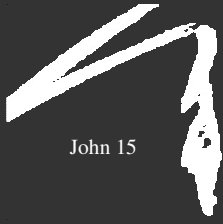


BROKEN BRANCHES

Issue 72

Oct/Nov 2009



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

Charles Francis QC.

This issue of the newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Charles Francis QC, magnificent pro lifer and friend of all who fight for the right of the child to be born and who believed that mothers are deeply hurt by the procedure which kills their baby. He fought for women to be recognised as having experienced a pain unknown to those who have not aborted and he believed and fought for them at all levels including the legal battles.

Charles dear friend now rest in the peace of our Saviour together with all the babies who have come to welcome you home.

At 12 noon Friday August 14th we in the Australian pro life movement lost a great friend, colleague and advocate, Charles Francis QC who died in Melbourne's Cabrini Hospital after a long and strong battle with cancer. An illness which he bore without complaint.

To Charles's family, his wife Babette and children he was a much loved husband, father and grandfather and they will miss him so much. For me Charles holds a special place in my heart. He was one of the first people to believe and support the work that I do. He was one of the very first people to read my book and kindly offered to write a review of the book. And what a review! He together with Babette and Endeavour Forum launched my book, thank you. Thank you dear friend.

For all of us in the Victorian pro life work Charles was a great supporter, unselfish in the legal assistance, prolific writer of articles on abortion, euthanasia and life matters and the advice he gave over many years. We loved him..a kind, courteous, generous and highly principled man who served his country in

the RAF (Royal Australian Air force), and his State, in Victoria's Parliament as a Member of the Liberal Party. In retirement Charles became a prolific writer, especially on pro life matters and was prominent in last year's struggle with Victoria's new abortion laws. This during a time of severe illness. Indeed we have lost a giant of man. RIP Charles.

To Babette and family we offer our sincere sympathy in the loss of a wonderful husband, father and grandfather.

The Umbrella Effect.

Anne,

When reading Heather's story continued in Issue 71 of Broken Branches, several things struck a chord so I will address this more in the frame of an article than a letter. Feel free to use it as you wish.

Alison L

The story has many more pieces and blessings than I could put into this space but I think you understand what I am trying to say. The loneliness within my life was unreal even though I had wonderful family and friends.

When I was 51 years old I had a dream of significance. It was short but so vivid I remembered it the next day. I was very young and laying on our couch at home. Mum was there and our doctor and a policeman. That was it.

When I next went back home to South Australia I was going to ask my mother about it, but before I could bring it up she brought it up over a cup of tea. The conversation was thus.

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“Alison do you ever remember something happening to you when you were very young?”

“Strange you should mention that mum (78) I had a dream recently that I was going to ask you about.”

” Well you tell me what came from your dream and I will fill in the gaps.”

Remember this was 1956. In a country town in South Australia

When I was three years old we had a park, which was three houses from my house. I was playing there with a neighbour’s child when a man approached and grabbed me. The other little girl ran home. He had me on his lap and from what I told my mother he put his fingers inside me and put a tablet up there. When I was released I ran home to my mother who immediately got the Doctor and the Police. I was able to tell them he wore pants like daddy did to work (Overalls with braces). There was no real evidence that day however the next day my mother discovered a suppository in my bowel movement and knowing she had not put it there went back to the Police who had their suspicions and later picked up the offending man who still had the suppositories on him.

You may say that this was mild molestation in comparison to what some have been through. However the effects have been clearly present till 2008. Some 51 years.

In my world FEAR, SHAME and BONDAGE were born that day. I lost my childhood.

It left me open to abuses throughout my teenage years not only emotional and mental abuse, but also sexual abuse that further contributed to loss and shame.

I was married at 19 by choice, to someone from an Alcoholic home background who had also experienced other abuse. This was never discussed. We were married for 27 years and had 6 beautiful children. However many of those years were spent in with anger and torment and in the last 15 – 20 years my husband had chronic depression, which no amounts of pills could free him from. He had many Psychiatrists’ but would never discuss any of the relevant childhood abuse details. I divorced him in 2001, as I could no longer cope.

Within 18 months I was caught up in a whirlwind romance, which I clearly thought was from God. (However as has been made clear since) I was controlled medically, emotionally and

mentally and removed Interstate away from my children, which almost crippled me. It lasted for 4 years almost to the day when my second husband divorced me. I started to see the cracks after my doctor stated clearly I was addicted to Valium and asked me if that is where I wanted to be. To which I replied “NO WAY.”

