

# Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude  
Winter 2014

## Coming Up

### WINTER MINI-RETREAT SERIES Spirituality for Everyday Living

#### On Wednesdays

10:00AM - 12:30PM

January 15: *To Be Faithful*

February 12: *Magic Moments of  
Risk Taking*

March 12: *Jesus, the Healer*

April 9: *What to Do in the Darkness*

**Sacred Hearts Retreat Center  
Wareham, MA**

#### On Tuesdays

10:00AM - 12:30PM

January 21: *The Time of Our Lives*

February 25: *Embracing Mystery*

March 18: *Growing in Compassion*

April 15: *The Power of Goodness ~  
A Reason to Hope*

**La Salette Retreat Center  
Attleboro, MA**

#### New Beginnings:

##### A Women's Retreat

January 24-26, 2014

Miramar Retreat Center  
Duxbury, MA

#### On the Way:

##### A Women's Retreat

April 4-6, 2014

Sacred Hearts Retreat Center  
Wareham, MA

#### For information & registration:

Contact Peggy at (508) 548-9149 or

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

For Peggy's complete calendar  
and program descriptions visit

[www.timeoutretreats.com](http://www.timeoutretreats.com).

## Peg's Ponderings: *Pray As You Can, Not As You Can't*

Prayer comes more easily to us at some times more than at others. When witnessing a magnificent ocean sunset we are moved by the Creator's power and utter a prayer of awe. On hearing of a friend's recovery, words of gratitude come quickly to our lips. When times are good and all is well within our worlds, prayer seems as natural as breathing.

Then there are those times in our lives when we resist or even feel too inadequate to pray. Illness, pain, loss, fatigue and fear can challenge our desire or ability to commune with the Divine. When we are overwhelmed by such experiences, we may neither be able to focus nor find words. We might even feel angry with God, abandoned or lost in confusion.

Not too long ago, a very wise and holy woman offered me these words of comfort: *Pray as you can, not as you can't*. I felt a burden lifted. I do not need to feel guilty if I do not meditate or write in my journal, two of my usual practices of prayer. I only need to pray as I can at that time. I realized that God does not need my methods of prayer, though I do at times, but continues to gaze lovingly upon me in my fragility, holding me in tenderness.

Author and concentration camp survivor Corrie ten Boom said it succinctly: *Nestle, don't wrestle*. She encourages us to come to God as we are - authentic, though broken, not artificial and sterile. When we feel we cannot pray, we need to remind ourselves to nestle in God's unconditional love and let go of the "shoulds" that bind us. Let us pray as we can, not as we can't.



## Passing It On

***Be Still***, a CD by David Kauffman

Recently I was introduced to Kauffman's music and cannot say enough about his work. His lyrics are both meaningful and clear. I have listened to *Be Still* over and over and find it to be one of the most prayerful and comforting selections of songs I've ever heard. When prayer is difficult, listening to this CD might help.

***Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers*** by Anne Lamott

In her typically candid fashion, Lamott shares what she has learned about prayer through her life experiences. Her insights have led her to think of prayer as one of three simple acts – asking for help, being grateful and feeling awe. With humor and faith she makes prayer uncomplicated and relevant.

***In God's Womb: A Retreat with Edwina Gateley***

November 14-16, 2014 Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

Mark your calendars now for a very special weekend with internationally known charismatic speaker and prolific author Edwina Gateley. This retreat based on her memoir "In God's Womb" will be a contemplative experience of sinking into God through poetry, music, visuals, reflection and prayer. It promises to be a true vacation for both women and men graced with life experience! For more information, contact Peggy at 508-548-9149 or [timeoutretreats@comcast.net](mailto:timeoutretreats@comcast.net).

## Recent Events *A sampling of fall 2013 programs . . .*

### Held at Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA



**Peacemaking in a Troubled World**  
September 11th

**ECHO Board of Cape Cod**  
September 19th



**The Healing Power of Prayer  
with Sarah Doherty**  
September 25<sup>th</sup>



### Held at La Salette Retreat Center, Attleboro, MA



**Cling to Nothing**  
October 15th

**Paula D'Arcy Retreat**  
October 22-24th



**Blessings in Abundance**  
November 19th



**Held at St. Raphael Parish, Medford, MA**  
**Autumn Reflections**  
October 26th



## A Little Soul Food

### The Miracle: *An Hasidic Tale*

Long ago whenever the great Rabbi Israel Shem Tov feared misfortune for his people, he would go to a certain spot in the forest. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer and the miracle would happen – his people were saved.

When his disciple, the Maggid of Mezritch, had occasion for the same reason to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say, "Master of the Universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer." Again the miracle would be accomplished.

Many years later, Rabbi Israel of Rizhin, saw misfortune ready to befall his people. He thought hard for a minute, scratching his head, "Where was the spot in the forest? How do I light the fire? What prayer am I supposed to say?"

Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke sadly to God, "Dear God, I am unable to light the fire and I do not know the prayer and I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I have to offer you are *my* words." And once again the miracle happened and the people were saved.

