

If you received this twice, please accept our apologies. If the Newsletter does not appear as it should please go to our Website at <http://www.godsexandthemeaningoflife.com/Newsletters.html> - click on Volume 17 - to view the document. If you would prefer to receive this email as a PDF attachment please let us know.



# God, Sex and the Meaning of Life

JANUARY 7, 2011

VOLUME 17

## GSML News

We at GSML Ministry hope that you had a holy and blessed Christmas and that God blesses you all in a special way this new year.

You might consider reflecting upon the Theology of the Body this year by reading JPII's book or several others that we have reviewed in the past. See the most recent review or go to our website to see other books and material. Visit our website at: <http://www.godsexandthemeaningoflife.com/>

**Note:** Email [gsmlministry@gmail.com](mailto:gsmlministry@gmail.com) to book a Workshop for your Parish or Group.

We are now taking bookings for 2011.

Our goal is to disseminate Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body as widely as possible and to encourage a more in-depth study of his teachings. In order to ensure that as many people as possible are exposed to the Theology of the Body, our ministry offers workshops and other resources on this topic

Review Date	Book and Author
Jan. 2009	<i>Heaven's Song</i> - Christopher West
Mar. 2009	<i>In Theology of the Body: Some Thoughts and Reflections</i> - Karen Doyle
Aug. 2009	<i>The Authentic Catholic Woman</i> - Genevieve Kineke
Sep. 2009	<i>Called to Love: Approaching John Paul II's ToB</i> - Carl Anderson
Nov. 2009	<i>Dressing with Dignity</i> - Colleen Hammond
Jan. 2010	<i>Discovering the Feminine Genius: Every Woman's Journey</i> - Katrina Zeno
Mar. 2010	<i>Theology of the Body for Teens</i> - Jason Evert & Brian Butler
May 2010	<i>Theology of His Body: of His/Her Body</i> - Jason Evert
July. 2010	<i>Theology of the Body in Context</i> - William E. May
Sept. 2010	<i>Parenting with Grace: Catholic Parent's Guide to Raising (almost) Perfect Kids</i> Gregory Popcak
Nov. 2010	<i>Our Lady of Guadalupe: Mother of the Civilization of Love</i> - Carl Anderson



### Our Workshops:

**God, Sex and the Meaning of Life Workshop:** This workshop, for married couples, singles and celibates, male and female, young and old, is based on Christopher West's DVD talks in which he unpacks John Paul II's teachings, translating them into language everyone can understand. It explores the connection between sex and the questions of human existence.

**Theology of the Body for Teens:** This program takes the two hottest topics on the planet—God and sex—and "marries" them through Pope John Paul II's compelling vision for love and life. This workshop for teens and young adults, is a positive portrayal of our sexuality as a good and essential part of love and life.

**If you are considering a Lenten Workshop, please book as soon as possible.**

Contact:  
[gsmlministry@gmail.com](mailto:gsmlministry@gmail.com)

During 12 weekly sessions, which include activities appropriate to the age group, participants discover the beauty and purpose of their sexuality, and why it is such a major part of their ability to love.

**Guiding Your Child Through The Sexual Minefield**— From Toddlers To Teens: Do your kids tune you out? Regardless of the age of our children, as parents, we have the daily duty to be involved in molding their morality and ethics in a Catholic manner. It is no longer enough to leave the task to the schools. We must counteract the false messages about love that are rampant in our culture. This presentation will provide parents with tools to help them mold the morals and sexuality of children from toddlers to teens.

**Theology of the Body in the Classroom:**

Our ministry was delighted to be invited to participate in Respect For Life Week by the Toronto Catholic District School Board. We provide a brief introduction to the Theology of the Body for Teens—suitable for one classroom period. The session can be expanded to cover more of the topic.

**Presentation skills and Basic Theology of The Body:**

This workshop will assist participants in organizing and facilitating workshops, making effective use of the microphone and PowerPoint presentations, as well as in running group discussions. Participants will also have an opportunity to train at our Workshops or Theology of the Body for Teens.

**Parish Retreat / Workshop:**

An all day retreat suited for all ministries and staff in a parish to enable those in the ministries to integrate the Theology of the Body their ministries and daily activities

**About our Workshops**

- Workshops are lead by trained facilitators
- Use of DVD and other resources
- Facilitator lead small discussion groups
- Some can be full day, half day, or weekly for several weeks
- Can serve as Lenten Retreat
- Offered Free of charge
- Books and resources are offered for purchase by participants

We can adjust and adapt various workshops to suit a group or parish needs or interest. 98% of participation feedback is very positive. with many people commenting on the small group discussions, finding them to be a very important part of the workshop.

