



Vine & Branches

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

MAIN MENU

[Home](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Retreats](#)

[Contact US](#)

[Our Store](#)

ARTICLES

[A Testimony of Hope and Healing](#)

[Grieving in the Light of Hope and Healing](#)

[Abortion Causes Grief and Pain for Military Service Members and their Families](#)

[Message from the Pastoral Director](#)

[Events of Interest: Virtual RV Training Good Shepherd Project](#)

[Connect with us!! Rachel's Vineyard Social Media](#)

[United in Prayer](#)

[Upcoming Grief to Grace Retreats](#)

[November Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Weekends](#)

UNSUBSCRIBE

November 2021

**"I will carry the message about
Rachel's Vineyard
for the rest of my life"
A Testimony of Hope and Healing**

Dear Dr. Burke,

In August 2021, I attended Rachel's Vineyard in Dewitte, Michigan with Della Seeley Rachel's Vineyard team leader; Eileen Craig, psychotherapist; Fr. David Rosenberg; and five other team members. The retreat was based out of the Lansing Diocese in Michigan and held at St. Francis Retreat Center.

I had two abortions in 1973 and 1976, so for nearly 50 years, I carried the negative feelings of shame and sorrow about my decisions. At age 36 I entered Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), found sobriety, and have remained sober for 34 years. I was able to dedicate my sobriety helping newcomer women in AA, and to teaching young people the subject of English for 30+ years as a public-school teacher, and, yet, even with these monumental life accomplishments, I still carried sadness and guilt about the abortions I'd chosen, the black hole of feelings that having two abortions at age 22 and 25 had created. There were years upon years that I didn't consciously consider the abortions I'd had, but something was always gnawing at my happiness—just under the surface of my psyche.

During the Covid-19 shutdown, I experienced a deep depression because my community activities were cancelled, and I felt loneliness unlike any other I'd had in my life. I didn't have a husband; I didn't have children, I didn't have grandchildren, and my life was empty. My rumination drew to the abortions I'd had nearly 50 years earlier. During those days of aloneness, I realized I must find help to heal from my choice to abort two children. I made one call to my Catholic friend, Judy, who immediately put me in touch with Rachel's Vineyard. By the next day, I was being interviewed by Della Seeley, Rachel's Vineyard team leader, about my abortions and the effects they'd had on my life. Finally, with that interview, I felt a glimmer of hope that healing could happen for me!

While I waited for the retreat, I read your book, *Forbidden Grief: The Unspoken Pain of Abortion*, and began to understand the after-effects of my abortions *did* leave wounds on my heart, psyche and spirit. I also learned that the abortion industry was a business, which I'd *never* considered before your book.

I had a very difficult emotional time leading up to the retreat date. It was like God sent me back in time to remember all of my choices before, during, and after my abortions. I am certainly not the young woman who'd made the decisions for abortion; however, I was reliving that period of my life as if it had happened yesterday. All the shape, loss of control, darkness, self-hate, and the anger toward others had returned to me, and as Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Weekend grew near, the deeper and darker my memories became. The depth of my lifetime sorrow was finally revealed. Waiting for the retreat was one of the greatest suffering times of my life. I talked to Della, who wisely explained that his darkness comes to many participants. Even the literature she sent to me told me to expect this brewing caldron to surface. Just how could I have kept these secrets hidden, and how had my life been twisted and turned because of my choice to have the abortions?

When the morning of the retreat finally came, I felt some relief that I'd be with others who understood my decisions for abortion and their lifelong after-effects. I felt safe and comforted by the abortion stories told by the team and retreat members. Finally, I knew I wasn't alone. The healing began as Friday evening started. I knew instinctively that I'd finally found a haven for what ailed me. As the weekend unfolded, I truly felt the Love and Presence of Jesus. I saw my children dancing, running, and giggling in a meadow with the 18 other lost children from my retreat members during one of the meditations. All the children were in Joy at being with Jesus. Through the 48-hour weekend, I gradually saw and felt the healing that Rachel's Vineyard offered, and also saw and felt how the *Holy Spirit* had transformed me. My experiences during the weekend retreat were life-changing. A Miracle, Divine Intervention, was performed for me.

