



The Holy See

**LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI,
SIGNED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
TO MSGR. JOHN RAPHAEL QUINN,
ARCHBISHOP OF SAN FRANCISCO**

Friday, 21 July 1978

Dear Archbishop Quinn,

During your private audience with the Holy Father on March 2 last, you spoke to him about the Symposium commemorating the tenth anniversary of "Humanae Vitae" sponsored by the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the University of San Francisco.

His Holiness now wishes me to renew to you the deep interest that he showed in this initiative. He considers it indeed a worthy example of what can be done at the level of a local Church, in close collaboration with a Catholic academic institution of higher learning, to help bring ever more effectively to the people a vital area of the Church's teaching. As such, this Symposium is likewise a splendid expression of service rendered by the ecclesial community to its members and to many other men and women motivated by high ideals touching conjugal love and the transmission of human life.

During the past ten years the Holy Father has reaffirmed many times the perennial importance of the doctrine of "Humanae Vitae". Just last June 23, he spoke again on this "serious and delicate theme". His reiterated interventions are indeed an indication of how important he considers this teaching to be, according to God's law; they also come as a response to the denial as such of the teaching, and as a clarification against certain interpretations that would deprive the Encyclical of its true meaning and in practice distort its application. At the same time he has repeatedly expressed his gratitude to all those who have assisted in scientific research, promoting natural family planning, not as an end in itself -to avoid conception-but as a licit means whereby a couple may worthily exercise responsible parenthood, after a decision that takes into account all the

factors involved.

On the occasion of the Symposium in San Francisco, His Holiness wishes again to offer his encouragement to all those who are striving to support and spread the teaching of “*Humanae Vitae*”, and to perfect natural methods that will assist couples to live in full conformity with God’s design for marriage. He once more urges all involved in research and promotion to the full measure of collaboration among themselves.

Among the concrete results of the Symposium, the Holy Father would hope that the dignity of marriage and the exalted vocation of married couples would be highly honored, and that new interest would be generated in showing the role of the Sacrament of Matrimony in building up the Kingdom of God.

To all assembled the Holy Father cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing, invoking upon them joy and strength in Christian living. With sentiments of fraternal esteem, I remain

sincerely yours in Christ,

J. Card. VILLOT