Broken Branches

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

ISSUE 154 - Feb/March 2023

R.I.P. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

R.I.P. His eminence Cardinal George Pell.

R.I.P. Renee Geyer, a lovely, beautiful voice gone.

R.I.P. Gina Lollobrigida, a most beautiful actress (I wanted to be like her).

Relationship is key to the pastoral care in the counselling of both sexual abuse and abortion victims. Relationship delves deeply into the depths of humanity. This depth has been understood by a counselling helper who has been able to slowly surface the humanity and dignity of the wounded one.

The care which a pastoral counsellor always offers is enwrapped in the knowledge that the human has been created and loved by God who will always love even when the obvious external circumstances suppose otherwise.

Love always creates and the manner of the creation (baby) is not what we call the "normal" conception, normal love, because love has its own route and DNA and seeks its birth.

It's interesting that the care offered is one which speaks of life, death, hope even sadness and in these the pastoral counsellor is the one who has been able to bring to the relationship the dimensions of care. Bring to the relationship a dimension of integrity which is so important to the pastoral relationship and to the wellbeing of the client.

Because both sexual abuse and abortion grief are dimensions of grief outside of what we call normal reasons for grief, which means its understood and accepted, and grief for sexual abuse and abortion is outside of the normal expectation and normal acceptance that the grief is right thing to do. Grieving for loss by death or any separation is understood, this grief understood and can be accompanied and

consolation deemed normal until the grief journey is completed. This journey is one that cannot ever be forgotten but it can become a memory of a time which was. Which has an imprint of forever remembrance.

Grief, where death is involved is accommodated by society but grief as a result of intentional loss (abortion) or intentional violation by a trusted and loved one (sexual even physical, emotional abuse) is a grief which has different trajectory. a grief with many stops along the wayside. A grief where one instance of a behaviour is not easily accommodated but where multiple there is a lifetime of remembrance and acting out on those memories.

There is the ability to ease the pain but the memory, that which has been seen, that which has been experienced cannot be forgotten.

The grief which follows both sexual abuse and intentional abortion has inscribed within it the same type of grief which is of a different dimension one that we can understand or think we can understand but not well at all.

Abortion today is not seen as a crime against a human being but as a right. it's become "normal". "Oh Well it happens. Everyone has them. Its legal etc". We know the euphemisms. But sexual abuse has still not found its language its accommodation in society. Sexual abuse (incest especially) is still a behind doors experience. Still a "bit" illegal it happens globally in as much a percentage as abortion but not accepted. The question must be why? Why does this horror which really does set up the template for a child and later adult's self-destructive behaviour.? I have seen it thousands of times. Indeed, even at this time a woman and her after effects of this violation.

She knows her behaviour is "not right" and slowly we look to where the origin is and start from there. The poisoned seed must be removed.

When asked Tessa (not real name) "what do you think has been your greatest sorrow about this?"

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"I don't know how to love. I don't know how to trust. I don't know to behave. I don't know what is right or wrong. I don't know how to say no. I don't know anything about boundaries. Anyone can have my body. I don't know when to say no. the litany continues. There are many losses and each of these losses must be named and rejected and a new one embedded. This is why this type of abuse is not for the faint hearted. It's a long-term need and work.

I have listened to counsellors speak about their knowledge and experience of "healing" sexual abuse in a 12-session government funded plan and voilà all done. This brings me horror. It speaks to me of some book written for money and shock inducing. It reminds me that whilst intentions of the counsellor are good and well-meaning the deep understanding of abuse, the soul, the inner being, the wounded spirit, wounded innocence which has been violently interrupted in its development is not understood at all.

