

Broken Branches

Issue 63

April/May 2008

John 15

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

Royal College of Psychiatrists warns abortions can lead to mental health illness. March 2008.

It has happened! At last.

In a recent article released in *Times* has reported that the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Britain has warned that abortion is a risk factor in the mental health breakdowns. Indeed the report says that the Royal College of Psychiatrists says that women should not be allowed to have an abortion until they are told of the possible risks to their emotional and mental health.

Further comment from this august body is that "consent cannot be informed without the provision of adequate and appropriate information"

This is what I have been saying for years and years. Indeed If would go further and say that it is not possible to give true informed consent because of the stress levels present at the time of the decision making. Whilst all manner of material and information may be presented to the aborting woman, her present state of mind, that is in a "crisis" mode and often with boyfriend/husband/parents/career coercion, and thus fear, would ensure that true informed consent cannot be given. A young woman who is pregnant and in fear of discovery is not going to think about the possibility of future anguish, future nightmares, future depression, future risk of breast cancer, future fear of substance abuse etc etc. A young girl/woman who finds herself

in an unwanted pregnancy is in a mindset to remove the "object" of her fears.

This statement by this medical body was issued at the request from the House of Commons for an update to its 1994 report on mental health and its relationship to abortion. This new, fairly short but powerful one-page statement stated that the College had undertaken to do a review of existing research and commented that "full systematic review around abortion and mental health is required."

Perhaps a more important and marvellous thing is their call for health care providers to screen women for pre-existing mental health disorders and other risk factors which are known to cause problems following abortion.

However, whilst cautiously making the above statements and warnings, this College does not call for doctors not to do abortions in these cases or even (and most importantly) to screen for the coercion factor. This indeed is troubling because have elicited results that clearly show that where there is support for the woman and her pregnancy, then abortion is not the ultimate outcome. However, This response by the august body continues to be the politically correct response to abortion, even when it is believed that abortion is harmful to the woman.

Again, the statement also addresses the issue of informed consent by saying that the College "recognizes that good practice in relation to abortion will include informed consent."

However, I still suggest that "informed consent"

A newsletter of Victims of Abortion

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I **would/would not** like to be on your mailing list.

Victims of Abortion, National Office
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Email: annevoa@bigpond.net.au

given by a woman/girl who is threatened, afraid, traumatised, ashamed and fearful of being pregnant is barely worth the paper it is written on.

Yes, this “informed consent” indemnifies the abortion provider and maybe even the medical profession from possible litigation; however, I don’t believe that it is a “true” informed consent because she cannot “hear” clearly and deeply what is being said to her or what she is consenting to. All she can see, hear, know, is her circumstance, and the reasons why she is having this abortion.

On a daily basis I answer calls (on land line of Victims of Abortion) from young women or men requesting that they want to book in for an abortion. Now all of you my readers know that I run “*Victims of Abortion*” So how can an organization which deals with “victims of abortion” book and carry out abortions? Simply because the caller is so distressed that they are not thinking clearly or reading clearly. They just ring a number which is in Yellow Pages.

And no, these callers are not foreigners so it can be said that they didn’t understand the name of the organization. They are young English speaking/sounding individuals who are much stressed and have generally known that they are pregnant and have talked about it to someone that is, boyfriend, husband, friends, parents and came to the conclusion to abort. Or at other times a young woman who has found she is pregnant and doesn’t want anyone to know so she attempts to deal with the issue quickly,

quietly and alone, before anyone finds out.

But I stress, as I speak with these young people (occasionally older ones too) the thing which stands out most to me is how stressed they are and how not thinking clearly they are and how much they are not listening to what is being said.

When I speak to them and explain what I do there is often a pause and before too long a hanging up of the phone. They have paused long enough to hear the word “suffering” but didn’t want to continue to hear more. This is the bringing down of their defences in order not to hear information which will cause them dissonance.

This is why I am convinced that “informed consent” whilst very very good in theory, in practice in this area falls far short of its truth.

