

Fertility Care for Young Women

A NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO HELPING WOMEN APPRECIATE THEIR FERTILITY



Humanae Vitae...Wait, what language are you speaking?

By : Jena McFadden, FCPI

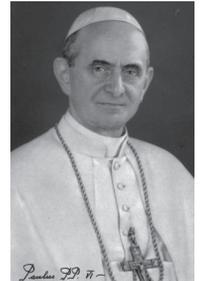
When I was 12 or 13, I remember having a picture of Pope John Paul II on my wall and, beyond one little comment my father made about him being the pope, I knew nothing about this man in white that wore a funny little hat. In fact, I knew very little about my Catholic faith all together! This didn't really phase or bother me until my freshman year of college when I started to get challenged on what it meant to be Catholic and on what Catholics believed. I had a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and loved Him with my whole self but thought that was completely separated from what it meant to be Catholic. Now I know my relationship is brought to a fullness within the Catholic Church. While the remainder of my testimony may have to be saved for a different time, my point in saying this is

that all the traditions, prayers, saints, different languages, teachings, and so forth, that were a part of my Catholicism were completely foreign to me. I didn't receive more catechesis until I was in college and, even then, I had never heard or thought of reading anything the

Popes had written. As I was growing in my knowledge of the Catholic faith, I had come to learn what encyclicals were from my friends. An encyclical is a letter about a certain doctrine that is sent by the pope and given to the Catholic bishops and often to the entire Church.

In college, my friends spoke of a particular encyclical called *Humanae Vitae*.

"*Humanae*, what?" I asked. They explained to me that *Humanae Vitae* meant "of human life" in Latin and that Pope Paul VI wrote this letter about the Church's full teaching on every level of human life and the sacredness in God's design of humans. I was BLOWN AWAY!!! I couldn't get enough of this teaching. In *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI spoke about the gift and sacredness of human life and how we are made to be "like God." Pope Paul VI wrote this, "'Human life is sacred—all men must recognize that fact,' Our predecessor Pope John XXIII recalled. 'From its very inception it reveals the creating hand of God.'"



After I understood this teaching more fully on all human life, I no longer felt like others were speaking another language that I could not understand. In fact, Pope Paul VI was speaking the language all of us understand...the language of the heart—the language of life and love.

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DID YOU KNOW????

The ADD Health data (National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health at www.heritage.org) show that teens who abstain from sex during high school years are substantially less likely to be expelled from school, less likely to drop out of high school, and more likely to attend and graduate from college. When compared to sexually active teens, those who abstain from sexual activity during high school years (e.g., at least until age 18) are **60 percent less likely** to be expelled from school, **50 percent less likely** to drop out of high school, and **almost twice as likely** to graduate from college.

A newsletter dedicated to helping young women

The Two Main Hormones of the Menstrual Cycle

By : Teresa Kenney, CFCP, APRN

Your cycle is dominated by the actions of two hormones, estrogen and progesterone. Both of them are equally important and have very direct actions in our menstrual cycles and on our bodies. First of all, to orient you, the first day of the menstrual cycle begins with the first day of your period and ends the day before the next period starts.

The hormone estrogen plays a key role in the first half of the menstrual cycle. The developing follicle that holds the egg, released in ovulation, releases estrogen. Estrogen causes the production of cervical mucus during the time of ovulation. You may notice cervical mucus usually at the time of ovulation on the toilet tissue when you wipe. Cervical mucus is slippery or lubricative, stretchy and clear. This discharge can last for several days and it is a biological marker that tells you when you are fertile. The hormone estrogen reaches a peak (its highest level) the day before ovulation.

After ovulation the hormone progesterone is released by the

corpus luteum, which is produced after the follicle ruptures and releases the egg. Progesterone's job is to prepare the uterus for the implantation of a new life by thickening the lining of the uterus (endometrium) and allowing a new life to easily implant. It also stops the production of cervical mucus by inhibiting the effects of estrogen.

