

My Dear Children, Daddy is very Sorry...



Every year, about ten thousand or one in four pregnancies in Singapore are terminated through abortion. Behind every termination of pregnancy, lies not only a woman, but also a man. The emotional and spiritual chaos one can experience after an abortion is very real. It affects men, too, in a deep way.

I should know. It has affected me.

I don't remember too much of my childhood. Perhaps that's because I chose not to remember. Maybe there was nothing to be proud of. Or perhaps it is due to the lack of self-esteem – of not being the person I truly want to be.

As a cradle Catholic I attended Mass on most Sundays, serving as an altar boy. There was also a youth group that I was involved in. I also tried to help whenever help was needed in and around church. Nevertheless, like many of my peers, God was for me somebody whom we, perhaps, give lip service to usually on

Sundays. Getting to truly know Him and being in a relationship with Him was something I did not really understand... or cared for.

That did not help me at all in my moral life. Not knowing how to differentiate between right and wrong, I had to learn lessons the hard way.

In my early thirties I experienced relationship breakdowns. Even though it was very much my fault, I did not know how to handle it. My state of mind was such that my family, relatives and friends were completely at a loss on how to help me see the error of my ways. It was a trying time for them. But I know that there were many who prayed for me. Looking back, I am very grateful for their prayers and support.

My promiscuous behaviour led to my downfall – I was the cause of two abortions. I was in relationships that did not work out. So abortion was the

way to go or so I thought. I just agreed with both decisions and did not think much about them. After all, it was legal. It never struck my conscience at that time to realise that the unborn child is a living being.

Nature has a way of getting back at you. My life slowly went into a spiral. I ended up on medication and was given light duties for a year. I did not know at first but looking back now, I realise that my casual attitude to both abortions was a contributing factor to the chaos that was engulfing my life. Yet I continued to fool myself into thinking that things were still pretty normal.

Nevertheless this gnawing sense of meaninglessness continued to prompt me to search deep within myself for who I am and the meaning of life.

It was 1986. I had the opportunity to be in Paris in the course of my work and the thought of Lourdes came to

my mind so I made a decision to visit the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes; I prayed desperately. I recalled then that I cried out in prayer and was filled with anguish. This I believe was my turning point but it was a “long and winding road” ahead for me. I begin to be aware that God was always there watching and helping me in my struggles in life. I begin to go for regular confession and attended weekday Masses. I also saw the need for retreats and healing sessions. Nevertheless, it was very tiring and many times I thought of giving up especially in prayer and not bother how I live my life. God gave me the grace of perseverance.

I believe it was God who was leading me to attend the Rachel's Vineyard post abortion healing retreat organised by Family Life Society. My off-days coincided very nicely with the dates of the weekend retreat.

During the retreat, we were invited to

recall our past experiences leading to our decision to be involved in abortion. Recalling the past was very painful but it brought a lot of healing. Something “clicked” for me. I had not grieved properly for my lost children. I realised that my experience was like losing loved ones in an air-crash and not recovering their bodies. Worst, I had not properly asked them to forgive me.

I wrote two letters to my unborn children during the retreat that I hope to share. I hope and pray that they may inspire others to realise that if you have gone through an abortion or if you were involved in pushing somebody to get an abortion, you, too, can experience the deep forgiveness and healing that I had experienced at the Rachel's Vineyard retreat.

May God be praised now and forever!

“John” (not his real name,) attended the recent inaugural Rachel's Vineyard post-abortion healing retreat in Singapore.

Our services

- Beginning Experience (BE)
- Catholic Engaged Encounter (CEE)
- CHOICE
- Couples for Christ (CFC)
- Couple Empowerment Programme (CEP)
- Individual, Family & Marital Counselling
- Joyful Parenting (JP)
- Life Sparks
- Marriage Encounter (ME)
- Marriage Preparation Course (MPC)
- Natural Family Planning (NFP)
- Retrouvaille
- Pregnancy Crisis Service (PCS)
- School Family Education (SFE)
- The Celebration of Life Programme (COL)

Letter to my Daughter

Dearest Patricia,

I would like to express my love to you. I do regret that I was not able to show it. I was young then and very care-free; not knowing what was right and wrong.

However, this does not mean that I am excusing myself of all my responsibilities.

I know you would have forgiven me and that you are with Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please pray for me that I will continue to live this path of righteousness especially so that we can meet. Within my innermost being I want to attain eternal life in Heaven.

I have an adopted son and am trying my best to bring him up living as how Jesus Christ would like us to.

I am struggling to be a true disciple and wishing that I could help others along this journey of life realizing that God loves us very much and would like us to be with Him.

With all my love, dad

P.S. I would like you to know that I'm sure mummy loves you too.

Letter to my Son

Dearest Michael,

Truly I cannot recall much about you. Maybe it was because I just wanted to forget everything during that time. I must have gone through too much anxiety and stress that I had a nervous breakdown.

It was all my doing and I sincerely apologize for the pain and anguish I caused you.

It was not mummy's fault but mine. So please forgive her. I ask for your forgiveness as well.

Just as I had written to your sister, Patricia, to pray for me, I also ask for your prayers.

I sought healing and I have been living a committed life towards my present family seeking guidance from God daily: reaching out to others as well as helping them in their journey to live righteously filled with love.

The retreat (Rachel's Vineyard) that I am attending presently, helped me not to deny the existence of the two of you but to acknowledge that you both are truly alive and in Heaven.

I love you, dad.

Rachel's Vineyard – A Post-Abortion Healing Retreat

A Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreat is a beautiful opportunity for both men and women who have struggled with emotional or spiritual pain of an abortion to experience the mercy and compassion of God. It is an opportunity to release repressed feelings of anger, shame, guilt, and grief in a private and comforting environment.

The weekend will help your spirit find a voice; transform the pain of the past into love and hope. Rachel's Vineyard can help you begin your healing process.

Our next weekend retreat is from Friday, October 29 to Sunday, 31 October 2010.

For more information on how to register for the retreat, please contact Rose Boon at 9818 5102 or email rachelvineyard@familylife.sg



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If you have a personal story to share on family matters or values, email to susie@familylife.sg