

NOTICE OF RETREAT CANCELATIONS

We're grateful that your reaching out to learn more about Rachel's Vineyard. This ministry has been actively spreading throughout the world for the past 30 years and we are glad you found us.

Knowing that you may be searching for help right now, it pains me deeply to share that we have put a hold on all our retreats until this coronavirus passes us over.

One of the really unfortunate things is that during this kind of a crisis, people have a more intense awareness of unresolved grief which can be triggered or surfaced when we feel we don't have control.

The coronavirus is not only causing a viral pandemic but it's also opening the gates of grief for many. Indeed, death always moves in the same company with grieving.

Abortion is also an area of deep pain and grief. It is an intimate experience of loss of a baby in pregnancy. Whenever our attachments are threatened, harmed, or severed, we naturally grieve. We experience a mixture of different emotions such as shock and disbelief. We feel anxiety. We become sad and possibly lonely. We may withdraw from others and stop seeing friends. We get angry. We may feel guilty or regretful.

Grief is normal and natural. As much as we may want to avoid and deny grief, it responds well to awareness, attention, and expression. You will feel better if you give yourself permission to mourn. Mourning is being aware of your grief, giving it the attention it needs and deserves, and expressing it and releasing it.

So keep your heads up, your hearts open, and your hands washed! We're in this together! There are retreat teams praying for you each day, as they prepare to welcome you as soon as the ban on public gatherings is lifted and your retreat can be rescheduled.

You don't have to wait until a weekend retreat to begin your healing journey. You can email or call any of our retreat sites **listed on our website** and they will be happy to write/speak with you to offer encouragement, support and love.

When we are feeling emotional pain, we can tune into it and allow it to teach us what we are really worried, sad, or angry about. That makes it easier to express it. We can journal about it, draw it, dance it out, talk to others about it. We can listen to music or watch movies that help us access, understand, and share our feelings. Mourning our grief in these ways will offer us an emergency release valve from the pressure that builds, so that we can carry on.

Be attentive to your spiritual health, especially now, to make it a point to care for your soul. One positive outcome of mandated isolation is that it creates the opportunity for spiritual contemplation and practice. In times of loss, its normal to wonder why things

happen. We naturally question the meaning of our own lives and can turn our attention to our deepest beliefs and values.

If you've been struggling with beliefs, values, meaning, and life goals and dreams during this pandemic, you're experiencing the spiritual aspect of grief. A great way to care for your spirit is to be intentional about giving it time, compassion and attention.

I encourage you to spend time each day doing whatever helps you get in touch with a God that loves you deeply, understands your pain, and longs for your healing and peace. For some people that might be meditation or prayer. For others it can be reading a spiritual text, speaking affirmations, and attending a religious or spiritual service online, exercise, writing in a journal, listening to music, or spending time in nature.

When you do attend a Rachel's Vineyard weekend, your life will be internally and spiritually restructured, rebuilt and renewed in a way most people could never imagine! So hang in there and have hope! Rachel's Vineyard Retreat will help you pass through the clouds of mourning and experience a deep joy and resurrection in your own body and heart experienced by thousands of women and men each year, in over 80 countries and in dozens of languages throughout the world.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your loved ones. We are praying intentionally hoping that you remain healthy and hopeful during these unprecedented times. Our hotline and retreat site contact numbers and emails are still being answered, so don't hesitate to reach out!

With all my hopes,
Theresa Burke, Ph.D
Founder Rachel's Vineyard Ministries