Society has reached the point where, apart from some several thousand stalwarts, who fight valiantly, has accepted abortion as a normal, and sexual abuse, well it happens in some families. It's there/here it won't ever go away so how do we keep fighting. What new ways can we do to try and catch up with the billion/trillion-dollar abortion industry? Or billiondollar child pornography, abuse business? How can small groups of hard-working individuals who plead for funds hope to match the funds of people like Soros, Gates, Bezos et al who fund in billion dollar amounts the right to kill child. Or stand by the trafficking of children? How can my 1400 readership and ¼% donors hope to fight against this behemoth

I know many of you will think "Anne's lost the plot or even hope that abortion will be pulled back" but sadly I don't think it will only an action from God Himself will do that.

As I have said many times the grief following abortion is one when true realisation occurs. A moment when clarity breaks through and the thought "what have I

done" slowly surfaces. From that moment onwards the realisation is fed on negative self. Every negative thought about oneself is brought to the surface and these thoughts now become louder and stronger and more accusatory. No amount of consolation is accepted. No number of excuses are accepted, and what needs to be understood that from that moment on, is that this grief and loss must be dealt with as a stop/start situation. Different than other grief and loss programmes and taken to a place or point where it's understood that things will never be the same again but the future beckons and it brings with it a new vision for life. When all is not lost. Good counselling does this. But the future can also shine if healing is done well.

The same for sexual abuse its grief is felt as a loss of many dimensions one of which can lead to selfannihilation The memory too awful to contemplate.

I recently read that in the past year 73,000,000 abortions were performed. 73 million human beings/actual people were killed intentionally and we read that 3 in 5 people say that abortion should be legal in all or most cases and stages. And perhaps we may wonder why so many abortions. Well, the trillion-dollar business would be difficult to be closed down. There is so much money to be made in the killing of babies and the liberalised sexuality as a result of the sexual revolution contributed to this.

But, if we look at the figures in question, 73 million women have been willingly, coerced, and/or knowingly or unknowingly are left with that scar. 73 million women with a scar which never heals. It can be suppressed. It can be forced from conscious memory. It can be joyfully bragged about, for a time, but then there is the memory, conscience, feminine heart, which comes back to at first gently remind them but then in time with an angry and ugly voice. With a hoarse voice say which says of herself "Murderer"

The woman, that creation which God has entrusted to fill the earth has turned against her own body. That

part of her body which holds and nurtures her baby weeps because its task has been thwarted. Woman has again said "it's not a baby is just cells" No said another "we won't die" "try it my husband". And he does.

There is no other grief like abortion grief because it's the kind which cannot be reversed. One can have 10 more children, conceptions, sons and daughters but there is one or many which should have been at that table and are not. All those not at the table have not only lost their own lives but the lives of the many generations which will never be. Because they were not allowed to be.

The other grief which seems to have grown in our day is a grief which has never really acknowledged as a grief. It has been acknowledged as an abuse but never as a grief. Why is this? Because sexual abuse is still

recognised as unlawful, a crime, illegal, and lawyers can be brought into the equation. Lawsuits in the countless numbers. Incest has not been made legal like abortion. But sexual abuse in the numbers of millions (about 3 million Australia. average age 10 yrs) passes by in silence

To our moment in history sexual abuse has not achieved the status that abortion has but my theory is that in the not distant future it will become like abortion. There are already whispers. About this.

I remember hearing and reading about two so called academics who proposed post birth abortion. This not long ago. About 8 years ago and today that proposal is being considered. Maybe morally permissible up to 2 weeks post birth it should be permissible especially as abortion to full term accepted. Mengele solution.?

Sexual abuse of children and legalisation is also on the horizon. Visible but maybe a bit far, but if visible it means it has taken root and the shoots are emerging.

We know that it already is rampant and my theory is that it is similar to abortion in numbers but we need to wait and see.

The losses and grief involved in this terrible, terrible attack against honour and integrity of a human being are many, especially when the abuse is carried out in early childhood. Developmental stage where what is happening is fearsome and unrecognisable especially when a loved member of family does it. Trafficking unbelievable.

