

VINE AND BRANCHES

The Monthly e-Newsletter of Rachel's Vineyard Ministries
February 2006

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Rachel's Vineyard is on the web at: www.rachelsvineyard.org
Our national toll-free hotline is (877) HOPE-4-ME.
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Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats for emotional and spiritual healing after abortion are held internationally. Rachel's Vineyard welcomes, women, men, couples, grandparents and abortion providers. Our retreats are held in both Catholic and Interdenominational settings. Rachel's Vineyard Ministries is a resource for clinical training, education, and healing models.

Rachel's Vineyard is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. All contributions are tax deductible. We work in partnership with Priests for Life and Gospel of Life Ministries.

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Help us spread the Good News! Pass along this newsletter to friends and colleagues. If you are receiving this newsletter because a friend forwarded it to you, details on subscribing (or unsubscribing) appear at the end.

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**Bridgeport's First Spanish Rachel's Vineyard Retreat:
A Blessed Success**

By Rachel Torres O'Leary

In October 2005, I coordinated the first Spanish Rachel's Vineyard Retreat in the Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut. The process began 2 years ago, when I attended the Rachel's Vineyard retreat in English. Upon completing my retreat, I embarked upon a journey of healing and restoration after over 15 years of misery. Deciding to help others, especially in the Latino community, was all part of God's plan.

Leading up to the Spanish retreat, I was filled with joy and anticipation of the Lord's work. Coordinating this effort was no easy venture, since I have three small children, under 5. Yet a priest once told me, "God does not call the equipped, He equips the called" and with that encouragement I knew everything would be led by God. With my husband's support and endless confirmations, I knew this was indeed God's will.

In a promotional effort, I wrote a letter to all of the Spanish-speaking priests in the diocese explaining the mission of the ministry and offering to give a testimony at their parishes. I was invited to speak at over half of the churches in our diocese. In addition, *The Fairfield County Catholic*, (our diocesan newspaper), also wrote an article promoting the ministry and the upcoming weekend retreat.

The weekend arrived and what a blessing this group of men and women turned out to be! The size of the group encouraged intimate bonding. When they entered the retreat center on Friday evening, it was apparent that they were burdened with guilt, pain, and unforgiveness. By God's grace, their courageous hearts persevered and they were all transformed by the unconditional love and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. By Sunday morning they all radiated His peace. We witnessed a physical change in their mind, body, and spirit.

The weekend was also successful because of the faith-filled retreat team. Our two priests, therapist, nun and married couple were all instrumental in leading the participants to experience the mercy and forgiveness of our Lord. Latinos also have a passion for music and food, and both our music ministry and kitchen team were anointed in these areas. Finally, my mentor Clarissa Cincotta, did an outstanding job ensuring this first retreat proceeded smoothly.

Even with all these blessings there were some difficulties that challenged me to grow. The first was when as I listened to the story of an older woman, I found myself looking into the eyes of my own mother. As she poured out her heart about her grief, I developed a tremendous compassion for all that my Mom had endured. It took great effort not to lose my composure and when I finally surrendered to tears, I felt as if I had failed as a leader. After we took a break I asked my spiritual director for counsel. "Am I seen as a weak leader for crying?" He lovingly told me that we were all crying in that room and that in showing emotion I united my suffering with that of the retreatant. I was grieving along with her as Christ does with us in our pain. It shows the participants that we too are touched by their stories, and in that sacred space, it is safe to bear each other's burdens. He said, "when you stop crying that's when you may need to stop the ministry." Those words encouraged me with such a bold stoutheartedness that I was doing God's will.

I was amazed at how smoothly the entire weekend progressed. We had the usual first time challenges; balancing time during the sharing of stories, knowing when to take breaks, and fumbling with music tapes. But as I look back I found these "mishaps" to be miniscule compared to the work of God this weekend. What is most important is that the participants were renewed and restored through the retreat process. Now they can embark on a new journey of hope and healing in our Lord Jesus Christ and hopefully encourage other post-abortive Latinos to do the same.

