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THEOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS  
OF PROCREATION IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY  
DEBATE ON NAPROTECHNOLOGY

**Abstract.** Immersed in the world dominated by pragmatism, contemporary man seems to be thinking and functioning only according to the criteria of effective acting. However, life experience, philosophical reflection, and the truth of Revelation lead to the conclusion that the laws of nature must be respected in the name of care for man and for one's genuine good, even though they may, in certain cases, limit the effectiveness of acting and the possibility to acquire current profit.

This article justifies the necessity to respect natural law in the sphere of transmission of human life. The starting point of this scientific reflection is the theological vision of values and of the inviolability of human life on the basis of the description of creation from the Book of Genesis. The fundamental truths and moral norms are being neglected nowadays as—being so proud of modern technological achievements—man makes himself the creator and the master of human life. Although such activities seem impressive from the scientific point of view, they actually result in a number of serious contemporary and future threats. The second part of the article presents alarming aspects of artificial interventions in the sphere of life transmission. By exposing the threats and by trying to prevent them in the sphere of infertility treatment, the Church opposes the methods of artificial insemination and becomes engaged in promoting naprotechnology which is a method that expresses genuine humanism, and which gives hope not only to the parents who want to have a baby but also to the mankind that longs for propitious future.

**Key words:** naprotechnology; infertility; artificial insemination; natural law.

Immersed in the world dominated by pragmatism, contemporary man seems to think and function according to the criterion of performance effectiveness. Meanwhile, life experience as well as philosophical reflection

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and the truth of Revelation conclude that one should respect the norms of natural law in every dimension of human activity, which in individual cases may limit the effectiveness of performance and the possibility to make short-term profit, but they do so in the name of care for man and his authentic good.

In the face of a growing problem of infertility and the continuing debate about the moral qualification of methods by which medicine is trying to solve the problem, it is worth noticing and justifying the necessity to respect natural law in the field of the transmission of human life. The starting point in the reflection is to present the theological vision of the value and inviolability of human life based on the description of creation contained in the Book of Genesis. The fundamental truths and moral norms arising from it are nowadays increasingly ignored, because, marveling at the achievements of modern technology, man makes himself a creator and master of human life. Although this kind of actions may seem impressive from a scientific point of view, in reality, it involves a number of serious threats, both current and future. Unmasking these threats and trying to prevent them, the Church is against techniques of artificial insemination as far as treating infertility is concerned. The Church is involved in the promotion of methods that remain fully in line with the requirements of human nature. The range of activities called naprotechnology is part of that approach.

The Church's stance in this matter is even more important considering the circles unfavorable to naprotechnology (it does not need explaining that these are usually groups which are open to support *in vitro* technique) which try to compromise naprotechnology, duplicating complaints about the alleged lack of sufficient scientific basis. Naprotechnology is sometimes referred to by them as a method based on ideology rather than medicine, which ultimately undermines its credibility and makes couples suffering from infertility resign from this type of therapy. For example, in a document *Diagnostic and treatment algorithms for infertility*, Polish Society for Reproductive Medicine and Embryology states: "The goal of the [naprotechnology] method is to identify the causes of infertility and to treat them, considering woman's natural hormonal balance and using common diagnostic methods. The therapy does not allow insemination and *in vitro* fertilization, which means the method does not help, among others, women with ovarian failure or tubal occlusion, or male infertility. Naprotechnology has no published evidence on the usefulness and effectiveness of this kind of

procedure. For these reasons, naprotechnology cannot be recommended in the treatment of infertility.”<sup>1</sup>

Perceiving naprotechnology as a method largely inspired by theology, which makes it supposedly unscientific, is an attempt to question both naprotechnology and theology. Meanwhile, both these areas, although so different in their scientific specificity, share their authentic service to human life in a manner consistent with the requirements of natural law.

