#### **Dear Friends**

In a magnificent report on July 31<sup>st</sup>, it was announced that the Pontifical Academy for Life will prepare a document on post abortion grief! Yeah. The new President of the pontifical Academy for Life, His Excellency Bishop Carrasco de Paula announced that his dicastery is preparing a document on the after effects of abortion especially on women and indeed he even called it "post abortion syndrome" and this paper is to be published in 2011.

As I read His Excellency's comments I rejoiced that at last recognition is being made for such a trauma and grief at the highest level of the Catholic Church. This is one of the most neglected areas of grief recognition in our society and to date the least researched. We could ask why this is so. But we all know that the answer to this why is because abortion has become a "woman's rights" issue and as such cannot be challenged by the powers that be. This is utter rubbish because abortion causes deep and at times complicated grief and as such we need to remove the politics and look to the reason for the grief.

I find it interesting that "grief" organisations can support and study and create recovery programs for people experiencing all kinds of disenfranchised (Kenneth Doka, 1989) grief, eg. Grief at loss of job, loss of pet, loss of friendships, loss of "partner" loss of personal belongings, loss of hopes and dreams, yet remain ambivalent when it comes to abortion loss and grief. Again we can ask the question why? And the answer must be that "chairs" and positions in universities become endangered, and no one wants to endanger his/her position because of abortion.

How interesting is this "rights" business! Today an Australian native plant or animal or whale has more rights to life than an infant in the womb. An infant whose existence is discarded either through chemical abortion (RU486) or the surgical abortion which in some states in Australia means abortion to 40 weeks gestation. Congratulations to Bishop Carrasco de Paula and the Pontifical Academy for Life for taking this stance.

I particularly love His Grace's comment that "the academy's role is to always go beyond polemics in order to reflect on every single aspect of the issue, even if it is uncomfortable to face. Internal and external debate does not scare us, rather, it enriches us." And further his comment "we believe that in studying this issue a distinction must be made. The existence of post abortion syndrome is a well known fact that has been developed in literature. I am referring to the state of depression that isolates many women who have undergone an abortion." Fantastic recognition!

And finally a very important comment from His Excellency, "It is true that abortion in addition to killing an innocent person, profoundly affects the conscience of the woman who undergoes it. It is a question then that cannot be ignored, especially from a pastoral point of view"

I personally wish that "grief organisations" and trainers of grief personnel would take the same stance and not be deterred because of the politics which surround the issue. It is the politics which blind trainers and researchers and because of this, this pervasive grief which covers our humanity continues unabated.

Dear friends when I read the report of this happening I rejoiced. All the appointments and trips and talks by me and several others had at last borne fruit. Thank God.

(http://www.catholicnewsagency.com)

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**Dear Friends,** In the last issue of the newsletter I wrote about DLP Member Mr Peter Kavanagh and his motion for an inquiry into the neglected infants who were aborted and born alive and left to die unattended. Mr Kavanagh sought to have an inquiry into these deaths and the said motion was defeated. There has been further on this matter. Thank you Elizabeth for your vigilance and article.

# **DLP MP's motion for inquiry into baby deaths defeated** "I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me." Mat 25:45

On 28 July 2010, Peter Kavanagh, Victorian MLC for Western Victoria (Democratic Labor Party) moved a motion in the Legislative Council for an inquiry into the deaths of children born alive after having "survived late-term abortions". The motion resulted in heated debate between Mr Kavanagh and Colleen Hartland (Greens) and Brian Tee and Gayle Tierney (Australian Labor Party), who opposed the motion apparently because the children were born prematurely as a result of induced labours rather than in the course of abortions, a fact made clear to these members after receiving briefings from the Department of Health.

The recently published 2007 annual report of the Consultative Council on Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity recorded that 52 babies had died neonatally after "terminations for congenital abnormalities", at 20 or more weeks gestation; apparently the report's use of the term "termination of pregnancy" conflated both "induced labour" and "abortion". Mr Kavanagh's motion was supported by a number of members, who supported his broader desire for an inquiry into the circumstances in which these children died.

