

BROKEN

BRANCHES

John 15

Issue 74

Feb/Mar 2010

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

Welcome dear friends to 2010 and we remember with sadness those who perished in Haiti... Rest in Peace.

I hope that your Christmas and New Year were moments of happiness and joy for you and your loved ones. It passed so quickly but it was for me a time of refreshment and rest.

Dear friends during my break I had an interesting encounter with a friend of a good friend (over lunch) and when I say interesting I mean interesting. Out of that interesting encounter (I was called bigoted and definitely “unchristian” for not agreeing that same sex relationships can ever be considered “marriage” and valid), I was even told that I have a lack of compassion for same sex couples and their desire to legitimize their relationship just like “everybody else’s relationship” (this lady does not know what I do, as I requested anonymity of my friend who invited me to lunch so I wouldn’t spend lunch time talking about abortion) Of course I agreed with my accuser that I am compassion less and bigoted. However, as a result of that encounter I decided to write or at least update an article I wrote some time ago but was too “chicken” to send to the intended catholic journal. It seemed appropriate for here.

MARRIAGE-A HEAVENLY REALITY.

In this decisive moment in time when marriage and family life is being challenged and threatened, it is important that we restate exactly what marriage is. What constitutes marriage? And why it is so crucial to begin again to learn why marriage is a covenant between a male and a female. Unless this happens then all other types of “marriage” become possible. Just as some wish to redefine marriage to incorporate various combinations so those who believe marriage to be a divine covenant need to fight to reclaim and teach what is the true nature of marriage. To this end understanding what is a covenant? What is a contract? And what is the difference between the two and how this difference is the essence of a true marriage.

Whilst it is important to enter into the fray to vigorously defend marriage via the legal system, political or even secular system, this is not the most important weapon for fighting this demonic attack against the future of humanity. The cradle of life. It *is* important, but *not* the most important. Entering into the fray using the legal/secular system to win is almost a guarantee of losing, because the legal system seeks secular justice and not moral justice, and on a natural plane, justice demands that all, *including those who have desires which are intrinsically wrong*, are accorded this same justice. On the natural plane all things become possible as long as it *appears that a good is being countenanced*. We need to fight on our terms. That is, defending of God’s honour and justice, and defending God’s idea of morality. Unless this is done we may win minor scuffles, or even public debates, but the agenda for the destruction of marriage, family, life, remains in place. To this end let us begin anew and relearn and rebuild what we understand to be an eternal covenant. So what is a covenant and why is it important to see marriage as a covenant?

A secular understanding of the term “covenant” suggests that it is an agreement, with certain stipulations, which must be met by the covenant parties. The reduction of the term “covenant” to such an understanding can and does cheat us of an understanding of “covenant” as something more than contract.

The covenant idea is central to our knowledge of God and Scripture.

Whilst our society uses the terms “covenant” and “contract” interchangeably, the differences between them are profound. With a contract what is exchanged are “things” whereas with covenant what is exchanged is “essence of self”. Contracts exchange the material. Covenants exchange the essence of the human being.

D.J. McCarthy defines covenant, “as a means by which the ancient world took to extend relationships beyond the natural unity of blood”. To be related by blood means a familial relationship. However, to extend this type of relationship, it is done via means of a covenant. Indeed covenant is a type of familial bond based on an oath. The Hebrew word for covenant *berit* means to “bind” or to “fetter” and in its etymology the word means to bind together by blood.(Lv 1:5e) There is sacredness to

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the relationship, which is related by blood or by extension, by covenant, because these relationships cannot be broken as the individuals are “fettered.”

God’s word in scripture is based on a series of covenants. Indeed we see how important the covenant idea is to God, and how very much He is involved in the covenants which He establishes with His people.¹ Through the covenants and under this symbol of covenant God “binds” or ties Himself to the human family. The relationship is sacred because it is based on God’s “binding” love for His family (Ps 100, 145, 150, 1Jn 4:7). We can understand the covenants and the importance of them by looking at the progression of the covenant structures and how they “grew” from the first ever-made covenant which was a marriage covenant (Adam and Eve), followed by familial covenant (Noah). A tribal covenant (Abraham). National covenant (Moses). Kingdom covenant (David), and finally the definitive overarching universal covenant with Jesus, His Son. Over time, God instituted covenants and designed them so as to incorporate larger and larger dimensions of humankind until finally the definitive covenant with Jesus is made. The new family begun by the new Adam (Jesus). Through the covenants God established the means by which imperceptibly, He expanded and extended His relationship until the time when His unique and ultimate relationship in and through Jesus is fulfilled and sealed in and through the new covenant.

