



## Why America's Birth Rate is Still Falling: The Role of Declining Millennial Wealth

BY JONATHAN ABBAMONTE

**I**t has been 10 years since the Great Recession ended. Yet, despite robust economic growth and low employment over the past two years, births in the United States have continued to plummet.

Before the Great Recession, the fertility rate—the number of children women have on average during their lifetimes—had been on the rise. But once the recession hit and unemployment rose to 10 percent, many couples put off having children and birth rates declined.

Demographers and economists had long anticipated the birth rate would rebound when the economy recovered. After all, birth rates in the U.S. have historically fallen during economic downturns and risen during times of economic recovery. But despite a 50-year low in the unemployment rate, rising earnings and wages, and a robust 2-3 percent



Photo: BartekSzewczyk/Getty Images

growth in GDP almost every quarter since the start of 2017, birth rates are still falling.<sup>1</sup>

Earlier this year, the National Center for Health Statistics reported that the birth rate in 2018 had fallen to 59 births per 1,000 women 15-44 years of age—the lowest birth rate

ever recorded in U.S. history. But before 2018, the 2017 birth rate had been the lowest birth rate ever recorded. And the year before that, the 2016 birth rate had been the lowest. In fact, of the 10 lowest birth rates on

*(continued on page 5)*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bea.gov/news/2019/gross-domestic-product-2nd-quarter-2019-second-estimate-corporate-profits-2nd-quarter>



# Why Bernie Sanders' Theory On 'Overpopulation' is Bunk

by Steven W. Mosher

**B**ernie Sanders is a real blast from the past.

Not only does the aging pol peddle failed socialist ideas that are better at producing tyranny than prosperity, now he's recycling the long-discredited idea that we are breeding ourselves off the face of the planet.

Even that other New York City newspaper long ago abandoned the cherished leftist belief in "overpopulation," calling it one of the myths of the 20th century.

Bernie must have skipped the paper that day.

The truth is that birth rates everywhere are falling. Currently many countries are literally dying — filling more coffins than cradles — and many more will soon follow. Even populous China has one foot in the grave, demographically speaking, as its aging population begins dying off.

Demographers tell us that the population of the world will never double again. Our long-term problem — in country after country — is too few children, not too many.

But when the question of overpopulation came up at the recent CNN town hall on climate change, the avowed socialist did not hesitate. Sanders jumped up to pledge

that promoting and performing abortions everywhere around the globe with U.S. tax dollars would be a key part of his plan to save the planet from too many people.

What brought Bernie to his feet was the claim by an audience member that "human population growth has more than doubled in the past 50 years."

This is not true, of course. Population growth rates have been falling for the past half-century, not doubling. While the absolute number of people on Planet Earth did double from 1960 to 2000 from 3 billion to 6 billion, this occurred because of lengthening life spans, not rising birth rates.

In other words, there are more of us around today not because we started breeding like rabbits, but because we stopped dying like flies.

So maybe that audience member was not a math teacher.

But Bernie enthusiastically endorsed her idea that we needed to "curb population growth" and went on to claim that women in poor countries "do not want to have large numbers of babies" and are being denied a "choice" in the matter.

Wrong again, Bernie.

We at the Population Research Institute have actually surveyed women in developing countries like Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Kenya. They say that they are having just about the number of children they want.

What they really want, it turns out, is not fewer children but help in keeping the ones they have alive. On our surveys, they list access to clean drinking water, primary health care, and help with infectious dis-

*(continued on next page)*



The Population Research Institute Review is published bimonthly by:

### Population Research Institute

109 East Main St.  
Front Royal VA 22630  
(540)-662-5240  
pri@pop.org  
[www.pop.org](http://www.pop.org)

Fr. Paul Marx, OSB, PhD  
(1920-2010)

*Founder*

Steven W. Mosher  
*President*

Joel Bockrath  
*Executive Vice President*

Jonathan Abbamonte  
*Research Analyst*

Karen Shannon  
*Development Manager*

Carlos Polo  
*Director, PRI Latin American Office*

Carlos Beltramo  
*Director, PRI European Office*

Design by  
Perceptions Studio  
Amherst, New Hampshire

“Population growth rates have been falling for the past half-century, not doubling.”

“Population control is about everything but giving women a choice.

eases as their top priorities. Abortion does not even make the list.

Bernie tries to frame this as an issue of “choice,” but population control is about everything but giving women a choice.

Did Chinese women have a “choice” when they were dragged off to abortion clinics under the one-child policy?

Did Indonesian women have a “choice” when soldiers showed up at their homes to escort them in for sterilization?

