



A Bridge of Love with Reiki

BY DEBORAH O'BRIEN

*My relationship with faith was nurtured
and inspired by my role model—my mother.*

—ALICE COLLINS TURINA

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WHEN DAD LEFT, I was twelve years old. Mom now had seven children to raise on her own, Teri, age 14; Kathy, 13; Debbie (that's me), 12; Mike, 10; Pat, 7; Tim, 5 and John, 2. We lived in the small town of Astoria, Oregon.

Mom was a very devoted Catholic. She adhered to the Catholic teachings, doctrines and social interactions that defined what she called her *faith*. She expected us to do the same. I perceived that she held in her heart a deep knowledge of Jesus, Mother Mary and the Angels.

Mom's courage and faith were often tested as she supported us in the large, five-bedroom house on a hill. She was left with the furniture, the car, the kids and the mortgage, too. Mom loved God so much! She would say, "Let God be the Father in this house."

I know He was listening. We always seemed to have our needs met, with help from others along the way. It bonded us together as a family to find ways to help bring in money. One thing that we did at Christmastime was to go door-to-door to sell bags of holly clipped from the holly tree in our front yard. Mom did bookkeeping for a dairyman who brought us milk, eggs and cheese. She washed dishes at a Chinese restaurant, taught physical education at the Job Corps. She was a secretary at the community college, taught herself upholstery then offered a class at the community college.

For five years on her own, she managed to keep us all together. She seemed to provide for our necessities with such ease, always maintaining a good outlook. She was very athletic, loved the outdoors and often took us camping, hiking, clam digging, biking. Everyone played sports.

By age fourteen, I was bumping up against society's restrictive ideals. I could see the hypocrisy, and I rebelled! Sometimes I felt overlooked at home because I had little interest in sports. I was more interested in music, art, drama, reading and writing. I had a keen interest in national and international affairs. My heart was

awakened to politics by the crisis of the Vietnam War. They used the draft to send boys off against their will to kill and be killed. I was angered and horrified at the atrocities. I participated in peace marches and canvassed for George McGovern.

Mom had no interest in these matters or she just had no time. It seemed like she rejected my unconventional ideas, the way I dressed, the way I spoke and my friends. For my part, I began to see the hypocrisy in society and religion. We grew apart.

When I was just seventeen, my boyfriend committed suicide. The Catholic Church considered suicide to be a mortal sin. This action meant that my beloved friend would burn in hell for eternity. I didn't want to know or believe in a god like that. I was confused. I had felt the truth of God's love as a witness to how well He provided for us during those years we were alone with just Mom. How could the same God put my friend in hell for eternity? I questioned the very existence of the church's version of God. In my heart, I knew God was good because Jesus and Mother Mary were good.

God had plans for me. I met and married a man who had custody of his four-year-old, Mary. We had three more daughters together—Jessica, Amelia and Aleta. We lived on his parent's farm for thirteen years before I realized I had to leave. I purchased a small house and moved into it with our three daughters aged seven, nine and twelve. Mary had moved in with her mother to attend her senior year of high school.

In the early years as a single parent, I started with my upholstery business set up in the garage, and I built a career as a realtor in the small coastal town in Oregon. I had learned by my mother's example to have faith that God would help me to provide for them, and that's what happened. It always seemed to work out that I either sold a property or just finished an upholstery job when payment on a bill was due. Then came Reiki.

For me, Reiki feels like a direct link to God. It's evidence that God loves us and wants us to know His love in very genuine experience. My first experience was one of these.

Early in my life as a single mother, I went to the real estate office with a tension headache. One of my fellow associates offered to help ease the headache. When she put her hands over my head, something miraculous occurred. My headache and the

tension completely disappeared within minutes, leaving me peaceful and calm. I was amazed! I knew I had to learn Reiki. Over the next few years, she taught me.

My real estate career grew. I gave up upholstery. My girls challenged me, yet I always felt comforted when I would write in my journal. It felt like I was talking to God asking for help and guidance. I always received it. I thank God today for all the help that I received during that time. I know for certain that I didn't and couldn't have done all that I did without His support and guidance.

God's grace and direction came through much more clearly after I learned to use Reiki.

Reiki became my most direct link to God's wisdom and assistance, building my faith in the absolute knowledge of God rather than a belief dictated by doctrines and rules. The experience built my faith. Faith showed me truth.

In 2006, the Oregon coast real estate market crashed. I felt that I would lose my career and our home. Thank goodness the girls were grown and out on their own. I had to let go of many things and find a new direction and Reiki helped to build my faith in life again when all seemed lost. Reiki led the way to a new life and opened my heart to love after being single for twenty-three years.

Mom and I both experienced loss and challenges that tested our faith. However, we knew and trusted in the same God, a god evidenced through faith and experience. We parted ways in how we worshiped, but our ideals were the same—to do no harm and to treat all with generosity and kindness.

When Mom was 83, she had an accident that would change her life forever. She fell on her left knee and cracked the kneecap, requiring emergency surgery. Experiencing an adverse reaction to the anesthesia, she ended up needing constant supervision. My sister called on me to help. I stepped in and stayed with her a while.

I set up the table in the den and gave Mom Reiki sessions. Every morning and evening she would get up on the table. Reiki was helping! Mom knew in her heart the value of faith built from experience. She immediately recognized the value of Reiki. She asked me to teach her and I agreed. She read the training manual, and I talked about the history. Then I gave her the attunement. She was thrilled to know Reiki.

One morning my brother Mike came by for a visit. His back was hurting, and he had a tension headache, so we offered to give him Reiki. He got on the table and we gave him a session. He went into a deep trance as we directed the energy and when we finished, he sat up, amazed that the pain and tension were gone!

My sister, who was her medical power of attorney, decided it was best for Mom to be placed in a Catholic nursing home in Beaverton, Oregon. I got an apartment close to her so that I could visit her there. I often gave her Reiki.

When she had a stroke and went into a comatose state for five days before her passing, my brothers and sisters and I took turns staying with her every moment, so she was never left alone. My cousin Ann, who is an RN, came to visit one day and while she was there, her friend called. She was a hospice nurse with over eighteen years of experience. She just happened to be at the same facility working with another person. We met with her in the corridor where I was able to ask her about Mom's dying process. She said it could take three to five days for her to transition and that this time was a very sacred time where my mother, while in her comatose state, was passing on spiritual wisdom teaching to loved ones.

It was after midnight. I was sitting with my two sisters watching Mom. I had told them that I had learned from my work as a nurse aide in an elder care facility that most people pass between midnight and 5 am. We noticed a change in her breathing. We knew it was time. My sister Kathy suggested that we share our favorite memories of Mom. After that, we each went to her to say our good-byes. I was last, and I placed Reiki symbols as I stood beside her bed—the Holy Fire, Usui DKM, SHK, CKR and Karuna symbols—while telling her it's okay to go now, Jesus is waiting for you. Mom took her last breath and transcended.

Reiki gives me an experience of God's love that is absolute and consistent. The sacred grace and peace heal my body and emotions. Unconditional love is mine, as I open my heart to receive it. Reiki created a bridge of love for Mom and me. We came full circle to meet once again, with hearts full of shared faith, and with the knowledge of God that brings comfort and peace. ❄️

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