To think of “covenant” it is also important to think about the concept of “oath.” These two terms appear interchangeably. (Ez 16:59, 17:13, 16, 18, Lk.1: 73, Mal 2: 14-17, Ps 105:8-9). There is an oath sworn when a covenant is made. It is the oath, which unites individuals in a lifelong “fettered” covenantal relationship. It is a promise of faithfulness in and to the relationship. The words “I will” spoken by the covenanting couple, (marriage) or by God, (to His people) “you are my people and **I will** be your God,” (Ez. 31:31) are the pledge of fidelity, “or sacred oath sworn by the faithful love with which Christ loves His Church and sanctifies her through His sacrificial love.” It is the love of God which is the bonding and binding agent which will reside within the covenanted parties in order to give strength and perseverance when it is required.

St. Augustine also understood St. Paul’s word “mysterion” to mean *Sacramentum* or “oath” which Jesus Christ swore for and on behalf of His bride. As Adam had failed to protect his bride (Eve) and therefore not loving her into eternal life, so Jesus’ *Sacramentum* (oath) for an on behalf of His bride was that He would remain faithful to her until the end of time. (Mt: 28:20). Fidelity to the *Sacramentum* (oath) ensured a re imaging of the bride into a reflection of the groom. “*The Sacramentum of marriage was therefore not only a sacred sign of a divine reality*

*but it was also a sacred bond between a husband and wife.”*¹ The covenant, *Sacramentum*, because of its divine origin, could not be rendered empty or barren. The covenant *Sacramentum* was until death and could not be dissolved, because it took on the character of family bond (chain, fetter) and therefore unbreakable. Just as Jesus’ fidelity toward His bride is until death or until the “end of time” so too is the bond between a covenanted married couple, (male/female) unto “the end of time” (Mt. 28:20) and “Until death us do part” (marriage oath).

Marriage was not always understood as a sacrament imbued with sacred properties, but it has been clearly understood from the beginning that marriage, was in the desires and designs of God. From the very beginning, marriage, relationship, and procreation was not cursed (Gn1-3). These were blessed and remained blessed.¹ God blessed marriage, with a special blessing which makes clear its goodness “as proof of His blessing, receive from God, children who crowd about the family table.”

Herein lies the difficulty with the newly sought-after redefinitions of marriage (same gender marriages) they cannot receive blessing from God because children cannot legitimately be awaited as a fruit of that blessing. Children cannot crowd around the table because the relationship by the nature of the couple is inherently barren, illicit and fruitless. Redefinitions cannot be blessed irrespective of how devoted and earnest are the desires or even the intentions of those are calling for them.

“Human marriage finds its eternal and proper reality, in the bridal relationship of God with His people.” With Jesus and His Bride. (Male and female). Perhaps in the mysterious nature of covenant, it may be possible to see why marriage is both indissoluble and between a man and a woman. It is marital relationship unto death. It is a relationship of *fecundity*. It is steadfastness in the face of infidelity. *The character of marriage covenant is one of fecundity, fidelity and steadfastness.* Any one of these elements missing then renders the marriage covenant dissolvable and therefore not a fulfilled covenant. Fecundity in a same gender marriage is decidedly impossible and therefore the union becomes not a covenant marriage, but instead a contracted association where goods and services, or even a friendship might be exchanged, but cannot be the two selves donating their essence to each other and creating of a new “other” because of the exchange. A friendship yes...marriage no

Jewish progressive understanding of their relationship to God was seen imaged “not from human marriage to divine covenant but from divine covenant to human marriage.”¹ So in Old Testament times the Hebrew people “gradually discovered an explicit place for marriage in the religious scheme of life.”¹ Marriage for the Hebrew people gradually acquired a dimension of sacredness

because a new meaning was read into the relationship between Yahweh and His people and Yahweh's character, that is faithfulness, self-giving and steadfast love. "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you" (Jer 31:3 cf. Ez 16:63; Is 54:7-8). The prophets Hosea, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Malachi turned frequently to the image of marriage "marriage became, as it were, a mirror in which something of God's love was seen as reflected."

