

**HABEMUS PAPAM  
WITH GREAT JOY WE WELCOME HIS HOLINESS  
POPE BENEDICT XVI  
OUR NEW AND PRECIOUS CHIEF SHEPHERD.  
DEO GRATIAS.**

***"GIVE WOMEN CHOICE"  
AUSTRALIA SPEAKS ON ABORTION.  
Southern Cross Bioethics Institute.***

This research project is the first part of a four stage project designed for an in-depth look at the ideas and attitudes of the Australian population concerning the issue of abortion.

This nationwide research has been designed to specifically identify (1) "public attitudes towards the proposition that women should have unrestricted access to abortion on demand.(2)To measure the level of support or opposition to selected arguments in favour of or against abortion on demand. (3)To measure the extent to which the public believes that women's rights, which are the foundation of the pro-choice argument, should be extended to include the right to have access to sufficient information to make an informed choice about whether to terminate a pregnancy. (4) Whether the public believes that abortion, under different circumstances, should be allowed by law and whether abortion is perceived as morally right or wrong. (5) To understand how positively the public feels about the choice for abortion compared with other choices. (6) The extent to which community awareness should be increased.

*(Give Women Choice: Australia Speaks on Abortion, JI Fleming & S Ewing, Southern Cross Bioethics Institute)*

As I read through this research I was not surprised by its findings that in principle Australians **do** want abortion on demand to be available. However, there is also uneasiness about the overwhelming use of the facility. It's almost like "yes we need it and we want women to have it available to them, but we certainly hope it won't be used too much."

The research also found that the vast majority of Australians want more support to be available for women who find themselves with a pregnancy that they do not want, and ways and means by which they can continue the pregnancy.

BROKEN BRANCHES



John 15

An interesting find was that Australians questioned about the availability of help were unable and unclear in their knowledge of where this help might be found. There is also a strong need and desire for more knowledge and information about health issues and other issues related to abortion, and a strong desire for the debate on abortion to be continued and not to be silenced.

The findings also showed that Australians are in deep conflict about abortion, although abortion for the “hard cases,” rape, incest, foetal abnormality, as always, appears to be justified. It was really sad to read that there was almost unanimous support for abortion for foetal abnormality. (85%).

A surprising result (though I should have not been surprised) was the fact that there was strong community support for those who choose alternatives to abortion and **only 28% support for those who choose abortion.**

Overall the results of most of the research did not surprise me very much, however, the above section “only 28% are positive towards women who choose abortion” is the section which is of most interest to me. I think we have a confused society. I think we have reached a stage of utter ambivalence, utter confusion, and utter apathy.

On the one hand we have a society which says that abortion should be available on demand, and on the other hand we have the same society which says “but if you have that abortion we won’t respect you. We won’t like you. We will think less of you.” Which one is it to be?

We also seem (according to this study) to have given a clear mandate to abort a child that is found to be disabled (85% severe disability and 60% for mild disability) which still places on the woman and her husband (or partner) the onus to destroy a child because it is imperfect, without taking into account the emotional, psychological, spiritual damage which comes in having to make that decision. **The instantly satiated society rules.** It’s got to be instant and totally gratifying or it’s disposable.

For me personally and the work that I do, the section and findings which probably distressed me most was the 28% who are positive towards women who choose the option for abortion. And herein I think lies part of the reason for the deep impacted grief which is found amongst abortive men and women, and its effects in our society.

This, I think, is part of the reason for trauma and grief following an abortion and the reason it becomes impacted. The reason why 11 years, 15 years, 30 years after the abortion there is still grief. The reason why there is at times emotional meltdown following the abortion. Not all the reason, but some of the reason for the unresolved and disenfranchised nature of their grief.

We have evolved as a society which insists that abortion is a “right” and must be maintained as a “right,” yet at the same time look down upon those who choose that “right.” And those who choose that “right”, in the first instance know deeply within themselves, (without society’s need to tell them) that what they have done is something contrary to their design and **wrong** and they have no way of openly grieving for this decision.

The support of friends, family, boyfriend, husband (following the initial moments) is weak and passing, and the support which they were promised and expected to be there is in effect not there, and has not been there from the beginning. Thus rendering the experience not only traumatic but isolating. This is why the silence by the abortive woman, because she thinks she is crazy and should not be feeling “like this for so long” That it must her alone who feels like this, so it must be her problem. Her expected support is no where to be found and mostly she is told to “get on with it and get a life” or further, “you made that choice! Live with it and move on!”

