



Things Are Not Always What They Seem

*"So, do not worry if everything is falling to pieces before you. After all, only your illusions that separate you from the One and Only Love who desires to fix everything, are crumbling to pieces."
(The Two Pillars; SC Beila)*

Life is full of illusions. We can look at people in situations that are, in reality, very different from what they seem. The wife whose husband is cheating and she does not know, has the "illusion" of a happy marriage. The person driving a BMW who is in major debt carries the "illusion" of being rich. The woman working for Planned Parenthood who is post abortive and in denial, portrays the "illusion" of having her abortion be fine with her. The post abortive woman who goes through life seeming fine while dying on the inside, portrays the "illusion" of a good life.

We look for our value from outside things instead of God. They are the illusions that keep us from Him. Wealth, success, beauty. So many people grasp at these things in the hopes of somehow feeling fulfilled, but our true value lies in being children of God, often in worldly terms, unknown, unappreciated, even hidden in good works.

Jesus' words to St Catherine of Sienna reflect the truth, "Do you know, daughter, who you are and who I am? If you know these two things you have beatitude in your grasp. You are she who is not, and I AM HE WHO IS. Let your soul but become penetrated with this truth, and the enemy can never lead you astray; you will never be caught in any snare of his, nor ever transgress any commandment of mine; you will have set your feet on the royal road which leads to the fullness of grace, and truth, and light."

It is in the fullness of grace, truth and light that we live in the peace, happiness and joy of Christ who loves us as we are. We do not have to be here or there for Him to love us, He loves right now!

"So, do not worry if everything is falling to pieces before you' ...Much easier said than done. My natural impulse when all seems to be falling apart is to panic, to feel as

though my security is threatened. I then work hard to create another illusion so that I think I am secure.

Failure to create illusions is actually a great grace although in our humanness it is scary. We need to keep fixed on Christ and how He teaches us to live life. My nature hates it. It is often very painful, but I realize that it is in these precise times, when I am most in need, that I actually live in the truth and draw closer to Christ.

I cannot remember a time when I felt more like "everything was falling to pieces" than after my abortion. I was desperate and shattered. I felt like life would never be good again. There were many times when I felt like I was not making any progress in my healing. Each time an old issue showed up I felt as though I was moving backwards instead of forward.

In temptations to despair, I doubted God's mercy. I let my emotions take over, often through the fear of abandonment which I experienced when disowned by my family. The walk through that pain, to find God's presence, to come to know His love for me, seemed impossible. I always felt I was moving backwards when I would feel that terror within me. It was only through desperation that I continued. I forced myself to continue to trust in God and His love for me in spite of my feelings.

We all have our demons from abortion or from any life altering situation. The difference from what we believe or "feel" and what is, are often very different. I can be in darkness and "feel" God has abandoned me and all is lost, but in truth He is carrying me.

In an article by AnnaMarie Adkins in Zenit News, about Mother Theresa, "Mary's Light in Mother Theresa's Dark Night", she quotes Father Langford co-founder with Mother of her community of priests. "Mother Theresa did not suffer a crisis of faith, but a 'loss of feeling' of

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Our Lady of Medjugorje

Fr Conrad Osterhaut, CFR and Theresa Bonopartis will be co-sponsoring a retreat to Medjugorje, from March 20-March 28, 2009. \$1899.00 includes round trip ticket from NY, seven nights accommodations, buffet breakfast and

dinner daily, daily Mass and other spiritual activities. For more information contact Linda Antonelle at 206 Tours, (631)361-4644 or (800)206 Tour ext 122, or email: linda@206tours.com

Reclaiming Fatherhood Conference

Sponsored by The National Office of Post Abortion Reconciliation & Healing Chicago, IL, Sept 8-9, 2008
For additional information please call 1-800-5WE -CARE

A Musical Journey to Paradise

A Classical Concert to benefit Good Counsel Homes. Performed by Professor Pierluigi Sampietro, September 11, 2008, 7:30 pm, SUNY Purchase Dance Building Recital Hall, Purchase, NY

In December of 2007, the Professor was requested by the Vatican, to play a private concert for the Pope Benedict XIV.

