

A newsletter of *Victims of Abortion*

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

Issue No 33 –June/July 2003

Hello to all my friends,

First of all I must apologise the lateness of this issue of the newsletter I have been busy not only with the on going work of counselling post aborted women and I have taken on some new ones and have spoken to quite a few over the phone and have two regular interstate phone counselling sessions which is usually once a week for about an hour each session with the two different girls.

I normally don't like phone counselling, I don't think it should be done, because if we really believe post abortion grief and trauma is serious then surely it should not be treated so lightly. However, I have accepted to do this phone counselling for several reasons. The first being that my Sydney girl (Melissa) has been to various different people for help and she felt that they had not helped her. I had also seen her friend and helped her friend here in Melbourne. So they both felt I might be of some help. The other reason is Melissa has agreed that whilst we speak over the phone weekly (or at any time that she needs me) I insist that she come to see me in person at least every 6-8 and at this time we will spend several days (intensive) together. This we have done and it's proving so wonderfully successful. Melissa's voice and face glows. It's so lovely to see. And she is growing as a person and is able to see it herself.

The other person Susie is also improving but not so fast. Although Susie is new so its still early times so I have great hopes for her also.

I have also booked a new lady called Judie but have not seen her yet. She begins in two weeks.

On top of this I have begun more studies with the University of Queensland so between counselling, four public talks, and other office related "stuff" I have had to write four quite large assignments since the last newsletter. It might sound like I am superwoman but in fact I am not. Maybe supernut yes! Superwoman No!

I need at this point to speak about your response to the last issue of the newsletter. I was overwhelmed with your kindness, especially with all the letters asking me not to shut down operations. Thank you to all those who took time to tell me they appreciated what I do and appreciate very much the newsletter they receive. Thank you to the person Jane who wrote and told

BROKEN BRANCHES



John 15

me how much I had helped her change her views about abortion. She went from being so-so, to understanding why abortion is never an answer. Not for the baby and not for the mother or father or others. This is good to hear because there are so many on the newsletter list that I don't even know how they got there except that someone asked that they receive one. And it has been good to know that what I write has educational value. This has always been my intention.

It was also good to hear that you want me to continue. I remember, before I wrote the last issue, I had this internal (mental) conversation with the Lord and I was telling him all my plans for life after this work of post abortion counselling, and I was so sure that I heard this deep rib shaking laughter and then I remembered that someone once told me that if you want to make God laugh...just tell him your plans.... that's what the laughter must have been about. I told Him my plans about getting a huge paying job. Taking time out to write the second book (I have a marvellous idea for this one-I could rattle myself for not thinking about it earlier-first book is being read by an editor at this moment) I really told Him (God) about teaching R.E either in Secondary schools or adult faith education. I told God that it was OK if He wanted me to finish, I didn't mind at all. That's when the laughter started.

Thank you to those who responded, because for the first time I was able to pay all my bills all at once. Pay the newsletter immediately and have sufficient for at least two more issues and several more phone accounts, yellow pages, stationary and other long overdue requirements for the office but above and beyond that what I really loved were the letters from people I had never heard from saying not to "shut the shop" as God always provides. Indeed He even provided my new computer for the office. Thanks Roy and thank you to the person who paid for it (wants to remain anonymous).

During this past time, since last newsletter, I did an interview with a Christian newspaper "New Life" and I must admit the editor Helen Woodall who interviewed me was the nicest journalist I have encountered. Full of integrity and very much **unlike** some of the more "so so " journalists. Her article about me (which I will enclose as an insert) left me really happy. Probably the first time I have been happy about an article written about me and this work.

SOME POST ABORTION PREVENTION STRATEGIES.

Part of the reason that again I have undertaken further tertiary studies this year is the fact that I would like to formalise what I have learned over the past seven years, and to this end offer as part of assignments reflections into the course and cause of post abortion trauma and grief. Whilst there are some researchers into this particular mental health issue (post abortion grief) the difficulty with some of these researchers is that they write generally for a "converted" population. That is, their work is disseminated through out the prolife movement (not always –but generally) and whilst this in itself is

important it (post abortion research) needs to move further a field of the pro life movement into the secular environment. Unless this happens and soon, what we are doing is preaching to the converted and the converted don't really need that particular information because they would (generally) not consider abortion as an option. However, the "converted" can most help in the spreading of the knowledge about the effects of abortion and further still to spread the information about the possibility of healing, mercy of God, recovery and possible renewal life-post abortion. However, their scope remains limited.

