

BROKEN BRANCHES



John 15

A newsletter of *Victims of Abortion*

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Welcome to this penultimate newsletter for this year. It continues to be a year of both blessings and many trials. Since the last newsletter I have been to Mt. Eliza, Geelong, Bendigo, Sale, and next Sydney (all in Victoria-except Sydney of course). The talks that I have given have been really well received and the comments encouraging. It is also always good to meet up with some of the recipients of the newsletters and to hear how far and wide they themselves have spread these letters. I am often amazed at the resourcefulness of my readers. Keep it up because only in this way can we cover the whole nation from side to side and from top to bottom. It is important that the information about post abortion trauma is disseminated. It is also good because in the process not only abortion trauma is discussed but also the reality that a baby died in the process. Everytime someone reads a newsletter, talks about the newsletter, encourages others to join and participate, it means that the babies who have died are remembered. An active decision has been made to do something for the infant who died. For the mother who is suffering from that awful decision she made, and to in some way protest at the road our society has chosen. Everytime someone quietly says "no its not OK to abort an innocent baby just because it is inconvenient" and everytime someone says "it must and has to stop" then surely we are getting closer to having our protest heard. Someone once said (I don't remember who it was) that evil proceeds because good people remain silent. What this newsletter attempts to do is to help redress this. Everytime someone says I have read

"Broken Branches" and it says etc. and then proceeds to discuss the ramifications of abortion then there is a form of education being carried out. And if I can get (by hook or by crook) a newsletter into every home in Australia (it's a good goal isn't it) then what we are doing with this issue called "abortion" will become clearer.

Perhaps my goals tend to become bigger towards the end of the year because I look back and see that quietly and consistently much gets done, although not always what is planned in the beginning of the year.

ABORTION AND SUICIDE.

Suicide, like abortion, remains a taboo subject within this enlightened society, yet these two death acts continue to increase and continue to leave in their wake many victims. Suicide and youth suicide especially are not easy issues to deal with. This is an area of concern, which is always a minefield to negotiate. This area of concern is not easy to deal with because reasons for suicide are varied and complex and prevention and intervention require a multisectoral approach. There appears to be a high correlation of suicide with other risk behaviours including substance abuse, depression, abandonment, abortion, and peer pressure. Amongst the high risk groups will be found women who have had an abortion are three times more likely to commit suicide than the general population. In a study published in the *British Medical Journal* (Dec.7/1976)

found that the suicide rate amongst women who had had an abortion was 34.7 per 100,000 women compared with 11.3 per 100,000 among all women. The most interesting aspect of this study was the fact that women who had actually given birth had a suicide rate less than half the general rate (5.9 compared with 11.3 per 100,000 women) however, teen mothers were again found to have a higher rate than the general population.

Depression is a major predictor of suicide behaviour and is associated with reduced capacity to perform normal day to day activities. Depression, combined with a sense of self worthlessness, combined with an abortion in the history of the individual form a lethal cocktail. Pervasive sadness uncontrollable weeping and/or erratic weeping. In the younger ones a form of acting out, delinquency, promiscuity and/or withdrawal. These are signs that something is seriously wrong and must be addressed. To ignore these signs is to be negligent most especially to ignore these signs in the life of a young person.

Suicide intervention must be a broad based approach however, awareness of the problems, affirmation of the existence of the problem must precede all. To be aware that the increased suicide rate amongst young aborted women is a very real reality alerts the presence of warning signs and risk factors. The precipitating event (abortion) is understood to be present and action taken to deal with the grief and sadness which has obviously led to the contemplation of suicide.

Today we live in a society, which is dying, and death occurs in different ways. We often hear that the youth suicide rate is rising. We are told that the suicide rate among the young males is increasing and we are told that the type of violence against the self is also on the increase. Yet abortion as a root cause is not even countenanced. Government and private initiatives work diligently to find the cause of

this disaster yet abortion as a root cause is not even countenanced.

The abortion-suicide connection has been known for over twenty years, yet still an individual presenting with suicide ideation or attempted suicide is not asked about an abortion history. What does it take to link the two together? How many more deaths does it take before the abortion/suicide connection is made and dealt with accordingly? Over the past twenty-five years most nations have experienced a dramatic increase in suicidality and in some cases statistics cited have been as high as 224%. Specifically some nations like Australia have witnessed dramatic increases in male suicides, while European nations-increase in female suicides. The increase over the past twenty-five years is interesting because this is also around the time span of *Roe v Wade* (1973- America) *Menhenitt Ruling* (Australia) and around the time in which abortion on demand began its gallop forward. It is also around this same time that family breakdowns have increased markedly. Substance abuse began slowly until today it is out of control. These anti life activities appear to have developed a life of their own and now cannot be stopped.

The abortion-suicide-substance abuse link has been known within the medical literature for many years now, yet it has remained quiet. Is it compassion or is the media not interested in the abortion-suicide connection., Is abortion so politically "hot" that the media refuses to become involved. Yet from my own (and any intelligent person's) perspective the connection is not difficult to see. The connection is post abortion grief. It is post abortion syndrome. It is such a deep anguish over an action contrary to one's own design and understanding of themselves. The connection is such deep sorrow that it becomes despair and despair leads to hopelessness and self-annihilation. For the post aborted woman whose realisation of the enormity of her action leads

to darkness and heaviness of spirit suicide appears as the only escape route out of the pain and the perceived lifelong remembrance of her act. A woman (or man) in deep despair cannot see hope that the sun will rise again. That in due course the pain can ease. That God *IS* merciful to post aborted women. A woman (or man –young or older) whose regret is pathological cannot see, hear, capture mercy to self or others. This individual looks to escape from the pain via the medium of suicide. Further, it is at times (for the woman) a way by which she can be re united with the baby she aborted and has missed and longed for since that day.