Because of the relief and joy I've felt from Rachel's Vineyard, I've already spoken to other women who have had abortions in hopes they, too, will seek relief at your retreats. I will carry the message about Rachel's Vineyard for the rest of my life. I have peace of mind and deep gratitude for your initiation of this spiritual phenomenon.

The Scripture, meditation, journaling, hands-on activities, blessings from the priest, and united healing of the memorial service deeply touched my heart, and I have been healed in my soul. Thankyou—thank you—thank you, Dr. Burke, for continuing this path of healing for those who suffer the results of abortion.

Sincerely,
Anonymous (age 70)



**"We give thanks to you,
O God,
we give thanks,
for your name is near.
We recount your
wondrous deeds."
~ Psalm 75:1**



"Grieving in the Light of Hope and Healing"

We recently held a healing service on November 3rd, 2021 at Saint Mary Magdalen Parish in Media, PA. [The service was recorded and can be watched in full here.](#)

Our event was a sacred evening to remember the shattering, life changing experiences of death as we honor our grieving. Discover the importance of remembering, rituals, and reflection, with the freedom to gather and pray as we commit to taking steps toward deeper healing. We explore the work of grieving and reconciliation—its necessity and its challenge—as well as its sweet assurance of healing and our eternal destiny with eyes of faith and hope. The presentations are followed by a special healing service.

Hosted by Monsignor Ralph Cheiffo
Pastor, St Mary Magdalen Parish

Presentation by Dr. Theresa Burke
Founder, Rachel's Vineyard
with Testimonies from Rachel's Vineyard Retreatants
and a Grief to Grace participant

Presentation by Msgr. Mike Mannion
Spiritual Director, Discovery Ministries, Inc.

Performance by Mark Forrest
International Irish Tenor



"Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love,
for I have put my trust in you.
Show me the way I should go,
for to you I entrust my life."
~ Psalm 143:8



Abortion Causes Grief and Pain for Military Service Members and Their Families By Kevin Burke, LSW

Jody Duffy, is a nurse, a former Army officer and a military spouse of 35 years as the wife of a major general. In the following excerpt from my book [Tears of the Fisherman](#) Jody shares some important insights from her extensive personal and professional experience helping women and men recovering from abortion loss:

How widespread is the experience of unplanned pregnancy and abortion in the military?

Jody: The military has a higher pregnancy rate than any other any group in the U.S. Because abortions are procured at local clinics, there is no means to track abortion rates among those pregnant military members. According to a few military doctors and OB nurses I have spoken to, a large number of female soldiers and dependents go to a military medical facility to validate the pregnancy and never come back. They procure an abortion at a local abortion facility.

How does abortion impact our military personnel?

Jody: The pain and grief of abortion only adds more stress and conflict to their lives. Whether it is the female soldier not wanting to sacrifice her military career or feeling pressured to fulfill her duty, or the male soldier feeling fatherhood may stand in the way of his mission, sacrificing our unborn children to abortion is an unfortunate and frequent reality of military life. Abortion decisions often involve varying degrees of pressure and conflict. This predisposes them to have more intense post abortion reactions and even trauma.

Left untreated, how does this post-abortion problem manifest in a soldier's marriage and family life?

Jody: Abortion provokes a major crisis in the lives of a married couple and that is frequently followed by the instability of that relationship. Frequently, one or both of the couple have been involved in an abortion before they met their spouse. Many carry this baggage into the marriage. causing even further problems in the relationship.

The family is the cornerstone of the church, our nation and civilization. Whether National Guard, Reserves, or active duty, our military families are the strength of our soldiers. When unresolved abortion grief leads to strife in our military families, it affects the strength of our soldiers, the strength of our military, and ultimately the strength of our nation.

Why is this an important concern for our military and civilian political leaders?

Jody: Our military leaders should be very concerned about the effects abortion has on their soldiers. It is tragic that soldiers may choose abortion to try to protect their mission.

Soldiers who bring unresolved abortion grief and even trauma into their mission are not able to function in the same way they did before the abortion, therefore compromising their capacity to serve safely and effectively. Unresolved abortion grief can affect a soldier's morale, performance and effectiveness, which in turn may affect the unit's cohesiveness and mission.