So, first loss, trust, the disbelief that someone "I love is hurting me and doing this to me" and confusion does anyone else do this? Does mummy know? Do my brothers and sisters know? And if they know it must be OK. But it's not Ok because it hurts me."

Loss of trust. Loss of knowledge of family. Loss of family safety, Trust in future and that all will be well because now I am afraid about my future.

Loss of my self-confidence. "Did I do something to cause this? It must be my fault" No its not and cannot ever be.

A Turning Point or Kairos moment is a time when things change and there is a knowledge that nothing will be the same again. One of my sexual abuse clients thought exactly that after first episode of abuse. She knew that nothing would or could be same again.

...Did I do something to cause this?... As we start this new year of 2023, a time to look back and see or acknowledge what the previous year or even previous years have been achieved. The experiences good and bad which have happened which helped us to learn, reshape and grow (or not) towards being fully human in order to more clearly help us to walk the journey. a new path; one that we can see clearly which leads us towards our soul's task. In this we shut the door to what had been and open door to what will be 2023. And we hope that the coming of this new year (unknown future) we

can further the work of goodness. This is the way to change society. Changing society is the only way. I am not talking about changing our fridges, washing machines, etc I am talking about changing hearts, minds, understanding, mostly of woman to one not of feminist but feminine. When this happens, we will see a glorious change as the human was created to know and be. A renewal of need for spiritual awareness and the holy and the right. She who carries the next human being will not allow harm to come towards it.

These past many years of labouring in the vineyard of pain I have seen the growth of new and helpful but also the greater growth of attacks against the Holy Spirit The Lord and Giver of Life, the domain of God. all manner life has been assaulted because the Lord and giver of Life has been forgotten.

For years now, I have seen the physical, mental, emotional, and social change, imperceptibly, at times, but change from one of quiet and with decorum (although with some problems) to open rebellion

Against against one another and against all life. it took place as people, seemingly went about their day-today business.

I have spoken on many occasions about the gathering of charisms and finding a way for all being on same page. That our fight against the anti-life cohort must be different than what they do. Not simply trying to catch up with them. Ours is a work of retrieval not "catch up" and as retrieval it means changing our modus operandi so that anti lifers chase us instead of the reverse. My very very humble opinion is that unless we speak with one voice using same language and words we will not be heard especially as media are not on our side. We must be louder than them. We know that the Lord can have a quiet whisper or thunderous voice and media don't matter to Him.

We must have a leadership which honours God and neighbour and colleagues so that all of us can retrieve the children going to their death. And their mothers left thinking "what did I do" or children and woman sold and abused.

The laws we depend on are necessary but they cannot really save humanity. Their role is simply to give to "Caesar et" direct and make street laws not save. Our role is to give to God what belongs to Him and whom he has loaned to us as a gift.... life.

Ex Father Frank Pavone.

The news about Frank Pavone being laicised came as a huge surprise to the pro-life movement all around the world. indeed, it was like a bolt of lightning which came out of nowhere.

How could it be that such a high-profile pro-lifer, founder of Priests for Life, outspoken pro-life activist be suddenly, unexpectedly be so horrendously treated? Here in Australia no loud words were heard of this coming "disaster." How did it happen? And yet the life journalists, newsletter writers and demanders of donations for this most important work remained fairly silent about this, though there were some rumblings of shock and some quiet dissent.

Of course, there were the usual Pope Francis bashers (if someone sneezes in the Vatican it's his fault)

For my part as a pro-life worker for over a quarter of a century and trying to keep up to date on the world pro-life scene by reading and seeing what others are doing and what we agree with and what we don't agree with in our work for life, I have to admit that I have stopped listening, reading, hearing anything said by Frank Pavone. Something within me started to rebel several years ago. I began to question.

Something didn't sit right. Though I agree with his belief and fight against anti-life brigade his manner of action slowly changed. He became an activist rather than a priest whose main work is to save souls. All souls. But in his, at times, his very visible anger, saving of souls were not considered by him. A priest gives best example by loving and being seen to be loving even those who are unlovable and obedience. The kind of obedience Jesus showed.

