

## *“Don't Think Twice It's Alright!”*

It ain't no use to sit and wonder why, babe  
It don't matter, anyhow  
An' it ain't no use to sit and wonder why, babe  
If you don't know by now  
When your rooster crows at the break of dawn  
Look out your window and I'll be gone  
You're the reason I'm trav'lin' on  
Don't think twice, it's all right (Bob Dylan)

I always wondered if this song by Bob Dylan “Don't think Twice It's Alright” was written after he and his girlfriend Susie aborted their baby. It would not surprise me since many relationships end after abortion.

“Don't think twice” is pretty much the feeling I get after reading articles and emails written by Aspen Baker, founder of Exhale, a pro abortion, post abortion talk line that prides itself on “listening” to the voices of women who have had abortions. Seems no matter how much I “think” about what she writes, it never really makes much sense.

I have never met Aspen but I think I would like her. She is a gutsy woman who has the courage to confront the pro abortion movement with their denial of post abortion “experiences”. Exhale, labels itself “pro voice”, (whatever that means) saying post abortive women's voices and experiences “should be at the center of public discussions about abortion. Their new endeavor is “digital storytelling”. Once upon a time....

The trouble I have with all of Exhale's talks, articles, workshops etc, is that I never seem to find any way in which they are actually helping women. I always end up feeling like a dog chasing its tail, never really addressing what the “story” is, abortion. In one blog post, Aspen states “The Abortion Wars and the tornado of stigmas, violence and politics they whip up (whether in a Newsweek article or a health-care vote) keep the voices of women who have had abortions – their experiences, their stories, their needs hidden and neglected. It's time to leave the war-rhetoric and the war-recruitment behind. It's time

to create Abortion Peace.”

While I agree that women who have had abortions remain hidden and neglected, I do not agree that it is because of “the tornado of stigmas, violence and politics they whip up”. Women remain hidden because they are filled with guilt and shame, not because of stigmas or politics, but because they participated in the death of their unborn child.

Exhale's main objective seems to be having women call with their “stories” in the hopes that they can then be used to remove this stigma by changing how people view abortion in “creating a social climate that is more supportive and respectful”.

I personally find it all very sad. Exhale (and Aspen) is seeking to remove the stigma of abortion by changing things outside of the post abortive woman. Good luck with that one. In truth, the only way to remove the stigma of abortion is changing things inside. The stigma of abortion finally leaves through a relationship with God. Through a realization brought on by the forgiveness and healing He gives

and the freedom you feel through His mercy. Oh, don't get me wrong, there are psychological aspects too that need to be learned, as well as having support and encouragement from those who have gone before you, but it is only in coming to know the only true healer that it does not matter what other people think or say because you know what He has done for you. No one can take that peace away.

T Bonopartis



## UPCOMING POST- ABORTION RETREATS

### ENTERING CANAAN MINISTRY

Sisters of Life or Theresa Bonopartis of Lumina  
Contact: 866-575-0075 or 877-586-4621

### Days of Prayer & Healing

June 19, 2010

September 18, 2010

October 16, 2010

Contact 877-586-4621 or 866-575-0075

### Day of Prayer & Healing for Men

October 9, 2010

Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621

### Adverse Pre Natal Day

For couples suffering because of an abortion  
due to an adverse prenatal diagnosis

November 6, 2010

Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621

### Day of Prayer & Healing for Teens

November 20, 2010

Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621

### Day of Prayer & Healing for Siblings

March 5, 2011

Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621

### St. Louis, MO

#### Weekend of Hope & Healing

7/30/2010 - 8/1/2010

Contact: Marisol Pfaff

MPfaff@archstl.org

### Arlington, VA

#### Day of Prayer & Healing

September 18, 2010

Contact: 703-841-2504

projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org

### RACHEL'S VINEYARD

<http://www.rachelsvineyard.org/>

#### New Jersey

##### Linden (Archdiocese of Newark)

Contact: Michelle Krystofik 732 388 8211

##### Cherry Hill

6/18/2010 - 6/20/2010

8/20/2010 - 8/22/2010

Contact: Stephanie Claudy 866-4-RACHEL

[sclaudy@camdendiocese.org](mailto:sclaudy@camdendiocese.org)

#### New York

##### Long Island/Uniondale

Contact: Frank Gariboldi 516-523-0586

#### Connecticut

##### Fairfield County

Local host: Diocese of Bridgeport

Contact: Clarissa Cincotta 203 218 0291

9/17/2010 - 9/19/2010

Website: [www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com](http://www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com)

##### Litchfield/Montforte House

6/11/2010 - 6/13/2010

##### Farmington/Our Lady of Calvary

10/29/2010 - 10/31/2010

Contact: Mary Hayden 1-203-882-1326

[mmhdfc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mmhdfc@sbcglobal.net)

An "Afternoon of Prayerful Remembrance" continues to be held in different locations. Caldwell College in Caldwell, NJ held one on April 13, 2010, and on May 13<sup>th</sup> St John the Baptist Parish in Jersey City held the prayer service.



