

A newsletter of *Victims of Abortion*

"Take courage! God has healing in store for you; so take courage" (Th. 5:10)

Issue No.29 – Oct/Nov 2002

Editorial,

Thank you for the responses following the last issue of the newsletter and my defense of the priests and priesthood. Especially thank you to those who wrote and affirmed my stance. But it was also very disappointing to note the number of angry calls and cancellations of newsletter and the anger expressed over this particular issue. Especially it was very distressing for me to receive a letter from a reader in Queensland who wrote in a most derogatory and disgusting manner about the sins of the "clerical p...." (this p is not for priest), and what shame I must now feel being a catholic, referring to the Archbishop Pell issue. I thought much about this letter and whether to reply and in the end I considered that it was best shredded and left unanswered. I really don't need this kind of reader reading my newsletter. And no I am not ashamed of being a Catholic and further I am not ashamed of knowing His Grace Archbishop Pell. It was he who supported me when many many others turned their backs. It was he who helped me with rooms to remove the counselling from my home and thus safeguard my family.

I stand firm in my defence of the very good and wonderful loyal priests whilst at the same time understanding that clerical sexual abuse, like sexual abuse by parent, relative, friend or other must be dealt with and cannot be swept under the proverbial carpet. I know the damage that sexual abuse does, (I encounter it in my work daily) indeed today I think that sexual abuse is of the same nature and type of violence as abortion.

Whilst I appreciate that offenders must be dealt with appropriately, I also have a need to pray not only for the victims but also for the offenders whose offence has caused life long suffering to victims and their families and to themselves (offenders) and their families, colleagues, supporters and parishioners. What I have understood from some of the received letters is that "we" demand a God who is merciful on "cue." The God we invoke is to be a God who is merciful to those that we consider "worthy" of mercy and who fit our prescription of worthiness and not others. We make a judgement on who is to be considered worthy of His mercy and then

BROKEN BRANCHES



John 15

demand that He act accordingly or according to our instructions. Meting out punishment on our say so....

Codswallop. This cannot be.

I do a work of mercy. I cannot pray, plead, counsel and beg for mercy for those who have taken their infant to die and beg God to forgive them and us (society) for this terrible act against life, and expect His forgiveness and healing, and then **demand** that He be less merciful and compassionate in His judgement and dealing with others who sin.

This is flawed theology. It is a flawed type of faith.

The thing that becomes most visible to me as I continue in this work of abortion grief counselling is that those who genuinely regret their abortion. Those who genuinely turn towards God in sorrow are granted a Mercy and a forgiveness quite unlike anything that is commonly seen. Above all those who genuinely turn to God seeking forgiveness over their abortion exhibit a sense of compassion (for others) rarely found elsewhere. They see their own sin as the greatest and develop a compassion for other sinners, which perhaps is not possible for someone who has not offended God grievously. I have heard it said, "after what I have done I cannot ever judge another person again."(Susan).

Again it must be understood that sexual abuse of children or others for that matter, must be rooted out, dealt with. Victims must be given every help possible, but it is grievously wrong to suggest that only clergy offend in this manner. This is the devil's lie. Sexual abuse is found in every stratum of society and the damage it causes leads to other self-destructive behaviours with their attendant misery.

Is the Church suffering through these scandals? Surely so. But this is good. If the Church is truly the Bride of Christ then surely it is possible to see that her suffering is such **because** she is the Bride of Christ and suffering is part of her charism along with that of her Groom. Indeed she must suffer if she is to maintain her integrity. She must take on herself the sufferings because of sins of society and indeed the greatest sins of society over the past 40 years have been sins against morality. Today those of us who love the Church suffer, but we would also suffer if our own physical mother is wounded and ill and we would not desert her. We would stand by our physical mother just as we now must stand by our spiritual mother.

