

Broken Branches

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

ISSUE 140 – Dec/Jan 2021

Baby or fame!

And so, we have reached the end of another year, and goodness what a year. Never would any of us have imagined what we have seen this past year, not just locally to ourselves but globally.

Since the last issue of the newsletter I came across a story which always leaves me cold. An entertainer who promotes abortion because she had one and therefore must ensure that the rights of other women who want to end their pregnancies in violence should have the right to do so.

Stevie Nicks of Fleetwood Mac in interview has said that unless she'd had her abortion then her band and her music would not have been. She opined that if she had not had the option to abort her baby then the band may not have been what it is today.

Indeed, her abortion happened during a time when the band was at its height in popularity.

Oh, and then Ms Nicks (now 72 yrs.) says that her music healed so many hearts (not her aborted baby's heart that stopped beating) and made so many people happy. I wonder if the people she supposedly made happy knew that she'd aborted her child so that she could heal their heart and make them happy. And today she again is trying to influence abortion discourse by speaking in interview about the woman's right to abortion and the need not to elect Judge Amy C Barrett to Supreme Court of US because she might not act according to the feminist demands for more and more abortions and more and more sophisticated ways of carrying them out.

I'm always saddened when I read or hear these stories because what the women are doing is asking the readers, listeners for their approval and to encourage others to do the same so that it will not seem so bad if many others "do it too."

I wonder if Ms Nicks has thought about what her child might have been like. Son? Daughter? (not foetus, embryo, cells) With all the success of the band and no

doubt many American dollars could she not have hired a nanny to help her? Would her fans run from her if they knew she was pregnant? I wonder why it wasn't possible to carry the child and get help to care for him/her without her decision and today she would have had an adult son or daughter.

Or perhaps was there another reason why the abortion was necessary. Fear of drugs effects? Or perhaps even not wanting to cease taking the "stuff" during the pregnancy?

Is this the price of success for her and her band? The life of her child and with deep thought was it really worth it all.

Another story which caught my attention and came through one of my daily newsfeeds if I remember correctly through Lifenews, was the story of a young woman who had begun the steps towards chemical abortion (25 weeks) and had to be taken to hospital. The hospital did not do abortions but the young woman insisted that she wanted one if "its" born alive. Kill the baby. Kill it. I don't want it. Nothing seemed to convince her otherwise.

However, and this is so important, as soon as the infant was born and cried the mother screamed "save my baby" "save my baby" This response is what I have been calling it over 24 years "mother love" It's an instinct inherent in woman to respond to the call of the very weak and vulnerable and especially of her own very weak and vulnerable baby.

Sadly, this particular infant did not survive as the chemicals used to initiate the abortion had done their deed but the infant had rescued his/her mother from a life of cold heartedness. Her recognition of her baby's cry to its mother awakened in her, her mothering instinct and ensured that never again would she utter the words "kill it" "I don't want it"

The beauty of this story is that we can see that "mother love" is real. Unlike any other love. It's the kind of love that half an hour before a baby wakes from sleep the

Name _____

Address _____ P/C _____

Donation _____ I *would/would not* like to be on your mailing list.

Send to:

Victims of Abortion, National Office

PO Box 6561, East Perth, WA, 6892, Australia.

Or email: anne@victimsofabortion.com.au

mother's breasts begin to ache and begin leakage. The bond between the mother and her baby is so deep that both mother and baby speak with each other without words.

Just before baby wakes the mother has prepared the nourishment with her own body and baby knows this. If only we could convince women of their awesomeness and how awesomely created, they are and that only woman can do something like that.

If only we could convince woman that the baby, she wants to abort carries without it her own heart cells and their dialogue which begins at conception carries on throughout their life.

Whenever a child is in need, the heart of a mother knows. I knew when my son Mark was dying as a sadness and depression overcame me but I didn't know why until later in day when I was told the news.

Whenever a mother is in need of special comfort a son/daughter knows and makes that call or visit which seems to fix things. Nothing changed, just the voice of shared heart cells knows what to do.

If only we could shout this from rooftops so that woman could hear about her special charism then maybe, just maybe, she might hear.

Remember but without pain.

At the core of grief is to hold on to the life story of the other not to allow their story to become forgotten.