There were many abuses within the marriage that I had not seen then, although many of my friends and family did. It wasn’t until I nearly lost ME and almost stepped in front of a car that I walked out. (A story in itself)

Two years further on having started to come to terms with the abusive relationship and understand that even though I was no longer in it physically one phone call could have me in bondage and fear for a week.

Within the next two years I lost my mother who passed away at 80, my first husband and my brother in law, who both passed away with cancer.

I took action and started on a process of recovery however it was again interrupted by another abusive relationship with a male friend who pretended he had cancer and moved into my home to share expenses. During this year I had collapsed and was having trouble with my mind not functioning for days on end. Stress and Depression was the verdict, my flat mate was wonderful in looking after me, which was contradictory to the rest of his behaviour.

After conning me into believing that he had a court case pending for finance and living of my meagre pension and savings for a year I had to have him removed. I was destitute almost lost my unit, as I was behind in rent no food or even a bus ticket. There were no boundaries. Every part of my life had now been torn apart. The glass had been broken, fragments of shattered glass, lay everywhere. God brought me to my knees so I could only rely only on him and the counsellor, friends and family He put before me.

Within a week a friend had taken me to a seminar (just happened to be on) on Restoration of the Soul, by Glenda Watson.

Breaking the Strongholds. Breaking Soul Ties.

It was an amazing insight into abuse. It was explained that when the first instance happened it was like an Umbrella opened and from then on it just gathered more abuse and more people from like backgrounds.

One year on and much growth has happened all within God's time frame he never opened up one layer of abuse till I was ready to deal with it. Now many layers and Healing Prayers later I am relearning and renewing my mind with the real truth. I take time now to understand that my feelings are real and they count. If I don't feel quite right I now step back and ask God what is wrong and don't move till I know it is right. I am still growing in His grace.

I have learned and understood in my heart. I am the daughter of a King and I have a wonderful brother in Jesus and I am entitled to inherit his Kingdom. As such He will supply all I need if I keep my eyes on Him.

Printed with kind permission from Alison Thank you dear Alison for sharing your story, I can see how Heather's story would have echoed with your story, and I imagine that it has echoed with many readers and that is why cancellations and anger. From much study into this area I understand that emotional, psychological and spiritual life literary stop its natural development at the moment of the first abuse. The intellectual and physical grow according to the mandate to grow but the other two aspects cease and continue this way until intervention. I believe that today our society with its many forms of media actually violate the innocence of young children by sexualising their mentality. Indeed it is a gross violation of their innocence and their mandate to grow according to their design. When children are violated in their sexual area the rest of their life is wounded and confused. Why would we be surprised at the rampant sexuality of the young? Their experimentation. I would be failing in my duty of care if I didn't do what I have done.

God bless your beautiful life Alison and congratulations to you and Errol may your life together be filled with happiness.
Anne

Pro Life March October 10th at 11am

This is a peaceful march. Beginning at 11am in the Treasury Gardens, then walk to Parliament House.
Remember dear friends with our new abortion laws (2008) Unborn infants in the womb can be legally killed until the time of birth all it requires is for two "doctors" to agree. Remember abortionists are meant to be "doctors" (Yeah right). Please dear friends those of you who can join in the March to show babies and mothers we care and if you have babies/children they are most especially welcome.
Dear friends I am sorry I can't be there I will be away at a speaking engagement. But please do this if you can. Anne

Abortion an absence of Hope.

Man was created for greatness, for God Himself. Says our dear Holy Father Pope Benedict in Spe Salve p 60

"Great progress has been made to alleviate physical pain. Suffering and torment is still terrible and well nigh unbearable. Yet the star of hope has risen – the anchor of the heart reaches the very throne of God. Instead of evil being unleashed within man, the light shines victorious: Suffering - without ceasing to be suffering becomes, despite everything a hymn of praise."

As I read and re read Spe Salve Facti Sumus (In Hope we are Saved) the above quotation struck me strongly and spoke to me of a confirmation for the work that I do.

