

Broken Branches

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

Issue104 – Apr/May 2015

A Special Letter

Dear friends I have promised Christine a special place for her story. Herewith:

Hello Anne
Thank you for the insight into the tragedy of post abortion trauma. Having been forced to choose to abort my baby by my new husband, who said he would leave me if I went ahead and had the baby, I underwent an illegal abortion by the abortionist in East Melbourne in the late 60's, and have suffered from guilt for many, many years as a result of that decision.

Only through becoming a Christian and realising the full forgiveness of God, through Jesus' sacrifice, have I finally been able to forgive myself but this has been a long process.

That has not taken away the sorrow and sense of loss, but has enabled me to speak out at times about the lie that the baby is "just a piece of tissue".

It was through this horrible experience that I have inadvertently saved my granddaughter's life. I had revealed to my daughter when she was in her teens the terrible thing I had done with the abortion and how it had affected me and that it was the killing of a human being. Later, when she found herself pregnant and unmarried, she said she would never abort her baby because of what I had told her. Praise God that out of that original despicable act, another life was saved, my beautiful granddaughter.

The lie, that those in the abortion trade and the politicians tell that continue to allow and support these murderous events to take place perpetuate, is that women should have a choice to do what they want with their bodies. The truth is that there is no genuine counselling of vulnerable mothers-to-be and therefore the abortion facilities collude to destroy

that which God has formed in the womb. (Psalm 139:13, 14) In so doing, the difference between right and wrong is becoming more muddied.

May God continue to raise up strong men & women who value human lives and are prepared to speak out and take a stance against this evil.

God give strength to the courageous doctors and politicians who refuse to be a party to such murderous wrong.

Christine T. (Vic)

Dear Christine Thank you for sharing this story with us and giving me permission to print it. I wanted my readers to see what long term damage and effects abortion has and that it is never forgotten irrespective what voices seem to want to say. Guilt is all consuming because we are not designed for such acts as abortions: see my article further down.

Left Holding Baby

Dear friends in one of our daily papers recently (Feb 1 2015) there was a story on page 5 which really wounded me deeply. I think that I am getting used to everything I hear and read but not really. It always leaves me wounded.

The story was about a young woman who is suing the medical facility which failed to pick up that she was pregnant. Apparently she was pregnant 6 months before another medical facility picked up that she was pregnant. It says that she went ahead with pregnancy (wonderful) and has a beautiful little girl. Indeed she was photographed with her now three year old daughter who looks the image of her mother.

This article says that she is suing the medical facility for the money needed to raise her daughter. Then there is a litany of reasons for the suing. Depression, and even not attaining her dream of becoming a vet.

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How sad that becoming a vet is more important than holding that beautiful daughter and rejoicing in the fact that the pregnancy was missed otherwise that child she is holding would have been aborted. How sad.

How sad that she has “trouble telling friends” she has a baby. What has she been doing for 3 years?

I suspect that someone has whispered something about \$\$\$ to be made. And I also want to tell her that there is no reason to believe that she cannot become the vet she has always “dreamt of becoming” because if she really wants to then it’s more than possible. I did two Masters degrees over 2 years instead of the usual 3-4 years for 1 degree and by coursework and looked after a family all living at home and worked doing counselling every day. Between appointments I studied and wrote assignments. This was possible because I really wanted to do Masters. So it is possible for her to become a Vet if she really wants to. But above all I hope that she wakes up and looks into the face of her beautiful daughter and says thank you Lord I have her, and she doesn’t wake up or go to bed at night “hearing” a little phantom voice calling her “Mummy” as happens with so many abortive women.

As I said this story really disturbed me because there is so much to be joy filled about and yet it has become one of \$value

Comments by some who have read Hidden Pain An Insight into childhood sexual abuse. My new book.

Hi Anne,

I've been chipping away at your book over the past few nights. I must say I have been a bit surprised by the emotions it has evoked in me, so I have to take it in a little bit at a time.