Prevention strategies must of course begin with the reality that abortion is not necessary. **It's OK to say no to an abortion.** However, this means that we might be lulled into believing that we live in a utopian ideal, because the reality is that abortions will continue to happen as they have been happening since time immemorial. Indeed we have the Didache (teaching of the apostles dated first century) speaking about this very topic. So closing our eyes and hoping that this issue will go away, I don't believe will ever solve the problem.

However, increasing knowledge of the immediate community and larger society concerning all the effects, **beginning with the death of a human child** and continuing with all the possible effects that this action has begun, may not necessarily stop abortion, but may bring a new understanding to a society lulled into a state of apathy regarding the value of life. May awaken this society from its slumber of apathy.

Indeed we can speak about the abortion breast cancer issue, abortion and suicide connection, abortion and eating disorders link, the abortion and post natal depression link, abortion and clinical depression link, abortion and substance abuse link, abortion and marriage breakdown link and the list is endless. There is much that needs to be spoken about and loudly.

Enhancing the community's knowledge about the traumatic nature of abortion, especially in some high-risk women, enhances the skills of those within the community to be alert to and be able to recognise and render support for this kind of trauma. And in the giving of support help to validate the mourning and grief of the woman. This in itself will begin to help her recover. It is in the **invalidation** of her loss and subsequent grief (irrespective of the reason for her abortion) and the denial of her experience either by herself or those around her that contributes to the development of Post Abortion Syndrome.

Re education of a community lulled into believing that a conception does not mean a human creation but some indeterminate "thing," disposable if inconvenient, needs to be given immediate attention. And whilst it is understood that abortion is a contentious issue, it becomes more urgent to do so. For too long Governments, Medical profession, psychiatric profession, psychological profession, schools, health centres, women's centres have been negligent in their cavalier attitude towards something as destructive to women's health, as abortion.

Abortion and its after effects to women needs to be on the lips of all those who have power to make the knowledge known and it needs these very people to speak loudly about this knowledge. Women are dying. Women's mental health is forever compromised. Women's reproductive health is compromised. Women's very dignity as women is diminished. She (woman) has been convinced that her very design can be tampered with, without consequence. What folly!!

I find it a huge irony, that the young are given corrosive sex education instruction, at an age when the only thing that the children should be thinking about is "girl" things or "boy" things, but there is a coyness about the topic of abortion (even in later years) which at times is the fruit of those early sex instruction classes. Part of the reason that abortion happens is the reality that sexuality is so degraded. It is not sexuality, a fundamental gift of life, an act requiring some maturity, commitment, love, but sexuality an act motivated by no more than instincts. This is the basic cause of abortion. This is the basic reason why women concede to a procedure, which will cause them wounds of lifelong dimensions. Women have been convinced that going against their design will be beneficial for them. This is the edenic lie of monumental size.

Of recent times a pharmaceutical company was brought to its knees because they were allegedly found to be negligent in their duty of care to their customers and some deaths and illness occurred as a result. There was massive media frenzy over the shortcomings of the said pharmaceutical company. Yet the same media will not cover honestly the abortion issue. Why? Are those who head the media, males? Or maybe feminists of the least feminine type. Or perhaps it really does not matter that 50% of the Australian population (women) are not that important and the state of their mental health is less important still. When was the last time that it was known that a very public figure, whether in government, or medical profession even sounded a warning of even **THE POSSIBILITY** that abortion is dangerous if not physically (though this is not ruled out) then psychologically.

When was the last time that the health department (whether state or federal) made a public statement or took steps to warn **of even the possibility** that studies are linking abortion and serious mental health damage to women. When was the last time that anti cancer organisations began to **at least look at the possibility** that with such rapid increase in women's cancers that there might be a link between abortion and cancer? Cancer such a deadly disease and still they prevaricate. What does it take?

