

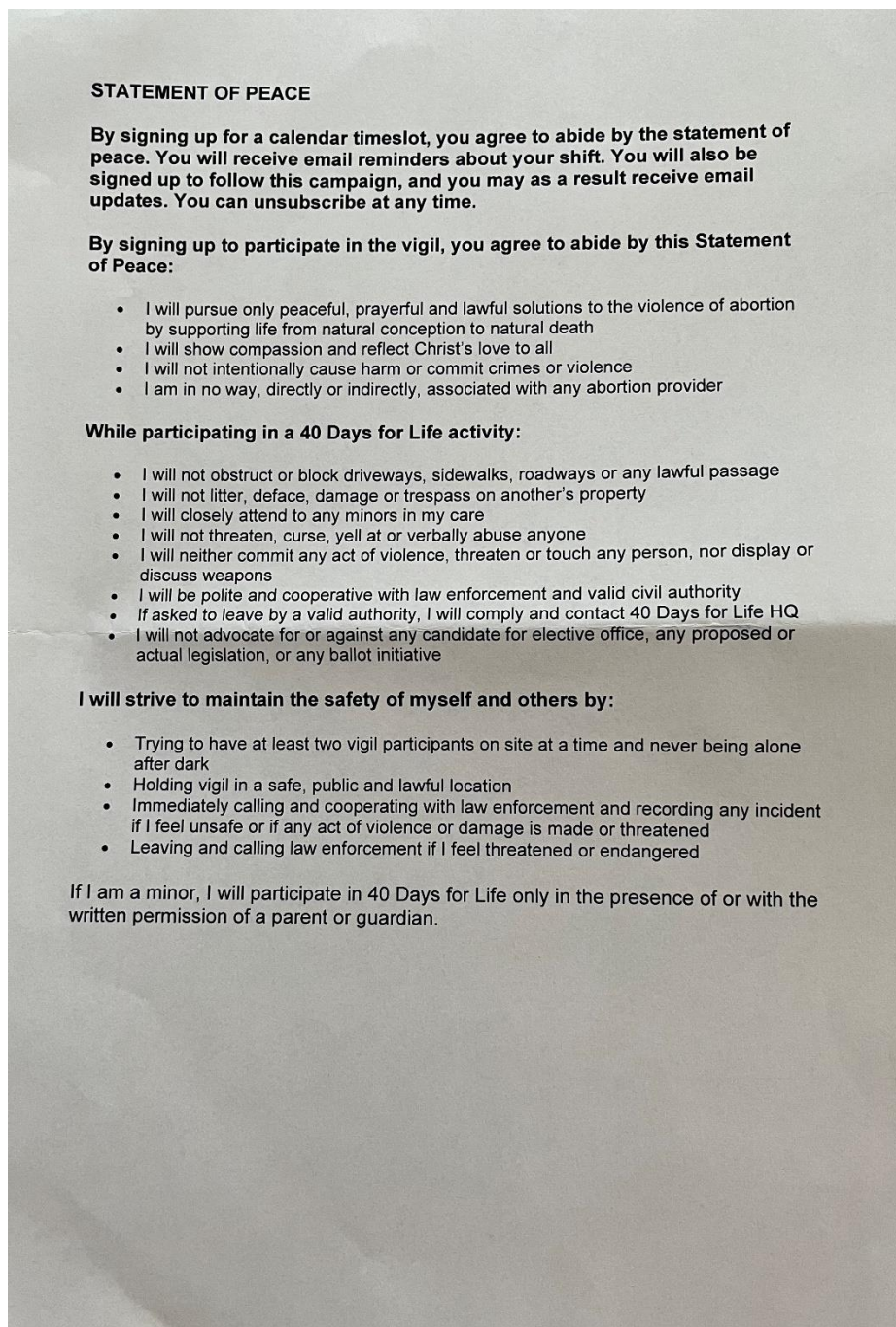
Resources provided by an informal engagement participant on Tuesday 5 March 2024

40 Days for Life – Statement of Peace

The participant noted that all vigil participants must abide by the statement of peace to take part in a vigil and if participants do not do so, they would be asked to leave by the organiser of that particular vigil.