The idea of covenant relationship is continued in the New Testament. The new covenant entered into by God and His people is facilitated through God's own Son Jesus and His redeeming action on Calvary. Through His death and resurrection Jesus established the new covenant in which He unites Himself to His people (1 Cor 11:25). His blood sealed the covenant and fulfilled all the stipulations set out, "just as Moses sealed the Old Covenant in blood, from animals offered as "peace offerings".

Old Testament covenants, whilst initiated by God Himself, always involved human responses and therefore temporary and unreliable. The New Testament espousal, between God and humankind has been accomplished by Jesus Christ and is eternal. This covenant, and the relationship between the covenant partners, Jesus and His bride, the Church, is assured because of His words "I am with you always" (Mt. 28:20). The new covenant may be seen in the context of the "great mystery" of God's mighty acts in and through Jesus Christ and His mystical body the church."

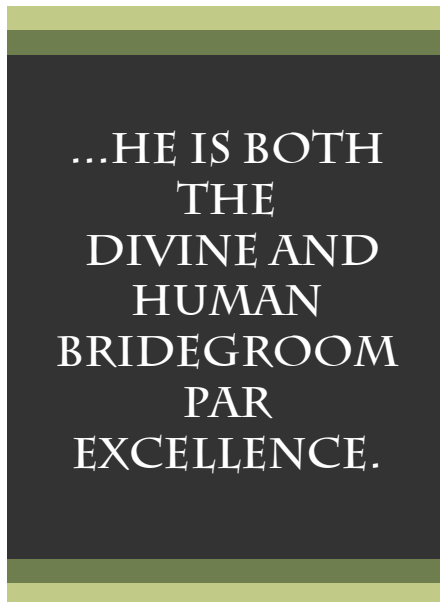
The new covenant of Jesus Christ is realized, actualized and consummated within His new creation. In union with His spouse the Church they give birth to children for the Father's Kingdom.

Children who have looked to the family and whose parents (Jesus and His bride the Church) can rest in the eternal Sabbath (sign of covenant).

To understand covenants it must first be understood that covenants are not only what God "does" with human persons but also "what" God is. God's promises are kept because He is the promise itself and for humankind the promise was redemption through His own design and using what He had originally made, that is, the highest of His creation, the human person. The history of covenants is the timeline of salvation and each new covenant took into account expansion of what He had made until finally in Jesus, He Himself, becomes what He has made, in order to fulfill His own promise to redeem. In Old Testament dispensation Yahweh God slowly emerged as the "Bridegroom" a symbol of divine fidelity unlike Adam (infidelity). In the New Testament it is Jesus who is the "bridegroom." Jesus is the ultimate symbol of "bridegroom" because He is both the divine and the human bridegroom par excellence. Jesus loves His "bride." In death He gave birth to her, (Church) and with utmost fidelity He loves her. Unlike Adam of old He dies for His bride in order to give birth to

her and unlike Adam of old He "binds" Himself to her in faithfulness, and fruitfulness "in this sacrifice there is entirely revealed that plan which God has imprinted on the humanity of man and woman since their creation."

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* has this to say, "The entire Christian life bears the mark of the spousal love of Christ and the Church. Already Baptism, the entry into the People of God is a nuptial mystery; it is so to speak, the Eucharist. Christian Marriage in its turn becomes an efficacious sign, the sacrament of the covenant of Christ and the Church. Since it signifies and communicates grace, marriage between baptized persons is a true sacrament of the New Covenant." (CCC 1617) Indeed it can truly be called a sacrament of the new covenant because it is a sacrament of persons in love with one another. The covenant of marriage is a covenant preserved by one clause – *love*, faithfulness and endurance and this model of love is based upon the love of Christ (bridegroom) for His very own bride. "It is the model and pattern of all human love."



The late Holy Father, John Paul II saw marriage as the restoration of the "primordial sacrament" the perfect harmony of the "covenant" in creation in Eden- a covenant with God and between man and woman. In the covenant of grace and election, God choosing us and espousing Himself to us. St. Paul in Ephesians revealed marriage as the "sacrament of redemption." By Baptism men and women are drawn, through marriage, into the eternal spousal covenant of Christ. Matrimony is the sacrament of the new covenant because it is the sacrament of the great "mystery" (Eph 5:32) of Jesus Christ and His Church.