Today we understand that abortion is and should be treated as a death experience, and needing to be processed by observing and understanding and managing the grief, in order that equilibrium is maintained. However, because, as the study shows, it is a procedure which is urged, encouraged, forced, expected, and at times self sought and voluntary, the stages of grief are not recognised and the grieving in many ways not encouraged or permitted. Abortion is seen as “her decision” “her choice” so therefore because it was a “decision” and a “choice” no grief is permitted.

I have recently taken on a new young woman (Angela) with three young children, happily married for 15 years. However, this happiness is marred by an abortion in the earliest stages of their marriage. This beautiful young woman still cannot see the reason why her husband would wish this of her. This contributed to other disorders and a life of deep suffering. It should not have been a suffering life but a life filled with the great joy of a happy marriage with an adored and adoring husband, three children, no financial difficulties, yet here is a young woman unhappy and deeply self destructive. The abortion was readily available. She did (contrary to her desires and design) as she was asked, all should have been well. But it has not been. Abortion proved to be her undoing and their disharmony.

The results of this latest study which also disturbed me greatly and I really don’t know how we are going to overcome this, is the results which clearly indicated that abortion for foetal abnormality (85% for severe disability and 60% for mild disability) is very much acceptable.

What is a mild disability? Hare-lip/cleft palate? What is severe disability? Down syndrome? I have the most fantastic, hugely talented, (musical genius, hello Anthony) friend with repaired harelip/cleft palate. I don’t see his harelip repair, (never have) I see him and how wonderfully made he is. I have a young friend who is Down Syndrome (hello Ben NZ) and he is of great value and much loved by his family and friends. Should he have been aborted? It is very disturbing that the call is for abortion (will it soon

become compulsory abortion for the defective?) for any child who is not “perfect.” The eugenic ideas of Hitler and Margaret Sanger have well and truly taken hold. How ironic that we have gone from calling eugenics a crime, to calling it compassion, all in one generation.

Another result of the above mentioned study which did not surprise me was the call for more public discussion and information. I had an experience of this lack of information very recently.

On my way home from New Zealand several weeks ago I had an experience of the “ignorance” of the reality of abortion. In the plane I sat next to a business executive also on his way back from New Zealand and back to Australia. During the long flight we exchanged pleasantries about life and Perth (his home town) and Melbourne (my home town-though I am previously from Perth) and light weight conversation.

As always it got to question about work, and I must admit that I try an avoid saying exactly what I do because invariably it leads to silence, avoidance or hot debate. However, not being able to avoid what I do (he persisted) I told him and as expected the conversation went “O my wife and I had an abortion before we were married but she is OK” I don’t usually respond to that comment. He continued and told me that they have two other children a boy and a girl but that their little girl (9 yrs of age) is often unhappy and says to them (parents) “daddy you wouldn’t want me if you hadn’t lost the other baby, would you?” This child overheard that there should have been another child and feels sad because if there had been another child she believes she would not have been wanted.

I think that as we spoke about the situation and he actually verbalised his child’s fears he realised that there was much more to this than he thought. His child’s sense of conditional wanted ness disturbed him because he now recognised what was happening. I hope that I was able to help him help this little girl and I also suggested that perhaps he should speak to his wife and see if she wanted to speak about the experience of her abortion. I gave him my card.

Something else he said was also disturbing, again because it clearly showed the ignorance about abortion. He was under the impression that “the baby is sedated before it is killed” Many things went through my mind when he said that, but mostly I think, the thing which struck me was his being able to say in one sentence “baby and killed” without realising what he was doing.

The conception was obviously recognised as a baby and that it would feel something and that it would die. Yet he was able to say it all without batting an eyelid. I did manage to clarify the point for him and actually became very descriptive. I also explained the partial birth abortion procedure for him in minute detail. He looked at me in horror. In disbelief.

I think that when we got off the plane in Melbourne and he changed planes to go further on, he would have been glad to sit next to someone else (or by

himself) and I really really think that he will listen to his young child about her wanted ness and speak to his wife and about their abortion and try and see if she *really* is OK. I hope I helped even in a little way and I hope that when he hears the word abortion he won't dismiss it as easily as he might have before.

