

# Broken Branches

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

**ISSUE 158 – SEPT/OCT 2023**

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## World Youth Day

I have to admit upfront that I am a huge fan of World Youth Day, a time for youth from around the world to gather together, for prayer, worship, friendships, catechesis, sharing of faith journey and of course the highlight of being present with the Holy Father Pope Francis, as he celebrates Holy Mass and to receive his blessing.

This event, this year in Portugal, next one in south Korea in four years' time and of course past meetings such as Buenos Aires, Manila, Sydney, Krakow, and God willing more to come.

I would call these meetings an Olympiad for God. Representatives from around the world present. Spiritual meetings with all nations participating. And it's so wonderful to see the young connect with other young like-minded people irrespective of race, colour, or creed. All who want to go to these Olympiads are welcome.

Daily reports this year (from Portugal the country of Fatima) highlighted the activities, the connections, the clergy beginning from Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, priests mixing together with the young made me think and see an image of how God sees his creations, His world, beautiful,

There were and have been the negative naysayers those who looked for anything wrong of which there were none.

The comments that there was no adoration, that lay individuals distributed communion, that chalices and monstrance were placed above boxes and below tables, and no reverence paid to the blessed Lord. Oh.... so wrong according to the critics, but not commenting on the thousands of young people on their knees praying in utter silence. This on rough ground. Silently praying. This youth, who is so

criticised around the globe, kneeling, praying, and adoring God.

Was it me or did the images remind us of the thousands who used to gather around Jesus to listen to him speak to them. To teach them. To comfort them and to give them hope. Were these young not doing the same? Gathering around their shepherds and their Chief Shepherd to listen and hear.

Are these four yearly events over a few years now a visible sign of the words of Jesus saying, "let the children come to me". Are these showing the ways of the visible living Gospel?

As I write this, I'm feeling very teary thinking about the marvellous ways (without us even realising) that the Gospels are brought to life in so many ways and yet we miss them. The Gospels are brought to life so that Jesus is again teaching surrounded by those who came to listen.

At this event there are so many ways of both experiencing the faith and of meeting. I am also reminded that this is a golden spiritual Olympics. The programme full of events and full of charisms brought from around the world and finally with the completion of the three-day event with the closing ceremony. Does this remind us of something of long ago? Why is it that we cannot see that Jesus, God, walks in our midst and yet not seen.

One of the so called "horrible", "pagan" events which sent social media into meltdown and was harped upon by the usual catholic church critics was a gathering of young in costumes to sing and dance and their DJ was a priest. And the song/refrain from the song was "all we are saying is give peace a chance". Over and over and priest smiling with joy at the young people. The young calling to give peace in our world a chance. To give these young a chance to know peace. So appropriate because many of these young

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ones have never known peace in their own country and for these friends the others hope that peace be given a chance. For these and those not present, to carry peace into the future.

In all of this the critics were scandalised at such behaviour and my thought was and has been “what foolishness” There are none so blind as those who do not want to see. (Mt 9:26-27). The focus of the criticisms was the priest DJ (who by the way turned out to be a traditional Mass priest) Fr Guilherme Guimaraes Peixoto, a local Portuguese priest.

Regarding his music Fr Guilherme said “I also try to leave my mark as a priest, as a Christian and as a church. My music itself these days is a journey of joy and peace, harmony, spirituality, faith, and that everyone has fun and, in the end, carries something in their hearts.” He told in an interview and indeed if nothing he left this writer with a heart full of his joy for being so close to the young and for finding ways to bring them close to God in a manner which they can understand.

Again, what does this remind us of? Jesus walking amongst the [people of his day and doing what he did and left people with peace and joy for having met him. Jesus entered the territory of those living in his time and left them better for having come to them.

This priest entered the territory of the young and left them better for his presence. And of course, the gathering and meeting with others and the Holy Father to be present with them and talk to them and tell them not to be afraid. “You young people are restless travellers to the unexpected are not afraid to exchange ideas with one another to dialogue, to “make a noise” and mingle among yourselves; and so you become the basis of society marked by friendship and solidarity” words of the Chief

Shepherd to “the children” who came to him. And his words to “go forward” I suspect meant to go and carry the future with them.

And finally, to receive a blessing from “Peter” and to announce and prepare for their next encounter, their next destination and meeting .... South Korea.