*An Evening of Prayerful Remembrance at Caldwell College, NJ*



*St John the Baptist, Jersey City, NJ*

*"Theresa what a blessing and powerful witness it was last night! Patty, Fr. Joseph and I were honored to be able to present it to the community of St. John the Baptist. The message of Christ's love, mercy and healing was beautiful in the celebration of the Ascension. Thank you for your response to the Holy Spirit and making this happen...may you be blessed in a special way today!"* Mary Kominski

"Entering Canaan", the post abortion ministry of Theresa Bonopartis and the Sisters of Life continues to spread. The manual of the ministry is currently being translated into three different languages, Spanish, Croatian and Chinese! In addition to the women's ministry begun with the Sisters, the ministry has expanded, through Lumina, to hold special retreat days for men, siblings, those who aborted due to an adverse diagnosis, and will hold their first retreat for teens in the fall of 2010.

## Walking Pilgrimage



It is time once again for the annual walking pilgrimage, to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, PA, August 5 - August 8, 2010. Those of you familiar with Entering Canaan and Lumina will know that Our Lady of Czestochowa is the patroness of our post abortive work.

The XXIII Walking Pilgrimage will begin at 6:00 a.m., on Thursday, August 5th, at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Great Meadows, NJ.

The closing event of the Walking Pilgrimage will be Holy Mass celebrated on Sunday, August 8th at 2:00 p.m. at American Czestochowa in Doylestown, PA. Mass is celebrated each day and there are many opportunities for confession, reflection and fellowship.

We are hoping once again to have a contingency of post abortive women and men participate in the walk. For information on the walk please go to their site at: <http://www.walkingpilgrimage.us/English/PilgrimInfo.html>

## Reaching out to Post Abortive Men

For the past four years Lumina has been doing retreat days for men who are suffering because of a past abortion. The day was begun by Fr. Mariusz Koch, CFR, Rev George Stewart and me, with the help of some wonderful Men who had gone through Entering Canaan. We have been humbled by their honesty, and moved by their willingness to share this deep sorrow they experienced through the loss of their children by abortion.

The decision to begin retreat days specifically for men came after seeing a need to give them a safe place where they could share all the dynamics they experienced without fear of hurting someone more (like the post abortive women). At the retreats they have the freedom to speak about the behaviors and feelings they are struggling with as men, with other men.

All too often men get lost in the middle of this debate and it is only recently that more and more attention is being paid to the impact abortion has had on them. While it is good and necessary to bring men and women together in the healing process, we have found that having their

own place has been very beneficial to those we serve. Some argue it is good for the women to hear the men, but as good as that may be, they are present for their own healing.

I am so proud of the men who have come to the retreats. They are reclaiming their fatherhood. They are courageously acknowledging ways in which they have failed, or perhaps working to forgive those who took the choice of fatherhood away from them. Others are coming to gain an understanding of post abortion so that they can help a spouse or girlfriend who is suffering from a past abortion.

Men have just as much of a right to their children as women do. Some may have been selfish in the abortion decision, some may not have been given the opportunity to have their child, but all deserve to come to know the love and forgiveness of Christ who is Mercy Himself. This Father's Day, may we pray that all fathers of children who have been aborted feel the love of their children through the unconditional love of Christ who longs for their healing.

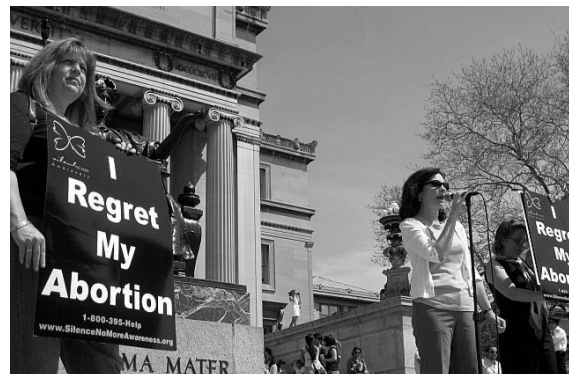
(T Bonopartis)



### ALL AROUND THE TOWN



*Students at Columbia University visiting the information table during our Silent No More event*



*Theresa & Mary Kominski being SNM at Columbia*



*Fr Benedict Groeschel, CFR, Theresa & Fr Mariusz Koch, CFR discussing post abortion on EWTN's "Sunday Night Live"*