Suicide of Artist following abortion

In a recent article reported in all forms of media, the story was told of a young British woman (30 years old) who committed suicide following the abortion of her twin babies.

At the time when I read the article (it’s also now on internet you can find it by googling her name-Emma Beck), I remember feeling such a sense of loss and devastation. I felt pain for her loneliness and the anguish she must have felt to have hung herself.

.....I don't believe its true informed consent

We know that the reason for her suicide was the abortion, because she left a note filled with pathos. "I should never have had an abortion. I see now I would have been a good mum"

If we can just imagine the loneliness and grief she would have been experiencing for her to take such a step. Suicide is the greatest form of loneliness, isolation and abandonment. It is a total rejection of life, along the same lines as abortion. We know that abortion is the greatest form of abandonment known, and suicide is the fruit of such abandonment. Suicide is also the greatest loss of "hope" and the greatest loss of self worth and self respect.

When I recovered from reading the article and composed myself a little, I started to think about this young woman and her unnecessary death and the unnecessary and unwanted death of her twin children.

Reading about her story seemed to me like a litany of calls to stop the abortion and the deafness surrounding her and these calls of hers. As she says "I told everybody I didn't want to do it, even at the hospital.....I died when my babies died"

The abortion/suicide connection has been known about for many years and studies have

clearly shown a link between abortion and suicide, and it is easy to see why there is this relationship. The emotional pain following abortion can be unbearable and in the depths of despair it is easy to do an act of violence against the self. Irreversible violence like suicide.

The pain, the sense of loss, the sense of failure can especially be strong at the time of the abortion and around the anniversary date and these dates pose great risk for women in the more at risk category, like women with mental health issues, youthful women, and those with prior abortion history.

Anniversary syndrome is a well known phenomenon. It is the unconscious replaying of a trauma which can be deadly. The anniversary syndrome can continue through generations with a member of that generation repeating a trauma, (on or around same date) until the original traumatic event is resolved and laid to rest.

Of further interest, it has been said to me by several of my young women, that suicide is an ideal because it means being re united with the aborted child/children.

"I want to go and be a mother to my daughter. I

.....the abortion/suicide connection has been known

don't want her to be alone and afraid" (Cheryl)

Whenever I have heard comments of this nature I have known that the person in front of me has been very deeply affected and careful and gentle and slow work needs to be done in order to move her from thinking "suicide" to beginning to reclaim her own self and her own life. Different now, but still the possibility of a good life which can be restored with joy.

This is why I believe that post abortion trauma is not something which has a short term solution, absolution, and then all is OK.

Post abortion trauma and grief is serious and devastating, and the work necessary to help this woman/girl/male return to a sense of "living" and not "dying" is a work of love, time and care and of course Mercy and compassion from God.

I have in my office dealt with women experiencing suicide ideation (thinking-thoughts) and where this is present my process with them changes. However, I can safely say that to date, the programme I use has been successful (God's very involved). Before any serious work of healing is possible it's

important to work with the suicide ideation/thoughts and help to ease them or remove them from thought. A reason for living, more strong than the reason for dying, is needed to be found in the life of this person, then we can begin to journey together in the hope of recovery or reaching a place of peace.

Post abortion grief and bereavement poses a challenge to reconstruct a life and its meaning. When this is done well, the woman can again experience a desire for life and living. Separation anxiety, grief, loss is always a measure of the love for the lost one. It is a clear indicator of the depth of loss and regret.

Please continue to keep my clients and me covered in prayer, it really is a life saver.

"Bella"

On a recent Monday afternoon I had the great pleasure of being invited to a private screening of the movie "Bella"

I know that the movie has now been out in Australia for quite a few weeks but I would encourage any of my readers who have not seen this movie to please see it. It is one of the most beautiful movies I have seen in a long time. A movies where the whole family can go and see it. A movie without the gratuitous sex scenes, drugs themes, nakedness. A movie without the aimless ness of youth. A movie filled with soft gentle, unobtrusive love.