Frank Payone had been called to priesthood, to be a shepherd going out to find lost sheep, instead he became like a hunter who wanted to save the lambs but leave their mothers to the wolves. His first "Yes" was to the answer the call and in answering to be obedient to his Chief Shepherd and his representatives.

At the beginning of Pavone's work for life his then Archbishop was Cardinal O'Connor, who approved of his work for life, and he began to be seen as one of the most important pro-life leaders. He began to believe and see himself as indispensable in this ministry and began to disobey his own Bishop. He knew better. When asked to return to his original role of parish priest, he believed that his now new call was to be pro-life worker, leader.

I am reminded of parable about doing little things, bigger ones you will be trusted with.

"Whoever can be trusted with small things can also be trusted with big things. (Lk 16: 10-14) Pavone, in refusing, gave example not only of disobedience but lack of belief in God's trust in his shepherds and so he couldn't be trusted in bigger things.

He could have still remained faithful to the life cause but was more needed in parish work and possibly to be reined in from the temptation of celebrity status, pride, and in humility look to the holding of the souls of others and presenting these to the Lord, in the parish given to him to minister to. Indeed, what he showed was that he believed he knew better and decided that he would continue doing what he believed was his new calling. Throughout all of his so-called "new calling" the main standout point has been that he disobeved every Bishop who attempted to re assign him to parish work and always his response was NO. The pro-life work which he was doing was his new calling. The NO has been his undoing.

In his now perceived "new calling" he became loud, aggressive, and spoke in what I believe to be anger, rage, demeaning, vulgar way towards his overseers, the church and those who opposed him. His later political affiliations also questionable also contravened his role as priest and again showed his activism and disobedience to his Bishops and whose beautiful calling was to be a good shepherd carrying his sheep home and towards the protection of the fold.

My horror at his celebration of Holy Mass with the body of dead baby on the altar confirmed for me my deep misgivings and anxiety about this man who presented as an angel of light but was no longer. This, not because death of infants is untrue and not an abomination, but because he violated and used the altar to make a political point. If the Eucharist is a political ploy, then perhaps, we have all been practising idolatry for all of these several thousand years. The altar, irrespective how poor or how grand, is used to bring God the Son to earth to give his body to those who were not present at the first donation. To offer to God the spotless sacrifice. To do what Pavone did was offering to Molech a sacrifice of death using one of the shepherds to perform this work.

He was a changed man and now resembled anyone of those angry pro-abortion, pro-choice activists whom we see on our screens

His mistake has been that he began to believe his own narrative, that his new work is more important than obedience. Faithfulness in small things can lead to trust with big things. Pavone's problem was/is that he reached a stage where he believes his own story of his importance to the life movement, and again that yes, the Vatican is at fault, the pope is at fault, there are heretical priests, immoral priests, unjust Vatican hierarchy, the whole catholic and the pro-life world have been led to be against Pavone. But the reality is that Frank Pavone has been the only one against Frank Pavone. He listened to the smooth, enticing, lying voice of the enemy who told him that he was too important to the life movement and to disobey "the Father."

Echo of another time here?

Thank you and Adieu Dear Friends.

The Time Has Come to Say Goodbye...not gone for ever just goodbye and arrivederci. (Till we meet again)

It's with a sense of great sadness, and also thankfulness, that I write to let you know that at the end of this year or maybe earlier (September) I will close down the offices of Victims of Abortion. Both in Perth and Melbourne.

Since early 1996, with the words of priest who said "go and do for others what the Lord has done for you" (after my own healing from post abortion grief) I have laboured in His vineyard of pain. I set out in obedience (hard for me) and started this work. The late Cardinal Pell gave me three rooms to set up office in East Melbourne and I began the labour. I Made mistakes, and fell down and got up again

and got tempted to quit when it was too hard but somehow, I'm sure with the Lord's help, I lasted 26 and a half years.