Rachel Torres O'Leary *Rachel is a former high school history teacher and has a passion for reading and writing. She can be reached at torresoleary@yahoo.com*

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"I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy."

Rabindranath Tagore

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A Note from the Pastoral Director

The Annual March for Life this year was perhaps the best ever! Rachel’s Vineyard was highlighted in many ways, especially by the attention given to it by the EWTN broadcast of the March. EWTN is the largest religious broadcasting network in the world, reaching literally hundreds of millions of people.

I also had the opportunity to reference Rachel’s Vineyard in the United States Senate, where I preached at the annual National Memorial for the Pre-born and their Mothers and Fathers. This service was held in one of the most prestigious rooms on Capitol Hill, the Senate Caucus Room, and was attended by clergy from many denominations, and activists from across the country. It is sponsored by the National Pro-life Religious Council, of which I serve as President.

The fact that the memorial is for the mothers and fathers of the children, as well as for the children themselves, accents the importance of the work of Rachel’s Vineyard. And we are gaining the ear of the key lawmakers in the nation. One of the pro-life movement’s best friends, Senator Sam Brownback, was honored during this year’s memorial. He has spoken to me many times about how important he believes the work of post-abortion healing is, and often reassures me of his prayers for the women and men to whom we minister.

Let us pray that the Holy Spirit reinforce the words that have gone out in these recent days about this special ministry!

Fr. Frank Pavone
National Director, Priests for Life
Pastoral Director and Chairman of the Board, Rachel’s Vineyard

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Help Us Change the World

The Rachel's Vineyard Website is THE place that most folks learn about our ministry and one of the leading referral sources for the Rachel’s Vineyard retreat sites across the United States and around the world. Our website is updated daily, linking people needing help to an incredible powerhouse of healing weekends.

When you first meet someone, isn't it important to make a good first impression? More practically, it is important that a website is attractive, easy to use and navigate, and has a good traffic pattern leading to it’s door. It can make the difference between someone opening the door and leaving...or someone opening the door, staying awhile, and getting the help and healing they need.

Here at Rachel's Vineyard we have a very small staff of 4 and a very lean and mean budget. This is the most important need of Rachel's Vineyard Ministries at this time...but we don't have the funds right now to upgrade our website. We are looking to raise \$15,000.00 to hire a top notch professional who can help us highlight the important resources of Rachel’s Vineyard and create the capacity to produce on-line training and education services and audio classes to empower people throughout the world to engage in this important work of healing and to learn about the impact of abortion on mental, emotional, relational and spiritual health.

This is one of the most exciting things that you could contribute to because our website touches so many persons—well over a million hits a year, averaging 150 thousand hits each month. That's a lot of bang for your buck! With the hundreds of Rachel's Vineyard Retreats taking place, we want to make sure people out there have the opportunity to experience a life-changing weekend that puts them on the path to wholeness and life!

Please consider supporting our efforts with your prayers and assist us by sending a tax-deductible donation of \$1,000...\$500...\$100...or even \$25 to help us upgrade our website. Click here: <http://www.rachelsvineyard.org/support/support.htm> to contribute via credit card or PayPal or send an e-mail directly to me <mailto:t.burke@rachelsvineyard.org> and I will forward a postage-paid envelope or you can send a donation directly to:

Rachel's Vineyard Ministries
800 N. Henderson Road
King of Prussia, Pa. 19406.

Please give what you can and if you know a donor who would love this project, please ask them to help us change the world!

With gratitude,
Theresa Burke, Ph.D.

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Harvesting Voices of Hope

by Dave Dowd

Blown by the wind, her jet-black hair so flowed,
Her pretty pixie face sparkled and glowed.
Sitting on a couch, engaged in her thought
you wouldn't think her insides were so taut.

Speaking of her kids and volunteering
you're caught up in her sheer persevering.
Like a woman who you might be extolling.....
If you knew, you would be consoling.

