

Broken Branches

Issue 64
June/July 2008

John 15

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

World Youth Day in Australia

Recently I had the great pleasure of seeing a DVD presentation of the journey of the World Youth Day Cross, as it traversed its way around the nations of the world on its journey to Australia for the World Youth Day with the Holy Father Benedict XVI, in July 2008.

From the moment it started playing I wept. I wept as I watched those thousands of young people journeying and carrying high over their heads this special Cross commissioned specifically for the WYD, and accompanying this Cross held aloft, The Icon of BVM accompanying her Son, as she always did.

Why I wept was the watching of the faces and demeanour of these young people. The reverence, awe, holiness, faith, which they exuded. Normal teenagers, sneakers wearing teenagers, jeans wearing teenagers, whose faces clearly showed their love and reverence for the Cross. As you my dear readers know, I tend to see the deepest wounds that society can inflict (sexual abuse, abandonment, rejection, violence, addiction) and I see the deepest pain that can be experienced in the life of a young person (abortion, and at times I have to ask "when the son of man returns will he find faith?" (Lk 18:8) And after seeing the thousands upon thousands of young people carrying "their cross" I know that this is why God endures the sins of the world, because there are 50 "good people" (Gen. 18:28) amidst the pain.

I wept for the young ones who have aborted because when they come to realise the enormity of their action they will ache with pain unlike any other. I wept for those who have been sexually

abused again because their pain is unlike any other. I wept for those who have been abandoned by their parents and cannot find consolation in their life because of their belief if that if their own parents couldn't love them then they are unlovable and not even God can love them. I wept for the suffering of human beings.

But I also wept for the goodness very visible in the faces of these young people, and in those who quietly carry on the work of Life and living, and against all odds continue because they love God and their littlest neighbour. As I watched these young people following the WYD Cross, I was deeply reminded of the Good Shepherd leading them home, but He leads them home by way of the Cross. That is the only way possible for those who follow Jesus.

I could see Jesus leading the young home, and I knew that the future is in good hands. With Jesus guiding, these young hands will be blessed. To the WYD pilgrims, "may the Lord Bless and Keep you, May the Light of His face shine upon you, May he uncover His countenance and be Gracious to you." (Nb 6:24-26) And may your stay in Australia be that special moment of Grace to change and enrich your lives.

Welcome to Australia WYD Pilgrims and Blessings on your life.

The Father's Role in Abortion. An Enigma

A fertilised human egg at the moment of conception is the opinion of the creator that a human life at that instant must begin....F. Zugibe.

A newsletter of Victims of Abortion

Name_____

Address_____ P/C_____

Donation _____

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
Email: annevoa@bigpond.net.au

In a recent newsletter I wrote of the magnificent relationship which is possible between a father and daughter and how when damaged this leads to such personality and life altering wounds.

This enormous damage done to the daughter (or son) is further difficult to conceive when we know that from the very beginning the conceptus/child has a dignity ascribed to him/her because she is separate and different human being from the mother or the father. It is a creation in its own right with its own brain, heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, and blood group and may be of the gender like the mother or different like the father.

This damage done to the newly conceived (abortion) is difficult to fathom because studies of the earliest moments of conception have shown that the amniotic sac which encloses the foetus is constructed and built by the embryo itself from information/instruction which is encoded only in the genetic material donated by the father (sperm). These instructions lead to the creation of a protective barrier around the conception; this barrier protects the newly conceived child, otherwise the mother's immune system may see the conception as a foreign object and attempt to expel the conception or as we would say, the baby. The Father protects his child from the instant of conception!!

The father's genetic material has inscribed within it the information to protect his offspring by actually setting in place the system to build the barrier which will protect the child from the moment of its very conception, and yet this very same father then takes that same child and insists that the child he created and set into motion its protection, is then humanly killed. Why is this?

What has happened between the inscribed mandate and outcome at abortion clinic?

The genetic material of both mother and father create a whole new creation with its own instructions for differentiation and development. What marvellous being is the human, and yet only the human person takes its young to be destroyed whilst the mother sleeps and the father smokes or is absent. How sad it is that the father who has an innate mandate to engender and then protect his offspring today fails in this service.

Is this what Psalm 49 meant when God speaks "If a mother (or father) forgets you, I will never forget you I have carved you on the palm of my hand" Is the carving hidden in the imprint of the nail wounds?

Say NO to experimenting with life

*Your eyes beheld my unformed substance
Ps139; 16.*

As a society we need to begin to thoroughly and actively refute, and not validate, all manner of discussion which seeks to reduce the human being into nothing but another species. Merely another piece of living matter taking up space on this piece of universe called "earth"

The claims of biophysists' and other so called eminent academics who deny the newly conceived a human status and with this, respect for its human dignity, should be challenged strenuously.