There is a need for post abortion syndrome to be recognised as a reality. There is a need for medical personnel, to be trained in identifying this syndrome and not simply pacifying presenting depressed women with more pills. This will only mask the problem. We have a need to remind women that they matter. That their design is different than the male and that once their design is damaged all other areas of their life will also suffer.

There is a need for strategies to be put in place that protect women against machinations against their value as human beings. Abortion devalues the woman (not enhances her) and says that her body was ill designed and the procedure will “fix” the ill design. Abortion penalises her for being a woman. Conservatively 100,000-150,000 abortions in Australia per year. Potentially a substantial percentage of these will develop a malicious syndrome –yet only the voices of a few pro life individuals (whether professional or lay persons) to bring this to the attention of a slumbering society.

Whenever a generation is forbidden to actively and publicly mourn their loss (aborted men and women) those surviving such losses are driven to find a manner in which to ritualise that loss, even if it means a constant gnawing away to bring attention to the sorrow. Abortion grief needs expression; otherwise further injustices are committed both to mother and child. To the mother because she will become ill (and so society suffers when a mother “woman” is ill) and to the child because its place in society is negated. We have at least thirty to forty years of unmourned grief over abortion and indeed we can see the outcome. We do not have a psychologically healthy society. Women are getting cancers in extraordinarily youthful bodies. Men are refusing their generation/protector roles. Children are being more and more abused at younger and younger ages. Youth are suiciding in never before conceived numbers and marriage and family breakdowns also in unprecedented numbers. It is time that those in positions of responsibility act. Failure to do so will demand a retributive justice.

RETURN OF NIC’S COMMENTS

Greetingz and Salutations once again fair people!

And how are we all? Splendiferous I hope! Lately I have been run off my feet with university, so much so that sleep is now only a distant memory! Yes, Chiropractic is a full on course – I honestly did not expect the amount of work there is, but it will be worth it in the end when I can fix mum’s back (at least that’s what she says!). Anyway, I’m sure you don’t want to hear of my petty vexations, but it’s these vexations, which inspired me to write this article.

After receiving an e-mail from a friend about the things that make you most happy in life, I wondered to myself why people are so interested in drugs, sex, violence, and ultimately destructive things to make them happy. It seems that a large majority of our population now sees these things as good things in their lives, but why? Why, when we have so many wonderful things in our lives, would one resort to such negative actions?

If we take just a second to reflect, and really think about the things in our lives that make us happy, the things that make us smile, we see that the smallest things often are the things that make us happiest. See for yourself, what makes us feel good?

1. Falling in love
2. Laughing so hard your face hurts
3. A hot shower
4. No lines at the supermarket
5. A special shared glance
6. Getting mail
7. Taking a drive on a pretty road
8. Hearing your favourite song on the radio
9. Lying in bed listening to the rain outside
10. Hot towels fresh from the dryer
11. Chocolate milkshake (or strawberry, or vanilla)
12. A bubble bath
13. Giggling
14. A good conversation
15. The beach
16. Finding a \$20 note in your coat pocket from last winter
17. Laughing at yourself
18. Midnight phone calls that last for hours
19. Running through sprinklers
20. Laughing for absolutely no reason at all
21. Having someone tell you that you're beautiful
22. Laughing at an inside joke
23. Friends
24. Accidentally overhearing someone say something nice about you
25. Waking up and realizing you still have a few hours left to sleep
26. Your first kiss
27. Making new friends, or spending time with old ones
28. Playing with a new puppy
29. Having someone rub your shoulders
30. Sweet dreams
31. Hot chocolate
32. Road trips with friends
33. Swinging on swings
34. Making eye contact with a good looking stranger
35. Making cookies
36. Having friends send you homemade cookies
37. Holding hands with someone you care about
38. Running into an old friend and realizing some things (good or bad) never change
39. Watching the expression on someone's face as they open a much desired present
40. Watching the sunrise.
41. Getting out of bed every morning and being grateful for another beautiful day
42. Knowing that somebody misses you
43. Getting a hug from someone who cares deeply about you
44. Knowing you've done the right thing no matter what other people think
45. Realising GOD LOVES YOU.