Is there an abortion connection to the high suicide rate among veterans?

Jody: Eventually soldiers become veterans. This unresolved abortion grief follows them into their civilian lives. Suicide rates among young veterans are rising at an alarming rate. Unresolved abortion grief can be a factor in these suicides.

Abortion recovery programs such as **Rachel's Vineyard** provide women and men an experience of a safe and very effective grieving process and emotional and spiritual support that are so essential for recovery. It's a foundation they can build on as they make the transition to post military life.

It is our duty to reach out and help serve those who have served our nation. Fortunately, I have had very positive results at veterans' conferences and on veterans' Facebook groups to which I belong. But we need to do more to get the word out and connect both our active military and our veterans with resources for [abortion recovery](#).

LifeNews Note: Kevin Burke, LSW, is a pastoral associate of [Priests for Life](#) and co-founder of [Rachel's Vineyard](#). An expert on men and abortion loss, he is the author of **Tears of the Fisherman and co-author of **Rivers of Blood/Oceans of Mercy**. Jody served as an Atlanta Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Leader and as a Military Liaison for the **Silent no More Awareness Campaign**. Jody is also the Military Outreach Coordinator for **Post Abortion Treatment and Healing (PATH)** ministry in Atlanta. She continues to help our nation's service women and men find the information and resources they need to recover from abortion loss.*

***Article originally posted by [LifeNews here](#).*



Today and everyday,
we are grateful for our
military service personnel,
past and present,
and the families who support them



Message from the Pastoral Director

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Those who sell abortion, and who are now frantically trying to convince the Supreme Court to keep it legal, try to paint pregnancy and childbirth as obstacles to educational or employment opportunities, or as more dangerous than abortion.

This position ignores, however, the immense burden and damage that abortion brings, and how it is often the obstacle to the fulfillment and success people are seeking.

The very existence of our healing ministries gives witness to this truth, as well as to the hope that those burdens, obstacles and wounds can indeed be overcome and healed.

We could literally be just months away from the reversal of Roe vs. Wade and the start of a new chapter in our nation of protection of unborn babies and their families from abortion. The Supreme Court will hear arguments in the *Dobbs* case on December 1st and issue its ruling sometime in the subsequent months.

We have made sure that the voices of those who have been wounded by abortion and have found healing in our ministries have been brought into this case and are being heard loud and clear at the Court. Let's continue to bring that healing and to bring those voices to our entire nation!

Sincerely,



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



"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life."
~ Melody Beattie



Events of Interest

Virtual Training Event:

Join Dr. Theresa Burke, a pioneer and expert in the Aborting Healing Counseling movement for a dynamic and life-changing series of training that will build and strengthen a solid foundation for Healing After Abortion.

The Rachel's Vineyard Professional Training Series will provide unique, practical, and dynamic workshops to equip you to help those healing from abortion.

This unique training will be held in 6 sessions over the course of 2 years.

Session Dates:

- ~~February 22, 2021~~
- ~~June 14, 2021~~
- ~~October 18, 2021~~
- February 28, 2022
- June 13, 2022
- October 17, 2022

Costs:

- \$15 per class
- \$20 additional per class for CEU's
- Multiple sessions discount
- Pay over time

Audience:

- Clinicians--morning classes are geared to clinicians, but open to all.
- Clergy--are welcome to attend all classes, with one class addressing your special role.
- Rachel's Vineyard Team--are welcome to attend all classes.

- Anyone—and everyone is welcome. Even if you aren't currently involved in this ministry, understanding the trauma that can stem from abortion can help you help so many!

*To learn more about this training, [click here](#).

*To visit the Facebook Event page, [click here](#).

*To Register directly, [click here](#).



The Good Shepherd Project: Virtual Event for Priests & Deacons

Next Seminar: November 17 @ 7:00 p.m. ET

"Sacramental Marriage Prep for Couples and an Unhealed Abortion"

[Sign up here to receive the zoom information for the Seminar!](#)

Presenters:

Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life

Dr. Theresa Burke, Founder of Rachel's Vineyard & Pastoral Associate, Priests for Life

Kevin Burke, MSS, LSW, Co-Founder, Rachel's Vineyard & Pastoral Associate, Priests for Life

Janet Morana, Executive Director, Priests for Life

There will be ample time for comments and questions from participants.