A movie that has drama, sadness, moments of doubt, family, and agape type love.

It is a fabulously pro life movie. A movie that is inspirational and one which deserves our support.

It is a genuinely family friendly movie and covers themes which families encounter and the decisions that are made which change lives and also the unplanned events which also change lives.

Please, if it's at a cinema near you support it.

Anne

Letter from Sabrina In Rome.

Dear Anne,

Since we met and spoke together when you were here in Rome in October, 2007, many wonders God has done in my life.

Actually this story of grace was already begun last summer when with a "powerful arm" the Holy Spirit has broken the chains that were keeping my husband and I slaves in a terrible emotional paralysis tasting like death, that sooner or later would have lead us to leaving each other.

But let's start from the beginning: a few days before our encounter (yours and mine), my husband and I went to our priest, a very intelligent and sensitive man, endowed with a very subtle but powerful spirit, to talk about the suffering affecting our marriage. In a very prophetic way, hard for me to understand, we ended up talking about my abortion forcing me to attest to the fact that I was considering what was occurring in my life a sort of expiation for what I've done, and that at the bottom of all of this I accepted many bad things and sufferings from my husband because I felt I deserved it.

Our encounter with Don Antonio (that was his name) was very short, but his words were so sweet and serious at the same time that I knew something was setting free inside. After this, I met you and I have to confess that at the beginning I didn't trust. I didn't want to come out from my hole, where I had hidden for many years and where I felt secure.

It took me a bit to process what we said to each other (you and I) and I had to pray to be obedient, as usual. Then, one night I opened the Bible, putting my finger trying to find a name among the lines and the finger went straight to the name: **Benedetta**. She was a baby-girl, I always thought she was a male (it seemed to hurt me less, I don't know). I'm happy because now I can speak about her saying "**Benedetta**" and not "**that fact**", or "**my sin**" or worse, "**the**

A Poem for my Son.

You came into my soul one night, so quietly you arrived.
I did not notice you were there, until the great surprise.
My little spirit lived with me for weeks and weeks on end.
He lived through all my ups and downs, not knowing it would end.

We lay together every night. I often talked to you.
We slept so deep, so sound, so sweet, so tired that we were.

My little spirit I let you go, you could not stay for long.
I had a strange sensation that you would soon be gone.
I could not make you feel safe, for I felt so deep, alone.
So I wrapped you up snug in my heart, and gently said goodbye.

I gulped and drowned in my own tears, when I got no reply.
I gulped and drowned in my own tears, when I got no reply.
My little spirit no longer here - an empty aching heart.
My soul, so peaceful then, - has now been ripped apart.
For you are not there to feel and touch as you grew inside of me.

You are not there to talk to; I still yearn your company.
I wake in fright every night and stare hard into space.
The room, so dark without you - a cold and lifeless place.
I place my hands to feel you, and then scream 'where have you gone?'

The darkness then engulfs me when I realise what I've done.

My little spirit up in the clouds make sure you roll and play.
And please be sure my little one that I'm not far away.
I'm just out of reach but not for long. I'll be there with you soon.

So please, wait for me to find you, upon that golden moon.
And when I find you once again I'll never let you go.
My arms so warm around you - just like it was meant to be

...
We'll laugh and play and love together on that golden sunshiny day.

And I promise, this time, my little one - I'll NEVER go away.
And I promise, this time, my little one - I'll NEVER go away.

Jenny.

Thank you Jenny.

Jenny is one of my new "girls" please continue to pray for her. There is much pain in her heart as you can read from the poem she wrote for her aborted baby boy.

abortion": it's definitely another thing.

Then another miracle has occurred, I reconciled with my aunt, I mean, with the one who took me to interrupt my pregnancy, for the abortion. During all these many years I have refused her. I didn't want to see her because she reminded me of the abortion. I asked her for forgiveness, I told her about my story, I talked to her about God (to her, who is so angry with God!). So another burden was gone.

