

**VINE AND BRANCHES**

November 2007

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Rachel's Vineyard is on the web at: [www.rachelsvineyard.org](http://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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**God Moving in Rachel's Vineyard Down Under**  
By Theresa Burke

To quote the motto of the cosmopolitan city of Melbourne, Australia: "We gather strength as we grow." This motto could not have been more appropriate as it relates to the rapid and extensive growth of Rachel's Vineyard throughout the great "Down Under." I had the blessing and privilege to journey to Australia last month to speak at the Australian National Leadership Conference for those involved in the work of Rachel's Vineyard, in addition to presenting a series of public lectures on abortion and healing in Melbourne and Tasmania. The incredible people from this spectacular continent of kangaroos and koalas have done an outstanding job in spreading this beautiful ministry like a blanket that now covers the nation.

We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Julie Kelly, who has spent the last eight years helping to train up other teams who offer the Rachel's Vineyard Retreats in Australia.

It was awesome to visit and witness the fruit of many years of Julie's tender love and labor in sharing the ministry of Rachel's Vineyard. Special thanks to all the members of the Sydney team

for organizing this wonderful event, including my RV colleagues, Sr. Veronica McCluskie, Desley Creedy, Fr. Peter Maher, Anne Neville, and Anne Sherston.

We also had the opportunity to tape a series of shows for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference that will be used to educate about post abortion trauma and healing. I also enjoyed hiking through the “bush,” the gorgeous landscapes, exotic birds and the warm and wonderful hospitality of our friends down under. Friends I will never forget, friends I cherish with so much love and affection, and friends whose dream for healing has become a reality that will continue to grow, spread and impact more lives throughout the world. Plans are underway from Australia to take Rachel’s Vineyard to South Africa and the Philippines and beyond. May the light and love that has been sparked Down Under become a burning flame for freedom and renewal!

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“Gratitude ... goes beyond the "mine" and "thine" and claims the truth that all of life is a pure gift. In the past I always thought of gratitude as a spontaneous response to the awareness of gifts received, but now I realize that gratitude can also be lived as a discipline. The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated with joy.”  
Henri J. M. Nouwen

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**A Note from Our Pastoral Director**

Dear Friends,

I recently returned from a series of meetings with Vatican Cardinals. At each of these meetings I presented a report on the progress of Rachel’s Vineyard, and received immense encouragement from these Church leaders to continue pressing forward with this mission of healing. Each of them expressed gratitude to each of you who participate in and support this ministry in countless ways large and small.

Also recently, many communities completed the observance of the “Forty Days for Life” campaign. Without a doubt, this effort has strengthened the movement of healing after abortion. Why? Because people do not protest what is *good*; they protest what is *hurtful*. The growing public affirmation that abortion hurts affirms those who have experienced that hurt but don’t find adequate support for their grief. As I have participated in Forty Days for Life nationwide and communicated with the local leaders, it has become clear that one of the good fruits of this effort is an increase of people seeking healing and willing to help provide it.

You are in my daily thoughts and prayers!

Fr. Frank Pavone  
National Pastoral Director, Rachel’s Vineyard Ministries  
National Director, Priests for Life

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“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.”  
Melody Beattie

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## Thanksgiving Appeal

Thanksgiving is a great time to remember all the blessings we have received in our lives. Please think of those who could experience new joy in their own lives through your willingness to share.

Your time, talents and gifts have helped make Rachel's Vineyard the largest post-abortion healing program in the world. By giving financially, you become partners in the restoration of lives through the fruitfulness of healing. Being able to sustain our organization through your generosity enables us to meet the increasing demands and growth of Rachel's Vineyard.

Donations enable us to educate and equip others to engage in the work and blessing of this beautiful ministry. Make a tax-deductible donation by calling us at 610-354-0555 or by donating online at <http://www.rachelsvineyard.org/support/support.htm>.

