

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Spring 2012

Coming Up

Spring Mini-Retreat Series: Spirituality for Everyday Living

May 9: Look at the View

June 6: The Gift of Play

10:00AM - 12:30PM

Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, MA

*The series will resume in the fall
on the following Wednesdays:
September 12, October 10,
November 14, December 12*

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Coming on Tuesdays to  
La Salette Retreat Center,  
Attleboro, MA . . .

Fall Mini-Retreat Series:  
Spirituality for Everyday Living  
September 25, October 23,  
November 20 and December 18

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My One Wild and Precious Life Women's Retreat

November 30 - December 2
La Salette Retreat Center
Attleboro, MA

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**For information & registration:**  
Contact Peggy at (508) 548-9149 or  
[timeoutretreats@comcast.net](mailto:timeoutretreats@comcast.net)

### One Light Sunday Service

On May 13 and June 10 Peggy will  
speak at the 10AM Service at  
One Light: A Center for Spiritual  
Transformation, W. Yarmouth.

**For Peggy's complete calendar  
and program descriptions visit**  
[www.timeoutretreats.com](http://www.timeoutretreats.com).

## Peg's Ponderings: *Find a Forest*

A woman bought a parrot from a pet store and put it in a lovely big cage. After a few days when the bird never spoke she went back to the pet store and bought a mirror. She thought this might get him to talk. The parrot said nothing. The next day she got a ladder because parrots like to climb. The parrot remained silent. The distraught lady returned to the store and the owner suggested she buy a bell. Parrots like bells and maybe this would work. It didn't. Frustrated, she went back the next day and the owner sold her a swing. Surely this would work. The next day the lady returned to the store furious because her parrot had died. The owner of the pet store asked, "Did the parrot say anything before it died?" The woman responded, "Yes, barely, but I heard it say, 'Do they sell FOOD at the pet store?'"

Sometimes we miss the obvious, don't we! Like the parrot, we need to be fed, but not just food for our bodies. We need to be fed spiritually. You might say that our spirit longs for "soul food." Some call this apparently innate need "our hunger for God," a longing for Something Greater than ourselves. It is this yearning for connection or communion with the Divine that propels us to seek spiritual nourishment.

Contemporary times are stressful and chaotic and we can become overwhelmed by the magnitude of problems that we witness through the media as well as in our personal worlds. Many "demons," both inner and outer, threaten to consume us, such as, a poor economy, illness, war, addiction, crime, dysfunctional politics, fear and anxiety. Perhaps more than ever, our world is starving for something that brings peace – a connection with the Divine and a spirituality that makes sense. When we feel disconnected from our Higher Power we become vulnerable to the claws of life.

The choice of soul food or spiritual nourishment varies from person to person. There are many ways to strengthen our connection with God, but for me personally, to find inner peace, balance and new life, nothing works better than silence and solitude. "Be still and know that I am God," (Psalm 146) speaks deeply to my soul. I emerge a different person from quiet time spent alone, aware of God's loving presence within and around me.

There is a story of a Hasidic rabbi whose child used to wander off to spend time alone in a forest. Concerned and curious, one day the rabbi pulled his boy aside to ask him what he was doing. "I go to the forest to find God," said the boy. "That's wonderful," replied his father. "But you need not go to the forest to find God. Don't you know that God is the same everywhere?" "God is," the boy answered, "but I'm not."

In reality, we can never be totally disconnected from the Source of all life, but we can lose our *awareness* of God's presence and power. It's at times like this that the angel's words to the prophet Elijah remind us to, "Get up and eat, else the journey will be too long for you." (1 Kings 19: 4-8) Perhaps then, we need to find a forest.

## Passing It On

*Spiritual Literacy* by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat

Subtitled, *Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life*, this compendium of spiritual wisdom is a must-have for the serious seeker. The Brussat's have collected more than 650 stories, quotes, poems and essays from a variety of spiritual traditions to nourish the reader's soul and stretch one's understanding of the Divine. Lawrence Kushner's description of *Spiritual Literacy* as "a banquet for the soul" is spot-on. It's an excellent resource.

**Paula D'Arcy Retreat ~ Your Own Heart and Soul: Setting a New Intention**  
**Tuesday, October 16 to Thursday, October 18, 2012 at La Salette in Attleboro, MA**

This retreat is specifically designed to nurture those who guide and companion others on their spiritual journey. Paula is an internationally known retreat leader, conference speaker and author. A former psychotherapist, Paula survived the loss of her husband and young daughter in an accident in 1975. She was three months pregnant at the time. Among her best-selling books are *Gift of the Red Bird*, *Waking Up to This Day*, and *When People Grieve*. To learn more about Paula, visit [www.redbirdfoundation.com](http://www.redbirdfoundation.com). For retreat information, contact Peggy at 508-548-9149 or [timeoutretreats@comcast.net](mailto:timeoutretreats@comcast.net).

## Recent Events

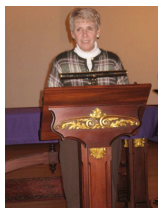


**My One Wild & Precious Life**  
**January 27-29, 2012**  
**Miramar Retreat Center, Duxbury, MA.**

Once again I had the privilege and pleasure of guiding this women's retreat. It's gratifying to hear feedback such as, "A fantastic weekend that I will never forget!"

**Keeping Your Love Alive Couples Retreat**  
**February 11, 2012, Falmouth, MA**

Five couples spent the day focusing on their most significant relationship. As one participant commented, "The time together was essential. Being reminded of so many excellent methods or tools (for communication) was great!"



**Lenten Parish Mission, March 5-7, 2012**  
**St. Mary's, Holden, MA**

This March I was honored to lead my first parish mission for parishioners from four parishes in the Worcester Diocese Wachuset Cluster. I was grateful for the opportunity and the response from the people was heart-warming.

**Longing for Connection, March 14, 2012**  
**Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA**  
Twenty-seven people participated in the third mini-retreat of the Winter Series, *A Spirituality for Everyday Living*. Sorry ~ I forgot to take pictures of you who attended the January and February sessions!

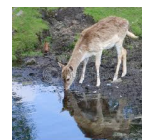


## A Little Soul Food

*This Constant Yearning*

*We are  
Like lutes  
Once held by God.  
Being away from  
His warm body  
Fully explains  
This  
Constant  
Yearning.*

~ Hafiz, The Gift



*As a deer longs  
for running water,  
so my soul  
longs for you, O God.*

~ Psalm 42

*Peace is not  
the absence of trouble.  
It is the presence  
of God.*

~ Written on a sign at a  
Baptist Church in Maine

*Feed your faith  
and your fears  
will starve to death.*

~ Unknown

