

Dear Padre,

God gave humanity the skills for a child to be born to those suffering from infertility. So why does the Church oppose *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) after a couple has exhausted other options to conceive?

While the Church views having, raising, and educating children as a primary purpose of marriage, it also teaches that the means to achieve that goal must be morally appropriate. The Church considers *in vitro* fertilization (Latin for fertilization “in glass” or a laboratory) to be a morally inappropriate means for attaining that goal for two main reasons:



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First, in practice, the IVF process almost always results in the destruction of living human embryos that do not get implanted in the woman, which the Church considers morally equivalent to abortion. Second, just as the Church teaches contraception is wrong because it entails the willful separation of the natural ends of the marital act, it also teaches that IVF is wrong because it replaces the dignity of the marital act with a technical procedure. In other words, IVF supersedes the act God willed to be the genesis of new life.

In addition, IVF demeans the dignity of the spouses and their parental role (and the dignity of a third-party sperm or egg donor, if one is involved). All of this deprives the resulting child of a true filial

relationship with his or her parents, turning the child into a technological commodity rather than a gift from God.

Couples must be careful not to become so obsessed with pregnancy that they lose perspective and fail to see other expressions of marital generativity, such as adoption, that expand marriage and provide a home to children who wouldn't otherwise have one.

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A WORD FROM Pope Francis

We are living in a time of experimentation with life. But it is harmful experimentation. Making children, rather than accepting them as a gift, as I said. Playing with life. Be careful, because this is a sin against the Creator: against God the Creator, who created things this way.

ADDRESS TO ITALIAN CATHOLIC PHYSICIANS, NOVEMBER 15, 2014



Our Parish Community

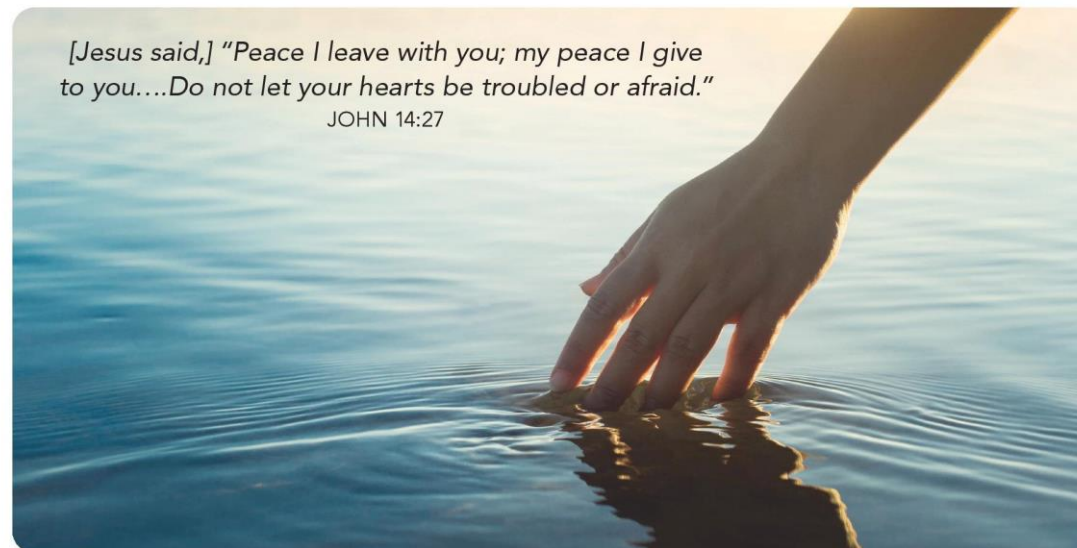
May 22, 2022

Sixth Sunday of Easter (C)

Acts 15:1–2, 22–29

Rev 21:10–14, 22–23

Jn 14:23–29



SHUTTERSTOCK

[Jesus said,] “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you....Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.”

JOHN 14:27

Times Are a-Changin’

Today's Gospel expands a theme mentioned on the fourth Sunday of Easter, namely, change in religious practice. Many good people find some Second Vatican Council changes difficult to accept. For example, they may not like the new Mass form or leniency in Church discipline. They prefer Latin chants and the organ rather than folk music with guitars. This dissatisfaction is not necessarily because they are stubborn or unbending. It could be they were taught that the truth of the Church is eternal and unchanging, and want to see that reflected in the liturgy.

Actually, such understanding of the unchanging Church is only partially correct. The fundamentals of our faith as expressed in the Creed have not changed. It is the ways we understand or practice our faith that have gradually developed. For instance, the Mass is still the Mass, with three essential parts. Yet, the wording of some prayers have changed, and at Mass we stand more and kneel less. Most are cultural changes, but

there are some changes in theological understandings too. We now recognize the religious value of other faith traditions; interfaith marriage is allowed with special permission; and we understand the teachings of the Bible in new ways.

Today's reading from Acts shows that, from its beginning, the Church changed. Paul and Barnabas did not require Gentile believers to conform to circumcision—a Jewish practice, not Christian. Dissention arose. But the Holy Spirit helped the leaders in Jerusalem move beyond long-standing past practices and into a new way of being faithful. We believe the Holy Spirit continues to work through believers to ensure that the gospel is always faithful, yet newly meaningful.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ✦ *In what ways have changes made your faith more meaningful to you?*
- ✦ *As we move toward Pentecost, pray to be open to the working of the Spirit in your parish.*