Imagine those estimated 1,500,000 young with the words from the Holy Father, “lets meet again soon, this time in South Korea.” And with the prayers and entry of those young ones into Korea, perhaps the young of North Korea might join them opening the door for the future to bring the Tent of meeting to North Korea. Another Samaria?

I would like to conclude this small article with the comment about the beautiful images which were broadcast on social media, news bulletins, newsletters, but the one image which personified this particular Golden Olympiad, for me was the image of the disabled young man whose friends lifted his wheelchair high so he too could see the Holy Father. Again, does this not remind us of something about the Gospel being seen visibly in our day?

*We remember reading “Four young men arrived carrying a paralysed man on a mat. They couldn’t bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head. Then they lowered the man on his mat right in front of Jesus (Mk 2:3-11)”* The resemblance is amazing. We see the Gospel being played out wherever “Peter” and the young and not so young meet.

## **Self-Sabotage.**

In a very long discussion with one of my clients and then further thinking and musing myself with the

need to make sense of this activity I came to some idea of its makeup and why it happens. Indeed, many reasons why this might and does happen.

First a description of what it might be as I have understood it, and this is steps taken to ensure failure. Actively taken steps which will ensure a negative outcome.

I came to realise that self-sabotaging is really a need to return to a place of pain to repeat actions which will ensure a return to place of pain somewhere in close past or distant in order to return and look at pain straight on. Any kind of pain, separation, abandonment, violence, complicated type of grief, and so on, and in the returning to negotiate the feeling of need to return to that particular disruption in his/her life, but this time with a

knowledge of what is happening and to be control of its effects. Even if the understanding that a different pathway should be taken.

This is also a place where real inner personal happiness has been left behind and, in its stead, a superficial, (see I'm OK) type of happiness in its stead. The need is also to return to pick up that happiness and carry it forward.

Along life's journey as new encounters are met and

liaisons formed which at the time appear ideal, they are maybe a memory of a past which is resurrected and brought to the surface for attention.

Perhaps this may be the reason why relationships which have inscribed in them a long ago incomplete "discussion" "story" which has a need for resolution (I don't like the word closure.... overused).

How does self-sabotage come into this? Because "he/he may be journeying through life happily, all things going along as they should be but somehow there is always a "missing" and in that "missing" a detour is taken. Away from the straight journey leading to ones own wellbeing.

Self-sabotage is an unconscious fear. A need to deviate from what appears a good for him/her and take on a road which has the markings of more pain and confusion. This is a road travelled which

prevents from achieving their goals and desires because unknowingly there is a memory.

However, it's also possible to understand that self-sabotaging is almost like a "full stop" wait. Maybe this road is both wrong and right. Stop and allow the eyes to see the road to travel much more clearly. Stop refusing direction because you think you know better than satnav. Maybe stop and allow satnav to guide which maybe the better way and possibly avoiding the dangerous road up ahead.

In my experience as counsellor, I have encountered many clients who sabotage and at times I have thought that this is the place of stasis (stopping) for them.

*...It's also possible  
to see self  
sabotaging as a  
stop.....*

Through talk and watching and listening the client is able to see that she has actively chosen the wrong person for her life knowing that that person is not right, and this would lead to eventual breakup.

The anxiety experienced is the inner memory being disturbed almost from its sleep.

Sabotaging is always intentional but not recognised as such. The ruminations of sabotaging ae always negative

and become stronger and stronger the more the self-talk intensifies leading to action.

Over the years of my work, I have seen much sabotaging and when explained to the client he/she is able to see, going all the way back to the point of pain, that since then she has lived that past experience. To hear "you're not worthy" echoes constantly and no matter how much else is going well internally there is the echo "you're not worthy" and if pressed further there is a sense that those words have come to define the person. "you're not worthy" have ensured that success has eluded her/him because of her own recall of the words. Every atom of her being touched with the words "you're not worthy".

When dealing with grief work its always important to look for sabotaging. Often this is not only the

result of the loss but also the sense of unworthiness of being left behind while another more worthy has gone. And work of counsellors is to work backwards and forwards and help client see that she is both worthy to be alive and that now is her turn to move on from the experience of death. This of course when grief has become complicated and not early days of grief where grief is to be allowed to take its own course.

Sexual abuse grief and post abortion grief are both candidates for self-sabotage because of guilt, shame, anxiety, attached to these two traumas. The self-guilt is so strong that the "I'm not worthy or I'm not worthwhile" are actually truly believed. These emotions always hinder a desire to feel well and enjoy life and meet the goals they had set for their life long before the intrusion occurred.