**GSML Ministry is on FaceBook**

If you have a question or would like to start a discussion - look us up at [www.facebook.com/pages/GSML-Ministry/142788839095476](http://www.facebook.com/pages/GSML-Ministry/142788839095476)



**Starting Again  
Why don't you join  
us.**

**Light Weigh**

The group is progressing well, learning much about the Catholic Faith, increasing our spirituality, learning about sacrifice and losing some weight. The group sharing is heartfelt and encouraging.

We will be starting a new group in February - please contact us if you are interested in joining. Meetings Tuesday mornings from 9:30 - 11:30. For more information contact us at [gsmlministry@gmail.com](mailto:gsmlministry@gmail.com) as soon as possible so we can order material.

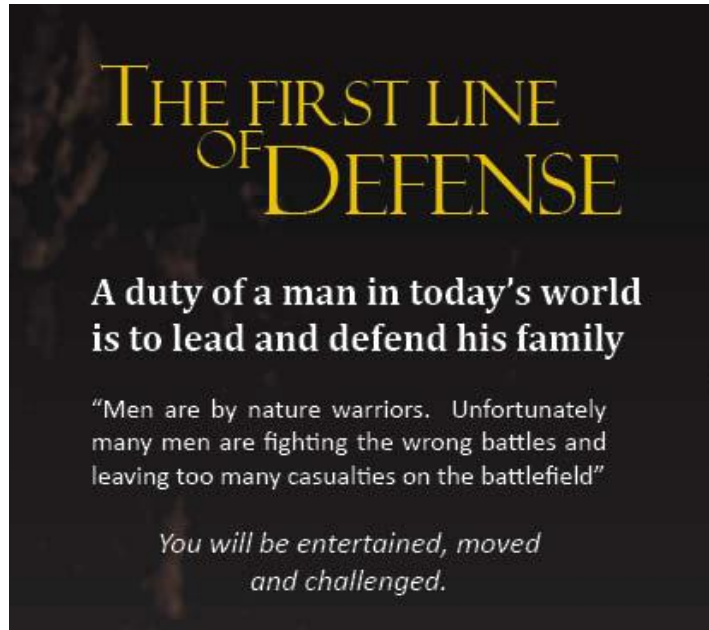


with Doug Barry of  
**EWTN**  
GLOBAL CATHOLIC NETWORK  
(Life on the Rock)

*To be held in  
Pickering, ON*

## A St. Joseph's Day Conference For Men

We are very fortunate to have been able to have Doug Barry from EWTN to present his talk about the value and role of the Husband in today's family



Saturday March 19, 2011 at 2:00 pm

(registration from 1:15 pm)

Holy Redeemer Catholic Church

796 Eyer Dr. Pickering, ON

Tickets \$15.00

For more information and to purchase tickets visit

<http://firstlineofdefense.eventbrite.com/>

Email: [Radix.redeemer@gmail.com](mailto:Radix.redeemer@gmail.com)

Tel: (Chris) 905-509-8500

For the Poster - [click here](#)

*Doug Barry is the founder and director of the Catholic apostolate RADIX. He is a devoted husband of 20 years and father of five. Since 1992 he has traveled throughout the United States along with journeying to several other countries, spreading and defending the Catholic faith.*

*With a dynamic and explosive style Doug has spoken to thousands, young and old alike, through television, radio and live appearances. He is probably best known for his powerful one-man performance of the Passion of Christ, seen regularly on EWTN and other Christian television channels around the world. He is also currently the co-host of Life On The Rock, weekly on EWTN.*



# The PASSION of CHRIST by Radix

featuring DOUG BARRY of RADIX and music by ERIC GENUIS

A powerful one-man performance by Doug Barry of the Passion of Christ, seen regularly on EWTN and other Christian television channels around the world.

To be held in  
Pickering, ON

**Saturday, March 19, 2011 - 7:30 pm**

Holy Redeemer Church

796 Eyer Drive, Pickering, Ontario

For further information or to purchase tickets:

Website: [www.thepassion.eventbright.com](http://www.thepassion.eventbright.com)

Email: [radix.passion@gmail.com](mailto:radix.passion@gmail.com)

Tel: (Chris) 905-509-8500

For Poster [click here](#)

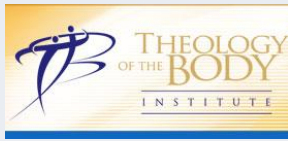
From St. Joseph  
Conference

## St. Joseph

What man does not need the example, influence and spiritual protection of St. Joseph? The world is always looking for the “superhero” who can save the day by riding in on his white horse and setting right the things that are wrong. What woman does not want her son to grow up to be a strong, truly good and honorable man? What woman, who seeks the vocation of marriage, does not want her husband to be capable of providing a safe, stable, spiritually and physically healthy life? Face it.