I will say I probably fall somewhere into categories 1 and 3, but fortunately have not experienced abuse at the hands of a family member. I will spare you the details as

I see you have heard it all before. I found Jen's story particularly difficult to read and I'm so glad she found you.

I am not necessarily a religious person, but I do believe in a God of free will that has given us the power to choose the experience that best serves the evolution of our soul's purpose. Somehow, even in the darkest moments, we are always mining the diamonds of our creativity. I have had great pain in my life that in hindsight has created things of beauty and a strength I never would have imagined at the time.

Having said that, the experience of having my trust violated has created a bitterness that can seethe with rage when it is tapped into...much like poking at a rattlesnake with a stick, you just don't do it. That is why this subject is so difficult to talk about. The imprint, as you say, remains with you. And when these memories are awakened, the only way through it is to "do" it, as in feel them all over again.

Not only do these memories effect the mind, they have a deep physiological effect on the body as well. I encounter this frequently as a Massage and Bodywork Professional. Often times, while I am working on specific areas of the body, a client will begin to speak of a trauma they had long since forgotten and are surprised when they encounter the memory of it again. I encourage them to talk about it if they are comfortable doing so, and usually find the area of the body I am working on has been a source of chronic pain for them. Hence, that is where the memory has been tucked away for safe keeping.

It takes a soul of great strength and a pure heart to enter into the realm of the unspeakable and offer a hand to those who are trapped there in the darkness and lead them back into light. I am sure the weight of such an enormous responsibility can be very overwhelming at times, that is why there are so very few of you. So thank you, Anne Lastman, for being one of the chosen few. The world is a much better place for having you in it.

With much love and respect.

Cyndi W. (USA)

Thank you dear Cyndi for sharing your words and pain with me and your kind words. Anne

“A masterly comprehensive treatment of a difficult subject. My compliments.” Fr Lewis.

“Anne thank you for tackling this topic. Don’t be silenced it is as much a death as abortion and any other kind of death. The ramifications remain for life. Congratulations on this very good and much needed book.” J. K. L. (Vic).

“Wow’ it provides a lot of information, makes me think very deeply and taught me a great deal.

I’m glad you began the book with “Suffering” and “Why Suffering” and you continue to delve into sexual abuse and its kind of suffering. I particularly found the chapter on forgiveness interesting. Must re-read that one. Love and congratulations for this new book. Your friend Verna.

Hi Anne

Have read half of your book Hidden Pain and all I can say is “awesome” It needs to be known about. It needs to be read. It needs to be understood for the ugliness which it is. Don’t be cowed by critics dear, even under threat. Those of us who have lived with a lifetime of this pain and the memories and hurt it has left with us, appreciate what you have done. Janet R. (SA)

Anne, your new book ranks up there with your other book Redeeming Grief and other excellent literature. It is confronting and yet needed. We cannot save the life of children in the womb and then pretend that the pain inflicted on those already born is not important. Sexual abuse of children is very much a pro-life matter even though most pro-lifers don’t want to know about it. Please come to Canberra to promote it. Anne C. (Canberra)

Dear Anne,
Hidden Pain, just one word “awesome”
Kath P.

It’s only a Bunch of Cells

“Each one of us has a unique beginning, the moment of conception...when the information carried by the sperm and by the ovum have encountered each other, then a new

human being is defined by 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 the individual this cell is already... to build that particular individual which we will later call Margaret or Paul or Peter, its already there, but it’s 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.

