

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Winter 2016

Coming Up in 2016

Spirituality for Everyday Living **Winter-Spring Mini-Retreats**

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, MA

January 13: Embracing Mystery
February 10: Growing in
Compassion
March 9: The Power of Goodness ~
A Reason to Hope
April 13: Nestle, Don't Wrestle
May 11: Be Not Afraid
June 8: Ordinary Miracles,
Sacred Moments

Women's Retreats

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

Growing into Wholeness

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 Christmas Message

Christmas reminds us that our good God became one of us (unimaginable, isn't it?) to show us how to live well. Jesus summed it up in one commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind...And love your neighbor as yourself." Mt. 22

Knowing how to live this command is not always easy, however. It can be downright confusing and seemingly impossible, especially in a world scarred by hatred and violence. What are we to do? What is our best response to these issues?

Of course, I don't have all the answers either, but I do believe we are called to be light in the darkness and a force of wisdom and love in the face of irrationality and hatred. Perhaps we can turn to Christ, the Prince of Peace and Light of the World who gives us some clues when we feel lost.

Perhaps too, we can learn from Antoine Leiris, the husband of 35-year-old Helene killed in the Paris attacks on November 13. He wrote a letter to the terrorists telling them, "You will not have my hatred," and refers to his 17-month-old son when he concludes his letter with, "And every day of his life this little boy will insult you with his happiness and freedom, because you don't have his hatred either."

Antoine's letter was part of a moving CBS report by Scott Pelley five days after the attack. Entitled "In the Face of Terror, the Human Spirit Endures," Pelley sites Viktor Frankl, a survivor of Auschwitz, as a source of inspiration for the ability to choose one's own attitude, no matter what the circumstances. I've included Leiris' letter on my second page of this newsletter under "A Little Soul Food." *Watching* Antoine read his own letter is even more powerful. You can find this online as a YouTube.

Finally, let us hold out hope that we have the power to make this world a more peaceful home for us all. We must believe we can if we are to do the work. As we look forward to 2016, a very important year in our government, let us make our voices heard and pray that integrity, wisdom and courage be hallmarks of our next president and that we as a country do not give into fear and hatred as we face our many complex issues.

I hope you and your loved ones have a joy-filled Christmas and celebrate the New Year with a spirit of hope.

God bless,

Peggy



Passing It On

“Growing in Compassion” ~ An Ash Wednesday Retreat February 10, 2016, 9:00 am to 3:45 pm Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

On Ash Wednesday I am offering an all-day program as opposed to just a morning mini-retreat. Participation can be for a portion or the entire program. Below is the description and schedule for the retreat day. Pre-registration is required, especially if planning to be present for lunch. Deadline: February 1st

Life provides innumerable opportunities to apply either judgment or compassion. It is often easier to criticize and judge than to try to understand and forgive. Lent challenges us to become more like the all-loving Christ. This retreat day includes Mass, a morning of reflection, lunch, afternoon video-documentary “Dreamcatcher,” discussion and prayer.

9:00 Mass followed by coffee & morning of reflection

12:30 Lunch

1:15 “Dreamcatcher” movie, sharing & prayer



“Dreamcatcher,” winner of the 2015 Sundance Festival Directing Award in the UK, is a 90-minute documentary about a former Chicago prostitute of 25 years, Brenda Myers-Powell, who now helps women and teenage girls break the cycle of abuse and exploitation. Brenda is a peer leader of *Sophia’s Circle*, women in recovery from prostitution and drugs, a ministry that is co-facilitated by Edwina Gateley and Peggy Patenaude. A portion of the day’s retreat income will be donated to *Sophia’s Circle*.

For more information and registration: Contact Peggy at 508-548-9149 or timeoutretreats@comcast.net or visit www.timeoutretreats.com.

Recent Events *Here’s a sampling of 2015 autumn programs.
Unfortunately, I forgot to take pictures beyond October!*



“Autumn Reflections” Mini-Retreat
September 9, 2015
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

“Don’t Postpone Joy” Parish Retreat
October 3, 2015
St. Elizabeth, Ludlow, MA



“All Is Well” Women’s Retreat
October 20-22, 2015
La Salette Retreat Center, Attleboro, MA

A Little Soul Food

Letter from Antoine Leiris to ISIS

On Friday night, you stole away the life of an exceptional being. The love of my life, the mother of my son. But you will not have my hatred.

I do not know who you are, and I don’t want to know – you are dead souls. If the God for whom you kill so blindly made us in his image, each bullet in my wife’s body would have been a wound in his heart.

Therefore I will not give you the gift of hating you. You have obviously sought it, but responding to it with anger would be to give in to the same ignorance that has made you what you are.

You want me to be afraid? To cast a mistrustful eye on my fellow citizens? To sacrifice my freedom for security? You lost. Same player. Same game.

I saw her this morning, finally after nights and days of waiting. She was just as beautiful as she was when she left on Friday evening. As beautiful as when I fell madly in love with her more than 12 years ago.

Of course I’m devastated with grief – I will give you that tiny victory. But this will be a short-term grief. I know that she will join us every day and that we will find each other again in the paradise of free souls which you will never have access to.

We are only two, my son and I, but we are more powerful than the world’s armies.

In any case, I have no more time to waste on you. I need to get back to Melvil, who is waking up from his afternoon nap. He’s just 17 months old. He’ll eat his snack like every day and then we’re going to play like we do every day. And every day of his life this little boy will insult you with his happiness and freedom, because you don’t have his hatred either.