



PATH *Way*

Fall 2004

Volume 1, Issue 6

For The Women

*Look with love and see her pain.
Listen to the silence of her shame.
The choice denies her sorrow.
She's not allowed to mourn.*

*A child is lost.
A heart is broken.
That's not how it's
supposed to be.*

*A problem solved, but not resolved.
The answer leaves her bleeding.*

*He waits for her with
longing arms.
He feels her pain in
His own heart.
Forgiveness,
not condemnation waits.
She cannot meet
those loving eyes.
Her sin is far too great.*

*Will you be there to
help her find
The grace that she
needs to live again?
He calls to you,
to me, to all
To love, to serve,
to mend.*

*And when this world
has passed away,
All who loved will
gather there.
His children reunited
And forever in
His care.*

*For post-abortion
women and
those who
minister to them.*

Teresa Lynn Rutledge
June, 2001

The Abortion Experiment Has Failed

The 1960's abortion advocates claimed abortion would improve women's lives. It was supposed to help reduce domestic violence, poverty, child abuse, single-parent

homes, and the number of children born with handicaps. None of these ends have been achieved. Research shows:

- Pregnant women are more likely to be abused, not less.

- Post-abortion women stay on welfare longer than those who give birth.

- Couples with a history of abortion are more likely to abuse their later "wanted" children.

- Abortion is linked to at least a doubling of premature deliveries—the leading cause of birth defects.

Women who have abortions report lower

overall health and require an 80 percent increase in doctor visits. Compared to delivering women, they are 2.6 times more likely to be hospitalized for psychiatric illness, five times more likely to start abusing alcohol and drugs, and seven times more likely to commit suicide.

Abortion is not safer than childbirth. Compared to women who deliver, women who abort are 3.5 times more likely to die in

the year after abortion than those who delivered.

When studied for eight years after a pregnancy, aborting women are more than 5 times more likely to die from cerebrovascular disease than women who gave birth, Strokes and heart disease are related to depression and anxiety, both of which are linked to abortion.

Source: *The Elliot Institute newsletter, April-June 2004*

Clearly, the most powerful witnesses for the humanity of the unborn are not scientists, but mothers who mourn. All can see that these mothers weep not over the destruction of "products of conception" but over the deaths of their children. The tearful stories of women who have paid the terrible price of abortion open eyes and hearts. Whenever facts of fetal biology will not change hearts, facts of familial relationship will. "It was my innocent little daughter who died that day!"

Making Abortion Rare by David Reardon

Path is participating in "Marketplace", a Holiday craft fair sponsored by the St. Pius High School Mother's club. Path is offering "Maternal Bond" sculptures by artist Timothy Schmaltz, on sale for \$40.00. The proceeds will benefit the PATH ministry. Stop by between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 20th to support our ministry. Someone on your Christmas list would love this beautiful sculpture! St. Pius High School is located at 2674 Johnson Rd. N.E.



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For more information
please contact our office
at
404-896-6521

4691 North Springs Court
Dunwoody, GA 30338

www.
healingafterabortion.org



From the Director

Path Ministry continues to flow ever forward through God's blessings as our hard work and effort brings forth ripple effects of healing from 2003 to our present day 2004!

Path started those healing waves rolling with three retreats in 2003 - helping 23 individuals on the path to God's grace and mercy. We have assisted fourteen women in Bible Studies and five individuals with one-on-one support. An additional 65 individuals received phone or email support, literature in the mail or were referred to other services. That means a total so far of 107 people are now able to go forth and spread the good news of Path and our healing God thanks to your help!

In 2004, Path has received over 70 calls for assistance. So far, we have conducted two amazing retreats serving 15 people. Our third retreat of the year is scheduled for November 19-21st, and we expect to serve an additional ten retreatants. As of August, 14 individuals have participated in a Bible study, and many more are currently being placed in groups to begin this October! In 2003 and 2004 we trained 9 new facilitators.

Path's momentum can't be stopped! Several of our volunteer facilitators have shared their stories of healing in Atlanta area churches, including Mary Our Queen, St. Andrew's, Holy Family, St. Philip Benizi, and Emory University. In July of this year, we have also had two of our facilitators attend a leadership training conference for the Rachel's Vineyard retreat process. This September, the Path team has been blessed to hear from these facilitators and learn from their experiences as they conducted an in-service to help educate Path members.

We have also witnessed the far-reaching effects Path's tidal waves can create! In 2003, three women from an Atlanta 2000 retreat went on to conduct retreats in Tupelo, Mississippi and Asheville, North Carolina, serving an additional 25 retreatants.

And if this wasn't enough - in 2004 of this year, one former Atlanta retreatant provided the first Rachel's Vineyard in Chattanooga, Tennessee!

Our own Director of Path's Board, Martha Shuping has gone international with her desire to help spread the ripples of post abortion healing ministry. She traveled to England and Ireland to provide training to new teams and conducted their first European retreat. From Tupelo, to Asheville, to Chattanooga, to Europe, Rachel's Vineyard is growing and thriving!

As God continues to bestow his love and grace into our Path pool of volunteers and dedicated priests, and wise and faith filled directors on the board...we can't help but feel the ripples of His healing hands in our ministry. Praise God!

Mary Ann McNeil

Some Of Our Facilitators...



