

Broken Branches

“Take courage! God has healing in store for you; so take courage” (Tb. 5:10)

Issue 102 – Dec 2014/Jan 2015

March for the Babies 2014

Dear friends I know that this report is a little belated, but as you know I only send out newsletter every two months so the report has to be a little later than other reports on this matter.

Before I went to conference overseas I had had much dialogue with a senior member of the police department here in Victoria and much dialogue had passed between us. He promised me that this year it would be different and that the police would be prepared for the demonstrators and noise makers. I was very confident with his words and assurances and this was justified with texts and emails and calls I received about the magnificent work of the police officers and how safe our people felt (unlike last year). Indeed some have said that the contrast between this year and last year could not even be described.

From what was relayed to me there was one stage when it seemed like the protestors would block the procession as they did last year but they were immediately surrounded by police and unable to move. How proud were those who walked for the babies who died, and their mothers who will suffer, being led by mounted police.

There were more police than protestors and noisemakers and the officers were able to keep them under control without also being themselves in danger.

There were between 200 – 250 police and maybe about 50 counter-protesters, who could be described as somewhat disturbing. There was also a young male who held up a sign which read: “*The only good baby is a dead baby*”. That sign was shown on evening primetime Channel 7 news. Imagine the distortion in this young man’s heart and mind and imagine his fatherhood if there ever is to be one. Imagine the hatred behind those words and that sentiment, and these are the people who have helped to shape the abortion politics and laws of Victoria, so much so that

draconian laws were enacted in 2008. Laws which permit babies to die up to stage of birth, indeed ensuring what the slogan which said *that the only good baby is a dead baby* can be a reality.

This young man, what could have happened to distort his thought so much? What occurred in his life that could possibly bring him such a reaction? This and these kind of thinkers, dear friends, are what is contended with daily by those who pray and offer help outside the abortion clinic and those of us who are in pro-life work.

Did this comment help the cause of the anti-life lobby? Hardly. And perhaps the public were able to see the kind of people behind the virulent calls for all matters and demands for death.

Also present were members of the Sex Party, although I suspect that this time they would have distanced themselves from such a comment about “*dead baby*” The Marchers for the babies, the police estimated between were between 5000- 7,000 people. A hugely bigger crowd than last year.

Thank you dear friends who attended I hope to be there next year. Thank you also for your prayers for the success of this day. It was important, after all the difficulties that there were last year, it was good to return this year with a bigger and better response.

More about Breast Cancer Studies

In a recent issue of our daily Paper the Herald Sun dated 29/9/2014 out after the completion of my last newsletter, a short note appeared inserted deep within the middle pages titled “Abortion, cancer link rejected”

How interesting that all the studies from around the world especially the findings of the most recent (2012-2014)

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Chinese, Sri Lankan, Indian Studies were rejected whilst the study done in Australia (where abortion laws are the most gruesome and draconian) find that there is no link between abortion and breast cancer. This study was published in Medical Journal of Australia.

The oncologist from the Peter MacCallum clinic Assoc. Professor Kelly Anne Phillips said it was "important to provide updated Australian Research to help women identify the risks." This I suggest implies that Australian women are different and only studies carried out in Australia will apply to them.

And a terrible indictment on her comment "it is important for each woman to understand what her personal breast cancer risk is, but abortion is not one of them."

Meaning Lets keep going with abortion because it won't cause any difficulties. Meaning disregard other reputable studies only our studies matter. Meaning we do not wish to even contemplate the possibility that abortion has dire after effects. Meaning we cannot disturb the status quo on abortion in Australia. Meaning if our study found difficulty then the 2008 laws might need to be reconsidered. Meaning if our study found a link between abortion and breast cancer then all those women who are enduring the pain of breast cancer might begin to ask questions. Meaning that those politicians who fought so hard to change the laws in 2008 might be called to account for their decision and action.

