

Guest Editorial

Vanessa.

When I reflect on the last ten years of my life, it's like there is a chunk of about 4 years when I am not sure how or why I did what I did. What was I thinking? Who was I being? I don't know. One thing for sure is that I had turned my back on my faith. Like an elastic band, I was pulling so far in the other direction that I almost broke. God was always around me, there were constant whispers suggesting the relationship I was in and how I was living my life was not compatible with my deepest needs. Unfortunately, I ignored the whispers, going along blindly, until they got louder and louder and louder and breaking point came when I was confronted with an unexpected choice. A choice that I didn't feel strong enough to make on my own, a choice I made in a panicked state, a choice I didn't fully understand.

I remember going to the doctor on my own, with tears welling in my eyes. I was afraid. The doctor took one look at me and said "You don't want to have this baby, do you?"

He sounded so matter-of-fact. There was no time for discussing anything.

I had forgotten that in Year 12, I chose to write a paper on abortion, and why it was such a huge concern, I felt so strongly about it...and there I was having an abortion six years later. How had I got myself into this situation?

My partner, whom I had known since I was a child, let me down. I wanted him to whisk me off my feet, saying, "I love you. Please marry me and let us start our family together." Instead, he said that he thought having a baby would hinder my studies and my life, and I accepted it without question. I had lost him once before, and was scared of losing this man again.

He was the first boy I had kissed when I was eighteen, and we had 'dated' for a month or so. He didn't like it when I told him I wished he would give up smoking for health reasons. As shy as I was, I boldly stated it was also detrimental to the health of sperm! He then told me that we were too different and because I was five years younger, he thought I needed to 'grow up.' So, I sent him back the books and tapes he had lent me, express post, and vowed never to speak to him again! Meanwhile, revenge was probably brewing in my subconscious. I was so hurt, after having a crush on this boy since I can remember. I idolized him, he was so funny and so cute and

BROKEN
BRANCHES



John 15

always the life of the party. I, on the other hand, had always been shy and didn't always fit in; I wished I could be more like him.

Away I went and 'grew up', and he was always on my mind. So, 3 years later...who did I call out of the blue? I now think I wanted to make him see how much I had grown up, I would show him, he was wrong! We started dating after a few months, but what I didn't realize at the time, was I had lost my sense of self, everything had changed. Me, who had always been so health conscious, starting smoking around him, to fit in with him and his friends. I wasn't going to be rejected again. I wanted this man! There was many a time; I just let things go to keep him happy. He didn't really know me; I was putting on a façade because I wanted to be accepted.

I suppressed a lot of my feelings; my abortion was not discussed between my partner and I. It was swept under the carpet. He said he hoped my abortion wouldn't change 'us'. I put on a smile and tried to get on with my life, and for three years kidded us both. I believe the decision to abort was the point, which changed us, and our relationship inevitably ended. I remember coming home after my abortion and curling up near the heater, on a woolly mat in a foetal position. The warmth of the heater was the only thing I could feel, everything else was numb. That part of me stayed numb until I found out I was going to be an Auntie, 2 years ago.

Amongst all the emotions, I resented my Mum for accepting this child out of wedlock so joyfully. She hadn't displayed the same emotion to me when I went to her six years earlier. I knew I had some work to do.

I went to confession for the first time and on mentioning my abortion, I bawled my eyes out. The power of the spoken word; once I started crying, tears I didn't know I had just kept coming. Someone had given me a Christian publication a few weeks prior and I read a story Anne Lastman had written. I 'Ahhhed' and I 'ummed' and then called her, after admitting I needed help and wanted to acknowledge my pain. Anne helped me retrace what I went through and tapped into some emotions that I had suppressed. For the first time, (after seeing Anne and encouraged by her) I was able to open up and talk to my Mum and other supportive women about how I was feeling. I now acknowledge that I also have issues to do with my father, which have also affected my brothers. Slowly, I am trying to build better relationships with my brothers and parents. My healing journey so far has also strengthened my relationship with God.

Looking back, that elastic band nearly broke, but thankfully God never gave up on me. He was always there, trying to guide me and steer me back home. I am in a place now, where I feel content. The experience I went through is something that I don't want to sweep under the carpet, I have acknowledged it and learnt from it and although I can't change it, it has changed me.