The motion failed 27 votes "against" to nine "in favour". According to a press release issued by Mr Kavanagh's office, Mr Kavanagh was "told by several distressed ALP MP's that they had to vote against my motion", because the ALP "did not want anything at all that even hinted at abortion to be mentioned at the time of the election".

Peter Kavanagh expressed disappointment that Ms

Hartland, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney had obviously, from the content of their contributions, not read the actual motion that was before the House.

And another fact happened to make this event even more confusing for the observer such as myself. The Hansard record of that debate miss-reported Ms Hartland's contribution and gave the false impression that Ms Hartland had in fact read the motion. Mr Kavanagh issued a press statement in which he said: "Hansard falsely indicated that she was right and I was wrong. The opposite was in fact the case."

As a result, Mr Kavanagh complained in a point of order to the President of the Legislative Council, The Hon. Bob Smith, who said he regarded the complaint as "very serious" and "almost unprecedented". The President reported back to the House on the following day, that Mr Kavanagh's complaints were valid. He also said that Ms Hartland MLC was not responsible for the misreporting which was done by a Hansard reporter.

Hansard Manager, Joanne Truman announced that "an erratum will be issued with the next *Weekly Hansard* and the sessional volumes" which will "reflect the change outlined by the President in his ruling". (Erratum: "a statement of an error and its correction inserted, usually on a separate page or slip of paper, in a book or other publication; correction"). So far, after reading again the Hansard record of the debate over Peter Kavanagh motion in the Legislative Council of Victoria on the 28 July 2010, I note that the erratum has not been inserted or published.

One can wonder, is it a coincidence – is it only a "human error" of the Hansard reporter, however rare and unprecedented? Why has it not been corrected?

And what is the difference between destroying the baby while it is still in its mother's womb OR inducing a premature birth and letting the baby die? Apparently there is. The definitions are different. But it is still not allowing the baby to live until natural death. Therefore – should there be an inquiry, as Mr Kavanagh MLC and those Members who supported his motion wanted?

I am sure that I am not alone in my deep conviction that all

human beings regardless of the intention of the parent/s or the medical procedures performed on them have equal human dignity before God.

Therefore it is of deep concern, that every baby born should have his/her human rights afforded to them, and especially their right to live; or in the case of unavoidable dying, receive every possible comfort while in agony. The staff involved with the care for babies born in such circumstances should be able to do so without risking disapproval and should be given all necessary support as needed. To do otherwise is barbaric and inhumane and puts all those involved such as staff and parents at the risk of trauma.

Elizabeth K.

# News Story (1)

In a recent news story coming out of the UK and read on daily Mail UK we heard of the love of a mother for her prematurely born infant. A love so strong and so insistent and so right that it brought her dead child back to life. The story went thus; the young mother Mrs Kate Ogg prematurely (27 weeks) delivered her twin children a little girl (Emily) and a little boy whom the couple named Jamie. The little girl was delivered successfully but sadly their little boy after much effort by the medical staff to resuscitate him and get him to breathe was given to the couple with the news that they could not save

him and had declared him dead.

With this unbearable news he was given to the mother and father to hold and cuddle and love him before saying goodbye. Mrs Ogg gently un wrapped her infant from his blanket and held him against her skin on her chest. She wanted to feel him against her heart and wanted him to feel her love for him.

For about two hours this young mother Kate and her husband David spoke to their baby, stroked him gently, telling him they loved him, telling him his name "Jamie" telling him of his baby sister Emily and told him all the things they wanted to do with him and his sister and slowly the miracle began to unfold, Jamie who had been declared dead by those who attended his delivery, began to gasp for

At first these gasps were thought to be reflex actions. At least that is what the medicos told the parents but the mother who could not let her baby go continued the love words and the gentle touching till eventually "I felt him move as if he were startled, then he started gasping more and more regularly" said Kate.