This article is a voice in the above discussion. Its main purpose is to show the theological and anthropological foundations of procreation which confirm the rightness of naprotechnology. The moral truth revealed in the Book of Genesis confirms experience exceptionally clearly and convincingly, providing many serious arguments that demand respect for the natural order and saving it in the context of contemporary threats. The confrontation of Revelation with the current reality will finally allow for formulating conclusions and referring them to the methods of treating infertility.

#### 1. NATURAL ORDER OF PROCREATION FROM THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The basic source for all theological reflection of anthropological nature can be found in biblical descriptions of the creation of the world and man included in the Book of Genesis (Gen. 1:1–2: 25). Their superficial reading, unjustly focusing only on the literal interpretation, raises a lot of controversy, often leading to the conclusion that these texts have nothing to do with the truth about the beginning of human existence and remain in a clear contradiction to the achievements of contemporary sciences. Meanwhile, to dispel doubts and discover the real value of the anthropological message of the Book of Genesis, it is enough to remember that the biblical message is intended to reveal the most basic and primary truths about the origin of the world and man. However, it absolutely does not aspire for the role of empirical and scientific analysis of individual stages of the development of the created world. Hence, it is not a direct factual reconstruction of the process of man's occurrence. Therefore, theology answers the questions: Why does the world exist? Where does it come from? What is its nature? How does one

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<sup>1</sup> M. JANUCHOWSKA, *Naprotechnologia—chwyt czy metoda?* <https://www.pfm.pl/artykuly/naprotechnologia--chwyt-czy-metoda/1562> (access 20.09.2016).

justify its order and laws that govern it? By contrast, empirical sciences address the following detailed matters: the development path of all creatures, why these creatures, and not others, exist today, and why they are the way they are.<sup>2</sup>

It is not difficult to notice that, while maintaining different specificity and scope of competence of theology and empirical sciences, truths they formulate are not mutually exclusive but complementary. Due to that fact, they allow to get a fuller picture of the beginning of the world and man. Although biblical descriptions of creation do not meet the criteria of empirical knowledge, they possess an extremely symbolic content which allows to answer the most basic questions concerning the essence of man and his place in the world.<sup>3</sup> The truths these descriptions contain deserve to be called fundamental, because they “are decisive for man from the very beginning, and at the same time they trace out the main lines of his earthly existence.”<sup>4</sup>

By means of a vivid, poetic description that follows its own principles and through *licentia poetica* is released from literal faithfulness in describing the facts, the biblical text reveals the most important truths about the beginnings and value of human life. Their essence can be put in the following way: 1) human life comes from God and is His gift; 2) as the gift of God, human life is holy and has not only biological but also spiritual dimension; 3) God, by a clear act of will, reserves the power to decide on human life and man has no right to usurp or violate this power in any way, nor to breach the original boundary established by him (although man is qualified to cooperate with God in the act of life transmission, he does not, however, have any prerogatives to create).

This last truth is particularly visible in the symbol of two unique trees planted in the garden of Eden, the life space of the first people: the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Interestingly, the biblical text specifies that the tree of life was in the middle of the garden, thus emphasizing the truth that life, which is a special good, is of central importance to the human existence, both in the individual and generic dimension.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> J. WRÓBEL, *Człowiek i medycyna. Teologicznomoralne podstawy ingerencji medycznych* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Księży Sercanów, 1999), 36.

<sup>3</sup> JOHN PAUL II, “Jakie są perspektywy tego pokolenia?” *L'Osservatore Romano* 8(1987) [special issue]: 18.

<sup>4</sup> JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical *Laborem exercens* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1981), No. 4.

<sup>5</sup> P. KIENIEWICZ, *Człowiek niewygodny, człowiek potrzebny. Dyskusja antropologiczna w bietyce amerykańskiej* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2010), 229.

