

Vine and Branches

The Monthly e-Newsletter of Rachel's Vineyard Ministries *April 2010*

Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats for emotional and spiritual healing after abortion are held internationally. Rachel's Vineyard welcomes women, men, couples, grandparents and former 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.

Rachel's Vineyard Ministries is available on the web at www.rachelsvineyard.org and through our 24/7 help line 1-877-HOPE-4-ME.

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Grieving an Abortifacient Contraceptive Loss in a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Setting

By Amanda Miner

We often receive questions about whether or not it is appropriate for someone who has experienced a loss through the use of abortifacient contraception to attend a Rachel's Vineyard retreat. The answer is a resounding yes.

Marisol Villanueva, the bilingual associate of the correspondence team at Priests for Life has experienced this kind of grief and was generous enough to share her story. Marisol hopes that more women who relate to this situation will attend a Rachel's Vineyard retreat and come to know the healing she has experienced.

Marisol shares:

"I couldn't understand why I was grieving when I went to Rachel's Vineyard in 2007 and when I started recalling my experience, first I was numb, then angry, and then the guilt/shame set in. I had been working as a crisis pregnancy consultant since 1994 and I didn't know that I had aborted children through a type of contraception that acts as a chemical abortion. I learned of the

abortifacient facts as I trained in crisis pregnancy consultation with Heartbeat international and Dr Denise Mari. I started realizing that one of the reasons I loved being a godmother to 14 children was to fill the void.”

“I was freed when I went to Rachel’s Vineyard. This program is amazing even for people who have lost a baby due to contraception. We are grieving for the children that might have been.”

Theresa Burke addresses this issue in her book *The Contraception of Grief*. In the following excerpt those who have experienced loss through contraception are welcomed at a Rachel’s Vineyard retreat:

“Those who have been wounded by abortion and abortifacients can find healing and reconciliation. The truth about the dignity of the human person and the gift of sexuality is a message of good news and liberation—not one of condemnation and judgment. We must convey the truth of Christ with love to the modern world. The more we have surrendered to the authority of God, the more we can be instruments of His love and mercy, and a living witness to the Gospel of Life.”

“For those seeking to reconcile these wounds, Rachel’s Vineyard is a place to help those who are trying to fit the very normal epiphany of grief into a world that would rather have us feel numb and blind, so as to maintain a safe distance from the truth... It provides a safe environment to search the fabric of our lives, the innermost depths of the soul, and to acknowledge the pain that comes when the gift of our sexuality has not been honored as a sacred and holy act...”

“For those who may be grieving the soul pain of contraception and abortion, Rachel’s Vineyard is a place where you will be supported during bereavement and grief and offered a lighted path to discover forgiveness and reconciliation.”

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Rachel’s Vineyard Leadership Conference-Save the Dates

The next Rachel’s Vineyard Leadership Conference will take place July 18th-21st, 2011. Mark your calendars now and save the dates for an educational and inspirational gathering that you won’t want to miss!

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"Ask the Expert" Featured Question

The following is a Question/Answer taken from our “Ask the Experts” section on our website:

Please click [here](#) to visit Ask the Experts

Question:

I was in a relationship for three years and in that time I had an abortion. Now that we are apart I don't know how to be close to anyone else or the right time to discuss that I did have an abortion. I am scared to start over. I feel very attached to my ex and the baby we never had and I don't feel that I am really worth dating anyone just to have this happen again. I really wish I knew what to do.

Answer:

You outline very well in your question some of the classic issues that individuals face after abortion especially in their struggles with intimacy and relationship. The fear of getting close, of starting over and the sense of one's self worth...these are classic and common feelings after abortion. This is especially true when the abortion occurred with someone you felt close to and cared about.

Because your heart was open to this individual and you shared this emotional and physical intimacy, the abortion is a painful and confusing experience of loss and strikes at the heart of relationship – intimacy, trust, and communication. The nature of the abortion experience, the circumstances that surround the decision, make it difficult to fully grieve the loss of your child and the relationship. This contributes to a sense of being stuck, creating the challenge to move on and trust again.

Given these complicated feelings and grief, it is really quite normal that you would have this struggle. Your fears have served to protect you from entering into another relationship too quickly while you are still hurting. This is a good thing. But as you are well aware, given our common human need for love and intimacy, there is a time to look for reconciliation and healing of your loss. You can also think of these “symptoms” as similar to the role of physical symptoms of an illness. They call attention to the problem and if properly understood and diagnosed can lead us to recovery from the ailment.

