

In Praise of the Rachel's Vineyard Healing Retreat

May 2017

"This retreat experience was a '10' better than I expected. I did not really want to come....fear!! I knew I needed it. Every exercise was thoughtful and meaningful, the order and flow of each exercise was perfect (very creative.)"

"It was meaningful and healing to be able to release the trapped emotions that I have carried for so many years in a safe and comfortable setting."

"This retreat was fabulous. We entered a safe and loving environment that allowed us to speak to our souls and God."

April 2017 Spanish

"I learned that God never abandons us and that he forgives us truly for the mistakes we made in the past. I no longer feel unworthy as a woman. My past is over and today starts the first day of my life, one that makes me feel proud walking side by side with God."

"I never imagined I would feel so much peace and God so near me in such a short period of time. God illuminated my way."

"I felt liberated, renewed and have a deeper connection with myself. I was able to let go of resentment for the people who hurt me in the past and to forgive them."

"The team protected our privacy. You respected me as a human being and you never left me alone. You were always caring for me and made me feel like family."

"The team was committed to serve us. It impressed me how you welcomed us and gave us the confidence of feeling at home. Thank you for your love, kindness and respect that you demonstrated along the way."

"It was very useful to have Father Jose as a spiritual coach – it gave me the confidence that God was taking my cross. I left with a lighter cross and with more energy to live."

"I can't find words to describe what I feel. The retreat team welcomed me without judgement, without pointing at my sins and miseries. You all opened your arms to welcome me with so much love."

"Before the retreat, I concentrated on my sins, kept distanced from God and ignored his mercy. God has given me the gift to live again for him and with him."

"The retreat was a gift. I feel physically renewed with lots of energy. I know God walks side by side with me and I now think that when I was in despair, he was carrying me. I feel like a new person, with more faith, hope and love for my Lord Jesus Christ."

"Each activity lifted my spirit and helped bring my faith back."

"The welcoming reception impressed me a lot. You were all very kind. Each exercise was very helpful and allowed us to see beyond our blindness."

"I feel I have more energy to live and to serve God in everything I can. God gave me the opportunity to feel better and to believe in him even more. I feel myself to be a stronger person today."

"I am grateful for the team's hospitality, the personalized service each of you gave us was spectacular. I felt like a queen. The program was very well organized. Everything was beautiful."

"I was able to let go of resentment. I feel an amazing energy to share my experience with my partner. Spiritually I feel lighter and I am leaving with more faith."

March 2017

[From a wife who attended with her husband]

"Most helpful was being given the opportunity to acknowledge the reality of my child in order to properly grieve.

Before the retreat, sleep was difficult to come by; now I am able to sleep. I had stopped caring about my health – not eating, not exercising, not wanting to shower, etc. Now I am renewed in my drive to be healthy.

**Before, my emotions were in chaos with no direction, rhyme or rhythm. Now, since taking the time & energy to look inward, I have clarity.
Before, I had no recollection of feeling. Now, I can feel again!**

My relationship with everyone, especially my husband & God, were at a near complete stop. Now, my relationships have been rejuvenated."

[From a husband who attended with his wife]

"The retreat was a great experience. I was able to meet some truly wonderful people who shared their story of sadness. My wife and I are closer after this experience. I have a better understanding of my wife and the emotions she has wrapped up in the decision we made. I was able to take away a feeling of love and understanding that I did not think possible."

[From others]

"This retreat was a safe place. We were guided by the team into places of the heart which we had blocked and repressed. The location was beautiful and peaceful. Having the whole weekend allowed us to keep our hearts & wounds open to continue exploring our emotions."

"The process of discovery, peeling back the layers was more productive than I would have anticipated. I had several "ah ha!" moments that I didn't anticipate and learned so much about myself. I discovered the "root" of my anger & inability to forgive. And because of that, I was able to reconcile with myself & those that have hurt me."

"Emotional improvement & relationship with God has been repaired. My heart has been reopened to the voice & will of God. I feel like my anxiety will be reduced as I have found comfort & peace with my life."

"This retreat was wonderful – more than I could have hoped for, and I was hoping for a lot! It was well run, thoughtful, inclusive; very hard but very much worth it."

"The scripture readings and meditations were most helpful and meaningful because they reminded us who Christ is – healer, teacher, God. Having a priest present helped a lot because we can talk to him, confess, and celebrate Mass. Being able to interact with the other participants was especially helpful."

"What I found most helpful were sharing our stories, the living scripture exercises and ceremonies for the babies – naming them & reading our letters."

"I was surprised at the healing that was done. I got closure that I didn't think I'd get. I realized I wasn't alone."

"This is an important ministry, valuable and life affirming. It needs to continue to help heal the women who come here."

"I feel a relief that the burden of guilt and self-hatred have been abated or lessened. I have hope for the future and ongoing healing."

"This retreat was wonderful – more, way more, than I imagined it would be. Very, very healing. I was able to feel, belonging, and a better connection to God and others."

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"This retreat was Holy Packed!!! Much much more than I expected! Lots of answers, revelations & healings."

"I felt loved, honored, respected & was able to bring to life what once was dead!"

"I was unsure what to expect but was blown away with the love and support of everyone here. I was also impressed with how organized it was. The team had a process that was very detailed and led us to experience healing. They gave us the support to face, deal with, then heal from our pain."

"The retreat helped me realize I am not alone. I was able to open up and experience my loss. I was able to forgive myself. Now I am on a journey of spiritual growth, of developing a better relationship with God."

October 2016 (español)

"Creo que en un aspecto estaba muerta en vida y ahora estoy resucitado. Dios fue muy generoso conmigo."

"Nos hace poder sacar todos esos secretos que guardamos en lo profundo de nosotros. Nuestros sentimientos que hemos reprimido por tanto tiempo. Los pudimos expresar a Dios nuestro Señor para que nos pudiera perdonar."

"Este retiro es lo más importante y hermoso que me ha podido suceder en mi vida. Es maravilloso y realmente emotivo y súper constructivo. Realmente superó mis expectativas. Es mucho más de lo que esperaba."

"Este retiro es un regalo de Dios para nosotros las mujeres. Gracias por todo este proceso. Dios las sigas bendiciendo por todo este proceso de sanación y esperanza para las mujeres en esta situación."

"In one respect, I was among the living dead ... and now I am revived! God was very generous with me!"

"We were able to share all those secrets we had buried deep within ourselves, the feelings we had repressed. We could express them to God so that He could forgive us."

"This retreat was the most important and beautiful I have ever experienced in my life. It was wonderful, emotional and very helpful. It really surpassed all my expectations. It was much more than I hoped for."

"This retreat is a gift from God to us women. Thank you and God bless you for all of this ministry of healing and hope for women."