# Comments from retreat participants – Rachel’s Vineyard Website 9/2022

**“Rachel’s Vineyard went far beyond anything I could imagine. It was an incredible journey from grief to joy. The Living Scripture exercises brought depth and meaning to our experiences. I felt like God was very much in our midst. Rachel’s Vineyard was a long awaited answer to years of prayer and immense need.”**

“This has been one of the most memorable and wonderful personal events in my life. Had I not been here and participated, I would still be a wandering soul without purpose. Now I am on my new journey to peace and being filled with the Holy Spirit. I found most meaningful that God is truly forgiving, therefore, I can forgive myself. Also, all of our babies are God’s creations and are happy in their eternal life in Heaven waiting to be re-united with their mothers.”

**“This retreat has been a life-changing and spiritual awakening for me. It allowed me to come in touch with past losses and grief. I feel that any woman who has had an abortion should come to Rachel’s Vineyard’s safe haven to experience healing and forgiveness. It was very meaningful to be able to meet people who understand my pain and losses. Everyone was so warm, loving, and accepting.”**

 “I have been through 14 years of therapy and anti-depressants. I’ve confessed my abortion a hundred times. Just when I thought I could take the pain no longer, I found Rachel’s Vineyard. This weekend literally saved my life.”

**“I hesitated coming because I knew it was going to be intense and I wasn’t 100% committed to all the religious concepts (or at least I was leery of them until I could see them with my own eyes). The Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat far surpassed all my expectations. I have never witnessed so much healing and relief from anything else I have experienced or observed.”**

“I never knew my wife had suffered so much pain over an abortion she had before I met her. It was a real eye opener to attend the Rachel’s Vineyard retreat with her and be a support in an area of her life where there was so much secret grief. Our marriage has truly been blessed. We are closer now than we have ever been and I had the privilege of being able to spiritually adopt her child during the Memorial Service.”

**“No words can explain the healing that I experienced on this weekend retreat. The retreat filled an area of my life with love and gentleness that was war-torn, raw and bleeding. God’s mercy and love was behind this retreat. He can make all things possible—hope, love, faith, life—where there was searing grief, pain, and desolation. Although this retreat was full of love, the conductors did not back away from reaching into the painful areas of our lives and beings. It was so important for us to dig deep and release the pain and the skeletons of the past. I believe this made room for God to fill that room with genuine love for lost children, family, friends, and especially ourselves.”**

“It is the best thing that ever happened to me. It is totally inspired by God and I am grateful to have been brought so intensely from the pain into the light. This is not a human endeavor. Only God can do this!”

**“The retreat was the most powerful healing experience I have ever had. The spiritual and psychological healing was immeasurable. It was a wonderful feeling of release and sharing. I felt so safe in sharing my experience and emotions. The Living Scriptures helped me to feel God’s presence in a way I had never known. This was exactly what I needed. Each person that was there was brought for a reason and touched me in some way. It was very meaningful for me to share my experiences in a warm, safe, loving environment where I did not feel like I was being judged.”**

“At the end of the retreat, I felt RELIEF AND HOPE! Release from the feeling of terrible unworthiness and hopelessness. It was incredible to see that so many others felt the same way and gathered their courage to come on the retreat.”

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“It is a wonderfully draining but also rejuvenating experience! I feel a renewed sense of faith. Knowing and seeing these babies that are happy with the Lord was very meaningful to me. The retreat renewed my Catholic beliefs which I had been moving away from.”

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“This retreat has been a very important rebirth in the spirit for me. It was so wonderful to be able to finally share my deep dark secrets with others who were open and accepting. The Holy Spirit was truly at work here this weekend. I found the most meaningful experience on Sunday night at the time of pouring our hearts to the Lord, naming my children and the prayer of Baptismal intent. The handing of my children to the Lord felt like I gave the burden of the ‘rock’ to Jesus.”

**“The program was excellent in achieving its objective of re-enacting the ‘PASSOVER’ and a celebration of life, death, and resurrection, thus giving participants a sense of wholeness again after a fragmented existence. I was truly amazed by the growth and transformation that I experienced in myself and others. The entire experience was enormously enriching.”**

“The retreat was an experience of opening, relieving, comforting, and affirming of God’s loving forgiveness. A much-needed tool for lost souls to find the path back to a healthy life in Christ and in their everyday world. I found most meaningful on the retreat the sensitivity of the retreat team, total and unconditional acceptance, the numerous prayer exercises and life experiences shared through them—all to the same ultimate end: that of cleansing of guilt and freeing of spirit to be able to appreciate God’s life-giving gifts.”

**“It was a very enlightening and draining experience at the same time. Facing and dealing with the past is hard, especially when there is guilt and shame involved. The Holy Spirit re-enlightening my life is a wonderful gift I hope to carry with me always. My Father’s love was brought back to me.”**

“Very well done. All exercises, scripture readings, and rituals give the opportunity to listen, to see, and to feel the depth of our experience with abortion. Having past retreatants attend is a great thing for them and for us. For me, being in a supportive atmosphere, professionally couched and speaking out loud, made the steps of grief real, something to identify in contrast to a feeling of being in limbo.”

**“The retreat is life-saving, sustaining, renewing, and reinforcing. It is an occasion to meet a particular need for possibly desperate situations, or those in lingering, growing pain who cannot find any other answer or source of consolation. These needs are met here in most effective ways, and because of the bonding to each other and the bonding with the Holy Spirit, the group will remain part of one’s identity.”**

“I have been through 14 years of therapy and anti-depressants. I’ve confessed my abortion a hundred times. Just when I thought I could take the pain no longer, I found Rachel’s Vineyard. This weekend literally saved my life.”

**“My impression was wonderful and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to experience this journey with other women in the same situation. I don’t feel alone or unworthy anymore. I found sharing our stories and also meditating on our feelings was a beautiful way of releasing my guilt and sadness. I feel that I have let go of so much anger.”**

“I hesitated in coming because I knew it was going to be intense and I wasn’t 100% committed to all the religious concepts (or at least I was leery of them until I could see them with my own eyes.) The Rachel’s Vineyard retreat far surpassed all my expectations. I have never witnessed so much healing and relief from anything else I have experienced or observed.”

**“Rachel’s Vineyard is a gift, directly, in every detail, personalized from Father God, Jesus my Lord and at last, indwelling of the Holy Spirit. I feel his presence within me now for the first time in my life, actually. Rachel’s Vineyard has diversified content and the very beautiful processing of emotions—especially for self-condemnation. There was an opportunity for self-paced unfolding and personal growth at my own speed. This retreat provides the ultimate opportunity for the Holy Spirit to at last be personally real. A great healing has come to me spiritually, physically, and emotionally.”**

“Rachel’s Vineyard is a new concept and will revolutionize retreat work. It is very healing at a depth in our souls that can only be reached by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The entire retreat is a flowing movement of the Spirit. The depth of healing that took place was awesome!”

**“The support on this retreat is tremendous! The gifts of love, peace, joy, and acceptance were awesome. The rituals were so perfect. I appreciated time alone with the Blessed Sacrament and the opportunity to respond as individuals and as a group to the Holy Spirit leading, guiding us through the Living Scripture exercises.”**

“I loved it because I was able to get issues out that were unresolved. I feel so calm and at peace with myself. I found the sharing of our lives and the opportunity to release our anger as very important for me.”

**“I feel relieved to know that I am not the only soul suffering in such deep sorrow after my abortion. Being with others in pain has helped me tremendously. Rachel’s Vineyard is a life-changing event. I am so happy I came. I have needed this for such a long time. I am so grateful that it is available. This weekend has also helped me in so many other areas of my life.”**