This world has always needed and called out for the “knight in shining armor” to step up and fight for and protect what is good and true. There is a daily need for the knight to defeat the dragons of chaos and despair and anything else that threatens truth. A man is designed by God to be that knight. And St. Joseph is our mentor and our example of the character and virtue needed to be faithful to this duty. He is the “action hero” that defended Truth Himself. There is a great responsibility placed upon the shoulders of each man. Turn to St. Joseph for assistance.

**Ite ad Joseph (Go to Joseph)**



## TOB I: Head & Heart Immersion Course

February 27 - March 4, 2011  
Taught by Christopher West  
Black Rock Retreat Center, Quarryville, PA

[CLICK HERE](#) to register online. For more information on their Certification Courses, contact Jen Settle, Certification Course Manager, at 215-302-8200 ext. 103 or [jsettle@tobinstitute.org](mailto:jsettle@tobinstitute.org).

## TOWARDS A NEW SEXUAL REVOLUTION

**THE THEOLOGY OF THE BODY BY JOHN PAUL II** with Christopher West

FOR YOUNG ADULTS 18-35 YEARS OLD, YOUTH MINISTERS, CLERGY, PCLs & CATECHISTS, FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY, MARRIAGE MINISTRY, BAPTISM, RCIA, VOCATION MINISTRY etc..

Saturday, January 22nd  
& Sunday, January 23rd 2011  
Loyola High School  
2477 West Broadway, Montreal H4B 2A5

Archidiocèse de Montréal Mission Jeunesse - Youth Ministry- Archdiocese of Montreal  
[jeunesse@diocesemontreal.org](mailto:jeunesse@diocesemontreal.org)

[www.diocesemontreal.org/presence/jmj/jmj\\_2010\\_2011/20110121\\_west\\_insc\\_2\\_en.pdf](http://www.diocesemontreal.org/presence/jmj/jmj_2010_2011/20110121_west_insc_2_en.pdf)

New members  
always welcome

## ToB Study Group

We meet every Monday morning from 9:30-11:30 at St. Bernadette's Parish at 21 Bayly St East Ajax

We are studying *Heaven's Song* by Christopher West. It is based on the hidden talks of John Paul II.

For more information contact: [gsmlministry@gmail.com](mailto:gsmlministry@gmail.com)

Come and learn more about the Theology of the Body and how it applies to your daily life.

## ToB Books for the E-Reader

Did you get an E-Reader for Christmas? You might want to check out these books for the e-reader at Ascension Press. Here are a few selections:

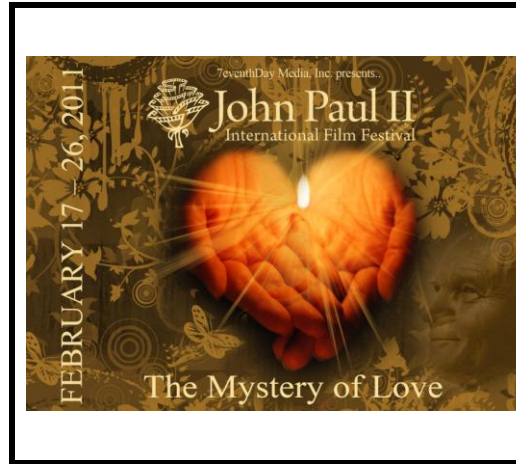
- *Theology of the Body for Beginners* (Electronic Book- nook/ipad/iphone format)
- *Theology of His Body / Theology of Her Body* (Electronic Book- nook/ipad/iphone format)
- *Heaven's Song* (Electronic Book- nook/ipad/iphone format)

Each of these sells for \$8.99 (USD) [Click here for more information](#)

# John Paul II International Film Festival

**Feb. 17 - 26, 2011 - Miami, Florida**

If you want to follow  
this online go to  
[www.jp2filmfestival.org](http://www.jp2filmfestival.org)



The official 2011 JP2IFF Theme

What is love? Like all of life's mysteries, love is not tangible. It is not something we can grasp, taste, or smell. It can only be felt and experienced... much like faith. Love is arguably the driving force behind our motivations, our wants, and subsequently, our creation.