He was so familiar and so warm to pull tight.
Close my eyes...the dance of romance..... so right.
In the morning, birds singing on light spring air.
A pregnancy test..... she sinks in despair.

He does the thing now expected of him.
Their act is not just done on a whim.
Marching past people praying and pleading..
They shut down their minds and stop believing.

Years now pass but the ache never leaves.
She cannot forget a life she conceives.
Waking up, she'd sit up and speak to her child...
And fall back bitterly, unreconciled.

And then Rachel's Vineyard's work crossed her path.
She'd suffered through her private aftermath.
She'd searched cemeteries for her lost soul.
In her dreams, she'd see her prancing sweet foal.

In thunder and lightning inside her mind...
God sought with His love, her soul to find...
The music she heard, she could not deny.
She had to give Rachel's Vineyard a try.

She's your neighbor sitting beside in a pew.
1/3 of the ladies are secretly blue.
Mother Mary looks upon them with love.
Sun's rays are streaming from heaven above.

At the next crash of thunder join me in prayer.
The song of dear Rachel might ease the despair.
And heal the broken soul of a woman you know.
Pray the thunder might touch where love could grow.

And then beg for rain, the rain of the voices
whose suffering bleeds from all the wrong choices
Of mothers and fathers deceived and denied...
Truth.
Lightning strike, raise these voices... elovetrified.

Dave Dowd writes from Boston, Massachusetts.
He can be reached at Mrbudds533@cs.com

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BOOK OF THE MONTH

Waiting for the World to End

By Nicole Hunter –

A novel about abortion and faith in America.

Thomas Olsen is hiding a devastating secret. He is the chairman of the English department and basketball coach at an Indiana High School. Despite his popularity, he cannot stop feeling guilty and lonely about the secret that has been haunting him for so many years. He develops a father-son bond with Ben, one of his students and players. He falls in love with Ben's mother and together they try to help him get some restoration of his life until something changes the course of all their futures.

To order a copy of *Waiting for the World to End*, or if you'd like more information, visit www.nicolehunterbooks.com

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Endurance is your steadfast ability to continue despite hardship.

Risk is moving beyond your previously accepted limits.

Opportunity is the discovery of possibility.

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Upcoming Clinical Training and Speaking Engagements

- March 3 Jacksonville, Florida**
Clinical Training for 6.5 CE credits
Contact: [Donna Augustine](#) 904 745-7719
(Kevin and Theresa will be presenting)
- March 9-10 New Orleans, Louisiana**
Magnificat Breakfast
Contact: Helen Hughes 504 837 6474
Sponsor: Woman's New Life Center
- March 20-22 From Grief to Grace - Reclaiming the Gift of Sexuality**
A new retreat model for those who have been victims of sexual abuse
Contact: [Katie](#) 610 354 0555
Malvern Retreat House, Pennsylvania
Facilitated by Theresa & Kevin Burke
- March 23-24 Facilitator Training - From Grief to Grace**
Malvern Retreat House, Pennsylvania
Contact: [Katie](#) 610 354 0555
- March 25 Baltimore, Maryland**
Sponsor: Archdiocese of Baltimore, Respect Life Conference
Contact: [Denise Douglas](#) 410 354 6900
(Kevin and Theresa will be presenting)
- April 1 Tri State Post Abortion Conference: New York**
Sponsored by: The Family Life Office of the Archdiocese of New York
Lumina, and the Westchester/Putnam Vicariate for Life.
Keynotes: Theresa Burke, Rachel's Vineyard Ministries
Georgette Forney - Silent No More Awareness Campaign
Contact: [Theresa Bonapartis](#) - 877-586-4621
- April 7 Diocese of Newark Post- Abortion Training Day**
Contact: Respect Life Office - [Michelle Krystofik](#) (732) 388-8211
Presenters: Theresa and Kevin Burke; Fr. Mike Mannion
- April 21 Clergy Training Day, Wisconsin**
Presenters: Theresa & Kevin Burke; Fr. Frank Pavone; Leslie Graves; Vicki Thorn
- April 22 Statewide Pro-Life Wisconsin Conference**
Contact: [Ron Faust](#) 608-221-4281 ext 229
Dells, Wisconsin