Did the Quechua-speaking women of Peru have a “choice” when government officials told them that if they wanted medical care for their sick child, they had to agree to a tubal ligation?

Since when has a visit from a government official ever been a good thing?

Population control — which Bernie has now endorsed — is about using the coercive power of the state to deny women the right to decide how many children they have.

Leave it to a socialist to embrace this idea.

---

*This article originally appeared in the New York Post.*

## Your Gift Can Make Her Holiday a Happy One And Be a Blessing to You!

BY PRI STAFF

As you are preparing your Thanksgiving meal, and thinking about your Christmas list, you are probably counting blessings and thinking fondly of loved ones near and far.

But please also remember a young woman in Kenya, who is pregnant, and is young and doesn't know what to expect. She's not sure what she is going to do. She might not have many thankful feelings right now.

You see, even though there is a fine pregnancy center in Kenya, this center doesn't have a sonogram machine. So, this woman won't get to see her baby, now growing in her womb. You and I both know how many women choose to keep their babies when they see these sonogram images! She may not, unless you can help.

You see PRI is working with representatives throughout Africa to make sure centers are equipped with these lifesaving sonogram machines. You may have recently seen a letter from Steven Mosher about this.

And while the center in Nigeria that got your help last year is already saving babies, other countries have similar needs. That is why we are counting on you to help provide ultrasound machines to two more care centers: one in Ghana, the other in Kenya. And that's just for starters!

But there's more than one way to help these, and all Family Care Centers!

In addition to sending a gift now, with the enclosed reply, you can:

- make an online donation, or you can
- use the same reply or online form to become a monthly donor by joining our **Circle for Life**,
- You can even automatically deduct it from your checking account if you prefer.
- If you like, you can donate stock to PRI. Just e-mail **karen@pop.org**, and she'll send you the info your broker needs for the transaction.
- And, this is a simple reminder: now is the time to double check how much interest your IRA has earned—you may need to pay tax on it.

Or, you can use it for good. When you make a charitable donation to a registered 501(c)(3) like Population Research Institute, it is deductible---it is not taxed! All you need to do is make sure you take care of that before the end of 2019—if you go online, as late as 12/31/2019 at 11:57 p.m. you'll be fine!

So, will you please make your Christmas list a bit longer, and fill this young mother's Christmas stocking with hope? You and I always feel good when we know we are saving babies!

Happy Thanksgiving and A Blessed Christmas to You!

# The Perfect Gift for Your Christmas Season!

You'll surely want a couple of copies of this wonderful book! If you are like me, you may be feeling these days that the sense of anticipation we used to feel at our home in November has changed. With most of our children now starting families of their own, the house is quieter, and we have settled into our daily adult routines.

That's why I can't wait to share with you about this wonderful book, *Christmas Around the Fire*. A beautiful book from trusted Catholic publisher TAN Books caught my attention when I saw the first mention of it.

This gift-worthy volume is compiled by Ryan N.S. Topping, author of *Rebuilding Catholic Culture*, and Fellow of Thomas More College of the Liberal Arts. He wanted to find a way for his own family to turn off the television, silence their phones, and share stories that would, as he puts it, "suit the leisure and deep joy of this season." And he has!

When I looked at the Table of Contents, I was pleased to discover that this will be just right for Advent as well! And just like I did, you will experience some childlike joyful anticipation—just look:

## Part 1 is Stories:

By the likes of Chesterton .... Oscar Wilde .... Willa Cather ... Henry Van Dyke,... Charles Dickens and Leo Tolstoy.... rich stories of joy and insight, some familiar and some new.

## Part 2 is Essays and Poems:

Pope Benedict XVI: "Advent Calls Us To Silence"; Joseph Pearce's thought-provoking "Keeping

Christmas Local" .... and others that are perfect Advent reading, while still others like Christina Rosetti's "The Shepherds Had an Angel" ... Ben Jonson's "A Hymn on the Nativity of My Savior" .... St. Augustine's "A Christmas Sermon" ... and of course Clement Clarke Moore's "A Visit From St. Nicholas" ....all wonderful Christmas reading to help everyone have visions of starry skies!



## But That's Not All...

You'll be able to continue throughout the season with Charles Dickens: "What Christmas Is As We Grow Older" .... John Neale's "Good King Wenceslas" ... St. Cardinal Newman's "Why Do We Need Epiphany?" .... Pope Benedict XVI wraps it up with "Epiphany in a Secular Age."