Text analysis, despite some editorial inaccuracies,<sup>6</sup> leads to the unequivocal conclusion that God left man a huge space for freedom; however, its impassable limit is the area symbolized by the tree of life: “‘Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?’ The woman answered the snake, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, ‘You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death’” (Gen 3,1–3). In this way, God reserves the mystery of human life—its beginning, duration and end—exclusively for himself, making it holy and inviolable. At the same time, he warns man against the temptation to interfere in this space, because its violation would not result in a better life, as could be expected, but would have fatal consequences: “You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death.”

As the biblical text indicates, after the sinful fall of man, God’s ban on taking fruit from the tree of life is sustained and even strengthened. God banished man from the garden of Eden to cultivate the land from which he was taken, and then “posted the great winged creatures and the fiery flashing sword, to guard the way to the tree of life” (Gen 3:24). This, in a nutshell, is the biblical vision of the beginnings which contains the basic truths revealed about human life.

## 2. INFRINGEMENT OF NATURAL ORDER AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Does the biblical message remain for us today only a relic of the past, or is it up-to-date and is confirmed by the present reality? Regardless of how it will be treated (a believer will recognize it as God’s word; others, by refusing to acknowledge its divine inspiration and supernatural value, can only see it as an ancient poem, a myth, or a synthesis of the original reflection on wisdom), a reliable analysis of contemporary reality confirms the biblical truth that artificial interference in the sphere of human life transmission (symbolized by the tree of life and being a space of *sacrum* reserved for God) entails consequences which cause more worry than hope for a better future.

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<sup>6</sup> D. DZIADOSZ, *Tak było na początku...Izrael opowiada swoje dzieje. Literacka i teologiczna analiza wiodących tradycji Księgi Rodzaju* (Przemysł: Wydawnictwo Archidiecezji Przemyskiej, 2011), 93, 116–122.

The two most common contemporary manifestations of questioning the natural course of procreation are found in the broadly understood anti-natalist ideas, which include all forms of contraception and abortion, as well as the methods of artificial reproduction and modification of human life. As intended by their propagators, these procedures are to serve life, allowing for its conscious transmission, as well as allowing its occurrence in the cases of couples suffering from infertility. Although at the declarative level, they are shown as methods for optimizing human fertility and allowing to control it in a rational way, in reality, they prove to be a threat to human life, both on individual and social scale.

Originally, contraception was supposed to prevent uncontrolled occurrence of multi-children families and their poverty. Using the discourse of Thomas Malthus, it was to prevent a global catastrophe connected with overpopulating the world. Eventually, contraception was promoted as part of sexual intercourse hygiene. In spite of all these assumptions, however, contraception, to a great extent, contributed to the demographic disaster which had not had a precedent in the history of the world. The universalization of the means and methods artificially interfering with the sphere of life transfer and excluding fertility, quickly contributed to the replacement of procreation with hedonist and consumerist attitudes. This, in turn, has led to the shaping of anti-natalist mentality (this profile nowadays dominates almost all highly developed societies). The effects of this tendency are exceptionally severe and disturbing.

Analyzing the situation in contemporary Europe and the United States, George Weigel captures the essence of the problem in the following questions: “Why is Europe committing demographic suicide, systematically depopulating itself in what British historian Niall Ferguson called ‘the greatest sustained reduction in European population since the Black Death in the fourteenth century’? [...] Why is aging ‘the fundamental problem of Europe’? What is happening with this continent which is better situated and healthier than ever, but which refuses to create human future in the most elementary sense, i.e. in creating the next generation?”<sup>7</sup> The same self-destructive tendency is expressed more strongly by Peter Sloterdijk who calls contemporary man “a mystical consumer, an integral user of the world, that is, an individual who does not reproduce, but plays with oneself as the final

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<sup>7</sup> G. WEIGEL, *Katedra i szczęście. Europa, Stany Zjednoczone i polityka bez Boga*, transl. I. & P. ZARĘBSKI (Warszawa: Fronda, 2005), 27, 29.

stage of evolution.” He then adds: “the world in its entirety has many more features in common with the play of large scale suicides than with the organization of rational beings who strive to preserve themselves.”<sup>8</sup>

