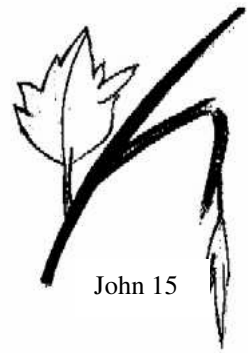


# BROKEN BRANCHES



John 15

A newsletter of *Victims of Abortion*

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Issue 15

December 2000

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Welcome to this final newsletter for the year 2000!

We made it to the end of the year. One could almost hear the words Hallelujah if one were listening intently. It has been a really busy month for me this past month and many many kilometres have been travelled. However, it is always good to say that the time and kilometres were well spent and used. Indeed it's good to get out there and see what the thinking about abortion and abortion trauma is.

As I thought and reviewed this past year, in fact as I went through my diary on a day to day basis and looked at the appointments and the names of the people seen, whether for several times or long term, I was amazed at what was achieved.

Over the past eleven months I have counselled to completion 57 new men and women. Carried over 11 from last year and of all these completed except 9 remaining. I have written, addressed and sent out 11 issues of the newsletter (some better than others). Began and finished a Masters Degree, and publicly spoke on the issue of post abortion trauma and its ramifications at 14 different venues local, country and interstate. Did several media interviews re late term abortion issue and of course innumerable phone counselling sessions especially at night. These were related to interstate phone calls and phone inquiries. I have phone counselled women from Sydney, Townsville, Perth, South Australia and of course country areas. Phone counselling, whilst good and important always leaves me uneasy because its incomplete and I cannot see the expression and body language of the person. Body language is so expressive that at times it is easier to read what is left unsaid rather than what is said. I have this theory that it is what remains unsaid that causes the pain because what is spoken of is already being dealt with.

I mention these happenings because I believe that as supporters, either financial or spiritual or both, you have a right to know what was done and how the year was spent.

There were many troubling moments however as per usual the Lord waits till the last moments to resolve them. In fact I think He waits till I've acquired a few new gray hairs and chewed my nails to the bone before he actually resolves them. There could be a message in this I think.

Anyway, I would like to say that as I looked back it became apparent that much was achieved even though on a day to day review it always feels like not much was done. It has been a good year.

### ***Teen Abortion Statistics.***

In the Herald Sun (26/11) was reported the findings of a study into teenage abortion history. This study found that Australia had the second highest (24 per 1000 women under 20 yrs) teen abortion rate. (America had 33.6 per 1000 teens under 20 yrs who aborted their baby). It was also stated that the Government "refused to publish official teenage abortion rates." This study is very interesting because it was compiled by the so-called "prestigious Alan Guttmacher Family Planning Institute using unpublished data supplied by the Australian Government." This study and these figures may be surprising to those reading them but they are not surprising to me. Indeed I have over the last few issues of the newsletter intimated that the many many callers to my office this year have been alarmingly young. Indeed the youngest being virtually a child herself (13 1/2 years of age). this particular year I have counselled through the various age ranges however, the most numbers have been

in the 13-18 year range. All still at school and sadly all the ones that I saw have been from Catholic Schools. Of course this is not say that only Catholic school girls are aborting, only that these found their way to me.

Professor Roger Short from Melbourne University's Dept. of Obstetrics and gynaecology is quoted as having said that he was "horrified" at the figures and according to him showed that sex education programs were a dismal failure. HALLELUJAH... A medical man has declared that the sex education programs are a dismal failure perhaps something will now be done about these legitimized pornographic lessons. In my own rooms I have sat and listened to the girls talking about the sex ed. programs which they had been involved in and how they "showed us what its all about". "They showed us stuff" Mind you, professor short appears not to want to clean up or abolish these existing sex ed. programs but he thinks "if we knew the true figures about teenage abortions, we would know whether we need a massive campaign to get sex education going in Victoria schools." My goodness there are none so blind as those that won't see. More sex Ed. More abortions. He cannot see that to introduce more sex education programs will mean that there will be more abortions rather than fewer abortions. He cannot see that to show young ones what to do will lead to them wanting to try out what they have learnt. He cannot see that unless the young are told that they are valuable, that they are holy, that their bodies are temples and to be maintained in holiness then more sex ed. equals more abortions.