All these meanings need to be taken into account if abortion and breast cancer link is found to be definite. I wonder why this professor Phillips believes that the Australian study is more valid than the recent Chinese studies, Indian, Sri Lankan studies, all the work of Prof Joel Brind, all the work of Dr Angela Lanfranchi. What is it that makes the Australian one more acceptable, except that perhaps Australia and especially Victoria has the most atrocious abortion law in the world, and this "hard fought for law" (Joan Kirner-feminist-former Premier of Victoria in interview after new laws passed 2008) is now non-negotiable.

The abortion breast cancer risk may jeopardise that law.

She refused to have an abortion and her son, the Archbishop of Riga, will be forever thankful

What an uplifting story. Many parishes and churches are praying for more vocations to ministry of priesthood and religious life but God is giving us all the vocations needed except that we abort them. I am always reminded of Jer 1:5 "before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you came to birth I consecrated you:"

The Lord forms, creates, consecrates and awaits our "fiat" to bring to birth. It's a pity that in our day this "fiat" is so absent and those He consecrates cannot fulfil their role of being "prophet" to the nations. When we think that in recent times we have heard of two priests whose mother was told abort and didn't and today they Shepherds and what wonderful shepherd they make because they know their history. And the above mentioned Bishop who is forever grateful to his Mum for not aborting him and today he is of the wonderful charism and school of Archbishop a successor to the apostles. When we think of the millions upon millions and possibly billions aborted babies imagine what we have done. The violence against the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life. Violence against God. For those who have computer below is the link to video. beautiful to hear him tell his story.

http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/she-refused-to-have-an-abortion-and-her-son-the-archbishop-of-riga-will-be-forever-thankful?utm_campaign=dailyhtml&utm_medium=email&utm_source=dispatch

Sibling Trauma

Dear friends in my care at the moment I have a young woman who came to me not long ago (recommendation and referral by someone I had helped several years ago) suffering what in the first instance appeared to be abuse issues, abandonment issues (which all exist) and a deep dislike of self and depression.

All the outward signs (family, husband children) seem good, she is loved by her husband and children is a good mother, yet still she said she feels a violence inside of her, a loneliness inside of her, "like something is missing." Somehow the pieces didn't fit. Just a pervasive unhappiness and loneliness.

This continued for about 8 weeks (weekly sessions) while I was looking for that "poisoned seed" which might be the cause of such inner emptiness

And this past week it happened. The disclosure that before her conception her mother had had an abortion and not long after conceived again, her. I had not thought about this because she originally came to me for abuse so I focused on this and she had not thought about abortion because she herself had not had an

abortion so she felt it had nothing to do with her. And yet!

As I listened to my client speak about her loneliness and being empty and wanting someone who is missing, it made sense that she would feel all of these things. There is an echo of life still in the womb. An echo of another history, of an unfinished work of life and unfinished story.

Professor Philip Ney (Canada) has written much on the topic of absent siblings and the effects that the loss of these siblings have on those who come after especially after an abortion. He found that the children know that there should have been other children and indeed the child draws for him a picture of the family as it should have been.

Today there are many studies which look at loss of a twin in the womb and the effect on its surviving twin. There is a knowing by the surviving twin and a sense of loss but it's an unexplainable sense. Almost like a haunting, or a distant memory of another. As my client said "sometimes I

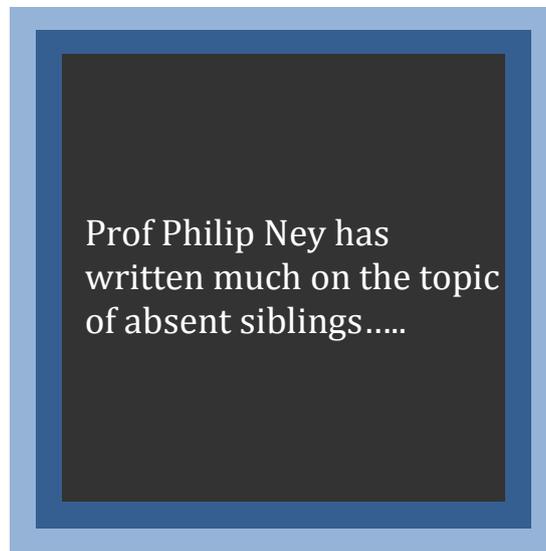
find myself listening for the sound of another voice. The sound of someone I will remember and recognise."