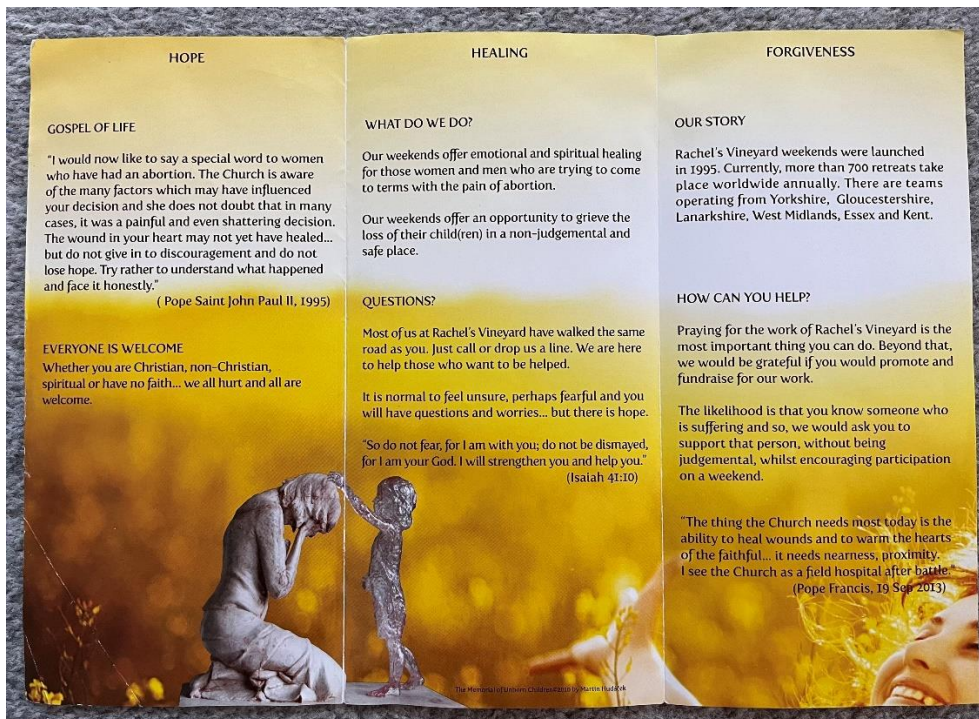
[The statement can be accessed online.](#)

A hard copy is also included below:



The participant provided these leaflets as examples of the literature they distribute at the annual vigil they attend.

Rachel's Vineyard Brochure



My friend has had an abortion - how can I help her

Your friend is walking a lonely painful path. She is coming to terms with the death of her baby, and this means that her heart and mind are in conflict. No matter how the mind rationalises what has happened, the heart continues in pain. She will need to reconcile previous ideas about abortion with the reality of what happened to her and her baby.

Even if you are asked "Do you think I did the right thing?" resist the temptation to reassure - or condemn. Leave it open. It is not helpful to impose judgement one way or the other. It is helpful to allow her to honestly work through her thoughts and feelings. Ask her what she thinks. She might have been very sure before the abortion - she might have been unsure.

Your friend needs and deserves all the help she can get in order to recover. Many women experience depression, suicidal feelings, despair etc. Alcohol or drugs will make these problems worse. Familiarise yourself with the symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder, most commonly exhibited by mothers bereaved by abortion. This will help you see when your friend's behaviour is changing and that they need help to recover.



Post Abortion Stress Syndrome

ptsduk.org

A mother bereaved by abortion will usually experience some or all of the following symptoms without necessarily realising there is a link with the loss of her baby.

- Low self esteem
- Depression
- Guilt
- Grief
- Anger
- Drug/Alcohol abuse
- Eating disorders
- Self harming
- Fear
- Nightmares
- Disconnection
- Struggling with thoughts of death
- Flashbacks
- Anniversary grief
- Sexual dysfunction
- Seeking multiple partners
- Broken relationships
- Difficulty bonding with subsequent children
- Anxiety
- Low self esteem

As with other causes of trauma there is a way to help recovery.

It takes time - weeks, months, even years and decades - for many women to face what has happened. There are steps to assist recovery - it does not need to blight great chunks of your life.