You can also mail your donation to:  
Rachel's Vineyard Ministries  
808 N. Henderson Road Suite 210  
King of Prussia, PA. 19406

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"Thankfulness is not something God gives us. It is not a spiritual gift and it is not a spiritual fruit. We can receive God's peace, joy and love, but thankfulness is something that we give to God and to others. It is a choice that we make. Let us thank Him today with songs of celebration, hearts of strong devotion and acts of admiration."

Roy Lessin

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**Watching "Bella" from a Post-Abortive Perspective**

The movie *Bella* has been widely promoted by pro-life groups, churches and those involved in crisis pregnancy centers. Audiences love the movie because it has a beautiful life-affirming message amidst a culture that celebrates death. We had the privilege to preview *Bella* before its release this past summer at the Rachel's Vineyard Leadership Conference.

The movie is now hitting theatres nationwide and getting spectacular reviews. One of the things I pondered as I prepared to show this movie to our particular audience was how those who have suffered the loss of a child through abortion would respond to a story where the main character actually had the emotional support to give life to her child.

I remember being a little worried about how our audiences would react. Was this movie really appropriate for a group of people who were so deeply involved in the work of healing after abortion? Would this movie be well received by so many women who had not been offered any support or encouragement to give birth?

The movie focused on a young man who seemed destined for stardom as a professional soccer player. His dream was shattered when he caused the death of a little girl who crossed in front of the car he was driving. After a jail sentence, he begins to work at his brother's restaurant. He befriends a young waitress who was just fired by his brother. He discovers that the young lady is pregnant and has no support system. While she is considering abortion as her best option, he stands at her side as a friend. (You may not want to read the rest of this article if you have not yet seen the movie – as we don't want to spoil the plot!)

How God can use tragedy and even trauma to bring compassion to the world is one of the beautiful messages of this movie. If our main character had not been involved in the deep grief of ending a life, would he have been so eager to help protect one? Sometimes we can't even recognize the need for compassion unless we have lost something ourselves. This paradox is at the root of so much good being done in the world today. In the work of post abortion ministries and crisis pregnancy centers, there are so many dedicated incredible people who have also suffered the reality of loss and consequently are deeply moved to protect life. Indeed, God does bring life from death – a profound mystery at the heart of Christian theology.

Another interesting point is that it was unclear to many viewers in our audience what outcome her pregnancy actually had. Since they identified with the woman in the crisis pregnancy, they also identified with the presumption that she went on to have an abortion. When she meets her child at the end of the movie, they re-lived the healing reunion of meeting their own children in Rachel's Vineyard. Because the leading man looks so strikingly similar to Jesus Christ, viewers had the perception that it was Jesus who had been caring for her child in heaven! Gratitude, love, joy and peace were the fruits.

The standing ovation from a room sensitive to post-abortion issues and intimately touched by the wounds of abortion made us realize that this movie has dual audiences with two totally different meanings, intentions, and story outlines. That's how God works. Economically. The truth is heard differently, the story line is dramatically altered in the perception of the viewer in the exact way they need to hear it, which works together for good, for the benefit of their hearts and grace in the present moment. That's the beauty of *Bella*!

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has seen *Bella*, those who have recommended it to friends and family, and those who have shared its beautiful message of *unconditional love*.

J. Eustace Wolfington and J. Brian O'Neill, producers of the film, share: "Your support has been tremendous and we are very thankful for it. Because *Bella* was an independent film, it did not have the resources that the major Hollywood films have at their disposal for promoting and advertising its films. But that hasn't stopped *Bella* from winning award after award, and hasn't stopped people like you from spreading the word. Its success comes from your efforts, and for that we are most grateful. Thank you."

[www.bellathemovie.com](http://www.bellathemovie.com)  
[WATCH THE NEW TRAILER HERE](#)

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I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.  
Philippians 4:13  
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**Newsy Notes and Announcements of Interest**

**Catholic Leadership Institute Honors Founder of Rachel's Vineyard**

On November 9, 2007, Dr. Theresa Burke was honored as a recipient of the 2007 Award for Outstanding Catholic Leadership. The award is given by the Catholic Leadership Institute to recognize people who have inspired and led others and who serve as role models in the Church. Theresa was chosen for her leadership and creativity in bringing the healing power of Christ to so many affected by abortion and sexual abuse.