The issue of abortion/suicide was made most present to me over the past nearly four years. I have removed from the presence and hands of one of my women approximately 300-500 pills, which were accumulated over six years since her abortion. Her psychiatrist gave these anti depressant tablets to her and she collected them with the plan to ingest them in one go. (So far she has made 5 suicide attempts). I have removed from the hands of a very young girl (16 yrs) 4 packets of over the counter pain killers (removed from their foils) which were going to be ingested because “I want to go to sleep and not wake up.” I have pleaded with one of my youngish women to cease taking the illicit substances she has already overdosed several times. I have almost waited holding my breath for someone to call me and tell me that young Angela has had another drug induced psychotic episode. And the list goes on. These young women have specifically said that they do not want to continue to live. That to live for them is harder than to die. To live is unfair because their baby died.

The very young (students) are extremely vulnerable especially after an abortion. For the young (13-17 yrs) an abortion during these years means a violation of something, which is still sacred and innocent. During these years both males and females are still idealistic. I can still see young Lisa saying “I am no good and I can’t ever be good because I killed a baby.” During these vulnerable years no amount of whitewash by abortion

providers, counselors, parents, boyfriends, friends, will convince her that she is carrying anything other than a REAL BABY. She is not carrying “tissue” or “cells” but a baby, which she has taken herself to be killed. In my encounter with Lisa her innocence is still so apparent. Yet it’s a wounded innocence. It’s innocence carrying a cross. She has undergone a life changing procedure yet she retains an innocence of idealism and youth. Her depression is manifesting in her demeanor, grades, withdrawal, unbidden tears, shame, and a belief that she has no value at all.

When a teenager has an abortion much more than the usual is at stake, for someone has to have taken her to have the abortion. It is usually someone she has trusted. It is usually someone who appears to have her best interest at heart. It is usually a best friend. A boyfriend who until now has “loved” her. A mother (rarely a father) who is supposed to be looking after the welfare and future of her daughter. Even a school counsellor has been known to act as the “good samaritan” Yet all these people have forgotten one thing and that is that it is the mother who actually lies there while the baby is removed from her body. It is the mother who then has the nightmares. It is the mother, even as young as 13 years of age who hears “my baby cry every night.” It is the mother (irrespective of age) who can reach a certain stage where it all becomes too much and the easiest way out of the sorrow is to end it all. The death of the unwanted, inconvenient child, has not resolved the issues and problems indeed the abortion has introduced a new and lifelong (at times life short) problems.

Today the life of young woman (student) is assailed by different difficulties. It is conceivable that she will have experienced a form of abandonment by parents, some form of exposure to unsavory friendships, broken family, some form of abuse including sexual and physical, and exposure to drugs, alcohol and peer encouraged early sexual experimentation and encounters. Into this milieu of broken ness is added abortion. The

result depression, suicide and self-annihilation. Indeed *we do not learn.*

As I read about suicide task forces and ingenious ideas about reducing the ever increasing rate of suicide especially amongst the youth, I am mortified that not a word is said about abortion. Not a word is said about promiscuity. Not a word is said about early sexual experimentation, which the young are not equipped to handle. I am mortified that the very issues, which cause confusion, are not addressed. I am mortified that those in positions of power do not or cannot see that the integrity of the young person is being consistently violated and from this violation arises confusion, panic, anxiety, and so on.

Whilst not all youth suicide is abortion related it is my contention that there is a stronger link than we care to admit. In my encounters I have spoken to 17 yr old young man called "Andrew" and he was absolutely devastated that his girlfriend's mother insisted that his girlfriend abort their baby. He has no say in the matter. He was told to go home and wait until it was over then his girlfriend was to come over and see him. I don't know the outcome of "Andrew" I don't know where he is today because he came to my office only once but unless there was some intervention in his life I am not sure of the outcome. **Youth suicide is a reality. Abortion by the youth is a reality. Substance abuse by youth is a reality. Pain alleviation (alcohol/drugs) by youth is a**

reality. How long will it be before someone in position of power can see that abortion/suicide are connected and that something must be done about this thing called "killing a baby" or abortion.

In this issue I have stayed with abortion/suicide connection because this past week I have spent many hours with a young lady who was feeling inclined towards this end. As I sat with her I often felt a fear that she would carry through with her desire to die. Thankfully she has not and has made a promise not to. Indeed she has promised that if she even begins to think about that she will ring.

This coming month could I please ask for Holy Sacrifice of Mass, and lots and lots and lots of prayers for Paul, Tricia, Lisa, Sharon, Roger, Tuean, Vincent, Leesa, Sophia.

Most especially please for Paul a terribly wounded soul who has harmed so many others in his life. Tricia who was harmed by him and Lisa who was also harmed by him. Please there is so much need here.

I have need to ask for your help again – Thank you.

May the Lord Bless and keep you.



Anne Lastman

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Victims of Abortion, National Office

PO Box 6094, Vermont South, Vic, 3133.

Ph: (03) 9663 9032 or Ph/Fax: (03) 9887 7669 Mobile: 0408 175 033 Email: lastman@primus.com.au

