

**Presentation given at a Dove Fellowship Meeting in October, 2010**  
about the New Zealand Dove Retreat held in September 2010

**Intro:**

I live in Orewa with my husband and 3 children – moved here 11 yrs ago, both love NZ – both teachers – have worked as pastoral assistant for the last few years in CC in Orewa – feel we are really blessed because we are on this faith journey together.

**The Dove Retreat**

The Dove retreat was an unforgettable experience and to try and sum it up in a few minutes would be impossible so I will try to give you a glimpse and a sense of what it felt like to be there.

Terry Modica is an amazing speaker. She came across as a very down to earth woman with a good sense of humour. She was inspiring, knowledgeable and full of love for Jesus and his mother Mary. Her focus was to give us a deeper insight into the Rosary as she explained that each mystery is a reflection of our lives! She linked each mystery and it's meaning to our lives and showed us how this connection when we are praying can bring about inner healing, strength and deeper faith.

Each of her 5 presentations spoke to my heart and as well as learning heaps, I came away with a renewed and a much deeper love for Mary and Jesus

Before each of her presentations we participated in praise and worship music. This was amazing, the choice of songs was so appropriate and the women's voices were beautiful. A song/chant that echoed throughout the whole weekend was one that has stayed with me since:

The participation of the women in the praise and worship was also very inspiring and became more powerful as the weekend progressed.

Terry gave us an assignment to complete after her first talk on the Friday night. She had been talking about the importance of having Jesus and you time and keeping our eyes on Jesus and not on our pain/anxieties. So, we were all asked to get all our talking done over supper and then enter into a quiet time with Jesus. She really stressed how important this was in order to be able to listen to Jesus and receive his healing over the weekend. She talked us through a visualisation that she uses and finds very helpful and encouraged us to do something similar. We were then asked to bring all our yearnings, our worries, our own needs, those who are sick, our weaknesses and more to Jesus. We were asked to include all of this in a letter to Jesus.

Writing this letter required some soul searching and deep reflection but proved very rewarding.

The Dove team had set up an amazing prayer room which had the Blessed Sacrament in it so we could go in there and be in Jesus' presence and worship Him.

We also got the opportunity to participate in the sacrament of Reconciliation. It was an incredible experience standing in line, listening to the music and watching the joy on the women's faces after they had received forgiveness

I have the tendency to be controlling and can also be a bit of a perfectionist. Let's say that I would be more of a Martha than a Mary in the Scriptures. This has been an issue for a long time and Jesus has been letting me know that I needed to do something about it. So I brought it to Reconciliation and received some very appropriate advice! God is amazing! He had obviously gone ahead and chose the right priest for me because what he said to me was exactly what I needed to hear.

I asked for forgiveness for all the hurt that I have caused in my life by being controlling and being a bit of a perfectionist. I received God's forgiveness and I felt an incredible weight lifted off my shoulders and a deep sense of joy and inner healing.

Later on we had the opportunity to be prayed over and anointed by the prayer ministers. This was another powerful experience. Again the musicians and singers were on fire and being anointed filled me with a great sense of God's love for me and that he was healing me of my weaknesses.

The weekend finished with a beautiful Mass celebrated by Fr. Neil and Bishop Pat . Terry had spent a while talking on the Mass and giving us a deeper understanding of the Mass and its implications and importance in our lives so the Mass was very special and very joyful.

The highlight for me of the whole weekend was the singing of the National Anthem at the end of the Mass.

I will never forget this experience. The women were giving it all up for God. I could feel God all around me and felt immense joy and love. I have never felt so connected to God, it felt like we were being surrounded by God's angels in praising and worshipping God. It was a really humbling and almost heavenly experience, difficult to describe but one that I will always cherish.

## **For Such a Time as This**

by Pat Carson

about the New Zealand Dove Retreat held in September 2010

The fig trees are budding and the grapevines are in blossom; how delicious they smell. Yes, spring is here. Arise, my beloved, my fair one, and come away. Song of Songs 2:13

On the third day of spring about 100 women came together at Silverstream to welcome our speaker Terry Modica from Tampa, Florida to the 2010 Dove Retreat; believing also that their lives would never be the same again – spring has come. We had women from Kerikeri to Timaru - truly wonderful that distance is not a problem for some.