### **Catholic Digest Names Catholic Heroes**

Dr. Theresa Burke was profiled in the October 2007 issue of *Catholic Digest* as a Catholic hero for America and the world. *Catholic Digest* conducted a national search for people who are making a positive difference through their work. They hope to inspire their readers to reach out to one person, fill one need, and through their passion, dedication and faith make the world a better place.

### **Please pray for the new Rachel's Vineyard sites in development:**

The new site recently approved in Venice, Florida  
The new Spanish-speaking team in San Bernadino, California  
And the new teams in Puerto Rico  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and  
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

### **Ireland Abortion Update**

Abortions are strictly limited in Ireland: only if the mother's physical or mental health is at risk. The 1967 Abortion Act applies to England, Scotland and Wales, but was never extended to Northern Ireland. A possible first step to abortion on demand was thwarted just this past October. Draft guidelines by the Department of Health had been proposed after the Family Planning Association brought a court case to demand clarity on the circumstances under which abortion can be carried out. A motion was passed in the Northern Ireland Assembly to reject those guidelines.

Lynn Coles, Regional Coordinator for the Silent No More Awareness Campaign in Ireland, was recently interviewed on UCB Radio, a Christian radio station in the UK, about her efforts with Silent No More and the visit of Alveda King to Ireland in early November. Many alumni from Rachel's Vineyard were also active in educational efforts with Parliament to share how abortion hurts women. We thank God for their voices and compassion, which ultimately work to protect women and their children from the grief of abortion

### **UnChoice Signature/Display Ads Available for January**

The Elliott Institute's [UnChoice Signature Ad](#) highlights coerced and unwanted abortions while bringing a message of healing and hope to those struggling with the pain of an unwanted or regretted abortion.

The [ad](#) features a beautiful stained-glass rose below the headline quote: "After the abortion, my life was falling into a million pieces." The ad then tells the true story of a woman who was pressured into an unwanted abortion, but concludes with a strong invitation to find healing: "If you give Him the broken pieces...God can make all things new." Quotes from Jeremiah 31:16-17 and Psalm 34:18 round out the ad.

This is an eye-catching, moving, and educational ad that serves multiple purposes:

- To help raise awareness about coerced, unwanted, abortions and post-abortion trauma.
- To expose abortion's harm to everyone involved, including those it was supposed to help,
- To express your concern over the pressures and obstacles women face, and
- To open the door to healing for the 50 million women and men who have lost a child to abortion.

The ad can be run as a [signature ad](#) or a stand-alone [display ad](#) without signatures. It also includes space for sponsorship information or to advertise an upcoming event such as a rally, speaker, informational meeting, or healing program.

Check out the other ad formats on the Elliot Institute's [healing ad page](#), which can be used as bookmarks, informational cards and small space ads in bulletins, newsletters, newspaper and other publications. Our web site also lists [low-cost/no-cost ways](#) to use these materials to spread a healing message at your church, school, workplace or community.

You can view and download the ads at [www.unhoice.info/healingads.htm](http://www.unhoice.info/healingads.htm). Please see our terms of use and other helpful information links on this page for ideas that can help you put out an effective and compassionate message this January.

**March for Life**

The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual March for Life will take place in Washington, D.C. on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. The theme is "Build Unity on the Life Principals Throughout America. To join the march with Silent No More click on the following link and add, "Want to attend Washington gathering" in the comment section: <http://www.silentnomoreawareness.org/join/>.