The same holds true after abortion. These symptoms are calling attention to this wound in your heart that requires a special treatment so you can find healing and open your heart once again to trust and love.

The good news is that many women and men just like you have found reconciliation, healing and peace. Please consider taking the next step and attending a Rachel's Vineyard Weekend for post abortion healing. Sites are located across the USA and internationally. Please visit our website to learn more www.rachelsvineyard.org and see retreat sites and contact info.

Take care, and don't be afraid to take the next step!

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A Note from the Pastoral Director

Dear Friends,

March 25, 2010 marked the 15th anniversary of the document of Pope John Paul II, “The Gospel of Life” (Evangelium Vitae), in which he proclaimed those words we all know so well:

“I would now like to say a special word to women who have had an abortion. The Church is aware of the many factors which may have influenced your decision... The wound in your heart may not yet have healed. Certainly what happened was and remains terribly wrong. But do not give in to discouragement and do not lose hope.... The Father of mercies is ready to give you his forgiveness and his peace... To the same Father and to his mercy you can with sure hope entrust your child.” (n. 99).

The same invitation, of course, applies to men.

In observance of the anniversary of this great document, the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family held a worldwide meeting of pro-life leaders on March 26-27, in which Janet Morana, Executive Director of Priests for Life, was privileged to give the report on the status of the pro-life movement in North America. Prominent in that report, of course, was the work of Rachel's

Vineyard. The leaders of the Church and of pro-life movements in other nations were encouraged by the continued growth of this ministry.

So should we be. We can be confident of the Church's support of this ministry at the highest levels, and should not hesitate to speak about it openly, so as to encourage more involvement on the local level.

Thanks for all you do!

Blessings!
Fr. Frank Pavone
Pastoral Director and Chairman, Rachel's Vineyard
National Director, Priests for Life

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Rachel's Vineyard Bilingual Outreach Update

By Marisol Villanueva

It has been noted that participation of the Rachel's Vineyard retreats has grown in numbers amongst the Latino community from the Tri State area Connecticut, New Jersey & New York.

We believe this stems from Fr. Victor's monthly radio interviews at Radio Jesus as well as Cristina Martinez's efforts (Rachel's Vineyard Connecticut Hispanic Coordinator). Cristina has been interviewed as a guest on the radio program. She and her husband Freddy have made it a point to come out to the Bronx and give presentations on their work with our ministry.

We are impressed and honored to know that the Misioneros de Jesus ministry has collaborated with our work on behalf of the unborn by giving out Priests for Life literature and brochures. Many of the post abortive men and women on their missionary team have become interested in receiving healing of post abortion syndrome.

Countries such as Peru, Argentina, & the Dominican Republic have shown an interest in opening up a new Rachel's Vineyard site.

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New Educational Series

An Educational Series on the Psychological and Spiritual Impact of Abortion is now available through Rachel's Vineyard. The series is called *Abortion Loss and Unresolved Grief*.

The set includes a collection of professionally produced DVD's of many of our presentations that we use in our clinical and pastoral trainings along with a number of talks by Fr Frank Pavone including "The Parish-Home for Healing, Healing for the Abortionist," and "Facing the Need for Healing."

A Course Guide has been developed to use with the DVD set that provides an outline of each talk to help facilitate discussion as well as a course syllabus and sample exams. It also includes suggested reading and discussion questions for each lesson. This set was made possible by a grant from Our Sunday Visitor.

Suggested Donation: \$60.00
[Click here](#) to order or for more information.

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Upcoming Grief to Grace Retreats:

Healing the Wounds of Abuse- Reclaiming the Gift of Sexual Dignity

Grief to Grace - Healing the Wounds of Abuse will be held in a number of different locations this year. If you or someone you love is suffering because of past abuse visit www.griegtograce.org . This new

program was composed by Theresa and Kevin Burke, the founders of Rachel's Vineyard, to provide a psychological and spiritual healing journey for anyone impacted by sexual, physical, emotional abuse or neglect.

Kelowna, British Columbia

May 6-9, 2010

G2GKelowna@shaw.ca

Aston, Pennsylvania

June 6-10, 2010

info@griegtograce.org

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United in Prayer

We pray for the following intentions:

For **Joe Checco** and family as he recovers from a recent kidney transplant.

For the recent passing of **Rogelio Manabat**, father of Victor Manabat of Priests for Life. May the Manabat family be comforted during this time of loss.

