



Summer 2011

PATHway

Post Abortion Treatment and Healing

Me versus Mother's Day by Vallory Welday

Every year I vow I am going to go with the flow. Appreciate my mom and not get caught up in the fact that I am not a mom. But here I am...going through my usual *sturm und drang* related to Mother's Day, my LEAST favorite, MOST hated "holiday."

Why do I grind my teeth when the waitress at Waffle House wishes me a Happy Mother's Day? I can barely stop myself from blurting out "I'm not a mother." Never will be. And while I don't think you have to have children to be a complete person--a complete woman-- why do I feel so incomplete?

Abortion does that to you. After attending a PATH-hosted Rachel's Vineyard Retreat and PATH's Bible study *Forgiven and Set Free*, however, I've learned to be more honest with myself and to actually accept (and maybe even forgive) my feelings.

And so I e-mail my friend Mary Ann and confess my seemingly un-American attitude. To my surprise Mary Ann writes back: "You know, it's funny. I kinda dislike Mother's Day too. It makes me feel uncomfortable, like I need to be the perfect Mom and don't deserve the attention unless I am."

Mother's Day has to be one of the hardest days on the calendar for those suffering after abortion. But, turns out, it is not just post-abortive women who hate this day.

One internet blogger posts: "How is it possible for all mothers to be happy on Mother's Day? This is a sad day for my friends who've recently lost their mothers to cancer and those who wish they could be mothers...How about all the mothers who work in restaurants today, serving other mothers? It's a recipe for discontentment."

And one of my favorite writers, Anne Lamott, wrote in "Why I Hate Mother's Day" that "It celebrates the great lie about women: those with children are more important than those without."

I love PATH's logo. The broken heart held up by caring, gentle hands with the words "Hope, Heart, Healing" underneath. That really sums it up, motherhood or not, for me. Even U2's Bono seems to get that. In an interview he said:

You see, at the center of all religions is the idea [that] what you put out comes back to you: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth... every action is met by an equal or an opposite one... Karma is at the very heart of the universe. I'm absolutely sure of it. And yet, along comes this idea called Grace to upend all that 'as you reap, so you will sow' stuff. Grace defies reason and logic. Love interrupts, if you like, the consequences of your actions ... I'd be in big trouble if Karma was going to finally be my judge. I'd be in deep s---. It doesn't excuse my mistakes, but I'm holding out for Grace. I'm holding out that Jesus took my sins onto the Cross, because I know who I am, and I hope I don't have to depend on my own religiosity.

PATH helps Love interrupt and Grace step in. Stacy Lynn Massey, President of Abortion Recovery InterNational, writes, "This year please consider ALL mothers. One third of all women in the U.S. have lost a child to abortion. She could be your girlfriend, grandmother, aunt, sibling, work-out partner or even your pastor's wife. Reach out and let her know you empathize with her loss."

One third of all U.S. women suffer after and because of abortion! I'm reminded again of the important work PATH is doing. Helping, healing, listening, loving all of us, even those of us who hate Mother's Day.

❖ *This retreat has been the most beautiful experience ... I felt the presence of my sweet Jesus every minute during the retreat. I feel very blessed that the Lord gave me the opportunity to meet these wonderful people and allowed me to learn so much. They are very inspiring.* ❖



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From Our Director

Mary Ann McNeil

A few years ago an advertising company for a particular beer ran some very funny commercials celebrating ordinary people. The tag line went something like 'Here's to you, bowling shoe guy, for all the work you do...' The ads were effective because they resonated with many of us, who, in doing ordinary things, appreciate recognition for our hard work.



Although many people have rather ordinary professions, there are some individuals that have professions that require considerable personal risk, such as firefighters and military personnel. I once spotted a guest at our annual fundraising dinner speaking to Col. Bill Duffy, who had recently returned from Afghanistan, eyes shining as if Bill were a rock star.

I recognized that look, because a few times other young men have looked at my husband, a firefighter, that way when they asked him questions about his work. I smiled to myself as I walked away. I was glad to see that young people look up to men and women such as this. But what exactly is it that we admire?

