

**From Humanae Vitae to Amoris Laetitia: love's revolution in Francisco times
(Author's Position)**

Dr. Cristian Vargas Manriquez[1]

**Physician - expert in bioethics – Billings Ovulation Method Instructor
WOOMB Int., Ethics Advisor**

"The joy of love that exists in families is also joy of the Church. As indicated the Synod Fathers, despite the numerous signs of marriage crisis, < the desire of the family stays alive, especially among the young, and that motivates Church >. As an answer to that longing < relative to family Christian proclamation is truly good news >"

Francis I Amoris Laetitia n.1

Introduction

As we get closer to the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the encyclical letter Humanae Vitae, which Paul VI gave us in 1968, I would like to briefly refer to the experience of teaching in my closest context, recognizing that the acceptance of the teaching of the Magisterium of the Church and the practice of his teachings is different in different regions of the world and therefore it is necessary to recognize this bias of departure. Perhaps one of the toughest challenges for a Christian is to discern God's will - in the image and likeness of the Trinity - in life itself, in its multiplicity of dimensions: relationship - love - generation - mercy. This discernment, which Francisco has reminded us recently on his pastoral visit to Chile[2] on the occasion to the next Synod of the bishops on "young people, faith and " " vocational discernment"[3] , we must do it on a daily basis, in concrete circumstances and situations, as diverse as each one of us is and our contexts, for which it is well worth to stop for a few minutes to think about the implications of discerning, particularly in what human love is.

In our time, different types of constraints have increased which prevent us from accepting in a natural way, brave and courageous decisions, a kind of general numbness of consciences, a subjective and collective wellness which removes our willingness of searching love with hope. On the one hand the consumer individualism makes us lose sight of our own dignity and that of the others; family disintegration - so prevalent in our times - with the pain and suffering that involves a broken promise and the crisis experienced by the children facing the loss of the source that feeds their life, the love of their parents; the ecological crisis not only environmental but human that decertifies many human communities and their environments; abusive forms of economic relationships that prevent the integral development to whole groups of society; the establishment of unjust laws that call a right to injustice, perverting the law of rightness; the distorted sexual education of youth that prevents them from opening their lives to higher horizons of respect and selfgiving; mistrust in political or ecclesial authority that prevents the development of lifelong healthy community seeking the common good; the ethical relativism which loses the ability to know the relationship between truth and good, preventing access to certainties that guide their own lives; and so a long list where the preponderance of ideologies about the truth, about the transient feeling of reason, the human masses above the face of each person, of a kind of feeling a sense

of pain and suffering about human life, in many cases ending by clouding the horizon of a good life against the culture of discard, limiting the dialogue between reason and faith, the shelter in the family, "ghettos" instead of communities and the lack of credible witnesses that facilitate the encounter Love.

However, love is stronger – it encounters us- and embraces us and am comforts us over and over again, in every moment of our lives, with our virtues and defects, as in the parable of the "good Samaritan" finding ourselves half way dead and badly wounded – sometimes, firm in the faith, to heal our wounds, lead us to safety, and reaffirming our hope, because the life of the Church is the life of every man and woman; and the way of the Church is the way of every man and woman, is the way of the family.

“For this reason husbands and wives should take up the burden appointed to them, willingly, in the strength of faith and of that hope which "does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us ~}36 Then let them implore the help of God with unremitting prayer and, most of all, let them draw grace and charity from that unfailing fount which is the Eucharist. If, however, sin still exercises its hold over them, they are not to lose heart. Rather must they, humble and persevering, have recourse to the mercy of God, abundantly bestowed in the Sacrament of Penance”.

Paul VI *Humanae Vitae* n.25

Part I: love in times of war

“How many wars take place within the people of God and in our different communities! In our neighborhoods and in the workplace, how many wars are caused by envy and jealousy, even among Christians! Spiritual worldliness leads some Christians to war with other Christians who stand in the way of their quest for power, prestige, pleasure and economic security. Some are even no longer content to live as part of the greater Church community but stoke a spirit of exclusivity, creating an “inner circle”. Instead of belonging to the whole Church in all its rich variety, they belong to this or that group which thinks itself different or special”.

Francisco I *Evangelii Gaudium* 98

Both, the *Humanae Vitae* event for Paul VI as its *aggiornamento Amoris Laetitia* for Francis have been *times of war*. The magisterial teaching on human love was strongly resisted in academic, political and ecclesial fields when it was enacted in 1968, which meant nearly null acceptance, dissemination, inculturation in biomedical field, and incorporation in the formation of boyfriends and husbands to the present day. Nevertheless, this bellicose atmosphere at the beginning did not prevent, the development of natural methods for regulation of fertility in coherence with the doctrine exposed on responsible parenthood groups of scientists, physicians, religious and people of good will . However a "passive resistance" was in fact, where the criteria of discernment, pastoral practice, the formation of priests, the training of health professionals and the married life of the spouses ended up being for many guided by culture prevailing pragmatics - that of the economic and international organizations - and by a theological pastoral *laissez faire* – which does not generate any discomfort of conscience but on the contrary is a kind of river without walls but also without a channel.