Our theme for Friday night was 'Keep your eyes upon Jesus' as He yearns for us to humble ourselves and become fertile soil. He wants our tears, yearnings and burdens but we have to give them to Him. Our tears are seeds that we plant in God's heart. Our homework before we went to bed was to write a letter to Jesus giving our yearnings and burdens to Him so that these can be lifted off us and left behind.

Some of us heard and felt the windows shaking around 4.30 am and awoke on Saturday morning to hear of the devastation from the strong earthquake in Christchurch and prayed for a day of grace for those in that area; also prayed for our own 'earthquakes' in life

After a good (or not so good night's sleep) Terry began speaking on the Rosary and how we can experience the joy of Christ in the stresses in our own lives. This put me personally into a bit of a quandary as I don't know the Rosary, have rarely prayed the Rosary and we never prayed the Rosary as a family. So I have to say that I wondered what I was going to learn and how this 'mystery' would be revealed to me

She began with the Joyful Mysteries telling us how we could put these into our own daily lives. Annunciation: – good news is spoken to all of us and we must respond in humility – we are the fertile soil. Visitation: a leap of recognition that the Holy Spirit visits our spirit and our seed cracks open and sprouts. Birth of Jesus: the seed cracks open and Jesus is restored, rebirthed and there is renewal – the cracked seed becomes new life.

Presentation of Jesus: we rededicate our lives to God; dedicate our own earthquakes. Finding Jesus in the Temple; finding Jesus in our earthquakes; our soil gets watered by more good news; we become more fertile and stronger.

Terry said that we have been bought up under a misconception and need to know that Jesus is all loving; all smiling and all joyful. Joy is a very normal part of a God-centred life. Jesus Our Yoke. Let Jesus be the stronger ox in the carrying of our burdens – let Him carry the bulk of the yoke.

Luminous Mysteries – these are for growing in the Mission of Christ. Baptism of Jesus- saying 'Yes' to growth; surrendering to Jesus; we are all called to prayer and intercession and speaking God's word to others Matt 3:13-17. Miracle at Cana –this was a revelation of the divine. We must do what Jesus tells us to do. When we are in the moment of what God wants us to do, we get the grace to do it. Preaching of the Good News – sharing Christ. We need to show and live the Good News ourselves before speaking out. The Transfiguration – we become holier when we really listen. Matt 17. The Last Supper –we become what we receive. Spend time worshipping what we have received. Sing songs of worship and live them. Share your love with

others. John 15:12-17

Sorrowful Mysteries – in Communion with Jesus – becoming Eucharist. Agony in the Garden – making the decision to follow Christ all the way to where it hurts; to sacrifice; to see the Gem' in others. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you. The Scourging at the Pillar – this is the pain of faith being rejected by those we try to help. Crowning of Thorns – when our minds are attacked by doubts and fears; we feel falsely accused. Carrying the Cross – the burdens we carry become easier when we realise that a better fruit will grow in us. The Crucifixion – we need to die to our own desires

In the final presentation on Sunday morning Terry showed us that after the crucifixion comes the resurrection in our lives. The Glorious Mysteries of the rosary deal with the resurrection – we are given the grace to evangelise and should find a spiritual director to help us recognise what God is doing in our life. The Ascension – whatever God calls us to do He enables us to do. Descent of the Holy Spirit – enables us to live the abundant life and to go out and help others. Mary's Assumption – Mary's holiness is our role model; she pondered and she trusted and we need to do this also. Crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven – we are daughters of Mary and God has given us everything that belongs to Him.

Interspersed with Terry's teachings we had wonderful Praise and Worship throughout the weekend; a time of Reconciliation with 6 priests from around Wellington; Saturday night was extra special as we had Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Fr. Ron Bennett blessed every woman individually as he prayed over us; as women we were delighted to have delicious food served to us at very regular intervals; we had Mass both days and as the weekend drew to a close we were each anointed by the Prayer Ministers for our journey ahead.

The women who left the retreat centre on Sunday afternoon were changed from those who arrived on Friday evening. With the teaching of Terry they are now more able to use Mary as a role model; to saying 'yes' to what God wants for them through reflection on the rosary. And as for myself – my view (or lack of view) of the rosary has changed and I can see the richness of this type of prayer.

It was truly a wonderful weekend.