## **PRAYER CARD**

I have thought and prayed about putting a new prayer card in with the newsletter and then prayed some more and still difficulties. However I have decided to send it to you my readers and perhaps explain my difficulties. The prayer on this card was composed by one of my young women and me. I have printed 10,000 copies and hope to spread this throughout parishes in Victoria and anywhere else I can get them into.

Now. Why I said that I have had difficulties and at times doubts and then confusion over the prayer is this. I had previously posted a few of these cards in mail to people who have written to me and in turn have received four complaints about the prayer. Indeed the complaints were so strong that I went into a state of shock.

The gists of the complaints are this. The four correspondents, who wrote to me, have said that the aborted children are not in heaven and I should not be telling my women that their children are in heaven because it is an untruth. This of course distressed me enormously because I certainly would not wish to tell my girls a lie and secondly because the very idea that the aborted children are not in heaven and with God and at peace is almost too much to bear. Indeed if this were the case I would no longer be able to do the work that I do. It would be psychologically and spiritually impossible for me to continue.

The very thing that has kept me going has been my deep faith and conviction that my children (Miriam and Joseph) and the children of those over 800 women and men that I have dealt with over nearly 10 years, and the millions upon millions of babies unjustly slaughtered every year, are "living in the Lord" and at peace in heaven with Him. With this knowledge I have been able to withstand all skulduggery and backlash, and lack of funds, in fact at times great financial difficulties, and at times even betrayal from both within the pro life movement and without, and still continue without a moment's hesitation. Yet this last onslaught seems a bit much.

One of the four letter writers has pointed out that Church teaching is that infants who die without baptism do not go to heaven but are consigned to a place called Limbo. My understanding has been that Limbo was a nice theory and possible explanation for what happens to infants who die without baptism, but it is not an official Church teaching. Indeed Limbo is meant to be this very nice place where the souls of the children and righteous unbaptised go, but not to heaven. The parents who aborted the child, on repentance can merit heaven but the child that was aborted (without personal fault) cannot ever merit heaven. It merits "Limbo" the nice Nirvana like

place (Buddhist belief) because ultimately that is what Limbo sounds like. A place of nice natural happiness though not heaven.

**I have struggled and anguished over these four letters.**

One letter suggested that if children go straight to heaven then why bother baptising infants when they are young. There is no urgency. Further, women might think that if their child goes to Limbo rather than heaven then maybe it would act as a deterrent to their action of going through with the abortion. Well I need to say that the very last thing a woman has on her mind when she is thinking about abortion is her own immortal soul and the immortal soul of the child. The only thing that the abortive woman has in mind, when she agrees to an abortion, is the removal of the envisaged difficulties and nothing else. And in order to do this the dehumanising of the foetus must take place. No other process is involved. Yes there is fear and at times resistance because of one's own beliefs, but it is not related to the eternity of the child in question.

Another reason for not placing child in heaven is that pro lifers need added impetus and believing that a child will be heaven would reduce the impetus. Again if this is the only reason pro lifers do the work that they do then it will not stand. The work of pro life is built on sandy soil if it is only for this reason. Pro lifers I believe work for the life of the child and then for the eternal life of the parents who have succumbed to the abortion mentality.

Another letter writer said "how dare you even think that without baptism you can enter heaven, don't you know your scriptures? Anyway without a body you cannot have baptism or eternal life. Please remove me immediately from your newsletter list" (done it) Another went on to tell me that the work that I do is good but I " shouldn't expect or teach that there is a heaven because there isn't and the child that died is dead. I do not wish to continue support for you. Please delete my name" (done it).

So, in sending out about a dozen prayer cards with outgoing mail these responses came and now I am in a quandary about sending each of you one. However, I have decided that I will trust God and I believe this was an inspired prayer and send them out. I also hope to place these cards in parishes to be taken at will. If anyone would like to send a donation to cover the costs, I gratefully accept, even a gold coin, however this is not necessary..

