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Attitude towards childbirth in modern families of priests of the Russian Orthodox Church: experience of typology

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Abstract. Modern sociological research often reveals the rhetoric of the family crisis in Russia, which is dependent on low birth rates and a demographic decline. At the same time, using the example of the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Canada, Peru and other countries, one can see what influence the clergy can have on the religious population, including their attitude towards the birth of children. In this regard, a study analyzing reproductive attitudes in the families of priests of the Russian Orthodox Church, capable of influencing the population of Russia with about 70% of people who call themselves orthodox, seems relevant and productive. Twenty families were interviewed for this study and analyzed using the “grounded theory” method. The analysis of the reproductive attitudes in the families of clergy revealed significant differences. For the convenience of describing these differences, we classified the attitude to childbirth in the families of priests, highlighting the traditional, intermediate and managerial types. As a result of the study, we identified a greater potential for solving the demographic problem in the traditional-type families, which is characterized by respondents' trust in God in their views on childbirth and the assessment of non-abortion contraception as a sin. Respondents of the managerial type talk about the use of contraception not as a church norm, but as a choice of spouses, which can be justified by the spouses' health, their income level, their desire to fulfill themselves in their professions, their attitudes to each other, etc. The intermediate type of respondents mainly spoke about trusting God in the issue of childbirth as an ideal, and about using contraception as an action that is possible for a family to save money, as a compromise, or as a result of their lack of faith. Families of the intermediate and managerial types allowed the use of non-abortive contraception in relation to their own family, thereby supporting the idea of planning and birth control. As a conclusion, the article proposes to include the communication of candidates for the priesthood with experienced confessors of the

traditional type in the modern system of clergy education, so that they can influence future clergy, who would then have an impact on the Orthodox population of Russia.

Keywords: family; clergy; childbearing; demography; non-abortion contraception; clergy education

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(50 - 100 thousand people) / Average city	4
(less than 50 thousand people) / Small city	6
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GENERAL TABLE OF RESPONDENTS WITH TYPES IN RELATION TO CHILDBEARING.
 TS - Theological Seminary, TA - Theological Academy, TI - Theological Institute (pastoral training);
 T - traditional type, I - intermediate type, M - managerial type

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