



Vessels of Peace

Women Embodying Peace ...
Inspired by the Sacred Feminine ...
Serving Divinity, Humanity, Earth

VESSELS OF PEACE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
MAY 2004 - ISSUE #8

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JUST START...

As I sit here at my computer to write this month's feature article, I don't know how to begin. I don't know how to wrap my writing mind around the last month of events, experiences and epiphanies and condense it all down to a few hundred words. So I am just typing whatever comes, trusting that it will result in something coherent and meaningful. Sometimes, even if we don't have a clue how to proceed, we have to just START -- and in the starting, something shifts ... the energy flows ... and what is needed comes forth.

That is what occurred for me at the Mary Magdalene and the Children conference in Florida last month, when it was time to offer my workshop, "Connecting with the Divine Feminine: The Sacred Energy at the Heart of Peace." In the days preceding the workshop, I tried several times to prepare it. Nothing would come together. Finally, I just made 40 copies each of The 11 Intentions and The Affirmation of Peace, picked out a couple of music CDs, and gave up having any sort of outline or plan. Either the Divine Feminine would guide me or she wouldn't, but it was clear she would not be filling me in ahead of time!

When I entered the room where my workshop was to be held, I still didn't know how it would go. Then women began to arrive ... and more women ... and more ... and some men as well -- and pretty soon, we had to turn people away because the room was so full, and I realized I had nowhere near enough handouts to go around. Then it was time to begin. Dozens of expectant faces turned towards me, waiting. I closed my eyes, prayed for guidance, took a deep breath, and started. And it happened. Something inside me shifted. I became the vessel through which the peaceful energy of the Sacred Feminine flows. I existed only as a means to serve that energy, those faces. And what was needed apparently came through.

Afterwards, woman after woman sought me out to tell me how much the workshop meant to her. All the women I spoke with loved the meditation and the 11 Intentions. They resonated powerfully with the idea that peace and the Sacred Feminine were connected. They were excited that the Vessels of Peace concept was something they could continue to work with on their own. But the comments that most stayed with me were about how much it meant to them

that I had shared my story: How I resisted the initial guidance that came to me. How I felt awkward and uncomfortable with embracing the Sacred Feminine more openly and fully. How I finally got in touch with the fear beneath my resistance. And how every step of the way, little miracles would manifest to keep me going.

Every one of these women was struggling to understand her inner guidance and follow it. Each knew she was being called to serve peace and the Sacred Feminine in some way, yet resisted it without being clear why. The women so resonated with my story because they needed to know they were not the only one feeling this way, and they needed to know they would be "OK" if they followed the call of their heart.

I will never forget the beautiful sea-green eyes of one woman who came up to me later that day to share her experience of the workshop meditation. As she began to speak, emotion welled up; she took some deep breaths to hold back her tears, and I took her hands in mine, telling her to take her time. She steadied herself, then said: "I have a very strong connection to the lost civilization known as Atlantis, an absolute knowing that I was part of that time. During the meditation, I was taken back to that time - and you were there! And I knew: You tried to tell us then [what you told us in the workshop] -- and we didn't listen."

Chills ran up and down my body as I took in her words. We stood silently, staring into each other's eyes. I knew nothing, consciously, of any connection to Atlantis. I did not even know what I believed about the existence of Atlantis. And yet, despite those thoughts of my "mind," I knew that what she said was true. I HAD done this before ... and not only was I not heard, but I suffered greatly for having done it. In that moment, I understood why I was in Florida, at this conference. And why I write all these emails. And why I am to move to California. And why it was so important to put up a website to reach and support more women. And why I keep doing this work that I never sought to do and that I sometimes don't want to do and that I don't always know HOW to do. I do it because we have to just START ... even if we don't have a clue, even if it looks too big to tackle, even if we'd rather do something else, something easier, safer, simpler. If enough of us just START, the cumulative act of all our starting will shift the energy of the world.