This is the prayer of an abortive mother or father; however I hope that 10,000 people will pray this prayer. I hope that 100,000 people will pray this prayer. I hope that those who have not been touched by the abortion experience will consider praying this prayer in lieu of someone who cannot pray this prayer for whatever their reason. I hope that those who have not been touched by abortion will take on the heaviness and burden of someone who has and pray for an on behalf of them

I am reminded of some lines I read by Kahlil Gibran

*And as a leaf turns not yellow  
But with the silent knowledge of the whole tree  
So the wrong doer cannot do wrong  
Without the hidden will of you all.  
And when one of you falls down  
He falls for those behind him  
A caution against the stumbling stone  
Aye, and he falls for those ahead of him  
Who though faster and surer of foot, yet  
Removed not the stumbling stone.*

(K. Gibran, The Prophet. Heinemann, (1928) pp 49-50

Yes indeed the abortive woman aborts, yet the child she aborts is a brother or sister of the human family. Was destined to be someone's brother, sister, wife, husband, friend, career person, daughter, son, priest, doctor, worker. The child who is aborted would have had a relationship not only with the human family but with the eternal family.

It is my hope that those who have not aborted or have been involved in any way, will pray the prayer not only for the mothers and fathers who have aborted but also for the child. I would like to hear from my readers if you think the prayer is OK But please understand that I may not be able to respond personally especially if I am inundated with letters. I may respond via the next newsletter.

**Thank you to my much loved number three son Lucas (quiet one) for his design of woman and child. He read my mind perfectly.**

**Please note that the prayer has been granted ecclesiastical approval denoting that the prayer card is free of doctrinal or moral error.**

### **KILLERS OF BABIES IN WOMB FACE 25 YEARS.**

I mentioned earlier in this newsletter that we live in a rather confused society and the above headline in the Australian early in May clearly shows this.

The New South Wales Government passed a law where individuals convicted of killing an unborn child will face jail terms of up to 25 years. This is the law where a foetus is killed during an attack on the mother. However, this law stopped just short of definition of foetus "as a child in utero" a very clever ruse which would have made it illegal for an abortionist to carry out his trade.

How ironic that an assailant can be jailed (rightly so) for quite a long time for an assault against the woman resulting in death of the child within her yet an abortionist actually assaults directly the child and kills it, yet remains protected by some loopy loophole. It is again word games at play and power of the political word games played. Further I think it is again the wanted ness factor creeping in. If the child is wanted then all efforts will be

made to recognise its humanity, whether it is very ill and premature or whether it is a road rage incidence. However, where it is unwanted, then immediately it loses its humanity and becomes valueless and disposable. Again it is the behaviour of the society with confusion as its ethos. It is no wonder that only 28% of respondents supported those who had abortion and its no wonder that the messages are mixed and difficult to read. One woman's baby is human and worthy of efforts to be helped whilst the other is non human and worthless and to be killed and in great indignity disposed.

As I conclude this newsletter, I need to say that I wrote it with a heavy heart and its been difficult to write, though I generally love to write it and send it out and receive positive comments. However, I do thank all those who helped me to pay for the conference in London in July, I hope to knock their socks off!! And I will write about it in August/Sept issue of the newsletter. Thank you also to those donors who wanted to remain anonymous. Please continue to help me with this work I really do work very hard six days a week. Since the last issue I have been to New Zealand for a few days at the invitation of Family Life International, thank you to Colleen and family for hospitality and staff of FLI. It was so good. I hope to return for their conference in September 2005. On June 11, I will be going to Brisbane for just a couple of days to take part in a forum on abortion.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO SOPHIA (ISSUE 41) AND HER HUSBAND TIM ON THE ARRIVAL OF A PRECIOUS SON BRYCE.**

I know that this is one child that lives because his mother is happy again. Please re read her story it is amazing. Sophia is an inspiration. Please continue to pray for the same names as last issue and five new ones, Angela, Mathew, Frances, Darren (2), and Heidi.

**NB.** Please note that as of this month, my current email address will be discontinued and a new service set up under the following address

[annevoa@bigpond.net.au](mailto:annevoa@bigpond.net.au)

Please forward any emails from now on to this new address.

God Bless

Anne Lastman

-----

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

Victims of Abortion, National Office  
PO Box 6094, Vermont South, Vic, 3133, Australia.  
Ph: /Fax: +61 3 9887 7669 Mobile: 0408 175 033  
[annevoa@bigpond.net.au](mailto:annevoa@bigpond.net.au)

-----



Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Yes/no, I would/would not** 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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Yes/no, I would/would not** 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

