Whether you read it with family, share it with friends, or use it for your own quiet reflection, you'll find that all these readings help us focus on the miracle of the Nativity---the real reason for the season!

So please let me send you this wonderful keepsake, with my humble thanks for your gift of \$50 or more...

And please accept these wishes for your very Merry Christmas!

...Please use the enclosed Gift Reply to request your copy of  
*Christmas Around the Fire*

Gifts to PRI are tax deductible. Give today!



## America's Birth Rate, *continued*

record, nine of them have occurred in the past nine years.

America's total fertility rate is also at an all-time low with women on average giving birth to 1.73 children over their lifetimes. This is far below the replacement fertility rate of 2.1, which is the minimum rate needed for the current generation to replace itself without having to be propped up by immigration.

Despite low birth rates, however, preferences for childbearing in the U.S. have not declined.

According to Gallup, Americans on average think 2.7 children is the ideal number of children to have.<sup>2</sup> This is virtually unchanged from the number of children Americans considered ideal back in the 1970s. In fact, Americans' ideal family size today is larger than it was before the recession started in 2007—and in 2007, the fertility rate had peaked to the highest level on record since 1971.

If childbearing preferences are not declining, why have birth rates continued to decline in spite of robust economic growth and low unemployment rates?

As it turns out, there is no single driving reason why birth rates have fallen. The decline in the birth rate is the result of a variety of factors—including economic factors, postponement of marriage, demographic changes in the marriage market, and changing ideas on marriage—all of which happen to be converging right about now.

### Lost Millennial Wealth

Perhaps the most potent reason driving the falling birth rate is that many adults, particularly young adults in their prime marrying-age years, are finding it difficult to afford having children or to get their finances in order so that they can have a family. Nowhere has this effect had more impact than on Millennials who now make up the bulk of women in their childbearing years.

Financial concerns have weighed particularly heavily on Millennials as they were the generation hardest hit by the Great Recession. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Millennials born in the 1980s accumulated 34 percent less wealth than they would have had the recession not occurred.<sup>3</sup> By comparison, adults born in the 1970s lost 17 percent of their wealth and those born during the 1960s lost only 11 percent.

Many Millennials, who faced high employment and underemployment early in their careers, were not able to accumulate as much income or savings as prior generations had when they were entering the workforce.

For some young adults, this has made it more difficult for them to achieve enough financial stability to start a family. As adults of ages 20-34 years make up the bulk of childbearing in the U.S., lower birth rates among the Millennial generation has directly translated into falling birth rates overall.

For one, wages and earnings for young adults in their prime marry-

“Despite low birth rates, however, preferences for childbearing in the U.S. have not declined.

ing years are less than they were a generation ago. Inflation-adjusted median weekly earnings for adults 25-34 years old today are lower than what they were in 1979 and during the early 2000s.

Meanwhile, wages for the workforce overall has increased—an indication that while older adults are still seeing their real wages rise, adults in their prime marrying years are being left behind.

Today's young adults are not only making less than they used to, they are also making less compared to the workforce overall. During the early 1980s, adults aged 25-34 years on average made more than the overall workforce and made close to what most adults over the age of 25 made.

But during the late 1980s, median earnings for adults 25-34 years of age dropped below the workforce average. And since 2002, the wage gap has been steadily widening. Today, median usual weekly earnings for adults 25-34 years of age are almost 9 percent lower than the workforce average.

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/poll/236696/americans-theory-think-larger-families-ideal.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.stlouisfed.org/~media/files/pdfs/hfs/essays/hfs\\_essay\\_2\\_2018.pdf?la=en](https://www.stlouisfed.org/~media/files/pdfs/hfs/essays/hfs_essay_2_2018.pdf?la=en)



Photo:damircudic/Getty Images

# New Netherlands Tax Code Punishes Families with Stay-at-Home Moms

BY JONATHAN ABBAMONTE

The Netherlands often prides itself on equality and tolerance, yet, written into the Dutch tax code are profound inequalities that place significantly heavier tax burdens on families with a stay-at-home parent.

In the Netherlands, a traditional family with a sole breadwinner and a stay-at-home mom may be required to pay as much as 557 percent more in taxes than a household with the same income where both spouses work—simply because one of the two parents does not earn wages.

According to calculations made by Professor Jos Teunissen for the Dutch Protestant newspaper *Reformatorisch Dagblad*, a family where each spouse makes €20,000 a year had to pay €1,864 in taxes in 2018.<sup>1</sup>

A family with only one working spouse making €40,000 a year, however, had to pay €10,381 in taxes that

same year. Even though both families have exactly equivalent household incomes, the family with a stay-at-home spouse is punished with a tax burden more than 5.5 times higher than a family where both spouses work.

