



Christian Voices for Life

Weekly Pro-Life

Education

Prayer

Action

This week's Topic: Forgotten Fathers



Education: Although still unknown to much of the general public, the word that women suffer from their abortions is slowly being spread. Less is being said about the effect of abortion on men. Men are less likely to openly express negative feelings, and may express their grief in anger, aggressiveness, and silence.¹ One study showed, however, that 4 out of 10 postabortive men suffered symptoms of chronic post-traumatic stress disorder, occurring on average 15 years after the abortion.² Since mothers can abort without the permission or even knowledge of the father, some fathers grieve for children they wanted, feeling painfully powerless. Others suffer guilt and remorse over pressuring the mother

to abort or abandoning her, not providing the support she needed to choose life. Some men mistakenly try to please their partners by not objecting to the possibility of abortion. But saying "You are free to kill our child" does not convey true love for either mother or child. Some men become depressed or anxious, others compulsive and controlling. Still others become enraged. Denial of grief can lead to avoidance of serious, loving relationships.

1. Coyle, C. (2007). Men and abortion: A review of empirical reports concerning the impact of abortion on men. *Internet Journal of Mental Health*. 3:2. www.ispub.com/ostia/index.php?xmlFilePath=journals/ijmh/vol3n2/abortion.xml
2. Rue, V., Coyle, C. & Coleman, P. (2007) Men and abortion: preliminary results from a web-based survey. Presented at the First International Conference on Men and Abortion: Reclaiming Fatherhood, San Francisco (Proceedings to be published.).



Prayer: Dear Father God, please have mercy on men who have lost children to abortion. Whatever their role may have been in the abortion, they have lost a child. Help them to be honest with themselves and to express their feelings in healthy ways. Help them to find healing and be able to participate in truly loving relationships.

Please help all men to look to you for the strength and wisdom to be good fathers to their children, and to freely express their love for them. Help fathers in crisis pregnancies to have the wisdom and strength to accept their responsibilities and show their love for both mother and child by strongly encouraging the choice for life.



Action: Take any opportunity you may have to speak to young men about the wonderful rewards as well as the serious responsibility of fatherhood. If you suspect that a male friend may be suffering from a past abortion, mention to him that you have learned how men can suffer after abortion and that confidential help is available to help men work through their grief. For a national abortion recovery care directory, see:

<http://www.abortionrecovery.org/recovery/CAREdirectory/tabid/234/Default.aspx>