

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2009

Total Cost of Abortion



Dear Parish Faithful & Friends in Christ,

I am browsing through the newest edition of Salvo, a journal with a very contemporary look and feel, though as an offshoot of Touchstone, it is something of a young adult's version of that journal's traditional Christianity. The articles are geared toward offering Christian responses to contemporary social and moral issues. The new issue contains an article by Terrell Clemmons, entitled "Roe v. Women - Pro "Choice" Clearly Harms Those It Claims to Help." The over-all intent of the article is to make the point that after thirty-six years of living under Roe v. Wade, studies are now revealing the traumatic after-effects of abortion on women. As an example, a certain Dr. Priscilla Coleman, research psychologist at Bowling State University, conducted a study of women and their post-abortion lives. In the Journal of Psychiatric Research in 2008, she drew this conclusion:

Abortion was found to be related to an increased risk for a variety of mental health problems (panic attacks, panic disorder, agoraphobia, PTSD, bipolar disorder, major depression with and without hierarchy), substance abuse disorders after statistical controls were instituted for a wide range of personal, situational, and demographic variables.

Clemmons writes further on in the article:

In contrast to grief following natural miscarriages or other death of a child, interviews and surveys show that feelings of distress and regret over abortion tend to increase, rather than decrease, over time. So common are these symptoms in post-abortion women that the syndrome has been given a name: Post Abortion Syndrome, or PASS.

Turning one more time to Dr. Coleman, Clemmons quotes her as concluding:

The scientific evidence is now strong and compelling. Abortion poses more risks to women than giving birth.

A very revealing - and poignant - part of the article is subtitled "Choice, Coercion & Desperation." Here Clemmons touches on an issue that is not given that much attention - the pressures put upon a woman to have an abortion, even though she is not so inclined. She turns to a David C. Reardon, Ph.D, who began research in this field as early as 1983. He is now considered "an internationally known expert of the subject." In a work entitled Making Abortion Rare: A Healing Strategy for a Divided Nation, Reardon writes that: "It is common knowledge that abortion often suits lovers and parents more than pregnant women themselves." And further: "It takes no leap of imagination to understand how these other persons often pressure, badger, and blackmail a woman into accepting an unwanted 'safe and legal' abortion because it will be 'best for everyone'." Clemmons even cites a "prominent abortion proponent," ethicist Daniel Callahan, who concedes: "That men have long coerced women into unwanted abortion when it suits their purposes is well-known but rarely mentioned."

Most Orthodox Christians are familiar with the prolific writer and speaker, Frederica Mathewes-Green. Clemmons includes some of her observations - based on her talks throughout the country with various women - about the reluctance of many women to abort their children:

The core reason I heard was, "I had the abortion because someone I loved told me to." Again and again, I learned that women had abortions because they felt abandoned, they felt isolated and afraid. As one woman said, "I felt like everyone would support me if I had the abortion, but if I had the baby I'd be alone.... I felt like I didn't have a choice. If only one person had stood by me, even a stranger, I would have had that baby."

No one wants an abortion as she wants an ice-cream cone or a Porsche. She wants an abortion as an animal, caught in a trap, wants to gnaw off its own leg.

At this point in a woman's life, as Clemmons points out "the abortion industry leaps to her side." She continues with the following description of one of our nation's most prominent "helpers:"

Planned Parenthood, the abortion industry leader, promotes itself as a provider of "vital reproductive health care, sex education, and information to millions of women, men, and young people worldwide." It's true that Planned Parenthood provides "services" other than abortion. A shrewd marketer, it conducts sex-ed classes and dispenses birth-control information and products. When the sex-ed succeeds and the birth control fails, Planned Parenthood is already in the picture, offering, like a fairy godmother, to make it all go away.

A former (abortion) counselor, Debra Henry wrote this of her experience in that field:

We were told to find the woman's weakness and work on it. The women were never given any alternatives. They were told how much trouble it was to have a baby.

Money has a good deal to do with it. For those who like statistics, we read the following:

According to a June 23, 2008 Wall Street Journal article, Planned Parenthood, which performs about 20 percent of the abortions in the United States, reported a record \$1 billion in annual revenue in a recent financial report.

A kind of summation of the article's intent, to show that women suffer from having abortions, is emphatically expressed by Ellie Dillion, of Missouri Right to Life:

Abortion is not a true "choice" for a woman; it is an act of despair. The psychological impact of abortion is so profound because women are acting against their maternal instincts and consciences. They react with guilt, anger, depression, substance abuse and suicide. The only people who are empowered are men. They can have sex without any responsibility to their partner or their unborn children.

And then Terrell Clemmons concludes her article with these thoughts:

To pit the right of prospective mothers against the rights of their unborn children is to begin the discussion with a false presumption - namely, that the interests of the two parties are at odds with one another. They are not. To harm the child is to harm the mother, and vice versa.

The summary above is taken from [Salvo Issue 10 autumn 2009](#).

Fr. Steven