

On 16 and 17 April 2000 the Sunday Star Times and the NZ Herald ran the following headlines

- The SUNDAY STAR TIMES: *Bishop urges contraceptive use.*
 - NZ HERALD: *Bishop Backs Contraceptives*
-

In response to these headlines Bishop Dunn wrote the following statement.

"I am not doing anything of the sort!

I am acknowledging the widespread use of artificial contraceptives in society, but I am not recommending, or supporting, or endorsing their use at all.

I commented that those who rejected the Church's position, could contracept themselves to the eyebrows.

But I was not "recommending" this at all.

Instead I am deeply concerned at the harm caused by the contraceptive mentality within our society.

The "contraceptive mentality", so widely embraced in western societies, has undermined the stability of marriage and family life, and has sent virtually every western nation into demographic decline: a phenomenon sometimes called genocide by suicide, as the population just gets older and older. We see its fruits in so many broken marriages and broken hearts.

We see its fruits also in STDs which have reached almost pandemic proportion among certain groups of young people. There is nothing very exciting about these infections or the sterility which sometimes results from them.

The Catholic Church is one of the few institutions in our society which continues to proclaim the beauty of marriage, an ideal which certainly is attainable: a loving, life-giving and life-long partnership.

The Church is one of the few institutions I see which is standing out against the tidal wave of moral relativism which is sapping the life from our society.

Am I "urging contraceptive use"? Definitely not!

Many in our society argue that the best way to bring down our tragic abortion rate of 15,000 p.a. is to provide more contraceptives and more and more sex education.

They have been pushing this line for years, but ignore the fact that the more sex education is promoted, the more the abortion rate rises.

There are deeper issues involved, issues of self-esteem and self-worth.

As our notorious youth suicide rate demonstrates, young people need to develop a sense of personal dignity & self-worth, and I do not see that the promotion of artificial contraception is the answer to that problem at all."

+P.J. Dunn 17 April 2000