These so called "eminent individuals" by their

"What a marvellous being is the human..."

stance ensure that support for all manner of experimentation becomes possible. These individuals who claim that until the 14th day the status of the human embryo is nothing more than a “bunch of cells” and as such fodder for experimentation, that embryonic stem cell research is of no consequence and morally acceptable. These so called eminent individuals who reject the claim that this new creation whom they call a bunch of cells is actually a new conception and incarnation of the love between its mother and father are deluded egotists.

These very dangerous terms used by these so called eminent persons remove from the new creation its right to its own existence and its right to be born, and because of this have opened the doors to experimentation and abortion, at first to early stages of development and now up to point of viability.

And not only has this disrespect for human conception led to countless numbers of abortions, but shame upon shame, this has led to calls for the patenting of the embryos which are meant for experimentation. An event or idea never imagined since time began. And further, to the sale of foetal parts for profit! →

The Holy Father John Paul II in *Evangelium Vitae* spoke on this matter “some try to justify abortion by claiming that the product of conception, at least until a certain number of days, cannot yet be considered a personal human life” (EV No.60 p 113) By this action and decree then what God has created deeply in the unseen womb is not recognised but only what is seen by the eyes of the human. This utilitarian concept then can and does lead to disposal of those whose worth is unseen, unmeasured and unknown.

At conception God creates a unique individual with a unique genetic composition and genetic history, whose dignity is found deeply in the heart, mind and desires of God, and whose destiny is to return to God its Creator and lover.

The human person’s life has its origins in God and its final vision and place in God, and in between, the human being’s life, is the external sacramental sign of the invisible God. The human being’s life is the end result of God’s breath being breathed into the elements which made up the body of the newly created being.

It cannot ever be bartered, bargained for, manipulated, negotiated or even toyed with. This is sacred material requiring sacred handling.

“The human person’s life has its origins in God...”

“Life” is the domain of God. We toy with this to our own peril.

Research in recent years has shown that human life with its nuances and characteristics is encoded in the newly fertilised ovum.

As early as 1948 the embryologist Dr Bradley Patten said, “It is the penetration of the ovum by the spermatozoon and the resulting mingling of the nuclear material each brings to the union that constitutes the culmination of the process of fertilisation and marks the initiation of the life of a new individual.”

Further to this, the foremost geneticist Dr→

Jerome Le Jeune, Professor of Genetics at the University of Paris and Sorbonne, commented, “each of us has a unique beginning, the moment of conception... when the information carried by the sperm and by the ovum have encountered and met each other then a new human being is defined because its own personal and human constitution is entirely spelled out. The information which is inside the first cell obviously tells this cell all the tricks of the trade to build himself as the individual this cell is already.... to build that particular individual which we will call later Margaret or Paul or Peter, it’s already there, but so small we cannot see it...It’s what life is, the formula is there: if you allow the formula to be

expanded by itself. Just giving shelter and nurture, then you have the development of the full person.” (J. Lejeune, 1992).

Dear friends we need to fight this thing called abortion. This crime against human life in its most vulnerable and precious stage. We need to begin to rebel loudly against governments which want to legislate for the unfettered/unrestrained death of its babies and its future citizens. Dear friends, we need to stand really firm and say that we don’t want our babies to die. We need to say that sexuality is not something which is negotiable”. We need to say that abortion is not something negotiable for some. It’s non negotiable for all. We need to see that abortion is even removed from dictionaries. We need to say to our representatives that we didn’t elect them to kill the babies and legislate for the emotional wounding of 50% of humanity (women) and we need to say that men are supposed to protect both their woman and their child and NOT take that child to be killed whilst abandoning the woman, or threatening to abandon her in her vulnerable state.

For my daughter and her little one

This is a special letter of tribute from Maria on the loss through miscarriage of her first grandchild.

As I read this letter I wondered how many grandmothers who never know that their grandchild has been aborted, or who take their grandchild to be aborted would treasure the new life given to them as a gift.

We in the pro life area tend to hear of grandmothers who take their grandchild to be aborted but I wonder how many would have rescued their grandchild had they known.

This Grandmother Maria, saw her grandchild in her daughter’s womb, moving, and then still.

There is a great sense of loss in her voice.

Thank you Maria for sharing this life with us.

My own little one...tomorrow they will put you to sleep and take they will from you your little one... who is already asleep in death, (miscarriage) so still and quiet. Why did you die little one? We saw you move. In awe and wonder you drew us

in, to your dance of life. So short was our glimpse of joy, for already immense loss had begun.

Too soon forced to look away as you faded from view, but then if you had remained would we ever have been able to turn away? For love had drawn us in that short glimpse of the Dance of life. Little one you gave us a lifetime of love. Moments so pregnant with memory of Life. Little one, tiny one, dancing inside my own little one; my heart burst with love.

