



Vine & Branches

Rachel's Vineyard
Healing the Pain of Abortion
One Weekend at a Time

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November 2016

Message from the Pastoral Director

Get out and Vote!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I've asked our RV team to put my message at the top of this month's Vine and Branches so as to emphasize the importance of my exhortation to you to *get out and vote*, and in addition, to get as many other people to vote as possible.

The election has implications for everything, including for our ability to do the work of Rachel's Vineyard without hindrance from those who would like to place legal and legislative obstacles in the way of anyone who says that abortion is harmful.

And given that we care so much about those whom abortion wounds, our vote -- as yet another important way to push back against the culture of death -- actually becomes an act of loving concern and of service to those whom we want to protect from an ever more unscrupulous and out of control abortion industry.

So please, in these final days before the election, focus all the time and energy you can at helping people raise their voices and cast their votes. Together, let's do as the Catholic bishops have urged all citizens to do, namely, "*to embrace their citizenship not merely as a duty and privilege, but as an opportunity meaningfully to participate in building the culture of life*" (US bishops, *Living the Gospel of Life*, n. 34).

Finally, I invite you to join me on Wednesday night, November 9th -- the night after Election Day -- for a webcast in which I will review the election results and discuss their implications for the pro-life cause and map out strategic action points for moving forward. Sign up at www.priestsforlife.org/webcast.

Sincerely,

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



**“God has planted greatness in you.
Let today be the beginning of a great adventure
as you step into the gifts He’s given you.”
~ Joyce Meyer**



Counting Blessings By Dr. Theresa Burke

It is such a blessing and privilege to share our ministry with so many people who truly bless Rachel’s Vineyard with their donation of time, love, service, financial support and prayer! We estimate that there are over 300,000 people around the world who have directly conferred immeasurable gifts into helping grow and spread Rachel’s Vineyard.

In these times of distraction and hectic schedules, there is such an unusual beauty in having so many ministry partners and teams who practice profound faithfulness in their efforts. There are geographical frontiers we never could have crossed without the determination and passion of these friends.

William Yeats once said that friendship is the only house we have to offer. Without the blessing of friendship we would never have become who we are. It’s hard to live a life of true service that endeavors to be faithful to its own unique calling and not become haunted by the negativity and obstacles that are out there attempting to distort and obstruct the works of healing. Therefore, it’s not a luxury to have such friends, it is a critical necessity.

In the climate of love and understanding that friendship provides, we take root and blossom. We can overcome many past tragedies when we know we are not alone and our burdens are shared in community. Our truest friends are the mirrors where we recognize ourselves and are challenged by their generosity of spirit that has enabled us to grow and flourish. There is also the blessing of health: the ability to see, to hear, to understand and celebrate life, embracing good times and challenging times with trust and a commitment to be present to each other. This is the joy of working through grief. When the work is over there is so much to celebrate and be thankful for!

If we yield to helplessness, we strengthen the hand of those who would destroy. If we chose indifference, we betray our communities and world; therefore, the way you chose to look at things is not simply a private matter. Your outlook actually has a distinct way of affecting what goes on around you. When you take back your power and choose to see the possibilities for healing and transformation, your courage and creativity awakens and begins to flow, helping to move you forward into new possibilities. You can become a source of renewal for your own life and an active force of encouragement and faith for others. That’s a life that leads to joy and freedom, always open to seeing possibilities and opportunities.

Thanksgiving is such a beautiful season to reflect on our blessings. I am so grateful for the gifts and talents that are awakened through the privilege of ministry.

Abilities that we never knew we possessed until they were called forth by the challenges of leadership or the poverty of confronting our own stories. Together we discover God – who blesses us with strength, renewal and often times a distinct and compelling desire to serve. We also witness the direct action of God bringing life out of death, dispelling darkness and grief, and opening up our souls to the brilliant and illuminating gifts of his Grace. The more we focus on recognizing our blessings, the more gratitude helps to increase our bounty. God's generosity knows no limits as he beckons us to bask in the mystery and wonder of what God is unfolding in our lives.

I pray you all take time to celebrate the miracles you witness and experience each day as a sacred gift woven around your heart.



**"The faithful friend is a secure refuge;
whoever has found one has found a treasure."
~ Sirach 6:12**



My Journey through the Vineyard from Death to Life

I would like to start by giving you a little background about the Rachel's Vineyard weekends. Rachel's Vineyard weekends for healing after abortion are offered throughout the year in locations across the United States and Canada, with additional sites around the world. Rachel's Vineyard is a ministry of Priests for Life.