Natural highs... nothing negative, nothing you can buy; only seeing what is. These real things that make life worth living. Wow... I really outdo myself each time don't I? 😊 Mum says I have taken up too much room, so I'll leave it there (she's probably jealous of my literary brilliance!).

Take it eazy people,
Laterz,
Nic Lastman.

PS Friends are the angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.

Letters:**No. 1**

Dear Anne,

Thank you for all the newsletters that you have sent me and I am sorry to hear of your struggles. Enclosed is a small donation.....I am sorry this is all that I can afford and I hope it goes some way to helping you to keep going. I think yours is one of the best newsletters because it not only teaches us about abortion and what it does to people but also it brings the effect of abortion to us when you speak about your women. I am saddened when I hear about the suffering that some of these women go through and I thank God that you have time to see them. I will pray for you and the women.

God Bless,

Maria M.

No. 2.

Dear Anne and Nic,

First of all thank you for your newsletter. Its really good. I love the way you take a little bit about abortion and explain how it affects the woman. I especially liked the issues where you spoke about abortion/suicide. Suicide has touched our family (many years ago) and somehow I don't think we ever recovered from it. Its one of those things which remains and haunts us because we never knew why he did it. He was only 19 years of age and much loved. So we don't have answers. Maybe only God knows. Nic reminds me of my grandson. Just his manner of writing and speaking. I can almost hear him when I read his little articles and I appreciate them very much. I pray that you can keep going. Enclosed is a small donation, I wish it could be more but I am only a pensioner. Please thank Nic for me also.

Regards and God Bless you both,
Margaret W.

No. 3

Dear Ann

I was horrified to read that you are considering closing down for lack of funds. I am surprised that the Church has not offered to make funds available for you not to have to worry about that. I imagine that the work you do is very rewarding but also very necessary. With so many abortions done every year there must be a lot of women and men and children suffering. I hope that our Church responds to your need for funds and appreciates the work that you do. Thank you for speaking to me on the phone the other day, I have tried your suggestion and I will let you know if it works. Even if it doesn't it was lovely talking to you. Please keep going. You'll see everything will work out.

Fond regards

Teresa. (enclosed small donation)

There were many letters along the same vein. Thank you to all. Hopefully if space permits I will put more in next few issues (at least as long as I keep going.

I conclude this issue with a heart that is a bit lighter than it was last time. Last time I didn't know if I would be writing this one so thank you for making it possible.

I need to thank those who contacted me and responded in whatever way it was. Funds, promise of prayers, offer of practical ideas. Whatever thank you. Thank you Paul & Michaela (you know why) Kathleen C., Fr. Thomas, Lorraine L., Margaret , Br Simon & colleagues, Fr. Gabriel & Brothers (Conv. Franciscans)., Therese & Suryan., Jane I., Mark C., (thanks) Jenny, Tim & children (thanks) Hans & Coby, MJB. G., (Bris) Richard, E., Thanks Janet (Perth) Gregory & Janet (you are marvellous).Thank you Irena W. Thank you to the others I will try and acknowledge you in the future issues. Thank you to those who asked to remain anonymous. I also thank those few people who sent donations via the Helpers. I will try and acknowledge individually as soon as I catch up with everything. **As I close please remember if you can please support this work it really is worthwhile.** Please pray for all those in the last newsletter and especially Samantha, Jason, Melissa, Darren, Marie, Jodie, Judie, Rob., Leigh Anne (this is a new Leigh Anne) the old one has completed with me., Ann, Michelle, Donna, Susie, Susan, Sarah, Rachel, Michelle and a little four year old (Tati) who has lost her baby sister in her mummy's tummy and is showing signs of confusion and distress.

May the Lord Bless and Keep you all in His care.



Anne Lastman

Name _____
Address _____ P/C _____
Donation/Newsletter _____
<i>Yes/no, I would/would not</i> like to be on your mailing list.
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