Man was created for greatness, for God Himself (p60) says the Holy Father in this encyclical,. Indeed man has been created for Himself and because of this no one may kill another human irrespective of size or relationship and be free from consequences. Post abortion Syndrome is a consequence of that law written on the heart, (Jer 31:31-33) that one may never kill another and hope to not be affected by the experience.

"A mother love wounded" Because indeed it is the deep mysterious, innate love written on the heart that calls out its pain. It is slow and does not want recovery because it wants to remain in touch with her infant. It refuses to stop its mourning because it has a covenantal loyalty attached to it

Unmasking this grief and then working with it, safeguards and protects the family and society.

Whilst the decision to abort means an instant of total loss of faith, hope and love, written within abortion grief is the seed of new hope, for within this grief is the kernel of deep love and deep regret and deep sorrow for an action which indeed was conceived in despair, yet in His infinite love and Mercy God is able to help her/him to begin the journey forward. In every journey there is "hope" inscribed within it and for this journey forward also there is "hope." Hope that God has forgiven us., Hope that our infant forgives us and Hope that eternally we may meet and love together.

One of the things which the late Holy Father John Paul II will be remembered for is his insistence on the dignity of the human person whose rights are universal and unchanging. According to him and also the Vatican II documents, *The Church in the Modern World*, a human is always a human and remains a human even in its darkness, and with this vision of

the human in mind, it is possible to minister to the most wounded and broken and perhaps even the most sinful members in our society, that is, those mothers who have aborted their child (willingly at times) and have regretted that decision.

Whilst abortion always means an instant where all hope is lost I believe that written within abortion grief is the seed of a new “hope” which acts as the fuel to carry on the journey. It also means to me that the words “I will not leave you orphans” are fulfilled because within this grief if managed well is the seed of recovery and not despair.

In every journey there must be hope to reach a destination, and the “hope” which fuels this journey is called “Mercy” or even “forgiveness” That God has loved us abortive women and forgives us and even our babies have forgiven us and one day we will meet and be together.

The Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI in *Spe Salvi* says “It is not science that redeems man. Man is redeemed by love” (p50). For the post abortive women their grief is the evidence of that love. And it is that deep and mysterious love which leads to God and to redemption.

The Holy Father further says “It is never too late to touch the heart of another. Nor is it in vain” (p89) and with this I strongly agree. To touch and help heal the heart of a wounded post abortive mother is to enter into her world of pain and speak words that help to comfort and heal her, those in her life and to help heal society. No it’s not in vain but a *new hope*.

A Mother’s Love

A “Mother’s love” cannot be bought or given. It is in every cell of my body. Once you have given birth to your child it consumes you day and night and never disappears. It only grows stronger and stronger each day and creates that special bond with mother and child!

A “Mother’s love” is the ultimate gift from God. In my lifetime I have been blessed with this love three times. Nothing can ever take this away from me. God blessed me with my loving husband, Steve and his ultimate gifts to me were Mathew, Tayla and Ben. My three angels!

Nothing compares with the feeling of watching my children grow and seeing parts of me in them. When they laugh and hug and kiss me, and tell me that hey “love you Mum.”” This is real heaven; it melts my heart and is music to my ears. Their love is unconditional.

It is the most real and natural love that any person can ever experience. It is the love that comes straight from the heart and is so pure. That feeling of nursing my children makes me the most important person in their world that really matters to them.

That wonderful feeling I get in my heart when they achieve something, is so special.

By them being themselves and making me feel proud of what they do and the person that they want to become, makes me love them more. That proud feeling in my heart is priceless and can only be felt when you are a Mum or a Dad.

This is why this ultimate “Mother’s Love” is the hardest to let go. Knowing I won’t be there to watch my children grow old and to continue to protect them, is the saddest thing that I will miss. I’ve lived my life protecting them every day and now it can be taken from me. Cancer may have taken my body, but it will never take my “Mother’s Love.”

Nothing will ever replace my “Mother’s Love” for it will always be in my heart and soul. It will just take another form when I am not there. The form of an Angel. This will be my next great gift to my children, Mathew, Tayla and Ben. I will always watch over you and be your angel in your prayers at night. Nothing will ever take away my “Mother’s Love” for you. Not even death.”

By Sandy Johnson, Mum.

Sandra Johnson died age 42. This was read at her requiem Mass on March 17th 2009.

