

# Teaching sexuality following the mind of the Church

By Louise Kirk

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## *Introduction*

Thanks for the introduction.

When Priscilla and I first discussed the topic “Teaching sexuality following the mind of the Church” I gulped, I hope not audibly, and asked if she were giving me three days. Instead I have three-quarters of an hour in which I hope I can open up for you avenues of thought on what is, I think, one of the most critical issues facing Catholic education today. How do we teach children the truth about so sensitive a topic as their sexuality in an age where most people are absorbing the opposite?

I was in this room myself just three weeks ago, sitting where you are now, and [listening](#) to Dawn Eden speaking on “The Thrill of the Chaste”<sup>1</sup>. I wish I could capture for you the love that Dawn has for the Church’s teaching on sexuality. It rescued her, she told us, from what the world calls freedom and gave her back dignity and joy. Our challenge is to pass that teaching on to children without their having to go through Dawn’s battles to find it.

Quite how necessary this work is has been pointed out by another passionate American, Donna Freitas. She is a professor of RE at Boston University and in her book [Sex and the Soul](#)<sup>2</sup> she describes how her lessons came to a halt one day with a groundswell of protest from her students at the hook-up culture in which they were themselves engaging – if you haven’t heard the term “hook-up” it means having recreational sex cut off from commitment. I read an article in *The Times Magazine* last month<sup>3</sup> describing similar things going on in our own universities.

Here were good students, male and female, and they were sick to death of a culture they knew was demeaning but by themselves they could find no way out. In fact, the students were amazed to discover that other youngsters were feeling the same way, and a movement started. Freitas decided to do a study on seven different campuses and was overwhelmed by the interest. She tells us that Catholic and mainstream Protestant students tended to perk up when discussions turned to their religion, love, and sex, but not in the way one might expect. In interview after interview, she says, they “laughed out loud at the idea that their faith had anything to say about sex other than not to have it”. Most of the Catholic students had come through Catholic schools.

I suspect that many of these schools had actually done their best. I have been impressed by teachers I have met in England, too, but taking a general look round us we cannot claim to have had much success. The sadness is that sexual behaviour has a direct consequence in the life of faith. If young people think that their Church has nothing to say to them on something as important to them as their sexuality, they

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<sup>1</sup> Her talk can be heard on YouTube through her blog at [dawneden.blogspot.com/](http://dawneden.blogspot.com/). See her blog also for details of her book “The Thrill of the Chaste”.

<sup>2</sup> Donna Freitas can also be found lecturing on YouTube, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5xDPP0oV5I>

<sup>3</sup> *The Times Magazine* 9 May 2015: “Bad education: sex on campus and the rise of the ‘uni lad’” by Ben Machell.

have two typical responses: to become apathetic about their faith, or to become angry. Sex is very close to the soul.

The irony is that, with St John Paul's teaching of the Theology of the Body, we have more depth of understanding on the meaning of sexuality than ever before. The Church is an expert. What is more, over the last fifty years or so there has been drawn together data from every professional discipline, medical, social, economic, psychological, to show that families and communities flourish when her teaching is lived. Much of this work has been done by Catholics, but by no means all. I have been lucky enough to attend various World Congresses of the Family and it is moving to find how the work of people in different professions, from different countries and different faith backgrounds all comes together like a large jigsaw.

We have the knowledge. The task is to disseminate it in the face of formidable opposition, and so change public perception and give the young the education that they are looking for.

### ***Current school sex education guidelines***

Before looking at what the possibilities are for doing this, it is worth having a quick look at the parameters of what is expected of our schools. Officially, the guidelines are still surprisingly light:

#### **Sex and relationship education**

Sex and relationship education (SRE) is compulsory from age 11 onwards. It involves teaching children about reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. It doesn't promote early sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation.

Some parts of sex and relationship education are compulsory - these are part of the national curriculum for science. Parents can withdraw their children from all other parts of sex and relationship education if they want.

All schools must have a written policy on sex education, which they must make available to parents for free.

*Taken from the UK National Curriculum, updated 12 May 2015*

The UK Education Department's [PSHE Guidelines of 2000](#) also still apply. These give responsibility to schools for writing their own policies in consultation with parents. At primary school, the policy can be to have no sex education. Secondary schools do have to teach sex, which is meant to include the importance of marriage and stable relationships. It should cover love and care, the responsibilities of parenthood and taking the consequences of one's action as well as teaching about contraception and safer sex. Children should also be taught to resist pressure to have sex against their wishes.