Quote from Prof Jerome Le Lejeune, MD., PhD, Prof of Genetics at the University of Paris and Sorbonne

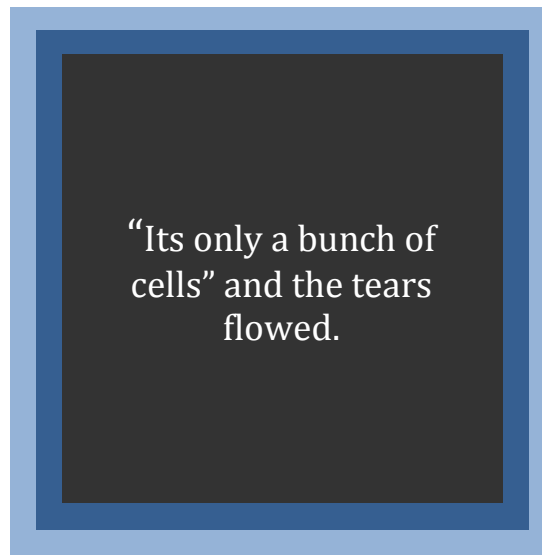
As the tears flowed down her face one of my new “girls” described how the counselling she received was all towards abortion and that it was only still “a bunch of cells” And if this was so how come she sits in front of me tears welling down her face? How come her fear that she will never be forgiven for her sin of abortion. All other sins will be forgiven but not abortion. How come those counsellors told her that other “spiritual” people “have abortions all the time and are OK and you will be OK too?” How come she can’t stop crying? Its affecting her job, her family, her life. How come?

No, there is more to the “bunch of cells.” there is the instant attraction and recognition of mother and child to one another. There is a call to one another to be each other’s love and protection. We see this when

we look at an image of a mother and child when the mother is nursing the baby and the baby is looking up at mother and mother is looking at her infant. There is an intimacy which is to be found nowhere else on earth. This is the kind of “mother love” which walks on hot coals to protect her child. It’s an instinct written in her essence and not something developed over the years. This is what is wounded when an abortion is carried out and this is what women today silently grieve about. This is the reason they need to strive so hard to “be” something because that essence is looking to heal something that is hurting.

We always tend to think that an abortion wounds the “emotional” and indeed it does. The emotional is its expression. How it shows itself outwardly, tears, depression, self-harm, self-isolation, self-abandonment, self-loathing and the behaviours which these bring with them and their outward effects.

However, more and more I am understand that the biggest wound is the spiritual which the essence of the human being is. Even when this is not understood as such. Even when



someone says “I don’t believe in God” or “I don’t believe that it was a baby” or “there was no baby there” or even as I have heard “there is nothing after life.” Even when these words are heard there is always a memory long into the future that once there existed a child of hers that never came to birth. A memory of a pregnancy. That word pregnancy which always and everywhere has had a meaning attached to it. Doesn’t matter what age whether at 14 years of age or 49 years of age a pregnancy and abortion has meant something momentous in her life. Never to be forgotten.

It is in this area, which is the spiritual dimension, that abortion cannot find a template. It was not intended that a mother (which the word pregnancy implies) would take her child, an extension of herself, to die, or a father who engendered (sparked the cloud burst of love, Fr Hillary’s words) a new extension of himself, would insist that his child be killed for any reason, including finances.

Children were never meant to be negotiable. They were meant to be exchanges of love, of God, and promises and assurances of the future. As Fr Hillary said in the last issue of *Broken Branches* every child is meant to be “a cloud burst of love” and not a discussion about its fate. This is the kind of thought considered of the “civilised” mind. Nothing civilised in this but decidedly uncivilised and bestial.

I am at the moment seeing one particular woman who is deeply wounded. She is in pain because her abortion was very recent and at this moment she doesn’t want to be forgiven because “she doesn’t deserve it” So our sessions are simply coffees and Tim Tams and “deserve discussions” and “forgiveness discussions and what this means” and we all sin. This because her fear is sin. She has already dealt with the Catholic aspect of this but we will deal with this again in future when there is a different understanding.