With Great Gratitude

Thank you the the following priests who have served on our retreat teams and conducted prayer services:

Reverend John Conway
Reverend David Dye
Reverend John Matejec
Reverend Bryan Horn
Reverend Bryan Small
Reverend Tim Hepburn
Reverend Larry Niese
Reverend Dung Nguyen
Reverend Msgr. Patrick Bishop
Reverend Bob Fredrick
Reverend Msgr. Richard Lopez

Reverend Frank Richardson
Reverend Kevin Hargaden

Thank you to the following priests who have supported Path financially, invited speakers, shared literature, and entrusted us with parishioners:

Reverend Msgr. Edward Dillon
Reverend Fred Wendel
Reverend Msgr. Daniel O'Connor
Reverend Msgr. James Fennessy
Reverend Msgr. Paul Fogarty
Reverend Msgr. Hugh Marren

Reverend Msgr. Francis McNamee
Reverend Richard Morrow
Reverend Msgr. Thomas Kenney
Reverend Msgr. Paul Reynolds
Reverend Kevin Peek
Reverend Larry Niese
Reverend Msgr. Patrick Bishop
Reverend Frank Richardson
Reverend Msgr. Richard Lopez
Reverend David Dye
Reverend Patrick Kingery
Reverend Eric Hill
Reverend John Durkin

Quotes from Priests who have served PATH:

“My first personal encounter with the post abortion healing team was the privilege to preside at a final service ending the session for approximately 30 men and women. It was one of the most profound experiences of my Priesthood. I watched the spirit of God move over young people who named, claimed, and brought into their lives the souls of children victimized by abortion. The healing that was present in that room was one of the most powerful experiences I have ever had.”

Reverend Monsignor Patrick Bishop
Transfiguration Catholic Church

“I will never forget the very first time I served as the priest for a PATH weekend retreat. I was so moved. I thought I knew about abortion and could imagine how it might feel. I could not believe the individual stories—the sadness, the burdens, the loneliness, the “hell” that the individuals had lived. But what was most moving of all, was the love and understanding that was present in the wounded healers who knew first hand the healing love of God. They were so compassionate, because they knew God’s compassion first hand. There was no self-righteousness, no condemnation, just love and understanding and the message of forgiveness presented as only a person forgiven could express. Each individual was accepted as they were where they were.”

Reverend David Dye
Mary Our Queen Catholic Church

Back To His Loving Arms

Dear Mary Ann,

I was very moved by your letter concerning political struggles related to the abortion issue. You mentioned a friend who cautioned you against using abortion as a single issue in voting. I know exactly where that friend was coming from because I felt the same way many years ago.

Back in the 1980s I was very active helping the poor in an outreach program within my parish church. To me, poverty was the most important issue and I never thought about abortion very much and thought it was rather rare. Even though I considered myself pro-life, I was a little suspicious of pro-life activists (I guess I believed

everything the media told us!). But God had plans to cure me of my blindness. Ironically, it was through my work with the poor that He began to push me into the pro-life movement.

The first nudge came with a quote from Mother Teresa, now known as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta: “I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another?” Here was a woman who had seen poverty at its absolute worst, suffering and death from starvation, the most horrible diseases, and the terrible ravages of war. I believe that no individual person has ever

Continued on next page

Overall I felt the retreat was wonderful from the introduction to the conclusion. The sequence of events allowed me to start at the top layer and go to the deepest depths of my abortion issues.

I particularly liked the living scriptures, since I, during this journey, have felt like the person in need, the one who needed Christ’s healing; it was such a validation.

I have been so ministered to, pampered and loved in ways I never experienced before on a retreat. The atmosphere was so conducive to healing and restoration. Each of the leaders was so gracious and loving! This was truly an experience of God’s love.

Back To His Loving Arms

Continued from previous page

witnessed more suffering than Mother Teresa, but she cited abortion as the worst evil of all! This truly was something to think about!

God then began to show me the pain and sorrow that abortion was causing among the poor that I was trying to help. He showed me women who had been pressured into abortion by family, friends and even government workers simply because they were poor. They were told things like, "You're so poor, it would be cruel to even think of bringing another child into the world" or "The last thing you need is another mouth to feed!" Tragically, many of these women caved in to the pressure and ended up having abortions they never wanted. So much for "freedom to choose".

I am also amazed at the sheer numbers of abortions that are being performed! There are approximately 1 to 1 1/2 million every year and a total of over 45 million in this country alone since legalization 31 years ago! How can anyone think that this single issue is too small to consider when casting your votes!

But thank God, there is hope! For even

though a child's life is taken and love seems gone, God does not allow love to disappear completely. How do we know? Because if love were totally destroyed, then abortion would not hurt so much. Mary Ann, you and those who help you in post-abortion ministry have seen exactly how much it hurts. Our poor suffering nation and world!! You were right when you called it a wound of the SOUL. First, there is the wound caused by the serious sin of abortion. Then there is the wound of grief as one comes to realize that his or her innocent child has died. There are so many people grieving desperately for a child that society says does not exist or does not matter! And they often grieve alone, not able to share their pain with anyone.

Post abortion ministry is one of the most important ministries in our church today. We are so blessed to have a merciful God who forgives us and comforts us in our greatest sorrows, even the sorrow of an abortion we might have chosen. We are also blessed to have wonderful people like you who help women and men through the grief and guide them, with God's help, back to His loving arms. God bless you all!

Brenda Stoll

The retreat addresses so many areas in which we have pain, unresolved issues, and scars. The atmosphere is one of unconditional love and acceptance...a safe haven. The work is hard but so rewarding. The pain in the deepest crevices of my heart and mind has been revealed... quite a surprise as to its intensity.



Post Abortion Treatment and Healing

4691 North Springs Court
Dunwoody, GA 30338

"I have been a spiritual director on two of these retreats and found the experience to be very rewarding. Seeing the true contrition these women (and even men) feel over their past abortions is at the same time heartrending and joyful. It was joyful for me because I felt they were like the prodigal son, finally returning home to their Father."

Reverend John Conway
St. Joseph's Catholic Church