What happened that contemporary man, at least in the sphere of Euro–Atlantic culture, who lives in such favorable social and economic conditions, who enjoys peace and affluence and who has such favorable conditions for taking a new life as never before, resigns from opening to a new generation? There are probably a lot of reasons of complex nature, but one of the most important causes is doubtlessly the fact that man, taking advantage of the possibilities provided by modern medicine and technology, dared to violate the sacred space symbolized by the biblical tree of life. Progressing death of entire societies (for none of the Western European countries achieves the level of demographical equilibrium) confirms God’s warning: “You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death”(Genesis 3:1–3).<sup>9</sup>

Besides anti–natalist activities, methods of artificial insemination are another contemporary form of violating natural order of procreation. They offer a possibility to initiate human life with the omission of conjugal sexual act. In the opinion of some circles, they are regarded as such breakthrough discovery that they deserve the title of the greatest discovery of humanity.<sup>10</sup> Their technical potential, however, does not change the fact that they raise a number of serious moral objections, the most frequent of which concern the problem of using and destroying additional embryos, genetic changes, breach of conjugal unity in the case of heterologous insemination, greater risk of health complications for both the child and the mother, and the instrumental treatment of thus conceived life. In the discussion about the moral evaluation of *in vitro* techniques, however, the whole area of problems to which artificial reproduction can lead in the long–term is often omitted. It

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<sup>8</sup> C. DELSOL, *Esej o człowieku późnej nowoczesności*, transl. M. Kowalska (Kraków: Znak, 2003), 51.

<sup>9</sup> Today in Germany, for 100 parents there are 64 children and 44 grandchildren, which means that the German population, regardless of migratory movements and paying attention only to the native inhabitants of this country, is decreasing almost by half within one generation. In 2008, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, appealing to the bishops of Europe, admitted that “Europe is dying having said «No» to life. [...] We said «No» to *Humanae vitae*. [...] Hidden behind the closed door for fear, not of the Jews, but of the press, for fear of misunderstanding on the part of our faithful, we have not had the courage! [...] We must repent the fact that the episcopate did not have the courage to support Paul VI, because today we bear the consequences of that sin in our Churches and dioceses. We are also responsible for this sadness of Europe” (R. SKRZYPCZAK, *Chrześcijanin na rozdrożu. Kryzys w Kościele posoborowym*, Kraków: WAM, 2011, 141–142).

<sup>10</sup> P. KIENIEWICZ, *Człowiek niewygodny, człowiek potrzebny*, 267.

covers a wide range of manipulation possibilities that pose a real threat of modifying man not only in individual case, but also on the mass scale. There is no shortage of those who see in it a necessary task to be carried out, which will be the next step in the process of evolution. This approach, defined as transhumanism, claims that, based on the natural potential of man (in other words: on humanity in its current form, i.e. humanum), and by using the latest achievements of biotechnology, the limits of human nature can and should be exceeded (transhumanum) to create a new creature (posthumanum) with much better features. This pursuit is a departure from evolution as a natural process and the beginning of self-evolution, in which man will create and shape himself. Thus, transhumanist sees the current situation of man as a transitional state aiming at creating a post-human being that will dominate contemporary man, similarly to man dominating ape at present stage.<sup>11</sup> Restricted in many respects, “biological, mental or intellectual human condition should be raised to a higher level, even if [...] the result is the crossing of species boundaries and transformation of human being into post-human. [...] This post-human will not only be definitely healthier and stronger, more vital, immune to diseases and passing of time, but will also be able to control his mood, desires or feelings. [...] All this can mean a highly new personal and generic characteristics that is different from what is known as humanity.”<sup>12</sup>

Although the methods of implementing transhumanist ideas are different and many of them so far have remained at the stage of futurist projects, it is impossible to deny that what today seems to be distant future can become reality sooner than we expect, especially considering the pace of biotechnological development. It is also obvious that the main trend of changes based on designing a new man will take place in laboratories which, using methods of artificial insemination, will “manufacture” embryos treated only as biological raw material for experiments.

