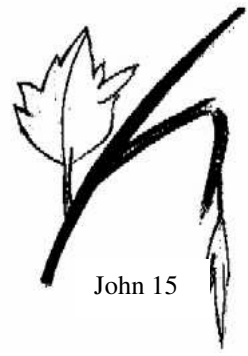


# BROKEN BRANCHES



John 15

A newsletter of *Victims of Abortion*

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Issue 11

August 2000

We live in a strange world. We live in a world which appears to be peopled by individuals who say that it is OK to kill children. We live in a world that appears to say that to kill a child is OK and then move on to the next phase of life without any effects from the death. We live in a world that seems to want to say that we are mechanized creatures without sense or sensibility. We indeed are a strange lot.

What does this say about us as a people? Does it say that we have progressed far along the spiritual and psychological path or does it perhaps say that we have regressed to an all time low? It, I believe says that we have become confused. It says that as much as we want to pretend that we have progressed, advanced from the primitive ways of our ancestors, we have not moved far at all. Sure, we live in a time of fast paced change and perhaps because of this are expected to "own" fast paced emotions, morals, and ideals. However, this is not so. Societal changes come and go but fundamentally human beings do not change at their innermost and spiritual level, because it is here that God has imprinted His Law (Ez. 31:31). His Love (Ps. 101) It is at this most intimate space that He calls and whispers and speaks.

Why can't we forget an aborted baby? Because God whispers "before you were born I knew you" (Jer. 1.) We cannot forget an aborted baby because in the death of this infant we recognize the diminishing of each and every one of us. In every infant that has been aborted we recognize a baby brother or sister who will never know a hug, a kiss, a moment of pure joy. Will never hear a human voice. Will never realize the full potential that God had prepared for him or her.

Someone mourns the death of every human being. Even the worst of criminals will have someone to mourn for them and so must it be for every child that dies through abortion. This child must also be mourned.

Post Abortion Syndrome, or post abortion trauma, or even post abortion grief is a spiritual and psychological response to an abortion, which resulted in the death of an infant. This is the sign that we cannot declare our emancipation from God's word and law and hope to be OK. Post Abortion Syndrome, is malignant and is a sign that it is not OK to kill another human being, even in secret, and hope to then continue living as if nothing has happened. The birth and therefore the death of the infant is communal event, and even when an abortion is carried out in secret the community experiences a sense of loss. At times it cannot even identify the sense of loss and bereavement but indeed this is what it is.

Post Abortion trauma is a declaration that there is something greater than our freedom to sin. It is our freedom to respond to God's law. Post Abortion Syndrome is a "revisiting" of Eden. It is the loss of virginity (innocence). The main characters in Eden "destroyed" innocence and then found themselves trying to hide from the truth of the death. Post Abortion Syndrome is the "fig leaf" of the death. A death which refuses to be hidden.

## **HE REFUSES TO BELIEVE.**

Several weeks ago, after many requests from me to accompany his partner, a young man whom I will call Sam actually did arrive accompanying her. My many repeated requests became necessary when I discovered that all the work that I would do with his partner every week was undone by him in the intervening time. Indeed, as I continued to work and re humanize their aborted child so that the infant could be taken on board then let go, he would work to demolish up building words and work. For a time I couldn't understand what was happening until one day something she said alerted me to the difficulties she was experiencing with her partner.

As Sam walked in I knew that it was going to be a difficult situation because his body language simply spelled “I don’t want to be here. I am here under sufferance.” As I looked at the lovely looking young couple I immediately thought how beautiful their child would have been however, I have learned from past experience, that this is not a road to go down.

When I asked Sam why he couldn’t support his partner in her grief over their aborted child his response was all that was needed for me to know the depth and strength of denial which was in place. “It wasn’t a baby! We were told at the clinic that it was still at the cell stage!” (11 weeks) “And I would rather believe them than you. You are one of those pro lifers who thinks that everyone should live”

As I sat and listened to his accusations of my exploitation of his girlfriend (I receive no money from her) and my need to hurt her, I suddenly realised that he was not even looking at me or at her he simply kept looking down at his feet. During all of this his girlfriend sat silently with tears rolling down her face.