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**Suggested Reading**

**Is it a Baby, or just some cells?**

The testimony of a nurse practitioner  
By Cortney Davis RN, MA, ANP

'Is it a Baby?' follows the true story of a nurse practitioner working in a women's health clinic that refers women for abortion. While originally not participating in abortion at all, Cortney Davis' work slowly draws her closer and closer to abortion—as she rationalizes her increased involvement all the way to the point of participating in one. Yet her conscience will not free her as God keeps sending her messages that she cannot ignore.

This powerful witness for life, accurate in its medical descriptions and emotions, should be read by everyone.

For more information on this book click here: [www.requiempres.com](http://www.requiempres.com)

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When you do nothing, you feel overwhelmed and powerless. But when you get involved, you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better.

Pauline R. Kezer

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**Upcoming Clinical Trainings and Speaking Engagements**

**Monday, November 26, 2007**

**Talk on Women's Health & Abortion**

Zedeck Auditorium, Evans Hall at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine 12-1pm  
Contact: Charlene Vestermark [charleneve@pcom.edu](mailto:charleneve@pcom.edu)

**Thursday, November 29, 2007**

**Tulsa, Oklahoma Clergy Workshop**

sponsored by Saint Francis Health System and Catholic Charities  
St Francis Hospital Education Center 5-9:30pm  
Contact: Theresa Valento 918-494-1096

[trvalento@saintfrancis.com](mailto:trvalento@saintfrancis.com)

**Friday, November 30, 2007**

**Tulsa, Oklahoma Clinical Training**

sponsored by Saint Francis Health System and Catholic Charities

St Francis Hospital Education Center 8am-4:30pm

Contact: Theresa Valento 918-494-1096

[trvalento@saintfrancis.com](mailto:trvalento@saintfrancis.com)

**Friday, February 29, 2008**

**Savannah, Georgia Clinical Training**

sponsored by the Savannah Diocesan Office of Family Life

Marsh Auditorium at Candler Hospital 8am-5pm

Contact: Stephanie May 912-201-4059

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**Upcoming Rachel's Vineyard Retreats: November 2007 – January 2008**

**November 23 - November 25, 2007 -- Adelaide, Southern Australia Australia**

Contact: Michelle Skurray 08-8381-6325 [pmsk@internode.on.net](mailto:pmsk@internode.on.net)

Note: Interdenominational Retreat

**November 23 - November 25, 2007 -- Vancouver, British Columbia Canada**

Local Host: Post Abortion Community Services, Office of Life & Family

Contact: Doreen Yung 604-525-0999 [vancouver.rachelsvineyard@rcav.bc.ca](mailto:vancouver.rachelsvineyard@rcav.bc.ca)

Contact: Angie Cote 604-525-0999

Contact: Michele 604-443-3256

Note: Interdenominational Retreat

**November 30 - December 2, 2007 -- Columbia/Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

Contact: Joy Crimmins 717-993-5450 [crimmins@nfdc.net](mailto:crimmins@nfdc.net)

**November 30 - December 2, 2007 -- Lake Havasu, Arizona**

Contact: Lisa 928-723-9504 [leexavc@cablone.net](mailto:leexavc@cablone.net)

Retreat Location: Nautilus Resort & Conference Center

**November 30 - December 2, 2007 -- Rochester, New York**

Contact: Betsy 585-328-0648 [camac@frontiernet.net](mailto:camac@frontiernet.net)

Contact: Betsy 585-313-7100

**November 30 - December 2, 2007 -- San Jose, California**

Contact: Mary Peter 408-426-7343 [mpeter@mht-church.org](mailto:mpeter@mht-church.org)

**November 30 - December 2, 2007 -- Sonoma County, California**

Local Host: After the Choice, Diocese of Oakland

Contact: Monika 510-267-8335 [mrodman@oakdiocese.org](mailto:mrodman@oakdiocese.org)

Note: November 30-December 2, 2007 (Spanish)

**November 30 - December 2, 2007 -- Tampa, Florida**

Contact: Emma Boe 813-631-4370 [eboe@ccdosp.org](mailto:eboe@ccdosp.org)