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<sup>11</sup> S. NOWOSAD, “Teologia i etyka a transhumanizm,” *Roczniki Teologii Moralnej* 60 (2013), 5: 62–63; B. CHYROWICZ, “Spór o poprawianie ludzkiej natury,” in *Etyka i technika w poszukiwaniu ludzkiej doskonałości (Etyka i technika, vol. 5)*, ed. B. Chyrowicz (Lublin: TN KUL, 2004), 47–61.

<sup>12</sup> It is worth noting that thus understood transhumanism has nothing to do with other concepts using this term. For example, Julien Huxley, the creator of this term, understood transhumanism not as a change in human nature, but as a situation in which the man exceeds oneself while remaining intact and realizes new possibilities on the basis of one’s own nature. Teilhard de Chardin, in turn, discussed transhumanism in theological context and described in this way the perfect fulfillment of man in eternity. Cf. S. NOWOSAD, “Teologia i etyka a transhumanizm,” 64.



Some of the laboratories have been run for a long time and are gaining more and more legal approval, becoming an evident degeneration. For example, the practice of hybridization with the use of human and animal reproductive cells results in the creation of interspecies creatures. The project of legitimating this type of activity was passed, among others, in 2008 by the British House of Lords, on the condition that embryos created this way cannot be implanted in a mother's body (both human and animal) and that the maximum time of their cultivation cannot exceed two weeks.<sup>13</sup>

The notion of inclined plane that can be observed in every form of moral permissiveness, also in this case will certainly lead to a wider acceptance of these practices. And even though their promoters assure that they have great humane motivation and only aim to make new methods of therapy possible, it is certain that creating some sort of "subhumans" can lead to disastrous and unpredictable consequences for humanity.

Once again, it should be emphasized that everything begins with the transgression of the order of procreation set by God and protected by natural law. Unauthorized transgression of the original boundaries means that man usurps the power over life, becoming its absolute master and creator.

### 3. KEY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NAPROTECHNOLOGY AND METHODS OF ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

Guarding the primary order and being deeply convinced that it corresponds to human needs and serves one's authentic development, the Church expresses her firm opposition to the methods of artificial creation of human life. Moral judgment formed in this matter is justified not only by theological reasons, but also by philosophical and biological ones. In the ongoing debate on this subject, some commentators express a conviction that the Church's disapproval of these techniques results primarily from the fact that numerous embryos are created and then destroyed. It is suggested in this opinion that the improvement of *in vitro* methods and the exclusion of the aforementioned problem would eliminate moral objections of the Church and allow for her acceptance. Meanwhile, it should be remembered that although the issue of treating human embryos is extremely important, the crown argument justifying the negative position of the Church towards artificial

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<sup>13</sup> See <http://info.wiara.pl/index.php?grupa=4&art=1224787537> (access: 23.10.2008).

insemination techniques has anthropological character and refers to human nature. Instruction *Donum vitae* (1987) by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith unambiguously states that “the act of conjugal love is considered in the teaching of the Church as the only setting worthy of human procreation. For the same reasons the so-called ‘simple case,’ i.e. a homologous IVF and ET procedure that is free of any compromise with the abortive practice of destroying embryos and with masturbation, remains a technique which is morally illicit because it deprives human procreation of the dignity which is proper and connatural to it. Certainly, homologous IVF and ET fertilization is not marked by all that ethical negativity found in extra-conjugal procreation; the family and marriage continue to constitute the setting for the birth and upbringing of the children. Nevertheless, in conformity with the traditional doctrine relating to the goods of marriage and the dignity of the person, the Church remain opposed from the moral point of view to homologous ‘in vitro’ fertilization. Such fertilization is in itself illicit and in opposition to the dignity of procreation and of the conjugal union, even when everything is done to avoid the death of the human embryo.”<sup>14</sup> Thus, techniques of artificial insemination, even with their maximum improvement, are and will clearly remain in conflict with the natural law and as such, they will not receive moral approval. The only right way and the place of the conception of human life is invariably the act of conjugal unity. This norm is one of the most important principles originating both from the Revelation and from personalistic philosophy which accentuate the dignity of the human person and the resulting laws. The act of conjugal unity, also from biological and medical perspective, creates optimal conditions for the occurrence and further development of human life.