Francisco Meanwhile faces a different scenario almost 50 years later. The contraceptive mentality and the day after pill is present all over the world, transnational pharmaceutical companies and international

agencies have established a "modern" vision that considers the use of contraceptive technologies as a synonym for development and progress, abortion as a right, the implementation of the ideology of gender in many places has distorted the meaning of the body, and seeks to establish laws clamps under the pretext of non-discrimination, the unit of the unitive and procreative nature of the acts marital is a taboo subject, considered conservative, where truth and meaning[4] of sexuality are unfathomable for the common man, the education of young people on sexuality lacks many times reliable witnesses at home or addressed in schools in such a manner, whereas only the health aspects, such as not to spread disease or prevent pregnancy, married couples decrease and are postpone, births are reduced and the population ages rapidly.

The current challenge is therefore that of discernment, the formation of conscience and action. Francisco has emphasized that spouses should enjoy a mature autonomy in the discernment of their actions - this is not limited to be "workers or employees"[5] - implying a new form of dialogue, giving reasons faith and adherence to the Magisterium, comprehending the meaning and sense of the human love, generosity towards life, mercy as a sign of grace, human promotion - truly integral - to the dispossessed, the education for life and culture I will heal the sick. The stand against the culture of death means to rediscover in its most profound sense the meaning of human love, live it, enjoy it and communicate it to others

“And now, beloved sons, you who are priests, you who in virtue of your sacred office act as counselors and spiritual leaders both of individual men and women and of families—We turn to you filled with great confidence. For it is your principal duty—We are speaking especially to you who teach moral theology—to spell out clearly and completely the Church's teaching on marriage. In the performance of your ministry you must be the first to give an example of that sincere obedience, inward as well as outward, which is due to the magisterium of the Church. For, as you know, the pastors of the Church enjoy a special light of the Holy Spirit in teaching the truth. (39) And this, rather than the arguments they put forward, is why you are bound to such obedience. Nor will it escape you that if men's peace of soul and the unity of the Christian people are to be preserved, then it is of the utmost importance that in moral as well as in dogmatic theology all should obey the magisterium of the Church and should speak as with one voice. Therefore We make Our own the anxious words of the great Apostle Paul and with all Our heart We renew Our appeal to you: "I appeal to you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." Paul VI *Humanae Vita* N.28

Part II: The preferential option for the family and conjugal love

*A child deserves to be born of that love, and not by any other means, for "he or she is not something owed to one, but is a gift", which is "the fruit of the specific act of the conjugal of his parents. This is the case because, "according to the order of creation, conjugal love between a man and a woman, and the transmission of life are ordered to each other. Thus the Creator made man and woman share in the work of his creation and, at the same time, made them instruments of his love, entrusting to them the responsibility for the future of mankind, through the trans mission of human life. Francisco, *Amoris Laetitia* n.81*

A mobilization of consciences is necessary, one that tackles in a decidedly manner, the educative urgency of families, dating couples, married couples, and children. The family and school educational spaces are

true oasis that we must promote, strengthen and defend against a culture seeking more and more early, to disconnect children from the love of parents. To work in promoting true human love to future generations - is a task of the present – starting with the true love of the spouses – including the reciprocal gift of each, which is open to life and its limitation is for serious objective reasons - is part of the challenges of a more just society, more humane and more environmentally friendly. Therefore, a revolution of conscience is required, a refocus of our personal, social, economic and political relationships, both time subservient to the individualism and wellbeing, a civil society from families and for families, where each family is recognized as a social good and the increase of relational good the measure of the human development.

Clearing this unusual environment that becomes a stifling atmosphere, children, young people and spouses can we live a culture of life and love. Isn't this a priority today? Why is the generosity towards life of so many families is considered crazy today? Is it not necessary to help and accompany so many families that need help with material and spiritual needs a product of the difficulties that involve a healthy marriage and family life? Perhaps it is time to widen the marginalized peripheries of the engaged couples, spouses and families, to help discern with their hearts what is the meaning of love. Human love is above all a way of life for the spouses and a model of life for future generations, from the arduous present will the future society depend, from the past, and his prophetic teaching! the future of the human family be nurture, discerning in times of war, is to participate the creative work of God, who is life and life in abundance.

[1] Surgeon. Researcher associate MELISA Institute, Concepción - Chile. Email: cristianvargasmanriquez@gmail.com

[2] See <http://www.humanitas.cl/el-papa-francisco-en-chile/discurso-del-papa-a-los-jovenes-chilenos-en-maipu> [30-01-2018]

[3] See http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20170113_documento-preparatory-xv_sp.html [20-01-2018]

[4] See in http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_08121995_human-sexuality_sp.html [30-01-2018]

[5] See <http://www.vaticannews.va/es/papa/news/2018-01/viaje-apostolico-a-chile-encuentro-with-the-obispos.html> [30-01-2018]