

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Spring-Summer 2015

Coming Up

Spirituality for Everyday Living **Fall Mini-Retreats**

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, MA

September 9: Autumn Reflections
October 14: Cling to Nothing
November 11: Abundant Blessings
December 9: Come to the Quiet

Women's Retreats

All Is Well

A Mid-Week Retreat
October 20-22, 2015
La Salette Retreat Center
Attleboro, MA

A Time for Everything

January 15-17, 2016
Miramar Retreat Center
Duxbury, MA

My One Wild & Precious Life

March 18-20, 2016
Bon Secours Retreat Center
Marriottsville, MD

8th Annual Women's Weekend

April 8-10, 2016
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, 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: A Memorable Weekend

Spending Memorial Day in Wisconsin with *Sophia's Circle*, a group of women in recovery from prostitution and drugs, is not exactly the way one might expect to celebrate the unofficial beginning of summer. However, there is no place I would rather have been.

Sophia's Circle, a ministry founded by Edwina Gateley, supports marginalized women of all races and creeds who carry wounds from violence, drugs, and prostitution. Many have been homeless, battered, and imprisoned. Most were sexually abused as young girls. Through the generosity of donors, *Sophia's Circle* enables women to find healing, hope, and strength.

For the last six years, I have had the privilege to co-facilitate with Edwina the annual retreat weekend for this very special and unique group. Once again, I left feeling inspired by these beautiful women. Despite their previous lifestyle and their current struggles, their faith in God is unwavering, their sense of sisterhood is powerful, and their perseverance in recovery is admirable. What moves me most is their authenticity. What you see is what you get. They allow themselves to be vulnerable by sharing their stories of pain and shame, as well as their stories of hope and courage. They teach me never to assume anything and always to look for the true person behind the label. They are very lovable women.

Let me share one woman's story of transformation. Brenda was first molested when she was five. She was used and abused throughout her youth, which led her to a life of prostitution for 25 years. Before entering recovery, Brenda had been shot 5 times, stabbed 13 times, repeatedly beaten and even dragged nearly to death by a moving vehicle. Today she is the co-founder and executive director of *The Dreamcatcher Foundation*, a charity helping women in Chicago leave the sex industry.

Brenda is the focus of the 2015 documentary *Dreamcatcher*, a remarkable, eye-opening presentation of life on the streets, including the risky outreach that Brenda does to save lives. The film won the World Cinema Directing Award in the documentary category at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. Brenda and her sisters of *Sophia's Circle* demonstrate that anything is possible.

Here on the New England coast where I live, spring has finally arrived -- and how welcome it is after a long, cold winter! Signs of new life are everywhere, offering *us* hope that we too can survive our dark times and come alive again. Both spring and *Sophia's Circle* remind me that transformation is available to each of us.



Passing It On

To Begin Again: The Journey toward Comfort, Strength, and Faith in Difficult Times by Naomi Levy

For those searching for some light in their darkness, *To Begin Again* has much to offer. From Rabbi Levy's firsthand experience of suffering, along with true stories from her congregants' lives, she gives the reader hope that he or she too can survive and grow through difficult times. This book is filled with poignant lessons gained from the lived-experience of real people.

Soul Sisters: A Retreat with Edwina Gateley ~ August 10-15, 2015
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

Edwina Gateley is an international speaker, poet, mystic, mother, lay missionary, advocate and author of 15 books. Her journey of faith has led her to Uganda where she established a school for girls; to the founding of the Volunteer Missionary Movement that has sent over 1,700 women and men to 26 countries on five continents; to sojourning to the Sahara Desert for three months of solitude and prayer; as well as to the streets of Chicago to minister to women in prostitution. Her story is like no other! Don't miss this retreat ~ it will change your life! To register, contact Peggy at timeoutretreats@comcast.net or 508-548-9149.

Recent Events *A sampling of 2015 winter & spring programs . . .*



"A Fresh Start" Mini-Retreat
January 14, Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

"On The Way" Women's Retreat, January 16-18
Miramar Retreat Center, Duxbury, MA



"Growing in Compassion"
Walking with Purpose Women's Scripture Group
February 28, Christ the King Church, Mashpee, MA

"A Time for Everything" Women's Retreat, April 10-12
Sacred Hearts Retreat, Center Wareham, MA



"Privileged to Serve" St Vincent De Paul Retreat
May 2, St. Anthony Church, East Falmouth, MA

"Sing Your Own Song" Mini-Retreat
May 13, Sacred Hearts Retreat Center Wareham, MA



A Little Soul Food

One of God's arrangements is that after winter there should come beautiful spring days; it happens every year and it happens in every life.
~ Fr. Joseph



Each one of us who travels further than the obstacles will know a different kind of life from that time on.
~ J. Stone

All the world is full of suffering; it is also full of overcoming it.
~ Helen Keller

