



Spring 2015

PATHway

Post Abortion Treatment and Healing

Grave Concerns about RU 486

If you had to choose between undergoing surgery or taking pills to remedy a medical problem, which route would you choose? I know which I would choose---the pills, of course.

Women seeking to end a pregnancy often make the same choice. They choose the "abortion pill", known as Mifiprex or RU486. In recent years, PATH facilitators have seen an increase in the number of pregnant women who have used Mifiprex, and we have witnessed the trauma this drug can cause.

When a woman procures an abortion at a clinic or doctor's office, she can pay extra for anesthesia. Without anesthesia, she experiences the physical pain associated with surgical abortion, which makes the reality of what is happening more immediate. Using anesthesia may prevent physical pain and delay trauma, but, in our experience, both methods often eventually result in spiritual, emotional, and mental anguish.

In the last few years, PATH facilitators have become increasingly concerned about RU486 and the physical and emotional consequences it entails. Several of our participants who have taken RU486 have experienced such severe bleeding that they had to be hospitalized. One recent participant was told that had she waited one more day to go to the hospital, she would have died from blood loss.

When a woman goes to a clinic or doctor's office, she is monitored. Even though we know that many clinics and doctors' offices do not monitor their patients carefully, still help is available if she needs it. In the case of taking pills, the woman passes the unborn baby at home, often alone, with no medical personnel there at all. Her own bathroom may become a trigger for her in the future, where she is constantly reminded of the tragic event.

Sometimes the bleeding lasts for weeks. I have had two participants return to work, only to deliver their child in a gas station bathroom! Clearly, using medications to induce an abortion is not without risk.

The FDA may not be aware of the magnitude or frequency of serious physical complications following the taking of RU486, because women do not report their experiences. The Mayo Clinic website encourages all who have had these symptoms to call 1-800-FDA-1088. PATH has now added this number to our website, to encourage women to report their experiences and to warn others of the consequences of taking this drug.

What is RU486?

RU486, sometimes called a chemical or "medication" abortion, is a nonsurgical method of abortion used early in pregnancy (49 days or less from the start of the last menstrual period). The pregnant woman typically takes two separate drugs. The first drug is mifepristone, commonly known as RU486, Mifeprex (its U.S. trade name), or "the abortion pill."

It works by blocking the hormone progesterone, which weakens the uterine lining and deprives the developing fetus in utero of necessary fluids and nutrients. This causes the unborn child's death.

The second drug, a prostaglandin called misoprostol, is taken about two days later to induce uterine contractions that expel the fetus. The complete expulsion often occurs within several hours of taking the misoprostol, but sometimes it does not occur for several days or even several weeks (and in rare cases, not at all). Many women experience the abortion at home with no doctor or health care worker present.

The woman is supposed to return to the abortion clinic about two weeks after taking the mifepristone to confirm that the abortion has been successful.

Serious health risks to women

The common side effects of the drugs (including prolonged pain, cramping, heavy bleeding, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting and fever) can mask more serious complications, such as infection, hemorrhage, and incomplete abortion, sometimes leading to death.

A total of 2,207 "adverse events" linked to RU486 were reported to the FDA from September 2000 (when the drug was approved) through April 2011. Of these, 14 women died; 612 women were hospitalized (excluding deaths); 339 women bled so much that they required transfusions; and 256 women developed infections, 48 of them "severe infections."

Abortion industry profits

RU486 offers abortion providers a cost-effective means of increasing abortions and revenue, at the expense of women's health. Planned Parenthood—the leading performer and promoter of abortion nationwide—violates FDA protocol regarding RU486 in order to reduce overhead costs and maximize profits.

RU486 is approved by the FDA for use within the first 49 days of gestation (measured since the start of a woman's last menstrual period). Yet Planned Parenthood administers RU486 abortions through 63 days' gestation, when the drugs become less "effective" and more likely to result in complications.

Source: Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life brochure, 2011, and Mayo Clinic website.

Many thanks to Joe Carr at BuckBlue Printing for donation of printing services for this newsletter.

Joe is a St. Jude parishioner and all-round great guy!



Board Members

Mary Ann McNeil, MSW
president
Richard Farnsworth, Esq.
secretary
Beverly Osterbur
treasurer
Fr. Brian Lorei
Deacon Mike Mobley
Martha Robert
Martha Shuping, MD
Renee Torina

Emeritus Board

Debra Ayers
Candee Elrod
Tarne Eyl
Tony Eyl
Ann LaBar, PA-C
Msgr. Richard Lopez
Sheila Malon
Kelly Markillie Cortez,
LPC, EdS
Dottie O'Connor
Kathleen Raviele, MD
Peggy Sinanian
Jessica Slovensky, LPC,
NCACII
Caryn Stofko
Sr. Pat Thompson, RSM
Stephanie Tramonte
June Webb, RN

PATHway

is published
for supporters of
PATH, Inc.

PATH, Inc. is a registered
501(c)(3) nonprofit program
which fosters a process
of compassionate healing
and restoration
for women and men wounded
by abortion.

All gifts to PATH
are tax-deductible.
For more information
please contact
our office at
404-717-5557
or visit us
on the web at
www.healingafterabortion.org

From Our Director

Mary Ann McNeil

"To grow is to change. To be perfect is to change often". Author unknown.

In recent years the demographics of those who seek PATH's services have changed. In the early years of PATH, beginning in the late 1980's, participants were usually in their 30's to 60's, and had carried the burden of one or more abortions for many years. There simply were not many services available for post-abortion healing in the late 80's and early 90's. Indeed, most professionals did not know that such help was needed! Also, many women experienced relief, denial, or shame following an abortion experience and did not seek services quickly. This resulted in many years between the abortion experience and healing.