All this is to put in relation with the re-flourishing of a marriage that was doomed to dry out and die completely. Certainly I still have many fears and sometimes I still feel the need to hide in my hole to lick my wounds but a word from God or from someone helps me and I know it's from Jesus which is the following: "who are you - I say- to steal even an hour to the Grace of God?" and this drags me out of my hole again and face my days full of hope.

This year we've dressed our Christmas tree in a different way compared to the past. Soon we're going to move. I spoke to Quirino (husband) about what we said when you came to my house and he knows what I have to do. For the first time I feel understood and helped. A new trust is now arising toward him.

The 21st December, Benedetta's birthday to heaven, I wasn't sad or angry like I used to be in that anniversary every year and this because I thought of her, Benedetta, and not about **that fact**, or "**the abortion**" I'm sure you know what I mean.

Anne You know what?! Listen what happens to me! I can now fight for those who are thinking to choose

abortion, I can now aid and comfort people. I have also attended the funeral of a baby lost in womb at the sixth months, and I'm not sure whether it's a miscarriage or an abortion, and I remained there beneath that small white coffin 40 centimetres long! So really there's a wind of change, a wind of grace. And this has happened since we met and you spoke with me.

I love you Anne and I'm grateful to you. I wish you a merry Christmas to you and ALL your children.

A big hug.
Sabrina.

Darling Sabrina, thank you for sharing your story and your kind words.

I have in past newsletters said that God will often go to extreme measures to let someone know how much He loves her. I feel this is the case with Sabrina. On the night we met there was an electric feeling, like the Holy Spirit was present and a great honesty between us.

I think (in great humility) that God sent someone (me) from the other end of the world

(Australia to Rome) to tell this precious daughter of His just how much He loves her and wants her to be well again and to trust in Him and His mercy.

Thank you Cara Mia, and blessings to you and husband and the children.

Also if you read her story carefully you my regular readers can see all the signs of post abortion syndrome. Many symptoms which I have spoken about over the years.

Foetal Abnormality

This past week (Holy Saturday) I was quoted in *The Age* newspaper on an article about the decriminalisation of abortion. My name was used and "Victims of Abortion" was used, so it was very easy to find me in phone book and call me anonymously. I did receive several calls, mostly negative and defensive, but the call which upset me most was from a young Miss who told me I don't know what I am talking about. She then proceeded to tell me her story of abortion for foetal abnormality.

.....there is a wind of change, a wind of grace.....

I listened to her anguish as she retold of her and her husband's moment of choosing to abort their child once it was found to be challenged. She told of their pain, their wavering, and their loss of hope for the future. The plans they had made, the nursery they were slowly preparing for him etc etc.

I continued to listen and make soothing noises as she spoke out her anguish this mixed with sobbing. When she had spent herself out and stopped to take a breath, I spoke to her gently and asked her would she like to come and see me after Easter. We have left it at that and that she is free to contact me again even by phone if she has a need to talk to someone, even anonymously.(she wouldn't tell me her name).

However, after we concluded the call I kept

thinking about her and her story. I was disappointed with myself because I couldn't tell her what a great tragedy it was that they were not able to look at the disabilities of their child and see a great gift in that. Not a gift according to the ways that the world thinks, but a gift according to the way God thinks.

When an abortion for foetal abnormality is performed there is a sense of great loss of the giftedness of the disabled, to the parents, family, community and society. I should have said that we are shaped by imprints people leave on our lives. The imprint left by a disabled child is so different from that of a non disabled child, that it has the potential to change so completely those in whose ambit that child travels.

Letters

Dear Anne

Please find enclosed my request for a copy of your book and a donation towards your work,

Your comments on the last newsletter re fathers and daughters were very pertinent and insightful.

Blessings on your work and may you continue in this marvellous work which you have been called to do.

