

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Winter 2009

Coming Up

Peggy will facilitate the following three programs at Genesis Spiritual Life Center in Westfield, MA:

Keeping Your Love Alive: A Couples Retreat

Saturday, February 28, 2009
9:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Communication Magic and Miracles

Sunday, March 1, 2009
9:30 AM to 3:00PM

My Precious Life: The Dance Goes On

Friday, March 20, 7:30 PM to
Sunday, March 22, 1:00 PM

For information & registration:

E-Mail: genesis@genesiscenter.us

Website: www.genesiscenter.us

Phone: 413-562-3627

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Peggy will facilitate the following women's retreat at Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

### My One Wild and Precious Life

Friday, May 29, 7:30 PM to  
Sunday, May 31, 1:00 PM

#### For information & registration:

Contact Peggy at (508) 548-9149 or

[timeoutretreats@comcast.net](mailto:timeoutretreats@comcast.net)

Register by March 1 to save \$25.

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One Light Service

On February 8 and March 8
Peggy will be the guest speaker for the 10AM Sunday Service at One Light: A Center for Spiritual Transformation, W. Yarmouth.

www.peaceoncapecod.org

For Peggy's complete calendar visit

www.timeoutretreats.com

Peg's Ponderings: Winter Waiting

Nature gives us insights into our own lives. For those of us who are New Englanders, each season has a distinctive signature, a special *look and feel*, and each teaches us something different about the human experience. Winter is no exception.

Winter is a time of mystery and waiting, the time when earth's landscape, at least here in the Northeast, has made the change from abundance to barrenness. Winter is dark and cold and it is the season when we can be fooled into thinking that the earth is life-less . . . that nothing is happening. Yet we all know that is far from the truth, for beneath the hard frozen soil, lie seeds holding potential for new life, gaining strength in their dormancy, waiting patiently for their time to push upward toward the sun.

When going through a difficult or painful experience, *an inner winter of sorts*, the season of winter can give us hope. Winter teaches us to trust in what is unseen, to live with mystery and to wait patiently for all the surprises that both spring and God hold for us.

Sometimes we just have to wait . . . wait for the right time . . . wait for circumstances to change . . . wait for nature to take its course. As humans, and perhaps especially as Americans accustomed to instant everything, we don't like to wait. "Patience comes to me as easily as vegetarianism to a lion," writes Sam Portaro.

But we can *choose* to wait; we don't have to be passive in our waiting. We can enter into a fruitful and patient kind of waiting which will transform *us* in the process. We can embrace mystery much like a pregnant woman lovingly holds her child in her womb and waits with hope and expectancy.

Everyone waits for something. A dear friend in the midst of her winter waiting longs for physical therapy to restore her ability to move after a stroke. A young nephew struggles with the long process of waiting for a clear diagnosis of his illness.

As we begin winter, we might ask ourselves: *What am I waiting for?* For passion and energy to return? For a change in economic conditions? For my child to mature? Winter reminds us to wait with faith and trust, to live as if we believe all is well . . . and all will be well.

And so, for whatever we wait, let us do so with the same assurance that the cyclical nature of the seasons offers us. As the title of the poem under *A Little Soul Food* on the next page says, there are *certainities that sustain a person*. "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)



Passing It On

The Circle of Life by Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr

Subtitled *The Heart's Journey Through the Seasons*, *The Circle of Life* superbly makes connections between nature's cycle and the seasons of our own lives. Rupp and Wiederkehr, two well-known retreat facilitators and current authors on spirituality, teamed up to explore the four seasons for the lessons they hold. They share their discoveries through essays, poems, prayers and meditations. *The Circle of Life* is a very rich resource not only for the individual seeker, but also for group sharing.

The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully by Joan Chittister

If you are in a "later" season of life, *The Gift of Years* will surely speak poignantly to you. With her characteristically intelligent, practical and wise reflection, Chittister offers the reader a compendium of 40 life issues relevant to growing older - - such as regret, faith, time, memories, fulfillment - - and challenges the reader to embrace the blessing and avoid the burden inherent in each one.

A Retreat for Men ~ Recapturing the Spirit of the Spirit: The Passion of Faith

Led by Fr. Stan Kolasa, SSCC, at Sacred Hearts Retreat Center in Wareham, Mass., this weekend for men is scheduled for February 13-15, 2009. Having met Fr. Stan, I enthusiastically recommend this mid-winter retreat. As someone who is grounded, easy-going, wise and humorous, Fr. Stan will not disappoint participants. For more information and registration, contact Sacred Hearts at 508-295-0100.

The Healing Well CD by Max Highstein, produced by Jim Moeller of *Serenity Music*

This guided visualization takes listeners on a journey to the center of a magical garden where they discover an old stone well that has restorative power. Highstein's soothing voice, along with the background music and vivid imagery, are deeply relaxing. For someone experiencing a "winter of illness," *The Healing Well* could be just what the doctor ordered.

Recent Events

My One Wild and Precious Life Women's Retreat
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA, November 7-9, 2008



Twenty-five wise wonderful women spent a fall weekend exploring and living their one wild and precious life. It was truly a very special time of bonding, laughter, tears, storytelling, prayer and reflection. As one participant said, "Whenever women meet there is MAGIC!"

Fall River Diocesan Catechetical Leaders Retreat
Cathedral Camp, East Freetown, MA, December 11, 2008

With the focus on Christmas as an incredible love story, this Advent retreat gave catechists the opportunity to slow down during the holiday rush to reflect on the true meaning of this great feast. It was a real joy to spend time with these dedicated, warm and faith-filled leaders.



A Little Soul Food

Certainties that Sustain a Person

by Julia Stairs

It is the knowledge
that no matter how cold
or bitter the winter,
there will be violets again.

That no matter how fanged
the January wind might be,
songbirds will return
and days will be gentle.

That no matter how
tightly locked in ice
the brook may be
by year's end,
by May it will leap and chatter
and sing of summer.

It is the certainty that spring
will follow winter,
and summer will follow spring.

Maybe we need to learn these
things anew each year.

Perhaps we need
to face the snowstorm
and feel the frost underfoot
to know that there is
both ice and fire in the earth,
even as in the stars;
*to know that the big
assurances endure.*



*"It's good
to know the season
and to not fight it."*

~ Author Unknown