When I first read Prof. Short's comments about his "horror" at the numbers of abortions in Australia I thought we might have someone of his stature on side. However, as I continued to read on I realised that whilst he genuinely appears shocked at the numbers of abortions, his reasoning is flawed. He might be one of Australia's finest obstetricians but he cannot see the connection between sex education and abortion. Further whilst he appears shocked he also sees abortion "as a necessary evil." Professor Short obviously does not see women who have had abortions. Or he does not see very young girls who have had abortions because if he did so then he would not in good conscience declare that "they are a necessary evil." ABORTION IS NEVER A NECESSARY EVIL. ABORTION IS

EVIL FULL STOP. THERE IS NOTHING NECESSARY ABOUT IT. ABORTION NOT ONLY DESTROYS THE CHILD BUT PROF. SHORT MIGHT BE REMINDED THAT IT DESTROYS THE INFANTS THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WOULD HAVE DELIVERED. It destroys (at times) the fertility of those women he and his colleagues might be called to see, and it destroys a part of human nature and as all human beings share the same nature it is supposed that the destruction of a human child contributes to the diminishing of human nature itself. Professor short goes by the way of those wanting population control and in doing so he shows that his "horror" at abortion is only "mock honor" Further to this, Prof. Short suspects "that Victoria is the teenage abortion capital of Australia because it has the lowest teenage birth rate." So What's new?

In this article it is reported that South Australia in 1997 doctors performed 1191 abortions on teenagers compared with 998 live births. It is hard to imagine that 1191 babies died, indeed more died than were allowed to live. In a nation that is not replacing itself we can now see why this is so.

As I read through this article in the Herald Sun, I think the most striking thing about it for me was the fact that the study was carried out by the Alan Guttmacher Family Planning Institute, the largest abortion provider and referral agency in the world. These figures are coming out of the "enemy's" camp. The question must then be asked. Why? And how is it that the Alan Guttmacher Institute can have made available to them such figures. Is it to show that abortion on demand is progressing nicely? Is it to show that no matter what is said and done that abortion is here to stay? Is it a boast that the powers that be cannot stop abortion? Is it a boast that women have achieved the highest realm of perverted freedom/slavery? Whatever the reason, Family Planning Association is clearly showing that whatever it is that they are doing is succeeding and whatever it is that we on the pro life side are doing is on go slow. Another interesting aspect is the fact that this institute does not publish facts about Post Abortion trauma. Somehow it is not interested in the women who remain wounded; it is not interested in the women whose life is forever changed because of that decision. It simply is interested in the numbers game. And

how good their numbers look. Further as I read that article I was amazed at the sterility intended both in language and in reality. This nation together, with America, England, New Zealand and others are not only sterilizing their women and men but also their very hearts and nations.

### ***What Can We do Anne?***

If I had a dollar for every time someone asked me this question I would never have to ask for financial support from you again and I am always at a loss as to how to answer this question because there is much that can be done but each according to what is their capability. To some it will be the call to pray strongly, deeply persistently. To others it will be to help financially those of us who stand beneath the cross, that is, those of us who are closely involved on the frontlines. To others it will be to speak, write, educate, and exhort. To some it will be that all of these and more. The importance is that whatever the call-respond and respond generously. Speak against abortion, euthanasia, cloning, interspecies experimentation and all anti life procedures. Become apostles for life. There can be no greater call than to respond to the call to protect life. All else whilst laudable is lost unless "life" itself is guaranteed, protected and respected.

