

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Autumn 2011

Coming Up

Fall Mini-Retreat Series: Spirituality for Everyday Living

Oct. 19: "The Journey to Peace"
Nov. 9: "Being a Blessing"
Dec. 14: "The Power of Kindness"
10:00AM - 12:30PM
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, MA

~~~~~

### No Song Like Your Own Women's Retreat

November 4-6  
La Salette Retreat Center,  
Attleboro, MA

~~~~~

My One Wild and Precious Life Women's Retreat

November 18-20
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, MA

~~~~~

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

### One Light Service

On October 23 and November 27  
Peggy will be the speaker for the  
10AM Sunday Service at  
One Light: A Center for Spiritual  
Transformation, W. Yarmouth.  
[www.peaceoncapecod.org](http://www.peaceoncapecod.org).

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

## Peg's Ponderings: *Continue to Choose Life*

Paula D'Arcy, a popular writer and international speaker, tells the story of a nun from Corpus Christi, Texas, who had been paralyzed by a drunk driver. Every morning people come to her convent for daily Mass just to see her pushed down the aisle in her wheelchair *by the driver who injured her*, his hand on her shoulder, her hand beneath his. What an image of forgiveness this story has imprinted on my mind!

Paula herself is no stranger to the pain inflicted by a drunk driver. In 1975 at age 27 and three months pregnant, her life was forever changed when an intoxicated driver struck her family car killing her husband and 21-month-old daughter. Needless to say, suffering entered Paula's life in an unimaginable and inexplicable way on that fateful day.

What these two stories have in common is how both women have chosen to go on with their lives. Both have chosen freedom and love over the bondage of bitterness and hatred. Refusing to allow life's circumstances to dictate the condition of their hearts, each woman has taken the higher road and each has become more whole in the process. Both women are an inspiration to me.

No one escapes pain in this life, but each of us has a choice about how to confront it. A major task of our soul-work is to face, embrace and integrate life's disappointments and, yes, possibly even tragedy. Obviously, this takes time. It is a process, which takes us through a variety of emotional stages.

I too struggle at times with what to do with pain; so it is not an easy topic for me to write about. Frankly, I'd rather not have any pain. But one thing I know for certain is that life is *still* good in spite of it. I refuse to believe I am powerless in the face of sorrow and other life-challenges. I am grateful to people like Paula and the sister from Texas who help me to *continue to choose life*.



## Passing It On

### *The Gift of the Red Bird: A Spiritual Encounter* by Paula D'Arcy

I read *The Gift of the Red Bird* several years ago and again just recently. Both readings had a powerful impact on me. I found Paula's story of searching for God and meaning in the years after she lost her family to a drunk driver very moving. Once again she has reminded me of my own need for solitude and silence if I am to make these deeper connections with life.

### *Waking Up to This Day: Seeing the Beauty Right before Us* by Paula D'Arcy

In her latest book, Paula invites the reader to ponder the question she too has asked herself many times, "What am I doing with this brief experience of life?" From her own living, she has discovered and shares nine guideposts that can help us find "a way through the layers of resistance that keep us frightened and small." She leaves no doubt that life is a choice and we have the power within us to awaken to the richness of each and every day.

### *I Will Not Die an Unlived Life: Reclaiming Purpose and Passion*

by Dawna Markova

With tremendous insight and candor, Markova leads the reader on a journey from wounds and rut thinking to wisdom and freedom. Her personal story, along with the lessons she learned, can inspire and teach us how to live our own lives to the fullest. Markova poses a very thought-provoking question or two at the end of each chapter that could serve as excellent journaling material.

## Recent Events



### **Sophia's Circle Retreat, Siena Center Racine, WI, August 4-7, 2011**

Twenty soul sisters from Chicago traveled to Wisconsin for a retreat led by Edwina Gateley, Carolyn Groves and me. What a privilege it was to be part of this weekend of healing and bonding, laughter and tears, grace and hope.

### **Fall Mini-Retreat Series, Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA, September 14, 2011**

"The Beauty of Being Real" led the Fall Series of monthly programs open to both men and women. It was a joy to return to Sacred Hearts and see many familiar faces.

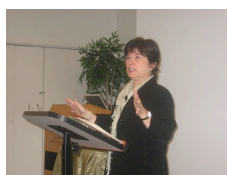


### **Parish Pastoral Council Formation Day St. Mary's Jefferson, MA, September 18, 2011**

"A Ministry of Leadership" was the title of a day of reflection and goal setting for the leaders of this central MA parish. Here, the pastor, Fr. Andy Remillard, poses with a few of his team members.

### **Waking Up to This Day with Paula D'Arcy One Light: A Center for Spiritual Transformation West Yarmouth, MA, September 24, 2011**

Paula's stories, insights and humor captivated the audience of 70 as she shared her wisdom on living life to the fullest. Her genuineness endeared us all.



## A Little Soul Food



*I will not die  
an unlived life.  
I will not live in fear  
of falling  
or catching fire.*

*I choose  
to inhabit my days,  
to allow my living  
to open me,  
to make me less afraid,  
more accessible,  
to loosen my heart  
until it becomes a wing,  
a torch,  
a promise.*

*I choose to risk  
my significance,  
to live so that which  
came to me as seed  
goes to the next  
as blossom,  
and that which  
came to me as blossom,  
goes on as fruit.*

~Dawna Markova

