

Position Statement on

Artificial Insemination & In Vitro Fertilization

Many married couples face the pain of childlessness, and their anguish elicits a compassionate response from those who are in the helping professions. That response includes understanding, counselling, and the provision of specialized services and procedures which may be helpful in eliminating impediments to fertility.

Reproductive technology today provides solutions to infertility for many couples, but it also opens doors to techniques, some of which are clearly immoral and others which are clouded in ethical uncertainties. Its use raises questions in the light of theological premises and is potentially dangerous to the sanctity and dignity of human life. With an array of possibilities for assistance, or interference, in the sacred act of procreation, man's knowledge and skill must be matched with a deep sense of responsibility and reverence for life.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION BY HUSBAND (AIH)

The Salvation Army recognizes artificial insemination, in which the husband's sperm is introduced into the uterus of his wife, as an acceptable procedure to assist the married couple to conceive, after natural methods have been unsuccessful and within the context of a stable heterosexual marriage.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION BY DONOR (AID)

For some married couples AIH will be unsuccessful and the deep desire to have a child may lead the husband and wife to consider the option of artificial insemination by a donor. The Salvation Army advises against this procedure because of the serious legal, ethical, moral and social implications that may adversely affect the couple, the donor, the child, and society at large.

IN VITRO FERTILIZATION - *HUSBAND AND WIFE*

The Salvation Army recognizes that for married couples who are unsuccessful in conceiving through normal copulation or artificial insemination (AIH), in vitro fertilization (IVF) may be considered, using the ova and sperm of the wife and husband.

The Army recommends that couples considering such a possibility be counselled and given a full explanation of the procedures, risks and potential consequences. This counselling ought to include alternatives to in vitro fertilization which are childlessness, adoption, and fostering.

The life that is conceived in vitro must be treated with respect, reverence and dignity. It is to be protected from harm, experimentation and death. Care must be taken so that unwanted or "extra" fertilized ova are not produced. All fertilized ova are to be inserted for implantation, and every effort must be made to safeguard the pregnancy.

IN VITRO FERTILIZATION - *THIRD PARTY DONOR*

Many of the problems associated with AID apply equally to in vitro fertilization in which a third party donor is involved. The Salvation Army advises against IVF in which donor sperm and/or donor ova are used.

The use of a third party donor in IVF opens the door to a host of bizarre possibilities such as unlimited experimentation with unused gametes, foster wombs for the fetus' growth, selection for "super-babies", and children for homosexual couples.

The Salvation Army believes IVF should be limited to couples in stable heterosexual marriages.

SURROGATE MOTHERHOOD

The Salvation Army is opposed to surrogate motherhood. A third party implanted with the sperm of a man whose wife is unable or unwilling to bear a child is in opposition to the Army's concept of Christian ethics. It is also fraught with legal complications and deep psychological forces that can scar for life. It is in conflict with the Army's attempt to support and promote stable family life, and infringes on marriage relationships.

SUMMARY

Artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization are acceptable when the sperm and ova of a husband and wife are used. The Salvation Army strongly advises against the use of donors because of legal, moral, social, psychological and ethical complications and implications.

The issues in the use of human assisted reproduction are many and complex. There are no easy answers. The Salvation Army will continue to make every effort to balance strong doctrine and principle with strong mercy and sensitivity. The Salvationist will not alter his beliefs, but neither will he condemn those who choose extraordinary means of achieving parenthood. The ultimate desire should be to offer love and counsel in Christ's name.



Canada and Bermuda