The large discrepancy in the tax burden arises from the fact that the Netherlands' tax system treats every taxpayer as an individual rather than as a part of a family. As a result, couples in which both spouses work qualify for a double tax credit.

Dutch tax law creates additional special incentives for dual-wage-earning families. If such families have children under 12 years old, for example, the lower wage-earning spouse qualifies for a tax credit that, in many cases, is large enough to completely cancel out his or her tax liability. That means that the wages of the lower-income spouse are tax free.

Stay-at-home moms, on the other hand, are ineligible for most of the tax credits available to wage earners. While the Netherlands does offer a tax credit for non-working spouses, it is slowly being phased out for people born after 1962.

The tax credit, which was €1,873 in 2009, will fall to €661 this year, or less than half of what it was a decade ago.

This phase-out is largely a result of the reigning political ideology of absolute equality between the sexes.<sup>2</sup> This radical notion of equality means that everyone, regardless of their state in life, is treated as an individual.

Indeed, family arrangements where the wife is dependent on her husband's income is viewed by progressive elites as patriarchal, even demeaning, towards women. Never mind that many women freely choose to pause, or even forgo, a ca-

# “Stay-at-home moms, on the other hand, are ineligible for most of the tax credits available to wage earners.

reer for the sake of making the best life possible for their children.

The Christian Union, a social Christian party in the Netherlands, has brought the unfair treatment of stay-at-home moms to the public's attention. But although the Ministry of Finance has acknowledged that such couples are treated differently, Dutch lawmakers appear disinclined to do anything about it. A majority seem to be quite comfortable with imposing onerous taxes on traditional family arrangements that it finds undesirable.

In the name of promoting a radical “equality,” the Dutch government is engaging in blatant social engineering. But is putting unequal and heavy tax burdens on families with stay-at-home moms in the long-term interest of the Dutch people?

Is it a good idea to punish such families, which in general have more children than the national average?

Probably not.

According to the United Nations, the total fertility rate in the Netherlands for the 2015-2020 period sits at about 1.66, far below the replacement rate of 2.06 in the Netherlands. And it has been below replacement for many, many decades.

As early as the 1980s, fertility bottomed out at only 1.52 births per woman. Although it has risen slightly since then, to around 1.75 in 2005-2010, the fertility rate has remained well below replacement.

According to Eurostat, the population of the Netherlands, despite fairly substantial immigration, is expected to begin contracting by 2040.

The Dutch effort to disincentivize stay-at-home moms not only drives down the birth rate, it also has a negative impact on the well-being of children. Children with stay-at-home moms during their first year of life display significantly fewer exter-

nalizing behavior problems during childhood.<sup>3</sup>

Numerous studies have also shown that children with stay-at-home moms, particularly during the critical first three years of life, have better cognitive outcomes. They outperform their peers in both math and reading.

A recent study on Norwegian students found that stay-at-home moms are beneficial for the school performance of children from seven to 11 and the benefits of this early maternal presence extend even into high school.<sup>4</sup>

The Netherlands tax system is deeply flawed. It is contributing to the demographic decline of the nation. It ignores the contributions that stay-at-home moms make to society, both directly and through their children.

The punishing taxes imposed on hard-working, single breadwinner families are fundamentally unjust. They need to be lifted.



Photo: dusanpetkovic/Getty Images

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rd.nl/vandaag/politiek/eenverdiener-betaalt-in-2018-8517-euro-m%C3%A9%C3%A9r-1.1440252>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rd.nl/vandaag/politiek/eenverdiener-betaalt-in-2018-8517-euro-m%C3%A9%C3%A9r-1.1440252>

<sup>3</sup> <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.00336.x>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/eric-bettinger-why-stay-home-parents-are-good-older-children>





HUMANAE VITAE COALITION

# A World Turned Upside Down

by Dr. Christopher Manion, Director, PRI European Office

Everywhere we look, we see confusion. In France, the government will not allow stores to feature separate toys for boys and girls. In England, a government minister tells Pope Francis to change church teaching to allow for population control in Africa. In Canada, you can get fined \$55,000 if you call a man a man.

In PRI's home state of Virginia, a high-school teacher was fired for refusing to call a boy a girl. And the valedictorian of my hometown's Catholic high school is running for president with such strong support of homosexual rights that he has a "husband."

Turmoil abounds in the Catholic Church as well. German bishops have forced the Vatican to raise the "S-Word"—schism—as they insist that their own national synod has the authority to define the Church's moral and theological principles for German Catholics.

