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[Book Review of] *In My Mother's Womb,* by Donald De Marco, Ph. D.

Eugene F. Diamond

In My Mother's Womb

by Donald De Marco, Ph. D.

Trinity Communications, Manassas, VA. 205 pp.

Looking back on the 20 year history of the pro-life movement, one tends to emphasize the positive by-products that have resulted from this wonderful grass-roots response to the abortion holocaust. These positive reactions do not expiate the horror of lost lives but they do tend to sustain us when frustration or burnout assail us. Think of the great pro-life literature generated by the philosophers, lawyers, physicians, theologians, teachers and other professionals using the insights of their special calling. Think of the many others who found the need to express their deeply felt anti-abortion sentiments when they would never have been moved to speak or write on any other subject.

Don De Marco is one of the Catholic pro-life movement's most persuasive and prolific writers. In the introduction to *In My Mother's Womb*, Dr. De Marco writes "The deeper one's love is, the more he is bound to speak what he holds to be true". In that line he summarizes himself. Defense of truth and defense of the defenseless have been his inspiration. Although his message is for the world, he is most cogent when addressing his fellow Catholics to remind them of their inescapable tradition of honoring the sanctity of preborn life.

In a series of chapters on Abortion and Church Teaching, Abortion and Language, Abortion and the Unborn, Abortion and the Family, Abortion and Contraception, Abortion and Bio-engineering, and Abortion and Compassion, the author covers all the familiar ground and repeats many of familiar arguments. He creates a whole new landscape, however, with adroit language, profound insights and witty asides. Part I of the book is suitable both as a primer and a graduate course in the many dimensions of abortion.

In Part II, after discussing the chic new world of Bioethics and its rapidly proliferating new breed of "Techno-theologians", he addresses a series of specific bioethical issues. There are chapters on Genetic Engineering, Fetal Experimentation, In-vitro Fertilization, Sex-preselection and Surrogate Motherhood. This is familiar terrain for those of us in the medical sciences. The medical literature is replete with the latest rapturous reports of the individual scientist's fascination and preoccupation with his own technological exploits. Larger issues tend to be shunted aside or assigned to irrelevance or obsolesence. De Marco reminds us of these issues which we ignore at our peril. Science without soul is constantly confounded by its own unanticipated outcomes. Nothing indicts the technocrats so effectively as the quotes from Congressional hearings and Presidential commissions which abound in these chapters.

The conclusion of the book has to do with Technological Parenthood. These is a catalogue of scenarios out of *Brave New World* with the various "I'm my own grandpa" twists and turns which are technically possible if not advisable. "Baby M" like "Baby Doe" before her, seems to have awakened the public to concern for the many injustices and unanswered questions surrounding experimental parenthood. There has been an unlikely convergence of views between the Vatican and the NOW organization regarding the questionable ethics of some of the reproductive entrepreneurs.

For those who plan even a small pro-life bookshelf, *In My Mother's Womb* stands out as an important and valuable addition.

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