“Lack of Respect for my Life”

There are moments in my counselling when words come out of my mouth and I really don't know where they have come from. The above comment was made to my out of the blue question “if I were to ask you what is your greatest regret? What would you say?” Quick as a flash the response was “lack of respect for my life”

These words have echoed in my mind for several weeks and I am unable to dispel them. As I pondered over this response and tied the response to the speaker (José) I have been able to see that she has vocalised something that I have seen with all my women and have been unable to name. The “unnamed” something which pervades the lives of those who abort.

As I considered the life of the woman sitting before me, and the suffering, which she has spoken of, then I can see that she has “named” her demon. José's history is one which includes rejection by her own mother, early death of her one support (father) lack of friendship or support by her only other sibling (brother) sexual abuse by neighbour, physical and psychological violence, multiple attempted suicides, drug addictions, and multiple multiple abortions. Indeed as I continue to see her and speak with her I am in awe of what she has been through and survived.

And further I can truly understand why she would say that her greatest regret is the lack of respect for her life and her greatest desire is to be accorded genuine, simple and basic human loving kindness. In her life she has not experienced the merciful *hesed*. All her life (and she is just over 50 years of age) she has fought a battle simply to be acknowledged as a human being with rights and privileges. These things, which we generally take for granted.

As I reviewed Jose's history and the history of many many of the other women who have aborted it is lack of respect for her own life, which sends the woman on a journey towards abortion. Abortion is the removal, disposal, and negation of another human. It is the total lack of respect for the rights and privileges of another human, especially a dependent one. It is a total lack of and absence of love and compassion for another. It is the meting out to another what has been meted out to self. Denial of existence.

Today as we fight this embryonic stem cell issue (**and we must win this one**) and in the close future interspecies manipulation and experimentation, we **must** understand that this has arisen because of the lack of respect for human life beginning with the life of the woman, the man, the child, society. Lack of respect for God who has a decided hand in “life.” Lack of respect for life or lack of “respect for my life” (José) doesn’t suddenly emerge; it breaks in very slowly, little by little, with the acceptance of unacceptable practices. Where not enough noise was/is made to condemn them (abortion) until these find total societal acceptance, and before long are recognised and thought to be normal. Lack of respect for life or total lack of “respect for my life” (José) takes many forms.

In the case of José as in the case of other abortive men and women, rejection by a parent, abandonment, lack of parental love, affection, direction, guidance. These show a neglect and disrespect for the person (child) or being, which is being so violated. This form of lack of respect sets the pattern for future actions, which will invariably include slow destruction of self.

Sexual abuse the ultimate betrayal of trust. This type of lack of respect for life and in particular lack of “respect for my life” (José) clearly abuses the very essence of life. The very innocence and innocent. The very vehicle of the essence of life (body) and the spirit.

Addictions, which abuse “my body and my essence and my life”, are clearly a symptom of disrespect for life. Addictions show no mercy and violate and destroy everything about life. Addictions begin subtly and progress to the stage where no favouritism is shown. Addictions respect neither male, female, child, elderly. The whole scope of addiction is to destroy life. Addictions do not enhance life but its ultimate aim is to destroy.

Abortion/s whether single or multiple abortions is the result of lack of respect for “life” and certainly no “respect for my life” An abortion not only disrespects the life of another but disrespects “my life”. Abortion is the ultimate disrespect because its aim is to destroy not only the child but also those involved in the destruction. Multiple abortions simply are attempts at slowly destroying the very being who is “me” bit by bit. Multiple abortions are the merciless attempts at slow piece-by-piece destruction of self. It is hatred of self, of body and of the being.

Often, we in the life movement, make attempts at explaining why someone has multiple abortions and at times say that multiple abortions are attempts by the abortive woman to give birth to a previously aborted child. We make further attempts at explaining how it is possible that someone can have 3-4-5-7-8 abortions. How can this be possible? Simply, it is possible because of the total absence of “respect for my life.” (José). It becomes possible

because the life of this individual is so devalued that in essence she considers herself less than human. It becomes possible because with every abortion every little bit of her humanity is further stripped away. It becomes possible because there is no emotion, empathy left either for the child or for herself. Respect for her own humanity or that of the child has disappeared and has been replaced with loathing possibly for both. Not one woman or man have I met who has expressed peace and contentment following an abortion or following abuse. Those others who have convinced her that she does not deserve respect succeeded most especially in convincing her that she does not deserve the appellation “human being.”