OH Lord of love and life, so much love and so much pain. And as we gazed we heard the words “50/50 either way.”

We struggled to breathe as these swords of sounds cut wounds so deep. And with you my youngest daughter, I bled inside. Immense grief had begun. OH Lord of Love and Life, why so much grief and so much pain?

Like a butterfly, little one, you fluttered in and out, resting your beauty upon our hearts, touching our souls. In whispered prayer our souls conversed. Now the world is empty...in pain and sorrow and grief immense we weave our tapestry of memories; threads of dreams of sandy days that do not happen; little laughs we did not hear; little tears in little eyes that did not open...(I wonder what colour they were) little feet that would forever remain shoeless...

Why did you die little one? Like us did you cry? You look so still, all curled up, your hands across your eyes...Your little photo I hold it close, it is wet with tears that never stop...It is all I have of you to cover my weeping heart.

Little soul do not leave us all alone, stay close each day...we ache because you are gone. Stay close beneath your angel’s wings as they cradle you until we come, your mother and I to hold you with love forever.

Lord of All, creator of Love and Life you took back home your little one. My grandchild.

Dear Lord she was so special our little one. How many hearts she was to touch in eleven short weeks she spoke to us of the joy of life....In being

Congratulations.

I would like to offer my congratulations to one of my girls "Stephanie" (you have been praying for her). Since the last issue of the newsletter went out, Stephanie and I and her dear friend Tess went to see the plaque which Stephanie has had installed for her beautiful daughter

"Alexandra"

It was a moving experience for all of us but indeed it is a very healing experience.

Today for Alexandra, together with many other babies, who in the past would have remained unknown and unmentioned, now have names and a resting place. A place where mum or Dad or both can go and visit and most importantly they are acknowledged as members of the human family.

Alexandra, one of those millions of infants who were destined for oblivion, is today acknowledged, named, loved and with God's help rests in a place of peace surrounded by beautiful setting and in the grounds of a beautiful church.

God is very, very good.

she spoke to us of God, The Lord of Life and Love. We miss her so. Keep her safe Lord. Watch over her for you are the "Good Shepherd" and she was your little lamb.

May the soul of our little one, through the Mercy of God, Rest in Peace. Amen.

Maria

Continuing Bonds

Continuing bonds is an understanding that there exist bonds which continue for the life of those involved, and continue well past death and do not appear to cause disequilibrium, but rather bring into play the state of what we know as partial awareness of the reality of death that forms the best compromise between unpleasant truth and a wished for state of events.

Continuing bonds with lost loved ones enables the relationship to be maintained, not as before, but in a new and different dimension. When dealing with love and loss, it is unthinkable that physical absence would diminish the attachment.

Where there is deep mourning, anguished grief there is also found deep and unswerving love and this is the dimension, which does not die. Love changes its dimension but continues.

There have been many studies which open the way for further insight into attachment theory but attachment not necessarily as a place of safety and security and from which to launch into new and further fields, but attachment as a dimension of something inexplicable called "love." Love, a universal life giving emotion which ensures that no one is ever forgotten. It is "love" which is responsible for the grief of abortion. It is love which eventually changes grief into "Redeeming Grief." It is love which ensures that the bonds remain unbroken.

To forget and move on has a dimension of "use" inscribed within it. To remember and move on has a dimension of "love" and "forever" inscribed within it. To remember means that all that the

aborted child was, is and could have been, has been memorialised for the well-being and happiness of those left behind who live with the regret.

To view attachment only as a necessary means of security loses its most profound meaning and becomes a servile instrument only. Attachment as love goes into repose but cannot ever be servile. Attachment for “use” only can die because its purpose is finite.

Whilst several researchers into “bonds” saw ongoing bonds with deceased loved ones as a natural flow on of the attachment theory, there is an added dimension (**that of love**) to this theory which needs to be contemplated.

Perhaps one of the most important areas of help in the area of post abortion grief is to help the community and society understand the nature of this particular loss and grief. Post abortion grief is a loss of unmentionable dimension. Irrespective of “fault” it needs to be understood that whether expressed or not, a loss exists simply because the ones who die (in utero infants) continue to reshape our lives.

Post abortion grief then is understanding this→

kind of grief and understanding that grief is a re negotiation of the relationship with the lost loved one (baby).

As a post abortion grief counsellor my role is to help my “girl” say hello, goodbye and to remember with love a short life but a very meaningful life. The life of her precious baby.

Words of rage from an abortive mother during counselling

“I lay there in tears because I was allowing them to take life from me. Don't they wonder why people cry on the table? Shouldn't they think "she's crying, something is wrong, she doesn't want to go through with this, she needs help". How low was I to let that happen to me? How low could I be to allow that? I must have been at depth of despair and darkness to allow that.

How dare they tell me it was peaceful? How dare they? What's peaceful about death dismemberment of a baby? Imagine having a dinner with an abortionist - "what did you do today?" "Oh, just the usual, killed 25 children".