This speaks of our interconnectedness. We recognise each other and cannot know of one of our own, missing and not be affected by it. Or know of its loss.

The therapy I engage in with this client is art therapy, and narrative therapy (telling the story) and I should have recognised it sooner because in all her artwork there is in utero, tiny life and other life surrounding her. It is only on further discussion that it became possible to see clearly what she spoke with her art and she herself is able to express what cannot be expressed in words.

This client has given me the great pleasure of being able to see how Prof Ney works, especially when his young clients draw for him what they cannot say.

Herewith her words which she compiled because I asked her to:



"As I sit here mentally processing my diagnosis of depression in my 30's. I can't fathom when it all began. Had it been an "event" that triggered this? Or perhaps it was always there lurking in the background waiting to rear its ugly head.

I have always felt different, as if I wasn't meant to be the middle child. It never sat well with my soul. I had always felt different but when I had my daughter my feelings became very intense (trigger for PAS-Anne)

Feelings of loneliness, aggression, sadness, suicide, anger, injustice, guilt, bitterness, used, weak, unwanted, vulnerable, fearful, anxiety, loss of innocence, sick, abandonment, resentment, feeling different, low self-esteem, shame, longing, ugly, defeated, inability to truly connect with God or my parents. I have often wondered where these feelings came from and why I have always felt out of place and the black sheep of the family. My childhood wasn't perfect by any stretch of the imagination, however, some of these feelings didn't make sense.

I did not want to be this way nor could I explain it, so God led me to Anne. I thought just for general counselling, but God had other plans. I had seen numerous counsellors and psychologists and no one could diagnose me properly. With this recent diagnosis of depression also not seeming to fit in I hesitantly started on medications. Anne helped me to see that my feelings had similarities with someone who had gone through an abortion. Since I knew that that was not the case with me, I started asking some questions and soon discovered I was one of 5 children instead of one of 3 children as I thought.

I found out that my mother was forced to abort her first child, she then had my sister, aborted the third child and following had me and then 11 years later came my brother. I was not the middle child at all and now I could feel a piece of my heart put back in place. I had other siblings, perhaps ones that would connect with me in ways my others could not. I cried not tears of sadness but tears of joy. I knew I was cared for. I was especially loved because they existed and they were with me.

I want so much to give them the biggest hug. I want so much to be hugged by them too. Would they look like Mum or Dad? Would they look like me? Would they be the missing pieces of the emptiness and puzzle that I have always felt? And hopefully now my emptiness would fade? Would they be male or female and what would their names be? I have never felt understood until I knew that there were others. I am important because I am here and I will tell their story.

My name is Rachel and I am one of 5 children. I have amazing siblings and my mum and dad did the very best that they could. One day all my siblings will be named because they are part of my family and they are loved dearly. I will meet them one day and will meet their family and we will be complete. My heart yearns for that day. Until then I will reconcile with these feelings of violence from the womb. I will fill the missing space in my heart with my own little girl and the joy she brings me until I meet all of you on that day.

I love you both my lost siblings but you are no longer lost.

Your sister

**Rachel.*

(not her real name-Anne)

I can imagine that losing a sibling/s in the womb and especially in a violent manner can leave behind psychic memories of that trauma and leave powerful impact on siblings which come following the abortion/s. Perhaps we could even say that some residual grief can be found in the womb and experienced by the one who follows.

We have heard and studies have been done on the experience of surviving twin when one twin has died and the longing for the absence and loss of someone ontologically known. Of listening for a special heartbeat that a surviving one remembers. Then as we learn more and more about life in the womb it is possible to see where an abortion has occurred the next infant will always feel something. A loss, its effects.

Souls we believe are present from conception and if this is so then soul remembers and memories register from first

cell division and first two cell union. The soul is the witness to past violence and remembers and grieves for that loss.

From "Rachel's" story we can see that echoes of past pain in the womb has power to effect and becomes known as soul pain.