As we watch on a daily basis those girls/women entering abortion clinics to end the life of their child it is important to remember that at some point “disrespect for my life” has begun and irrespective what follows much will be done to continue that disrespect for her life and “life” in general.

Attempted suicides and completed suicides should not be surprising when consideration is given to the “lack of respect for my life” This, like abortion is the ultimate in lack of respect. Suicide throws “life” away and declares “you are not worthy of respect” The suicidee can no longer see “respect for my life” and cannot conceive of a way of living without the respect of others and especially self respect for “my life.” The pain of this knowledge becomes too much.

Perhaps the reason that abortion and suicide are so closely linked is the reality that both suicide and abortion have the same characteristics (no respect) and the same end state. Death.

Where did this disrespect for life come from? All around us. Abortion violence (approx 40-50,000,000 pa). Celluloid violence interminable. Wars, terrorism, murders brought to the screen in regular daily measures. New disrespect for life in issues such as embryonic stem cell research speaks of a new and more sophisticated type of abortion and a new a more sophisticated disrespect for life. This disrespect goes to the very genesis and speaks of valuelessness from the very beginning. Interspecies usage of parts so that there is a blurring of the species, and humanity is suddenly no longer the marvellously made and created being created a little lower than the angels (Ps 8: 5-6). It is no different than another animal and therefore able to be used and abused as deemed necessary. Such disrespect for life as we have it today has happened because sexuality has been abused, cheapened, devalued. Sacredness of life been denied and abortion accepted. When abortion started gaining ground and acceptance all those years ago, it was only a matter of time before respect for life and especially “respect for my life” declined to the point of absence. Following this it was only a matter of time before all other devaluing became possible

Abortion and motherhood

It is important to understand that abortion **does** change the way a woman feels about herself and further how she feels about “motherhood” itself. There are many reasons for this, beginning with the guilt she feels over her abortion of child/children and her management of siblings of these aborted children. Indeed repeat abortions can be part of this cycle of guilt, shame and regret and if not dealt with, rather than exacerbate the situation of having to face the daily sense of loss and guilt etc., she decides on a further abortion in the hope that this will help her not to remember. Further to this, repeat abortion in some distorted way falsely “validates” the previous one/s. This of course is flawed reasoning however it’s important to understand that a woman who has aborted her child needs to develop strategies and comforting self reasoning in order to accommodate her decision and action. These modified reasonings are her survival tactics, which really are needed in order for her to be able to survive.

Abortion does affect motherhood. It cannot but do so because her maternal bonding is affected. Damaged maternal bonding can and does lead to rejection (not necessarily physical but emotional) and subsequent suffering (as seen in Jose’s life).for the child. A child who has been deprived of maternal and/or paternal bonding and love will spend a lifetime looking for an ideal (love) that is missing from his/her life and often times this lack of love or bonding will be sought through promiscuity and other behaviours which ensure “lack of respect for my life”. And of course this then leads to abortion/s and other destructive behaviours. Without that maternal/paternal bonding there will be an absence of something that is vital for existence. The losses, which a child who is abused, neglected, or abandoned, are many including loss of safe, secure, happy childhood. Loss of developmental props needed to safely move from one developmental stage to another and loss of spiritual life.

Abortion seems to sever or at least seriously damage the covenant written into the woman’s being, and that is, the covenant between her and her child. This covenant is imprinted into her very being and is vital for the safeguarding of the equilibrium of humanity. Following an abortion the covenantal relationship is tainted, broken, damaged and with this damage so too society becomes damaged because “mothering” and “fathering” are carried out whilst in a state of personal disequilibrium or “lack of respect” for self or another (child). A broken covenant usually means a type of violence begins to be waged and we see this in the battle being waged by parents against their own children (abortion).

Please pray for the healing of “motherhood” and “fatherhood” so that this battle against the children and indeed the future is fought and won.