April 27-28 2 Day Training Conference, Jamestown, North Dakota
Post-Abortion Care for Professionals and Healing for Sexual Abuse
CEU credits available
Presenter: Theresa Burke, Ph.D.
Sponsor: Diocese of Fargo
Contact: [Rachelle Sauvageau](mailto:Rachelle.Sauvageau@dioceseoffargo.org) 701-356-791

May 5 Rachel's Vineyard Fundraising Event
West Chester, Pennsylvania
Contact Katie Katie@rachelsvineyard.org (610) 354-0555
Keynote: Fr. Frank Pavone with Theresa and Kevin Burke

May 8 Bridgeport, Connecticut
Full Day Clinical Training for CE Credit
Host: Diocese of Bridgeport
Contact: [Clarissa Cincotta](mailto:Clarissa.Cincotta@dioceseofbridgeport.org) 203 218 0291
(Theresa and Kevin will be presenting)

May 17-20 Hearthbeat International Conference, Orlando, Florida
www.hearthbeatinternational.org/2006_Conference_update.htm
35th Annual Conference

May 26-28 University of Notre Dame, Indiana
Marian Conference 25th Anniversary
Contact: maryconference@hotmail.com (574) 288-8777
(Theresa Burke will be presenting)

July 18-22 Ramah International Conference, Kansas City, Kansas
Contact: Sydna Masse 941-473-2188 Sydna@aol.com
<http://www.ramahinternational.org>

July 24-26 From Grief to Grace - Reclaiming the Gift of Sexuality
A new retreat model for those who have been victims of sexual abuse
Contact: [Katie](mailto:Katie@malvernretreat.com) 610 354 0555
Malvern Retreat House, Pennsylvania

July 27-28 Facilitator Training - From Grief to Grace
Malvern Retreat House, Pennsylvania
Contact: [Katie](mailto:Katie@malvernretreat.com) 610 354 0555

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Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Schedule (Feb – March 2006)

February 3-5, 2006 -- Cedar Falls, Iowa
Contact: [Maria Shores](mailto:Maria.Shores@cedarfallsretreat.com) 319 530 2597 (mobile)

February 3-5, 2006 -- Los Angeles, California
Contact: [Christine Lowe](mailto:Christine.Lowe@rachelsvineyard.com) 866 2 RACHEL
Contact: [Rachel's Vineyard Los Angeles](http://www.rachelsvineyard.com/losangeles)

February 3-5, 2006 -- Bowling Green, Kentucky
Contact: [Fr. Ben Cameron](#) 270 542 4146 ext 337

February 3-5, 2006 -- Belfast, Northern Ireland
Note: Catholic Retreat
Contact: [Bernadette](#) 087 859 2877
Contact: [Marionette Morrison](#) 02890 799967

February 3-5, 2006 -- Steubenville, Ohio
Contact: [Sharon Maedke](#) 740-283-3636

February 3-5, 2006 -- Perth, Western Australia
Contact: [Clare Pike](#) 61 8 9375 2029

February 3-5, 2006 -- Tampa, Florida
Contact: [Emma Boe](#) 813 631 4370
Retreat Location: Clearwater, Marian Servants of Our Lady of Divine Providence

February 10-12, 2006 -- Longbranch, Washington
Contact: [Valerie Jacobs](#) 800 822 HOPE

February 10-12, 2006 -- San Jose, California
Contact [Mary Peter](#) 408 426 7343 or 888 467 3790

February 10-12, 2006-- Melbourne, Australia
Note: Interdenominational
Contact: [Anne Neville](#) 61 3 9870 7044

February 10-12, 2006 -- Casper, Wyoming
Contact: [Sharie Cundall](#) 877-237-0662
Local host: Diocese of Cheyene