This is the situation which is repeated often especially when the young man refuses to believe that his partner is suffering over an abortion or indeed when he is equally suffering but has been unable to communicate his suffering. As I listened to him I knew that he did not really believe that their child at 11 weeks gestation was a cell and that he had clung to this belief because it was convenient to do so. I also noticed that every time I used the word baby he would correct me and say that it was a “foetus.” The imageless language which he used was a clear indicator that he refused to see the baby as baby. Clearly clinical “foetus” brought no image to his mind so this was safe word.

There was much in his language and demeanor, which said that he was not interested in really knowing the truth and that it was more comfortable to remain, where he was. In this place he would not have to deal with the reality that he had taken his son to die.

Much to- ing and fro- ing went on however, I hadn’t progressed far in over an hour so I decided to invite him to come in on his own for another

appointment as I felt that he was afraid to say anything with his partner there and he agreed that he would come. As they stood up to go, he caught sight of my 10-week fetal model, which I have, just behind where I sit. I placed the fetal model in his hand and told him it was a replica of a baby at 10-week gestation. As He heard these words he literally flung the model across the room and he looked at me with so much pain in his eyes that I knew that at last the denial had been broken. There isn’t much that can be said after this. However I did ask them to sit down again for a while and I made both of them a drink.

For his partner it had been the recognition she needed because she couldn’t move on until he accepted that their baby had been a baby and that her sorrow was real and that she had been and is grieving for their lost son. For Sam it was also a recognition that that all the “life less” language that he had been using was a ploy to self protect. Not much more was said that day but I have since seen the young woman and she assures me that he has been supportive of her and that he has told her that he would like to come and see me again – on his own. Perhaps it wasn’t what I had hoped for but it was the start of what I hope to achieve with this couple. My first concern was for the young woman because she has been coming to me for 4 months but now I am also concerned for Sam because I realise how duped he had allowed himself to become, simply because he didn’t want to be a father at this time. For him it was easier to believe what those at the abortion clinic had told him because to his way of thinking there was nothing wrong with aborting “cell”

### **ABORTION AND FATHERHOOD**

Studies into abortion trauma experienced by males suggest that only “some” males are affected. However, even if it is “some” males who are affected, those who are, are affected with potentially destructive and malignant reactions. These males then bring to their society and environment their reactions and responses. This surely must then affect those with whom they come in contact and they in turn affect others so that like the ripple effect a large number of humanity is affected by that one act of violence.

Understanding the impact of abortion on

“maleness” and “fatherhood” may help us to understand why so very many men blithely take their children to their death without so much as a whimper of protest. This new breed of male takes his partner to the facility, pays and actually leaves for several hours while his partner, wife, girlfriend undergoes the procedure. While his child dies. He then returns to collect his now subdued partner and no child. He has been freed from/denied the responsibility of fatherhood. Several hours earlier he was a father of a child to be born, - now he is still a father – but of a child that has died because he failed to protect it.

Abortion has not only freed him from responsibility of fatherhood but it has also dishonored the very essence of “malehood” whose design is to be attracted towards the one whom he has brought into being. The one whom he has engendered and who is ultimately an extension of his very self.

Abortion appears to have weakened “maleness” and “fatherhood.” These terms have meaning ascribed to them and universally understood. Fatherhood initiates the process of transmission of the “essence maleness” It is not only the transmission of DNA or even the generative act, but further than this, it is the transmission of the “essence of maleness” Fatherhood is maleness enfleshed. Abortion then means that the man’s “fatherhood” or his “essence of maleness” was unwanted by her and/or rejected by him. This rejection then permanently demeans the man. Reduces him to something so much lower than his original design has inscribed onto it.

Modern understanding of fatherhood fails to capture the importance of the bond between God and man and man and child. There is transference of something dynamic in the transference of a father’s essence into his son/daughter. The moral, physical and spiritual bond, and the acceptance of this bond, is what makes the human being very different from the other created species. Indeed modern fatherhood whilst acknowledging that the generative act is important, has sabotaged its essence. Modern fatherhood (understood out of context of permanent marriage partner) has been neutered. Modern fatherhood is despised because sexuality, lifelong marriages, family and children have become tradable commodities and therefore the understanding of the sacredness of life and “essence” transference has been forced to be understood differently also.

In its original design the essence of fatherhood presupposed a great honour and a unique relationship based on “sameness.” The father’s likeness was reproduced in the child. Added to this the ongoing nurturing of the child and hence the relationship, presupposed an ongoing and permanent love bond between the father and the one whom he had generated, which ultimately simply meant the fulfillment of covenant responsibilities. That is, to take care of, and protect the one he has been covenanted to. **Covenant love.** For the male who takes his child to be aborted covenant love and covenant relationship cannot have meaning. Covenant love and covenant knowledge cannot be traced in the life of the male or female taking their child to be killed.

