Claire Giangrave (RELIGION NEWS SERVICE)
Many Catholics, but also many theologians, think that development is needed in the Church's doctrine regarding contraceptives. It would seem that even your predecessor, John Paul I, thought that a total ban perhaps needs to be reconsidered. What are your thoughts on this, in the sense: Are you open, in short, to a reevaluation in this regard? Or does the possibility exist for a couple to consider contraceptives?

This is something very timely. But know that dogma, morality, is always on a path of development, but always developing in the same direction. To use something thing that is clear, I think I've said it other times here: for the theological development of a moral or dogmatic issue, there is a rule that is very clear and illuminating. It's more or less what Vincent of Lerins did in the 10th century. He says that true doctrine, in order to go forward, to develop, must not be quiet, it develops ut annis consolidetur, dilatetur tempore, sublimetur aetate. **That is, it is consolidated over time, it expands and consolidates, and becomes always more solid, but always progressing. That is why the duty of theologians is research, theological reflection, you cannot do theology with a "no" in front of it. Then it is up to the Magisterium to say no, you've gone too far, come back, but theological development must be open, that's what theologians are for. And the Magisterium must help to understand the limits. On the issue of contraception, I know there is a publication out on this and other marital issues: These are the Acts of a congress, and in a congress, there are hypotheses, then they discuss among themselves and make proposals. We have to be clear: those who participated in this congress did their duty, because they have sought to move forward in doctrine, but in an ecclesial sense, not out of it, as I said with that rule of St. Vincent of Lerins. Then the Magisterium will say, yes it is good or it is not good.** Many things fall under this. Think for example about atomic weapons: today [recently] I officially declared that the use and possession of atomic weapons is immoral. Think about the death penalty: today, I can say that we are close to immorality there, because the moral conscience is not well developed. To be clear: it's ok when dogma or morality develops, but in that direction, with the three rules of Vincent of Lerins. I think this is very clear: a Church that does not develop its thinking in an ecclesial sense, is a Church that is going backward. This is today's problem, and of many who call themselves traditional. No, no, they are not traditional, they are people looking to the past, going backward, without roots - it has always been done that way, that's how it was done last century. And looking backward is a sin because it does not progress with the Church. Tradition, instead, someone said (I think I said it in one of the speeches), tradition is the living faith of those who have died. Instead, for those people who are looking backward, who call themselves traditionalists, it is the dead faith of the living. Tradition is truly the root, the inspiration by which to go forward in the Church, and this is always vertical. And looking backward is going backward, it is always closed. It is important to understand well the role of tradition, which is always open, like the roots of the tree, and the tree grows... A musician used a very beautiful phrase. Gustav Mahler used to say that tradition in this sense, is the guarantee of the future, it is not a museum piece. If you conceive of tradition as closed, that is not Christian tradition... it is always the sap of the root that carries you forward, forward, forward. So for that reason, regarding what you are saying, thinking and carrying forward faith and morals,

as long as it is going in the direction of the roots, of the sap, that's ok. With these three rules of Vincent of Lerins that I mentioned.

https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2022-07/pope-francis-apostolic-journey-inflight-press-conference-canada.html