

And then there was this ... (By J.M. Glover) from the May issue of The Interim, page 17.

Hannah's Children

Hannah's Children: The Women Quietly Defying the Birth Dearth, by Dr. Catherine Ruth Pakaluk (Regnery, 2024) was favourably reviewed recently by REAL Women of Canada. Pakaluk is an economist who decided to study women from various ethnic and religious groups across the U.S. who had given birth to five or more children. She asked if “a study of high birth rate families could provide an answer to the negative social, economic, and cultural fallout resulting from policies which discourage fertility?” She interviewed 55 college-educated mothers of large families to find out why they went against the trend toward small or childless families. The book focuses on the U.S., where the Census Bureau reports that “in 1976, 20 per cent of American families had 5 or more children. By 1990, this had decreased to 5 per cent, remaining constant since then.” Statistics Canada shows that: “in 2021 of ‘couples’ families’ (i.e. married and common law couples) with children, 40 per cent of women had one child, 41 per cent had two children, and 19 per cent had three or more.” Pakaluk discovered that “the secret to solving the puzzle of low birth rates, and reversing it, lies in the stories” from the women she interviewed. She found that the women in her study were “noticeably immune from the dominant trend in today’s society where feminist DEI sets the tone. She found that their stories show great wisdom and courage ... the mothers demonstrate the age-old paradox that “by giving yourself, you find who you are” and “motherhood becomes more who you are than what you do.” Also, the women were observed as having a spiritual dimension to their life and that of their family. Pakaluk concluded that “Nations that crowd out the sacred functions of Church and family will continue to reap a sterile harvest of disappointment.”