Please don't stop speaking out. We need prophetic voices like yours in our day.

God Bless you and yours,
Jenny K
Melb.

Dear Anne

Thank you for your newsletters. Just when I think you have said it all you come up with something so new and you continue to astound me.

I loved your piece on Fathers and Daughters. It is surely an inspired piece. Surely this is a must read for us all.

Dear Anne, please keep sending me your excellent newsletter it is the very best newsletter.

Regards and wishes,
Karen P.
Springvale.

Dear Anne,

How great is your book!! So many spiritual books pass through my hands these days that I usually only read snippets of them-but yours I am reading entirely.

Thank you for the gift and for your words written to me on it. The enclosed is for your work and to pay for another copy of the book which I wish to give as a present to our Archbishop. He is a good reader and also the chain person of the ACBC. In your book I love the clarity of your thinking. The obvious research and the "saying it as it is" without the nice sounding cover-up words.

The more I read it the more I admire what you have done and what you have written.

Hope we can catch up when I am next in Melbourne.

With love
Sr. Patricia.

Thank you dear Sr. Patricia, perhaps others might like to purchase a copy of the book for the pastor, or their Bishop or anyone that maybe interested in reading a book on this topic. Anne

The world and humanity is softened by the wounded. The spirit responds with gentleness to suffering and pain. A sense of “cherish” is developed and strengthened, especially when a child is challenged. The imprint which a disabled person leaves is one of love, compassion, care, and suffering and we as a society are greatly diminished because we can now screen out and terminate lives which do not conform to the perfect image or the “ideal.” We are slowly forgetting how to “care” and love in the dimension of the cross.

Is this why we cannot feel for in utero infants? Is this why it has become “normal” to be able to abort pre born infants? Because we first had no compassion for the challenged and now it has become easy not to feel for the most defenceless and tiniest amongst us?

What next? Infanticide being made a “rights” issue, just like abortion? Kill a child because it cries too much? Or is too sickly?

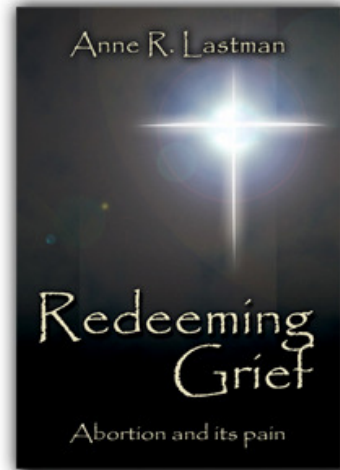
It is a frightening new world we are heading into. A world where imperfections are not tolerated and suffering of all kinds must be erased. Where suffering is considered scandalous. We are trying to remove the “Cross” from the world. A false “Eden” beckons.

As I come to the end of this issue of the newsletter I thank those very few of you who continue to support me. Thank you to my anonymous donor, without you I would have had real difficulties. Support has been decreasing so I am wondering if the Lord wants this to stop or something different.

I continue to accept new clients but it has been difficult. Support has slowed down to a trickle.

Also please please advise me if you change address or do not want newsletter, I have been receiving returned newsletters where the recipient has moved and not advised. Please just let me know.

Can I also ask that you support the sale of the book *Redeeming Grief*? Buy a copy for your pastor.



Please continue to pray for Maree, Jacquie, Derek, Michele, Alessia, Iris, Helen, Stephanie, Kate, Kathy, Clare, Frances, Sarah, Barbara, Sabrina, Leigh, Maria, Casey, Sam, Jody, Josie, Dillon, Jenny, Paula, Heather, Susie. Marc, Dianne, Joyce, Judy, Damian, Darren.

Anne Lastman

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Broken Branches – By email!



Dear Friends,

In an effort to help reduce the costs and time put into preparing each newsletter, I am now able to email it out to you in Adobe Acrobat format (.PDF). So if you would prefer to receive Broken Branches electronically, please email me at annevoa@bigpond.net.au with a request to be added to the email list.