November comes and mostly our thoughts of All Souls' Day, in which we remember our dead loved ones and remember with a heavy heart those who have left us for other shores and places. This month speaks to us and reminds us that we are on this beautiful Eden just for a short time and is a reminder of sorrow and sadness which accompanies the going and how final it is.

As I look into the distance there is calm which beckons and we carry with us a gratefulness for the life it has produced and lived. There is also a gratefulness for the life which was "knitted together" but didn't quite make it. This much much precious life (aborted, miscarried, stillborn, suicide) enhanced society because of its visit. Society cannot ever be the same because a new and never formerly created life came into being even for a short time. Or walked the earth for a short time. The earth stood still just as it did just over 2000 years ago when another little boy was born. Earth that sustained that life that long ago has also sustained the life of those loved ones who have departed and those who were forcibly sent away. For these, the earth stood still in a moment of reverence for such beauty rejected.

the stillness that follows the rejection is a reverence where there was none. As the sunset glows over the land and gives it a bit of its own glory so too the reverence which is shown to each new creation enfolds and shares with it with glory and beauty.

During times of deep sorrow, grief, pain our deepest yearning is for soul healing, and to do this it's important to pay attention to symbolic messages that surround us. When working with those who are grieving and in what seems unimageable pain and so deeply wounded in both souls and spirit (yes they are different) it's essential to be able to "see" past the visible available to the ordinary eyes, and to hear what is not heard by the ordinary ears and to do this my own inner listening and inner hearing must be constantly present to the one hurting so that I am able to find in the very ordinary something extraordinary and then to help my others/clients do the same.

The grief stories almost always are deeply connected to surrounding symbols and when talked about and shared by the griever, a profound effect is experienced by everyone who hears. For the one grieving all manner of symbolic is important because this allows the individual to associate and talk about the lost one in a manner which she can relate to and cause not so much pain.

The griever can recall moments, songs, colours, words, even tears without feeling embarrassed. For a woman

retelling her story of abuse, of abortion, these symbols are a support which she/he can use to talk about her loss and in some way even diminish her sense of guilt and shame at what she has done.

For the griever the symbolic which would have passed by unnoticed before the abuse/abortion, the memory now comes to her aid to remember a "time." The symbolic comes to help her create a history for her lost child/children and in this collation of word, memories, colours, songs, music, words, she can create a memory of her baby/ies. She is able to spend as much time as needed to speak about her baby so that in her own mind a history is completed and for the rest of her life the history and baby is remembered. An abused victim can spend time recreating a "clean history."

I think and believe that our beloved God does not leave us to walk the grief path alone but sends (unbeknown) signs to let us know that her baby is safe and one day, yes, day one she will be able to say "hello my baby" and hear in return "Hello Mummy I've waited for you."

Their language of sign and symbols is a language of another reality and understood by our soul as a divine language spoken into the soul for the purpose of comfort and healing. It becomes known and understood and in due course accepted as it becomes a frequently heard voice and with the increased hearing it becomes accepted as a voice for healing.

Rejection of this voice for healing can also make itself present however, this other voice is one which taunts, and accuses and immolates and is not the voice which allows for a memory to remain but not cause pain. This is voice of guilt. The other is the voice of regret and sorrow and self and other forgiveness. It's the voice which accepts the whisper of the divine voice which says "Father forgive her she did not know what she was doing"

Abortion grief counselling and sexual abuse counselling are two of the most rewarding work in our day. This because I believe when we do this work well we touch the heart and soul of another, journey with another and help to understand that reconciliation with one's own history will show that God does not make mistakes and is a work which is not for all even the very best of counsellors/psychologists even psychiatrists but a work for those called to help the wounded soul on its journey to wholeness. A journey leading to remembering without pain.

Amy Coney Barrett.

It was with such happiness that we hear the news that Judge Amy Coney Barrett had been appointed to be the next Associate Justice on the Supreme Court, replacing pro-abortion Justice Ginsberg who had recently passed away.

Judge Barrett was confirmed on a 52-48 vote with all Republicans except one Susan Collins, voting to confirm her, and shamefully all Democrats voting against her nomination.

After the administration of the oath of office Judge Amy Coney Barrett will be appointed as the next associate justice of the Supreme Court. of USA. Many kudos have come her way

"We've had a chance to witness this outstanding nominee. We've watched her in committee She's demonstrated she has the deep legal expertise, dispassionate judicial temperament and sheer intellectual horsepower that the American people deserve to have on their Supreme Court."