Some analysts have observed that there is a "cold civil war" going on in the American polity, while others see similar strife in the Church threatening outright rebellion. Politics, religion: Do these realms present separate challenges? Or do the two struggles have something in common?

## Enter *Humanae Vitae*

In 1968, in the face of political revolution (in France, Czechoslovakia, China, and the U.S.) and the sexual revolution (everywhere), Saint Paul VI laid down the law. With a firm

voice he pointed to the natural law and the divine law as seamlessly harmonious guides for the family, the basic building block of community in every civilization.

In the United States the response to *Humanae Vitae* in the political realm was as significant as the response in the Church.

In 1958, the U.S. Supreme Court had declared that the Court, and not the Constitution, was the "supreme law of the land." And they didn't waste any time in delivering one blow after another to "the laws of nature and of nature's God." 1962: Prayer in public schools banned; 1963: Bible reading in public schools banned; 1973: state laws against abortion banned; 1980: displaying the Ten Commandments in public schools banned.

The Court had completely uprooted America from its foundation as "One nation, under God." So it was no surprise that in 1992, Justice Anthony Kennedy, a nominal Catholic, could write with a straight face that, "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life."

Once Kennedy's amoral aphorism took hold, the avalanche wasn't far behind. Sodomy, gay marriage, "transsexuals" and "Drag Queen Story Hours" in public libraries now inundate a country whose schoolchildren had for 50 years been deprived of simple civic truths because the Supreme Court had cavalierly denied them.

## Freedom Without Faith? Not a Chance

A country without faith will soon have no freedom. In the current political season, senior politicians on the Left have declared war on the Constitution, even advocating elimination of the U.S. Senate and the Electoral College because they are "undemocratic." Once unfettered from the ball-and-chain of "the laws of nature and of nature's God," the nation can be anything those in power want it to be.

A similar rebellious frenzy has infested Holy Mother Church. America's bishops vocally support the president's opponents on a slew of prudential issues, while they acknowledge his stunning defense of pro-life principles quietly, if at all.

In Rome, the theological institute founded by Saint John Paul II in 1982 to teach the fundamentals of *Humanae Vitae* and the Theology of the Body has been hijacked by advocates of what we can only call views drastically opposed to those of its sainted founder. Whereupon an American cardinal, unsatisfied with St. John Paul's legacy, says, "rethinking of the mystery of human sexuality is important."

That's *not* what's important, or called for. What we need is a return to eternal truths espoused in *Humanae Vitae*, a teaching as prophetic as it was controversial, as timeless as it is urgent.





# The Dramatic Story of How Right to Life Won in Ecuador

by Carlos Beltramo, Ph.D. Director, PRI European Office

From now on, September 17 will be marked on the calendar in the history of the pro-life movement in Latin America. It will be a date to remember like August 8, 2018—when the attempt to legalize abortion in Argentina was defeated.

On September 17, pro-life Ecuadorians managed to stop a pro-abortion bill dead in its tracks while fighting against the political establishment and a good part of the power of the media, a media which has been hijacked by pro-abortion groups.

The Ecuadorian National Assembly needed 70 votes to approve the law, and many had already assumed a victory for the pro-abortion side with 75 votes. In the end, the vote in favor of abortion only garnered 65 votes, while 59 legislators spoke out against the bill and 6 abstained from voting. Unable to reach the 70-vote threshold, the bill failed to pass.

The result has demonstrated yet again the reality of what can happen when a Christian and pro-life country publicly expresses and defends its convictions. It is an authentic pro-life political movement that surely will carry much weight in the next presidential election in the Andean nation in 2021.

For more than two years, pro-abortion groups, with the support of the government, have been working to include five exceptions to the country's abortion law in the Ecuadorian Comprehensive Penal Code (COIP). The exemptions in-



Photo: Gabrielle & Michel Therin-Weise/Getty Images

cluded cases of rape (without having to present any evidence), cases when the unborn child has a congenital disease (such abortions would be able to be performed during all nine months of pregnancy!) and cases of incest or nonconsensual insemination.

In practice, this was nothing more than a covert way of legalizing abortion. But the Ecuadorian people were never aware of everything that was included in the bill.

In the last few months, the pro-abortion activists concentrated on a very emotional and effective appeal: "Women who are raped should not be imprisoned if they abort." They did not mention anything about the rest of the package.

On this premise they mounted their communication strategy: They

repeated "abortion in cases of rape" to their spokespeople, whether they were legislators, journalists, NGOs, pro-abortion activists, or pollsters. It was a well-planned campaign that pro-lifers were not able to counter, and many began thinking that abortion would finally be legalized.