## Empathy.

I think that for me the best possible way to describe empathy is that it is a body language. It's a language in its own right and seeing it or looking for it becomes very powerful. Empathy is a visible feeling of sameness, understanding totally, feeling for the other, knowing the other as an extension of "me" The other is "like me" is a recognition that if the other hurt so do I.

Looking at doctor patient, nurse patient behaviour should be easy to "see" empathy. Sadly, this is not always the case. With modern schedules the time needed to look into eyes of the other and see the words written there is not possible. Schedules are meant to do a task as quickly as possible and move on to next for repeat. Whereas empathy wants to stop a while and look at the other and let the other look back and see recognition, of a deep knowledge of one another, and deep relationship which exists between them. Their humanity. They understand how the other feels. Indeed, empathy is very different than sympathy although they both have the same intention, but sympathy is "pity" Outer looking in, not the inner intimacy of likeness like the other.

One, sympathy says to the hurting one, "I know how you must feel" not really knowing, whilst empathy speaks a different language, a language of the eyes and face and at times little needs to be said, the eyes say it all with either love or pain, face says it.

Sympathy stands outside of the person, yes feels for the suffering of the person, but is distant from the person, feels pity. Empathy also feels but the feeling is almost felt exactly as the hurting one is feeling. Empathy does not say "I understand how you are feeling" the words even sound distant, but empathy can say the same words with slight alteration, nuance "it's so painful" the empathetic one has entered into the other one's actual feeling and feels the same.

There is so much more to empathy and sympathy, though both have their place where pain is found.

For My own personal work of grief counselling both sympathy and empathy are called for, and for me empathy is easier than sympathy. Whether it's my own experiences in life I feel I can enter in certain sufferings and be present to that suffering. I can't stand outside of that suffering and simply say words like "I can see it must be hard for you" I must be able to say "I it's very painful. Let's sit a while" without talking just sit and "feel" the pain.

just like at times I find it difficult to understand certain biblical passages not because translated are not correct but because the nuances are lost in translation, same with sympathy and empathy. Both good words for suffering but the nuances which one could say are the body and visible language, of expression, the other distant.

As I said, previously, empathy is probably difficult to actually express by the medical, psychological, or helping professions because of time constraints. too busy, can be emotionally exhausting even for the professional, or even fear of opening up wounds in their own self so it's easier to express pity for the one suffering and feel that this has shown the right amount of concern. However, there is a loss of an opportunity to be the "other" just for a short time, a moment and to be able to see that they are the same. They are made of the same material and experience the same emotions even the same love.

Empathy gives all of us, even non practising professional or just friends and family, a true understanding. A true entry into the being of the other who is finding it hard and remain silent as they think about their pain. To my way of understanding pity is external, it doesn't touch me. I'm separate from the other. Whereas empathy is an internal relationship so close that I feel exactly like you. I know the pain. But at the same time for both the health of the practitioner

and patient/client I must be able to stand and really not carry that cross because hearing of all the pain, the cross for doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners it will become too heavy.

Empathy is a very powerful tool for communicating that which is difficult to voice, and it doesn't take a university degree to learn how to do it. It simply needs really seeing, time, silence, a few words of kindness, a really loving heart and a desire to hold the other in the palm of your hand.

We are very fortunate we have a role model who exhibited both very clearly for us. Jesus. We saw his sympathy for us, for the people, as he looked over Jerusalem and knew what was to come and wept, but he had/has massive/endless amount of empathy. That sense of knowing and whispering, "I am with you, don't be afraid. You're not alone. I feel your pain".

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Recently I read that Ketanji Brown Jackson (Assoc justice of the American supreme court), Kamala Harris, Hillary Clinton, and other loud voices who demand abortion at all stages, all methods, all ages of women and children made some interesting comments. Ms Ketanji Brown Jackson sees pro-lifers as "noisy hostile and in your face" She forgot about the pro aborts who harass, spit venom at pro-lifers, speak of rosaries and ovaries, demand the right to kill children, real small and even viable children who have features like human beings except for their being small and needy of care and fed and clothed and loved. These so called "brave" women (NOT) forget that the infants suffer when being dismembered or poisoned to death. These and other so called intelligent women make their name by joining the club of baby murders.