Relationships, according to St. Paul, had to be lived in the Lord, the way Christ gave Himself in love to His bride the Church, and

the Church received and submitted with the same love. So too, human marriage was to have those same characteristics. Donation in love is the supreme understanding. Covenant love, both old and new, is underpinned by unhindered "donation" of self in a dimension of divine love. Total, free, fruitful loving donation of self, is the mystery of love, because it is a reflection of a greater love, which is divine love. Marriage as a Christian Sacrament draws on the theology of the covenant relationship between God and Israel, and Christ and the Church.

Redefinition of marriage to incorporate other combinations (same sex and other types of coupling) is therefore illegitimate and cannot be called "marriage" because marriage in its original design (since time immemorial) has inscribed within it nuptial fecundity which is only possible between male and female. Not fecundity outside of the couple but as an encounter of the one flesh. It is in marriage that human beings are most like God (God self donates in love perpetually and is fruitful). Creative. God blessed them and commanded them also to be fruitful and multiply. (Gn 1-3). Again creative. In the natural plane same sex coupling and other illegitimate coupling cannot be fruitful. God

designed one male and one female (Gn 1:27) so that they have natural affinity. They have natural complementarity. She is a part of him and he is a part of her but they are different. They fit together. They complete one another. What is lacking in the male is brought to him by the female. What is lacking in the female is brought to her by the male. (They socialize and humanize one another). Together they form the “one flesh” which in due course is open to “one flesh” plus one new one, a child who is the fruit of marriage between one man and one woman, freely entered into and for the duration of life.

The demand for redefinition of marriage has become possible because what was understood about marriage is today being rejected and this is that marriage was for the creating of family, for the creating of nest or even a cocoon for children which would come from that intimacy. Family meant the extension and then protection into the future of the fruit of that union and for the wellbeing of the one man and one woman for life. The couple in marriage (because they have made a lifelong promise, vow) innately know that they take on the role of protectors and guardians of “love” so that in a time of crisis it does not collapse. The nature of marital love is different and much much more than eroticism. It is a giving intentionally of self to the other, and not a response to an instinct. This because the human person is so much higher and more refined than beast whose response is instinctual.

Since children are now wantonly disposed of, through abortion and rejected through contraception, then it makes sense that the demand would be that coupling of any dimension is legitimized. The building and the protection of the nest is no longer thought necessary because there is open death and open rejection willed on the fruit of that intimacy of marriage. At the root of the demands for redefinition of marriage is....contraception and abortion. At the root of abortion is the demand to plagiarize life and at the root of this is hatred for humanity.

Same sex unions are not fruitful and cannot ever be, however much and however good are the people who call for them. However, unions in the right order (male and female) are fruitful both physically and spiritually, but through abortion and contraception are rendered fruitless and this demanded fruitlessness gives rise to demands for legitimization of the order of barrenness.

Same sex attraction has existed since time immemorial. It is not something new but it is only in this day that it is demanded as a right. That it is legitimized, just like in our day abortion as been demanded as a right in order to give it legitimacy. Abortion and same sex attraction have always existed but never in the past demanded as a right, and in the not too distant future euthanasia will be demanded and granted as a right. Then we shall have the unholy triad called “death”.

“I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child - a direct killing of the innocent child - murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love, and we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts”.--Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

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A Society in Pain.

I would like to zone in on a specific area previously touched upon and I would like to enlarge upon it, and that is the area of contraception. Indeed this area I believe is the genesis of all the ills which beset our society today and which the media and same society do not really want to acknowledge.

It is the contraceptive mentality and the abuse of sexuality which should be cited as the main demons. Indeed others might cite television, movies, games, wars, and so on but contraception leading to loose morality can be seen as the seed and from this seed grew the fruits attendant to it.

The media itself is anti life and as such cannot be expected to see the seed from which this anti life attitude grew. It would be like saying that an abortionist sees that he/she is killing a baby/human person and should stop it. An abortionist must use deceptive language about cells and tissue and product of conception and foetus rather than “baby.” In this way it becomes possible for the abortionist to proceed. Likewise, the media has a vested interest in not seeing the root of the problem in order that it can proceed to

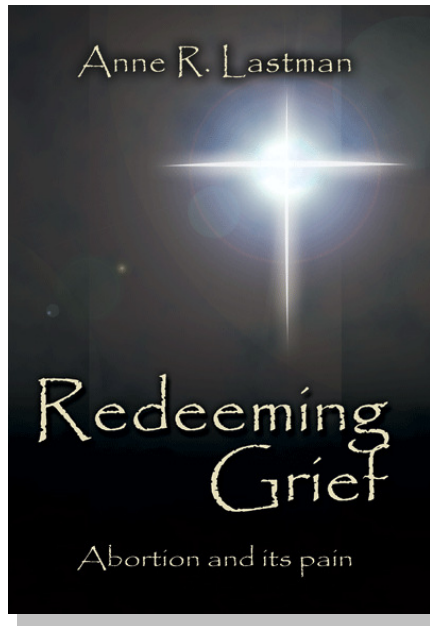
report news of massive dollar value.