Sign up at www.TheGoodShepherdProject.com

"The Good Shepherd Project," is an effort to assist priests, deacons, and pastors of other denominations to shepherd their people in regard to the ongoing tragedy of abortion. This involves several dimensions of pastoral activity:

1. Leading our people in prayer about this crucial topic;
2. Guiding people to alternatives to abortion if they have a pregnancy they feel they cannot handle;
3. Healing the wounds of those who have had abortions or participated in abortion in any way;
4. Teaching and preaching the Gospel of Life

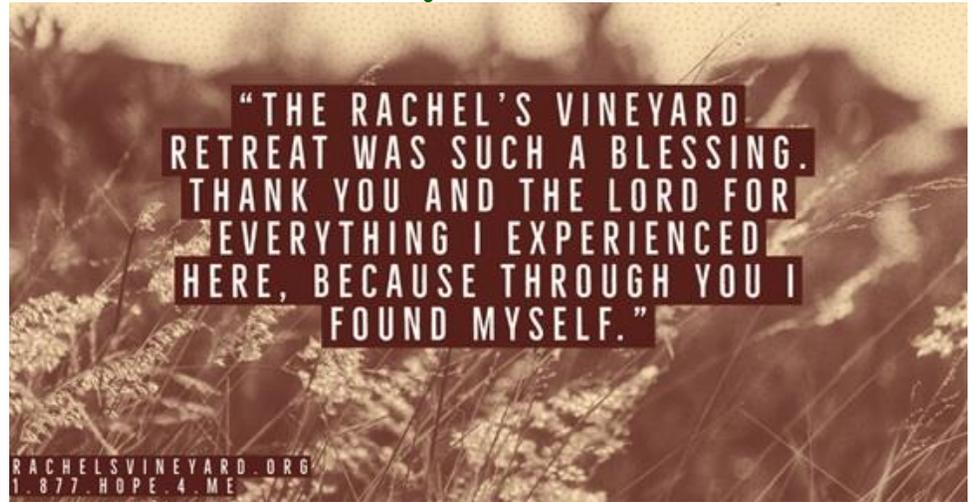
If you signed up for past seminars, no need to sign up twice, you will automatically receive the zoom information.



**"I don't have to chase extraordinary moments
to find happiness—it's right in front of me
if I'm paying attention
and practicing gratitude."**

~ Brene Brown

Connect with us!!
Rachel's Vineyard in Social Media



Facebook Fan Page: [facebook.com/rachelsvineyard](https://www.facebook.com/rachelsvineyard)
YouTube: [youtube.com/user/rachelsvineyard](https://www.youtube.com/user/rachelsvineyard)
Twitter: twitter.com/RVHealing
Pinterest: [pinterest.com/rachelsvineyard](https://www.pinterest.com/rachelsvineyard)
Instagram: [instagram.com/rvhealing](https://www.instagram.com/rvhealing)
Tik Tok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@rachelsvineyard?>

If you are a Rachel's Vineyard retreat site with graphics, testimonials, or videos that you would like us to share on our social media accounts, please email them to assistant@rachelsvineyard.org

**"Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy;
they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom."
~ Marcel Proust**

United in Prayer

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving with our friends and families this year, we are reminded of just how grateful we are too all of the wonderful **retreat leaders, team members, and volunteers** that help on our **Rachel's Vineyard and Grief to Grace** retreats around the world. We are blessed and inspired by your dedication, and keep you and your families in our daily prayers!!