As Christians, we should exercise what room for manoeuvre there is before it is taken from us. Already most primary schools teach sex, and with great external pressures, not least from Ofsted<sup>4</sup>, sex education generally is becoming increasingly immoral. You will know the pressure to teach homosexuality and now genderism. At a [Family Education Trust](#) meeting this last Saturday we were warned to expect more of this, including legislation. The UK Parliament's Education Select Committee recommended in February that PSHE<sup>5</sup> be made compulsory in primary as well as secondary school. The word marriage was not mentioned once in its [report](#). The [PSHE Association](#), an offshoot of the Sex Education Forum, has taken upon itself to circulate its own [guidance](#) to all our secondary schools based on a "morality" of consent – marriage again is not mentioned.

Always in the background there are documents like the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s [Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe: A framework for policy makers, educational and health authorities and specialists](#) of 2010:

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<sup>4</sup> The UK's Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) is responsible for inspecting maintained schools and academies.

<sup>5</sup> Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), which includes sex education.

**For Children Age 0-4 years**

“Give information about enjoyment and pleasure when touching one’s body . . .

“Enable children to gain an awareness of gender identity”

**For Children Age 4-6 years**

“Give information about early childhood masturbation”

“Give information about same-sex relationships”

different concepts of a family”

respect for different norms regarding sexuality”

**For Children Age 6-9 years**

“Give information about . . . different methods of conception”

“Give information about enjoyment and pleasure when touching one’s own body,

“Give information about friendship and love towards people of the same sex”

**For Children Age 9-12 years**

“Give information about different types of contraception . . . enable children to use condoms and contraceptives effectively in the future”

“Gender orientation and differences between gender identity and biological sex”

“Give information about pleasure, masturbation, orgasm”

“Give information about sexual rights as defined by the IPPF and World Association for Sexual Health

**For Children Age 12-15 years**

“Gender identity and sexual orientation, including coming-out/homosexuality”

“Give information about pleasure, masturbation, orgasm”

“Enable teenagers to obtain and use condoms and contraceptives effectively”

“Give information about sexual rights

**For Age 15 and up**

Surrogacy, medically assisted reproduction and “designer” babies, genetics”

“Help teenagers to develop a critical view of different cultural/religious norms related to pregnancy, parenthood, etc.”

“Help teenagers to develop a change from possible negative feelings, disgust and hatred towards homosexuality to acceptance and celebration of sexual differences”

“Sexual rights: access, information, availability, violations of sexual rights, right to abortion”

Documents like these are so obnoxious that one doesn’t even like reading them, but I think that is part of the problem: adults feel embarrassed or disgusted, and so turn away, leaving children at school defenceless.

I was talking to a friend of mine just yesterday who told me that her son aged ten had been using smutty language. She confronted him and asked if he knew what sex meant. He flushed pink, and mumbled yes. When she asked him to explain, he said that he would be too embarrassed. Yet children such as Joe have sex talk forced on them in the classroom with no escape.

The assault on children’s modesty does more than invade their privacy: it helps to break down a natural shell of restraint. You can see how programmes such as those outlined by the WHO do this. These things are already in our schools, and have been for a long time. And they have effect. A teacher at a Catholic primary school told me many years ago that “children masturbate in my class”.

There are big obstacles to change, so how do we begin?

***What is sexuality?***

You cannot think *how* you are going to teach without first thinking *what* you are to teach, indeed what is sexuality? This runs much deeper than may at first appear, as I shall try to show you (with apologies to St John Paul, St Thomas Aquinas, and Dr Scott Hahn). Hang on if you think I am being a bit abstract. Everything I say has a direct bearing on teaching children.

Sexuality is a mystery. It is not only St Paul who says so. Charles Darwin wrote: “You are quite right that there is nothing direct in my Book on the final cause or manner of origination of the sexes. It seems to

me one of the profoundest mysteries in nature.” It cannot be explained philosophically, but takes us directly to the mind of our Creator. It is a mystery rooted in God.

God, we know, is love, and out of His love He created us in His image. We image Him in the entirety of our being, body and soul. This is very important. Pope Benedict commented that, in the Catholic liturgy, we worship God using each of our five senses: hearing, sight, taste, touch, smell.