The contraceptive pill, initiated into societal thought the notion that sexuality can be toyed with without recourse to after effects. Sexuality became the new leisure time activity to be used and "enjoyed" by all and sundry. At will, and in any manner, at any place, at any time, at any age and in any configuration. It became nothing more than something "we all do." It became the most common leisure time activity of all time. Indeed the contraceptive mentality made barrenness seem attractive.

Perhaps there will be some who say that this is good. That the sexual repression of past eras were damaging and therefore better forgotten. But I would argue that this is not the case. Some would argue that today there is a healthier attitude to sexual matters than past times. But I would argue that this is not the case. Today there is a condoned societal voyeurism which is so damaging that its effects will not be recognised for several more generations...

In my area of work (post abortion grief and sexual abuse grief) I hear sad stories. I hear of wounds of the spirit which leave me trembling and give me sleepless nights. I hear of sadness of abandonment (after sexual use and abuse) unlike other times. I hear of outright sexual use and abuse. I hear deeply damaged persons crying out for pain relief. I hear that the rampant sexuality of the young and at times not so young leaves the person empty and lonely. I also hear that "I started on the pill at fourteen and mum knew about it. In fact she helped to get it" I also hear that "the pill makes sure that I can have sex with my boyfriend and not get pregnant" (Janet 15yrs) I also hear "I was on the pill and forgot to take it and I took all those I forgot to take all at once and then I was on track again" (Mel 15 yrs. abortion) I hear "I am sixteen years old and I am sexually active with my boyfriend, (my mother knows) and I don't want to get pregnant and if I get pregnant I don't want a kid because I am too young to have a kid" (Terri, 16) I also hear that "my mum had an abortion when she was young and she has been alright. And if I get pregnant I am going to have an abortion or as many abortions as I need to until I am ready to have a kid." (Diane 17yrs)

These are some of the comments I encounter in my office, on the phone or letters.. There is a hardness of heart in the young that is frightening.



Redeeming Grief is a reflection of and study of abortion grief, which is experienced by some women who choose to undergo this elective procedure. These reflections are the result of listening to over 1000 personal stories and listening to the expressions used by the women as they spoke about their decision to abort the life of their child. These reflections then attempt to reconstruct the meaning that this procedure has had for the aborting woman and how this one procedure has been the catalyst for life changes.

Redeeming Grief looks at abortion trauma and grief from the spiritual and the psychological perspective. Its influences on the individuals involved and society. It is hoped that the language used is reader friendly and the concepts (both spiritual and psychological) are also reader friendly.

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When challenged that a pregnancy means “baby” the response is “No its not! It’s just cells. I studied reproduction at school and it’s just cells and tissue. It becomes human after it’s born and learns to recognise.” (Tanya 16 yr old from a private religious school).

Perhaps the sadness in all of these stories and others not quoted, is that the most common factor is the youthfulness of the speaker and contraception and parents (usually mother) knowing that the daughter is taking contraceptive measures in order to be sexually active. I have never heard a father making these comments.

There is little thought about the meaning of sexuality and appears to be little concern for the psychological and spiritual welfare of the young. The overriding concern appears to be “make sure that if you are going to do *it* you are careful and do not get pregnant.”

Whenever I speak to mothers and groups I am often told that “there should be no need for abortions in today’s age and information climate, because the pill is readily available and there is a lot of knowledge about conception. It’s not like the old days when we didn’t know much.” (Kath 68 years of age). When I say that it is this understanding and attitude which contributes to abortion rate then she becomes offended. “It is more serious to have an abortion than to take the pill. The *pill* is good because we can’t really stop the young from experimenting sexually so it’s important to make sure that they don’t get pregnant.”