To the Priests and religious I would say this, please pray and offer Holy sacrifice of the Mass to end this holocaust. Speak publicly, strongly consistently about abortion and post abortion trauma. There is no compassion in remaining silent in order not to "upset" someone in the congregation. Those who are wounded or have been touched by abortion need to know that there is practical help available and more importantly they need to know that God is most merciful. Remaining silent simply lets the sufferer continue suffering in silence.

Educators, please speak about the lifelong wounds that abortion causes. Educators of secondary students please discuss this issue with your students and present sexuality as a sacred and holy aspect of life rather than a mechanistic exercise with consequences attached to it. Sacredness presents one scenario and mechanistic another. One is cloaked in mystery and holiness the other is simply instinctual, animalistic and liable to abuse.

Recently it was reported that 1 in 7 young people in Australia suffers mental health problems. This is not surprising. Many factors contribute to these mental health issues however within those factors is hidden abortion. An abortion history in the family is like a silent and deadly cancer. It works its way through the whole family causing grief, loss, sorrow and breakdown.

I do not wish to conclude this newsletter on a down note so I will print here for you a few words written to me by Ann (18 yrs) and received only this morning.

*"Thank you for listening to me when all others said to get on with it and get a life. I just needed someone to talk to because at first I thought I did the right decision, but after I felt so bad. I went to the library and looked at a book with pictures of babies in the tummy and I saw how big mine was (it was big and had fingers) and I realised what a mistake I made. Thanks for not making me feel bad and for listening to me. I liked coming to your room it was so peaceful and I hope I can keep coming next year. Have a nice Christmas and a good break" love Ann*

Ann is a young lady who has been quietly coming week after week and there is such a sincerity about her and also the beginnings of a peacefulness and possibly and interest in knowing Jesus. As I said earlier much was achieved this year. Not all the things I had anticipated or planned, but some better than others and some have to be carried over into next year.

For next year I hope not only to continue with counselling and perhaps get someone to help but also to do other new and exciting things.

This will be the last newsletter till February 2001. From third week in December I hope to take time out (about 4 weeks) and have a rest and spend time with my family. I've counted forty-nine new gray hairs this year so I really need the rest before we start again next year.

Thank you to all who have supported me this year whether spiritually, financially, psychologically or all of them. Thank you to

those who responded (when contacted privately or through newsletter) to SOS for funds when I ran out. Thank you to Peter B (Syd), my brother in Christ (Qld), Margaret O (Melb), Fr. Leo.K (Mel), Jane, Gail, Wanda, Kathy (Perth) Frs. Conroy & Walters, Br. Simon,(UK) Frs. Obrien, B.Lewis, Br, Dominic and confreres, Pauline; Paul M. (Mel). Thank you to the Helpers and their editors. Thank you to the many others who have written and encouraged and supported. Thank you to those who have valued my work. I have appreciated. Thank you to those who gave me hospitality when I travelled to do talks especially Gregory and Janet K. and Maryanne. Millions of thanks to my priest friends who not only encourage and where possible financially support but especially for the many Masses that have been said at my request.

You are so wonderful- I appreciate you and your priesthood so much.

I could write a whole list of names indeed so many it would fill a whole page but you know who you are. Thank you especially to those who have asked to remain anonymous.

May I finish with this request that you remember this charism both in your prayers and financially especially as you go about buying for family and

friends for Christmas. Please consider making even a small donation so that when I re open the office for next year I start with some funds rather than an empty biscuit tin. There will be phone expenses (telstra never takes time out from sending accounts) and other ongoing expenses. You know what it takes to run an office. When I re-open I will immediately need to pay again small fee for the office (\$250-500)

Finally I wish for you and yours a happy, holy Christmas. A New Year filled with promise and contentment and the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

May you be blessed in all you do.



Anne Lastman  
(MRed.) Hurrah I can write this now.-its finished!!  
(Master of Religious Education)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ P/C \_\_\_\_\_

Donation/Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_

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

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