

Abortion - A Nation in Crisis

This year, we've received a constant, daily barrage of figures on the news, how many people have caught coronavirus, how many are in hospital, or have died. Years ago there would have been a large amount of frightening, infectious diseases around and without antibiotics and vaccines many would have been fatal. People died far younger and infant mortality was much higher, in fact the sort of country we live in today would have seemed something wonderful to aspire to, something to dream of and hope for. Yet what does our society do? We turn on our most vulnerable. Now here we are, on the eve of the 53rd anniversary of legalised abortion in the UK, commemorating **the loss of 9,560,403 lives.** 9,560,403 lives purposefully destroyed and as many women and families permanently damaged.

Indeed, since the abortion act was passed on October 27th 1967 and implemented in April 1968, the figures in the UK for abortions in the first six months of this year have been the highest ever. Yet the standard of care for women has reached a new low. Even the World Health Organisation, who cynically advocate abortion as the 'right' of every women, say that: 'An abortion is unsafe when it is carried out either by a person lacking the necessary skills or in an environment that does not conform to minimal medical standards, or both.' so why has this country deemed it acceptable to allow women to have 'DIY' home abortions, alone, from which two women have already died? It also states that 'every individual has the right to decide . . . without discrimination, coercion and violence – the number, spacing and timing of their children'. Those individual's rights obviously don't extend to fathers who desperately want to keep a baby their wife or partner aborts, or to women who feel bullied and threatened to have an abortion by partners or husbands and coerced by family. Volunteers outside abortion clinics have provided a lifeline to women such as this and those in other distressing situations, through conversation, practical help, leaflets and prayer, but this too is now under threat as, under the false guise for care and concern, other groups are joining with abortion providers in the call for 'buffer zones' which will prevent these volunteers from standing anywhere near the entrance.

These 'buffer zones' have already happened at three UK clinics, two in London and more recently, one in Manchester. Abortion providers have written to the current home secretary Pritti Patel, even though the previous home secretary said there was no need for any new legislation, as laws in place were perfectly adequate. Those who have signed the letter include BMA (British Medical Association), RCOM (Royal College of Midwives), Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Women's Aid, Fatherhood Institute, Mumsnet, Doctors for Choice and, most ironically of all, from 'End Violence against Women'! At the same time, alarmingly, there is a push to 'decriminalise' abortion altogether, effectively making it legal on demand up to birth.

Yet it is sometimes said it is darkest before the dawn. There is great hope emerging out of these grim realities. This year there has been more people involved in grassroots prolife work than ever before in the UK including the highest number of 40 Days for Life campaigns. This year's online March for Life event 'LifeFest' had over 15,000 people tuning in! If the volunteers for 40 days for life and other groups who minister outside abortion facilities were not making a significant impact on the

abortion industry then why would the abortion centres be so desperate to get 'buffer zones'? If they were not impacting the people they speak to, especially in those last moments at the abortion centres, then why has there been such a huge increase in demand for the abortion reversal pill with more doctors than ever helping women procure this? And if the information, conversations and prayers with and for men and women were not touching their hearts then why are more post abortive women than at any other time accessing 'Rachel's Vineyard' retreats, offering real care, support and healing to men and women struggling to come to terms with their abortion experience? There is a change happening and the tide will turn.

Prayer of course can never be stopped and the work of every individual can, does and will make a difference. How heartening to see the wonderful campaign from Heidi Crowther, a recently married, young woman with downs syndrome who is challenging the law regarding abortion up to birth for people with downs syndrome. She is an amazing example to everyone and with 90 per cent of pregnancies with Down syndrome children now ending in abortion in this country, it is a tragedy that people with such value are so often not treasured.

It is absolutely right that we should feel a just and righteous anger at the figures involved where abortion is concerned over the last 53 years, but in the words of the 4th century philosopher, theologian and Catholic saint, Augustine of Hippo; 'Hope has two daughters. Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are'.

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