"I thought, "Oh my God, what's going on?" A short time later he opened his eyes. It was a miracle."

"'I told my mum, who was there, that he was still alive. Then he held out his hand and grabbed my finger. 'He opened his eyes and moved his head from side to side."

The parents sent news to the doctor who had who had delivered Jamie but he dismissed them, claiming it was impossible. A midwife continued to film the movements, and once given breast milk on his mother's finger, he began breathing regularly.



"At that point the doctor came back. He got a stethoscope, listened to Jamie's chest and just kept shaking his head," recounted Kate. "He said, 'I don't believe it, I don't believe it." David said, "Luckily, I've got a very smart wife." strong. very

"She instinctively did what she did. If she hadn't have done that, then Jamie probably wouldn't be here."

Skin-to-skin contact has been recognised as a vital step in the bonding process, however, premmie babies are only usually given this opportunity once their vital signs are stable, which can be days or weeks after birth.

How wonderful it was to read this story and to read of a mother's love so strong and so undefinable and so instent that she was able to bring her infant back to life. And how different from those mothers who took their late term infants (some older than this child) to be aborted and whose doctors and medical staff left those born alive after the abortion procedure, to die struggling for breath and eventually succumb alone and unloved. In this story we can see the holy dimension of motherhood. A dimension which is truest form of mothering. A dimension which truly gave

This story was found at:

http://www.essentialbaby.com.au/baby/baby-health/babybrought-back-to-life-with-skintoskin-contact-20100827-13uoa.html

### **News Story 2**

Following on the above fabulous news story of a mother's love and its miraculous powers, there appeared a second beautiful story of parent's love for their children and the difference in responses.

In my last issue of the newsletter I wrote about the babies who were aborted and born alive but were left to die unattended. As I read about these abortions I could feel the palpable loneliness of those infants and a great shame that we as a society have reached such pits.

In this feeling I read an article again in our daily paper Herald Sun 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2010, with a heading *Love That Won't Die*. It was the story of two little boys who are not expected to live past their fifth birthdays because of an incurable disease so rare that it affects 1 child in 1.4 million (leukodystrophy). And how tragic that both of their children have this disease. Yet the words which pierced my heart with love for all the family were these "but they would rather have their boys with this deadly form of leukodystrophy than never to have known them" and the report continued with "at least we have had this time to say goodbye."

This story was an amazing story because of its beauty and pathos. "It's worth hearing because it shows that lives of substance don't need to last 80 years" the reported said. I was so taken by the sensitivity of the reporter and the beautiful photos which accompanied the story. Photos of a young family in love with each other.

My own tears fell as I read "if we were given the choice between having Sebastian and Charlie as they are or never having children, or even having two children that aren't Sebastian and Charlie we'd go down the same path again" said the children's parents.

This story can be found in the Herald Sun, August 28, 2010 Heraldsun.com.au pages 1, 8 and 9.

Dear friends it is such a beautiful yet sad story because of the kind of love which is shown "a love that won't die" and I share this with you to show the difference between this story and the the report of the 52 infants who were aborted (late term) and were born alive and left to die struggling for breath. The first story speaks of a love in the dimension of the cross. An exquisite kind of love which puts no conditions or barriers or demands.

The second story of the aborted infants who some tried to justify the abortion by saying that they were "wanted" children but aborted because of disabilities is the shallow kind of love surrounded by conditions, barriers and demands. For the parents who aborted because of supposed foetal abnormalities a life of substance meant substance

according to their terms.

Dear friends the story of these two young boys particularly touched my inner being and clearly showed me how much we as a society (especially the women of society) have changed. How much we have traded in and because of this trade how much our feminine genius has been mutilated.