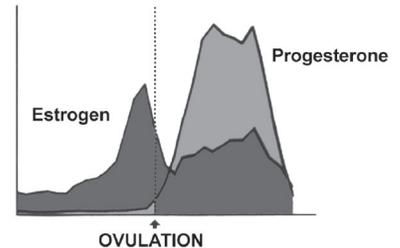
If after ovulation the egg released is not fertilized than the production of estrogen and progesterone drops off dramatically signaling a menstrual period to start. The menstrual period is the shedding of that thickened lining of the uterus. In order to have a normal period you need to have ovulation, which creates the rising and falling of the estrogen and progesterone. Women who have either low progesterone or low estrogen levels can have problems with their fertility such as miscarriage and infertility.

In order to determine when these biological events are occurring women can chart their cycles. By charting your cycle you can determine the days of fertility and infertility by tracking the biological markers (i.e. cervical mucus) during your menstrual cycle. By using a standardized and accurate charting system like the Creighton Model System of Natural Family Planning, you can easily monitor, maintain, and track you reproductive health. This not only allows you to have the knowledge and power to take care of your body, but it can someday allow you to plan your family in a moral and completely effective way.

The Creighton Model System has been scientifically proven to be as effective as any method of hormonal birth control on the market. It is safe and natural with no side effects, and it has been proven to be good for the health and vitality of marriage.

"The hormone estrogen reaches a peak (its highest level) the day before ovulation. After ovulation, the hormone progesterone is released by the corpus luteum, which is produced after the follicle ruptures and releases the egg."

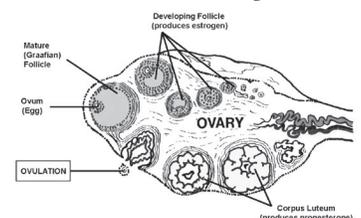
Ovarian Hormones



FACTS ABOUT YOUR FERTILITY

Did you know... that you have all the eggs you need for a lifetime of fertility before you are even born? A female fetus at 28 weeks gestation has somewhere between 200-300 thousand eggs within her ovaries. On average she will only use 400 eggs, releasing them from the time her first period starts until the last period she has at menopause.

Ovulation Cycle



Becoming Pure

By : Teresa Kenney, CFCP, APRN

How many of you want to experience pure love? God designed and created us for that very purpose...to be a gift of pure love.

According to Father Joseph Kertenich, founder of the Schoenstatt Movement, purity is the “clear and full transparency of God’s mark on us.” Upon creating us, God the Father placed an original mark on our heart. Purity is the “reflection of eternal beauty,” a reflection of the beauty of God (from Catholic.net).

As most of you may know this vision of purity is very counter-cultural. Our current culture wants to do everything it can do to degrade the purity of women; from our dress, the way we are portrayed in T.V. and movies, to the pornography that is epidemic on the Internet.

However, we must continue to fight against the powers of the culture because the consequences of decisions here on earth are eternal. God asks us to view our bodies as “temples of

the Holy Spirit” and therefore they must be protected and treated with the dignity God intended.

C.S Lewis in *Mere Christianity* spoke about the difficulties of sexual purity and wrote:

“...we may, indeed, be sure that perfect chastity—like perfect charity—will not be attained by any merely human efforts.

You must ask for God’s help. Even when you have done so, it may seem to you for a long time that no help, or less help than you need, is being given. Never mind. After each failure, ask forgiveness, pick yourself up, and try again.

Very often what God first helps us towards is not the virtue itself but just this power of always trying again. For however important chastity (or courage, or truthfulness, or any other virtue) may be, this process trains us in habits of the soul, which are more important still. It cures our illusions about ourselves and teaches us to depend on God.

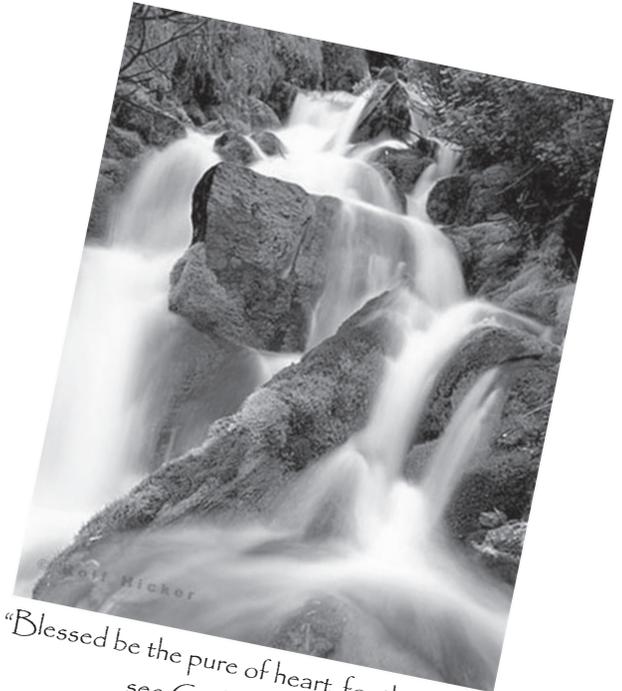
We learn, on the one hand, that we cannot trust ourselves even in our best moments, and, on the

