

The Humility of God

Saint Faustina discovered that devotion to the Christ Child deepens our trust in God, because we know we have nothing to fear from a God who would stoop so low as to become a little child for us. What repentant sinner can possibly cringe in fear before the Almighty, All-seeing, Thrice Holy God, if He gives Himself to us in weakness and helplessness, with the smiles and tears of an infant? He disarms our fear of His justice with His littleness. As St Josemaria Escriva wrote: "He has become so small, you see: a Child! so that you can approach Him with confidence."

(from the Society of the Infant Jesus, Singapore)

"He disarms our fear of His justice with His littleness" As a post abortive woman or man you may be saying "Not for me!" The thought of a little child in weakness and helplessness may be anything but comforting. In fact, a baby, instead of disarming your feelings of condemnation and fear, may even intensify them. So what can you do and how can you internalize the fact that God stooped so low to become a little child to save you from your sins...even your sin of abortion?



Stop trusting in your emotions and trust in Him instead! Stop focusing on yourself and what you have done and focus instead on Him and what He has done! You can believe Him and His word! You can make an act of trust in His love and Mercy!

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2: 9-11)

May you all have a blessed Christmas filled with the joy and peace of His love and mercy.

- TBonopartis

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

WHAT'S NEWS

How Much Time

In a ploy to instill fear a new web-site "How Much Time" has been launched by pro abortion groups. <http://www.howmuchtime.org>

The site seeks to spread the false idea, that if abortion were made illegal, women who have abortions will be tried as criminals and sent to prison. (The question "How Much Time?" refers to how much prison time the post abortive woman would be made to do.) Hence, if you are against abortion, the site implies, you will be responsible for sending those women you love who may be post abortive to prison! Not surprisingly, there is no indication as to who is behind the site, though I would venture to guess that Planned Parenthood has played a part.

The site also asks that readers promote the running of one of their ads in a city near you.

Of course, no mention is given to the harm abortion does to women, or the "life sentence" many suffer because of an abortion decision.

Medjugore Retreat

A pilgrimage to Medjugore is taking place from March 20-28th, 2009 under the direction of Father Conrad Osterhaut, CFR. Anyone who knows Father will recognize what a great gift it is to have him lead this trip. What better time to invoke Our Lady than now, as we seek protection for our country and pray to remain under her mantle. Contact: Linda Antonelle, Linda@206tours.com, 800-206-tour (8687) ext 122.

After Abortion-God Offers Forgiveness, Healing and Hope

A new resource, "After Abortion", a publication of "The Word Among Us", was written to help address the issue of post abortion trauma for women currently serving time in prison. The pamphlet was written by the director of Partners in Evangelism Prison Ministry, Angela Burrin. If you are interested in obtaining a copy, please visit: <http://www.partnersinevangelism.org>.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AN AFTERNOON OF PRAYERFUL REMEMBRANCE AND INTERCESSION:

Wednesday, January 21st, 2008: 1-4pm

Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Crypt Church, Washington, DC

The hidden wounds of abortion affect each of us. Whether it be one's neighbor, co-worker, friend, relative, or, oneself...as a community we have all been touched.

Join us as we observe the 36th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. We will gather to pray and intercede on behalf of our entire nation, seeking forgiveness and healing in God's merciful love. The day will include Mass, Eucharistic Adoration and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Sponsored by US Council of Catholic Bishops Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, The Sisters of Life and Theresa Bonopartis of Lumina/Hope and Healing after Abortion. For more info contact Lumina: 877-486-4621.

ALL AROUND THE TOWN



Volunteers from Alight Pregnancy Center in Hudson, New York, at their banquet in October where Theresa was the keynote speaker.

Tony Felicissimo was honored at a dinner for his work in the pro life movement. Tony always stresses the importance of reaching out to those who are post abortive with God's mercy. Bravo Tony!



Professor Sampietro and Rev. Benedict Groeschel, CFR, at our fundraising concert at SUNY Purchase College.



UPCOMING POST ABORTION RETREATS

Entering Canaan Ministry, Sisters of Life

Contact: 866-575-0075 or 877-586-4621; Day of Prayer & Healing: January 10, 2009

Men's "Day of Prayer & Healing"

Franciscan Friars of the Renewal & Rev. George Stewart

Contact Lumina: 877-586-4621; November 22, 2008; May 9, 2009

Poor Pre Natal Day; Contact Lumina: 877-586-462; April 25, 2009

RACHEL'S VINEYARD - <http://www.rachelsvineyard.org/>

New Jersey, Cherry Hill

Contact: Margarita: 877-665-2974; Spanish Retreat; Dec 5-7, 2008

Linden (Archdiocese of Newark)

Contact: Michelle Krystofik 732-388-8211; January 16-18, 2009

New York, Long Island/Uniondale

Contact: Frank Gariboldi 516-523-0586; January 16-18, 2009

Spanish retreat; Contact: Donna Crean 631-258-5062; February 20-22, 2009

Connecticut, Fairfield County; Local host: Diocese of Bridgeport

Contact: Clarissa Cincotta 203-218-0291; www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com; Jan 23-25, 2009

...Witness *(continued from last page)*

mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it shall no longer give you its produce. You shall become a restless wanderer on the earth." (Genesis 4:9-12). I didn't find God; He found me.