I have come a long way in understanding who I am, and what being a woman means to me and have learnt to respect myself, my body and my emotions, and in turn, have found that others have learnt to respect me and my decisions as well.

And I have to say this, because here is where my passion lies...the pill may have been designed to prevent pregnancies, but I believe it has encouraged people to accept sex outside of wedlock, which has seen more women fall pregnant to unsupportive men who do not want the child. One little pill, but the ripples are far reaching. Does anyone really know the effect this drug has had? Not only does it have the power to change our biochemistry by preventing ovulation, relationships are being created that are purely revolving around sex! Children are being born to couples not in sustainable relationships and others go through the trauma of abortion. Endometriosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome...these illnesses were unheard of thirty years ago. Both the portrayal of women via the media and the medical industry have a lot to answer for. The pill certainly hasn't helped men understand and appreciate women or create loving, committed relationships. I better stop now....my blood pressure is rising!

I would love to see education regarding such life issues being openly discussed at schools; it was something we never touched on, if only adolescents could be exposed to the trauma of abortion, the hard facts... to let it really sink in...the responsibility that comes with a sexual relationship. I was one of those young people, who thought...it would never happen to me.

I am just grateful for people like Anne who help pick up the pieces. I am now off to help my Mum baby-sit my adorable nephew. ☺

Thank you Vanessa, the journey is good and the goal magnificent. I am so happy when “my” girls slowly recover and begin to reclaim their own lives. It makes it all worthwhile.

CONTRACEPTION & ABORTION

At the risk of being told again to “do what you do and leave the rest to others” I am going to make comment about the connection between contraception and abortion. I feel that I am ably qualified to speak on this issue, having heard many, many girls themselves speak on this issue. Vanessa is **not** the first young woman I have spoken to who has deep anger about “the little pill” What that “little pill” has done and continues to do is to remove constraints and permit rampant sexuality, promiscuity by both males and females and conceptions leading to indiscriminate abortions. This to an extent previously unknown. Over nine years I have heard of 12-year-old girls, 14 yr old girls, and it appears to be a normal for 16-year-old girls to be on contraception. And yes the mothers of these young people (who came to me regarding an abortion because “the pill didn't work” or “I

forget to take it sometimes”) did know and in some cases insisted that their daughter is put on the pill.

This in itself is horrific because of the message it gives to the young person, by a person who is trusted and is closest to her (parent) that is, “if you are going to have sex then make sure you don’t get pregnant” It assumes and gives permission for her to do so without constraint and with the proviso that protection against pregnancy is the only condition. No thought is given to the psychological betrayal that this is for a girl where her own mother’s concern is first and foremost to prevent conception, whilst no thought is given to the other issues (health and otherwise) connected with the contraceptive pill. It seems to me that young people are no longer permitted to be young and to develop according to their own timetable rather than the timetable of others including parents, and of “peer demand and pressure.”

I am mortified when I have in front of me a 13 yr old young lady who is still very emotionally young, speaking about “the pill” (Jane-abortion) and trying to make sense of her pregnancy and her abortion. I am saddened as I watch a very young 17 year old unable to concentrate on her VCE because she “hears it” (baby crying after the abortion) (Janette) and yes she was on the pill and the usual story about forgetting to take it.

At the more spiritual level, the contraceptive pill (apart from being abortifacient) immediately says NO to God. Says to God, “yes I want you to be God but not of my fertility-that is my domain” Well actually, **Life is God’s domain** we have simply tried to usurp this domain and impose upon it our own conditions. Further, the pill frees both the male and the female from constraints of honour and views the body as an instrument for use and abuse rather than a vessel capable of carrying the sacred and capable of bearing another. Where the body is seen only as an instrument for use, then a conception and an abortion are really not that important. An inconvenience? Yes. but not really important. The pill frees men from the responsibility of their act of engendering and then fathering, and women from their right to be respected in their integrity and their entirety. That means even when a conception occurs. Even when she is with child.

As Vanessa so rightly said, the pill has not helped men to appreciate women more, but indeed has actually helped men to distance themselves from their action and helped women become more alone than ever. The woman who finds herself with an unexpected pregnancy finds herself alone. He no longer needs to concern himself because it was her responsibility to deal with the contraception. As has been said to one of my girls, “its your fault you got pregnant, you should have been more **responsible** with the pill. **Get rid of it**” (boyfriend of Ann). And of course she did get rid of it and has been on a downhill slide ever since. He has also since moved on to other pastures, whilst she remains to pick up her life as best as she can.