Abortion is fatal to fatherhood because it is a perversion of the very essence of male. Abortion can be likened to Original Sin because the father, like Adam, is absent when the “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh (Gn.2:23) is being destroyed by evil. He continues to turn his face away. **We do not learn.**

The Father (God) who engendered His own Son (Jesus) did so in order to show us humanity what it means to love. He (God) introduced His son Jesus as One who was/is an extended likeness of Himself. The Father (God) has engendered His own child, watched over Him, knew Him as only a father and son can know one another “no one has ever seen God; it is the only Son who is nearest to the Father’s heart, who has made Him known.” (Jn 1:1-5, 10-14, 16-18). Indeed the child more than anyone else is nearest to the father’s heart. The child awaits the father’s breath to animate him, ransom him, and rescue him and ultimately to be given his heritage, that is, his identity as a son/daughter of the heavenly father imaged by the earthly father.

Without the father’s love and animation of the child, he/she remains voiceless, powerless, emotionless creature whose presence remains hidden from the world and if not hidden then a lone traveller in the world. Always seeking the lost “father.” The father’s seal must be passed to the child in order for the child to “grow” and when fully grown to be able to be a father himself. It is the most essential spiritual and psychological need of the child to know that his/her father is a “good” and loving person in order for that child to progress healthily and happily. Interruption of this development will

result in the child seeking the father that he/she feels they should have had.

A Man who has participated in the abortion of his or someone else's child will not feel "good" and cannot by nature be a good father to an existing or future child because he has the knowledge that this "fatherhood" of his is not his first gift of "fatherhood" but indeed his first gift of fatherhood was rejected. The guilt involved even at a subconscious level ensures that the father will not and cannot father his child according to his original design. The scar left by the abortion will mar his present fatherhood.

Abortion wounds the man at the deepest and most intimate level, because the wound is rooted in his innate knowledge of his masculinity and what this means. This wound suspends the man's covenantal role, which is situated in the context of "fatherhood," and derived from the fatherhood of God. Fatherhood is rooted both in the divine (spiritual) and natural (physical generation) order and cannot be circumvented without suffering the poison arrow of perversion.

For the male who is the father of an aborted child personal suffering, frustration, and helplessness and at times destructive ness propels them towards behaviour consistent with self-loathing and emotional shutdown. Alcohol abuse, substance abuse, dangerous pursuits, violence against self or others, suicide ideation and suicide behaviour are the external manifestation of an internal personal war. The anguish of failure. The sense of loss or even the sense of foreboding are the male's response to the violation of his covenant and only God in His infinite mercy can enter into his war and restore his peace and equilibrium and ultimately restore to him his apostolate of fatherhood and masculinity. To be able to turn to God the Father the abortive father must first acknowledge his own lost "fatherhood" and seek renewal of his relationship with both the divine Father and his own child, so that at least he can spiritually reclaim his aborted child.

Renew their relationship and "father" that child even in death.

I have for some time felt the need to write about male response to abortion and after the episode in my office I felt that it was time to do so and even though I do not see many males because they don't come for counselling, those that I have seen have touched me deeply with their suffering. And they do suffer. At times their suffering will manifest differently but I don't think I will forget for quite a long time the look of despair and anguish in Sam's eyes. His bravado was just that-bravado. Will he recover...I don't know. Only God knows. However, over the last several years I have made many attempts to understand "motherhood" and "fatherhood" in the context following abortion and what I have found is very very disturbing.

Overall it has been a busy month and have taken on 2 other young ladies. Both started this week and have also started to work on some literature, but this for the near future.

I thank those who responded to the call for funds to pay the heavy bills. Thank you. I do *still* need your ongoing support in whatever you feel capable. This year has been busy in different kinds of ways. I hope to put together some really good literature on this topic, in the very close future. But I will let you all know when I get to this. Please continue to pray for Caterina, she is really ill (cancer) and pray especially for Sam and Grace. Please also pray for Kathleen and for Sharon and for Susan. And to my priest friends could you offer Holy sacrifice of the Mass for my family this month? It would be appreciated so much. Thank you and...

May the Lord Bless and keep you.



Anne Lastman

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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