"This outstanding nominee is exceptionally suited to this job, period. And I know we all know that. She is an exceptional nominee to the Supreme Court who will make the Senate and the country exceedingly proud," he said.

...In these tragic circumstances not to forget the dignity accorded both...

For my part, her appointment, that is, the appointment of a woman of huge integrity, a woman who is a mother of 7 children, a woman who loves the law, is a rebuttal of what previous Judge Ginsberg said that the things going against her was that she was female, and mother and she set out to ensure that woman would no longer be denied the job of her wishes because she was a mother and to this effect liberalised abortion to scandalous degree. Judge Coney Barrett is a woman, a Catholic, a mother, a wife and judge and intensively a woman unashamedly of great faith.

For the many pro-life groups throughout USA and around the world it looks like a prayer has been answered. Not only a pro life president but a supreme court judge of great integrity and honour.

We who are so involved in the abortion pandemic waited to know her thoughts on this issue and so heard that when it comes to abortion Justice Amy Coney Barrett has been on the pro-life side. in 2016 she voted to allow a hearing on a pro-life law from the state of Indiana that

requires abortion centres to offer a proper burial or cremation for babies they kill in abortions. And in 2019, she voted to allow a hearing on another Indiana pro-life law allowing parents to be notified when their teenage daughter is considering an abortion so they can help her make a better decision for her and her baby. Music to the ears.

For me especially was the importance of burial of aborted babies because doing this, even in such circumstances speaks of their humanity. Honours the child who has passed by for a brief moment and with great dignity laid to rest.

This is what I have spoken about, written about for so many many years. The not forgetting about the humanity of the baby and even child's parents. In this tragic circumstance not to forget the dignity accorded to both.

Dear friends,

In a moment of meditation, I distinctly heard "don't give a piece of yourself away. A piece of your soul. Don't give it into the care or hands of one who won't cradle and hold it gently and securely and who will treasure and protect it and ensure that no one will ever be able to wound it.

But give that piece of yourself into the care of one who will love, cherish, protect that piece of you which you have entrusted to be loved and held in honour and esteem.

To give a piece of yourself and receive a piece of another each to nourish, protect, treasure is to truly love the beloved.

The piece given to one to protect and honour and love and then return it more blessed will be like the parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14-30) and that person who enhances and honours the gift will be more blessed whilst the one who dishonours and wounds the essence of another will be punished.

This meditation for me was important because it brought home the very real privilege that we each have in being given to hold onto a precious piece of another.

For a counsellor to be given into one's care to hold carefully the life story of another and then finally returned when it has been enhanced because it has been held with respect and honour.

We are to be careful in our care for another. Only love will measure up to it and the reward will be greater than that given.

Fatherhood.

Every time I read the parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk15:11-32) something new emerges. Some nuance which had not been noted in past reading and yet so important to understanding of fatherhood to look at the "function" of the father as imaged in this parable

The role of the father is so important to the spiritual and psychological development and formation of a child. The relationship with the father is not only that of physical generation, but also of establishing a psychological and spiritual bond. It's through this bond that the "son" or child gains his identity as "son" just as surely as God is identified as Father, through the generation of his Word (son) Jesus.

As the human father confers on his human child his nature and personality (all that it means to be human), so too the divine Father confers on his son his own nature, which is divine. God's Word establishes the fact of "sonship". "You are my son the beloved" (Mk 1:11) and "You are always with me" (Lk 15:31) are the identifiable characteristics and promise between the Father and the Son. For it's true that the Son has been within the Father always, forming an extraordinary and indissoluble bond. For the human child, the son has also always been with the father.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is extraordinary because it shows the son's or the human's misconception of a father's nature and son who fears that nature. The relationship between God and His son and a highlighting which Jesus brings to the relationship of fatherhood and child. There is even a fear of the father as indeed we see clearly in Old Testament Scriptures where God is portrayed as someone to be feared and at times ruthless, tyrannical and someone who required appeasement, obedience and detachment.