I am reminded that women (and men) have written within their essence the need to protect their child, as seen in the above stories and yet there seems to be a pervasive loss of this knowledge and I suspect that this is due to the wholesale slaughter of the infants in the womb and the woman's role in this, thus leading to a hardening of the heart in order to not feel. A corporate psychic numbing so that no pain is possible. I suspect that a hardness of heart has overtaken what used to be the feminine gift - life. A shell formed to protect against horror of disfigured femininity.

### A Poem by Jenny

(Her story issue 69)

#### **Allow Me**

Allow me to shed this veil of sorrow Allow me to shed the wall of guilt Allow me to shed this cloak of shame Allow me to regret But

Without more pain
Allow me to look forward
Allow me to step toward that light
Allow me to step off the cross road
To a place where I can live again

Allow me to care
Allow me to dare
Allow me to dance
To even prance
With some joy
Allow me to laugh
Allow me to sing
Allow me to begin
Again
Allow me a chance
One more chance
For peace
Take off this cloak
Take off this veil
Allow me to break through this wall

Allow me.

#### Jenny.

Beautiful..as always. Jenny writes with deep love and understanding.

# **Naming**

I have often been challenged/asked why is it important to name infants in the womb because surely this humanises the child more and causes more grief to the already grieving woman and as a result of this one of my beautiful readers of the newsletter sent me in this short article and I think it's so good that I asked permission to print it. Thank you Helen for taking the time to write it.

#### Naming

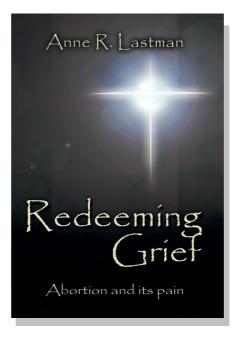
We don't realize it but a name carries weight. We are named by our parents when we are born. Why? Because a name gives us a personal dignity and recognition that we are individual persons .The Christian name, or some other in the case of non-Christians, is given to us and from then on we are known by that particular name. A whole identity and history is formed around that name. A vision of who that person is surrounds that name. That person has understanding, knowledge, face, laughter, family, stories, and so on.

Some do not like their name and have it changed for another more suitable to Indeed the "name" is so important that some people do choose to change it to make it more "them"

How do we de-humanise a person? By taking away his/her name and giving him a number or nothing at all (as occurs in a prison and even in concentration camps). A name confers honour, and dignity, a number is always "faceless" None of us would like to be known as a number it is beneath our dignity of whom we are and who we were meant to be.

God has a name for each of us and we won't find out our true name until we get to heaven. How awesome to think that God has a special name for each and every one of us and we are known by name by the Lord of the universe! "If a mother ever forgets you, I will never forget you" says the Lord. (Isaiah

49)



**Redeeming Grief** is a reflection of and study of abortion grief, which is experienced by some women who choose to undergo this elective procedure. 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.

#### **AUD\$29.95 (inc GST)**

Plus postage and handling

To order your copy of Redeeming Grief, please complete this order form, detach, and send with Cash, Cheque or Money Order to:

> Victims Of Abortion, PO Box 6094, Vermont South, Vic, 3133, Australia.

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	OR	AUD	\$12.60 (Worldwide)
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So how very important it is that we name the little ones who have died in the womb. They have been on earth for just a short while but they need to be acknowledged and given an earthly name by their earthly mother or father or both because this mirrors the heavenly process awaiting them as God confers on them His own name for them.

Helen.

# Trauma, Pain & Grief a Hidden Gift

Even uttering these words may seem horrendous. Pain and grief a hidden gift?

First of all let's look at trauma and what it is. Trauma is an experience which is outside of the "normal" It causes pain, wounds, and even ,can at times, cause death. However, trauma even though an experience so totally "other" that all coping mechanisms are called into question and left wanting, trauma has inscribed within it change. No trauma can occur without leaving in its wake a huge change.

The victim of trauma whilst wounded has it within him/her to beat the trauma with the grief and change from victim to How the trauma is dealt with and handled victor. determines enslavement or freedom.

