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## Chosen Childlessness Revisited

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Vincent J. Schodolski, national correspondent for *The Chicago Tribune*, deals with the intentional childlessness issue in "Pitter-patter of Little Feet Isn't for Them: Not Having Kids Sounds Great to Many Couples," a front-page story in Sunday's edition of the paper.

"Growing numbers of American couples are electing to have child-free relationships," he reports. Schodolski offers truly interesting insights into actual couples who have decided never to have children and gives attention to groups such as No Kidding! and The Childfree Ring.

"Babies have just never interested me," said one wife. "My husband and I didn't get married to have children. We got married for us." *We got married for us* — that just about perfectly illustrates the problem. Why did her parents marry? For her?

He also dealt fairly with my argument: *Some see this issue as a defining one for modern American society, as a line in the sand in the nation's so-called culture wars, a place where science and beliefs clash. One such person is Albert Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He sees a decision by a married couple to refrain from having children as a violation of God's will. "I am trying to look at this from a perspective that begins with God's creation," Mohler said. "God's purpose in creation is being trumped by modern practices. I would argue that it [not having children] ought to be falling short of the glory of God. Deliberate childlessness defies God's will," he said. Mohler, who uses the same argument in his opposition to same-sex marriage, said that rather than being concerned about overpopulation he was concerned about underpopulation. "We are barely replenishing ourselves," he said. "That is going to cause huge social problems in the future," a reference to demographic shifts that might occur.*

And with those who disagree: *Amy Showalter, 44, and her husband, Randy Boyer, 45, decided not to have children and consider themselves devout and conservative Christians. They attend weekly services at the Crossroads Community Church in their hometown of Cincinnati. "Nobody has ever told us this is a sin," she said. "It just does not come up." Showalter, a consultant, said after 11 years of marriage she and her husband had concluded that they would be bad parents. "We didn't feel we would be qualified," she said. "It was not that we wanted to be rich or anything like that."*

My concern is that the Church cannot be satisfied to produce people who, though married, "would be bad parents." I appreciate Amy Showalter's candor, but I would hope that she would be dissatisfied with this self-evaluation of her capacity (and her husband's) to be a parent.

My larger concern is with her comment that this subject "just does not come up" in church. This is a widespread phenomenon, no doubt. It is to our shame that this subject does not come up in church

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