How Did the Right to Life Win in the End?

Two weeks before the vote, everything changed. The right to life won because pro-lifers in Ecuador organized themselves and looked for tools to understand the reality of the situation. They joined their talents, putting them to work in a coordinated manner, standing shoulder to shoulder, all the while adhering to two principles: unity and professionalism.

They took a "time out" from all the activism they were carrying out in order to assess the situation. In doing so, they recalled that the challenges they faced were political in nature, since the majority of legislators were not able to be moved by any moral or legal argument—some because they are convinced promoters of abortion and others because they succumbed to the power of political communication of the pro-abortion activists, accommodating themselves to their efforts to "mainstream" the issue.

Then pro-lifers saw clearly that it was time to change focus, to begin speaking to legislators in their own language.

The chips were moved. Leaders and movements like Frente Joven,

## Ecuador Right to Life, *continued*

the National Movement for the Family Ecuador, Pro-life Ecuador, among many others put themselves to work and coordinated with one another.

RELEASE, a division of the Population Research Institute, put together a seminar stretching several days to study the political situation and to determine which tools were best suited to combat the legislative proposal to legalize abortion.

First, they set out to question the commonly accepted ideas in the debate that had been introduced by the pro-abortion advocates, and they revealed in its entirety the content of the legislative proposal that was going to be voted on. In other words, they made it known to the legislators and the Ecuadorian people what was really being passed: a true legalization of abortion through all nine months of pregnancy in five cases.

Secondly, they reminded the legislators that they were there by the vote of the Ecuadorian people, who in general oppose the legalization of abortion. And because the elections are very close, this message really resonated with the politicians.

Leaders of political parties, including leading candidates for the presidency, began to listen and understand. One of them, Guillermo Lasso, made clear his pro-life sentiments, saying on a TV program that if the legislative bill was approved, he promised to repeal it immediately.

There were crucial social media groups. Dozens of pro-life activists from different organizations articulating themselves in a network that covered the entire country. During one week the leading trending topics on Twitter were #COIPLe-galizaElAborto (COIP legalizes

abortion), #VotoProvida2021 (“I vote pro-life 2021”), and #ConAbortoNoTeVoto (“With abortion, I don’t vote for you”), the slogan already used in Argentina with great success.

Soon, the media started inviting pro-life speakers. The message was the same: “They are trying to legalize abortion,” displacing the half-truth of “abortion in cases of rape” from the public square.

On Monday September 16, the bishop of Guayaquil Monsignor Luis Cabrera Herrera, OFM, called for a day of prayer at the cathedral. Hundreds of Catholic and some evangelical pastors united together in prayer. The hashtag #CristianosUnidosPorLaVida (“Christians United for Life”) quickly became the top trending topic on Twitter.

At that moment, the abortion lobby panicked. They were not able to reintroduce their tagline of “abortion in cases of rape.” They were failing in the Twittershpere, even though they were using bots.

The media, controlled by the abortion lobby, also tried to sway the debate, but they did not have the same reach and penetration as social media. A tsunami of tweets, with videos and creative images, nullified the ploy of disinformation from abortion activists. A new mainstreaming of pro-life discourse was enough to open the eyes of legislators.

In their desperation, the abortion lobby moved up the date of the vote (which originally had been announced for Wednesday the 18th) putting it on Tuesday the 17th. They had been informed that several buses filled with enthusiastic pro-lifers would depart from the city of Guayaquil on the coast to demonstrate in

front of the National Assembly in Quito in the mountains, travelling throughout the night.

But nothing was able to dampen the enthusiasm of pro-lifers. The convoy of buses was also moved up, with pro-life activists that left behind family and work obligations to come.

And then came the day of the vote. The atmosphere was tense until the final moment. Neither the pro-lifers nor the pro-abortionists knew exactly how many votes there were in favor and how many there were against.

The result was a bitter surprise for the abortion lobby that had been handling things at their will for two years. They never expected such a rapid and overwhelming response would ruin their plans in the final stretch.

Pro-lifers, who had spent the entire day outside the Assembly, erupted in an uproar without limits. Thousands of citizens celebrated there and on social media with the hashtags #GanóEcuadorGanóLaVida (“Ecuador Won, Life Won”) and #EcuadorProvida (“Pro-life Ecuador”).