We may want to hear the "war stories" and hear an exciting tale. But I think there's more to it. We are naturally drawn to people who are quietly sacrificial... who do the extraordinary without making a big show or drawing attention to themselves. There is something quite

noble about this type of individual, whether or not they serve in a dangerous profession.

PATH has many such individuals who make the ministry possible. In the last year Fr. Brian Lorei, Fr. James Harrison, Fr. Paul Moreau, and Fr. Dan Ketter have served on our retreat teams. Fr. Joseph Peek served for years as our priest and cheerleader.

Deac. Mike Mobley, Deac. Chris Thompson and Deac. Levi Jelks have also served. Last month the Knights of Columbus at St. Stephen's parish hosted a benefit golf tournament.. All of these men have helped us willingly, quietly, humbly. Serving on a retreat team made up of mostly women is not for sissies!

As Father's Day draws near, I would like to highlight the quiet sacrificial giving of all of the men, who like the men of PATH, quietly serve their families, their communities, and their country much as Christ himself did—sacrificially. Thank you for all you do and are.

.....UPCOMING EVENTS.....

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat: September 16-18, 2011.

Forgiven and Set Free Bible Study: Tuesday mornings at 10:00. *Call for location and fall start date for this and other evening studies.*

Matthew Linn Day of Reflection: September 10, 2011.

PATH Fundraising Dinner: November 10, 2011. *Check the web page for details.*

❖ *It is something everyone who struggles following abortion should go through to either begin or continue on their journey of healing. I'm grateful that God led me on this path.* ❖



SAUSAGE MAKING AND THE RULE OF LAW by Richard Farnsworth

"Laws are like sausages; you don't want to see how either are made." --Otto von Bismark
"The legislative process has become a cruel shell game..." Elliot Richardson, former U.S. Attorney General

The first few chapters of *Last Call*, a book about the rise and fall of Prohibition, details the DECADES of work done by diverse groups--their shifting strategies and clever alliances to forge a coalition-- culminating in the passage of Prohibition.

Mocked and scorned by men, Prohibition was nurtured for many years by thousands of women – all the while denied even the right to vote – who watched husbands and fathers drink away families' incomes, lose their jobs, and inflict violence on women at home.

Prohibition supporters learned to mix altruistic argument with horse-trading. The powerful forces who wanted income taxation realized they needed women's votes to pass it. So American women won the right to vote simply because men needed their votes to get Prohibition and Income Tax!

Getting a major legislative change through is often more like erosion than a flood or fire. The false advertising, brinksmanship, personal attacks, and pigheaded stubbornness that we see in today's political world were all present back in the decades the war was waged to get Prohibition passed.

Perhaps unaware of the similarities between the legislative process and sausage-making, on March 9 our intrepid heroines, Mary Ann McNeil and Beverly

Osterbur, went to work, meeting individually with Georgia State Senate committee members in support of a pending bill.

The Senate bill would effectively bar procured abortions in Georgia after the 22nd week of pregnancy. Strong medical evidence shows that by the 22nd week, a human fetus (unborn child) indisputably can feel, and register feeling, pain.

The committee members were courteous to our star performers, who had some "quality" time with individual senators. However, some of the senators openly admitted to ignorance of the facts regarding abortion or post abortion syndrome. Exactly! That's why Mary Ann and Beverly were there—to equip them for battle.

Each step away from unchecked abortion on demand represents many human lives saved. Even with a limited number of lifeboats in the water, we should scoop up as many splashing for help as possible. Every law restricting any abortions will be tested in court. This one had a good chance of success in court. Had it passed and been upheld, it would have opened a doorway through which other scientifically supported bills could pass.

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EWTN Star Will Grace Fundraiser Dinner

Guests at the upcoming annual PATH fundraiser dinner (November 10 at Christ the King) will get to hear Kitty Cleveland, who has performed for the U.S. bishops in St. Peter's Basilica and for U.S. Senators in DC. EWTN viewers may have seen Ms. Cleveland on *Life on the Rock* series or *Backstage*; her music is often used on EWTN's *The Faithful Traveler*.