This soul pain, of violence in a place for life, cannot be ignored it makes itself felt in manners psychological and manners which demand attention. And these behaviours of soul pain (self-wounding) require recall, feeling and forgiving in the most deepest and profound way. The place that is sacred where life begins cannot be violated and then thought that peace can reign there.

The work of forgiveness for the pain of abortion is not only forgiving those who coerced, those who did not support, those who encouraged and urged abortion as the best option. Not even those who performed the abortion but most importantly forgiveness of self and to restore peace to the womb so that ensuing that future life may not be touched by the violence.

This is why the work of post abortion grief counselling is slow work. Is delicate work and is important and special work because we are dealing with soul pain not only of the mother, father, family, society but "life" pain.

Please help all of us to understand this and pray for the healing of soul wounds.

Another Beautiful Story

Dear friends, my dear husband often tells me that my newsletters are sombre and that people get fed up with reading awful stuff and so don't bother responding to calls for support. I try and argue with him (of course you would say you!) that I deal with sombre topic and I need to bring to you news which relates to this topic and he hrrrrmp and says no more.

However, recently I came across this really beautiful story in our daily paper and thought I would share it with you. It shows how it is possible for a "village to raise a child."

The story appeared in our Herald Sun October 31/2014, under the title of "Hum Hits the Books for her Son" and it shows a beautiful photo of a very young Mum (Christine Lam) and her little two year old son Christopher. The Mum is wearing her school uniform and her little boy is close to her and beautiful and happy looking. Indeed both of them have huge smiles on their faces and appear so bonded.

The article speaks of the support the young student Mum has received from her teachers, school, principal and

others. On the day the photo was taken she was participating in her first VCE exam and the school had provided for her taxis and baby sitters so that she would be able to manage with the exams.

It appears that throughout her pregnancy, Christine (17 year old) had received much help from school and principal (Catholic Regional College) and because of all of the support her decision to have her baby and still continue with her education has to be applauded and so does the school and the principal.

If more of these situation would occur then perhaps we would see less abortions by the young and then much less pain after several years of grieving for that loss.

The story can be found on *the herald sun website 32/10/2014*. By *Wes Hosking, under title of "Mum Hits Books or Her Son"*

Anyone who may be interested it's a heart-warming story especially in my area of work.

Abortion does not always have to be the answer and with help an unplanned pregnancy gives all the chance to respond in humane ways so that a child and mother may be supported and helped to continue and a baby does not have to die.

Sexual abuse Book.
Hidden Pain. An Insight into Childhood sexual Abuse.

Dear friends at long last the book has been printed but not launched yet. I thought I would wait till the new year to do this, but I have it available for anyone who may be interested in a copy. Those who have read it have said it is very deep and good.

I would like to add a small snippet of review of this book by Mr Peter Westmore, National President of NCC and this review is found in November issue of AD 2000.



REDEEMING GRIEF

ABORTION AND ITS PAIN

ANNE R. LASTMAN

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FOREWORD BY HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP BARRY J. HICKEY

NEW REVISED EDITION!

REDEEMING GRIEF is a reflection of over 17 years of counselling and study of abortion grief, which is experienced by some women who choose to undergo this elective procedure. These reflections are the result of listening to over 1500 personal stories and listening to the expressions used by the women as they speak about their decision to abort the life of their child. These reflections then attempt to reconstruct the meaning that this procedure has had for the aborting woman and how this one procedure has been the catalyst for life changes.

REDEEMING GRIEF looks at abortion trauma and grief from the spiritual and the psychological perspective, and its influences on the individuals involved and society. It is hoped that the language used is reader friendly and the concepts (both spiritual and psychological) are also reader friendly.

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“Hidden Pain examines child sexual abuse; its causes and consequences for both victim and society.

The book is not a catalogue of horror stories, nor does it point the finger of blame. It seeks to understand the problem, and by casting an informed light on it, help the victim and ease the social trauma.

Anne begins with a psychological and Christological reflection on the problem of suffering and trauma, particularly as it affects children’s development. She then discusses the causes of sexual abuse, and shows why it is so damaging..... (.ends with), childhood sexual abuse is indeed confronting, but every person who reads this book will benefit from the authors insights into one of the most difficult problems facing our society.” (PW)

Thank you Mr Westmore I appreciate your words and review. Dear friends I have not tried to make this a book about shock and horror it’s about a reality which surrounds us but remains hidden just as abortion was hidden and homosexuality was hidden.