Carlos Polo, pro-life consultant and international activist who spent several days with the brave pro-life Ecuadorians, put it into perspective: “When groups of citizens take the time to think and discuss points of view calmly, information and ideas – guided by tools of analysis and political communication – the result is that their strength is enhanced. In Ecuador it seemed that Goliath would crush David, but with the energy of these people well-directed to the exact points where it matters most, even a small stone is sufficient to win. We have to stay on this line.”



## ■ Abbamonte: Religious Purity a Factor in Push For India Birth Control

WORLD—Environmental issues are not the only reasons for the drum-beat of population control in India, according to PRI staffer Jonathan Abbamonte, quoted in an article in WORLD online.<sup>1</sup>

Religious purity is also a factor, he said, noting that Hindu nationalists seek to reduce the country's birth rate among religious minorities such as Muslims and Christians.

"They want to preserve India for Hindus," Abbamonte said. "They want India to be a Hindu nation."

It's troubling that population control supporters look to China's one-child policy as a model, Abbamonte said, especially since they are aware of the demographic crisis that resulted.

"A population control law would only deepen the problem as some parents who have strong son preference would seek to abort second daughters in order to keep their quota open for a son," Abbamonte said.

"The writing is on the wall," he said. "What the contours of this policy might look like and how much political support it receives still remains to be seen."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a Hindu nationalist, urged couples to have fewer children in a speech last month, calling it an act of patriotism, according to the article.

Modi promised health and happiness to those who kept their families small. "Your family will be away from disease, will have more resources," he announced on Indian Independence Day.

Modi stirred up fears about a "population explosion" occurring at an unrestrained pace in India and "creating innumerable challenges for us and the coming generations." But the country's population growth actually has slowed over the past several decades, according to the article.

## ■ Face Scans in China: Big Brother Watching

LIFESITENEWS—PRI President Steven Mosher has said the latest identity tracking tool in China is a sign of alarming totalitarianism.<sup>2</sup>

As part of its "social credit" system, Chinese citizens will soon have to undergo a facial-recognition scan to prove their identities before being allowed to install internet access in their homes or on their smartphones, according to *LifeSiteNews*.

"What we have now in China is the nightmare of the world's first truly totalitarian state," said Mosher. "The Left has always said that true totalitarianism is impossible to achieve because there are never enough minders. That's no longer true."

He said this technology will make it impossible for Chinese people to organize a demonstration like Tiananmen Square.

"It's hard to see how dissidents can get ahead of the government," Mosher said. "The cyber walls are closing in."

## ■ Mosher: Genetic Tests Violate Rights in China

THE EPOCH TIMES—China is building a massive DNA database by collecting sensitive information from citizens in various regions of the country, a move that violates citizen's rights, according to PRI President Steven Mosher.<sup>3</sup>

"Individuals have a natural right to 'own' their own DNA," he told *The Epoch Times*.

Governments have no right to collect DNA samples other than in actively investigating criminal suspects or convicts, he said.

Mosher said the regime wants to ensure "quality births." One way to achieve that is by tracing "who is related to whom," he said, so authorities can eliminate those carrying recessive genes that produce birth defects.

The term "population control" has always had an "eugenics element," Mosher said. "With the advent of genetic testing, [this practice] is about to get a high-tech boost and become much more comprehensive."

Mosher added that it makes sense for some Chinese authorities to target males, which studies have shown have a higher tendency to commit crimes.

Mosher said that China's DNA collection programs are a violation of citizens' rights.

<sup>1</sup> [https://world.wng.org/content/india\\_s\\_looming\\_two\\_child\\_policy](https://world.wng.org/content/india_s_looming_two_child_policy)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/big-brother-getting-bigger-in-china-citizens-must-pass-facial-recognition-test-to-get-internet-access>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.theepochtimes.com/china-collecting-dna-from-males-across-country-prompting-eugenics-and-privacy-concerns\\_3099248.html](https://www.theepochtimes.com/china-collecting-dna-from-males-across-country-prompting-eugenics-and-privacy-concerns_3099248.html)



# From the Countries



## MEXICO

### 500,000 March for Life and Family

MEXICO CITY —A half-million pro-life advocates took to the streets in 100 cities throughout Mexico on September 21 to march for life, family and conscience protections, according to the Catholic News Agency.<sup>1</sup>

Marches were held in some 100 cities across the country, including Guadalajara, Querétaro, Xalapa, Monterrey, Pachuca, Huejutla, Tlaxcala, Chilpancingo, Puebla, Naucalpan, Celaya, Guanajuato and Hidalgo, as reported in the National Catholic Register. Marches also took place in the United States at the Mexican consulates in Chicago and San Diego.