## **FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS**

By Helen Kehoe, written for her parish magazine  
about the New Zealand Dove Retreat held in September 2010

It was with great excitement and anticipation that Brenda and I, together with approximately 300 other ladies, set out for this year's Dove retreat at Carey park, Henderson. Having experienced two retreats already, we couldn't wait to have this time of fellowship with our sisters in Christ and to receive refreshment and renewal from the Lord. Our hotel was booked, the dear ladies from the Dove National and local teams had taken care of all our needs and there was the promise of an amazing international speaker, Terry Modica.

We were not disappointed. Despite the rain, our spirits could not be dampened. From the moment that we arrived at the camp, we were surrounded by the Lord's joy and Loving Presence radiating out through the ministering of the leadership teams. The weekend started with a beautiful time of worship and praise as we invited the Holy Spirit to be present amongst us. As His Spirit descended we were able to let go of all our cares, troubles, home responsibilities and focus on the Lord and the message He had for each one of us.

Our inspiring speaker Terry Modica, whose motto is "Keep your eyes on Jesus", had flown in from Florida, USA, to be with us. She based her five talks on the four Mysteries of the Holy Rosary and gently led us into a deeper understanding of how each Mystery helps us to connect our lives with the life of Jesus. She explained how we can use every decade of each Mystery to identify with Jesus and so bring all our hurts and crosses, our joys, hopes and thanksgiving to Him. It is here in the Rosary that we can, with Him, birth new ideas.

Terry used a very powerful visual aid to deepen our understanding of each Mystery and how it connects to our life. The Joyful Mysteries were represented by a "sprout", a tree ready to become all that it has been created to be. Each new Mystery was represented visually by the tree as it matured, bearing fruit, being pruned, the falling of its fruit to fertilize the ground and produce more trees etc. It was very powerful to visualise ourselves as the tree and helped me to accept each stage as a very necessary part of my journey with the Lord. The final Glorious Mysteries were represented by a beautiful mature tree whose blossoms, in full bloom, radiated a delicate fragrance to all. This for me was the most important message of the weekend. We too are called to be that fragrance, the fragrance of Christ throughout the world, the fullness of Jesus to all who we meet.

Terry shared with us the following prayer by Blessed John Henry Newman:

### **RADIATING CHRIST**

"Dear Jesus, Help me to spread Your fragrance everywhere that I go. Flood my soul with Your Spirit and Life. Penetrate and possess my whole being, so utterly that all my life may only be a radiance of Yours. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come into contact with may feel Your Presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus! Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as You shine, so as to shine as to be a light to others. The light O Jesus will be all from You; none of it will be mine; it will be You shining on others through me. Let me thus praise You in the way you love best; by shining on those around me. Let me preach you without preaching, not by words, but by example, by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what I do, the evident fullness of the love my heart bears for You. Amen."

We were given so many opportunities to experience the fragrance of Christ throughout the weekend; the leadership team who lead us in Worship and Prayer, the ladies who prepared the most beautiful prayer room where we could sit in Adoration of our Lord at any time during the weekend, the ladies and two brothers from Joshua, who took care of our practical needs during the weekend and continually prayed for us during the retreat. Our Chaplain for the retreat was Father Neil Vaney from St Joseph's Discipleship College, Takapuna, who ministered to us with such love and humility. Our weekend concluded with Mass led by our National Chaplain, Bishop Pat; an awesome finish to an amazing weekend.

As we reluctantly departed from our mountain top experience and journeyed home, the fragrance of the weekend stayed within each of our hearts. And as we spend time with Jesus, pondering the Mysteries of the Rosary, Our Blessed Mother encourages us to be His Fragrance everywhere we go.

## **“The voice of the dove shall be heard in the land”. Song of Songs**

By Judy Olsen

about the New Zealand Dove Retreat held in September 2010

The Auckland Dove Camp was held at Carey Park from Friday 10th September to Sunday 12th September. Around 300 ladies responded to God’s invitation to come away to be renewed, refreshed and restored. A big camp which both the Carey Park team and Dove National Team handled with grace and efficiency.

### **Springtime**

The Camp’s theme “For such a time as this” and the key scripture from the Song of Songs --

“The fig trees are budding and the grapevines are in blossom how delicious they smell.  
Yes spring is here. Arise my beloved my fair one and come away”

-- was so apt for the beginning of spring! Even if the weather was inclement and a little cool at times the warm reception and loving hospitality we received on arrival from our beautiful Dove ladies and Joshua men more than compensated for this.

Prior to the first session on Friday night, the ladies gathered for a welcome ‘cuppa’ and a chat (who can stop us Dove ladies from talking!). There were many happy reunions with our Dove sisters and the beginning of new friendships.