We will include the list of submitted films in the next newsletter

## **JPIIFF Mission statement:**

To organize an annual faith-based film festival modeled after the views and ideals of the late Pope John Paul II. With the help of filmmakers from around the world, we will create an alternative to the Hollywood industry by fostering filmmakers longing to use their God-given talents to share their faith with the masses. The festival will also feature talks, seminars, music, and art that celebrate our humanity through God's eyes.

## **The Teaching of Jesus Christ**

Wednesdays, January 12 – March 2, 2011

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Hall, 640 Glenholme Avenue, Toronto.

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish will be presenting the program, "The Teaching of Jesus Christ". The program format will be viewing a 1-hour DVD (speaker is Fr. John Corapi) followed by group discussion, led by clergy at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. This program synthesizes the Catholic Church's official Catechism. "A sure norm for teaching the faith," as Pope John Paul II calls it, the Catechism of the Catholic Church is the benchmark for all Catholic doctrinal and moral teaching. This program has been broadcast and used in over 100 countries throughout the world and has helped countless people to love and know the Catholic faith better.

\$10.00 for the course which consists of 8 sessions. Cheque or cash accepted on the first evening of each course payable to St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. The New Revised Standards Catholic Bible and Catechism of the Catholic Church are recommended texts.

WINTER 2011 COURSE CONTENT: Marriage and Humanae Vitae, Introduction to Christian Life, Conscience & Virtue, Virtue & The Reality of Sin, The Reality of Sin & Human Vocation, The Human Vocation in Society, The Church & Social Justice, and God's Salvation, Law & Grace.

Please contact  
[cvolpentesta@rogers.com](mailto:cvolpentesta@rogers.com)  
for more information and  
to reserve your place.



**LifeSiteNews**

## **Ontario Catholic teachers union funds leading gay activist group**

by John-Henry Westen

TORONTO, December 16, 2010 ([LifeSiteNews.com](http://LifeSiteNews.com)) – Faithful Catholic teachers are outraged after discovering that the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) is funding Canada's leading homosexualist organization with dues collected from them.

According to OECTA's website, the organization represents 45,000 teachers in publicly-funded English Catholic schools in the province. All the teachers are compelled to pay dues to the organization, which vary according to teaching status, with many having nearly \$1000 per year deducted from their paychecks. This gives the union huge financial clout.

*To read the rest of the article go to [www.lifesitenews.com/news/ontario-catholic-teachers-union-funds-leading-gay-activist-group](http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/ontario-catholic-teachers-union-funds-leading-gay-activist-group)*

**B. C. Catholic Paper**

## **Theology of the Body reflects on humanity and divinity**

By Father Alan Boisclair

In Advent we celebrate the two comings of Christ: the first at His birth, the second at the end of time. For John Paul II, the birth of Christ is proof of God's spousal love for us. In becoming human, Christ literally marries divinity and humanity in His Person, "two in one flesh."

In His second coming we celebrate the humanity of Christ, resurrected and glorified, with the full divinity, power, and authority, as Son of Man. This gives us hope of the ultimate destiny and meaning of the human body.

The Theology of the Body is a catechetical summary of our faith, given to us by Pope John Paul II as a reflection on what it means to be human, created "in the image and likeness of God." Through Christ's teaching on marriage we come to the ultimate truth about our humanity. It is startling to realize that, in Christ, we become fully sacred and exalted so as to be higher than angels!

Pope John Paul II never tired of quoting two key statements from the Vatican Council document, *The Church in the Modern World*.

The first statement is: "Christ, the final Adam ... fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear" (#22).

In this we understand that, through the Incarnation, theology is not only about God but about man. Christ not only reveals God the Father to us, but He reveals to us our own humanity, created as "very good," so sacred as to give God's life to others as well. Christ gives us an authentic template and model of genuine humanity.

The second statement is: "Man is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, [and he] cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself" (#24).

To read the rest of the article go to:

[bcc.rcav.org/opinion-and-editorial/336-theology-of-the-body-reflects-on-humanity-and-divinity](http://bcc.rcav.org/opinion-and-editorial/336-theology-of-the-body-reflects-on-humanity-and-divinity)

**From the Gabriel Project of the Archdiocese of San Francisco - as a follow-up to a recent Educational Conference of the Catholic Medical Association.**

**To read the article online**  
[Click Here](#)

## **Moral teachings of the Church are in accord with human dignity** by Bishop Robert Vasa

The Office of Readings for the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time contains one of my favorite and most challenging passages. Citing from the "Pastoral Guide of Pope Saint Gregory the Great," the reading contains these words: "A spiritual guide should be silent when discretion requires and speak when words are of service. Otherwise he may say what he should not or be silent when he should speak. Indiscreet speech may lead men into error and an imprudent silence may leave in error those who could have been taught. Pastors who lack foresight hesitate to say openly what is right because they fear losing the favor of men. As the voice of truth tells us, such leaders are not zealous pastors who protect their flocks, rather they are like mercenaries who flee by taking refuge in silence when the wolf appears."