For the repose of the soul of **Fr. Paul Marx, OSB**, founder of Human Life International. He was loved by many. May he rest in the arms of our Lord.

We pray in thanksgiving:

For **Jennifer Butcher** and all of the hard work she put into the Fresno site. We also pray that she have a safe and successful move to Lincoln, Nebraska.

For **Lorraine Keener** as she celebrates one year with the Rachel's Vineyard International Office as a volunteer hotline counselor.

For our new retreat site in **Evansville, IN** run by Julie Deeg. Please keep **Julie** and her team in your prayers as they begin Rachel's Vineyard retreats in this new location.

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Letter from a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Participant

I attended a retreat in 2005 in Richmond VA. To say the RV retreat saved my life would be an understatement. Theresa's insight into the pain and destruction of abortion coupled with a deep faith and love of the Lord has allowed so many of us to find our way back home. Saying thank you just doesn't seem enough.

Since my retreat I have served under Kay Marie and Joe as a team member in Richmond VA. How blessed I am to have met them and even more blessed to be called to serve God in this way.

Last Friday I decided to give my own witness to my parish of God's love and mercy from the sin of abortion. It was the first time being public, most likely shocked some folk. It was a big decision and huge step in my own healing. It took a tremendous amount of courage, but it was such a beautiful way to serve Him, and hopefully the Holy Spirit was able to change hearts and break down walls.

This April will be my tenth retreat, I now serve with my husband on team. I feel so blessed to be apart of such a wonderful ministry. I feel honored to walk with my brothers and sisters in their darkness, and love witnessing the Holy Spirit at work!

This journey started with Theresa saying yes when the Lord called her.... Thank you Theresa, for not allowing us to journey thru our darkness alone and staying with us until the despair turned to hope.

Much love,
Maggie

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Rachel's Vineyard T-Shirts

Christianshirts.com now offers Rachel's Vineyard T-shirts! 10% of profits go to Rachel's Vineyard. Two different designs are offered. [Click here](#) to view one design and [click here](#) to view the second.

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An Easter Appeal

Easter is a time of resurrection and new life. It is also a time of hope in Christ. You can help restore hope for someone who has suffered the pain of abortion. By giving to Rachel's Vineyard, you assist in

Rachel's Vineyard Ministries is a non-profit organization. We are able to minister to those affected by abortion through your contributions and prayers.

Here's how to make a donation:
Online: www.rachelsvineyard.org/donate
By Phone: 610-354-0555
By Mail: P.O. Box 140130 Staten Island, NY 10314

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Leadership Talks Still Available on CD

All of the talks from the Rachel's Vineyard Leadership conference in Malvern, PA were recorded live by Vincent & Barbara Sumoski (Love Tape/CD Ministry) and are available on CD for purchase. There were 45 excellent talks which may be purchased individually as an entire set. Each CD is a conference special price of only \$7.00 and includes FREE shipping and handling. Other conference special incentives are available on the order form. Order forms may be obtained upon request at rvcds@sumoski.com, 601-779-8989.

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Rachel's Vineyard Bumper Stickers

Don't forget to check out our new Rachel's Vineyard bumper stickers! Our bumper stickers are a great way to spread the word about our healing ministry.

To order our bumper stickers please [click here](#).

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Check it Out

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Full of Grace: Miraculous Stories of Healing and Conversion through Mary's Intercession

Last month, we highlighted this book and wanted to include more information on where to find the book. *Full of Grace* tells of Christine Watkins's dramatic story of miraculous healing and conversion to Catholicism, along with the stories of five others, three of whom have had abortions: a homeless drug addict, a lonely youth, (who writes an incredible letter to his aborted child), a Nobel Peace Prize-nominee, a nightclub stripper, and a cocaine abuser. To find out more, or order the book, go to www.christinewatkins.com

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Send a Mother's Day Message of Compassion and Hope

[Click here](#) to see great ads for healing and education that you can place in your local newspaper or church bulletin during Mother's day from the Elliot Institute.

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20th Anniversary Edition: *She's a Child Not a Choice*"

Human Life Alliance has released a 20th anniversary edition their advertising supplement entitled *She's a Child, Not a Choice*. Please [click here](#) to read or order copies.

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"God could not be everywhere and therefore he made mothers."
~Jewish Proverb

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OVERUS~Supports Rachel's Vineyard

OVERUS is a certification mark—similar to kosher, fair trade, or organic—but it identifies brands that respect Christian values. The goal is to enable you to practice good stewardship when shopping: you can just look for our logo. OVERUS is now supporting Rachel's Vineyard with a portion of its proceeds. Rachel's Vineyard encourages you to take a look at how your purchases can support Christian values.