Speaking of the experience brings tears to the Professors eyes, but that is not surprising. He is a man of great passion, and his music transcends words!

"When I play", the Professor says, "I go to paradise, and there, as a Catholic/Christian, I embrace my Savior". There is no doubt that those who hear him will accompany him on the journey.

Professor Sampietro is acclaimed in the "Who's Who in Music" and has played all over the world. A classical concert pianist, he graduated from The Mozarteum's Conservatory of Music in Salzburg. This wonderful concert will be an experience. You don't listen, you "enter into it".

Tickets are \$30. Check should be made payable to Good Counsel, with "concert" on the note line, and mailed to Good Counsel, c/o Lumina, 1955 Needham Ave Bronx, NY 10466.

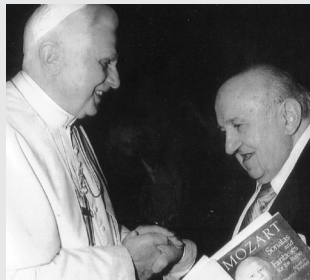
It is a journey you will not forget!

Post Abortion Leadership Retreat

September 18, 2007

A renewal retreat led by Father Mariusz Koch, CFR For those leading post abortion ministries. Contact: 877-586-4621 for further information

Don't forget to visit Lumina's post abortion blog <http://reclaimingourchildren.typepad.com/>



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faith." "She was allowed to feel as though God was absent... though never did her lack of feeling become lack of faith." "Our Lady would help her to not only believe in the night, but to love in the night."

There is no "getting there" in this life. If we think we are there, that is the biggest illusion. Truth would tell us we are not even close to being there. Life is a constant process of me clinging to my illusions, and, with Gods grace, letting them go; of pulling ourselves back constantly to live in His Presence, the only truth. It is something I will do daily until the day I die.

Jesus said if you lose your life, you'll find it. Not easy, but by keeping our gaze on Him and trusting Him we will live in the truth that sets us free. Free from our illusions, and free from the pain of abortion. We cannot do it alone, it is only His grace that permits it to happen. Let us ask Our Lady to help us as she did Mother Theresa, not only to **believe in the night, but to love in the night.** -TB

ALL AROUND THE TOWN



Theresa & Alan Mehldau at the Northern Westchester and Putnam Center for Life annual breakfast



A demonstration on May 15, in Yonkers, NY outside the local office of Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the Democratic Senator who introduced the Reproduction and Privacy Protection Act giving women a bad RHAPP here in New York.



Little Feet

A CRY WITHOUT A VOICE

Mothers are honoring and remember their aborted children through selecting a pair of baby shoes and attaching a card of commemoration.



“Speaking with women from other nations, I found the cultures may vary but the pain left by abortion is the same,” said Cynthia Collins, Operation Outcry Louisiana State Leader, who has had multiple abortions.

The baby shoes have been displayed in the United States, Israel, and Holland with the project “A Cry Without a Voice” under the care of Rebecca Porter, Florida OO State Leader.

Cynthia chose shoes to represent her five children, now in heaven. The white pair represents the first baby she aborted. “I will always regret the choice I made to abort my son, David Emmanuel, In January of 1973.

His life speaks through the shoes he never wore and as I share with others what I was not told: Abortion hurts women,” Cynthia said.

Deeply moved by seeing the shoes, others have wanted to honor brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren killed by abortion. Fathers have also selected shoes in memory of their aborted children.