### **Anticipation**

We gathered with great expectation and excitement for the first session on Friday night as the music team lead us into a time of welcome and praise to our loving God.

The joy in the room was already tangible as Helen Funnell the National President welcomed us for the weekend. A special welcome was made to ladies who were experiencing “Dove Ministry” for the first time – many hands went up confirming that indeed “The voice of the dove is being heard in this land”.

Helen introduced our weekend’s speaker, USA’s Terry Modica, and told us we were in for a treat. How blessed we were with Terry’s talks as they ministered by challenging us, inspiring us to greater things for God while encouraging and equipping us in the reminder to “Keep our eyes on Jesus, and when you have to look at others see them through His eyes.”

### **Individual gifts from the Father**

Terry opened her first talk by encouraging us that “God has a gift for each of us this weekend – whether we think we deserve it or not! We are here at God’s invitation. Not one of us is here by accident, Jesus has called us. God is not looking down at a group of ladies. God is looking at each of us – Jesus is present to take our tears and yearnings.” – What a wonderful promise from our loving Jesus as Terry reminded us that “He is my beloved and I am His beloved”.

Terry’s talks were interwoven through the Mysteries of the Rosary and Terry shared how by reflecting on these mysteries and connecting them to our personal journey with God we can enter into the deeper meaning of our Christian walk with Jesus our companion and role model. Terry was open and honest about her own journey and her down to earth approach helped us

all to see that God is calling ordinary people to live extraordinary lives through the power of His Holy Spirit, His salvation and the sacraments. Looking around the room it was evident that God was meeting each woman, whatever her age, nationality or life experience, where He knew she needed to be met.

Jesus ministered to our hearts by prayer ministry and through the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday afternoon. Terry encouraged us to write down our crosses, heartaches and prayer requests on a piece of paper, these were to be placed in the safe hands of Jesus on Saturday night – a time of Jesus being present to us to heal our hurts and to hear our heart's cry.

The tableau at the front of the meeting room changed with each talk and visually reinforced Terry's message. These were inspired and changed from a plant just sprouting through the soil to finally become a beautiful orange tree laden with fruit. A visual reminder that God takes all the tears and heartaches and they become the soil ("humus") in which He can grow beautiful life giving fruit.

### **A Spirit of Joy**

The Music Team lead us into a powerful time of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in the evening. We were all blessed by their music throughout the camp. Following adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Fr. Neil Vaney brought Jesus to each one of us as we symbolically placed our heart's yearnings in a basket handing them over to Jesus to place in our Heavenly Father's care. Hearts were touched as Jesus came to each of us knowing already our deepest needs and desiring to heal us of our burdens.

In Terry's final presentation on Sunday, she shared how deeply God had blessed her through the Spirit of Joy present at the Dove Retreats. Terry remarked on how touched she had been by the tangible spirit of love she had experienced with the Dove ladies. She encouraged those not presently associated with Dove to connect with a local group so they could continue to be ministered through the special Dove "Charisma".

The weekend concluded on the Sunday afternoon with Bishop Pat Dunn, Dove National Chaplain, celebrating Mass with Fr. Neil as co-celebrant. Bishop Pat's homily reflected on the gospel of the day Luke 15:1-10, encouraging us that "We are made for God and God will not rest until He has found us." The national anthem came to life at the end of the Mass when women of "every creed and tongue" sang the anthem as a prayer to God for the protection of our nation.

As a woman who has been personally blessed through the Ministry of Dove for some 24 years, the deep sense of gratitude to God I felt for the love and joy that was apparent in all the Dove ladies (and Joshua men) who ministered to us over the weekend –"leaking Jesus to us all". It has renewed my love for Dove in witnessing anew the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst over the weekend.

## **Nelson 2010**

I was fortunate to be at Tea Pot Valley in Nelson for the South Island Dove Retreat on 17th to 19th September.

God, our Beloved had called, and 70 women had responded to come away.

I had been asked to help welcoming and it was interesting to meet the women arriving. I wasn't staying in. The solitude and silence of my nearby home called me. However, I caught the companionable joy of the women choosing beds and unrolling sleeping bags in shared rooms. There was a wonderful spirit of being together and the excitement of a sleepover. Someone I hadn't seen in over 40 years recognized me from our boarding school days.