Committed to support all who have been hurt by abortion

www.postabortsupport.com
E-mail: pauline@postabortsupport.com

 PostAbortionSupportforEveryone
 @healingafterabortion
 healingafterabortion

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PASE
Post Abortion Support for Everyone

Abortion is **not** something that can be dealt with lightly and forgotten about.

It will affect you for the rest of your life.

Parents

A new baby doesn't just grow in the mother's womb, it grows in the hearts of both parents. In order to agree to abort our child we first have to let go of its place in our heart, or perhaps never let it live there in the first place.


Only you know the circumstances that surrounded your decision. It may have seemed the best option at the time, but now the knowledge that your baby is dead may make you wonder if it was too high a price to pay.

The father of the baby may have found himself unable to influence the decision being made, or he might even be unaware of the existence of his unborn child until after the abortion. Many men feel confused and devastated after their child has been aborted: their instinct to protect has been thwarted.

A man who perhaps welcomed abortion originally as a 'sensible' option, may only many years later appreciate that it was his son or daughter who died.

The effect on both parents can be traumatic. Or it can be delayed, often covered up by years of denial.

Many women who have an unexpected baby can testify to the joy that baby brings. We who allowed fear to overwhelm us know the saddest words in the English language are 'if only.' But recovery is possible and there is hope, even for us.



There is a path to recovery for men and women

Ignoring your feelings will slow the healing process. It may seem better for now to avoid experiencing your emotions, but they exist whether you're paying attention to them or not. Fight the desire to forget, to pretend nothing happened.

Fathers: your emotions may have been badly damaged as a result of this experience. Do not minimise your distress or seek to mask the pain with distractions.

Mothers: you may be overwhelmed by heartbreak, do not minimise your distress or seek to mask the pain with new and unhealthy relationships.

Parents: it is important to face the truth. This was a real baby even though it was very small. Do not be ashamed by this secret sorrow, there is nothing wrong with you. Your feelings are a natural response to the death of your child.

Talking about how you feel may be difficult, but it is essential in order to recover from any trauma. The support of a kind, caring person who will not impose their ideas, will greatly benefit you. It would have probably been difficult for you to read this leaflet - the memories you try to bury are still alive, the distress is still there.

But many have found there is recovery and healing through our free Recovery Course.

www.postabortsupport.com/recovery

After abortion it is not uncommon to experience intense feelings of shock and disbelief, fear, sadness and helplessness, guilt, anger and shame. These feelings can suddenly overwhelm us, and disappear just as quickly. It can leave us feeling isolated and anxious. Who can understand us when we are so changeable?

These intense feelings and grief are common to many women and men, even those who would deny any spiritual reality. Be encouraged to be open-minded and pray to Jesus for peace. Jesus is someone who is loving enough to understand and powerful enough to help. Jesus will walk with you through the painful days and nights as you slowly recover. He can make sense of the confusion that often takes hold of us.

You can pray:

"Lord Jesus, you know all the circumstances surrounding the death of my baby and the relationship I had with the mother/father. You said you didn't come to condemn, you are called the friend of sinners and I need a friend. Please take my hand and give me your forgiveness and healing. In so many ways I am lost and alone. You are called the Saviour and I trust in You to guide me through these next days. Please give me your peace and show me the way of life."

The Recovery Course

The Recovery Course connects women bereaved by abortion, to recover together and give each other permission to break the secrecy and talk about their experience and feelings in a safe and loving environment. It is a wonderful resource for the church, available for anyone who has suffered the experience of abortion. During the course you can let go of grief and pain, receive the healing and love of God and to share in the blessing of friendship together with others who understand.

Every woman who has an abortion has been lied to, coerced, bullied or persuaded to end the life of her child. This may have happened in the days leading up to the death of the baby, or it may have happened years earlier so that she has been brainwashed to believe that the baby isn't human, isn't alive yet, etc, so she is a willing participant when the decision is made.

In Jesus there is hope, but even after we come to salvation there is still a great need for the support and healing The Recovery course offers. One woman remarked "I feel safe here, no one understands what we have been through, but here we can know and be known, and help each other."