

YEAR OF MERCY

Young Slovakian Sculptor Captures Post-Abortion Pain, Mercy and Forgiveness

By Dan Zeidler

As an art student, Martin Hudáček of Slovakia was moved to create a sculpture to draw attention to the devastation abortion can bring to the woman, and that through the Love and Mercy of God, reconciliation and healing are possible.



Sculptor: Martin Hudáček; born 1984; home: Banska Bystrica, Slovakia

The sculpture shows a woman in great sorrow grieving her abortion. The second figure in the work is the aborted child, presented as a young child, who in a very touching, healing way, comes to the mother, to offer forgiveness.

Martin, who named the work “Memorial for Unborn Children,” said the sculpture also “expresses hope which is given to believers by the One who died on the cross for us, and showed how much He cares about all of us.”

Praised by many as an extremely effective representation of post-abortion trauma, the work sensitively communicates this reality, and draws out many emotions and interpretations.

Dr. Martha Shuping, M.D., a psychiatrist with more than 20 years experience in helping women with abortion recovery, says, "I believe this beautiful image will resonate in the hearts of many women who have had abortions. It illustrates powerfully their experience."

"This presents a very beautiful image of a core component of post abortion healing," comments Kevin Burke, LSW, of Rachel's Vineyard Ministries, "- that the very child that was lost to abortion with God's grace is now instrumental in calling the wounded mother and father to repentance and healing in Christ."

Julie Thomas of Atlanta, who has personally experienced abortion and is now active with the Operation Outcry post-abortion program, commented, “I love that the little girl is not a baby – we often talk about that during our Bible study and for some reason a lot of us believe that when we get to Heaven that our children will be a toddler as the child is here. I also like the child being ‘transparent’ almost angel-like in appearance. The mother appears to be in anguish which is so very real. I love that the child is reaching out to touch the mother's head. I can imagine the mother sensing the touch and believe that she will stand up, taller than before. I believe that this image is very strong and touching, possibly leading to the first step of healing for the mother who has aborted her children.”

A Latin American post-abortive woman, Michelle, who was helped in the healing process by the Proyecto Esperanza (Project Hope) program says the sculpture “is simple...marvelous. I got emotional and I stopped to take the time to look at it...I felt many things...the woman with all her pain being concentrated in her face held in her hands. Shame is also conveyed...And the daughter who blesses her, reaching up to touch her, to me indicates the height of forgiveness, the height of that child's forgiveness, through the love of God. The transparency of the child means she comes from a pure place. It talks to me of the forgiveness we feel after we have worked through the grief... Precious...really precious.”

“I find this a heart-rending sculpture,” says experienced post-abortion retreat leader, Fr. William Kurz, S.J. of Marquette University in Milwaukee. “It’s a message of forgiveness and healing needed by the grieving post-abortive mother even some years after her abortion ... It speaks directly and beautifully both to the intense and profound grief of the mother, and to the dignity of the aborted baby.”

Several people interviewed for this article stressed that promoting this powerful image should also be accompanied by referral possibilities for anyone who senses they need help and reconciliation. For that reason, it is recommended that contact information be included for programs such as Project Rachel (www.hopeafterabortion.org) and Rachel's Vineyard (www.rachelsvineyard.org)

Marek Hudáček, brother of Martin, says both he and his brother were extremely surprised by the positive reactions from all over the world to the sculpture, “We did not expect it... The main intention of my brother to do the sculpture was not to be famous, but to speak about the important value of human life and the necessity to protect it from conception.”

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