This imagery is also evident with the (prodigal) son's desire to flee from what he thought were strict confines of his father's house. However, in his wanderings he discovers that the image of his father was false and that instead his father's house meant freedom from any kind of want. Security, generosity, love. These which he did not find in wanderings.

In this parable Jesus skilfully weaves the true image of his Father on the tapestry of the human story. With this parable Jesus reverses past beliefs about God's attitude towards his creation. Jesus clearly shows an image of his Father which was previously unknown or vaguely hinted at.

The mercy of God the Father previously only alluded to, is incarnated in visible form in the son so that it could be understood by all who heard and saw. The mercy and compassion shown by Father (father figure in the parable) is constant, even in the weaknesses of the child. God is ever vigilant for the son's return and knows the humiliation and baggage borne by the child are heavy. In his solicitude He (Father) lightens the burden of shame by running to meet his still distant child, the child still weighed down by the misfortune of his wanderings.

Perhaps this parable is most appropriate for today because of the diminished role of fatherhood, which in turn has led to the diminishing of the enjoyment of the child's creator, his father, as head of his household, and male role model and also Father as head of the Church, but also diminishes the understanding of fatherhood and the great necessity that a father is to his child.

Both mental, spiritual and somatic health are associated with emotional wellbeing of a child growing with a father and research points to this reality.

In the absence of father, a child has no protector, no headship/leadership role. For a boy there is no father to teach his son in the growth to manhood and later fatherhood and his daughter, how a father loves his daughter with the respect he has for her mother and for women. He teaches her how to expect respect from males in her life because respect and love is what she has experienced from the first male (father) in her life.

At a cellular level he/she has a memory of male voice, smell, tone, and when filled with positive emotion all future triggers will return her to this imprint and repel what is not known. Like Jesus who said "my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me" (Jn 10:27-28). Where there is an imprint and echo of the father's voice a child recognises that voice and is assured and comforted by it.

A great and unfortunate tragedy of this era is the diminished role of father in the child's life, either by desertion or even by separation and abandonment. A child has an echo of a voice he/she needs to hear in order to feel complete. The jigsaw piece to fit into the whole and where not possible then there is a sadness, longing and searching.

The voice of another, whilst pleasant and assuring is not the same as the one deeply embedded in every cell of his/her being and perhaps the rebellious child and youth of our day has resulted from the need to fill that void of an absent father.

We pray that the role of fatherhood will be again honoured and the dignity accorded to it by divine donation will again be found in them.

The year that's been.

Dear friends, as I come to the end of this last newsletter for 2020, the year unlike any other we have known in our lifetime. I would like to say that I have achieved much but the reality is that like all of us I have not done the things I would have liked to have and even done in past years.

Looking through my diary up until March 2020 I had given two talks to two different groups, on abortion grief and one on the similarities and differences between abortion grief and sexual abuse grief. I had been back to Melbourne twice and give each of my clients two sessions each in the week I was there and then had to hurry back before borders closed.

Since that time, I have given two further talks on abortion grief and one of these talks was to professional people.

I have continued to counsel my Melbourne clients (weekly) either by phone and zoom and whilst it has not been the same as per "normal" it has been acceptable.

I continue with zoom with four clients and I enjoy a little because we are able to see each other but I also enjoy speaking by mobile with those without zoom.

During this time, I have written the usual number of newsletters per year (6 issues) and have written quite a few articles for publishing both in Australia and overseas.

I have renewed my office here in Perth and made it light bright, comfortable, with lightest grey and green colour scheme (restful) and plants and above all space for social distancing.

I haven't been able to establish referrals from pregnancy helps here though have had referrals from Melbourne people and places I know and who know the work that I do.

I had hoped to have done something very special for babies here but I haven't been able to bring this about yet but I haven't given up on that project. I hope as things ease more can be done.

I am now in my office (here) 3 full days per week and others I do writing from home office because all my resources are there.

I have been able to order one more plaque for the South Melbourne Children's memorial wall (should be installed before end of November and if borders opened, hopefully will go to Melbourne so that my girl will not have to experience seeing her plaque by herself. This is important. And whilst there will be able to give my clients there 2 sessions each (3 where more needed) before I close office till end of January.

Letters

Hi Anne,
It's Di here. I just wanted to send you some love and say I'm thinking of you with such fondness and happiness. I am so grateful for your help, support and for your love, counselling me for free.
How are you? How is Perth going?

