



Published in **Life in Focus Newsletters**
Fall 2009

A Publication of **Rachel's Vineyard Ministries**
www.RachelsVineyard.org

Post-Abortion Healing

Letter from a past Rachel's Vineyard Retreatant

My name is Molly, and it was a little more than two years ago when our Lord placed in my ear a call to a vineyard. By coming back to the Church with a granddaughter who came to live with my husband and me, it all began. In a simple homily message, thirty plus years of denial about my abortion was awakened. I wondered, how did this priest know to reach into my heart and squeeze it? "God's desire," he said, "is to grant us mercy, forgiveness and love, softening our hardened hearts so that we can repent and have eternal life with Him." He was telling us about Rachel's Vineyard, a confidential weekend retreat for people exposed to abortion. I found myself shrinking down in the pew, wondering if people could see that it was me to whom he was speaking. I told myself he had to be talking to someone else, that it couldn't be me because I didn't need to bring it all back up again. I had buried it so long ago. So I ignored what I heard and decided I would pray for these people that they could be healed.

But I guess God wasn't happy with my response. A few months later, He came to me again, once more inviting me. It was irritating how my conscience kept at me. Answering every reason I gave not to go, I eventually gave in. I finally laid down the fear I blanketed myself with so long ago, fear that I used to deny my access to my Lord.

I went to the weekend retreat, and through the living scriptures, I came face to face with Jesus. As I shared with the group, I remembered all the sins that piled up over the years, and with my eyes closed, feeling vulnerable, afraid and full of shame, I cried once more in fear that He would see me as I saw myself, dirty and unlovable.

I continued to feel His presence in the leaders who guided us through the weekend. When I finally emptied myself of all the pain, I felt Jesus wrap his arms around me and weep with me. He took my hand and told me that He loved me and that I was forgiven. He asked me to forgive myself and told me that a very dear child in heaven was praying for me and was waiting to be

reunited with me. When my tears and sobs slowed down, I found that all I hated in myself seemed to be dying, and thoughts of new life, filled with His love, rose up in me. He turned something ugly and sinful into a joyful and beautiful awakening of His love and mercy.

Rachel's Vineyard Ministries believes that Jesus calls us to walk with Him and to spread the news of His forgiveness. I am grateful for the gift of support it offers to singles and couples, men and women alike, all ages and faiths. I am grateful it is in international organizations with 650 retreats held annually in 47 states and 22 countries so that many like me, and someone that you may know, can find healing too.

Very often, I have to remind myself once again, that no sin is greater than God's mercy. My father does not ask me to lie in the trenches and mourn forever and a day or to be pitied or to lose hope. He asks me to carry my cross of sorrow and sadness with a joyful heart, for through the pain His love can come forth.

You may know someone like me but wonder how can I help? You can help by becoming informed on what Rachel's Vineyard is about. You can become a Counselor of life and become educated in life before birth. It is likely many of us are connected in some way to abortion, as it is a known fact that one in four men or women is suppressing this.

My husband asked me, "Why are you doing this?" I answered, "Because I have to." I cannot say "NO" any longer. I believe God wants us to love each other, reach out to each other, and bring those in pain to the path of His mercy. When we step outside of ourselves and help others in need, even when we do not know who they are, His grace may begin to set them free. We're looking to offer seeds of hope. God waits patiently for all of us to be merciful, generous with forgiveness, and filled with His love. I believe He is waiting to heal each and every one of His children spiritually, physically, and emotionally.



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