ABORTION AND DANGERS TO MARRIAGE

Today in this volatile climate, marriage appears not only weakened but maybe even doomed. With the many calls for its redefinition, the last bastion of stable society is being assaulted on all sides. It’s a sad reality that less and less people have a desire to marry and if and when they do the chances of the success of the marriage appear diminished. Whilst statistics show that young people still do want to have a “wedding” the reality is that when the “wedding” is called to become a “marriage” the pre requisites for marriage are not found within the couple.

Perhaps many reasons can be posited for this. However I would like to offer my understanding as to why “weddings” continue to happen, but “marriages” do not.

Over this past year I have encountered (in my offices) many couples whose marriages have collapsed. As I listened to their stories the single most often quoted difficulties have been “depression” “sadness” “lack communication” “different ideals” and in all the couples whom I have seen,

one or more abortion. Abortions of their own child or abortions (both husband and wife) in past relationships on both sides. I have one couple who between them have aborted 4 children including one within their marriage. Indeed with one couple that are still with me, the husband originally called to seek help for his wife whom he had “assessed” to be suffering from abortion grief because of her abortion 7 years earlier and he felt that everything wrong about her was related to her abortion. However as I continued, it emerged that she’d had several abortions (he only knew about one) and he had 2 abortions “but that’s OK I don’t feel anything about them. They happened when I was 17 years old so we did the right thing. I am a bit sad that we aborted our first *foetus* but we weren’t financially ready at that time” (they now have a 18mth old baby). These were his exact words. Note the word *foetus* not baby. Nobody speaks about his or her wanted baby as a *foetus*; only a baby that is to be disposed of is called a *foetus*.

As I listened I think I was overwhelmed with horror that neither of them was even remotely concerned about the 4 babies they had aborted, although the woman exhibits a pervasive sadness. Her tears are always present and her grief (she says it’s because her life is so unhappy in this marriage) is profound.

Today as I read about the statistics, which speak about broken marriages and the short duration of said marriages I am not surprised that marriages are failing. I know that the desire for union between man and woman still exists and the desire for marriage still exists, however, the baggage, which is taken into marriage, weakens the possibility of endurance, sacrifices and perseverance in the face of life difficulties.

Abortion breaks intimacy bonds. Abortion breaks covenants. Abortion destroys innocence. Abortion takes away from women and men their assumption that they are “good.” Abortion stands as an accuser in marriage. It removes the dignity of the human person. Abortion removes the adhesiveness of the glue in marriage, which is motherhood and fatherhood and children. Abortion is so contra covenant and so contra human that the foundations of humanity and society are rocked dangerously when “man and woman” turn against their offspring “woman” herself turns against her child. Abortion means that a mother has refused to give hospitality, welcome and nourishment to her child. Abortion cannot but destroy marriage which in its essence means hospitality and welcoming intimately of another. The desire remains but the reality cannot find firm foundations.

There is inscribed within the human person a “yearning” which begins long before it comes to fruition. This yearning or call is strengthened as a sign of the differences between the male and female and any disturbance of this “vocation” (eg abortion) must by its very nature corrupt the finely tuned, intricate design, which is the human. Within each person, male or female is inscribed fruitfulness, which cannot be fulfilled except with the grace and donation and

permission of the other. It is at this place which abortion wounds. Abortion enters into this secret place and steals dignity, leaving behind an emptiness unlike any other.

Today we have weddings, but not marriage. Marriage calls for sacrifice, dignity, and reciprocal love. Abortion, sexual abuse (more widespread than previously thought) immorality, violence, drugs, etc. etc. ensure that marriages do not become solidified and unless marriages are strengthened and rebuilt even one by one if need be, then all the work in the world, against abortion, against euthanasia, against drug addiction and trafficking, against terrorism, against the very evils which endanger society become only band aid treatment. The horrors we feel at the terrorist acts, the horrors we feel at the senseless murders of innocent lives going about doing life, should be the same horror shown for infants who are crushed and sliced in the womb. Unless we start fighting for these littlest ones then the horrors we feel for others becomes fears for our own self and possible situation.