Now it is obvious that no single man, or woman, could image the whole of God. He is much too big, and we too little. So He has given us each an infinitesimal way of reflecting His glory. The way Tom, Dick or Jane does so will be unique, making their contribution precious to the whole of God’s creation. There is order in that creation, linking one person to another, a hierarchy. St Paul likens this to a body, St Peter to a building in which we are all living stones. Some people have prominent roles, others less so, but all have like dignity as human beings. What we are called to do is to live our own vocation, whatever that might be, with love for God and neighbour.

The mystery of the Holy Trinity itself is at the heart of creation and is so big a mystery that it is quite beyond our minds. Each Person of the Holy Trinity is radically distinct from each other, much more so than are the angels. We are as like as peas in a pod compared with the persons of the Holy Trinity. And yet they share one nature. St Patrick’s clover leaf may help to get our minds round this, but hardly makes us feel at home. To put Himself at our level, God takes us up to His and in a daring scheme allows us to experience His life of distinctness and togetherness, and He does this through His gift of sexuality. “In the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

Male and female are not the same as each other. They are radically different, though of the same nature and dignity. We are male and female on the inside as well as on the outside, each with our own capacity to bring alive the relationships within the Holy Trinity. These include authority and obedience. Through the gift of sexuality, God has even allowed man and woman to bring new persons into the world, imaging the Holy Trinity yet more closely. More remarkably still, it is through sexuality that He gave us His Son, born of Woman into the Holy Family.

Thus all fatherhood takes its origin in the Divine Fatherhood. It’s not that we have to call the Persons of God something and the First Person happens to be called Father. God the Father *is* Father, and all human fatherhood takes its origin in Him. Any attack on human fatherhood is therefore a direct attack on the Fatherhood of God<sup>6</sup>.

While we image God through being sexual beings in many ways, the nucleus of sexuality is the marital act, where we share in God’s power to give life to a new human being, and to love as God loves each of us. There are many types of love and affection but only the marital bond is designed to be permanent, total (body, mind and spirit), and exclusive. I think you will see from this how important the bonding side of marriage is, regardless of whether or not there are any children. I think it dangerous that we have a tendency to defend marriage in the light of offspring, as though childless marriages don’t matter.

You will already know what I am leading up to, which is that splitting the marital act apart through the use of contraception, or, for that matter, IVF, goes to the heart of faith. What it is saying is that God made a mistake when He put together His powers to create and to love in one human act, as though we know how to love better than He does. Worse still is the thought that He gave us only a partial gift, keeping the best from us.

It has always seemed to me that what offends God most about our use of contraception is our lack of trust in His providence. In practice, pulling apart the nucleus of sexuality has caused an explosion of difficulties in family life, and is a root cause of many social ills. What we have not even begun to see is its consequence for old age. Already there are more people living alone than ever before, but when the

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<sup>6</sup> Cardinal Lopez Trujillo made this point strongly in a Congress on the Paternity of God and the Paternity of Man hosted by the Pontifical Council for the Family in 1999. For my own [account](#) of that impressive Congress, see the Reports page of our Alive to the World website ([www.alivetotheworld.co.uk/reports](http://www.alivetotheworld.co.uk/reports); scroll to the bottom of the page).

promiscuous young of today become old without having formed their own strong married families, who is going to look after them? Many won't even have brothers and sisters. It is one of life's ironies that we thought that the bonding side of the sexual act was so strong it would survive whatever we did to fertility. How wrong we were.

There is one more thing to say, which is that we need to distinguish human sexuality from that of animals. I have often seen children's books start from plant life and then go up the hierarchy of larger animals, and place human reproduction at the top, graced with a wedding ring. This gives the impression that animal mating is much like ours. But we are incarnate spirits, and they are not. In fact, it is not just our bodily sexuality but our hunger, our thirst, our desire for sleep which have a supernatural function. Christ didn't just think: how am I going to stay on earth? Oh, I know. Human beings eat. I'll become bread. Rather, He gave us food to eat so that we would know what it is to hunger for Eternal Food. Look at the number of times hunger and eating are mentioned in the Bible.

The same with drink. We are taught to thirst for the Living Water which Christ gives us by physically knowing what it is to thirst for drink. When we drop into bed exhausted at night, we look forward to the eternal sleep which will give us true rest. Our sexual longing also has a function. It leads us beyond human desire to anticipate the Wedding Feast of the Lamb in heaven. Having periods of sexual abstinence is good for us, as sex therapists are now saying. All of us experience it, and some are called to live it permanently. The celibate vocation is an eschatological sign that human marriage is not the ultimate state but a stepping stone to something infinitely better.