In all these years I have never written an invoice or charged anyone a fee. When I lost two "clients" at the beginning because they couldn't afford \$10 per session, I had a discussion with my BOSS and suggested he find the funds and I do the work.

Hence birth of newsletter. The first issue 26 copies in number with addresses hand written on kitchen table, and two pages, photocopied newsletter. In time it grew and donations slowly came in enough to eventually pay all expenses and so I continued to slowly grow the work, and public speaking (this was my idea to talk about the grief of abortion and harm to woman and to baby).

Slowly, the newsletter also grew, both hard copy and later in email. As you know I got involved in the sexual abuse issue related to abortion and other domestic issues related with abortion.

I spoke and was present at over 30 international conferences, a few local Australian conferences, continued the newsletter, wrote two books, on each of the topics I worked with, spoke on radio programmes, did a radio Maria interview, and many other interviews, too many to count and of course continued with newsletter which helped you to see what I have been doing and counselling, and perhaps my best achievement has been to be present and be able to help 23 babies to be born because I helped their mothers. One of them is my Godson and he is a strapping 185cm tall and gorgeous. A beautiful young miss who's too beautiful to be true. The last little boy I helped with was 2 years before we moved to Perth so he would be about 6 now. His grandfather and I worked together and we did it under the nose of the psychiatrist who wanted her to abort and after birth she got better immediately and today is a wonderful mother. fourteen-year-old Bella, an 11-year-old Willy, and others not in touch which is OK with me so they can move on without any shadow hanging over them.

I helped with the starting of a children's memorial Garden in the grounds of a Catholic Church in Melbourne. My task was to add names of babies as we completed sessions. There's many.

I'm a bit disappointed because there were two other major projects I had in mind, and I had hoped to achieve but until now, they have not happened. However, I still have hope.

There have been many, many more things which I have done including being as a panellist on sexual abuse discussion, and its after effects. And wrote a large



Dear Anne,

It is good to read your newsletter, this one exceptionally personal and moving! Especially your experiences with protestors. These are very unhappy and lost people. So vulnerable to spiritual attacks. And so dangerous when they get mad. But we must remember that anger is a defensive response! (Although could be damaging to the opponent). So at the base of it is fear. Fear is a very bad advisor.

And you are fearless. I admire you courage and persistence and don't say it does not make any difference. It is one person at a time. I agree with you, this work can't be done in a group setting as it could be traumatising more than useful and helpful.

I have retired from the psychology profession this November and understand your longing to stop, but wish you strength to decide well. Whatever you decide will be for the best.

I hope you will have a very good Christmas and New Year and may God bless you richly!!

Warmest regards,

Elizabeth

Dear Anne,

I hope you had a blessed Christmas and I pray for God's blessing on you in New Year.

Enclosed a donation.

Frances

Dear Frances, thank you for your wishes and I wish for you so many blessings this coming year. Thank you for your much support.

Love Anne

Dear Anne.

Thank you for my bulletin which you have sent to me faithfully for over 9 years. I'm sorry I have not been of much help financially but I do think and pray about you and for you.

I hope you recover your health very soon.

God bless your effort.

With my best wish

Clare T

Vic.

Dear Clare, thank you for your kind words. Keep well and thank you for your prayer support. God bless Anne

For want of space in main newsletter,

Please accept my thanks for the support both financial and prayer support over the many years. Thank you to those who made monthly credit s It helped be able to plan.

Thanks Tim, Margaret, Paul, Fr HF

Thank you, Jim H. Carol H. Fr John C. and all the rest I cannot remember. Please know that I will pray for you all and thank you.

Anne

paragraph for another author's book on grief. My topic abortion grief.

I want to say thank you for being such a large part of my life. For 26 years. And not only did you help me with the work but you encouraged me, wrote, supported me through breast cancer, and its treatments, spinal fusion surgery, epilepsy, death of my son Mark and coming up sometime in not distant future, hip replacement surgery which will require longish rehab time. We've walked this journey doing this work together. I've always seen it that way. Without you it couldn't have happened.