Trauma can lead the individual on a journey of discovery or it can bury him/her. The depth of trauma in its core, in its nucleus, is black and forbidding, but to enter into this darkness is to pave the way for the eternal light to be shone into that place. At the deepest core of trauma is pain, loss, grief, anger, loss of balance, loss of trust, loss of belief and yet it is into this place that the most beautiful change and life altering elements are found.

A traumatic event in the life of an individual opens the doorways for all manner change. Yes, there is the chemical change, and there is the emotional, psychological and spiritual change but into this change there is also the seed of holiness. Of divine intervention. Trauma of the deepest nature can create PTSD and post traumatic stress disorder is indeed dis- order of the spirit which then translates into the observable physical behaviours. However, into this milieu can be found the seed leading to change. The seed of understanding.

I have so often seen this seed sprout, and grow and bloom into a statement like this, "I will never have another abortion Anne, and I will speak out against it at every opportunity. If I can help it, another baby that I know will not die because of my silence" (Sophie).

This is radical change. This is the change encountered when the core of grief and trauma has been penetrated and not retrieved from. Radical change from multiple abortions to "never again" comes when that pain which is found in abortion trauma and the ensuing grief is faced and the right and wrong is seen, and the reason for the pain is seen.

In looking at the grief and guilt and shame and horror which has found place in her being, the woman can look straight at it and say "never again" or of course because of freedom of will she can say "it's not important it's only a bunch of cells" and this is not taking advantage of the hidden gift within the pain. This is exacerbation of pain.

This is again rejection the "gift" this time not the infant but the "gift" of Mercy, healing and of radical change.

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Also in the last issue of the newsletter I spoke about the Victorian abortion provider Ms Jo Wainer (wife of the late Bertram Wainer who opened the first abortion clinic here in Victoria in 1972 and who was the first to campaign for legal abortion, which started the massive holocaust we see in Australia today) and her being awarded a Queen's birthday award and I was left amazed at how it is possible to be given an award for killing pre born infants. It still has me flummoxed but then again it's the hardness of heart I spoke about earlier.

In this issue I would like to write about another award and honour given to Mr David Forster given at the annual pro life dinner.

David, a magnificent human being, who has been standing outside abortion clinics for over 20 years praying and offering women help to save their baby from death and them from the lifelong pain of having aborted their child.

David was awarded the inaugural Charles Francis award. Charles Francis QC was a fabulous friend and pro life Queens Counsel (barrister) whose help in pro life matters was always forthcoming and who wrote copiously on matters of life and post abortion trauma and grief and whose expertise was seen in his defence of women who had been hurt by their abortion experience. Indeed it was a sad day for the pro life movement in Australia when Charles passed away (August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009).

This award was presented to David by Charles's lovely wife Babette in the presence of their family and several hundred pro lifers. Babette is another magnificent pro lifer and this

# Letters

Dear Anne

God bless you in all areas of our life ad may He continue to provide all you need to do His work for the Kingdom.

Yours in Christ,

Sandra

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne

Thank you for another Broken Branches keeping us up to date in the Pro life war. I pray for your continued health and commitment to the cause.

I also offer my sympathy on the death of your mother. Enclosed is a donation to help a little with your work. With love to you and your family

Kath....Vict.

Dear Kath, thank you for your kindness. The commitment hasn't waned but the "bones" are tiring.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne,

Thanks again for the terrific newsletter.

I have to read these a few times to take it all in. No wonder you were a bit late in writing this one as I am sure your mind is going nonstop with all these facts, figures etc.

You do a wonderful job Anne and I am thinking it must take a great toll on your mind and body.

Again may God bless you and yours abundantly now and always.

With love and prayers.

Maureen W. (Vic)

Thank you for your kind words Maureen yes it is taking a toll. Thanks for prayers I need them. Anne Dear Anne.