NICK'S COMMENTS

Bonjour my Fan Club,

How are we all? Good I hope. I have been quite busy recently as it is getting close to the business end of year 12 so I have been forced into actually doing some study and not just watching TV, and writing for you tremendous people. I unfortunately only have another short article this issue, mainly to inform you of a most wonderful mass mother and I attended. Recently, I was invited to the confirmation of a good friend of mine. Now although this is quite common, the confirmation itself was not at all common. Held in the St. Patrick's Cathedral, it was a Pontifical Latin Confirmation led by Archbishop Dennis Hart, and was by far one of the most moving services I have ever attended with a choir singing Latin Chants and Hymns, a huge cohort of Priests and Alter-Servers, and a powerful presence of reverence felt by all in attendance. It was truly an amazing experience, and one of the best ceremonies I have attended. I would just like to thank Louise for inviting me, and all those associated with the confirmation for such a fantastic event. Anyway people, that's all from me as I am suffering exam syndrome where my symptoms are, being confined to my room, and an extraordinarily strange affinity for studying. Please pray to God to help me with my exams, as it would be good to have some divine assistance!

God Bless,
Take it easy,
C'vediamo amici,
Nic Lastman ☺

LETTERS 1 IN MEMORY OF D. HEENAN.

Dear Anne,

Thank you for your newsletter, which I find very thought provoking and inspiring. I would like to make a donation in memory of my father who died last year. He had to battle most of his life especially after being permanently disabled after the war. At one stage the doctors decided to amputate his legs but he prayed to St Gerard Majella and his legs were saved and kept him mobile until only a few months before his death. I think his life is an example of how trust in God can overcome adversity. Many times Dad would have felt like giving up but I think his experiences taught him both the frailty and preciousness of life. Dad was very pro life and would have supported your work. Please accept this donation on his behalf.

SincerelyCatherine.

(thank you Catherine and we pray that the Lord God has your father in his loving care).

I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO LET YOU KNOW THAT:

*In conjunction with Rosaries for Life Memphis, Tennessee:
There will be a day retreat in honour of Our Lady of Fatima with
Fr.D. Jenkins Celebrating Mass and
Mr Richard Grant ...speaker on Humane Vitae
date.....October 16, 2002
Where.....Mary MacKillop Centre
109 Old Mornington Road...MT ELIZA
TIME.....10.30AM – 2.30PM.
COST.....\$10 pp morning tea provided. But please bring own lunch.
Contacts.....Margaret.....97769339
Carmel..... 97873966*

For those who live in Victoria please give the above consideration. It is through prayer that the demon who goes by the name “abortion” will be defeated.

I conclude this issue of the newsletter with saying thank you to those who responded to my call for **HELP**, I have appreciated it, especially Peter, Fr. J.B. C., Margaret and the others I couldn't have done this newsletter without you. To those who were not able to respond please see if its is possible to help it really is needed. I can't do it without you. Those magical six numbers (Saturday nite) have not yet fallen sequentially....darn it! Every week I am sure its my week Indeed not even three numbers have fallen sequentially in years so I guess the good Lord is giving me messages but I am not listening.

Thank you to Fr. Victor Farrugia for last Friday's Mass for two babies (Madeleine Anne-Louise and Joshua) and their families it was the most beautiful Mass and very powerful and healing for the mothers, fathers and families of these babies who were originally destined never to be remembered. Not only are they remembered, but taken into the hearts and hearth of their families. Please continue to pray for Sally, Jamie (new) Jane, Susan, Katherine (new) Sue, Jose, Michelle, Linda, Greg, (new) Julie, Marie, Christine (new) Leanne, Janice (new) Bob, Marlene (new) Margaret (new), Jane and Michael (loss through accident) Helen N.(cancer) Maureen (cancer) Sheri, and please pray for the work and special intention of Fr. Ian. And please pray for me and my family and my work. This work cannot be done without your prayers and support.



Name _____

Address _____ P/C _____

Donation/Newsletter _____

Yes/no, I would/would not like to be on your mailing list.

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