



*"...and you yourself a sword will pierce...so that the hearts of many may be revealed".*  
(Luke 2:35)

How would you feel if your heart were revealed? I think for me, I would be mortified by all the sins I have committed, through my actions, thoughts and words, those I committed by omission, as well as the many I have no conscious knowledge of.

*"...and you yourself a sword shall pierce".* Through the piercing of Mary's heart and her sufferings, sin was brought to light. Through the crucifixion and death of her innocent Son, the hearts of many were revealed. The hearts of the apostles, who hid in fear even though they knew Jesus and the many miracles they had witnessed. The hearts of the people in society who called for His death in spite of the good they knew He had done. The heart of Herod, whose self importance and pride, would not allow another to be held in regard, and, the heart of Pilate, who allowed the taking of innocent blood because he did not want to get involved and have the comforts of his life disrupted. Over two thousand years later, we are still suffering from the same sins and human weaknesses.

The hearts of many are revealed in our day by another "crucifixion", the abortion of the unborn.

When I think about my own abortion, I can see the revelation of many hearts that failed to love. My own heart, defiled by sin filled with fear, and lack of trust in God to

bring life to my son. The hearts of those who did not want to get involved and so stood silent, even knowing what was to happen was wrong. The heart of my baby's father, who, out of fear, fled from his responsibility. The heart of my father, whose pride caused him to worry more about what people would say, than the life of his grandchild, and who coerced me into abortion. The heart of my mother, who always felt guilt for fearing my father so much she did not speak up to him. All hearts that would have preferred to stay hidden but were made to face the truth about themselves. Every abortion reveals the truth of countless hearts.

But hearts of love were revealed through the crucifixion as well. The heart of Mary, who trusted completely in God's will and consented to the death of her son for our salvation. The heart of John, who in spite of the dangers to himself chose to stay next to Jesus, and the heart of Jesus Himself, whose ultimate sacrifice brought us the ultimate love and bought our salvation. It is only in these deep wounds that there is love enough to heal our wounds of abortion. It is through this sacrifice and love that we are able to look at our hearts, revealed in truth because we then understand the redemptive value of the crucifixion and our new life in Jesus Christ, who is Mercy Himself! TB

# WHAT'S NEWS & EVENTS

## UPCOMING POST ABORTION RETREATS

### ENTERING CANAAN MINISTRY

Sisters of Life or  
Theresa Bonopartis/Lumina  
Contact: 866-575-0075 or 877-586-4621  
**Days of Prayer & Healing for Women**  
April 2, 2011  
Contact 877-586-4621 or 866-575-0075

### Day of Prayer & Healing for Men

May 7, 2011  
Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621

### Day of Prayer & Healing for Siblings

For siblings of aborted babies  
March 5, 2011  
Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621

### Arlington, VA

#### Day of Prayer & Healing

March 26, 2011  
Contact: 703-841-2504  
projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org

### St Louis, MO

#### Day of Prayer & Healing

May 7, 2011  
**EC Hope & Healing weekend**  
July 29-31, 2011  
Contact: Marisol Pfaff  
E-mail: Mpfaff@archstl.org

### Rockford, IL

#### Day of Prayer & Healing

June 4, 2011  
Contact: Terri White  
E-mail:  
projectrachelrockford@gmail.com

### RACHEL'S VINEYARD

<http://www.rachelsvineyard.org/>  
**New Jersey**  
**Linden (Archdiocese of Newark)**  
March 11 - 13, 2011  
Contact: Michelle Krystofik  
732-388-8211

### Paterson, NJ

April 29 - May 1, 2011  
Contact: Marie Ryan  
973-777-8818 x264  
rachel@patersondiocese.org

### Connecticut

#### Fairfield County

Local host: Diocese of Bridgeport  
April 8 - April 10, 2011  
Contact: Clarissa Cincotta 203-218-0291  
Website: [www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com](http://www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com)

*Upcoming events Lumina will be speaking at or participating in:*

### Sussex Community College

March 31, 2011, 10:50am – 12:05pm  
Sussex College, Newton, NJ  
Debate: Representative from Planned  
Parenthood & Theresa Bonopartis  
Contact Sr Frances DaGrossa,  
bssra21@hotmail.com

### Fordham University Silent No More

April 5, 2011, Tuesday, 5:00pm – 7:00pm  
Followed by a candle light prayer vigil, 8:00pm  
Rose Hill Campus, Bronx, NY  
If you are a PA person wanting to  
participate contact Theresa at  
lumina@postabortionhelp.org or Colleen at  
newyorkcity@silentnomoreawareness.org  
General Info contact:  
Keyne Rice at rice@fordham.edu