The program is an opportunity to examine your abortion experience, identify the ways that the loss has impacted you in the past and present, and helps to acknowledge any unresolved feelings that many individuals struggle with after abortion. Because of the emotional numbness and secrecy that often surrounds an abortion experience, conflicting emotions both during and after the event may remain unresolved. These buried feelings can surface later and may be symptoms of post abortion trauma.

Married couples, mothers, fathers, grandparents and siblings of aborted children, as well as persons who have been involved in the abortion industry have come to Rachel's Vineyard in search of peace and inner healing. The weekend is a lot of work but yields a fruitful harvest for all who are willing to labor there.

The death caused by abortion leads to anguish and intense yearning for someone who cannot be retrieved. We weep. We recall regrets, our role in what has happened and the child we will miss. It is these painful moments of loss that we search for meaning—some greater power beyond ourselves and the reality of something more perfect than our infinitely frail humanity. The Rachel's Vineyard weekend helps us through these emotions while encountering God's mercy.[\[1\]](#)

From a personal perspective, this ministry saved my life. In 2009 I attended my own retreat and the weekend was very life changing.

Matthew 14:25-33

²⁵ *Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.* ²⁶ *When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.* ²⁷ *But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."*

I was raised in the Catholic Church but was never told that abortion was wrong. But deep down I knew it was. When I was 19 years old, and living with my boyfriend and his family, I found out I was pregnant. The first thing I did was look in the telephone book for the number to an abortion clinic. I called and made the appointment without consulting with my boyfriend and he took me with no questions asked. We were both young and I knew I didn't want a baby. This decision to abort was the worst one I had ever made, but didn't realize it at the time.

After the abortion, I fell away from the church; in fact, I didn't even go at all. I still believed in God but just didn't practice my faith. I became more promiscuous and a year later I became pregnant again. Without a second thought I went to have an abortion. As years went by I dabbled in drinking, drugs and sex, but I knew I was missing something.

Isaiah 40:31

³¹ *but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

Five years later God blessed me with another child, this time I knew I was going to have this baby since I had made mistakes before. He was my perfect little boy named Paul, except that he was born with the right side of his heart not fully formed. Not but only a day old or less he underwent an operation to put a shunt in so that the oxygen and blood flow correctly. This shunt lasted about 11 months before he out grew it. The doctors went in and replaced it. After one month there were complications. This happened 1 week before his first birthday. My baby boy, Paul, is no longer here on earth with me. He is now playing in the meadow with Jesus. To this day I am not sure why I was given this gift, but I am very thankful for the opportunity to experience motherhood. And I know that I will see all three of my children some day and we all can play in the meadow together.

Fast forwarding to 15 years ago, my heart felt it was missing something, and I somehow knew I needed to return to my faith. I came back into the Catholic Church, and except for my husband, I still hadn't told anyone of my secret that I kept deep down inside. I felt ashamed and thought everyone would condemn me for having the abortions. I sometimes felt sad but didn't know why, just that I was sad. I couldn't tell anyone close to me because they wouldn't understand. After mass one day I saw a brochure with Rachel's Vineyard on it and took one. I read the brochure on Rachel's Vineyard and was glad to know the Catholic church offered help for people suffering from abortion. On Friday of the weekend we arrived at the retreat facility. Everyone looked frightened and scared, not knowing what to expect. During the weekend we shared our story and grew as a family. I think just knowing that someone else shared the same feelings as I did was very comforting. By Sunday, everyone had a smile a mile wide. I was forgiven and I felt it deep in my heart.

After the retreat, sometimes I still feel sad and regret very much that I killed my children. But I know that God's grace will always be with me. The wound will never be gone but will become a scar as a reminder that **I am FORGIVEN!** I sometimes think about my life if I had all my children here on earth, what would it be like, but I know that they are with Jesus playing in the Meadow and I will see them someday.

Eventually, I started serving on the retreat weekend team and have been doing this for the past 6 years. I knew I wanted to help other women feel God's mercy as I had. I feel that anyone who has gone through the trauma of abortion needs to know that someone is there for them anytime and they aren't alone. I am glad I get to be a part of being there for others now.

The heartache you feel after having an abortion is so painful, more than anything you could imagine. The abortion facility will tell you that it is okay and it's your choice to make but what they don't say is the you will **REGRET** this decision. Having the **LIFE** of a child is so much better than living with the **REGRET**.