You will have noticed that contemporary thought is out of kilter with almost everything that I am saying. I could have been shot down numerous times, not just for saying that contraception lies at the heart of many of our ills, but for suggesting that people have different roles in life, that there are hierarchies, that there are only two sexes and that these are God-given. I haven't even mentioned man's dignity as head of the household or the woman's at its heart. In the absence of a strong and united Christian voice, society has become riven by false ideologies.

I picked up once from a Family Congress a point which I have never forgotten, which is that every "-ism", and there are many, egalitarianism, communism, feminism, and now genderism, has a point but where they go wrong is that they exaggerate one aspect of life. They blow up a piece of the jigsaw and make of life a distorted shape. Unless you are humble in the face of that extraordinary, mysterious and subtly-balanced being that is the human person you go wrong. It took the Son of God Himself to explain to us that most difficult relationship of all, which is that you only truly find yourself when you give your life in truth to others.

Incorrect values have infiltrated the whole of school education, including career guidance. Girls are being treated as though they are boys, with boys' aspirations, and vice versa. This lacks the resonance of truth, and fails to give young people a satisfying guide as to who they are. In the process, romance has been lost. One of the saddest aspects of Donna Freitas's book is that, for all their hook-ups, young people are longing for romance. Romance to them is to be able to talk for hours, to share intimacy with no bodily contact, save perhaps a hold of the hand or chaste kiss. There is not time to speak more about this now, but it is a serious problem which is set to become worse with the new fad of genderism<sup>7, 8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> In an address to the American Academy of FertilityCare Professionals in July 2014, Gabriele Kuby, German author and sociologist, told us that there are now 200 professors of gender in Germany alone. An interview for the Catholic World Report based on her (German) book: *The Global Sexual Revolution: Destruction of Freedom in the Name of Freedom* can be found at:

[http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Item/3357/the\\_global\\_sexual\\_revolution\\_and\\_the\\_assault\\_on\\_freedom\\_and\\_family.aspx](http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Item/3357/the_global_sexual_revolution_and_the_assault_on_freedom_and_family.aspx). She says in it: "I had a wonderful opportunity to visit Pope Benedict emeritus, and he said sex education is not only brainwashing, it is also 'soul-washing'. If children are sexualized it destroys their sense of shame, their relationship with their parents, their relationship in general to authority, and it destroys their relationship with God. They tell us gender mainstreaming is about 'tolerance', but it's really about changing us as human beings."

## *What to do?*

I am now going to turn to what we might do about all of this. I realised that I was going to run out of time, and so I have cheated. I have written out my thoughts at further length and put them on our [website](#)<sup>9</sup>. I shall give you a brief introduction to three suggestions.

### *Get parents to teach*

When life is tough, and sex education is tough, I reckon that first you need to do what you are told. St John Paul was passionate about the need to get the intimacies of sex education out of schools and given to parents<sup>10</sup>. He knew the difficulties. He knew that many adults had never been taught adequately themselves. He presumably knew that few parents would even know how to teach, given that many use contraceptives. But he still insisted that parents should do the teaching and ways should be found to help them do it.

That is why I wrote my book [Sexuality Explained](#)<sup>11</sup>, to give parents a tool to encourage them to teach. God and religion are nowhere mentioned. My thought was that, if you start from religion, you cut out a lot of people and scare off others, but if you start from God's creation and tell truths many people have never heard before, you awaken curiosity. Everybody likes to know about themselves, and to teach their children the truth. I use stories to make it easy.

In writing my book, I discovered how prescient St John Paul was to insist on the parents' role. There are many reasons for this – I have given a [talk on the subject](#)<sup>12</sup> which you can look up on our website. They include practical matters, such as the parents' availability to teach one to one, but a thought I particularly like is that it is only the parent who can connect the child at firsthand with his own coming to be. Teaching sexuality at home gives a strong pro-life and a strong pro-love message. It is a rite of passage in which the parents acknowledge their children's emerging adulthood. It is an act of trust which opens up new depths of friendship.

Having the odd parent teaching well in the home is not enough. Chastity is lived in community. Therefore you need schools and parishes to build up programmes to help parents, and then, as the children get older, to reinforce good teaching. I envisage parishes taking groups of parents, say at First Holy Communion and again at Confirmation, to explain what is expected of them and give them appropriate resources. The same can be done at school, with parent workshops being set up. I have found these to be popular and it rapidly emerges how different families are and how wrong one-stop group education is even if it is well designed.

