

## THE LION AND THE JACKALS

Dear Parishioners,

Last week the media threw another grenade at the unassailable Vicar of Christ. Here is what the *New York Times* reported to its readers on November 21: “Pope Benedict XVI has said that condom use can be justified in some cases to help stop the spread of AIDS . . . .”

Really? A careful read reveals that he essentially said three things:

- 1) The only proven method on AIDS prevention is that of the Church’ (abstinence and/or marital fidelity)
- 2) Absolutely no one does more to fight AIDS and help AIDS victims globally than the Catholic Church
- 3) While those who use condoms to fight AIDS may be manifesting a good intention, nevertheless they are choosing an immoral act and giving in to the cheapening (he said “banalization”) of sexuality.

It is obvious that the Holy Father is speaking of the “subjective value” of the decision to use a condom, and certainly not the “objective value.” In other words, such a decision can reveal that there is at least some glimmer of moral concern remaining in the person who uses one. At least they think it is somewhat important to exercise a little restraint (even as they defile one another – he gave the example of male prostitutes after all). From there perhaps they might develop their moral sense to the point where they begin to see why the overall behavior is immoral *in se*. He was being very generous in this comment. More likely is that they are trying to protect *themselves* and not the other person.

I would add that were someone to have a real concern about the transmission of AIDS, even in the case of a married couple, the only morally correct option is total abstinence. One moral theologian of note, Martin Rhonheimer, has argued that it might be justifiable for married couples to use a condom as AIDS prevention (not contraception) within marriage. I disagree. No one who loves his or her spouse would risk their very life for such a banal reason. The reason one would use a condom for this purpose is *precisely because* there is a fear of infection with a deadly disease. Do normal married couples fear AIDS infection from their spouse? No. St Paul exhorts husbands “to love your wives as Christ loved the Church.” That means a willingness to suffer for the other, not play sexual Russian roulette. The marital act is about Love & Life, not Lust & Death. One should not fear being infected with a deadly disease when loving one’s spouse. But of course, we’re not essentially talking about the God-ordained “marital embrace” but rather the selfish satisfaction of lust.

At any rate, this story should not even have made the news. It only reinforces that impression that there are power brokers in the media who are deranged condomolaters, in my humble opinion.

What the enemies of the Holy Mother Church are really trying to do is catch her in a contradiction of her teachings so they can say: *The Church is either wrong now or it was then. But in any case here is proof that the Church can teach error.* [Such is the nature of contradictories, i.e., one is necessarily true, the other necessarily false].

Our opponents use this tactic all the time to erode the trust of Catholics in the Authority of the Church. Why? Because the HISTORICAL FACT that the Catholic Church HAS NOT EVER contradicted herself in her final decision on matters of Faith and Morals is evidence that she is protected from doing so by God – in other words, she is infallible.

We can point this FACT out even to non-believers. It in itself is not a matter of faith. Even were one to disagree with our teachings, the fact of consistency remains. Yet there are more sublime reasons to think that the Church cannot err, viz., the promises of Christ, Who for example said:

*He who hears you hears Me; he who rejects you rejects Me;  
and he who rejects Me rejects the One Who sent Me... (Luke 10:16)*

**ALL THINGS WITH PETER THROUGH MARY TO JESUS,**

**-FATHER DE ROSA**