

## **FORGIVENESS**

If you are suffering from grief after having had an abortion, remember that the Church always offers forgiveness. Nothing is unforgivable and the Church is the hospital of healing. Just as the Father ran to the Prodigal Son when he came home, so God is waiting with open arms to receive you back home!

### **YOU ARE NOT ALONE...**

Every year, numerous women and men suffer the after-effects of abortion that can include the following:

- Feelings of emptiness and loss
- Intense grief or sadness
- Depression
- Guilt or remorse
- Inability to forgive yourself or others
- Anxiety
- Intense anger
- Emotional numbness
- Shame about your abortion
- Isolation
- Insomnia or nightmares
- Flashbacks
- Preoccupation with your aborted baby
- Discomfort around or keen interest in babies
- Preoccupation with becoming pregnant again
- Suicidal thoughts
- Difficulty in relationships
- Fear that God will punish you
- Problems with drugs and alcohol

## **Rachel's Vineyard Retreats For Healing After Abortion**

Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats are a beautiful opportunity for any person who has struggled with the emotional or spiritual pain of an abortion. The retreat is a very specific process designed to help you experience the mercy and compassion of God. It is also an opportunity to surface and release repressed feelings of anger, shame, guilt and grief. There are many exercises to help you grieve the loss of your unborn child and to receive and accept God's forgiveness. The retreat concludes with a Memorial Service. The weekend will help

"I experienced a great inner healing as a result of attending the post abortion retreat. I highly recommend this retreat to anyone who has felt the void and shame of the abortion experience. It is a wonderful way to forgive yourself, find the unconditional love of Christ and grieve the loss of your little child."

"I was terrified to take that first step forward and participate in Rachel's Vineyard. It seemed safer to remain in hiding in the darkness, keeping the pain locked up deep inside rather than to risk exposing my shame to another soul. Now I am grateful to have experienced God's healing and forgiveness with other women in an atmosphere of complete acceptance and trust. Rachel's Vineyard has been a blessing to me."

"I never knew my wife had suffered so much pain over an abortion she had before I met her. It was a real eye opener to attend the Rachel's Vineyard retreat with her and be a support in an area of her life where there was so much secret grief. Our marriage has truly been blessed. We are closer now than we have ever been and I had the privilege of being able to spiritually adopt her child during the Memorial Service."

"The Rachel's Vineyard Retreat restored my life. I feel whole again, alive and capable of love."

"For the first time in 20 years, I was able to share my grief, my guilt, my anger. I was able to mourn the loss of my baby. For this, I will always be grateful."

"Before this retreat I was spiritually dead. I was empty inside. I felt separated from the church and from God. After this retreat, I now feel alive, and happy to be alive. I feel the love of God inside me."

"To any person considering the need to reconcile their abortion, the retreat is a wonderful gift you can give to herself. You are able to experience the sadness, grief, and shame in the company of other women and men feeling very much the same. You are able to turn this pain into hope with the help of nurturing counselors and supportive caretakers. You are not rushed or hurried, but given time to reflect and become open to the healing process gradually. In the spirit of penance and reconciliation this retreat addresses the pain and suffering of those who feel their sin of abortion has (made them) outcasts from their church and their faith."

"For 18 years I have been haunted with heavy guilt that no one could take away, tormented by thoughts of what my child would be like. Through participating in Rachel's Vineyard, I was finally able to forgive myself. I know that God has given me a peaceful mind, cleansed my heart, and has washed away my guilt."

"Rachel's Vineyard is a gift to the church."

"Rachel's Vineyard is a powerful therapy for the soul."

## *About Rachel's Vineyard*

"Jesus Himself said that He came to call sinners and not the self-righteous. I pray that all who participate in Rachel's Vineyard with the longing to be free and to be healed by Jesus, may find Him, the source of true joy, peace and love, and allow God to restore them to wholeness and happiness. I am praying much for you."

-God Bless you.

**Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

"I cannot think of another work of this kind so well done. A most difficult and painful human problem is engaged with faith, psychological insight and trust."

**Benedict J. Groeschel, CFR**

Psychologist and Spiritual Writer

"I heartily endorse Rachel's Vineyard to men and women of all Christian Denominations. I have seen life-changing miracles of healing during the retreats."

**Candace Banks**

Executive Director, WEBA, VA.

"I would not hesitate to recommend the retreat to anyone I know that has a past abortion experience if they are searching for God and his forgiveness. Our experience with the Rachel's Vineyard weekend has been remarkable. WE have never witnessed the intensity, depth of healing and restoration.

**Pastor Phil Hosinger**

Family Care Network

"I have seen so many lives changed through Rachel's Vineyard Retreats. There is truly nothing like it. The retreat uses effective exercises combined with the power of prayer and scripture to deal with grief, guilt, and shame in a way that brings deep healing, emotionally and spiritually."