Today the remaining taboos are sexual abuse and suicide. Both of these occur within our midst but remain silent because of the shame, guilt, and anger, attached to them and whilst they remain hidden it does not mean that they go away but simply that those who suffer do it alone.

Children are still abused (not necessarily by priests but others see internet link below) and the abuse leads to much trauma pain and wounded life but unless opened up to discussion nothing will change.

Remember abortion went on unabated because only those interested in the procedure and changes to laws were interested in the topic. To “normal” family it was simply something whispered about. Everyone knew someone who had had an abortion but no one spoke about it. Today it’s the same with sexual abuse and suicide but no one will speak about it because of the shame attached to it. Yet still they suffer alone....the children and later adults who will hate their own bodies and do violence to it because violence was done to their own body as a child.

Dear friends it is my hope that in New Year I will be able to do book launches around Australia and see where else it is possible to get this book into for sale.

It is my hope that every priest and Pastor would buy a copy to help them with people who may go to them and to be able to recognize the tell-tale signs.

It is also my hope that others working in mental health will also be interested in both Redeeming Grief (abortion) and Hidden Pain (sexual Abuse) as a resource.

<http://www.msn.com/en-au/news/australia/former-nsw-deputy-premier-andrew-stoner-reveals-reason-for-stepping-down/ar-BB9DHpM>

The year that was. 2014

Dear friends as we come to the end of the year it seems quite strange to think that so much has happened and so quickly. It’s either I’m getting older or the time passes faster. I suspect the former.

As I look through the diary this year I have finished with some clients, taken on new ones some long term several short term (successful completion). Attended conferences both for my own learning and to present papers.

Have done several radio interviews/talks and TV interview also. I have travelled to country Victoria and one overseas conference. There was a time when it seemed I was living out of suitcase and I never thought I would complain but for a few seconds (☺) I did. My own bed seemed really nice. I travelled around states in Australia for talks including Victoria, Brisbane, Tasmania, Sydney (Hobart and Launceston).

I attended life conferences around Australia and I delivered a talk to a group of about 23 Victorian Counsellors. Out of this talk there seemed much interest to learn more about post abortion grief and hopefully will do a workshop with them early next year. There was also an interest in the book *Redeeming Grief, Abortion and its Pain*. These colleagues have encountered clients with this grief and would like to know how to best work with them. I found this particular talk very rewarding so I am hopeful that next year I will speak to other counsellors and maybe psychologists.

In week of 21-22 November attended a Psychology Conference in Sydney and was able to network with psychologists on the topic of post abortion trauma and grief and sexual abuse trauma and grief. This particular topic was important because the theme of the Conference was on Forgiveness, Hope and Peace the very three aspects of required for healing of abortion and sexual abuse wounds.

In the midst of this I have also attended to the health (cancer) issues, appointments, medications, scans, ultrasounds, mammograms and even a brain scan (epilepsy).

The counselling of my clients, of course went on as usual. I keep saying at the end of every year when I am really tired that I will slow down but I love what I do so it probably won’t happen.

Letters

Dear Anne,

Thank you Frances M. (Albury) luv you.
Thank you Nancy M, (Balwyn) luv you.
Thank you Christopher S. (NSW) luv you.
Thank you Tim H. Vic Luv you
Thank you Yvette luv you.
Thank you Christopher B. for donation. Thank you to those 3 anonymous donors. I appreciate your care.

Dear Anne,

You have dedicated yourself to a wonderful apostolate or rather two!

As a mere male I cannot understand how a woman can expect to have an abortion and then just lead a normal life. Neither can I understand child abuse whether sexual or other (physical, psychological, economic etc.) However, these deplorable things happen and are not new. As a senior person with Parkinson's the opportunities to help you are limited to a monthly mass and donations.

I wish I could do more. I enclose a cheque. You are very important and very valuable your two aborted children must be proud of you and those you seek to influence. Affectionately, Fr Leo.