The pain is real for both men and women. If you or someone you know is suffering from an abortion, please reach out to the Rachel's Vineyard.

[1] Rachel's Vineyard Ministries, "Rachel's Vineyard- Our Story", www.Rachelsvineyard.org/aboutus/ourstory.aspx,



**“Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”
~ Psalm 51:10**



A Thanksgiving Appeal

This November, we prepare our hearts and homes for gatherings with family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving. For those suffering after abortion, celebrations like this may be a painful reminder of the immense loss they have suffered. If you or someone you know is suffering after abortion, please encourage them to reach out to Rachel's Vineyard for support, hope, and healing.

Rachel's Vineyard Ministries is a non-profit organization. We are able to minister to those hurting after 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



**"How can we be witnesses of mercy?
This is not by undertaking great tasks or superhuman gestures. No, it's not.
The Lord tells us there is a much simpler way, composed of small gestures.
However, in His eyes these have great value in the way
that He told us that these gestures will be judged."
~ Pope Francis**



Rachel's Vineyard in Social Media

Suffering after abortion?



Visit us at RachelsVineyard.org
Or call 1.877.HOPE.4ME

Click the links below to visit Rachel's Vineyard social networking sites. Join today and send to your friends and family!

Facebook Fan Page: www.facebook.com/rachelsvineyard

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/rachelsvineyard

Twitter: www.twitter.com/RVHealing

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/rachelsvineyard

Instagram: www.instagram.com/rvhealing

*“Faith is the art of holding on to things
in spite of your changing moods and circumstances.”*

~ C.S. Lewis

United in Prayer

Please pray for the repose of **Stefan's** soul. Stefan is the son of **Christiane Wiedebusch**, who serves on the Rachel's Vineyard retreat team in Germany. We pray for Christiane and her family, that they can find peace and comfort during this difficult time.

Please pray for **Sue Dowie**, a dear friend of Katie D'Annunzio, the office manager at Rachel's Vineyard. Sue has been battling cancer. We pray for Sue, that she may take comfort in the Lord, and continue to fight with strength and faith.

Please pray for, **Melissa Landis**, aunt of Lauren Vogan, executive assistant for Rachel's Vineyard Headquarters. Melissa suffered a major heart attack during a routine operation. She is a survivor of lung cancer, and due to issues with the cancer treatment is unable to undergo surgery needed to correct issues with her heart. Please pray that the doctors are able to treat her unique situation swiftly and efficiently. Please also pray for a miracle of healing.



“Be the living expression of God's kindness:

Kindness in your face.

Kindness in your eyes.

Kindness in your smile.”

~ Mother Teresa



Upcoming Grief to Grace Retreats
Healing the Wounds of Abuse
Reclaiming the Gift of Human Dignity
www.GriefftoGrace.org

Jamaica

Contact: Familylifecentreja@gmail.com

Call: 1-876-927-2525

November 11-16, 2016

Houston, TX (Non-Denominational)

Contact: G2Gtexas@griefftoGrace.org 254-383-1717

January 14 - January 18, 2017

July 1 - July 5, 2017

London, UK

Contact: g2guk@yahoo.co.uk

Call: 020 7937 4297 / 07849 029 442 / 07770 373 758

5th - 10th February 2017

Grief to Grace Retreats: Australia

Aston, PA (Philadelphia)

Contact: info@griefftoGrace.org 610-203-2002

March 5-10, 2017

Tasmania, Australia

Contact: info@griefftoGraceaus.org.au

March 26-31, 2017

Kelowna, BC, Canada

Contact: G2GKelowna@gmail.com

Call: 250-878-7603

May 4-7, 2017

Yellowknife, NT, Canada
Contact: Religious.ed@theedge.ca
Gerri Fletcher 867-920-2129



"You are braver than you believe,
stronger than you seem,
smarter than you think,
and loved more than you'll ever know."
~ A.A. Milne



Upcoming Rachel's Vineyard Training Events

Honolulu, HI - On **November 27, 2016**, Dr. Theresa Burke will be meeting with the Rachel's Vineyard team in Honolulu, HI. For information, contact Lisa Shorba: RVinHawaii@gmail.com.

