



November 2011

Thank You, from the Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Team

The third Rachel's Vineyard Retreat for 2011 has been held and the Wellington-based Retreat Team has a programme of three more scheduled in 2012.

"It has been a rewarding, if at times challenging year for this work," said the Rachel's Vineyard Retreats Site Leader, Suzanne O'Rourke. "The first Retreat took place a few days after the February earthquake and the second Retreat took place, quite literally in the shadow of the Chilean volcanic ash cloud. To have successfully managed three weekends, drawing participants from throughout New Zealand, has taken a quiet army of support, for which we are very grateful."

The Team for each Retreat which includes counsellors, a therapist-psychologist and a Catholic Priest completed formation training last year.

Coming to an understanding of the losses and grief abortion has brought into a person's life is difficult and sensitive work.

"It is a privilege to see someone arrive to the Retreat guarded and cautious on Friday and leave on Sunday, with a new understanding of themselves and the gifts in their own life. An experience of abortion changes a person and a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat weekend changes them again. Our advice to everyone after a Retreat weekend is to be gentle with themselves and let the Holy Spirit continue to do the work," says Suzanne.

While enquiry for places on a Retreat is high, the cost of travelling to the Retreat as well as the cost of the weekend is often a barrier which proves too much for some. "In early 2012 we will be turning our mind to some specific fundraising to make sure those who want to come to a Retreat are not prevented by lack of funds. In the meantime, we have much to reflect on, including the outstanding support which has made the Retreat programme this year possible.

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Dates for 2012 in Wellington are:

- 24-26 February, 2012
- 22-24 June, 2012
- 9-11 November, 2012

More information is available on www.rachelsvineyard.org.nz.

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