Retreat Location: Marian Servants of Our Lady of Divine Providence, Clearwater

**December 7 - December 9, 2007 -- Forth Worth, Texas**

Contact: Betsy Kopor 817-923-4757 [forgiven@racheltx.org](mailto:forgiven@racheltx.org)

Website: [www.racheltx.org](http://www.racheltx.org)

**December 7 - December 9, 2007 -- Launceston, Tasmania Australia**

Contact: Anne Sherston 03-62298739 [projectrachel@smartchat.net.au](mailto:projectrachel@smartchat.net.au)

**December 7 - December 9, 2007 -- London, England**

Contact: Susan Boyle 020-7723-1740 [susan@goodcounselnetwork.freemove.co.uk](mailto:susan@goodcounselnetwork.freemove.co.uk)

Retreat Location: Brentwood Essex

**December 7 - December 9, 2007 -- Orlando/Central Florida, Florida**

Contact: Karen Reilly 321-662-5097 [karenreilly57@gmail.com](mailto:karenreilly57@gmail.com)

Contact: Project Rachel 877-908-1212

**December 7 - December 9, 2007 -- Pittsburgh (Western PA), Pennsylvania**

Contact: Kathy or Dan Hawk 412-257-3120 [rachelsvineyard.western.pa@verizon.net](mailto:rachelsvineyard.western.pa@verizon.net)

Note: Interdenominational Retreat

**January 4 - January 6, 2008 -- Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota**

Contact: Nancy Blom 952-882-2072 [marypio37@usfamily.net](mailto:marypio37@usfamily.net)

**January 11 - January 13, 2008 -- Long Island/Uniondale (Español), New York**

Contact: Frank and Lorraine Gariboldi 516-523-0586 [fgariboldi@optonline.net](mailto:fgariboldi@optonline.net)

**January 11 - January 13, 2008 -- Northwest Indiana, Indiana**

Local Host: Project Rachel, Diocese of Gary

Contact: Carolyn Kenning 219-374-5193 [carolyn@projectrachelnwi.org](mailto:carolyn@projectrachelnwi.org)

**January 18 - January 20, 2008 -- Linden, New Jersey**

Local Host: Archdiocese of Newark

Contact: Michelle Krystofik 732-388-8211 [arnewrespect@sjanj.net](mailto:arnewrespect@sjanj.net)

**January 18 - January 20, 2008 -- Los Angeles, California**

Local Host: Rachel's Vineyard Los Angeles

Contact: Christine Lowe 866-2-RACHEL [rvla.christine@gmail.com](mailto:rvla.christine@gmail.com)

Website: [www.rachelsvineyard-la.org](http://www.rachelsvineyard-la.org)

**January 25 - January 27, 2008 -- Bowling Green/Owensboro, Kentucky**

Contact: Debbie Ward 270-683-6933 [rv.bgky@yahoo.com](mailto:rv.bgky@yahoo.com)

Contact: Colleen 270-776-6177 [info@hopeafterabortionky.com](mailto:info@hopeafterabortionky.com)

Website: [www.hopeafterabortionky.com](http://www.hopeafterabortionky.com)

**January 25 - January 27, 2008 -- Fairfield County, Connecticut**

Local Host: Diocese of Bridgeport

Contact: Clarissa Cincotta 203-218-0291 [jeremiah31v17@aol.com](mailto:jeremiah31v17@aol.com)

Website: [www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com](http://www.rachelsvineyardbpt.com)

**January 25 - January 27, 2008 -- Santa Rosa/St. Helena, California**

Contact: Valerie Johnson Fish 707-967-1101 [rachelsvineyard@gmail.com](mailto:rachelsvineyard@gmail.com)

**January 26 - January 28, 2008 -- Hays, Kansas**

Local Host: Salina Diocese

Contact: Donetta Robben 877-447-4383 [rachelsvineyard@salinadiocese.org](mailto:rachelsvineyard@salinadiocese.org)

Website: [www.salinadiocese.org](http://www.salinadiocese.org)

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