

A unique Mission opportunity for Catholics!



Rachel's Vineyard Italy Mission: **Reaching women and men who seek Hope and Healing after losing a child through abortion**

Founded over 25 years ago by a Catholic psychotherapist from Philadelphia, ***Rachel's Vineyard*** is a post-abortion healing retreat flourishing in the United States and expanding internationally. For 12 years **Monika Rodman Montanaro, MDiv** led ***Rachel's Vineyard*** retreats for the Diocese of Oakland, CA. After moving to Italy, she and her Italian husband, together with other collaborators from various Italian regions, in 2010 launched the retreats in Italy. After 15 years ***this pioneering outreach remains Italy's only Catholic apostolate reaching out*** to women, men and couples seeking to reconcile their hidden grief associated with past abortion experiences.

Our work embodies the New Evangelization so desperately needed in what is rapidly becoming a "post-Christian" Europe. In the *Year of Mercy* of 2016 **Pope Francis** emphasized that the Church must expand its post-abortion pastoral care. The Italy Mission is doing precisely this in an ecclesial culture that is often at a loss over how to engage the distant, the alienated and those on the spiritual periphery. The evangelizing and reconciling nature of **this apostolate draws women and men from Sicily to Piemonte**, who travel hundreds of kilometers to Bologna to participate in this one-of-a kind 3-day program.

We closely collaborate with clergy both in the Diocese of Bologna and around Italy. Our apostolate is notable for its **collaborative nature** and the **strong presence of select past participants as leaders**. In 2019 **Pope Leo**, as a missionary bishop, personally blessed the start-up of ***Rachel's Vineyard*** in Peru – a sign of his trust in, and admiration for, this ministry largely led by laypeople.

While the ***Rachel's Vineyard Italy Mission*** has long enjoyed the blessing of the Cardinal of Bologna (**Mons. Matteo Maria Zuppi** has encouraged our continued activities since the passing of **Mons. Carlo Caffarra**), the ministry receives no diocesan funding, is not yet financially self-supporting and thus remains, from a financial perspective, largely a Mission of U.S. Catholics.

Those who've already partnered in this ground-breaking project include 2 Knights of Columbus Councils, mission-minded American Catholics and other Christians who keenly sense that the Gospel of Life and the Gospel of Mercy must be proclaimed with equal vigor.

Having participated 5 of the last 10 years in the Diocese of San Diego's MCP, we are reaching out to other select dioceses and request that the ***Rachel's Vineyard Italy Mission*** be considered by the **Roman Catholic Diocese of Davenport** for its year 2026 Missionary Cooperative Plan.

www.VignadiRachele.org (click on ) / www.rachelsvineyard.org