About a month ago, I had a dream about my spiritual teacher in which she said, "On the eighth day, God rested," and as I woke up, I heard "I need you." For days, I pondered this dream - in particular, why she said the eighth day. In Genesis after all, it says God rested on the seventh day. Then I recently read a magazine article by Sam Keen, about spiritual power, and something he wrote immediately brought the dream to mind. He said there is an "abiding sense of power, purpose and meaning" in the sacred perspective to "bring forth what is within you," for it offers us "the conviction that ... one's idiosyncratic gift -- one's vocation -- is an integral part of the divine creative process -- the eighth day of creation."

Suddenly I got it. On the eighth day, it's not just Divinity on its own anymore; it's Divine energy and human energy in this grand experiment together. Yet, we keep waiting for Spirit to do it, even as Spirit keeps trying to tell us "You have to do it WITH me now! I need you to bring forth what is within YOU!" That's how spiritual evolution works - through a process of co-creation.

Dear women, my teacher's words in the dream were not just for me; they are for all of us. We are needed. It is time to bring forth our gifts. Don't worry about the details of how, when, what ... just START ... and trust me - little miracles will manifest to keep you going.

VoP NEWS - MAY

ORLANDO CONFERENCE WAS INCREDIBLE!

If you read this month's feature article, then you understand part of why the Mary Magdalene and the Children conference was incredible. It also was incredible to experience James

Twyman's gentle energy, inspiring words, sense of humor and beautiful voice. On Saturday night, he performed the most moving version of "Amazing Grace" that I've ever heard. When the last note ended, the hall was completely still. It would have been inappropriate to applaud. I will never forget it.

Other conference highlights:

- The showing of two heart-opening films: the James Twyman-Neale Donald Walsch and Steven Simon collaboration, "Indigo," as well as a beautiful new documentary about Mother Teresa and her legacy;
- Hearing Bonnie Mansdorf, founder of The Foundation for a Healing Among Nations, speak about her work through this spiritually-based peace fellowship;
- Watching a powerful video of the Peace Vigil Ceremony in Baghdad that Twyman and other spiritual leaders conducted on March 20th;
- Learning the Mudra of Light meditation from Argentina's angel of peace, Maria Cristina Uhart, with whom I felt an instant heart connection (more on her work in a future issue);
- The hauntingly lovely voice of Lisa Rafel, whose chanting and sound energy healings called us to the afternoon and evening sessions each day;

For Vessels of Peace, the conference resulted in several dozen more names being added to our email list and the chance to share our work with women from as far away as South America, Quebec, and all over the U.S. Several women have indicated their intention to either start a VoP group or bring the work to existing women's groups, and I've been invited to come to several locations to give a workshop or talk about Vessels of Peace.

A special thank you to Emma Conklin, our VoP from Pennsylvania who donated one of her custom, hand-sewn tote bags for the conference. Note to the women who signed up for the tote bag drawing: the winner was Pamela Douglas-Smith, a Unity minister from Port Townsend, Washington. A special thank you also to VoP Victoria Mayeux, of the Beloved Community in Ashland, Oregon, whose enthusiasm for Vessels of Peace led to my being invited to participate in the conference. The Beloved Community holds conferences a couple of times a year, plus offers many other ways to support your practice of peace. To learn more or sign up for their email list, go to their website: www.EmissaryofLight.com

VoP WINS "WORK THAT HEALS" AWARD!

The Unfolding website monthly newsletter named Vessels of Peace as the winner of their Unfolding Award for Work that Heals! Commented Julia Mossbridge, newsletter editor and site founder: "I am proud to announce that our own Lynda Terry, who has been writing the 'Meditative Life' column for a year now, has received this award on behalf of her organization. Lynda's work is unfolding in miraculous and healing ways. Let's support her by visiting her website and spreading the news to women in our lives."

I'm very grateful to Julia for her support of our work and for the chance to write about meditation and the spiritual journey in her monthly newsletter. To learn more about the Unfolding Award for Work that Heals, as well as to see issues of the newsletter and my "Meditative Life" columns, visit the Unfolding website at: www.unfolding.org

NEW VoP GROUPS FORMING IN NORTH & SOUTH CAROLINA!