As I struggle with this mentality as expressed by this woman (I suspect she is projecting her ideas about her own life) I at times feel like throwing the towel in, and going back to the safety and sanctuary of the university campus. Or the safer place... my kitchen! It does not seem to connect that the pill and rampant sexuality go hand in hand: It does not seem to connect that the pill and abortion go hand in hand. It does not seem to connect that the pill has eroded from the parents their rights, duty and authority in guiding their children’s psychosexual development and their beneficial influence in that area. It does not seem to connect that too early sexual activity leads to emotional fatigue before the child’s 21st birthday. It does not seem to connect that sexuality is a mature activity which requires some maturity in order to process all that it encompasses. It does not seem to connect that when sexual integrity is violated, the imprint always remains. It does not seem to connect that contraception and barrenness and violation of sexual integrity go hand in hand. It does not seem to connect that barrenness through contraception leads to demands for all manner of coupling because the intent of the sexual act has been thwarted and sterilised. Etc.

The emergence of the pill, (contraception) at first for what was believed to be helpful measures to control family size, followed by the rejection of Humane Vitae by the catholic population and society, has opened the door to the deeply wounding of marriage and human intimacy. The slow erosion of values followed. Abortion then became the norm. This then was followed by ease of marriage breakdown and divorce. Followed by blended families and the introduction of new partnerships. This then was followed by new types of blended relationships. And now the demands for legitimisation of all manner of coupling under the

banner of “marriage”

Sexuality abused (whether by sexual abuse, abortion, violence, violation) results in societal illness, disintegration and slow death. Sexuality distorted/frustrated in its task becomes a caricature of its true nature. Contraception and its intent is designed to cause barrenness and if barrenness is highly desired and sought after then this means that all manner of sexual combinations become sought after because the artificial frustrating of the work of sexuality has been accomplished.

As His Grace Archbishop Fulton Sheen said in one of his brilliant talks “purity is the reverence paid to the mystery of sex”. Contraception pays no reverence to the mystery of sex but indeed it mocks sexuality and mocks the Lord and Giver of Life.

Abortion and its effects on Marriage and Family

“Brother will betray brother and a father his child” Mat. 10:21

In a society which aborts approximately 50 million babies per year it would be difficult to think that the family would remain intact from this attack. Fifty million abortions per year mean that 50 million women and 50 million men have acquiesced to the abortion decision. 100,000,000 people who will take into any relationship that they have the memory of abortion.

In ongoing studies it is becoming more and more evident that abortion does not leave those involved unscathed. Abortion or the killing of a pre born infant leaves an indelible mark on the being of the person and this mark is not of a positive nature no matter how hard the pro abortion people desire it to be. Abortion leaves a mark, perhaps like the mark of Cain.

How this affects family is that wounded and hurt individuals take into new marriage and new family and new relationship the memory (guilt/shame) of an abortion and this will slowly erode confidence in his and her ability to husband/wife and parent.

As more and more parents parent in a wounded manner, more and more children who are permitted to be born are carrying the pain of their parents’ action because traumatized, wounded and hurt people can only parent in this way. Males and females lose their sense of who they are as male and female. For the woman, depression, ontological loneliness, a seeking of a goals too high to achieve and thus failure,(self fulfilling prophecy) the emptiness of life filled with all the material things desired but empty of inner peace. Indeed loss of peace in family life. (See the words of mother Theresa).

For the male a sense of impotence / failure in being able to protect his child/children. A sense of loss and failure leading to alcohol, substance abuse, violence, or even workaholic. “I made a mistake. I didn’t think it would matter so much” (Mark)

For the children of the family the sense that Mum and Dad are hiding something. Mum’s tears speak volumes, and the children wonder if they are the cause of those tears.

Letters

Dear Anne,

I never cease to be amazed at your efforts, success and above all your bravery. The words "do not be afraid" are certainly working for you.

Enclosed please find some practical expression of my support for your work.

God Bless
JB (NSW)

Thank you John, I very very much appreciated your "practical" help and your very kind words....Anne

Dear Anne

With much love and respect I send this gift to you. I have always wanted to sow a seed in your garden of love. When I remember you and you calling to give women their dignity I am so happy and filled with joy that my heavenly father blessed me to meet you and spend time with you. The time we spent together has touched me deeply. I assure you of my prayers everyday when I am before the table of the Lord and as He feeds me from His heart that is so special I pray for you and your family. Have a wonderful break and as you prepare for Christmas may His gentle love refresh you and strengthen you and fill you with His Holy Spirit
With much love

Your sister in Christ
Cheryl.