There is a pattern, which I am surprised, is not seen by women of recent past and current time, and the pattern is this; All things, which have been offered for their “good” reproductively, have turned out to be poison to their

design. Abortion which was first offered as answer to the “hard” cases, e.g. rape, or if the mother’s life was in danger, has in one generation (40 yrs) become a normal, to the extent of holocaust dimensions, and it is the woman and mother who is asked to have terminated a life within her and to then bear the emotional consequences. The Pill which was offered to regulate family size is now rampant. Again with the pill and contraception what is being asked is that the woman (girl) change her design to become sterile. Again this is the lie presented, that it is a good to prevent an evil (conception) without adding that the pill changes the physiology, psychology and spirituality of the woman, and certainly the psychology of the man. And so slowly down the slippery slope we slide. The ethical character of our society slipping further and further into chaos and death.

I have recently heard a counsellor giving parents of teenagers advice that it is acceptable to permit a teenage couple (16 yrs & 17 yrs) to share a bed in a sleepover at the family home. The theory being that “they are going to do it anyway so its better for them to “do it” at home where we know that they are safe.” I was beside myself when I heard this “safe and secular” advice. But then I realised that this is part of the above-mentioned pattern. It cannot be different. If parents put their daughters on the pill and buy their son’s condoms, then of course the next step is to permit “sexual sleepovers” with parental permission and blessing. Again that slippery slope.

What happened to the parents protecting their children’s sexuality? What happened to the father standing behind the door with a broomstick just in case? What happened to mother’s advice about “women’s business? And how can parents who put daughters on the pill, consent to “sexual sleepovers, ” drive a pregnant daughter to an abortion clinic, then be expected to pass on to the same daughter a notion of the **‘ideal?’** How can these parents pass on the ideal? The ideal being that love, sex, marriage, conception is all-sacred and should be protected against all offence. The parental blessing on sexual encounters in the family home must now become the norm because tacit approval was given when the pill was offered to the child to be taken as a precaution (the only precaution) against pregnancy and STD’s. Permission was given to engage in active sexuality. With this also came tacit approval for abortion. The morality issue only concerns precaution rather than whole of life integrity.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy in all of this is that the young will not know what ideals are and what to pass on to their next generations. The **“ideal”** was denied to them. They do not know it and cannot pass it on. And yet the ideal that life is sacred, sexuality is sacred, conception is sacred, the body is sacred and holy, need to be known and shown. The ideal needs to be presented even though it may not be accepted it cannot ever be denied or hidden from the young or they will never know or even hear what the ideal is. We now have generations being born (and who will be born) who will not know what purity and wholeness are.

MY FOETUS (TAKE 2)

My last issue of the newsletter, the *Special Edition issue*, served to put the cat among the pigeons, as I imagined that it would.

For the most part the comments were favourable and most of my readers agreed with what I wrote, however, there were also some who did not like what I wrote and who took me to task for being divisive and not seeing the bigger picture. To these people I still say, there was no bigger picture to see and nothing redeeming or worthwhile or even pro life in that so-called documentary. I have looked at it many times since and still I cannot see anything that might even be called remotely good for the pro life side. It was a huge promotion for the Marie Stopes International abortion facility, which appears to be gaining ground in Australia. It was a very blatant effort at showing the viewing public that abortion is not that bad, because if done early then there really is not much humanity to even speak about. It was about showing the viewer that all the fuss about the humanity of the child is just that, a fuss. It was about the abortion industry's confidence in public acceptance of abortion and further affirmation that it is a desired procedure, a clean procedure and a procedure, which is quick, easy, safe and here to stay. It had nothing to do with humanity of the child. Have I changed my mind and been able to thank the producer (Mss J Black) that it (documentary) was produced and shown? absolutely not! We have nothing in common.

Indeed I came away from this being more sure than ever that the pro abortion movement and the pro life movement have absolutely nothing in common because we cannot even begin to agree on "what" is conceived in the womb. Until there is a consensus about what is conceived, (human life in its origins and its early stages, according to us, or a bunch of cells, or tissue, according to them) then there is nothing to talk about. We shouldn't even begin to discuss the weather with the pro-abortion movement until there is agreement on what is aborted.