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<sup>8</sup> For an excellent (and amusing) 40-minute film on sexuality v gender, see *The Gender Equality Paradox*, with an introduction from MercatorNet at:

[http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/a\\_funny\\_thing\\_happened\\_on\\_the\\_way\\_to\\_gender\\_equality\\_in\\_norway](http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/a_funny_thing_happened_on_the_way_to_gender_equality_in_norway)

<sup>9</sup> See [Some thoughts on writing a sex education policy for a Catholic school or diocese](#) on the Reports page of our website: [www.alivetotheworld.co.uk](http://www.alivetotheworld.co.uk).

<sup>10</sup> "The right and duty of parents to give education is *essential*, since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is *original and primary* with regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children; and it is *irreplaceable and inalienable*, and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others" except in the case of physical or psychological impossibility (*Familiaris Consortio*, 36). The Pontifical Council for the Family enlarged on St John Paul's teaching in its excellent guidance [The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality \(1995\)](#). For an excellent (and amusing) 40-minute film on sexuality v gender, see *The Gender Equality Paradox*, with an introduction on MercatorNet at:

[http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/a\\_funny\\_thing\\_happened\\_on\\_the\\_way\\_to\\_gender\\_equality\\_in\\_norway](http://www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/a_funny_thing_happened_on_the_way_to_gender_equality_in_norway)

<sup>11</sup> [Sexuality Explained: a Guide for Parents and Children](#) (Gracewing), 2013.

<sup>12</sup> [Address to parents on teaching their children about sexuality](#) on the Reports page of our website at: [www.alivetotheworld.co.uk/reports](http://www.alivetotheworld.co.uk/reports).



## ***Values education as a preparation for chastity and marriage***

My second suggestion is to make use of the PSHE slot in the school curriculum to educate children in the solid values which contemporary society has done so much to deprive them of. I was taught the importance of this by Christine Vollmer, creator of the [Alive to the World](#)<sup>13</sup> programme which I represent in the UK. She discovered when she was helping pregnant girls in Venezuela that young people have the same aspirations for love, esteem, heroism, generosity that we all have. They want to have a good job and to marry. But in many families, and in whole communities, there has been a breakdown in the transmission of the values which help achieve those goals. Even the desire to marry is beginning to be lost.

*Alive to the World* opens out life as an adventure and human nature as an abiding wonder. It shows children that the more you pitch in, the more you will get out of it, but always by using your talents to the advantage of those around you, your own family, your school, your community. The programme is arranged in stories to capture children's attention, and there is a book for each school year, with a teacher's guide to accompany it. At the moment in England we have books for ages 8-13 but we hope one day to complete the programme for every year.

## ***Take the lead in secondary school sex education***

And, finally, at secondary school we need to take over from the sex educationalists. Many people don't realise quite how vulnerable the current establishment is. Their contraceptives have failed, especially among young people<sup>14</sup>, and it is only a matter of time before the impact of hormonal contraception on health and even in our water supply catches up with them. The only way they can continue to hold their ground is to ignore the latest findings of science and continue teaching as though the last thirty years hadn't happened.

Lessons on Theology of the Body given in RE should be complemented by lessons on the human side of sexuality which do not mention faith at all. This way the Church's teaching can be seen to stand up to scrutiny and to be ahead of the game, not behind it. Young people should be taught contraception, all of it, not to use it but how it works, its failure rate, and its impact on health and future fertility. They should know that IVF regularly fails and is much less effective than natural methods of infertility care, such as [NaProTechnology](#)<sup>15</sup>. They should know that condoms offer no substantiated protection against various prevalent sexually transmitted diseases<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> See [www.alivetotheworld.co.uk](http://www.alivetotheworld.co.uk). Christine Vollmer explains how the programme was developed in a talk on the Reports page at <http://www.alivetotheworld.co.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/Address%20to%20Baden%20Powell%20House.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Last year, first the British Pregnancy Advisory Service <https://www.bpas.org/about-our-charity/press-office/press-releases/women-trying-hard-to-avoid-unwanted-pregnancy-res/> and then Marie Stopes <http://mariestopes.org/media/research-reveals-more-half-young-women-who-have-abortions-were-using-contraception-when-they> explained that roughly two-thirds of those presenting for abortions were using contraception at the time of conception. Similar reports appear from other countries. Despite this, the same people take part in a sex education industry which teaches children that "artificial forms of contraception if used properly are nearly 100 per cent reliable" (my son's AQA GCSE course material for *Religious Studies: Roman Catholicism: Ethics* (Nelson Thornes), p. 107.)