*Thank you darling Cheryl it was a pleasure to spend time with you too.
Dear friends I printed this letter to show you the very thing which keeps me going and that is the love and prayer support of people like Cheryl and you dear readers and friends.
Thank you Cheryl*

Dear Anne,

My name is Gerard. We once met at your house after a Helper of God's Precious Infants took me to visit you one afternoon after a vigil. It was the day after Victoria had passed an abortion bill.

Personal information about writer deleted from here..then continues.....

I was at a London Helper's vigil on Saturday and afterwards, everyone was in the church hall. A DVD was being sold, and then a book was produced. It was described as 'brilliant', 'incredible' [insert adjective here ha-ha!] and people in the room were nodding and telling each other how good it was - it was by an author called 'Anne Lastman' - Redeeming Grief! When I heard it, I knew that that was my cue to get in contact! So, any time you are tempted to let the battles in the pro-life scene get you down - please remember that you have written a book which is literally helping, educating and inspiring people on a global level! I felt so privileged to have met the author!
Please send my love and best wishes to all the people in Melbourne who are doing such great work in the pro-life scene to create a culture of hope and redemption in our world! God bless and I will be praying for you and your family!

Love,
Gerard

Thank you dear Gerard for your kind words. It lifted my spirit especially about the book. I know it's good. My heart is pleased with it but it seems to have been generally ignored here in Australia though overseas it has been beautifully received. I am resigned to the words of Jesus found in Lk 4:24. I guess He knew what He was talking about.

Keep well and keep in touch and God bless your vocation.

Ps Yes I remember you; you came to my home with Chris.

Dear Anne

My dear what a year you've had! It seems that you are doing marvellous work both here and overseas. Mazel tov.

Jeremy A.
Caulfield Vic

Thanks Jeremy

The family is under attack on all fronts and this is very clear to all except those who refuse to see, but the most serious is the assault by parents on their pre born children. It is attack on innocence by those who should be the protectors, and in this scenario the gradual loss of meaning for the man and the woman.

Dear friends as I come to the end of this first newsletter for 2010 I would like to thank those who have supported me throughout the years. Thank you to those who sent Christmas gifts. I appreciate your care for me.

I know that this issue of the newsletter is different but we need to see that abortion pain wounds all. Not just the woman or even just the male but it wounds families. It wounds marriage. It wounds society. Its wounds all of us because human beings especially women were never designed to take their child to be killed. As abortion damages the character of woman so too abortion damages the character of marriage. If childlessness and barrenness are what is demanded then of course other demands to change our marriage norms will be made.

Please dear friends be prepared to fight for what is beautiful and good. Marriage as designed by God. Children sent to us as a gift and let us not compromise this because of guilt or apathy.

Recently a gentleman friend I was speaking with asked me "Anne why do you do this year in year out?" The only answer I have is that this job is for me is a pilgrimage to the heart of my Father in heaven who has loved me and come looking for me when I didn't want to be found. He also holds my dear babies in His care and because of this I'll keep going till He says "now rest Anne."

I would ask that you please continue your support as you can. You know that the rent, phones electricity, newsletter, and everything to do with the work is supported by your kind ness.

Please support me through the buying of a copy of the book Redeeming Grief. This helps me enormously.

As I start the new year please continue to pray for me and this work and continue to pray for those in my care, Robyn, Victoria, Roger, (new) Anna, Kirsten, Heather, Juliette, John, Susan, Jenny, Josie, Tina ,Kerry, Paul, Paula, Erica, Nicholas, Teresa, Lillian, Diane, Rebecca, Monique (new) Marlene, (new) Mark (new).

Dear Friends I have been asked to promote a very important conference coming up this year in Lourdes France. Especially doctors and other health workers on my newsletter list I would strongly encourage to attend. Fabulous to meet other pro life doctors and friends.

WORLD CONGRESS FIAMC

LOURDES 2010

MEDICINE AND FAITH

UNDER THE HIGH PATRONAGE OF
THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL OF
PASTORAL HEALTHCARE (VATICAN)
AND UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF
THE INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION OF LOURDES (AMIL)
AND WORLD FEDERATION OF THE
CATHOLIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATIONS
(FIAMC)

6-9 MAY 2010.

<http://pagesperso-orange.fr/p.theillier/enindex.htm>



Anne Lastman-

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FVC, Counsellor

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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 anne@victimsofabortion.com.au to be added to the email list.