Helen Funnell, the Dove National President officially welcomed us and set the scene for our weekend. Helen is amazingly effervescent, warm and witty, and efficient in a very relaxed style. We were made welcome, welcome and welcome some more to our time away to rest at the feet of Jesus.

Helen introduced her National Team of equally talented women and they all ministered to our needs of body and soul in many quiet and miraculous ways over the weekend. Everyone was grateful for their loving ministry to us. How often over the weekend I noted simple acts of kindness from one woman to another. Thank you.

The music team of Judy and Lesley began with Val stepping in until Wilma from Hamilton arrived after weather delays. She had her guitar out and was in action within minutes of entering the room. The music and singing were fantastic all weekend. It flowed over me and saturated my being. There were times of praise and worship, times of ambience music, and even dance music on Saturday night.

Then Terry Modica, the guest speaker from America came forward. I admit that my main motivation to come was to hear her and she exceeded my expectations. First she replaced the word Retreat with Restoration. She spoke of God's desire to restore us, to heal us. We would journey to the healing heart of Jesus.

She introduced 2 images she would use as we journeyed. One metaphor was of the weekend as a mountain climbing process as in the many scriptural stories of mountain experiences including Mt. Tabor and being transfigured and being close to God. The other image connected to the theme of Growth, the parable of the Sower and the soil. This theme was before us visually, beginning with a pot of soil, garden tools and seeds and it changed and grew many times over the next 2 days.

I liked the image of making good soil by composting the layers of my life with layers of The Word of God and the sacraments. So healing, growth and mountain climbing was on offer and I embraced all three. I love hiking and gardening and never say no to healing.

The stepping stones to climb the mountain would be the 4 sets of Mysteries of the Rosary. Terry was easy to listen to, intelligent, very down to earth and practical, very scriptural, full of faith, and humorous. Terry wove the up and down realities of her own story and her love of God through her talks and that made her so real and believable and touched deeply into my story and the authentic me.

She gave 5 talks in all. Terry began with the Joyful Mysteries, bringing them wonderfully alive and we tilled our soil to increase our fertility. I liked her expression of “Joy Robbers” for what prevented us living in Joy. We made our own private list of joy robbers and presented them individually in the 2nd Rite of Reconciliation. It is great to experience enthusiastic participation of this liberating healing sacrament. The sun shone as brightly as the women.

Then it was lunch. Good food is always a highlight and for women, no preparation, no dishes and good company made the mealtimes a real treat.

Saturday afternoon we continued climbing and pruning things that were not life giving as Terry stepped through the Luminous mysteries and breathed new life into them and us.

Then it was time for the sorrowful Mysteries. I remember her phrases, ‘Every cross can be a Resurrection unless maybe it is a cross God didn’t ask us to carry.’ “Let God be God.” A bit more pruning needed for me! A bit more climbing. After an inspiring journey from the Agony to the Crucifixion, we were invited to write down the crosses we were carrying, our heartaches, our burdens, our prayer requests. ‘We cannot endure the sorrowful journey of the cross unless we are centering our prayer life in Jesus.’

During an evening time of Adoration, Fr. Jack carried the monstrance and blessed each person individually. How special and I eagerly let go my folded list into Helen’s basket. Prayer teams were available for prayer and anointing. Wonderful things were happening. The atmosphere was electric. Next day when asked if anyone had experienced healing all hands went up, many put up 2 hands! The Spirit was indeed moving in the weekend.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny and Terry added to the sparkle with the stepping stones of the Glorious Mysteries. By now roses were blooming in the soil, the band played on, songs were sung, the flags were waving, prayers were prayed and anointings of the Spirit abounded.

After lunch my delight was to climb the mountain behind the camp to the crucifix on the hill and look down on the camp and reflect on all the restoration that had taken place in me since Friday night. The fertility of my soil had improved, I had overcome some challenges of my life, and I asked God for fruit to grow abundantly in me.

We concluded with Mass and our thanksgiving was evident. I asked one woman for her impression of the weekend, she said, “Blessings, blessings, blessings.”

I bought the high quality CD’s that the sound and screen technicians made of each session. I knew I would value hearing them again. I have continued to ponder:

- How does my life connect to the mystery of what I hear announced?
- How is my spirit exhilarated when visited by the good news?
- What is born from my dyings?
- Can I rededicate myself and my life to fulfill my purpose?
- What do I need to risk to find Jesus?