### Regnum Christi "Celebrating the Culture of Life" Conference

April 16, 2011  
9:00 am to 4:00 pm  
Shrine of Our Lady of Divine Vocations  
Florham Park, NJ  
Contact: Dolores Berardi at  
908-237-0005

### Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration

May 1, 2011  
1:45 pm – 3:30 pm  
Holy Rosary Church, Hawthorne, NY  
Guest Speaker:  
Theresa Bonopartis

## ALL AROUND THE TOWN



*Father Peter Pilsner & Monsignor Reilly at  
Yonkers Respect Life Week*



*Theresa with Sr. Marie Pappas at Sirius  
Radio.*



*Volunteers for The Morning of Prayerful Remembrance at St. Patrick's: Gail Malloy, Fran  
& John Astorina, John Beck, Brother Damiano, CFR, Patty Decker, Melissa Perez, Theresa  
Bonopartis, James DeSilva, Fr. Peter Pilsner, Sr. Lucy Marie, SV, Fr. Mariusz Koch, CFR,  
Mary Kominsky. Thank you all for a grace filled event!*

# Be Not Afraid

There has been a lot of progress over the years, in understanding the impact of abortion. I personally, will always be so grateful to the Elliot Institute, ([afterabortion.org](http://afterabortion.org)) for understanding exactly how I felt and putting it into words before I knew how to.

I also am grateful for post abortion research that increases awareness of the many factors which influence an abortion decision. Pressure from boyfriends, or husband, parents and even doctors are often a contributing factor, and although there may be some women who abort for no apparent reason, I have found that most people make the decision because of some outside influence. Abortion is always wrong, but it does help to understand the reasons and the fact that no matter what the who's, how's and whys, abortion is never a solution, but the beginning of a whole new set of problems.

In spite of this progress however, there are still times when those post abortive feel stuck in the middle of the debate. The majority of those who favor abortion still fear acknowledging the harm to women and pain and suffering they go through. They continue to deny the existence of post abortion stress and blame it on other things, as if killing your own child were not enough reason to suffer. They refuse to accept the suffering as a direct result of an abortion.

There are also pro lifers who fear by allowing the suffering to end or by showing compassion and mercy to those who have had an abortion, you would somehow be saying abortion is ok. For some reason, they think by showing mercy, the pain will end too soon, or maybe, will not be felt at all.

Ironically, this can apply not only to the mothers, but to the aborted baby as well. Many pro choicers think the unborn feel no pain in spite of evidence to the contrary, and some pro lifers believe that heaven is closed to aborted children, as if God's Mercy can be limited. In truth, in many ways, mother and child are still joined in the craziness of the societal battle of abortion when, instead, they need to be reunited in the God of life.

I recently attended a mass in which the priest focused on the message of the Holy Father's last visit to the Unites States, "hope". He spoke of this "hope" being rooted in reality. That it is not a *wishing* like earthly hope, but a *knowing*. A knowing, because of the life, death, resurrection and ascension, of Jesus Christ.

In the Catholic faith, we who are post abortive have the beautiful Encyclical written by Pope John Paul II, "*Evangelium Vitae*", "*The Gospel of Life*". I am certain, like me, many women and men searched its pages to find the words of the Holy Father to those of us who had aborted a child. What a gift of understanding, compassion and mercy...it was as if he knew everything...our difficulty in the decision, our pain and guilt after, while still standing firm to the wrong of abortion. Like the God of Mercy he

represents, the Pope also addressed our desire for knowledge as to the care of our children.

As we dealt with our sin, there was a fear to think of our children's fate and the possibility of their closure to heaven because they were not baptized, but Pope John Paul the II assured us even of this. "To the same Father and his mercy you can with **sure hope** entrust your child."

([http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25031995\\_evangelium-vitae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html))

A "sure hope" not found in earthly terms, but in reality. The reality of Jesus Christ who is Mercy Himself.

Some people unfortunately have trouble with the thought of our children in heaven. They fear that if we believe they are in heaven it will somehow make abortion okay, or not as painful, as if the thought of our child living with Christ makes the killing justified.

They seek to close off heaven to the unborn as if a baptism of blood, in their innocence, were not allowed by God. They reject the comfort it may give to those who have participated in abortion, fearful that this comfort would make them believe abortion is all right.