*Hi Di, thanks for thinking about me and it was my pleasure working and knowing you. Hope you are more than OK. Hope you are great.
Perth is still difficult and the shutdown and not being able to go to Melbourne every 4-6 weeks to see both sons and partners and all my existing clients has been difficult. Keep well and very safe and bless your life abundantly
Anne*

Dear friends I received a long letter to ed which covered many life issues but I print just the first sentence. "Frank" (his real name) met me in the street and said "my mother killed my brother" "What?" "Yes, she had an abortion. She killed my brother. I can't trust her anymore. I feel like a child without a father and a mother." And speaking with others, those kids are also feeling the same. No depth of connection anymore."

Thanks Don K for sending this....

As I read just this sentence, I was reminded of a client I had many years ago, a male, who I saw over some time who after his wife went off and had the abortion without his knowledge till after the procedure, said to me that he could not trust her anymore. He couldn't see her as his beloved wife. He saw her as a murderer.

Its not unusual for children to be horrified at the thought that their mother and father would take their sibling to be killed. It induces a fear into the child that maybe they might be next. Why was he/she allowed to live and not the sibling? And a fear is introduced that they must be good all the time otherwise maybe they won't be wanted anymore.

Children cannot relate to their loved parents taking their sibling to die. And introduces such a horror and fear that this will manifest as PTSD.

Dear Anne,

Have just received your book *Hidden Pain* and I have to tell you how much I am enjoying reading it. I realise the word enjoying may not be the right word to use about a book on sexual abuse but I have been reading

it and I have not been afraid and really look forward to each new chapter. I don't know why every priest doesn't have a copy on his desk just to learn about this very important issue.

I particularly like the chapter on suffering and cleared for me some questions I had about suffering. Questions which always left me stumped. Again, thank you for much for writing about such a clearly written topic and not making it sound awful.

Regards
Marie K. M.,
Vic.

Dear Marie, thank you for letting me know and I'm glad you like reading book. I don't believe it's a difficult book to read but the topic itself is probably one that people don't want to know about and so its been hard to sell. However, it is a very topical subject and the reason I wanted to write is because I encounter sexual abuse much in my counselling for abortion grief. And at the time I wrote it there wasn't much written except several books on personal stories.

I was also sick and tired o hearing about "priests doing it" but not much about where the largest percentage of childhood sexual abuse occurs, in home and amongst friendship groups. That was the reason for the writing of this book and this topic.
Anne

Dear Anne,
Thank you for your last issue of Broken Branches, I was horrified to read about satanic abortions, and temple of satan and about that woman who says its an injustice if a woman can't kill her baby. What is wrong with her. What happened to her to make her so cold?
Any keep up the good work and I pray for you
Together with my friends.

Jenny A
Sydney

Thanks Jenny, yes it was hard writing about the satanic temple and satanic abortions and this week I heard about a satanic mass being offered in our own country Noosa I hope there were enough people objecting to it. It seems to be everywhere. Keep praying.
Anne

I also hope to have another two plaques available to place on the memorial wall sometime soon and perhaps when I come to Melbourne either before end of year or beginning of next year will again go with my client to see the name plaque for her babies. And perhaps speak to both the girls about a saying goodbye ceremony we might do whilst I am there.

Normally I would attend 2-3 overseas conferences per year and several in Australia, where I would deliver a paper on either of my two topics but this year as you can imagine all cancelled.

Even attending to ongoing professional development seminars have been difficult as I don't like doing webinars. I like the interaction with others and sharing of information.

All in all, I have done as much as it was possible to do with the limited availability. I am hoping to close office by mid-December and reopen end of January but as always available in emergencies.

I sincerely hope that by time of return to work some kind of "normal" will have been restored and we can look back at this past year as a time when we were all tried and tested and hope we have passed the tests posed before us.



Appeal.

Dear friends I would normally send out a separately printed appeal for support. My only real appeal once a year. However, in order to save on printing costs, I thought I would simply appeal to your generosity here.

In this part of my work it has been difficult this past year but I knew that most of my supporters have been concerned about the virus and its possible financial difficulties facing them but I have been blessed with half a dozen donors and family funds and have been able to continue under these conditions.