In our rush to fight “all ills” the thing which most needs healing and bandaging and nurturing, marriage and family, are left to whimper and stumble along. I have seen the damage that not only abortion but also other abuses in family create and because of the damage, then the next generation, where they are allowed to be born, are forced into living a life impoverished by the abuses.

Impoverishment in marriage occurs not only through abortion, though this I would suggest is the greatest poverty, but also impoverishment through neglect of the any children allowed to be born. Where parents leave the child in the care of others to go and work (yes I know that there are times when necessary) there is always abandonment felt by the child.

An infant/child doesn't understand “quality” or “quantity” time, it simply understands time away from mummy or daddy or family. Irrespective of the goodness of the carers, the child feels “left” behind. The necessary foundational basis for the wellbeing of the child, that is, sense of firmly belonging, sense of valued self, sense of parent's and child's roles leading to a right sense of “authority,” the transmission of values, of rules to be lived with and obeyed, the formation essential to the dignity of life, these become compromised and where there is compromise to do with life, then obviously we encounter death.

Wounded Mothering

In a recent study published in the *Journal Of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 2002; 43 (6): 743-757, has found that children whose mothers have had an abortion or have an abortion history tended to have less emotional support leading to possible behavioural problems, than those whose mothers did not have an abortion history. This of course should not be surprising because children born after an abortion and especially those born immediately following abortion act as permanent reminders of that abortion, thus inducing guilt.

Added to this, it should further not be surprising because unacknowledged abortions also mean unacknowledged grief, unresolved grief, and disenfranchised grief. This kind of grief is pervasive and it adversely affects all those in the range of the person suffering grief. Depression coupled with grief equals unhappy, sad person whose coping skills are challenged and who constantly lives in a state of anxiety and dread. The dread occurs because mothers who have aborted children and who have not reconciled themselves to their decision always live in an unknown fear. A fear that something is always about to happen. A fear that G-O-D will do “something awful to my other children. He'll let them die just to punish me.” (my new client Fran) Abortion creates a fear within the inner being of the woman and robs her of her natural inclination towards her child. Even where there is no perceived grief over an abortion, pervasive/passive sadness, a withdrawal, an aloofness is in place and this guards against an unknown “something” which might break through.

In the distance created between a mother and her child, it is clearly evident that the relationship between a mother and her child is challenged, thus creating a new generation of difficulties. Children not mothered well or “mothered smothered” through fear of loss go on to repeat their lot. In the field of trauma and loss studies, it is a known that often a trauma will be repeated and repeated until the original trauma is understood. In the area of abortion this means that grief must be acknowledged, the child mourned and then released, and unless this occurs what happened is not only repeated but also passed on so that next generation. Abortion is not simply a once off, quiet gynaecological procedure without side effects; it is a procedure that will not allow itself to be forgotten.

THE BODY ALWAYS REMEMBERS

One of the most amazing things that I have discovered ever since working as a grief counsellor is the fact that the body remembers. It keeps store of pain experienced. I have thought and rethought about this and have wondered and continue to wonder what it is that assists the mother's to “know” what gender their aborted baby was. With the exception of maybe a handful of women who appeared not to know the gender of their aborted baby (although I think that they did know but could not bear to vocalise the knowledge), the others when asked do they know the gender is always, always, “yes of course I know what it was. It was a boy” or “it was a girl.” “I always knew.” Yet this is the answer even when the pregnancy was of short duration and the abortion was carried out under full sedation.

