

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Spring/Summer 2013

Coming Up

MINI-RETREAT SERIES Spirituality for Everyday Living

Wednesday, June 12: *To Be Faithful*
10:00AM - 12:30PM
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, MA

Tuesday, June 18: *The Gift of Play*
10:00AM - 12:30PM
La Salette Retreat Center,
Attleboro, MA

The series will resume in the fall
on Wednesdays at Sacred Hearts:
September 11, October 9,
November 13, December 11
and on
Tuesdays at La Salette:
September 17, October 15,
November 19, December 17
Titles TBA

Gather Us In Women's Conference November 2, 2013

DCU Center, Worcester, MA
Peggy's Workshop: *All Is Well*

New Beginnings:
A Women's Retreat
January 24-26, 2014
Miramar Retreat Center
Duxbury, MA

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

**For Peggy's complete calendar
and program descriptions visit**
www.timeoutretreats.com.

Peg's Ponderings: *Hope Is Everything*

In her book, *Why Are the Dandelions Weeds?*, Kathleen O'Connell Chesto tells a story of her visit to a church during a very painful and dark time in her life. Thinking she was alone in the old stone Gothic structure, she cried out loud to God, "All I want is the courage to go on. All I need is a *little hope*." However, an adult and small child had just entered the church as she made her desperate plea. As the two walked down the aisle the little one, no more than three, stopped at Kathleen's pew, put her small hand on Kathleen's arm and said, "I'm Hope."

Hope is *not* a little thing. Anyone who has ever experienced a sense of hopelessness knows this to be true. When hope is lost, what else is there? As the proverb says, *He who has hope has everything*.

When I worked with inmates at Plymouth County Correctional Facility, one day a young man in my class named Kurt said to me, "When I get lonely, I get depressed. When I get depressed, I do drugs. When I do drugs, I steal. When I steal, I go to jail." I responded to this description of his vicious cycle with, "What are you getting from this program?" And Kurt said, "Hope."

No, hope is *not* a little thing. Hope is everything. Without it, we are doomed. We need hope when we are up against what seem to be insurmountable odds. We need hope to go on.

Each of us walks through periods of darkness that threaten to overwhelm us with fear and discouragement. During these times we might wonder, "Will I ever get to the other side? Will I ever see dawn again?" What might keep hope alive when we experience such deep darkness?

For me personally, it's my *commitment* to finding the light. It's the attitude, "I cannot give up. I refuse to quit." I look for hope wherever I can find it – in inspiration from others who have survived terrible crises, in my own past victories over hurdles and in the belief *this too shall pass*. Even the explosion of spring life out of a barren winter earth offers me hope.

We do not have to succumb to darkness, nor do we have to make our way through it alone. It's best to hold hands in the dark and allow others to be at our side when the path gets too steep. Surrounded by love, we can be carried by these living vessels of hope.

Last, but not least, we can remember how loved we are by our faithful God and let that love inspire hope in us. As Scripture says, "I will call this to mind as my reason to have hope: The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent. They are renewed each morning, so great is God's faithfulness." Lamentations 3: 21-23

Passing It On

Let in the Light: Facing the Hard Stuff with Hope by Patricia H. Livingston

What I liked most about *Let in the Light* is that Livingston's wisdom is practical and her stories are real. Anyone struggling with dark times could find hope and inspiration in this easy-read. I highly recommend it!

A Gift of Hope: Helping the Homeless by Danielle Steel

For all you Danielle Steel fans, and even those who are not, *A Gift of Hope* might surprise you as it did me. After the devastating loss of her son, Steel turned her darkness into light by beginning a ministry to the homeless on the streets of San Francisco. For 11 years, this well-known celebrity went out at night to serve the needs of the poor anonymously. Her very moving memoir cannot but spark hope in all those who long to make a difference in this world.

Guideposts: True Stories of Hope and Inspiration www.guideposts.org

This non-denominational, monthly publication is well worth the cost of \$15.97 for a year's subscription. Filled with many short stories of faith, *Guideposts* has the potential to uplift, console and inspire. The 5" by 7" size makes it a handy little magazine to stick in one's purse or pocket to be read on a beach or in a waiting room of a doctor's office!

Mark Your Calendars for Two Special Events This Fall!

Sarah Doherty: "The Power of Prayer in Healing," September 25, 2013 Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA. Contact Peggy for more information.

Paula D'Arcy: "Having the Experience, But Missing the Meaning," October 22-24, 2013, La Salette Retreat Center, Attleboro, MA. Early registration discount date is August 1st. Contact La Salette at 508-222-8530.

Recent Events: A photo sampling of winter and spring programs...



In Search of More Mini-Retreat
January 9, 2013
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

No Song Like Your Own Women's Retreat
January 25-27, 2013
Miramar Retreat Center, Duxbury, MA



New Beginnings Women's Retreat
April 5-7, 2013
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA



Look at the View Mini-Retreat
April 23, 2013
La Salette Retreat Center, Attleboro, MA



Worcester Secretaries Luncheon
April 25, 2013
St. Anne's, Shrewsbury, MA

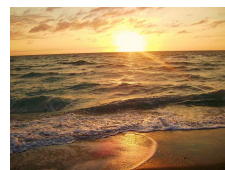


A Little Soul Food

What To Do in the Darkness

*Go slowly.
Consent to it, but don't
wallow in it.
Know it is a place of
germination and growth.
Remember the light.
Take an outstretched hand
if you find one.
Exercise unused senses.
Find the path
by walking on it.
Practice trust.
Watch for the dawn.*

~ Marilyn Chandlet McIntyre



*I believe in the sun,
Though it is late
in rising.
I believe in love,
Though it is absent.
I believe in God,
Though He is silent.*

~ Holocaust Survivor