Printed with kind permission of her family and Marian Centre newsletter. (WA)

I wanted you dear readers to hear the words of love from Sandra to her children and this also for me shows clearly why post abortion grief exists.

This type of “Mother’s Love” is written deep within the essence of a woman and when she acts contrary to the language of her body, the language of her essence, and the language of the covenant with her body which bears her child, then indeed we see a grief and pain unlike any other. Because a woman was **never** intended to intentionally take her child to be killed. Woman weeps for her child no matter what age.

The woman has it written within her very being to protect and nurture and feed and grow her child with a kind of love unlike any other known love. The child growing within her is a deep mystery of life and she herself is also involved in this mystery, even when she refuses to acknowledge or be a conscious part of it. At the unconscious level she already is part of that mystery and as such after abortion she becomes restless and suffers great pain until she can reclaim and acknowledge her motherhood and be forgiven for rejecting it.

The famous French philosopher Jean Guitton once wrote “the mother prepares in her body the existence which is destined for eternity and in this way she takes part in the deepest event in the world. This is what constitutes the proper greatness of a woman as a mother, and destruction of it constitutes for her, destruction of herself”

Yes indeed “mother love” is very different from “father” love because the woman carries within her own body just under her heart the child entrusted to her care. Indeed “mother love” is a mysterious and creative love, like the love of her own Creator.

Anne I want to know where my baby is.

I recently had the experience of holding a young woman (Chelsea) in my arms as she sat with me in my office sobbing out her whole story. Her body was wracked by uncontrollable sobs whilst she recounted her experience of abortion.

I heard the same words as I usually hear, of her not wanting an abortion and being forced by boyfriend who had already left her. Of her mother saying that she could not stay home if she continued pregnant and she couldn't "expect your father and me to support your child too".

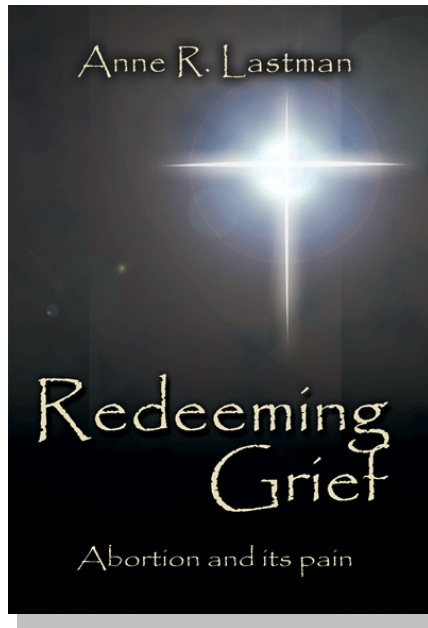
Chelsea didn't tell her boyfriend that she was pregnant because she was afraid that he would make her have an abortion so she left it as long as possible before she told him and likewise with her mother.

"I was so terrified Anne but I was sure he wouldn't make me have an abortion because I was 16 weeks gone. How could he make me do this? How could he force me to kill our baby? I thought he loved me and he told me he loved me and I believed him because I loved him too. And then Mum did the same. I had no one who wanted to help me. I felt so lonely and more than that I felt really alone."

Chelsea's story continued, "never thought that I would feel so much hurt, anger and pain and even hatred for my boyfriend and my mum but it's not a kind of normal anger its different. It's more like a rage. I want to hit out at hit someone and mostly I hit out against me."

As Chelsea spoke of her experience of being debased and dehumanised and brutalised into submission I could see such a terrible look of understanding that she has now about the reality of what the abortion has meant to her.

Since the abortion, Chelsea has been very depressed and is in fact on anti



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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depressants and has been for many months. These, according to her, make her feel numb and distant and she doesn't seem to care. Suicide is a thought which she has entertained and indeed made several attempts. Though I believe that the attempts were a loud cry for help rather than a real desire to complete the act.

Chelsea continues to suffer deeply and refuses to even begin to forgive herself. Her self blame is deep. She cannot understand why she didn't leave everyone and go away and have the baby. But at the moment I also see that she is not in a place in her mind where she can think clearly. She is in a place where it's self blame, self demeaning and even attempts at self harm. My hope is that with time there will be a renewal of her sense of who she is and a beginning of self forgiveness and a rebuilding of a new and stronger "Chelsea"

"Anne I want to know where my baby is. Can I get his body back?" At first I thought that the question "where my baby is" meant eternally, but she had meant what had happened to the remains of her son.