**Martha Shuping, MD**

Psychiatrist

## Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address  
\_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Area code) Phone number  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address  
\_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:

**Diocese of Joliet**

Mail registration and payment to:

**Rachel's Vineyard**

**P.O. Box 1133**

**Frankfort, IL 60423**

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**Contact Kay for  
upcoming retreat dates at  
1-866-99-4-GIVE**

[www.rachelsvineyard.org](http://www.rachelsvineyard.org)

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Rachel's Vineyard is an international ministry of Priests for Life, under the Pastoral Direction of Father Frank A. Pavone.

*Currently 600 retreats are held annually in 47 states and 17 countries.*

## General Information

**Registration:** The retreat weekend is designed for about twelve participants. To register, contact Kay for upcoming retreat dates at **1-866-99-4-GIVE**.

Participants will receive a call before the weekend to address or answer any questions about the retreat. Feel free to call if you have any questions.

Participants will receive a letter of confirmation with directions and a map to the St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Center in Romeoville, IL.

**Schedule:** The weekend begins on Friday evening and concluded mid-Sunday afternoon.

**Cost:** The \$125 fee includes the lodging for two nights, all meal and materials.

**Accommodations:** The St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Center retreat facilities are located at 402 S. Independence Blvd. in Romeoville, IL. Linens are provided, but you will need to bring towels and washcloths.

**Confidentiality:** Rachel's Vineyard strictly respects confidentiality and privacy. If you or someone you know is hurting, please call today.

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Rachel's Vineyard Retreats  
For Healing After Abortion

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**Rachel's Vineyard** weekend retreats offer a beautiful opportunity for healing to any woman or man who has struggled with the emotional or spiritual pain of an abortion.

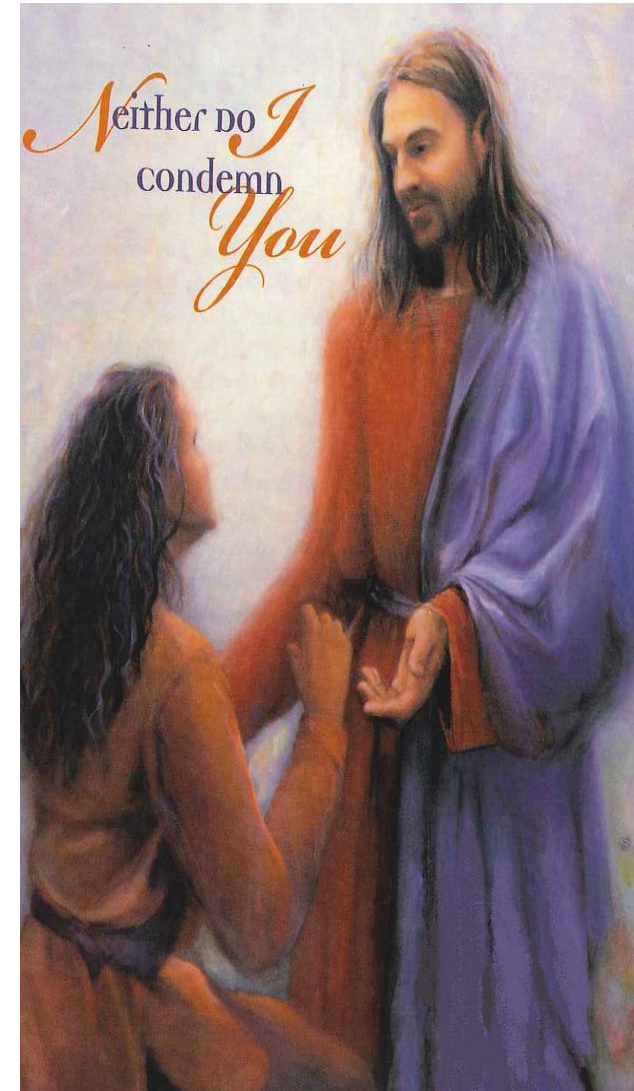
The retreat is a chance to get away from the daily pressure of work and family, to focus on a painful time in life, and to begin healing through a supportive and non-judgmental process.

Spiritual exercises focusing on God's forgiveness, compassion, and mercy are shared through psychological exercises that help participants work through repressed grief and anger that may exist.

Many preconceived fears of condemnation are transformed into blessings; memories of abandonment, pain, and confusion are replaced by peace and reconciliation.

**Rachel's Vineyard** retreat, written by Theresa Karminski Burke, PhD with Barbara Cullen, focuses on God's love and forgiveness in a nonjudgmental environment. Based in Catholicism, the retreat is open to and welcomes individuals of all denominations.

# Hope after Abortion



# 1-866-99-4-GIVE