For a list of certified brands, please see our Shopping Guide:
[Click here](#).

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"Mothers hold their children's hands for a short while, but their hearts forever."

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Upcoming Events and Trainings

Saturday, May 08, 2010

Treating the Post-Abortive Client Training - Long Island NY

Keynote Speaker(s): Theresa Burke, PhD

Kevin Burke, LSW

Contact Info: Deacon Frank Gariboldi

Life Center of Long Island

516-523-0586

www.lifecenterli.org

Tuesday, May 18, 2010 -Thursday, May 20, 2010

Heartbeat International Conference -Orlando, FL

Speaker(s): Theresa Burke, Ph.D.

Kevin Burke, LSW

Contact Info: visit www.heartbeatervices.org for more information

Details: Heartbeat's Annual Conference is designed for ministry leaders, staff, Board members, and volunteers of life-affirming pregnancy resource centers, medical clinics, maternity homes, and non-profit adoption agencies, and for professionals in the areas of medicine, counseling, social work, and education.

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Other Conferences/Events of Interest

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Conference on the Vocation of Women
Women's Formation and Leadership for a Better Society
Cazenovia, NY
June 15-24, 2010

Sponsored by AVOW: Advocating the Vocation of Women

For more information please contact:

Karen Stein at karentkc@aol.com

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ARIN SHARE Symposium
Abortion Recovery InterNational-"Come Aboard"
Anaheim, CA
July 20-22, 2010

For more information please visit: <http://www.sharesymposium.org/>

Or e-mail at info@abortionrecovery.org

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Upcoming Retreats

May 7 - May 9, 2010 -- Cork City, Ireland

Contact: Bernadette 087-859-2877 bergoulding@eircom.net

Contact: Dr. Rita O'Connor 061-468-570

May 14 - May 16, 2010 -- Albany Area, New York

Contact: Mrs. Pat Mousaw 518-222-1160 rachelsvineyardalbany@yahoo.com

May 14 - May 16, 2010 -- Taipei, Taiwan

Contact: Georgie Hsieh 886-2-933426608 georgiehsieh@yahoo.com.tw

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Fresno, California

Contact: Jennifer Butcher 877-629-6626 tjen98@windstream.net

Contact: Rosalinda Gutierrez - Español 888-686-8537 rosgonz20@aol.com

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Honolulu, Hawaii

Contact: Lisa Shorba 808-349-5071 rvhawaii@gmail.com

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Jacksonville/St. Augustine, Florida

Contact: Donna Augustine 904-221-3232 rachelsvineyardjax@yahoo.com

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota

Contact: Nancy Blom 952-882-2072 rvr-nancy@usfamily.net

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Orlando/Central Florida, Florida

Contact: Karen Reilly 321-662-5097 karenreilly57@gmail.com

Contact: Project Rachel 877-908-1212

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Philadelphia Area, Pennsylvania