I have just returned from the annual educational conference of the Catholic Medical Association at which I again heard, from the medical and scientific community, that the teachings of the Catholic Church are fully in accord with a proper philosophical understanding of man and with the prudent practice of the healing arts. I was reminded again that bishops and priests, as shepherds, are perhaps a bit reluctant to speak to our secular and relativistic culture those truths which could perhaps be described as "inconvenient." The theme of the conference was "Theology of the Body: The Dignity of Woman." Starting with the series of talks by Pope John Paul II, in which he presented a rather comprehensive theology of the body, the conference presenters pointed out how this teaching interfaces with the practice of medicine.

**As you can imagine, the Theology of the Body is fully consistent with the moral teachings of the Church.** For example, there was a presentation on the use of the contraceptive pill as the medicine of choice for the impairment of fertility and the treatment of a variety of ailments which women might experience. In keeping with the theme of the dignity of women it was pointed out that many studies confirm the significant increase in the risk of breast cancer for women who use the contraceptive pill. The conclusion: The pill is not good for women. Furthermore, another presenter pointed out that the contraceptive pill, because it is a type of hormonal therapy, is used to treat the symptoms of a whole series of other underlying problems. Some of these, because they go undiagnosed, cause even more serious problems in the future. The pill may be convenient but it is not



good morality when it is used contraceptively and it is not good medicine when used therapeutically.

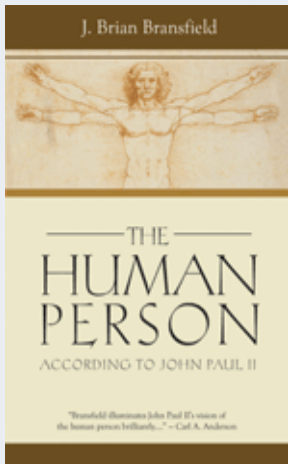
Contraceptive tubal ligations are morally illicit and it is hard to imagine a tubal ligation which is not contraceptive. Such surgeries are a violation of the integral dignity of women, they further promote the objectification of women and there are sometimes serious adverse health consequences.

In vitro fertilization, also known as IVF, is frequently used as a means for a couple to achieve a desired pregnancy. This process diminishes the dignity of both the man and the woman, it objectifies both of them, and it even objectifies the child to be conceived. In some ways that child, who has a right to be born of natural processes in the context of the embrace of love, now becomes the manipulated product of laboratory technology. The Church, while recognizing the longing of couples to achieve a pregnancy, also recognizes that achieving such a pregnancy "at any cost" involves a diminution of the dignity of woman, of man, of the marital relationship and that such a cost is too high. IVF is immoral. Furthermore, thanks to IVF we now have the seemingly insoluble problem of approximately 400,000 frozen embryos, frozen microscopic human beings who have parents who are morally responsible for them but who have either abandoned them to their frozen fate or who do not have the ability to rescue them. This kind of situation clearly diminishes our respect for life, further objectifies the innocent child and treats him or her like a product of the freezer section of the local market. This absurd fate of the innocent child is the product of a technology detached from morality, a technology which does not give proper regard to the dignity of the human person, the dignity of the woman, the dignity of the man, the dignity of the child. There are legitimate modalities which assist, very effectively I might add, married couples desiring to achieve and sustain a pregnancy and these do not involve IVF or freezing embryos or donor gametes or selective reductions or designer babies or gender selection or genetic testing, all of which further dehumanize and objectify the child. Good morality is good medicine. Good medicine respects the nature and dignity of the human person.

Abortion harms women. This is one of the signs often held by the proponents of life when advocating a deeper respect for life. Direct abortion undoubtedly kills an innocent human being and this fact alone should be sufficient for all of us to see its absolute immorality. Unfortunately, it appears that a fuller recognition of the immeasurable harm this procedure does to women will be necessary before this crime against humanity can be seen for what it is, the destruction of an innocent human being and a great harm to women. I do not believe there is any other freely chosen action which has a greater detrimental impact on women than abortion. This medical procedure is certainly a grave moral evil. This medical procedure is an assault, not only on the individual woman, but an assault on the dignity of women in general.