However, really the tin has been empty for some time, so before I commence again early in New Year would really like to see some security to even be able to pay the expenses that go with running an office. It would help my sense of less stress.

So, if possible, can you help? There are several things I would like to do next year if country is opened and movement is free. I believe that these are important things both for abortive mothers and babies. More about this as I begin to do them next year.

I thank you for staying with me this year and thank you enormously to those who contribute in any way possible, prayers, kind comments, financially and in any way that you make my life and work easier and a great pleasure to do.

Please continue to pray for me and my clients. For me I need prayers for health issues so much appreciated for this.

Please pray for Barbara, Sharyn, Jill, Matt, (lots) Bec, Belle, Helen, Fran, Chris, Pat, Trish, Julie.

Till we meet again may the Lord bless and keep you safe.

I wish for you a blessed Christmas and joy in abundance I wish for you safety as you travel and see loved ones and I wish for you the gift of peace and of course lots and lots of presents 😊

Please can I encourage you to purchase one (or both) of my books the funds from those goes into maintaining the office and hopefully next year a new one to offer you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne".

Anne Lastman

© Copyright Anne Lastman, VOA, 2020.
No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission.



Broken Branches – By email!

Visit <http://www.victimsofabortion.com.au/> to subscribe to our mailing list.

BOOKS

To order, please use the form below or order online (Australia only) at www.victimsofabortion.com.au

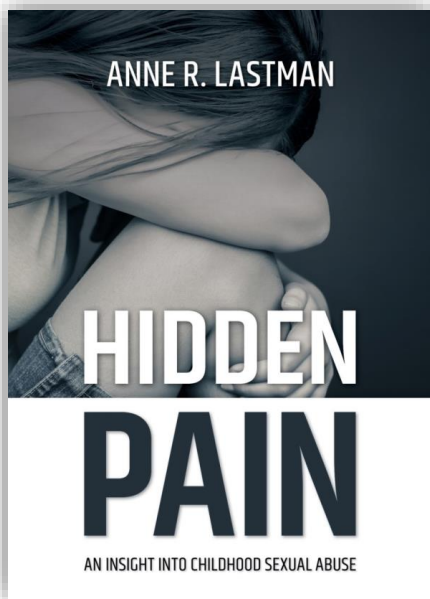
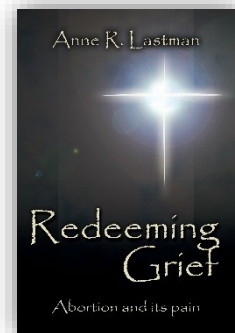
Contact Anne via email for international orders. anne@victimsofabortion.com.au

CLEARANCE!

There is a limited number of the first edition of Redeeming Grief to be cleared at a reduced priced of **\$10.00** including postage within Australia.

If you or anyone you know may be interested, please pass this on to help me clear them.

AUD **\$10.00** (Including free postage within Australia)



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.

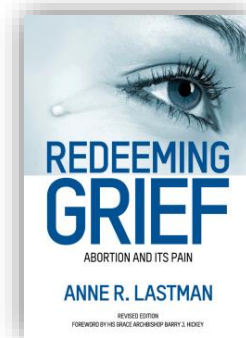
This is not a step by step guide to dealing with abuse. It is the result of my engagement with those who have come to me originally for post abortion counselling and on further investigation it was found that abuse (especially in cases of multiple abortions) existed in their history. It is my hope that **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.

AUD **\$20.00**

(Including free postage within Australia)

NEW REVISED EDITION! **REDEEMING GRIEF** is a reflection of over 17 years of counselling 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 1500 personal stories and listening to the expressions used by the women as they speak 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.

AUD **\$20.00** (Including free postage within Australia)



To order your copies of **Hidden Pain** or **Redeeming Grief**, please complete the form (right) and send with Cash, Cheque (made out to Victims of Abortion) or Money Order to:

Victims of Abortion, National Office
PO Box 6561, East Perth, WA, 6892, Australia.

Name _____

Postal Address _____

_____ P/C _____

Phone:(____) _____

Number of copies of Hidden Pain @ \$20each: _____

Number of copies of Redeeming Grief Edition 1 @ \$10each: _____

Number of copies of Redeeming Grief Edition 2 @ \$20each: _____

Total Price: \$ _____ (Free postage within Australia)