Many of my “girls” actually ask me do I know how she/they could possibly know such information and why she was so sure considering that her abortion was done when she was 8 weeks pregnant and my only answer to that was simply that her consciousness and heart were awake at that time, but her body was asleep. Indeed there is a line in Scripture, which seems to speak similar words, “I sleep but my heart is

Letters

Thanks Anne and thanks also to Fr Hilary and Grace for her poem.
Sober Reflections
Bro Chris

Dear Anne,
I do enjoy reading your newsletters so much and your first newsletter for 2015 is no exception.
The letters Fr Hilary wrote for your newsletter were inspiring. While I was reading them I could not help but to picture in my mind what my babies would have looked like under an ultra sound, but then I would smile thinking to myself what my children would look like now.
Then the beautiful and moving poem by grace made me feel very emotional and brought me to tears. She sounds so mature beyond her years.
I hope that this year things go well for you in your work and with your health,
May God bless you and the work you through 2015.
Heather.

Dear Anne

Your bulletin is always so welcome and when I receive it I sit down with a cuppa and read from front to back it is so good and so informative. I so much enjoyed the young girl's poetry in your last issue. I could imagine her innocence and I also enjoyed very much Fr Hillary's writings. He is such a good priest, a few more like him and all would be well.
Keep us the good work dear and thank you for continuing to send for all the years.

God Bless
Caroline W (Vic)

Dear Anne

Beautiful last issue of the newsletter and especially Fr Hillary's pieces and the young girl's poem both so talented in their writing. Enclosed a small donation to help with your work

God Bless

Peter S (Brisb)

Dear Anne,

Yesterday my friend and I were discussing your news bulletin and decided that it is the best one we receive. Please add (3 names) who are also our friends to the list and please keep going you are doing a very good work.

Blessings,

Teresa K and
Janet T (Vic)

Dear Anne,

Thank you again for sending your newsletter I appreciate it very much and enjoy reading. The last issue was especially beautiful and the writings of the priest and the young Grace (so wise for one so young) are inspiring. Thank you also for recommending that DVD (which I purchased) called Noelle and it was as beautiful and moving as you said it was.

Keep going dear Anne

God Bless

Sarah T (Syd)

awake” (Song of Solomon 5:2) It is the heart and consciousness which are fully present to the abortion and which must bear witness to the horror which they have been subjected to. The heart, body, mind and spirit were present at conception; surely they knew what gender the new creation was. Every cell, every bit of DNA, every gene, every molecule etc. was present at the “cloudburst of love” and recorded the event, as indeed every cell was present when abortion happened. Awareness informs our being and “we know” perhaps more than we want or should know.

It is in this intimate knowledge that human beings discover the interconnectedness of all beings. Grief for an aborted child is correct response because grief is the correct response to loss of someone special and important to our very existence. Whilst we know that consciousness informs matter we also know that mind, spirit and body are not separate “things” but realms of the human being. All awareness then, whether, mind, body, heart, cells, DNA, molecule etc. becomes one bodily thing with its inscribed inner knowledge of life. To me it seems very simple and understandable that a woman would “remember” what gender her unseen baby was. It would seem to me that this is also what God meant when He said, “If a mother should forget her baby” (Is 49:15). It would seem impossible for this to happen because consciousness has informed her being of the marvellous new event which has occurred.

Dear Friends,

As I come to end of this issue of newsletter (I always start off with what am I going to write about? then run out of space)

No. 1

For your diary

Several things for your diary important please, please Annual Pro Life Dinner this year it will be held in June 27th at Mannix College Clayton, Tickets \$75pp lesser for students. For Bookings Annemarie Kiely at (03)98160800 Mob: 0447 352 252 and ask to be put at my table. Remember a third of tickets goes to me as fundraiser. And we get to meet face to face at least once a year.

amkiely@family.org Thank you.

No 2.

Thank you to Fr John C. (Syd), Bernie and Fran, Margaret G, Helen I, Jim H, Coral B, and Fr Michael S and several others who have helped me \$ recently, I have appreciated your care for me.

And finally please continue to pray for my usuals, Mel, Kerrie, Charlie, Marlene, Vanessa, Anna, Teresa, Melita,, Barry, Amy, Sue, Marilyn, Christine, Yvonne, Anne, Luci (new) Frances, (new) Eve, (new) Cam, (phone 1 hour pw i/state) (new) Mary (new).