It often happens that the Church is accused of disdaining and condemning the joy of sexual expression and that all these moral laws are really about sex. Pope Benedict mentioned this in his Encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*. "Doesn't the Church, with all her commandments and prohibitions, turn to bitterness the most precious thing in life? Doesn't she blow the whistle just when the joy, which is the Creator's gift, offers us a happiness which is itself a certain foretaste of the Divine?" In a word, no. The Church, because she sees, recognizes and seeks to defend the dignity of the human person, perhaps especially the dignity of women, is a strong shepherd in speaking out against those things which are immoral and which are contrary to the dignity of the human person. To do otherwise would be "imprudent silence."

## Recommended Reading



**Book Explores What It Means to be Human in Light of Theology of the Body**

WASHINGTON—"What does it mean to be human?" A new book by the priest who spearheads the evangelization and catechetical efforts of the U.S. bishops explores this question by drawing on the teachings of Pope John Paul II in his theology of the body. **In *The Human Person: According to John Paul II***, published by Pauline Books and Media, Father J. Brian Bransfield examines the vision of humanity expressed by Pope John Paul II and uses it as the basis for a moral theology that offers practical guidance and support in living the Christian life.

Father Bransfield writes about the challenges raised by three social revolutions of the 20th Century – the industrial, sexual and technological revolutions – and how Pope John Paul's theology of the body responded to the resulting societal shifts. These shifts, Father Bransfield observes, have led to a disregard for women, the spread of cohabitation, the rise in divorce and the growing trend of fatherlessness. John Paul II challenged all of these trends. Father Bransfield shows how Christians today can overcome the negative consequences of these shifts through living the teaching of the theology of the body as an essential element of the new evangelization proclaimed by Pope John Paul II.

Father J. Brian Bransfield is a priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. He currently serves as the Assistant General Secretary and Executive Director of the Secretariat of Evangelization and Catechesis at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Father Bransfield holds a doctorate in moral theology from the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family in Washington.

## An ecological blind spot

***Contraceptives are polluting women's bodies and the environment, but who cares?*** by Cristina Alarcon

There is a huge effort today to protect the physical environment from the unintended effects of human activity. We have international agreements and national policies to reduce global warming by curbing excess carbon, produced as human beings pursue their material wellbeing.

On a smaller scale, we each do our best to turn off the taps, turn down the lights, use public transport, cut down on the fumes, recycle, recycle, and definitely not flush any medicines down the sink – especially not the brain-altering or endocrine-disrupting kind. Yes, we are constantly seeking ways to reduce air and water [pollution](#), and in Canada, the [Environment Act](#) even allows citizens to bring civil action when the government is not enforcing environmental laws.

But in spite of all our efforts, there are tell-tale signs that a particular type of pollutant, the [endocrine disruptor](#), is wreaking havoc on our [ecosystems](#). And as the world's rivers are in a crisis of ominous proportions, we are witnessing the [alarming effects](#) wrought by estrogenic substances on aquatic life. Feminized male fish that lay eggs and/or have lost their reproductive abilities have been found near waste water effluent areas.

There are also growing concerns about damage to the human body from

To read the article on line go to [mercatorNet.com](http://mercatorNet.com)



How come after 50 years of militant feminism and environmentalism that nobody cares about the ecology of women's bodies and the integrity of their person? How much longer will women agree to be [guinea pigs](#) "for the sake of the planet" -- or for the sake of Big Pharma's profits?

pollutants, although there appear to be no human data on long-term effects from this exposure. Not reassuringly, the World Health Organization [reports](#) that there are still many unknowns.

In an effort to curb pollution, Canada has recently declared bisphenol A a [toxic](#) substance under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act -- a great [victory](#) for environmentalists, and a huge relief for Canadians, as exposed rodents have shown signs of neurological and behavioural developmental problems.

Used in the making of clear, hard plastics, as well as food can liners, [BPA](#) is known as the "gender bending chemical". Even trace amounts found on some shopping [receipts](#) may contribute to impotence of male shoppers -- while boosting Viagra sales -- if they touch their mouths or handle food.

The endocrine disruptor has also been linked to low sex drive and DNA damage in sperm; it may disrupt female reproductive systems, and contribute to development of cancers and metabolic diseases. Its status is currently under review in Europe and the US.

But why are environmental [crusaders](#) hounding plastic manufacturers and the canned foods industry while ignoring the most obvious culprit: [pharmaceuticals](#) in our water supply? Not just what is dumped by manufacturers or consumers, but more importantly, what is flushed down the toilet after human consumption.

The fact remains that over the past 50 years countless millions of women have ingested [synthetic hormones](#) -- great endocrine disruptors -- to prevent conception, and excreted the waste product.