**"For each new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food,**

for love and friends
For everything Thy goodness sends."
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson



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

Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

Email: Diane@griefftoGrace.org

Call: 612-440-7247

November 12-17, 2021

Philadelphia, PA

Email: Philadelphia@GriefftoGrace.org

Call: 610-427-1187

Call: 610-203-2002

March 13-18, 2022

Phoenix, AZ

Email: Phoenix@griefftoGrace.org

Call: 480-215-6762

March 20-25, 2022

Beaverton, OR

Email: GriefftoGraceOregon@gmail.com

Call: 541-357-7501

Houston, TX

Email: G2GTexas@GriefftoGrace.org

Call: 866-763-6557

Lake Charles, LA

Email: griefftoGracelouisiana@lcdiocese.org

Call: Marjorie Long – 337-489-2473

Newark, NJ

Email: info@griefftoGrace.org

Call: 610-203-2002

International:

Perth, Australia

Website: <https://rachelsvineyardministriesperth.wordpress.com/grief-to-grace>

Email: perth@griefftoGrace.org

Call: +61-0-413-593-059

Kelowna, Canada

Email: G2GKelowna@gmail.com

Call: 250-255-7223

El Salvador, Central America

Email: Anajhill@hotmail.com

Call: Ana Julia Hill – 503-772-97-721

Call: Nueva Alianza – 503-229-87-000

Cote D'Azur, France

Website: www.duchagrinalagrace.com

Email: g2g.lsi.france@gmail.com

Call: +33 6 09 39 79 27

London, UK

Email: info@griegtogracesuk.org

Call: +44-207-937-4297

Call: +44-07484-248-799

Slovenia

Email: tomaz.mikus@gmail.com



**"Do not be anxious about anything,
but in every situation, by prayer and petition,
with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
~ Philippians 4:6**



**November Rachel's Vineyard
Retreat Weekends**

Dubuque, IA

Contact: Teresa Shepard 563-542-8378 psalmniv139@gmail.com

Contact: Amy Houselog 563-542-9548 houselog4@msn.com

Website Address: www.dcrtl.org/rv

Denomination: Interdenominational

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Hermosillo Sonora, Mexico

Contact: Tonatzin Lagarda Burton 6622 27

6020 laguardiaporlavida@gmail.com

Contact: Marisol Astiazaran Amaya 6621 04

0842 marisolastiazaran@gmail.com

Contact: labor_t@hotmail.com

Language: Spanish

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Lake Geneva (Interdenominational), WI

Contact: Women contact Amber Culverhouse 262-325-1970
littlesue123@yahoo.com

Contact: Men contact Alex Chobanian 262-989-6553
alexchobanian@gmail.com

Contact: Donna Brendel 262-620-3608
donnajane2361@gmail.com

Contact: Para Español llamada Laura Brown 414-975-2270
lsbs2p@gmail.com
Website Address: www.twentythree61.com

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Lancaster County, PA

Contact: Becky Biter – English 717-788-4959
undefeatedcourage@gmail.com

Contact: Indhira Garcia – Spanish 717-788-4959
vdryorkpa@gmail.com

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Lubbock, TX

Contact: Mindy Yarbrough 806-702-2284
rios2000us@yahoo.com

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

Contact: Nancy Blom 763-250-9313
rachels@rvineyardmn.org

Website Address: www.rvineyardmn.org

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

New Orleans, LA

Contact: Pam Richard 504-460-9360
richj504@bellsouth.net

Contact: Donna Scheuermann 504-258-9183
donnas@1791.com

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Orlando, FL

Contact: Carmen Claypoole : English & Spanish 407-222-8584
projectrachel@cflcc.org

Language: Spanish

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Sacramento (Interdenominational), CA

Contact: Rose Romant Todd 707-631-9692
lethealingbegin@gmail.com

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Savannah/Augusta, GA

Contact: Stephanie May 912-306-0406
stephaniemay135@gmail.com

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Shreveport, LA

Contact: Rosalba Quiroz – Spanish 318-588-1064 rquiroz@dioshpt.org

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Sydney, NSW, Australia

Contact: Lena lena.krynicka@op.pl

Contact: Marg 0400 092 555 info@rachelsvineyard.org.au

Website Address: rachelsaus.blogspot.com

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Waupaca (Interdenominational), WI

Contact: Laura Denk 262-224-5617 laura@seedofhopecenter.org

Website Address: www.seedofhopecenter.org/support-services/post-abortion-services