other, that we need not despair even in our worst, for our failures are forgiven.

The only fatal thing is to sit down content with anything less than perfection.”

From: C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Touchstone Edition, 1996), p. 94.

For more information on how to stay pure go to the website www.pureloveclub.com.



“Blessed be the pure of heart, for they shall see God.” Matt 5:8

“When you decide firmly to lead a clean life, chastity will not be a burden for you: it will be a crown of triumph.”

— St. Josemaria Escriva



RESOURCES

*www.popepaulvi.com

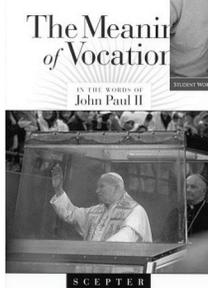
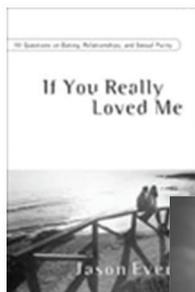
*www.fertilitycare.org

*<http://www.chastity.com>

*<http://vocation-network.org>

*www.onemoresoul.com

*www.ewtn.com



Agnes of Rome: Saint of Purity

According to tradition, Saint Agnes was a member of the Roman nobility born c. 291 and raised in a Christian family. She suffered martyrdom at the age of twelve or thirteen during the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, on January 21, 304. The Prefect Sempronius wished Agnes to marry his son, and on Agnes' refusal he condemned her to death.

As Roman law did not permit the execution of virgins, Sempronius had a naked Agnes dragged through the streets to a brothel. As she prayed, her hair grew and covered her body. It was also said that all of the men who attempted to rape her were immediately struck blind. When led out to die she was tied to a stake, but the bundle of wood would not burn, whereupon the officer in charge of the troops drew his sword and beheaded her, or, in some other texts, stabbed her in the throat. It is also said that the blood of Agnes poured to the stadium floor where other Christians soaked up the blood with cloths. She did not want to marry but wanted to have God in her life.

A few days after Agnes' death, a girl named Emerentiana was found praying by her tomb; she claimed to be the daughter of Agnes' wet nurse, and was stoned to death after refusing to leave the place and reprimanding the pagans for killing her foster sister. Emerentiana was also later canonized.

Agnes' bones are conserved in the church of Sant'Agnese fuori le mura in Rome, built over the catacomb that housed Agnes' tomb. Her skull is preserved in a side chapel in the church of Sant'Agnese in Agone in Rome's Piazza Navona. An early account of Agnes' death, stressing her steadfastness and virginity, but not the legendary features of the tradition, is given by Saint Ambrose.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.



Martyrdom of St. Agnes
by Alessandro Algardi

NOVENA PRAYER TO SAINT PHILOMENA

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to grant us the pardon of our sins by the intercession of Saint , virgin and martyr, who was always pleasing in Thy sight by her eminent chastity and by the profession of every virtue. Amen.

Illustrious virgin and martyr, Saint Philomena, behold me prostrate before the throne whereupon it has pleased the Most Holy Trinity to place thee. Full of confidence in thy protection, I entreat thee to intercede for me with God, from the heights of Heaven deign to cast a glance upon thy humble client! Spouse of Christ, sustain me in suffering, fortify me in temptation, protect me in the dangers surrounding me, obtain for me the graces necessary to me, and in particular (Here specify your petition). Above all, assist me at the hour of my death. Saint Philomena, powerful with God, pray for us. Amen. O God, Most Holy Trinity, we thank Thee for the graces Thou didst bestow upon the Blessed Virgin Mary, and upon Thy handmaid Philomena, through whose intercession we implore Thy mercy. Amen.

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