I hate this question because I either have to divert the question about the remains of her child (and I don't want to do that) or tell her the manner of disposal of aborted infants (as medical waste or incinerated) and watch more pain and horror.

When it comes to this I try and divert the talk into a different area like locating the infant in the heavenly realm and suggest we discuss the earthly remains at a later time when it comes to talking about a plaque with the baby's name. I also encourage discussion along the lines of hope and courage and God's Mercy.

I have also discovered that even those who don't really want to know anything about God's Mercy, love, forgiveness, for themselves, are really happy to hear that their baby is being held in God's care. That the baby is safe and at peace and that the baby prays for her peace because he loves his mother and wants her well.

"Anne I want to know where my baby is" is a difficult question to answer. For anyone who hasn't had an abortion it is a matter of information, though painful as it is. But to someone who has had an abortion and regrets the decision, this new information will be another "sword piercing the heart" and it never gets better.

I saw images of aborted infants for the first time about 14 years ago and I have never forgotten them. They are deeply imprinted in my mind. When someone speaks favourably about abortion those images come to mind and I am able to speak with vehemence about abortion not being a minor procedure no matter how much the pro abortionists/pro choice brigade wishes it to be so.

Today it is more difficult when counselling because most have access to internet and readily available images and information about procedure, and information and availability of abortion providers so it makes the pain of the aborted woman/man more acute. More visible. It makes their decision and it's after effects more clearly visible because the woman/man sees in these images their own aborted child or children.

I also find it interesting that before an abortion the same person does not go to the websites to see the images. She/they go immediately to the abortion provider who tells them the words they want to hear. Indeed most don't even want to have an ultra sound because of what it will show, but later these same women will become "addicted" to the websites showing the effects of abortion. Showing the procedures and showing the remains of the babies. This is a self punishment regime devised to cause the maximum crushing pain.

Several years ago I was counselling a young woman and it seemed that we were progressing well. Then something began to change she began to arrive for her sessions utterly distraught and we would work together and by the time she left I thought we had made progress. At times I would see her 3 times a week because she was in so much pain.

This went on for several months, this up and down, until one day she let it slip that she daily watched the aborted babies' images on the internet and she saw in those images her own infants crushed as those she saw on the net and then she dream about them.

This then made sense why she seemed to progress and then regress. And dumb me never thought to ask about internet!!!! It took a long time to undo what those images had done.

We continued to work together but with a contract that she would not look at those images again and if she did we would terminate our sessions, and indeed this is what eventually happened, and she found someone else who she felt gave her the freedom to look at the images whenever she liked. I agreed with her decision to go to someone else as I could not sanction her behaviour.

The Book of Nature

"If there is lack of respect for the right to life and natural death, if human conception, gestation and birth are made artificial, if human embryos are sacrificed to research, the conscience of society ends up losing the concept of human ecology and, along with it, that of environmental ecology. It is contradictory to insist that future generations respect the natural environment when our educational system and laws do not help them to respect themselves.

Letters

Dear Anne

This donation is written by me but comes from our 16 year old daughter Elyse. Elyse works part time so her tithing is not huge but still represents a sincere wish to help you in your work.

God Bless

Beth- Mother of Elyse.

Dear Elyse, when I read your Mum's letter I felt tears well up. Thank you dear one for the sacrifices you made to send me the donation. I appreciate your care for me and this work.

God Bless your beautiful life.

Anne

Dear Anne,

I would normally send you a donation as a sign of my family's support for you, along with our prayers. However, I am so surprised to hear of the negative reaction to your last newsletter that I feel compelled to remind you that you have many people who admire you greatly.

Thank you for shining Christ's light into sad hearts and doing the work that takes so much sacrifice.

God Bless you

Sincerely

Mrs and Mrs R. & family

Melbourne.

I am humbled by your kind words...Anne

Dear Anne

I was most disappointed to read that you had so much negative feedback to *Heather's story* in the June/July issue of Broken Branches.

You were absolutely right to publish the story because had it remained a secret, Heather would have been deprived of the prayerful support of your readers. Abuse cases such as Heather's are far more common than our depraved society cares to admit and the victims need all the support that they can get. Such support can only be offered if their stories are made known.

