

Birth Dearth Reflects Moral Sterility.

By Father George Rutler, 24 March 2019

There is a law that the time required to [complete](#) a task matches the time available. The feast of the Annunciation fits conveniently in the Lenten cycle this year, as the season comes unusually late. Our Lady conceived when she said “Yes” to the Creator. Many today are saying “No.” In some parts of our country there is growth in the number of seminarians, but in most places the harvest is sparse, and that is directly related to the dearth of children. The birth rate is the lowest in history: 60.2 births for every 1,000 women. We may be contracting a contagion of barrenness from Europe, which is dying because of a birth rate of 10 per 1,000 women and is desperately trying to survive by radically transforming its culture through massive immigration. It is projected that within ten years, the European Union will experience a 14% decrease in its workforce and a 7% decrease in its consumer populations.

A birth dearth reflects moral sterility. There is one condition shared by the heads of state or government in France, Germany, Britain, Italy, Sweden, Holland, Scotland, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia and Luxembourg: none of them have any children. Why should they care about future generations? There actually are voices calling for a complete elimination of births, on the claim that anthropogenic “climate change” will destroy the world in twenty years anyway. Many of them, whose mothers were of a different school of thought, may not remember that fifty years ago, a book titled *The Population Bomb* predicted that within ten years, hundreds of millions would have died of starvation and that most of its readers would have starved to death by now. Practicing what he preached, the author had a vasectomy and now—at the age of 85—still has an adequate food supply. Confident that theory takes precedent over fact, he maintains that his core thesis was correct.

State legislation and cultural pressures are increasingly hostile to families, which in various ways are looked on as threats to government. Governmental and societal forces promote contraception, abortion, easy divorce, and welfare structures that encourage fatherless households. If the Church is true to herself in her teaching and example, she will be the solace of civilization in this new demographic dark age.

Giving thanks in these Lenten days for Our Lady’s “Yes,” we look to the words of Saint John Paul II: “I wish to invoke the protection of the Holy Family of Nazareth. ... It is therefore the prototype and example for all Christian families. ... St. Joseph was a ‘just man’... May he always guard, protect and enlighten families. May the Virgin Mary, who is the Mother of the Church, also be the Mother of ‘the Church of the home.’ . . . May Christ the Lord, the Universal King, the King of Families, be present in every Christian home as He was at Cana, bestowing light, joy, serenity, and strength” (*Familiaris Consortio* #86).

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