This is affirmed in a peer-reviewed [paper](#) by Alan D. Pickering of the Natural Environment Research Council, and John D Sumpter of Brunel University, who highlight that although some of the endocrine-disruptors are industrial chemicals, it seems clear that the most pervasive estrogens in the aquatic environment are steroids derived from human excretion. They readily admit that although, theoretically, the pill could be controlled at source, "the social implications of this would be totally unacceptable". Meanwhile, whether the pharmaceutical industry could develop "an effective but environmentally less persistent alternative...remains an open question."

Oh really? What makes hormonal contraception sacrosanct among other pollutants? Is it that there is absolutely no better way to guarantee women's "reproductive choice"? Or is there, behind that slogan, an attitude to the female body that is out of sync with ecological thinking and, if the truth be told, not concerned with real choices for women at all.

Think about it: if estrogenic contaminants aren't good enough for rodents or fish, why would women consume them? After all, women themselves suffer ill effects of hormonal contraceptives which are gradually being revealed, even as blogosphere chat rooms are increasingly flooded with expressions of personal malaise.

How many women know that in 2005 the World Health Organisation classified the contraceptive pill as a [Group I carcinogen](#) because of proven links with breast and some other cancers? Do they know that sex hormones can compromise the

[immune system](#)?

How about recent findings that show the Pill may skew the [biological cues](#) that help a woman choose a compatible mate? (Imagine getting off the Pill only to wake up one day and realize you are lying next to a man you loathe!) Again, German researchers have linked the Pill to female [sexual dysfunction](#), and neurologists are concerned the progestin component may be affecting our ability to [think](#). Alzheimer's anyone?

Actually, this gambling with women's wellbeing goes back to [the beginnings of the pill in the 1950s](#) when American scientists [took advantage](#) of poor Puerto Rican women, not informing them that they were being corralled into a medical experiment with potentially dangerous side effects. It has continued through the Depo Provera controversy to the recent [Ortho Evra patch](#) fiasco.

Yet, even as [lawsuits](#) over Evra are quietly settled in both the US and Canada -- the British Columbia government is suing to recover past and future health care costs for damages inflicted on women -- as NBC [reports](#), the millions paid out to victims is peanuts compared to the billions on profit sales.

How come after 50 years of militant feminism and environmentalism that nobody cares about the ecology of women's bodies and the integrity of their person? How much longer will women agree to be [guinea pigs](#) "for the sake of the planet" -- or for the sake of Big Pharma's profits?

And what may turn the tide? The threat of impotence and sterility among the male population?

If the driving force of contraception really is choice for women -- and not just social control of fertility -- there is an alternative, just as there are alternatives to plastics and cans, oil and coal if we really want to find them. In fact, we don't even have to look for a healthy method of family planning; it already exists.

[Fertility awareness](#), or natural family planning, has been shown in scientific [studies](#) to be a highly effective method when couples are properly instructed and use the method consistently -- as is the case with hormonal and other methods.

It does require a change in lifestyle, but the biggest barrier to change now lies with healthcare professionals, most of whom just don't know enough about it, as a recent study co-authored by Dr. Ellen Wiebe at the Dept of Family Practice at the University of British Columbia clearly [shows](#). In fact, most physicians underestimate the effectiveness of NFP, and only a small proportion of them provide information on this healthier option.

In a world increasingly preoccupied with conserving nature and singing the virtues of naturalness, this is an anomaly, to say the least. To continue along the path of promoting risky and polluting contraceptives while ignoring a wholesome alternative would look very like an ideological or commercial commitment, and nothing to do with women's reproductive health at all. Or care for the planet, for that matter.

*Cristina Alarcon is a Vancouver pharmacist and writer. She holds a Masters in Bioethics.*



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### Online Study Group

**The group will study John Paul II's book *Love & Responsibility***

## ToB Study Group with Fr. Thomas Loya

This Internet Study Group will meet every 2nd Saturday of the month (September thru June) 10:30 am - noon (CST) which would mean it would start at 9:30 (ET)

**Join any time.** All welcome.

Next one will be on Jan. 8, 2011

Simply go to [www.ustream.com/channel/theology-of-the-body](http://www.ustream.com/channel/theology-of-the-body) to watch, or join the chat and ask your questions live. (Past classes are archived)

The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition exists to build a well-informed broadly-based network of groups and individuals to create an effective social barrier to euthanasia and assisted suicide.