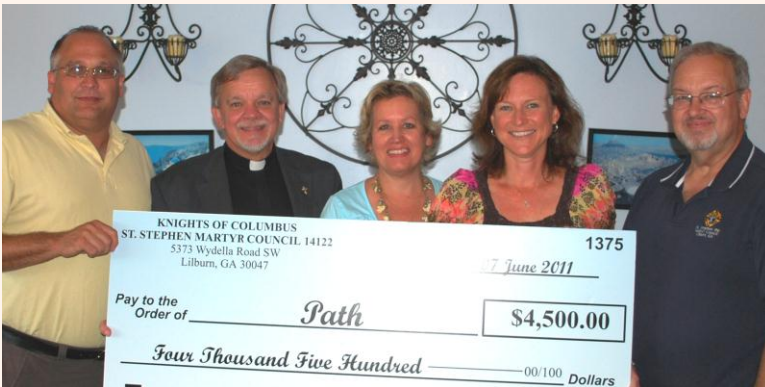
Recordings include ***Surrender***, winner of 2001 Unity Award® for "Sacramental Album of the Year," ***Sacred Arias***, final nominee for the 2002 Unity Award® for "Devotional Album of the Year," and ***God Will Provide***, a 2010 release by Lighthouse Catholic Media which includes Kitty's 2008 testimony plus nine songs from her previous collections.

Stay tuned...more about the fundraiser to come...





Knights Take the Fairway by Beverly Osterbur



Left to right: incoming Grand Knight Mike Basak, Deacon Mike Mobley, Mary Ann McNeil, Beverly Osterbur, outgoing Grand Knight Joe Rickels.

I first met with the Knights back in September of 2010. Over the next 6 to 7 months they worked tirelessly to put together this fundraiser tournament for us. As I worked with them to organize PATH’s tournament, I found out about many other events they were working on for other groups. I was impressed.

May 12th finally arrived and we all gathered at the Heritage Golf Links golf course to get the show on the road. God blessed us with a beautiful day on the green, lots of golfers, and enough hole sponsors to make our first try at a golf fundraiser a big success. I guess we’ll have to make the golf tournament an annual event (“back by popular demand”)!

The St. Stephen knights haven’t just got a corner on the chivalry market—they’ve got good timing, too. The “take” from the tournament will help defray the expenses of our June retreat.

FORE!! Thankfully for everyone’s safety I was not actually out on the golf course but was working “behind the scene” at our first annual golf tournament hosted by the Knights of Columbus from St. Stephen the Martyr in Lilburn.

Mary Ann and Bev Equip Legislators to Defend Pro-Life Bill

It is hard to persuade legislators with philosophical, moral or religious arguments! It is easier to make a medical argument, especially to legislators who have never known anyone who had an abortion, or to judges who have never heard post abortive women describe their trauma, their silent suffering and, hopefully, their recoveries.

Mary Ann and Bev could not identify any strong force

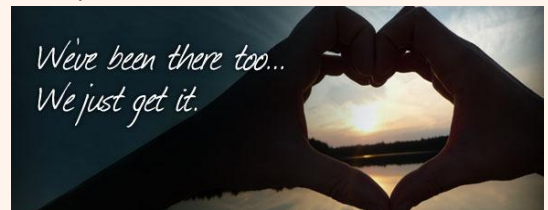
working the hallways to get this bill passed. So they got busy themselves.

In the months *between* General Assembly sessions, a lot of effective persuasion can take place. Do you know who your representative and state senator are, and how to get in touch with them?

Remodeled Website Open for Business

The “pardon our mess” signs are gone and our website remodel is open for business. Same address (www.healingafterabortion.org) with a fresh look, thanks to the generosity of the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia and the skill of web designer Ginny Millar, assisted by Jason Medina of Kapp Concepts. The remodel features new colors—brown, navy—and a consistent look (each page includes a photo and a quote) throughout.

Visitors can investigate PATH’s bible studies and retreats, catch up on the latest events, shop, access education resources (books, articles, websites) and services (crisis pregnancy and post-abortion ministries) and even donate. Come visit our “new house.”



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