It is also worth noticing that only such a form of life transmission deserves to be called procreation because it means, from the theological point of view, human cooperation with God in the act of creation (Latin *pro-creatio* means ‘create together’). The full conjugal act, excluding the use of contraceptives, is a manifestation of the awareness that God himself is the only giver and master of life.

A completely different attitude lies behind the use of artificial reproduction methods. The dimension of cooperation with God disappears and human willingness to usurp the power over human life becomes visible. The

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<sup>14</sup> CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH. Instruction *Donum vitae* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1987), No. II B 5.

first moment of life's existence is in this case the result of a purely technological process, which in fact is no longer procreation but production.

For the above-mentioned reasons, the Church with full conviction accepts and promotes methods of remedying infertility in a manner consistent with human nature and dignity, unambiguously opposing the methods of artificial fertilization.<sup>15</sup> All effort made in naprotechnology is undoubtedly in line with this stance. The very name (NaProTECHNOLOGY—Natural Procreative Technology) indicates that all activities use modern technology to support and restore proper physiological state of fertility, compatible with the nature of human body. The main steps of effective assistance provided under this system include first a reliable observation of fertility symptoms, which then becomes the starting point for advanced diagnostics and therapy.<sup>16</sup>

If we look for the actual beginning of naprotechnology—not in the chronological sense, but in the sense of inspiration—one can say that naprotechnology starts with the right intentions and the recognition of the objective hierarchy of values. It is from this attitude that further logic of the procedure and the choice of applied methods result. First, there is a sincere search for the truth about man: knowing his nature and principles governing it, the possibilities and limitations it contains, as well as the effort to understand the natural potential of human fertility and conditions determining it.

Thomas W. Hilgers, creator of naprotechnology, openly admits that motivation to undertake research in this field was for him contained in the moral message of the Church expressed by Pope Paul VI in the encyclical *Humanae vitae*<sup>17</sup>. Defining and justifying norms concerning the transmission of human life, the Pope included in it also a message for doctors and employees of medical services: “Likewise we hold in the highest esteem those doctors and members of the nursing profession who, in the exercise of their calling, endeavor to fulfill the demands of their Christian vocation before any merely human interest. Let them therefore continue constant in their resolution always to support those lines of action which accord with

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<sup>15</sup> CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH. Instruction *Dignitas personae* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana 2008), No.12–13.

<sup>16</sup> P. KIENIEWICZ, *Bioetyczny labirynt* (Licheń Stary: Zakład Gospodarczy „Dom Pielgrzymy”, 2015), 90–91.

<sup>17</sup> “Naprotechnology should be recognized as one of the miracles necessary for the canonization of Pope Paul VI. Thanks to him that science was established. His pastoral indications were just a stimulus that pushed us towards creating naprotechnology” (“Nadzieja na dziecko, czyli cała prawda o naprotechnologii. Tomasz P. Terlikowski w rozmowie z prof. Thomasem W. Hilgersem,” *Fronda*, Warszawa 2015), 91.

faith and with right reason. And let them strive to win agreement and support for these policies among their professional colleagues. Moreover, they should regard it as an essential part of their skill to make themselves fully proficient in this difficult field of medical knowledge. For then, when married couples ask for their advice, they may be in a position to give them right counsel and to point them in the proper direction. Married couples have a right to expect this much from them.”<sup>18</sup> On the day of Paul VI’s death, 6 August 1978, Thomas and Sue Hilgers promised to build the Institute of the Pope Paul VI—to commemorate him and to implement his pastoral indications. The Institute opened in 1985. Currently, it is working on improving naprotechnology in its medical aspect, as well as on promoting NaPro–Ethics, or the ethics of natural procreation.<sup>19</sup>