I enclose a small donation to help you in your most valuable work which I hope you will continue for many years to come.

George.. Melbourne

Thank you George for your ongoing support. Many years to come? Not sure about that. It gets harder every year. 3 mornings per week beginning counselling in the city office at 6.30am (before their work) and going till late afternoon, and two other days from home office, does

this old body no good....blessings... Anne

Dear Anne,

“Noli illegitimi carborundum”

Have courage! Your revelation about sexual abuse and its potential consequences was excellent and did not in any way surprise me. Indeed it confirmed some privately held opinions.

You are doing a wonderful job and I was stunned that your article caused offense!

Maybe it raised some unwanted memories? That have remained buried for a long time (memory wipe-out is another symptom)

I treasure your magazine. God Bless

Kevin F-S (WA)

Thanks Kevin loved the “noli illegitimi carborundum.

Dear Anne,

I have followed your work over many years and have both laughed and cried with you and I am sad to see some of the letters. I can hear your tiredness and I am amazed that you have kept going with this work for so long. Having myself worked with grief I know how easy it is to burn out.

Dear Anne please be careful because you sound like you are beginning to burn out. Just take time to spoil yourself and to pamper yourself for a while because if you don't you won't be able to help anybody else.

God bless you dear

Marie K.

Bentleigh. Vic.

Thank you Marie. Yes I am tired and looking forward to Christmas break and this year won't travel anywhere just have 4- 6 weeks off.

Anne

The book of nature is one and indivisible: it takes in not only the environment but also life, sexuality, marriage, the family, social relations: in a word, integral human development. Our duties towards the environment are linked to our duties towards the human person, considered in himself and in relation to others. It would be wrong to uphold one set of duties While trampling on the other.”

Caritas in Veritate (no. 51)

What beautiful words spoken by our dear Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI and how astutely he has seen the bigger picture.

As “Eve” goes, so does the church and society.

Since the 1960’s the human woman has violently emptied her womb, (abortion) and the church has experienced empty pews, and society has seen violence previously unknown outside of a war situation. And entered the new “demographic winter.” We have also seen and experienced degradation of environment and natural disasters in dimensions to cause fear and still there is the loud and shrilling cry to give more liberal assent to killing of innocence in the womb.

Indeed we are hard of hearing and of seeing.

New Address

Dear friends, I think I must be a bit insane, because I have just signed a new two year lease even though this last year has been a really really difficult one and I am really tired.

I have also moved from my office in the heart of the city of Melbourne and have moved to one just outside the fringes.

The move was necessitated because the location I was at had become increasing unhealthy and I was beginning to be afraid to be at the office. I daily had to step over syringes and other after effects of alcohol and drug taking. Indeed it became very hard to be at the office and I usually had to get in earlier in order to remove what might have been there.

So I was faced with ending this work or finding new premises. Mind you the retiring looked soooo good for a few moments but I still have many in my care so it was not a viable proposition.

This new office literally “fell into my lap” and it is in a

beautiful location amidst a group of medical tenants. Indeed my new neighbours are doctors, psychologists, Naturopaths, Chinese medicine and now a grief counsellor, me!!

The only drawback was the needing to sign a two year lease, where at the old office I was on a monthly basis.

Dear friends I need your prayers and support to help me to continue. Perhaps for a while longer if you could help with both needs and I will continue to do the best I can.

Thank you Paul B. and Fr Raymond. I appreciate your care and thank you also to those who have responded to my needs.

Also dear friends by the time you receive this newsletter I will be in Germany attending a conference as a speaker. I have also been asked to stay an extra week for further talks after the conference. Please pray that I do well. I will write about it in the next newsletter.

Please continue to pray for Amanda T. Juliet, Suzie, Heather, John, Jenny, Maria (Rome) Rula, Stephanie, Gloria, Gabby, Ronnie, Sophie, Paul, Michael, Antoine, Nicholas, Gayle, Maddie, Paula, Derek. Anna, Erica, Teresa, Amanda (2) Robyn (new) Lillian (new) Daniel, Tina.



Anne Lastman- Counsellor

BA (psy) BA Rel Stds., Dip Educ., MA Theol. MA Rel Educ., MACA (Qual) FVC (Full Member).

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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 annevoa@bigpond.net.au with a request to be added to the email list.