I wonder if any of them have ever held in their hands parts of dismembered baby, hands, arms, legs, heads, torsos? And look straight at them and their closed little eyes though at times slightly open. I wonder if any of them have ever held a full-term baby killed with cruel partial birth abortion, late term abortion using toxic injections into heart, suctioning out infant (in pieces) from uterus which sounds like a vacuum and remains to bring back to mind the abortion of their baby? Or maybe some are easier to see and identify, those born alive and left to die because an abortion was demanded by the mother and these so-called "intelligent" women ensured that the law enabled this.

I wonder if they held any of these children how they might feel. Would they just once hear the pain of a regretful woman who made the choice and then it hurt her so much. I wonder if they would look at the helplessness of a man who could not save his child because the law says he can't. I wonder if they can imagine the hate a father feels for someone he formerly loved.

I think that maybe these eminent women should be made just once to hold and look at these children and see if they still think the same.

I wonder if those multi-millionaires both male and female ever think that the "now" passes but a future and end is still to come and memories remain and it amazes me that females like Ketanji Brown Jackson, Kamala Harris, and many others of dark skin ever remember that they were persecuted, enslaved, and that abortion kills thousands of their own? I wonder.

I wonder if Hillary Clinton remembers that she is a grandmother, holding her own grandchildren and then deciding which of these three grandchildren the 7-year-old, 6-year-old, the 3-year-old would she choose to have killed by dismemberment. Oh, by the way Mr and Mrs Clinton are said to dote on their grandchildren.

So, what's the difference between their grandchildren and grandchildren of other grandparents or are they special. Because of their surname? Imagine if their daughter Chelsea had chosen to abort them, would they still be who they are? Doting grandparents?

Imagine what have these grandchildren have brought into their life simply because they were allowed to live. And yet Madame Clinton still continues to call for more and more abortion. It beggars' belief.

Recently we read and heard the news that a British nurse murdered seven born babies whilst working as a neonatal ICU nurse at Countess of Chester Hospital. As more and more information was released the horror of what she had done was unbelievable to read, hear, even digest that one who had trained to care for little infants would murder them in such a cruel and cold-blooded manner. Is this the post birth abortion which was spoken about as being the next step in the abortion industry? Child sacrifice?

# Letters

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Dear Anne,

Enclosed a donation for your work of suffering by women. Your latest newsletter was very moving and informative.

Thank you.

Frances M

*Dear Frances, thank you for your kind words. As usual you lighten my heart. God bless you always.*  
Anne

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne,

Just sending you some "mueler" to keep you going, to help you a little with anything you may need it for. I love your little mag and will miss it and you very much. God bless you for ever for the wonderful work you have done and will continue to do in the future.

You are missed already.

Love and good health

Coral

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dear Coral, I'm so glad that you have enjoyed my little mag. It's been good to write it. One of my wishes at the very beginning 27 years ago, was to make known the pain of abortion not only to baby who does feel pain as they are dismembered, but future and ongoing pain for parents of that child when the realisation occurs. I hope I have achieved this. Globally I have spoken on this, and my newsletter goes to 38 countries including Ukraine and Russia believe it or not.*

*I have also wanted so much to bring attention to the sexual abuse of children in the family. I know its easy to talk about it when public figures are involved, the media enjoys writing about that, but the largest % of abuse occurs in a place which should be the happiest and safest place on earth. There are many losses involved with this.*

*I hope to be able to work/write on this after I have a rest.*

*Thank you for supporting me \$ it's been of so much help. Mostly my \$ help, except for about a dozen of my usuals, have stopped. So, I appreciated your kind donation.*

*I still have several sexual abuse clients here in Perth and same in Melbourne to complete and hopefully have completed by early December. Bit longer than I thought because I had three referrals here in Perth and a new one in Melbourne.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Anne,

Thank you for issue of Broken Branches 158, was as usual very thought provoking and full of good sense. And thanks too for all that you have done.

Enclosed donation to help as you need it.

Take care and I hope you get a change to rest.

God bless.

Verna

*Dear Verna, thank you for donation it's been many years since we met at a Right to Life Conference in Qld. It's been a pleasure.*

Anne

\*\*\*\*\*

Some Thank Yous.

*An anonymous friend*

*Charles,*

*Laurie,*

*Verna,*

*Frances*

*Coral.*

*Tim,*

*Margaret, Paul.*

*Frank O.*

*Carole and T.*

*Jeanette*

*And if I have forgotten anyone, please forgive me.*

Anne

*Thank you also for lovely cards and kind words.*

These babies were ill, and it was her duty and should have been her honour to care for them and return them to the babies' parents healthy and ready to begin a long life.