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Wichita, KS

Contact: Bonnie Toombs 316-269-

3935 toombsb@CatholicDioceseOfWichita.org

Contact: Stephanie Nemecek 316-269-

3900x134 nemecheks@catholicdioceseofwichita.org

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Winnipeg (Interdenominational), MB, Canada

Contact: Chris Mackay 204-772-1923 loss@pregnancy.ca

Friday, November 5, 2021

Sunday, November 7, 2021

Bogotá-Minuto de Dios, Colombia

Contact: Blanca Yanet Uribe (321)436-5828 yaneturibe9@outlook.es

Language: Spanish

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Cedar Rapids, IA

Contact: Haley Brimmer 319-364-8967 haley@bridgehavencr.org

Website Address: bridgehavencr.org/abortion-recovery-support/take-courage/

Denomination: Interdenominational

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Central Indiana, IN

Contact: Jennie Hack 765-404-9583 jenniehack@gmail.com

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

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Georgetown (Interdenominational), DE

Contact: Teresa Bolden 302-856-4344 tbolden@sussexpregnancy.com

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Joliet/Lemont, IL

Contact: Kay Corcoran 866-994-4483 prolife@dioceseofjoliet.org

Contact: Heidi 815 634 3796 hmillercare@gmail.com

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Madison, WI

Contact: Mary Mead 608-221-9593 meadmt@sbcglobal.net

Contact: Mary Mead 608-821-3177 rachel@straphael.org

Website Address: www.madisondiocese.org/rachel

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Maison Saint Joseph, ACR, France

Contact: Joel Rosenfeld 06-08-42-43-

81 lavignederacheloise@gmail.com

Website Address: www.lavignederachel.net

Language: French

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Melbourne (Interdenominational), VIC, Australia

Contact: Anne Neville (03) 9870 7044 Anne@Neville.org

Website Address: www.opendoors.com.au

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Palm Beach, FL

Contact: Donna Gardner 561-602-4778 isaiah61@bellsouth.net

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Portland, OR

Contact: Lori Eckstine 541-942-2861 ProjectAurora@aol.com

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

San Francisco Bay Area (Interdenominational), CA

Website Address: realoptions.net/after-abortion-support/

Language: Spanish/English

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Trenton, NJ

Contact: Judy Warenkiewicz 732-536-6871 judywarren543@msn.com

Friday, November 12, 2021

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Duitama-Boyacá, Colombia

Contact: Claudia Andrea Alarcon 3006670174 andre-alarcon@hotmail.es

Language: Spanish

Saturday, November 13, 2021

Monday, November 15, 2021

Midland, TX

Contact: Priscilla Fuentez 432-897-4788 rachelvineyardsanangelo@gmail.com
Sunday, November 14, 2021
Tuesday, November 16, 2021

Doral (Español), FL

Contact: Martha Endara 305-586-9604 vinedoraquel@guadalupedoral.org
Language: Spanish
Friday, November 19, 2021
Sunday, November 21, 2021

Greater Boston Area, NH

Contact: Susan Clifton 603-315-6971 rvofgreaterboston@gmail.com
Denomination: Interdenominational
Friday, November 19, 2021
Sunday, November 21, 2021

Greater Boston Area, MA

Contact: Susan Clifton 603-315-6971 rvofgreaterboston@gmail.com
Denomination: Interdenominational
Friday, November 19, 2021
Sunday, November 21, 2021

Richmond, VA

Contact: Marty Montgomery-Jennings 804 704 0429 rv4hope@gmail.com
Contact: Maggie Carlson 804 432 2589 rv4hope@gmail.com
Friday, November 19, 2021
Sunday, November 21, 2021

Tai-Shan, New Taipei City, Taiwan

Contact: Georgie 02-27290265
Contact: Georgie Hsieh 0933426608 georgiehsieh@yahoo.com.tw
Language: Mandarin
Friday, November 19, 2021
Sunday, November 21, 2021

Poznan, Poland

Contact: Agnieszka Lewandowska +48 737 90 30 99 WinnicaRacheli.Poznan@outlook.com
Language: Polish
Friday, November 26, 2021
Sunday, November 28, 2021