Wenatchee, WA - Leadership Training, Clergy Training, Clinical Training, and General Overview of Rachel's Vineyard

On the morning of **December 2, 2016** Dr. Theresa Burke will conduct a **Rachel's Vineyard Leadership Training**

On the afternoon of **December 2, 2016** Dr. Theresa Burke will conduct a **Clergy Training**

On **December 3, 2016** Dr. Theresa Burke will conduct a **Clinical Training** that is open to the public

On **December 3, 2016** from 7 to 8 PM, Dr. Theresa Burke will offer a **general overview of Rachel's Vineyard** for the general public

REGISTER at goo.gl/XisQVI or call Lisa at (509) 421-7847 or email rvwenatchee@gmail.com

For more information on individual classes in this training, go to goo.gl/JV8rFC



"The meaning of life is to find your gift.
The purpose of life is to give it away."
~ William Shakespeare



Upcoming Rachel's Vineyard Retreats

Medellin, Colombia
Contact: Margarita Agudelo
entretusmanos33@gmail.com

316-657-8585

Language: Spanish
Friday, November 4, 2016
Sunday, November 6, 2016

Bologna, Italy

Contact: Responsabili Nord-Centro-Sud Monika Rodman e Domenico Montanaro
39.099.7724.518 info.vignadirachele@yahoo.it

Language: Italian

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Melbourne (Interdenominational), VIC, Australia

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

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Boise, ID

Contact: Gerry and Susan Guzman 208-938-9797 gsguzman@msn.com

Contact: Cindy Martinez 208-571-2736

cindymartinezrv@outlook.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Hartford City, IN

Contact: Jennie Hack 765-477-7706 jenniehack@gmail.com

Contact: Jennie Hack 877-522-3300

Contact: David Bangs 765-860-6006 dlbangs1@gmail.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Portland, ME

Contact: Annette (207) 321-7885 Annette.Rioux@portlanddiocese.org

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Omaha/Lincoln, NE

Contact: Heather 402-253-9936 helpingrachel@yahoo.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Las Vegas, NV

Contact: Kathleen Miller 702-218-5613 katm419@aol.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Las Vegas (Español), NV

Contact: Maria Vazquez 702-283-8379 shalom_m@msn.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Richardton, ND

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

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Steubenville, OH

Contact: Sharon Maedke 740-632-5512 steubenvillerv@gmail.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Clarks Summit/Scranton, PA

Contact: Denise Rowinski Mengak 570-822-7118 x333 drowinski@csswb.org

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Charleston, SC

Contact: Christy 803-554-6088

grace4healing@gmail.com

Contact: Kathy 803-546-6010

kcs6010@gmail.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Upstate / Greenville, SC

Contact: Christy 803-554-6088

grace4healing@gmail.com

Contact: Kathy 803-546-6010

kcs6010@gmail.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Burkburnett/Wichita Falls, TX

Contact: Betsy Kopor 817-923-4757

forgiven@racheltx.org

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Arlington, VA

Contact: Project Rachel 703-841-2504

projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org

Contact: Project Rachel 888-456-HOPE

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Wheeling, WV

Contact: Tawnya Knierim 304-905-9860

rachelsvineyardwv@comcast.net

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Note: Note: Retreat held at John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston, WV.

Lake Geneva (Interdenominational), WI

Contact: Women contact Donna Brendel 262-620-3608

donnajane@twentythree61.com

Contact: Men/Espanol contact Noel Rivera 262-914-6960 noel@twentythree61.com

Friday, November 4, 2016

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Cypress / Katy (Interdenominational), TX

Contact: Mary Lee Mason 254-383-1717

rvinfo@newheartoftexas.org

Thursday, November 10, 2016

Saturday, November 12, 2016

Thunder Bay, ON, Canada

Contact: Mary Jo McDermott 807-252-7420

cocoa@tbaytel.net

Contact: Terry Howard 807-683-7066

thoward@tbaytel.net

Denomination: Interdenominational

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Encino (Interdenominational), CA

Contact: Tegra Little 310-433-6008

nolongerbound@faithfamily.org

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Fresno, CA

Contact: Jennifer Butcher 877-629-6626

butcher_jennifer@yahoo.com

Contact: Paula and Edward Davalos – Español

888-686-8537

paula.d@fbcares.org

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Mt. View/Santa Clara Valley (Interdenominational), CA

Contact: Shirley Poitier 408-837-0990

Shirley@realoptions.net

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

San Jose/Greater South Bay (Interdenominational), CA

Contact: Shirley Poitier 408-837-0990

Shirley@realoptions.net

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Santa Cruz Valley (Interdenominational), CA