The project touches people’s hearts and provides a powerful visual of the impact of abortion. It allows women to talk about the deep pain of abortion and the forgiveness and healing of Jesus Christ. It also allows them to give honor and dignity to their babies’ lives. (reprinted from www.operationoutcry.com) To watch a video on the baby shoes go to <http://acrywithoutavoice.com>. This display of baby shoes will be on hand this summer, August 15 & 16 in Washington, DC during “The Call”. The Call mobilizes people from all across America to gather together to humbly petition Almighty God for undeserved mercy for our nation. Just as in the days of Joel, we believe that now is the time to blow the trumpet across our land, to fast, to pray, and return to the Lord with all our hearts. <http://www.thecall.com>



Cindy Collins, LA



Myra Myers, TX



Rebecca Porter, FL



Karen Bodle, PA

UPCOMING POST ABORTION RETREATS

Entering Canaan Ministry

Sisters of Life

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

Day of Prayer & Healing

Sept 20, 2008

Nov 15, 2008

Men’s “Day of Prayer & Healing”

Franciscan Friars of the Renewal & Rev George Stewart

Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621

Nov 22, 2008

Rachel’s Vineyard

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

New Jersey

Cherry Hill

Contact: Stephanie Claudy

866 4 RACHEL

Sept 26-Sept 28, 2008

Linden (Archdiocese of Newark)

Contact: Michelle Krystofik

732 388 8211

Sept 19-Sept 21, 2008

Nov 21-Nov 23, 2008

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

Website: www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com

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

Sept 19-Sept 21, 2008

Litchfield

Local host: Archdiocese of

Hartford

Contact: Mary Hayden

203 882 1326

Oct 24-Oct 26, 2008

WITNESS

A Brotherly Presence

From earliest memory, I had always wanted an older brother. Every weekend starting in the first grade, I would go to my friend Andy's house and we would play in the woods, skateboard, and shoot each other with nerf guns.

Andy was a great friend and he had an older brother whom I idolized as the man I always wanted to be. He would wrestle us (beat on us really), tell us jokes and listen to U2 and the Police, and he taught me how to ride a skateboard.



I loved every minute of being at that house, and whenever I returned home, I would joyfully tell my parents about how much I wished I had an older brother! Believe it or not I used to tell my parents this often until I graduated from college. It always seemed to me that this drive in my heart, which was so specific, was also constantly present to me.

Shortly after graduating from college (doing what all good college graduates do) and moving in with my parents, something happened. My family was in the process of a real conversion of faith.

One afternoon my mother sat me down at the kitchen table with tears in her eyes. I knew something life changing was about to be said, but I could never have guessed what was about to be disclosed to me. My mother told me that indeed I had once had an older brother! In disbelief and shock and feeling all the loss in my heart, I burst into tears.

She began to tell me the sad story of her and my father's unexpected pregnancy at nearly 20 years of age, and how they were forced to abort the child by their parents. She was far enough along to have known her child was a boy and she spoke of how she desired to have run away to hide and have the baby. She was filled with fear of what my reaction would be, and honestly, it was difficult. Suddenly my whole life was beginning to make sense. Every desire, and sadness. I had actually felt his loss in my heart throughout the course of my life.

Of course, I forgave my mom and dad but a wound has remained. I have wept for the loss of my brother and longed to see his face but through a gift of God, this brother of mine has become close. I know now that in those moments in my life when I desired a brother so desperately, he was then, at that moment, near to me. I speak to him often now and I know him to be a constant faithful companion.

Remarkably, Our Lord has also given me another gift. Several years later He began to call me to religious life and now I experience the literal "hundred fold" that Christ speaks of in the Gospels. In my community of Franciscan Friars, I literally have one hundred and twenty brothers!

Christ is the wounded healer and He shows us that precisely through our wounds is the path of His deepest and most lasting healing. That grace and life are far greater than all that we have lost through sin and He asks only one thing from us, "let yourselves be loved".

Br Andrew, CFR

Lumina is a separately funded program of Good Counsel Homes. Donations to support the work of Lumina are greatly appreciated. Checks should be made out to Good Counsel, Inc with "Lumina" on the note line or you can donate online www.goodcounselhomes.org. Please mark it for Lumina in the comment box.

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