“...love changes its dimension but continues.”

"We had one that tried to bolt yesterday, but she came back." How on earth can they live with themselves? What is wrong with them?

I'm furious. I'm furious at the stupid women who think abortion is 'their right' and made it 'my right'. I can't understand it. It wasn't my right at all. It was the baby's choice to live and to be here - there should have been no choice for me to have to make. It's ludicrous. I feel as if I am waking up from a bad, bad dream and slowly putting the reality back into the dream's place. I've woken up! The reality is very confronting - but I don't wish to hide from it any longer.” →

Dear friends please pray for “Jenny” it is a struggle although we are making progress. Please keep us both covered in prayer as we work through this. Anne.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Heather who after more than 20 years returned to the faith. There was much joy in heaven that day. Please continue to keep Heather, Jacquie, Jenny, Clare, Mark, Helen, Maria, Fran, Leeane, Suzie, Annemarie (new) Jamie, (new), Linda (new) Toni, and the others covered in prayer.

Letters

Dear Anne,

I found this issue of your newsletter Broken Branches April/May 2008, the best newsletter that you have produced. I would like 10 more copies of it please to send to friends. Enclosed is a donation to cover costs and for your work to continue. God bless your efforts and those loves of the men and women you touch. May God comfort you and give you courage and strength to continue in the future. Love and Prayers

Mary P.

Dear Anne,

At this time please don't even consider not being there for the women who need you and also for us readers. You may not know this but over the 6 years that I have received your newsletter, I have become bold. I now don't run when I hear the abortion word. I stand my ground and defend your work and the work of other pro life organizations. I also strenuously defend the life of the unborn. I used to remain silent when controversial subjects were being discussed. No longer!!!

Thank you for your work and I know it must be exhausting but as the old song said "I have become accustomed to your Face" I can say that I have become accustomed to your words and your joy and your laughter.

Blessings on your life and on your family and those whom you help.

John P. S.

Dear Anne,

I have not thanked you for the copy of Redeeming Grief you kindly sent to me. So I thank you now. I also agree totally with your comments about fathers and daughters in your previous newsletter. I see others have also commented.

I am sorry your support is lessening; I will keep praying and sending my small amounts as long as

*possible. I know God is totally with you and I am sure he will help. Also Our Lady, God Bless and Love,
Sandra D.*

Dear Anne,

Thank you for your continued work and continuing to keep us readers informed. I hope you do not have to close down. It would be such a tragedy. Anne I have to say that the last issue had me so much in tears I couldn't continue. The poem that Jenny wrote for her son is so touching that it took me several goes before I was able to read it as a whole. There is so much pain in that young woman. Imagine if you weren't there for all those women you see. I cannot bear thinking about it. I enclose a small donation I know it's small but it's all I can afford. The widow's mite you might say. God Bless

Marie O.

Dear Anne,

Please accept this donation to help you continue your essential work. I am so sorry to hear that financial support is drying up. I can't believe God wants you anywhere else. What you are achieving is almost unbelievable. I hope to make regular donations.

Please send Broken Branches by email.

*Yours sincerely
Moya C.*

Dear Anne,

I was sorry to read that your financial support for you and your work has fallen. (Enclosed my widow's mite) I was really and truly impressed with Sabrina's story. It just goes to show how far a field your compassion and help can reach. And the work that God is able to do when we let Him. May God continue to bless you.

Frances M.

Congratulations also to Jacquie and her husband on the Baptism of their little boy Daniel (see below!). Dear friends you have been praying for Jacquie.



Thank You

Special thank you to Charles Francis AM QC for review of my book Redeeming Grief which appeared in AD2000. I have appreciated his care, especially as he is very ill. Please pray for Charles and his family.

Thank you also to Aust. Counselling Association for review from a secular perspective and to Mrs Anna Breheney and Mrs Madge Fahy (CWL) for their reviews also. Will share these reviews with you as I can.

I would also like to tell you dear friends that I

have now been accepted by the Federation of Victorian Counsellors as a full member. I can now write after my name

**BA (psy) BA Rel Stds, Dip Ed., M.Theol,
M.Rel. Ed., MACA. FCV.**

Thank you for your love and support it's been a time of struggle but we keep going as long as the Lord wants. When He wants me stop I will.

Please support sale of my book, **Redeeming Grief**.

In regard to this, I would like to tell you dear friends that the book has been nominated for a literary award! I am so surprised and delighted about this, and I am sure it won't win because the topic is difficult but just to be nominated is an honour.

Will let you know what happens.

And if you can please support this work.

Thank you to my anonymous supporter. You help enormously. Without you I don't know.....

Anne Lastman MACA, FVC.

© Copyright Anne Lastman, VOA, 2008. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission.

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.