Contact: Shirley Poitier 408-837-0990

Shirley@realoptions.net

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Georgetown (Interdenominational), DE

Contact: Teresa Bolden 302-856-4344

tbolden@sussexpregnancy.com

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Columbus (Interdenominational), GA

Contact: Sr. Pat Thompson, RSM 706-569-0614

Contact: Stephanie May 912-306-0406

stephmay@bellsouth.net

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Northwest Indiana, IN

Contact: Rosanne Kouris 219-765-1396

nwinrv@outlook.com

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Saginaw, MI

Contact: Lori Becker 989-797-6652

lbecker@dioceseofsaginaw.org

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Asheville, NC

Contact: Jackie Childers 980 241-0251

jackie.childers1@gmail.com

Friday, November 11, 2016

Sunday, November 13, 2016

Charlotte, NC

Contact: Jackie Childers 980-241-0251 jackie.childers1@gmail.com
Friday, November 11, 2016
Sunday, November 13, 2016

Dallas, TX

Contact: Regina Rivas 214 544 2273 rrivas@prolifedallas.org
Friday, November 11, 2016
Sunday, November 13, 2016

Seattle/Western Washington, WA

Contact: Valerie Jacobs 800-822-HOPE valeriepr@aol.com
Contact: (Español) Marisela 206-450-7814 valeriepr@aol.com
Friday, November 11, 2016
Sunday, November 13, 2016

Note: Retreat held in Seabeck, WA Contact: Valerie 800-822-HOPE

Kent, England

Contact: Pam Nelson 07851331816 pamnelson566@gmail.com
Friday, November 18, 2016
Sunday, November 20, 2016

Taipei, Taiwan

Contact: Georgie 02-27290265
Contact: Georgie Hsieh 0933426608 georgiehsieh@yahoo.com.tw
Language: Mandarin
Friday, November 18, 2016
Sunday, November 20, 2016

Palm Beach (Español), FL

Contact: Emily Babilonia-Gonzalez 561-966-8580
ebabilonia12@bellsouth.net
Friday, November 18, 2016
Sunday, November 20, 2016

Ann Arbor, MI

Contact: Beth Bauer 734-879-0427 lpbbauer@yahoo.com
Friday, November 18, 2016
Sunday, November 20, 2016

Bogota Central, Colombia

Contact: Myriam Fernandez 300-444-1016
Contact: Luis Gabriel Montañez 322-200-2056
Language: Spanish
Friday, November 25, 2016
Sunday, November 27, 2016

Houston, TX

Contact: Cindy 713-825-0649
Contact: Traci or Cindy 281-658-7366 rvhouston@yahoo.com
Friday, November 25, 2016
November 27, 2016

Houston (Interdenominational), TX

Contact: April 281-236-8719 april@gulfcoasthealing.org
Contact: Shay Christophson 281-799-2002 shay@gulfcoasthealing.org
Contact: Stephanie Walker 713-690-2210 steph@gulfcoasthealing.org
Denomination: Catholic
Friday, November 25, 2016
Sunday, November 27, 2016

Bogota, Colombia

Contact: Yahayra Montenegro 3006186326 yaenmo@hotmail.com
Language: Spanish
Friday, December 2, 2016
Sunday, December 4, 2016

Tampa, FL

Contact: Emma Boe 813-924-4173 projectrachel@ccdosp.org
Friday, December 2, 2016
Sunday, December 4, 2016

Oklahoma City, OK

Contact: Margo MacRobert 405-623-3844
rachelsvineyardokc@gmail.com
Friday, December 2, 2016
Sunday, December 4, 2016

York County, PA

Contact: Becky Biter 717-788-4959
Contact: Joy Crimmins 717-788-4959 Rvpamd@gmail.com
Friday, December 2, 2016
Sunday, December 4, 2016

Dallas (Español), TX

Contact: Eileen Kuhlmann 972-679-4760 ekuhlmann@prolifedallas.org
Friday, December 2, 2016
Sunday, December 4, 2016

Rock Hill, SC

Contact: Sarah – Spanish 803 627 1209
Contact: Christy 803-554-6088 grace4healing@gmail.com
Contact: Kathy 803-546-6010 kcs6010@gmail.com
Language: Spanish
Friday, December 9, 2016
Sunday, December 11, 2016