Of all the abortions performed on a daily basis, poor prenatal diagnosis largely escapes the radar screen. Even if abortion were to be outlawed in this country, most people would allow for exceptions under these circumstances. If the souls of these poor little ones are eliminated because of the economics of providing for them, then the solution can only come from the Church that reinforces the dignity of life. May this story be a testament that even in these "hard" cases of abortion due to poor pre-natal diagnosis, there are consequences to one's actions. -Lucy

On Friday August 25, 2006 I chose to "say goodbye" to my very much wanted baby boy at 14 weeks pregnancy after having received a diagnosis of Trisomy 18 diagnosis (Edwards Syndrome). Humans normally have 23 pairs of chromosomes, numbered 1-22, with the 23rd chromosome. (XX for a girl, or XY for a boy) determine the gender. A trisomy occurs when the child inherits three, rather than two, copies of a chromosome. The more commonly occurring more widely recognized genetic abnormality, Down Syndrome, occurs when the child inherits three, rather than two, copies of the 21st chromosome and is therefore also known as Trisomy 21. Edwards Syndrome is a genetic abnormality in which the child inherits three, rather than two, copies of the 18th chromosome. The mortality statistics for children diagnosed with Trisomy 18 are overwhelming. A whopping 95% of children diagnosed with Trisomy 18 either miscarry or are stillborn prior to birth, and of the 5% who do make it to birth, half will die within three months and the remainder will die within one year. Very few survive beyond their first year. Natural selection had "blessed" me with a death sentence for my very much wanted child. When I think back to the sequence of events that lead to my tragic "choice," I cannot help but ask, "Where was the Church?"

Where was the Church on the afternoon of Wednesday, August 16, 2006 when I got the news that my child had Trisomy 18? A mother's instinct is to care for and nurture her child. I knew enough not to trust the medical community's solution to terminate. I recall telling the genetic counselor who called me at work with the news that I specifically did not want to talk to my obstetrician because "I know what he's going to tell me." But an internet search on Trisomy 18 led at best to the Trisomy 18 Foundation and at worst to a whole series of medical journals on the gloom and doom of infants born with Trisomy 18. The decision to terminate the pregnancy was essentially made when I first read the mortality statistics on a webpage. I recall going down the hit list of things that could go wrong and thinking to myself that I could handle just about anything regarding physical appearance and mental capacity. I couldn't understand how physical appearance and mental capacity equated to a 95% mortality rate. Then I realized that the very foundation of life we usually take for granted, our respiratory system, our circulatory system, our urinary tract system, our digestive system, all had problems in the Trisomy 18 baby. In the blueprint of life, there was something very wrong with Tommy's basic programming. It was as if a pattern was made, and it was good, but the sewing machine programmed to sew the piece was one stitch out of alignment. How can a child who cannot feed possibly mature and grow? There was nothing I could do for him. So even though deep inside I realized that death would be the ultimate conclusion, I could not bring myself to actually authorize it. I think that if any one of the avenues I sought had pointed to hope, I would have gone there. But every person I spoke to, and every webpage I perused all led to the same road.

And down that road I went. Where were the avenues that would have allowed me to make a choice for life? I could not give birth to a special needs child in isolation, and I wasn't aware enough to ask for hospice care for babies. I didn't know such a thing as hospice care for babies even existed until after I was led down the path to destruction. Why didn't I stumble upon these websites prior to making that tragic choice? God only knows.

Where was the Church on Thursday, August 17, 2006 when I had lunch with the local neighborhood parish priest who told me point blank that he didn't agree with the Catholic Church on everything? His advice and counsel was that in making my choice I would have to consider my other family responsibilities and the impact of caring for such an infant on the overall family unit. He suggested that it would be a selfish choice on my part to want to hold on to such a doomed child. There was nothing more painful to him as a priest, he said, than to preside at the wake and funeral of an infant with a tiny little casket and console a mother's loss. When I went to see this same priest after the "procedure" to express my hesitation over my "choice", he told me that it was never a "good" choice but that I had made the "right" choice. He then asked me when I was going back to work so that I could move on and not wallow in my misery at home.

Where was the Church during the week long road to Calvary when I would go to bed at night and desperately pray to God for a miscarriage prior to the abortion date? I would go to bed at night, rub my belly, cry to my baby and tell him that God would heal him where his mamma could not and that his mamma loved him and was sorry for what she was ABOUT to do. The paradox of that statement alone drove me insane. I was praying to God to let me off the hook. Alas that was not meant to be.

Where was the Church while I was sitting in the waiting room at 6 am that Friday morning waiting to be wheeled into the operating room when my husband kissed me, rubbed my belly, and said, "Bye, Bye baby?" The tears spilled over and shut my husband right up. My last waking memory was looking at a clock at 7:30 in the morning.

Where was the Church at one in the morning, when the world had gone to bed and the walls of denial came crashing down and the tears of truth overflowed like running streams. The gravity of what I had done hit me the minute I got home. One minute you're pregnant and the next minute you're not, and I missed my baby terribly. I would rub my belly but there was nobody home. I couldn't sleep. Every night for two weeks I would wake up from nightmares. The story of Cain and Abel kept running through my mind like a broken record. "Then the Lord asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He answered, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" Then the Lord said: "What have you done! Listen: your brother's blood cries out to me from the soil!. Therefore you shall be banned from the soil that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it shall no longer give you its produce. You shall become a restless wanderer on the earth." (Genesis 4:9-12). I didn't find God; He found me.

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WITNESS

In the past month Lumina has received calls from four couples who have experienced abortion due to a poor prenatal diagnosis. I am sure there are countless other couples out there who are also suffering this loss. In addition to the overwhelming grief of abortion, these couples often also have to come to terms with the anger they have towards the medical profession and clergy that encourage, and even pressured them to abort.

The witness below belongs to one of the brave women who attended one of our poor prenatal days. I believe it is through voices such as hers that people will recognize that no matter how though imperfect in the opinion of the world, these children and their parents, have a right to life and love, trusting in God and His will.

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