<sup>15</sup> For an introduction to [NaProTechnology](#), see my [account of the Proceedings of the American Academy of FertilityCare Professionals Conference, July 2014](#) at the bottom of the Reports page of our website at [www.alivetotheworld.co.uk/reports](http://www.alivetotheworld.co.uk/reports). There is a lot of general information in this which deserves to be much better known.

<sup>16</sup> In 2000, a number of US Federal Agencies sponsored a major international workshop to answer the question: "What is the scientific evidence on the effectiveness of latex male condom use to prevent sexually transmitted disease transmission during vaginal intercourse?" The only firm conclusions reached were that consistent condom use decreased the risk of HIV transmission in both men and women by approximately 85% and that correct and consistent condom use could reduce the risk of gonococcal transmission for men. With regard to chlamydia, trichomoniasis, genital herpes, syphilis, chancroid and gonococcal transmission to women there was insufficient evidence to draw definite conclusions about the effectiveness of the latex male condom in reducing transmission of these diseases. For HPV there was no evidence that condom use reduced the risk of transmission." *From the witness statement by Dr John McLean in the High Court of Justice, CO/5307/200.*

At the same time, we should make sure that no young person leaves a Catholic school without understanding the ecology of the body as part of their care for themselves and of the environment. They should know the science behind natural methods of family planning, the economics of marriage, and the sexual chemistry of the brain. Most importantly, they should understand sexual bonding, and that it “loses its stick”, physically, when repeated with different people. Chastity is the best path to a happy marriage.

### ***Conclusion***

The sex educationalists have money. They also have the ear of the government and of the media. However, even if they can continue to shake off their continuing failures, with mental health a new hazard, there is one trump card with which they can never compete, and that is on old age.

All true sex education looks to prepare the young for the whole span of life. Contraceptive-backed education does the opposite: its proclaimed target is to get youngsters through the teenage years without pregnancy or disease. Its methods, teaching contraception and consent, do nothing to prepare for the long years of life which are designed for bonding into new families.

The problems to society of providing elderly care are already becoming obvious, even when most people still have family to look out for them. The thought of what will happen when the promiscuous young become old is bewildering. Many will never have settled into permanent relationships, and particularly so in the poorest echelons. Too many men will have lost touch with their children, if they have them. Many couples will have tried and failed to bear them. And this, remember, will be happening to people who themselves come from smaller families than ever before. I remember reading that by 2020 half the children in England will have no brothers or sisters.

The thought is terrifying. It should also be a matter of government concern<sup>17</sup>.

It is thus not just for religious, but for social reasons that we need to overturn the present mentality. Gallant members of pro-life and pro-family organisations have been paving the way for years. Members of other churches are strongly with us, but now we need numbers and I can think of no organisation other than the Catholic Church who is capable of leading a fight back.

It may take time, but I am confident that we are on the winning side. As Cardinal Newman said: “I have an intense feeling in me as to the power and victoriousness of truth. It has a blessing from God upon it. Satan himself can but retard its ascendancy; he cannot prevent it.”

It will be done by spreading the truth with love, lighting up one person after another, and that is why I thank you for coming here today, and the Catholic Union for hosting this meeting. Our task is also one of prayer, and there I take heart from the words of Our Lord to St Faustina:

**“Why are you fearful and why do you tremble when you are united to Me? I am displeased when a soul yields to vain terrors. Who will dare to touch you when you are with Me? Most dear to Me is the soul that strongly believes in My goodness and has complete trust in Me. I heap My confidence upon it and give it all it asks.”**

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<sup>17</sup> A [senior infertility doctor](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3105716/As-fertility-doctor-says-start-30-face-problems-older-mother-one-miscarriages-IVF-urges-women-conceive-20s.html), Professor Geeta Nargund, wrote to Education Secretary Nicky Morgan in June 2015 urging that girls be taught the full pattern of their fertility, because IVF can no longer cope with the numbers of patients coming forward. This speaks not only of the growing problem of infertility, but also of the inadequacy of present sex education. See <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3105716/As-fertility-doctor-says-start-30-face-problems-older-mother-one-miscarriages-IVF-urges-women-conceive-20s.html>.