*Kevin Burke presenting at the "Treating the Post Abortive Client"*

## WITNESS

*This is a letter I received from a post abortive dad. I know that his feelings are shared by many post abortive men. It is easy for us to sometimes forget the wide impact abortion has had, but our world is filled with people hurting from a past abortion, whether it is the mom, dad, siblings, grandparent or a friend.*

*May we always be aware of the possibility of those around us hurting, and may we be a sign of God's great Mercy and forgiveness!*

May 1, 2010

Hi Theresa,

Today is the Day of Prayer and Healing for Men that I couldn't attend, but I was rereading the Lumina Newsletters that Mary sent, a way to keep my heart in spirit, so to speak, and I recalled something that prompts me to write to you about it, a flip-side story that may still be helpful.

In reading the Spring 2010 issue, the part of me that "hopes" was hoping that something would catch my attention, bring some insight to this day. As you may know, it's a tricky process, hoping like that, because I was also holding a tense sort of aversion to the painful subject matter. I imagine that's common in post-abortive people.

I kept noticing things that "ticked me off," in the articles, and as I continued reading, I was comparing myself to the writers and the people and situations they were relating, looking at the photos of people involved in various anti-abortion efforts; trying to imagine myself as not an outsider, not alone; to stand in some inner solidarity with all the other people who have been damaged by abortion.

And, as I was rereading the "A Morning of Prayerful Remembrance" article, I finally recalled one cause of both my aversion and my hope—something I'd forgotten, probably deliberately—that happened on Pro-Life Sunday this year, 2010.

I went to Mass that day holding my own abortion-related special intention quietly, personally, not looking for communal support, but just to witness before God for my own child and loss. God had something rather different in mind, though. I'd been to Confession just the week prior, and felt an unusual peace about receiving Communion; that's a Sacrament I have great difficulty with, no matter the prayer "I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word..." That place in me that "hopes" keeps a constant ear tuned for that word, never really knowing what it is or what it sounds like. On Pro-Life Sunday, though, I was clear about it and intended to receive Communion with all my heart. I was happy about that.

The priest gave a homily on the importance of family, of children, of mothers; about how God loves women, how God chose Mary to be the Mother of his Son. It was meaningful, not less so for being predictable as a topic for Pro-Life Sunday. As he spoke against abortion, the harm to women and children, I realized I was "hoping without hoping" for the part where, in connection with family and the harm caused by abortion, he was going to speak on behalf of the fathers.

But as his homily went on and on without that mention, I found myself getting very anxious, feeling at-risk and strangely frightened, like I'd stumbled into a place that was dangerous, a bad part of town—in a Catholic Church. The now-guttering flame of hope was still there, and he hadn't finished yet, so there was still time to hear him say the words, "the fathers," but I started to realize that in this major metropolitan parish, there wasn't going to be any talk about abortion-related harm to fathers or men on this Pro-Life Sunday. Not even one glancing acknowledgement; that isn't at all unusual, but for some reason, this year, it got right past my guard.

In the time it took to talk myself back to a safer inner place after all this, to try to be "present" and "participate" in the rest of the Mass as I'm commanded to—i.e. with all my heart—the "hope" in me had already decided that I wasn't going to be Communicating that day; that I didn't want to get that close to God just then, or let him get *anywhere* near me for a while. I'd come to Mass with an old grief and an open heart, unprepared for what he was going to do with that gift.

Unfortunately for me, though I don't have a local parish, the Catholic Church is my Church, the one I was born in, baptized in, etc. Worst of all, I know it is Christ's true Church, the Church of my heart, where I'm supposed to be; where I want to be. That's hard to live with, because even in my most dense self-absorption, I'm not utterly deaf to the sufferings of others. I can still hear and feel others' pain, and I take that as sign that the Holy Spirit still reaches through to me sometimes.

Anyway, it made a real, positive difference for me to receive the info packet from Lumina and read the words on the front of the brochure—Fatherhood and Abortion...Men Suffer too! To read the stories of priests that work to try to help men after abortions. Lumina has clearly chosen the path of truth and compassion—which *is* Christ, and that matters a lot to me.

As for Mercy, given how hard it can be to differentiate between what actually happens and whatever God's Will may have been in a given situation, I can only wish about it. Nonetheless, God does seem to be helping my unbelief.

Thank you for your part in that, for being a demonstrated instrument of his Mercy. I did send an email to the contact you sent, and do appreciate the newsletters I've received and look forward to receiving others if possible. It would be great to get back to the City for a retreat some day.

Sincerely,  
Ed

***Donations to Good Counsel's Lumina Program are tax deductible. Your gift today can be multiplied many times over in bringing those hurting to the healing mercy of God.***

***Lumina, 1955 Needham Avenue, Bronx, NY 10466***