#### **TEACHING HUMAN DIGNITY SERIES:**

# Are There Too Many People in the World?

#### What Economics Can Tell Us

Copyright © 2019 McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame. Developed in Collaboration with Kirk Doran and Joseph Kaboski

## **Population Worries: 1968**

• "The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970's hundreds of millions of people will starve to death in spite of any crash programs embarked upon now."

*The Population Bomb* (Paul Ehrlich, 1968)

## **Comparing Countries Reveals...**

|                      | Chad     | <b>US in 1850</b> | US       |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| GDP/person           | \$1,600  | \$2,700           | \$46,300 |
| Infant Mortality     | 9.7%     | 23%               | 0.8%     |
| Life Expectancy      | 48 years | 40 years          | 78 years |
| % Farming            | 80%      | 58%               | 3%       |
| Primary<br>Schooling | 40%      | 63%               | 98%      |

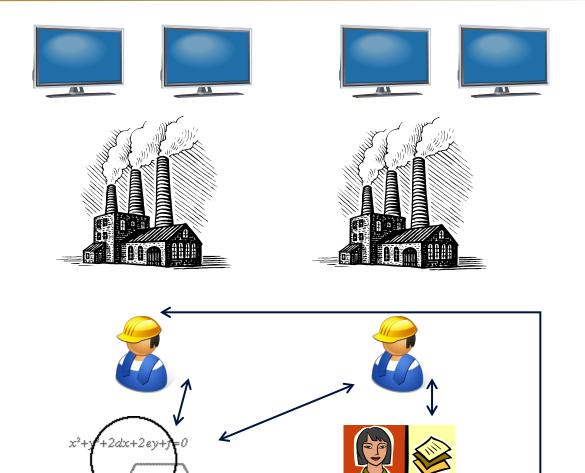
**Teaching Human Dignity** 

## **The Importance of Growth**

- Every single country that has high average living standards today was poor in 1850
- These countries all improved their average living standards by experiencing a century or more of per capita economic growth per capita economic output =  $\frac{economic output}{total population}$
- None of these countries attained per capita economic growth merely through long-term population reductions (reducing the denominator). Something deeper happened to increase the numerator.

### **Knowledge and Growth**

 $a = \pi r$ 



E=MC<sup>2</sup>

**Teaching Human Dignity**