Many thanks for your faithful sending of your newsletter Broken Branches. You are to be congratulated on the excellent work you are doing for "Victims of Abortion" We are living in a very secular anti Christian era clearly shown by some of the candidates standing for office in the recent Federal Elections. We support your effort in your work. Thank you for your excellent newsletter which keeps us up to date with what is happening and provides many beautiful testimonies of redeemed lives.

Will uphold you and the conference in Rome in October 2010. Especially will remember you at Blessed Mary of the Cross canonisation which will be a great blessing on our nation and womanhood.

Please find enclosed donation to help with your work. All for Jesus and His little infants.

God Bless Philip. NSW

Thank you dear Philip for your kind words, donation and prayers. Sadly I can't stay for canonisation even though I will be in Rome a 4 days before canonisation, but I have to return because of another commitment I made here in Melbourne.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne,

Its been a long time since I last wrote to you but your last newsletter touched me so much that I felt the need to write again. The special letter by Sue really touched my heart and I could hear her pain and then her changing and wanting to get better.

Thanks Anne for doing the work you do even if it must surely be getting harder and harder to keep hearing the things you hear.

Please keep going as long as you can and to this end I enclose a small donation. I wish it could be more but as a pensioner it's hard. Thank you for keeping on sending your newsletter I read it and share it around some of my friends.

God Bless you dear

Marie S... (Melbourne)

Thank you Marie for your lovely words. I appreciate your care and thank you for donation....Anne

award honours the life and work of Charles. See issue 72 of this newsletter for a little about Charles.

David Forster, like Charles, has fought for the life of the babies and their mothers through thick and thin. Through rain and sleet and heat. He is an icon of the East Melbourne landscape, much to the chagrin of the abortuary staff. And how ironical it is that David prays outside the same abortion clinic (or human abattoir) where Ms Jo Wainer (and her late husband) carry out their baby killing activities. Ms Wainer was "honoured" for killing babies and David was honoured for trying to save them and their mothers. I wonder which award holds greater honour.

Congratulations on the beautiful award David, and hear the words of the Lord especially spoken for you "well done good and faithful servant. I tell you solemnly; in so far as you did it for the least of my brothers you did it to me" (Mt 26:26).

Dear friends as I come to the end of this newsletter I want to say that by the time you read this, I will be at the Human Life International conference in Rome. Oct 4-10. At this conference I will be delivering a paper on the connection between sexual abuse of a child and later multiple abortions and also delivering a workshop on the same topic. Please pray for me as I will for thee. In the next issue of the newsletter I will report on the conference.

Whilst in Rome I will also try and look for a publisher for my book which has now been translated into Italian. (Thank you Francesca) There are several possibilities at the moment.

I hope to also meet other post abortion people so that we can share our knowledge and how best we can help in this new and much neglected area of grief work. I think as a collective voice we need to make more noise so that this "new grief" does not become a "victim" of political rants and raves but indeed is given the attention as grief that it deserves.

There are also several other "things" I would like to achieve

and then maybe I can retire and weed that garden of mine!!! However, I can't quite see that yet and it appears a bit distant still.

Please dear friends I have taken on board several new people but one of them (Tallia) in particular is very very distressed and I need lots of help with her. Please pray as I won't be able to work much with her until I come back but her distress is palpable. Her nightmares are terrible and haunting. Please keep her covered in prayer.

Also dear friends may I ask again that you might consider purchasing a copy of my book Redeeming Grief. I and my dear and long-suffering husband would love to be relieved for the last several hundred copies. You would put a smile on my poor husband's face. Maybe mine too! Thank you in advance.

Please also continue to pray for Amanda, Juliet, Suzie, Heather, John, Jenny, Josie, Matthew (new), Stephanie, Gloria, Gabby, Charlene, Roger, Sophie, Erica, Nic, Judy, Catherine (New).

Dianne, Anna, Rebecca, Monica, Marlene, Lynda, Patsy, Sara, Rosemary, Jacquie, Antoinette, Louise Tallia.(new)

Till we meet again,

God Bless your life.

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