February 10-12, 2006 -- Cork City, Ireland
Contact: [Bernadette](#) 087 859 2877
Contact: Dr. Rita O'Connor 061 468 570

February 10-12, 2006 -- Peoria, Illinois
Local Host: King's House Retreat Center in Henry, IL
Contact: [Colleen Harmon](#) 815 303 1184
Contact: [Jeanne Whalen](#) 309 671 1550 or 1 800 367 0702

February 17-19, 2006 -- Rockford, Illinois
Contact: [Catherine Rennert](#) 815 968 1157
Note: Interdenominational retreat
Location: Stronghold Retreat and Conference Center in Oregon, Illinois

February 17-19, 2006 -- Long Island / Uniondale, New York
Contact: [Frank and Lorraine Gariboldi](#) 516 523 0586

February 17-19, 2006 -- Fresno, California
Contact: [Jennifer Butcher](#) 877 629 6626

February 17-19, 2006 -- Portland, Oregon
Contact: [Lori Eckstine](#) 800 249 8074 or 541 521 5186

February 17-19, 2006 -- Phoenix, Arizona
Contact: [Margarita Chong](#) 480 820-3593
Contact: [Dianna Contreras](#) 480 966 1902 ext 103

February 17-19, 2006 -- Dallas (Español), Texas
Contactar: [Aurora](#) 972 679 4760

February 24-26, 2006 -- St. Paul, Minnesota
Contact: [Debbi Stocco](#) 952 928 1697 or 651 206 8926
Note: Interdenominational

February 24-26, 2006 -- Corpus Christi, Texas
Contact: [Desda](#) 361 949 1251
Contact: [Fr. Tom Goodwin](#) 361 882 7912

February 24-26, 2006 -- North Providence, Rhode Island
Local host: Rachel Vineyard Retreats of Southern New England
Contact: [Sheila Kuzmic](#) 401 348 8874
Contact: [Joan Pendergast](#) 401-861-2069
Contact: [Gail Picard](#) 401-447-3279

February 24-26, 2006 -- Denver, Colorado
Contact: [Edith Gutierrez](#) 303 682 9185
Contact: [Diane Svoboda](#) 303 359 3289

February 24-26, 2006 -- Hartford City, Indiana
Local host: Family Life Ministries, Diocese of Lafayette in Indiana
Contact: [Jennie Hack](#) 765 477 7706 or 1 877 522 3300

March 3-5, 2006 -- Romeoville, Illinois
Local host: Joliet Diocesan Life Office
Contact: [Kay Corcoran](#) 815 838 7171

March 3-5, 2006 -- Hays, Kansas
Contact: [Donetta Robben](#) 785 623 7531

March 3-5, 2006 -- Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Contact: [Susan Lepak](#) 405 721 5651 ext 107

March 3-5, 2006 -- Juneau, Alaska
Contact: [Mary Brooks](#) 907 523 1025
Contact: Fr. Tony Dummer 907 789 2648

March 3-5, 2006 -- Prescott Valley, Arizona
Contact: [Diane](#) 928 775 4500

Living Water Retreat Center, Cornville, AZ

March 3-5, 2006 -- Sonoma County, California
Local host: After the Choice, Diocese of Oakland
Contact: [Monika](#) 510 267 8335

March 3-5, 2006 -- Washington, DC
Note: Bilingual Spanish and English
Contact: [Eugenia Hadley](#) 301 237 6177

March 3-5, 2006 -- Wichita, Kansas
Local host: Rachel's Vineyard of the Diocese of Wichita
Contact: [Yvonne or Lori](#) 316 269 4673 or 1-888-456-4673 (statewide only)

March 3-5, 2006 -- Dallas (English), Texas
Contact: [Caryn Stevens](#) 214 544 2273

March 10-12, 2006 -- Fort Worth, Texas
Note: Interdenominational Retreat
Contact: [Betsy Kopor](#) 817 923 4757

March 10-12, 2006 -- Cherry Hill, New Jersey
Contact: [Stephanie Claudy](#) 866 4 RACHEL