Please continue to pray for Christine who is undergoing treatment for cancer. Please also continue to pray for me, I think stresses are doing strange things to seizures, they have surfaced again so loads of prayers please.

No 3

Please also buy a copy (or millions) of Hidden Pain, *An Insight into childhood sexual abuse* It is a really good book and it will help me also. This can be purchased from me directly, (see opposite) from Melbourne Central Catholic Bookshop, Lonsdale St., Koorong Books (Vic) and Freedom Publishing.(Vic) (see opposite).

Till we meet again.

Happy and Holy and safe Easter

The Lord Is Risen.....Hallelujah



Anne Lastman

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Broken Branches – By email!

Dear Friends,

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



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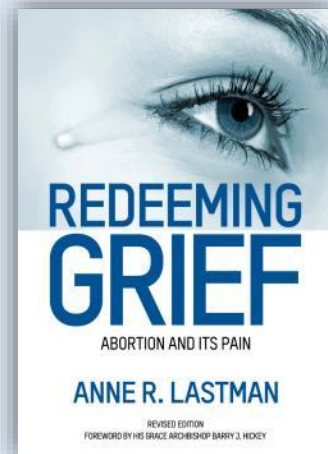
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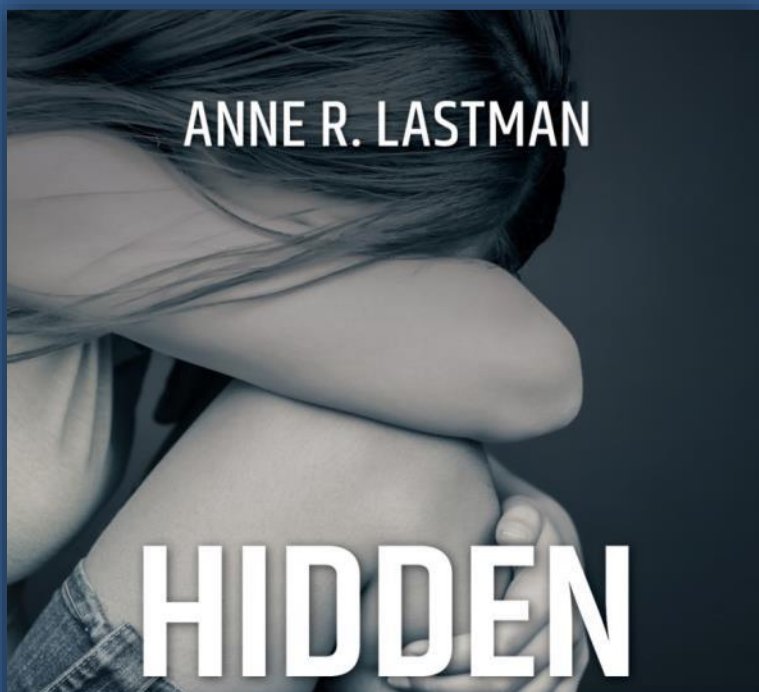
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HIDDEN PAIN

AN INSIGHT INTO CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

HIDDEN PAIN is written about memories which are hidden and cannot be spoken out loud. It is a book about shame, pain, sorrow and lives which have gone wrong both for victims, families, and perpetrators. Sexual abuse of children is common in all communities, in all societies, and yet it's still one of the last remaining taboos. It is something which cannot be spoken about because it's so awful, so inappropriate that it cannot be discussed. Yet discussed it must be, because the children are crying and pleading to be helped.

This is not a step by step guide to dealing with abuse. It is the result of my engagement with those who have come to me originally for post abortion counselling and on further investigation it was found that abuse (especially in cases of multiple abortions) existed in their history. It is my hope that *HIDDEN PAIN* can be of help to those who read it and more so be vigilant and not to turn away when a child is suffering.

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