesus Christ.
II. We are for Responsible Parenthood.
Responsible Parenthood (HV)

“In relation to physical, economic, psychological and social conditions, responsible parenthood is exercised, either by the deliberate and generous decision to raise a numerous family, or by the decision, made for grave motives and with due respect for the moral law, to avoid for the time being, or even for an indeterminate period, a new birth.”

(HV, 10)
Responsible Parenthood (PCP II)

“Christian parents must exercise responsible parenthood. While nurturing a generous attitude towards bringing new human life into the world, they should strive to beget only those children whom they can raise up in a truly human and Christian way. Towards this end, they need to plan their families according to the moral norms taught by the Church.”

(PCP II, 583)
Role of the Christian Family

1) Forming a community of persons

- an “intimate community of life and love”
- Equal dignity of parents, children, elderly
- “a school of deeper humanity”
Role of the Christian Family

2) Serving life.

- “transmitting by procreation the divine image from person to person”
- conjugal love – “fully human, exclusive and open to new life”
- family as “the first school of social living”
Role of the Christian Family

3) Participating in the development of society.

• the “first school of the social virtues”
• the family plays a social and political role
• lives out the values of truth, justice, freedom and love
Role of the Christian Family

4) Sharing in the life and mission of the Church
   - family as the “domestic church”
   - Christian marriage as a “profession of faith”
   - Discover the image of God in every brother and sister
III. We are for Natural Family Planning.
What is Natural Family Planning (NFP)?

- Natural Family Planning (NFP) is an approach for regulating births by identifying the fertile and infertile periods of a woman’s cycle.
What is Natural Family Planning?

• As an educational process and a way of life, there are four elements:
  - It involves the observation of a naturally occurring body sign or signs in order to identify the woman’s fertile and infertile periods.
  - It involves the timing of intercourse to avoid or achieve pregnancy.
What is Natural Family Planning?

- NFP methods are Fertility Awareness Based (FAB), as classified by the World Health Organization.
What is Natural Family Planning?

In contrast to artificial contraceptives, NFP means No DIDO – i.e.,

**No Drugs**

**Injections**

**Devices**

**Operations** at any time.

It also means **no withdrawal**.
Our “All-NFP” Program means we:

1) include *all* modern NFP methods;

2) reach out to *all* chapel communities & households;
Our “All-NFP” Program means we:

3) promote NFP all the way, i.e., without back-up contraceptives;
4) involve all family-oriented lay organizations.
All - NFP includes the following methods:

1. Basal Body Temperature (BBT)
2. Billings Ovulation Method (BOM)
3. Sympto-Thermal Method (STM)
4. Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM)
5. Standard Days Method (SDM)
6. TwoDay Method (TDM)
1. The Standard Days Method, provided it is not mixed with contraceptives, is a natural family planning method and is consistent with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church. The bishop should inform the priest or lay faithful who think otherwise and should stop him from spreading his error.
2. It belongs to the bishop to decide whether his diocese will promote or not the SDM, in accordance with his pastoral discernment.
Consensus on Natural Family Planning and the Standard Days Method
Reached at the CBCP Plenary Assembly in Jan. & July 2009

1. The Standard Days Method, provided it is not mixed with contraceptives, is a natural family planning method and is consistent with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church. The bishop should inform the priest or lay faithful who think otherwise and should stop him from spreading his error.
A Parish Priest explaining how to use SDM to his parish worker.
Why Natural Family Planning?

1. Normal intercourse is preserved. Couples can plan the size of their families and space births the natural way.
Why NFP?

2. NFP is morally acceptable to people of all religions. It does not separate the love-giving and life-giving dimensions of the marriage act.
Why NFP?

3. Modern NFP methods are effective and reliable. They are based on scientific evidence. Simplified methods are easy to learn.
Why NFP?

4. There are no inherent health risks in NFP methods, unlike the use of contraceptives.
Why NFP?

5. NFP is pro-poor. Once the method has been learned, there is no cost involved. It empowers couples not to rely on health centers or drugstores.
Why NFP?

6. NFP is sustainable across generations. Mothers can readily pass on the practice of NFP to their daughters.
Why NFP?

7. NFP involves a joint decision by the couple. Neither partner feels being used by the other.
Why NFP?

8. Through periodic abstinence, NFP engenders sexual discipline for the spouses, mutual caring, and self-control in the rearing of children.
Why NFP?

9. NFP enhances communication between spouses and promotes a wholesome family life. NFP couples seldom or never end up in separation or divorce, or resort to abortion.
Why NFP?

10. NFP can be used to avoid or achieve pregnancy.
Natural Family Planning

“Periodic continence, that is, the methods of birth regulation based on self-observation and the use of infertile periods, is in conformity with the objective criteria of morality. These methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them, and favor the education of an authentic freedom.”

(CCC, 2370)
IV. We are for enabling couples to make an Informed and Morally Responsible Choice, according to the dictates of a Right Conscience.
Three kinds of Freedom

1. ontological freedom
2. civic and political freedoms
3. authentic freedom
Conscience and Natural Law

“For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God... His dignity lies in observing this law, and by it he will be judged... By conscience in a wonderful way, that law is made known...”

(Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes, 16)

Responsible Parenthood and All-Natural Family Planning Program
Formation of Conscience

- vs. ignorance and sinful habits
- objective norms of morality
- full knowledge & full consent for a sinful act
Three Dimensions to Consider for a Sinful Act

• Act or object
• Intention or motivation
• Circumstances
Responsible Parenting

Factors to consider:

• good of children, present and future
• material and spiritual situation
• good of family, society and Church

“ It is the married couple themselves who must in the last analysis arrive at these judgments before God.”

(Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes, 50)
Local Church’s Role

• information on all NFP methods as a *pastoral imperative*
• proclamation more than denunciation
• charity, compassion, formation of conscience
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1: Parish Orientation</th>
<th>Step 2: NFP Counselors’ Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parish-level</strong></td>
<td><strong>Parish-level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation talk on RP-NFP to all parish workers (Parish staff/ councils, ministry workers, chapel leaders, kaabags, rel. organizations. etc.) (1-2 hours)</td>
<td>All-NFP Training Seminar for NFP Counselors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Each chapel, rel. organization chooses its potential NFP Counselors.)</td>
<td>• Humanae Vitae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 Core Values of NFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fertility Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NFP Methods: BBT, BOM, STM, LAM, SDM, TDM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Counseling Approach (2-4 days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 3: Chapel Orientation</th>
<th>Step 4: Individual Counseling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapel level</strong></td>
<td><strong>Household level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation talk on RP-NFP to potential acceptors, (Pre-Cana, Pre-Baptism, Panagtagbo sa Managtiayon, STEP, BEC Session, etc.) (1/2 hr- 2 hrs.)</td>
<td>Individual counseling and follow-up by NFP counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Parish coordinator and NFP Counselor(s) can work together to give orientation talk and make house-to-house visits.)</td>
<td>(NFP counselors keep written records of each couple acceptor.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 5: Parish / Archdiocesan Monitoring</th>
<th>Step 6: Ongoing Values Formation and Updating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapel – Parish – Archdiocesan level</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chapel – Parish – Archdiocesan level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting from NFP counselors to parish coordinator; then to archdiocesan coordinator. (every quarter) (1/2 – 1 day)</td>
<td>Values Formation and Updating for RP-NFP Staff, Trainers, Coordinators, NFP Counselors &amp; NFP Couple Acceptors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(RP-NFP Parish &amp; Archdiocesan keep written records of the reports.)</td>
<td>• BEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Panagtagbo sa Managtiayon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Marriage Encounter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Values orientation Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Systematic Training for Effective Parenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Family Ecclesial Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bio Ethics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A six-step RP-NFP program for Cagayan de Oro Archdiocese
A six-step RP-NFP program for Cagayan de Oro Archdiocese
Step 2: NFP Counselor’s Training

- Fertility Awareness
- NFP Methods: BBT, BOM, STM, LAM, SDM, TDM
- Counseling Approach

(2-3 days)

Parish-level

Launching of the NFP program and installation of NFP counselors. (Homily of the priests, posters, radio plugs, pamphlets may be used to publicize All-NFP.)

A six-step RP-NFP program for Cagayan de Oro Archdiocese
Step 3: Chapel Orientation

Orientation talk on All-NFP to potential acceptors (Pre-Cana, Pre-Baptism, PsM, STEP, BEC Session, etc.)

(½ - 1 hr)

Parish Coordinator and NFP counselors can work together to give orientation talk and make house-to-house visits.

A six-step RP-NFP program for Cagayan de Oro Archdiocese
Step 4: Couple Counseling

Individual counseling and follow-up visits by NFP Counselor

(15-30 mins. per couple)

(NFP counselors keep written records of each couple acceptor.)

A six-step RP-NFP program for Cagayan de Oro Archdiocese
Step 5: Monitoring Meeting

Chapel-Parish-Archdiocesan Level

Reporting from NFP counselors to parish coordinator; then to archdiocesan coordinator. (every quarter)

(1/2 – 1 day)

(RP-NFP Parish & Archdiocesan coordinators keep written records of the reports.)

A six-step RP-NFP program for Cagayan de Oro Archdiocese
Step 6: Ongoing Values Formation and Updating

Values Formation and Updating for RP-NFP Staff, Trainers, Coordinators, Counselors & Couple Acceptors

- BEC
- Tipanan ng Mag-asawa
- Marriage Encounter
- Values orientation Seminar
- Systematic Training for Effective Parenting
- Family Ecclesial Community
- Bio Ethics

Chapel-Parish-Archdiocesan Level

A six-step RP-NFP program for Cagayan de Oro Archdiocese
Government program

No!

Church advocacy

All FP methods

Couples’ 3 felt needs

All-NFP

Yes!
“The more we promote All-NFP, the sooner contraceptives will die a natural death.”

- a Family Life worker
thank you...