A statement read at events in different cities stressed the need to reject a culture of death and “build an authentic culture of life.”

“For this to happen, we have to start with the family, the basic cell of society,” the statement said. “We reiterate that the function of the government is to ensure everyone’s rights. ... If we can’t guarantee life, we will hardly be able to guarantee other fundamental rights.”

The marches also condemned organized crime, extortions, kidnappings and other acts of violence, call-

ing on government officials to “make Mexico a safe place to live, where the lives of all Mexicans are guaranteed, the first human right. Today not one less Mexican!”



## UNITED STATES

### No International Right To Abortion

NEW YORK— The United States delivered a joint statement at the United Nations General Assembly in September asserting “there is no international right to an abortion” and repudiating the use of ambiguous terms signaling abortion “rights” in UN documents, reported LifeSiteNews.<sup>2</sup>

The statement also declared that the family is “the foundational institution of society and thus should be supported and strengthened” and affirmed the “protective role of the family” when it comes to sex education of children.

U.S. Secretary for Health and Human Services Alex Azar delivered the statement Monday before the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage on behalf of “19 countries representing more than 1.3 billion people,” the article stated.

Those countries are: the United States, Bahrain, Belarus, Brazil, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary,

Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

The “diverse nations here today are united on a positive, constructive goal: focusing the international discourse around healthcare on better health and on the preservation of human life,” said Azar in a preamble to the statement.



## ROMANIA

### Europe's Fastest Population Drop

BUCHAREST – According to a column in Mercator.net, the country of Romania is continuing to hold its position as one of the fastest declining populations in the world.<sup>3</sup>

Romania’s population had declined by 120,000 people (a drop of 0.6 percent) in 2017. Half of the decline was due to natural decrease (more deaths than births) and half due to net migration (more emigrants than immigrants).

According to the latest figures from 2018, the population decline has continued and even quickened. In 2018 the Romanian population fell by a further 125,500 people to 19.4 million, the lowest Romanian population since 1967.

Like the rest of Eastern Europe, Romania is slowly but steadily depopulating.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/march-for-life-and-family-in-mexico-opposes-abortion-organized-crime?\\_hsenc=p2AN-qtz-9M2O5-D-jAEVSf56Yip9KhIZTPEbRhnaQ1XT8AbWRmAovx3cBzPol4Edt1okc5kGjxV5DFuRERVGFp-yifh8x6LDI-5A&\\_hsmi=77386794&fbclid=IwAR0\\_LCBakhVRdPcw6oktQRYe9dkQn6YVFF5TG9mNZDy2fgfbRcEk4b8Jql](http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/march-for-life-and-family-in-mexico-opposes-abortion-organized-crime?_hsenc=p2AN-qtz-9M2O5-D-jAEVSf56Yip9KhIZTPEbRhnaQ1XT8AbWRmAovx3cBzPol4Edt1okc5kGjxV5DFuRERVGFp-yifh8x6LDI-5A&_hsmi=77386794&fbclid=IwAR0_LCBakhVRdPcw6oktQRYe9dkQn6YVFF5TG9mNZDy2fgfbRcEk4b8Jql)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/us-18-other-nations-tell-un-there-is-no-international-right-to-an-abortion?utm\\_source=LifeSiteNews.com&utm\\_campaign=ec3e1defd7-Daily%2520Headlines%2520-%2520U.S.\\_COPY\\_595&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_12387f0e3e-ec3e1defd7-401373841&fbclid=IwAR1Pp\\_pIEWT1hTNMxC8SSzbZC\\_TtVQtU8lwwfVPM3Tt-PpSZgt-BJGMmfNk](https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/us-18-other-nations-tell-un-there-is-no-international-right-to-an-abortion?utm_source=LifeSiteNews.com&utm_campaign=ec3e1defd7-Daily%2520Headlines%2520-%2520U.S._COPY_595&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_12387f0e3e-ec3e1defd7-401373841&fbclid=IwAR1Pp_pIEWT1hTNMxC8SSzbZC_TtVQtU8lwwfVPM3Tt-PpSZgt-BJGMmfNk)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.mercatornet.com/demography/view/update-from-bucharest/22815?fbclid=IwAR3F1PYDJRMp4q-WsZaHU5pF2KRkQJiMSgAjAM-0td-1n8bAI\\_6nyzx7K6AQ](https://www.mercatornet.com/demography/view/update-from-bucharest/22815?fbclid=IwAR3F1PYDJRMp4q-WsZaHU5pF2KRkQJiMSgAjAM-0td-1n8bAI_6nyzx7K6AQ)