The main tool of naprotechnology is the Creighton model, inspired by the Billings method, which allows to determine fertility on the basis of the observation of cervical mucus. This model is an extensive, standardized system of observing various vaginal secretions (not only mucus), with exceptionally high efficacy indicators (99.5%—in order to postpone conception; 96.8%—effectiveness of use) and can be used by every woman at every stage of procreational life.<sup>20</sup> Its advantages include: professionalism, adjustment to the situation of a particular person, medical safety, credibility and precision of diagnosis, compliance with a woman’s natural cycle, involvement of both spouses, respect for woman’s dignity and integrity of marriage, usefulness in order to observe and preserve woman’s health.<sup>21</sup>

The use of this model not only enables reliable recognition of fertility and infertility periods, but also provides a lot of data that allows to diagnose existing irregularities in order to undertake precise and effective therapy. The knowledge obtained this way helps, among others, to overcome difficulties related to infertility, painful menstruation, premenstrual syndrome, ovarian cysts, irregular or abnormal bleedings, polycystic ovaries, recurrent miscarriage, postnatal depression, premature birth, hormonal disorders and other

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<sup>18</sup> PAUL VI, Encyclical *Humanae vitae* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1968), No. 27.

<sup>19</sup> “Nadzieja na dziecko,” 90 & 145–152.

<sup>20</sup> P. MARZEC, *Naprotechnologia—nowoczesna troska o płodność. Ujęcie teologicznomoralne* (Tarnów, 2015), 89.

<sup>21</sup> T.W. HILGERS, *Creighton Model Fertility Care System. Autentyczny język zdrowia i płodności kobiety. Podręcznik wprowadzający nowego użytkownika*, transl. E. Marchlewska (Warszawa: Fundacja Instytut Rozwoju Położnictwa i Ginekologii, 2012), 3.

disorders of reproductive health. Diagnosis and therapy also include males. Thanks to long-lasting monitoring it is possible to know the actual condition of the organism and its functioning, as well as accurately determining the causes of infertility. This, in turn, allows to take the appropriate therapeutic or prophylactic action.<sup>22</sup>

Honest uncovering of the truth about man—not only understood in general but, above all, as individual—leads to respect, which is expressed in the action compliant with the truth's requirements. This means application of a genuine therapy appropriate for a specific case, and in irreversible situations—respecting the moral boundary that exists between serving life and domination over it, between procreation and reproduction, between real therapy and its technical substitutes. It always requires humbleness, both on the part of the researcher, as well as the doctor and those suffering from infertility. This gesture, however, remains an expression of respect for the primary border, which—both under expressive Divine command, as well as natural law—requires man to refrain from interfering in the sphere symbolized by the biblical tree of life. The Book of Genesis clearly emphasizes that the fruits of this tree seemed “good to eat” and their consumption opened people's eyes and provided a new, incomparably higher quality of life (cf. Gen 3:5). However, when the first man succumbed to this temptation, he quickly became convinced that what seemed to be so promising, brought bitter disappointment and his fall.

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Also today, the “area” of the beginning of human life seems to be very promising and tempts with new possibilities. However, both the wisdom of the Revelation, as well as the experience of the past, analysis of the present reality and a careful look into the future force us to admit that man taking over the power over human life, instead of leading to progress and improvement, will become a deadly threat.

Therefore, the preservation of the natural order of procreation is a key issue today for the good of all humanity. That is why naprotechnology, clearly serving man and respecting his nature and dignity, is an expression of

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<sup>22</sup> P. MARZEC, *Naprotechnologia*, 98–99.

authentic humanism, giving hope not only to the parents who want to have a child, but also to humanity that wants a good future.

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