Contact: Priscilla 215-906-6337 occonnorpl@comcast.net

Contact: Geri Simboli 610-399-0890 simboli2@earthlink.net

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Rapid City, South Dakota

Contact: Carol Kling 605-374-5639 ckling@sdplains.com

May 21 - May 23, 2010 -- Santa Rosa/St. Helena, California

Contact: Valerie Johnson Fish 707-967-1101 rachelsvineyard@gmail.com

Contact: Christine 415-260-4406 christinew@firstresort.net

May 28 - May 30, 2010 -- Atlanta, Georgia

Contact: Mary Ann McNeil 404-717-5557 pthmcneil@earthlink.net

May 28 - May 30, 2010 -- Northern New York, New York

Contact: Colleen Miner 518-891-2309 cbm510@roadrunner.com

May 28 - May 30, 2010 -- Perth, Western Australia

Contact: Jenny Shier rachelsvineyardwa@gmail.com

May 28 - May 30, 2010 -- Stanwood, Washington

Contact: Valerie Jacobs 800-822-HOPE valeriepr@aol.com

May 28 - May 30, 2010 -- Tucson, Arizona

Contact: Judy 520-743-6777 reachout4life@q.com

May 28 - May 30, 2010 -- Vancouver, British Columbia Canada

Contact: Doreen Yung 604-525-0999 vancouver.rachelsvineyard@rcav.bc.ca

Contact: Michele 604-443-3256

Note: Interdenom & Catholic Retreats

June 4 - June 6, 2010 -- Charleston, South Carolina

Contact: Christy 803-554-6088 grace4healing@gmail.com

Contact: Stephanie 912-201-4059

June 4 - June 6, 2010 -- Fort Worth, Texas

Contact: Betsy Kopor 817-923-4757 forgiven@racheltx.org

Contact: Macaria (espanol) 469-767-8669 misericordia@racheltx.org

June 4 - June 6, 2010 -- Fresno, California

Contact: Jennifer Butcher 877-629-6626 tjen98@windstream.net

Contact: Rosalinda Gutierrez - Español 888-686-8537 rosgonz20@aol.com

June 4 - June 6, 2010 -- Providence, Rhode Island

Contact: Kristin Caproni 401-421-7833 x119 rachelsvineyard@dioceseofprovidence.org

June 11 - June 13, 2010 -- Hays, Kansas

Contact: Donetta Robben 877-447-4383 rachelsvineyard@salinadiocese.org

June 11 - June 13, 2010 -- Lancaster (Interdenom), Kentucky

Contact: Anne-Marie Gosser 859-233-0511 am@whitedovepottery.com

June 11 - June 13, 2010 -- Litchfield, Connecticut

Contact: Mary Hayden 203-882-1326 mmhdfc@sbcglobal.net

June 11 - June 13, 2010 -- Long Island/Brentwood, New York

Contact: Frank and Lorraine Gariboldi 516-523-0586 fgariboldi@optonline.net

June 11 - June 13, 2010 -- Long Island/Brentwood (Español), New York

Contact: Donna Crean 631-258-5062 donnacrean@optonline.net

June 11 - June 13, 2010 -- Northwest Territories, North West Territories Canada

Contact: Pat Regan 867-872-0026 pat_j_regan@yahoo.com

Contact: Phyllis MacFarlane 867-920-2129

June 11 - June 13, 2010 -- Tampa, Florida

Contact: Emma Boe 813-631-4370 eboe@ccdosp.org

June 18 - June 20, 2010 -- Ann Arbor/Detroit Area, Michigan

Contact: Beth Bauer 734-369-3470 lpbbauer@yahoo.com

June 18 - June 20, 2010 -- Cherry Hill, New Jersey

Contact: Stephanie Claudy 866-4-RACHEL sclaudy@camdendiocese.org

Contact: Spanish Retreats: Margarita 1-877-665-2974 popejp2rc@verizon.net

June 18 - June 20, 2010 -- Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Contact: Joanne Fogue rachelsvineyardokc@gmail.com

Contact: Paulette Finnegan 405-623-3844

June 18 - June 20, 2010 -- Phoenix, Arizona

Contact: Jason Baier 602-334-7651 jasonb@fatherhoodforever.org

Contact: Roberta Bazaldua 602-471-1944 roberta.bazaldua@gmail.com

June 18 - June 20, 2010 -- Portland, Oregon

Contact: Lori Eckstine 800-249-8074 ProjectRachel@CatholicCharitiesOregon.org

June 18 - June 20, 2010 -- Wellington, Wellington New Zealand

Contact: Suzanne O'Rourke +64 (04) 974 9691 suzanne@voiceforlife.org.nz

Contact: Wendy Hill +64 (04) 974 8693 info@rachelsvineyard.org.nz

June 25 - June 27, 2010 -- Baltimore, Maryland

Contact: Denise Douglas 410-625-8491 projectrachel@archbalt.org

Contact: Deacon Frank Zeiler 800-286-4224

June 25 - June 27, 2010 -- Cork City, Ireland

Contact: Bernadette 087-859-2877 bergoulding@eircom.net

Contact: Dr. Rita O'Connor 061-468-570

June 25 - June 27, 2010 -- Grand Rapids, Michigan

Contact: Maggie Walsh 616-340-1824 mwalsh@ccwestmi.org

Contact: Toll-free (MI only) 800-800-8284

June 25 - June 27, 2010 -- Melbourne (Interdenom), Victoria Australia

Contact: Anne Neville (03) 9870 7044 anne@opendoors.com.au

June 25 - June 27, 2010 -- Sacramento, California

Contact: Debbie Anderson 916-733-0161 projectrachel@diocese-sacramento.org

June 25 - June 27, 2010 -- Washington DC Metro Area, Washington D.C.

Contact: Eugenia Hadley 301-300-1997 mena4481@aol.com

Note: Español and English retreats offered

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