

CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT POPE; ATTACKS ON HOLY FATHER MOUNT

Over the past few months, it has become increasingly evident that a large-scale campaign against Pope Benedict XVI is being waged by his critics. The issues that his adversaries have seized upon include his relations with Muslims and Jews, and his opposition to embryonic stem cell research, abortion and gay marriage. The latest firestorm occurred when the pope questioned the utility of condoms to check AIDS.

On his flight to Cameroon in March, Benedict XVI was asked about the Catholic Church's position on fighting AIDS. He said, in part, "One cannot overcome the problem with the distribution of condoms. On the contrary, they increase the problem." Despite the uproar this caused, the facts support the pope's position.

Last year, Edward C. Green, director of the AIDS Prevention Research Project at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, wrote that "In every African country in which HIV infections declined, this decline has been associated with a decrease in the proportion of men and women reporting more than one sex partner over the course of a year—which is exactly what fidelity programs promote."

As for condom use, Green said, "Many countries that have not seen declines in HIV have seen increases in condom use, but in every country worldwide in which HIV has declined there have been increases in levels of faithfulness and usually abstinence as well." No wonder that when Green was asked about the Holy Father's remarks, he said, "The pope is correct, or put it a better way, the best evidence we have supports the pope's comments."

The Catholic Church, we pointed out to the media, has been the

most active of any institution promoting the very programs in Africa that Green touts. It also operates more hospitals and related medical centers for AIDS patients than any other private institution in the world.

The Holy Father will be visiting Israel from May 8-May 15. Look for commentators to try to discredit him by mentioning the flap over Bishop Richard Williamson's inane comments on the Holocaust; the St. Pius X Society bishop has since apologized.

What the pope's critics are trying to do is frame him as being out-of-touch. That way they can try to force feed Catholics with a steady diet of their so-called progressive ideas. Funny thing is this pope could run intellectual circles around every one of them.