Many new women have signed up for the newsletter since the Florida conference. Two of them have contacted me about starting Vessels of Peace gatherings in their area:

Eva Johnson wants to start a group in the Asheville, North Carolina area. Interested women can contact her at eva42@msn.com

Maggie Self, of Columbia, S. Car., also wants to bring women together for Vessels of Peace work, and Lynn Milo, of the Charleston area, has offered to help with getting that group going. Contact them via Lynn's email address at lynnmilo@knology.net

Want to connect with women in your area to start a VoP group? Send an email to me at lyndaterry@vesselsofpeace.com. We will list your contact info on the site and in the newsletter.

NEW WEEKLY EMAIL SERIES STARTING!

I am very excited about our 2004 spring/summer email essay series, "The Sacred Feminine and the Attainment of Peace." A few mornings ago, while in meditation, I "heard" that title. As I wrote it down afterwards, I knew it would be the focus of a talk I am to offer, and I also knew it was the theme for this year's spring/summer email essay series.

Some background for those of you new to this list: Last June I began a 10-week email essay series, "Connecting with the Divine Feminine," in response to women's requests for more direction on how to experience the Divine Feminine energy in their day-to-day life. That series culminated right before our first annual VoP retreat, where we further contemplated and celebrated our connection with the Divine Feminine. The essays also became the foundation of a book by the same name (No publisher yet, but I am confident that one is manifesting as I type this. Please hold that vision with me?).

In the book version of each essay, I added a meditation focus statement that reveals how that particular goddess energy supports our practice of peace. Just as one of the 11 Intentions was the starting point for each of last year's essays, these meditation focus statements will be the starting point this time. Having awakened to the awareness of the Sacred Feminine in our being, having explored how to more tangibly perceive her presence in our life, we now will expand our understanding of how that relationship supports and sustain peace embodiment. The essay series will begin the week of May 10th and, as with last year, culminate before the summer retreat, so that we may use that event to contemplate, share and celebrate what we have attained.

UPCOMING VoP EVENTS

THE 2nd ANNUAL VoP SUMMER RETREAT: EMBODY ... INSPIRE ... SERVE ...

SATURDAY, JULY 17th, NOON - 6 P.M
STILL WATERS RETREAT HOUSE*, CARLISLE, PA.

In this retreat, the three elements of our Vessels of Peace motto will be the "pillars" supporting our day. Together, we will:

- Discover which aspect of Divine Feminine energy wishes to partner with us at the retreat and let her energy INSPIRE us through guided meditation, visual journaling, music, movement, and nature;
- Support one another in uncovering our sacred identity and learning how it infuses the ways we EMBODY peace;
- Discover, share and honor the unique ways we SERVE as a vessel of peace in our lives and in our world.

It's going to be a wonderful day; I hope you will join us!

Registration Details: Cost is \$15, not including lunch. Please bring a lunch dish or snack to share. Bottled water will be provided. RSVP if you WILL be attending: Call 717-651-1528 or

email lyndaterry@vesselsofpeace.com. Space is limited, so do get your reservation in early. Local driving directions will be sent out by email just prior to the retreat date. If coming from out of the area, contact me regarding travel directions/places to stay.

About the retreat site: Still Waters Retreat House is owned by Spiritual Director Sanford Alwine and his wife, Lois, and is located at 501 West Slate Hill Road, Carlisle. Situated on the banks of Conodoguinet Creek, the grounds include both wooded and open areas and paths for walking. The house is a beautiful, rustic multi-level structure with lots of natural wood, glass, tile and stucco, and can accommodate overnight as well as day retreats. For more information about Still Waters, call 717-243-8774.