Some of the comments reported show signs of a hatred of infants "cold, cruel, relentless" some of the babies "subjected to repeated attempts to kill them" (reminds me of a needed procedure this week where blood tests were needed, and I went and first attempt ...no blood. Second attempt... no blood (I joked Dracula must have visited during the night) thankfully third attempt vein above thumb was success and I must say that I was ready to scream and run out of the room because it was so painful. So, I can imagine the pain that these children experienced as she intentionally inflicted it.

Some of the painful ways of hurting the children are too gruesome to even name or think about, and for me I found it too difficult to continue reading the rest of the story. I heard that she was jailed for whole of life.

For the parents, family, friends of the infants it's not only a lifetime sentence but even transgenerational because other children in family remembering and fearing and retelling the story.

I thought for a while about this young woman who did this. What could have happened to her that this cruelty was found in her.? This type of cruelty is not something which is heard about every day. It's said that it's premeditated, but I wonder. Did something happen to her which she remembers as a cellular level memory? Womb memory? Was there terrible cruelty inflicted on her as an infant? Has a memory of this kind been responsible for her behaviour. It's also a sign of maybe someone who wants to "go" and is expecting to go.

This is a case which is so astonishing, difficult, painful even to write about that even the legal individuals around her spoke of her with epithets of horror, abuse, character malignancy and yet I wonder! For me it's hard to believe that such horror exists and yet it does. Or it appears so and in saying all of this I do not forget the horror that the children's parents and families have endured and their desire to see her punished to the highest

possible level which is of course what has happened. But I am still left wondering what happened to her that changed her from the innocent infant born as other infants born and changed her into a woman of terror. Infants are all born the same. What happened to her? I've thought of transgenerational remembering of pain inflicted. There is much more to this. Such demonic behaviour is not found in one who is born with breath of God.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear friends I have once more come to the end of another newsletter, I've covered a few topics today, didn't I? I'm surprised myself at what my mind remembers when I sit at computer. Blank page at the start and nearly 8 pages later. ....

I hope to put out one more issue before the end of the year if (\$\$ permit) and I will start next month October thinking of the ways of finalising with the remainder of the girls and slowly return office to state it was in before I got it. Unless of course huge miracles happen.

Anyway, thank you to those who have helped with the expenses and please pray for me (health) and girls and pray for a friend of mine who is not well at all. K. (she doesn't want name put in. But she is a lovely lady.

Anyway, for now it's thank you till we meet again if God so wills.

And if you can support for couple more months would be appreciated.

Many blessings sent your way.



**Anne Lastman**

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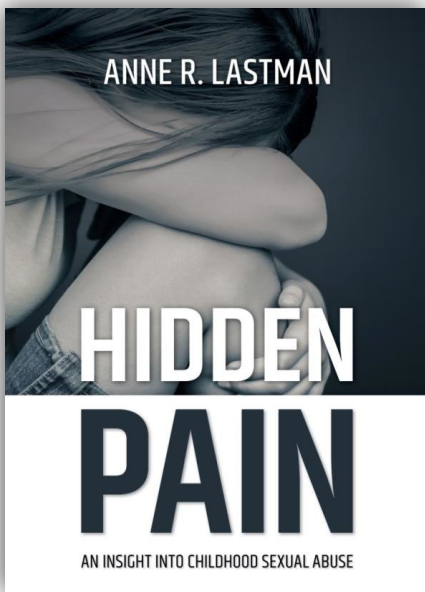
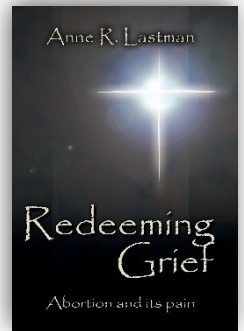
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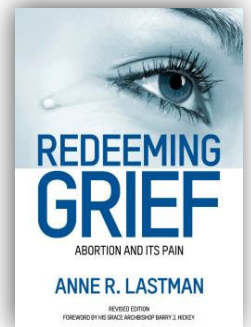
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This is not a step by step guide to dealing with abuse. It is the result of my engagement with those who have come to me originally for post abortion counselling and on further investigation it was found that abuse (especially in cases of multiple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