March 10-12, 2006 -- Allentown, Pennsylvania
Contact: [Maryann Dunn M.S.](#) 866 372 2435

March 10-12, 2006 -- Sevierville / Gatlinburg, Tennessee
Note: Interdenominational Retreat
Contact: [Judy Magnussen](#) 423 266 8322

March 10-12, 2006 -- Youngstown, Ohio
Contact: [Brenda Dama](#) 330 519 8838
Contact: [Br. Vit Fiala](#) 330 799 1888

March 10-12, 2006 -- Philadelphia Area, Pennsylvania
Contact: [Priscilla](#) 215-906-6337
Contact: [Geri Simboli](#) 610 399 0890

March 10-12, 2006 -- Sydney, New South Wales
Contact: [Julie Kelly](#) 02 9440 7980

March 10-12, 2006 -- Cork City, Ireland
Contact: [Bernadette](#) 087 859 2877
Contact: Dr. Rita O'Connor 061 468 570

March 10-12, 2006 -- Arlington, Virginia
Local host: Diocese of Arlington
Contact: [Myriam](#) 703 729 7998

March 17-19, 2006 -- Linden, New Jersey
Contact: [Michelle Krystofik](#) 732 388 8211

March 17-19, 2006 -- Richmond, Virginia
Note: Interdenominational retreat
Contact: [Gordon and Deborah Frantzich](#) 540 775 5147

March 17-19, 2006 -- Greenville, South Carolina
Contact: [Martha](#) 336 287 8421

March 17-19, 2006 -- Lafayette, Louisiana
Contact: [Karol D. Meynard](#) 337 261 5607
Contact: [Trista M. Littell](#) 337 261 5607

March 17-19, 2006 -- Litchfield, Connecticut
Local host: Archdiocese of Hartford
Contact: [Mary Hayden](#) 203 882 1326

March 17-19, 2006 -- Knoxville, Tennessee
Contact: [Catherine McHugh](#) 865 694 4971

March 17-19, 2006 -- Eugene, Oregon
Contact: [Lori Eckstine](#) 800 249 8074 or 541 521 5186

March 17-19, 2006 -- Baltimore, Maryland
Contact: [Denise Douglas](#) 410 354 6900
Contact: Kathie Ryan 800 286 4224

March 24-26, 2006 -- Providence, Rhode Island
Local host: Life & Family Ministry, [Diocese of Providence](#)
Contact: [Kristin Caproni](#) 401 421 7833 ext 119

March 24-26, 2006--Richardton, North Dakota
Contact: [Carol Kling](#) 605 374 5639

March 24-26, 2006 -- Sacramento, California
Contact: [Kathy Conner](#) 916 733 0161

March 24-26, 2006 -- Bloomington, Indiana
Local Host: Archdiocese of Indianapolis
Contact: [Pat Car](#) 812 327 3712

March 31 - April 2, 2006 -- Minneapolis / St. Paul, Minnesota
Contact: [Nancy Blom](#) 952 882 2072

March 31- April 2, 2006 -- Temecula, California
English Retreat: Contact: [Dolores Dunphy](#) 951 325 7702

March 31- April 2, 2006 -- Stockton, California
Contact: [Nancy or Kim](#) 209 465 5433

March 31 -April 2, 2006 -- Jacksonville / St. Augustine, Florida
Contact: [Donna Augustine](mailto:DonnaAugustine@rachelvineyard.org) 904 221 3232

March 31 - April 2, 2006 -- Las Vegas, Nevada
Note: Interdenominational retreat
Contact: [Kathleen Miller](mailto:KathleenMiller@rachelvineyard.org) 702 737 1672
Contact: [Maria Basquez](mailto:MariaBasquez@rachelvineyard.org) 702 283 8379 (Español)

March 31 - April 2, 2006 -- Lubbock, Texas
Contact: [Kathy Krile](mailto:KathyKrile@rachelvineyard.org) 806 577 5912

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