## The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition

is hiring a Full-Time assistant to the executive director

**The successful applicant should have the following:**

- **Website design**
- **Excellent researcher**
- **Superior editor**
- **French fluency an asset**
- **Willing to work in London**

Contact Alex Schadenberg  
Euthanasia Prevention Coalition  
Box 25033  
London, ON. N6C 6A8  
<mailto:info@epc.ca>  
1-877-439-3348  
Respond before January 28, 2011

## Lighthouse Catholic Media

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*“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace”*  
Isaiah 9:6

## Peter’s Points to Ponder

During the Christmas season I was struck by a unique paradox.

It was impossible not to notice that there were a larger number of parishioners in the pews, and the local parish offered additional Mass times than a ‘normal’ Sunday. So why were there more people gathered to worship? As Isaiah 9:6 proclaims “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given”. The church was full because people had come to worship the child born that night over 2000 years ago in a lowly stable in Bethlehem. A simple, meager, and harmless birth of child – what is not to celebrate, right?

At first glance it may seem difficult to see the paradox; but, if the statistics are correct 97% of American Catholic women over the age of 18 have used some form of contraception.<sup>1</sup> So if the birth of a child is something to be celebrated, why would so many people be so afraid of such an event? It’s important to remember that the church calls couples to responsible parenthood, and does not dictate that they must have a large family in order to be ‘good’ Catholics. A couples timing and choice to have children should be controlled using the female’s natural cycles of fertility.

1) The Center of Disease Control and Prevention 2002 National Survey for Family Growth.

## Priests for Life

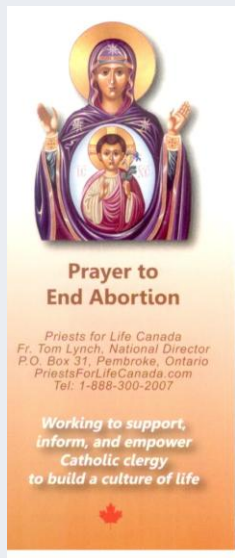
### Joins the Real Estate for Life Program

#### How it works:

- You, your family, or a friend decides to purchase or sell a house anywhere in North America
- Call Real Estate for Life first, before you call a real estate company (i.e. Century 21, Remax, etc) and they will make the necessary arrangements to market your home (using your preferred real estate company or agent if you wish)
- One phone call and you will be supporting the pro-life efforts of Priests for Life Canada
- With that one call, a portion of the money that is already being spent on the services of a professional real estate broker will be donated to Priests for Life Canada

1-877-543-.3871 - [www.RealEstateForLife.org](http://www.RealEstateForLife.org)

Priests for Life Canada: [www.priestsforlifecanada.com](http://www.priestsforlifecanada.com)



GSML Ministry Prayer

## Theology of the Body Prayer

Heavenly Father, in your goodness you give us the Theology of the Body through your faithful servant Pope John Paul II.

We are called to reflect upon the goodness of you creating us in your image and

likeness as male and female, and we ask you to help us better understand the great mystery revealed to us in the "one flesh union".

Through our bodies, grant us the grace to share your gift of life with others, and to return your gift to you for your glory and our salvation.

We ask this according to your holy will, in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus! Amen.

## ToB Resources

- [General Audiences: John Paul II's Theology of the Body](#)
- [Mulieris Dignitatem \(On the Dignity and Vocation of Women\)](#) *Pope John Paul II*
- [Familiaris Consortio \(On The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World\)](#) *John Paul II*
- [Letter to Families from John Paul II](#)
- [Deus Caritas Est \(On Christian Love\)](#) *Benedict XVI*
- [The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality](#) *The Pontifical Council for the Family*
- [Humanae Vitae \(On The Regulation Of Birth\)](#) *Paul VI*
- [Casti Connubii \(On Christian Marriage\)](#) *Pius XI*
- [Towards a True Sexual Liberation](#) (COLF)

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## God, Sex and the Meaning of Life Ministry

Formed in 2006, our ministry has presented over twenty Workshops on the Theology of the Body in many Parishes in the Toronto and Hamilton Archdioceses. As well, in the fall of 2009, we organized a Conference attended by over 1000 people. We have held four Theology of the Body for Teens workshops and have been invited into two high schools to provide a session on the Theology of the Body in the Classroom. We have also held workshops for Parents . Our Ministry is approved by The Archdiocese of Toronto.

Please keep GSML Ministry in your prayers

**Contact information:** [gsmlministry@gmail.com](mailto:gsmlministry@gmail.com)

[www.godsexandthmeaningoflife.com/](http://www.godsexandthmeaningoflife.com/)

*God, Sex and the Meaning of Life Ministry has Toronto Archdiocesan approval*

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