MEDITATION GROUPS INFO/UPDATES

HARRISBURG VESSELS OF PEACE MEDITATION GROUP

Monthly, First Tuesdays, 7:15 p.m., Harrisburg (Lynda's place)
Dates for Spring/Summer: May 4th, June 1st, July 6th, & August 3rd
For more info: Lynda Terry, 717-651-1528

GETTYSBURG AREA VESSELS OF PEACE MEDITATION GROUP

Third Tuesday, Monthly, 7 p.m., Carroll Valley
Date for May: the 20th
For more info: Peggy Fitzpatrick, 717-642-6760 or Carol Donovan, 717-642-9378

Note: Have a peace and/or women's meditation group in your area? Let me know so we can list it here and on the website.

GREAT FEMININE BEING FOR MAY 2004

BONNIE MANSDORF, FOUNDER OF A HEALING AMONG NATIONS

When Bonnie took the stage at the conference in Orlando last month, she exuded the calm radiance of a woman who has found her vocation, her inner gift, and brought it forth. She sees herself as a "world citizen diplomat," and her spiritually-based peace fellowship, The Foundation for a Healing Among Nations (AHAN), is quietly and steadily doing important peace work around the world. She has participated in or helped organize programs, sacred meetings and international forums on civil rights, the release of suffering through the awakening of forgiveness, and other peace-related issues. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Arun Gandhi, Deepak Chopra and indigenous prophecy elders from around the world are just some of the world interfaith leaders with whom she has worked. And it was while working as an interviewer for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Project that she was inspired to start AHAN. One of AHAN's current projects is The Women's Tour of Global Understanding, which engages women and children from war torn countries and the United States to come together and make a difference.

Many of the things Bonnie is able to do through AHAN are done quietly, as with most diplomacy. The difference, however, is in her ability to bring leaders together in a way that enables the spiritual context to peace to be the guiding energy of the discussion. I am grateful to have heard Bonnie speak; she inspires an expanded sense of the possibilities for what Vessels of Peace can offer the world. To learn more about Bonnie's work, see her website at www.healingamongnations.org

Note: In each newsletter, we honor a Great Feminine Being - either a Vessels of Peace woman or any woman whose life and/or work resonates strongly with what we are about. She can be a woman who is well-known and/or a woman no longer with us in form. Who would you like to see recognized and why? Send nominations to lyndaterry@vesselsofpeace.com

TENDING THE VESSEL: INSPIRATION, SHARINGS AND SUPPORT

This space is for sharing experiences, thoughts, favorite quotes, etc. that speak to our day-to-day intention to embody peace. Please send your contributions to lyndaterry@vesselsofpeace.com

EMAIL SHARINGS:

A sharing from Eva, Asheville, NC:

"... I was in your class at the Twyman conference in Orlando and wish to tell you how much I enjoyed your work. I have become one of the goddesses, in tune with the Mother, and celebrate the divinity in seeing God as mother and father. I lean toward the mother... when I let people know, especially men, that now I am a goddess they treat me with much more respect and awe. My opinion is that as women have forgotten their connection we lose our value. The gathering was very powerful and I thank you for the message that you brought..."

INSPIRING QUOTES

Two favorite quotes from VoP Nadia Alfieri, of Harrisburg, Pa.:

"Seek Peace and Pursue it." - St. Benedict Psalm 34:15

"We need to find God and God cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature -- trees and flowers and grass -- grow in silence. See the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence. The more we receive in silence, the more we give to our life." - Mother Teresa

PURCHASE GUIDED MEDITATION CDS!

The Vessels of Peace Guided Meditation CD is a wonderful way to do peace embodiment practice, to connect with the energy of the Sacred Feminine, and to connect with the collective energy of Vessels of Peace women everywhere! To order your copy, email me at lyndaterry@vesselsofpeace.com or call 717-651-1528. Cost: \$15.

My guided meditation CD/tape, "Meditating for Life - One: Breath Meditation," is available from me and also, at The Inner-Connection Bookstore, 308 Market St., New Cumberland, Pa. 17070. To purchase directly from me, see contact information above. For the Inner-Connection, stop in to purchase or you can call them at 717-774-4874 to order by mail. CD: \$15. Tape: \$10.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT VESSELS OF PEACE

Vessels of Peace is an informal network of women committed to choosing peace in all areas of their lives. For more information, go to our website at www.vesselsofpeace.com