Dear Anne

That was a very good article on breast cancer. It's incredible that the girl on TV said that they've fought for a long time so the side effects don't matter. She most certainly is spiritually blind.

Enclosed is a donation towards your work. Keep with the good work and God bless you heaps.

Yours sincerely Mary P.

Thanks Mary I liked this notice you sent in best of all. "Outside a second hand shop: we exchange anything-bicycles, washing machines etc. Why not bring in your wife and get a wonderful bargain" (I laughed so much).

Dear Anne,

Thank you for your wonderful newsletter, I read every last word. I pray for your health and the success of your mission. I am 92 years old.

Please receive my donation together with my love and prayers

Kevin T. (Vic)

Dear Kevin, thank you as always for your ongoing care for me and this work. Thank you also for prayers and please keep well and strong.... Blessings... Anne

Dear Anne, Peace be with you.

It's me from Peru writing to you as I promised you. Thanks for the newsletter which I always read it all. I had a very big welcome from the people at Arequipa airport with banners and singing and dancing. Such a welcome as if the messiah came to redeem them. I am totally immersed in a new world. The simplicity of these people just struck my heart. Something in the west that we have lost because of the consumerist mentality. Some interesting information for you. In Lima there are bands of people who buy and sell babies. You see what poverty brings about? Another one: the government is proposing the so called therapeutic abortion for the good of women.

What do you think of this? It's deceiving. It's killing just the same. They have the usual arguments. The wives of many politicians support this. That's for today. Keep on doing your excellent apostolate. God love and bless what you do.

Fr Adami

Thank you Fr Adami and you keep doing your marvellous work with orphans. Look forward to sharing with you when you return.

Dear Anne,

Just a small donation for stamps enclosed. I read your article on "Day-care" in Newsweekly and your thoughts on this matter tops, excellent.

Please the good Lord your health is holding.

Fr Paul

Dear Fr Paul, thank you for "stamps" I appreciate your care. Glad you liked article on day-care. Have received quite a few comments agreeing with it.

Health? Well you know...end of year huge tiredness nothing that a short break won't fix.

And finally I forgot to add that I have also written 6 more issues of newsletters. Some were received better than others and I finally completed the book *Hidden Pain, An Insight into Childhood Sexual Abuse*. It's taken nearly two years to complete and it's very close to my heart because of the loneliness and pain I have seen in the eyes of those who have come to me with these pains.

I want to bring attention to this so that the children are not alone or feel that they are alone and have nowhere to go because no one will believe them or feel threatened to say anything because of some ill which will befall them as threatened.

Dear friends I have included another Christmas Appeal notice with the hope that you will respond as generously as you can.

As I say in the appeal it has been a difficult year and I have had to make phone calls. I don't have a fund raising committee. I don't have fund raising functions. My only source of income is you my readers and with some hope next year when I launch the new book maybe some funds (after the expenses of producing it) might become available to help me run office.

I find it difficult to continually ask but as my priest friend reckons it keeps me humble. ☺
Mind you I think I could think of other ways of being humble however, I will take his word for it.

So dear friends I bid you well and a fabulous Christmas and New Year. I wish for you Happy Holidays spent with loved ones and may you and they be safe days so that we can meet again in early January/ February.

I ask that you please please continue to pray for me, and those in my care who will also be having a break. And please pray that we will get to Perth this year so that I can see my grandies. I miss them so much.

Please continue to pray for this work, especially that the words I speak will fall on hearing ears and heart. That I will be able to touch the heart of those who have been abused and that it will be the touch of the Holy One of Israel. Please continue to pray for Christine, Kerrie, Leanne, Roger, Adrian, Stacy, Mel, Vanessa, Michelle, Theresa, Melita, Barry, Amy, Greg, "Charlie" Sue, Marlene, Marilyn, Yvonne, Joy.

Till we meet again dear friends I wish for you a Happy and Holy Christmas and a Blessed and safe New Year.



Anne Lastman

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Broken Branches – By email!

Dear Friends,

Please email me at anne@victimsofabortion.com.au to be added to the email list.