These years have been amazing. Me, Anne, from the back blocks of Australia to be in a private audience with Popes, a meeting of a pro-life European Prince, Prime ministers, spoke to European parliamentarians' international medicos, authors, visited 38 (some for learning) countries and spoke about abortion and sexual abuse issues and met many other counsellors doing my kind of work. While the work continues and will forever be with us, I believe that the Lord is asking me to step back. We made an agreement that when the time came, he would let me know and I believe he has been slowly letting me know for the past 6-12 months, the financial support has slowed down enormously and health issues seem to come one after the other.

While I believe that changing of this death culture is the only solution to the problems we face, (not our chasing after the pro-abortion pro-choice lobby) but a changing of culture from death to a renewal of life culture it will be slow and labour-intensive work and one which doesn't lend itself well to fundraising. We don't have the billion \$\$ donor patrons but have to travel like the disciples not carrying much and trust that the Lord will provide. We're in a culture where woman again has turned her eyes away from true femininity to engage in other pursuits so the thing needed is for a return to the original, without this all sorts of human manipulations and death become possible. As they have become possible and are happening.

These past 26 years I have met some of the most beautiful and amazing people and leave having had the honour of knowing each of them and above all each of my hidden supporters most of whom I have never met. Many have even shared their life and private stories with me and I am grateful for the trust and time you have given and shared with me. Thank you.

After I have returned the keys of offices, I will take a break but hope not to disappear entirely. I hope that I will be able to finally finish the third and fourth books (different topics) and hope to continue writing articles on topics abortion and sexual abuse and that the same publishers who publish my articles now will continue to do so in future. I hope to also continue speaking out and if invited to conferences (again on my two topics) will love to go. If these things don't happen then I will walk on beach enjoying a gelato or three and in the hills of Perth looking for Devonshire tea places, and maybe after hip replacement or early next year will visit Israel and stay for a month quietly walking the walks of Jesus.

I close the offices at that time because funds will have run low by then (thanks Fr HF for helping out recently) and the stress related issues that go with that, and of course health issues. As I said it's the deal, we made (the Lord and I).

I will continue till at least September because I have clients both in Melbourne and Perth (took on three new ones this week S/Abuse) and then will return keys to the offices. Till then I hope you will continue to help with expenses of running office. I will continue to write newsletter, but not as often, very expensive. And I hope to complete with the clients in Melbourne (older ones) and Perth ones and what I can't do will refer on to other counsellors with offer to help if necessary.

This reduction in responsibilities will also afford me more time for me to rest and sleep in later than 5.30am (appointment 7 am before client going to work) every day and also be a grandmother.

As difficult as this decision has been for me to make, I believe it's the right one.

If I could also ask one last favour, I am still left with at least 70 books (combined) of Redeeming Grief both issues and about 57 books of Hidden Pain. I would love to see them go even with a donation. It would also help me and cupboard space. With much love.

Anne Lastman

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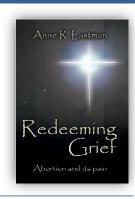
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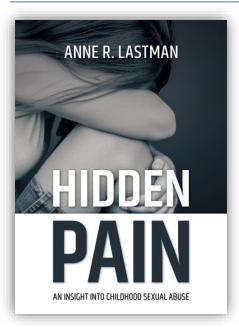
CLEARANCE!

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.

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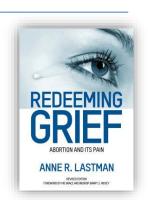
HIDDEN PAIN is written about memories which are hidden and cannot be spoken out loud. It is a book about shame, pain, sorrow and lives which have gone wrong both for victims, families, and perpetrators. Sexual abuse of children is common in all communities, in all societies, and yet it's still one of 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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