Pro life belief is that a conception is the beginning of a human person, beginning a journey which will take many steps and various stages of development (in utero) just as in its external life it also passes through various stages of development e.g. neonate, infant, toddler, young child, teenager, young adult, adult, middle age and elderly. These are various stages of development of the external bodied person, matched exactly in developmental stages by its in utero counterpart. At all stages of development the human has always been a human, and at no stage has it even momentarily changed into something else (cow zygote, cow embryo, or even cow tissue or cow cell) only to return to human stage. A human is a human at all times and remains so irrespective of size, gender, health, etc. it always remains a human. This is the meeting point and can only ever be the meeting point. Unless both sides can agree on this then we have opposite beliefs and cannot be expected to see things the same. This is why pro-abortion thought continues to mask the reality of what abortion is

because it must continue to mask the reality of a human person being taken to its death. This is what mothers grieve about, the reality of the death of their son or their daughter. (human) This is what causes the mental health problems following abortion. (I have killed my baby.) It is never “ I have killed my calf embryo, or pigeon embryo.” Just I have killed my baby.

Perhaps if it was possible to reach a consensus about what an abortion does, then it might be possible to discuss the morality of what is being done. However, until this is achieved, as I said, we cannot even discuss the weather. There is no meeting ground. The pro abortion thought and lobby will continue to hide behind language of denial whilst the anti abortion thought and lobby will continue to reject that language and must continue to speak the language of truth.

Special Letter

*From Pontificia Academia Pro Vita
Vatican City
August 13, 2004.*

Dear Mrs Lastman,

*We received and read your newsletter of **Victims of Abortion** – Issue No 41 Aug/Sept 2004: “Guest Editorial” “Sophia” and Sexual Abuse & Abortion, with news article.*

*God will bless you and your collaborators in helping children who were sexually abused and women tormented by the abortion.
The Pontifical Academy for Life will continue to pray for those who are in your care list. The Divine Providence will assist your precious apostolate and well deserving organization.*

Jesus Christ told us: “Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these” (Mt 19:14) and still: “I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these members of my family, you did it for me.” (Mt 25:40).

With best regards, Sincerely

*Mons. E. Silvestrini
Sec. Pontifical Academy for Life.*

I just want to say thank you to Mons. Silvestrini for these encouraging words. I really do appreciate the effort taken to write, especially of these very busy people. I am really moved by their promise to pray for those on my care list and I am sure the people themselves will also be touched by this. Thank you.....Anne

SPECIAL NEWS

If you remember at the end of Sophia's story (Issue 41) Sophia said that she would like to give her marvelous, loving and supportive husband a precious gift (baby) and that they were working on it. I would like to tell you that Sophia and Tim are awaiting their first child! (after years) Sophia is newly pregnant and absolutely over the moon and her husband Tim is unable to remove the smile from his face. Please pray for them that all goes well. Both of them have waited for this moment for a long time and Sophia has suffered much but came out the other side a marvelous woman, daughter, wife, sister, friend and now will be a marvelous mum. ***Congratulations to them both....Anne***

Thank You's

Thank you to those who responded to my call for funds I have appreciated your care for me, and this work. I need to thank a couple whom I am unable to thank even by writing as there was no address to write to, so if anyone knows these people I would love to hear from them. Thank you Julie and DR T. (Sandgate) Qld for your kind donation. I would love to hear from you. Thank you also to those who helped me pay for the special issue I grew a few more gray hairs wondering how it would happen. Thank you to my usuals, those who keep me going, thank to 2 anonymous donors. Please continue to pray for Louise, Sarah, Edward, Vesta, Simon, Jodie, Darren, Victoria, Melissa, Jason, Marie, Margaret, Susan, Donna, Sally (1), Sally (2) Toni, James, Michelle (new) Marc (new) Fran & Eileen (sick) Hamish (new) Luc (new) Catherine (new).

Please, please I need to ask for your help again. Thank you.

May the Lord Bless and Keep you.



Anne Lastman

Name	_____
Address	_____ P/C _____
Donation/Newsletter	_____
<i>Yes/no, I would/would not</i> like to be on your mailing list.	
Victims of Abortion, National Office PO Box 6094, Vermont South, Vic, 3133, Australia. Ph: +61 3 9663 9032 or Ph/Fax: +61 3 9887 7669 Mobile: 0408 175 033 Email: lastman@iprimus.com.au	