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Can birth control be pro-life?

John McCarthy | Nov. 26, 2012 NCR Today

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently released numbers [1] that said abortion rates have dropped 5 percent between 2008 and 2009 -- an all-time low. For so many of us in the faith community, we have to ask: Why the decrease?

I'd love to say that the answer was because of our swift economic recovery and that women finally have the resources they need to bring children into the world. Unfortunately, this isn't yet the reality. *The Washington Post* finds an important correlation [2]: "At the same time the abortion rate took a big drop, use of more effective contraceptives had recently increased."

The bishops aren't going to be moving anytime soon on the relationship between abortions and birth control -- probably because they're still fighting for religious freedom or something -- but the laity needs to start thinking more seriously about the issue.

Is it more moral for a woman to use birth control than have an abortion? I certainly think most members of the laity (about 97 percent of who use birth control) would resoundingly agree. If it lowers the rate of abortions, should the church more actively advocate for prayerful use of birth control in family planning?

While these are certainly just a series of questions, the new information is important for the laity to consider as we tackle these larger issues. What are your thoughts?

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Links:
[1] http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss6108a1.htm?s_cid=ss6108a1_w
[2] http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2012/11/23/surprise-the-abortion-rate-just-hit-an-all-time-low/?wprss=rss_homepage