With John Paul II, I say to those people "Be not Afraid." No one knows more than a mother's heart, no matter what she says, that abortion is wrong. It is their child, tied by a motherly bond even abortion cannot dissolve. And the thought of their children in heaven brings hope. Not a hope that focuses on them or reduces the seriousness of their sin, but a sure hope in Jesus, and His Mercy, allowing them to be reunited with their unborn children.

Sanctioning people to a life without hope is not something of God who sent His son into the world for the forgiveness of all sin. Even the sin of abortion. I assure you, there will still be suffering. The thought of a child in heaven does not negate the act of abortion, nor the loss of that child to this world. But it does accentuate the Mercy of our God. A God who desires the salvation of all sinners, even women and men who participate in abortion. If they can get to heaven, why would this same God omit their children? He wouldn't! As another translation of the Gospel of Life states, they are "living in the Lord".

Post abortive people do not need others to make sure they suffer, they suffer enough on their own. You may not always see it, they may cover up or hide in denial, guilt, shame or maybe even arrogance, but it is there, for God alone, who knows our hearts, to judge.

May we all look to the mercy and grace of God that alone saves us all from sin. May we not limit His goodness, who died on the cross for our salvation, and may we never take for granted the remission of our sins but humbly follow Him with gratitude for the Mercy He has shown us all. Be not afraid! TB

# WITNESS

## Lost Motherhood

In November of 2003, I became pregnant. Although it was unplanned, my baby definitely was not unwanted.

I was very worried about telling my boyfriend the news and what his reaction would be. It was one of anger. How would we afford and take care of a baby? Eventually, he came around and said he would stand by me, but then he called telling me the baby was not his. This upset me so much, my sister told me it was better to take care of the “problem” now, rather than to give it up when it was born. She urged me to get an abortion and then never speak about it again. I did not want the abortion, but in my mind I did not know how I could ever do this alone, so I gave in to the pressure. I felt very scared and abandoned.

I called and made an appointment for a Saturday morning. I tried to talk to the father of the baby the night before to tell him what was about to happen but my sister made the call instead of me and told me a woman answered and said he was not home. They did not allow me to speak to him. I felt like the lamb being led to the slaughter.

When we went to the abortion clinic, it was very scary, with a lot of women and men sitting around in silence. My sister filled out all the forms and gave all the wrong information because she was worried our neighbors would find out, so, she told all lies in spite of the fact I had a heart problem at the time.

The nurse gave me a sonogram and checked my blood pressure. I asked why they were doing all this, when my unborn baby is about to be killed. It did not make sense to me. She asked if this was what I wanted. I wanted to say no, but before I could reply my sister said that I did not have any choice.

I cried and cried, and I knew this was very wrong. I saw a lot of girls on stretchers, looking very sad. I wanted to turn around, but all I did was look at the ceiling and the clock as the doctor proceeded to kill my unborn baby.

When I came out they asked if I wanted to have other children. Something about a medicine they would have to give me. I just laid there crying and alone. I knew what had just happened was evil. Afterward when I got home, my other sister called asking how I was and then telling me that I was never to talk about it again. From that moment on my life went down hill. I drank to ease the pain, and I was very angry and emotional when I would see pregnant women. I would even cry when I saw babies on the TV. I would look out the window for my lost baby wondering if the pain would ever go away.

I went back with the father of the child although I was angry with him. I think it was a connection to my baby, but I would get up during the night pacing the floors, my heart breaking. The following year, I got pregnant again and miscarried at the same time I had had the abortion. It led to a nervous breakdown. Although I looked for help many times, the only solution I was told was to move on. My boyfriend too told me to get on with my life, but I couldn't, the pain was just too deep. I knew I needed help, and eventually, through church, got the number for “Entering Canaan”. It has helped me with my healing through the retreats and groups on post abortion healing. It has been a long hard road but, thanks to God, I am moving forward, forgiving, learning how my abortion impacted me, and trying to help other women. Dymphna

### **Entering Canaan Men's Post Abortive Retreat May 7, 2011 • Bronx, NY**

Are you suffering, or do you know a man who is suffering, because of the loss of a child through abortion?

Did you pressure someone, or were you both pressured to abort? Were you against the abortion?

Did you go along because you thought you had no say, but wanted to support the woman?

Did you find out she had aborted after the fact? Is your wife or girlfriend post abortive?

**Hope & Healing is Possible!**

Sponsored by The Franciscan Friars of the Renewal and Lumina/Hope & Healing after Abortion

For more information call Lumina: 877-586-4621

*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*