Today, the internet provides instant communication. PATH's web site, as well as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, translate into instant communication. Younger women are seeking help sooner, and sometimes reach out to PATH a few days, weeks or months following an abortion.

PATH's Bible Study workbook is more suitable to meeting the needs of those who have had a few years to process their experience. The retreat may address much of the trauma a person has experienced, but is only offered a few times a year. So, PATH facilitators pondered the need for a new approach.

This year we will embark on a "Bridge" program...a short program that will provide information and support to those women who have had an abortion a year or less before calling PATH. This program will instruct participants regarding common reactions they may be experiencing and help them know what to predict, thus reducing their anxiety until the next retreat is available, or until the next bible study is deemed appropriate.

Another change we are making targets those who have completed the Bible Study and the retreat, but desire further support. In a previous newsletter we described a pilot group in PATH which used the book "Path to Sexual Healing" to provide further growth. Five brave facilitators, led by Jessica Slovensky, Outreach Director and consultant therapist to PATH, embarked on this program. However, following the pilot program, the group decided to revise the curriculum and will use the book "Captivating" by John and Stasi Eldredge going forward.

When all of our services are in place, we hope to offer the Bridge for those who have had a recent abortion, followed by the Bible Study, the Retreat, Aftercare, and finally Captivating...providing a full range of services for those seeking healing and support.

Finally, PATH plans to offer a series of Open House opportunities to the public, inviting all to visit our office and learn about our services in an open, friendly and inviting manner. Stay tuned for these new developments!



The only thing we cannot give is...UP.
Celeste McNeil, Reading and Writing Teacher





2014 Speaking Events

- ❖ St. Jude the Apostle Youth Group
- ❖ Archdiocesan Northeast Deanery Meeting
- ❖ St. Michael Church (Gainesville) Masses
- ❖ Mercer University (Macon)
- ❖ St. Michael Pastoral Center Mass
- ❖ Magnificat Prayer Breakfast
- ❖ Prince of Peace Fun Run
- ❖ Military Council of Catholic Women
- ❖ St. James RCIA
- ❖ SCLC Celebrate Life Festival
- ❖ Luncheon for Life
- ❖ St Francis (Blairsville) Memorial and Masses
- ❖ Archdiocesan Respect Life meeting
- ❖ Priests for Life meeting
- ❖ Two radio interviews with Kim Ketola on Cradle My Heart Radio
- ❖ RCIA class, Immaculate Heart of Mary Church
- ❖ St Anna Church (Monroe) Masses
- ❖ Holy Trinity Church (Peachtree City) Masses

Where We're Going...and Where We've Been

- January 2015**
 - ❖ 18 – Our Lady of the Assumption Masses
 - ❖ 22 – Stand for Life Youth presentation
 - ❖ 25 -- St. Jude the Apostle Youth Group

- February 2015**
 - ❖ 16 – Valentine Tea to support PATH

- March 2015**
 - ❖ 8 -- Prince of Peace Mass and Youth Group
 - ❖ 19-20 -- Artsy Market (St. Jude) to support PATH
 - ❖ 21-22 – St. Mary Magdalene Church Masses

- April 2015**
 - ❖ 10-12 -- Rachel's Vineyard Retreat

- May 2015**
 - ❖ 16-17 – Mary Our Queen Masses
 - ❖ 21 -- Golf Tournament sponsored by St. Stephen the Martyr Knights of Columbus



Pictured left to right: Magda Brady, Jessica Slovensky, Mary Lou Konsin, Ann Heroman, Ursula Wolf.

Mary Lou Konsin, PATH facilitator, opened her home and heart to PATH on February 16th by holding a Valentine Tea, and asked guests to make a donation to PATH rather than bring a hostess gift. PATH was richly blessed by many generous donations and a lovely gathering!





I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do.

Helen Keller



Vendors chat with shoppers at the 2015 Artsy Market, PATH fundraiser organized by Women of St. Jude in March.

Thank you for being the pioneer in all of this. Without you we would all still be floundering, drunken drug addicts with cold hearts and no feelings. We would all still be on the brink of insanity (oh, I still am) with no excuses for our crude behavior and poor choices in wardrobe, handbags, and men.

Excerpt from a letter to Mary Ann from Jody Duffy, PATH facilitator

PATH would like to thank the following groups for their financial support in 2014:

- ❖ The Archdiocese of Atlanta
- ❖ The Catholic Foundation of North Georgia
- ❖ Cathedral of Christ the King
- ❖ Holy Trinity Church
- ❖ Kindred Spirits
- ❖ Holy Family's Knights of Columbus
- ❖ Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church
- ❖ St. Anna Church
- ❖ St. Francis of Assisi Church
- ❖ St. Jude the Apostle Catholic Church
- ❖ St. Michael Church in Gainesville
- ❖ St. Monica Church
- ❖ St. Monica's Knights of Columbus
- ❖ St. Peter Chanel Church
- ❖ St. Peter Claver Church
- ❖ St. Stephen the Martyr Church
- ❖ St. Stephen's Knights of Columbus
- ❖ St. Thomas More Church
- ❖ Transfiguration Church
- ❖ Women of St. Jude
- ❖ All who attended and donated to the annual PATH Dinner
- ❖ All other supporters, our quiet "Simons of Cyrene," who help hurting men and women carry their crosses.

There is no
greater
agony
than bearing
an untold
story
inside you.
Maya Angelou