

GOOD NEWS! Via de Cristo

OF SE MICHIGAN & NW OHIO

Our Mission: By Grace with the Holy Spirit, we challenge leaders to discover and achieve their personal calling, assisting them with a method for influencing their environments.

FEBRUARY 2012 • VOLUME 26

Intent of the Via de Cristo

The Via de Cristo is a spiritual method for the renewal of Christian life. It is directed toward having the truth and the grace of Jesus Christ proclaimed to each participant. This is effected through the power and work of the Holy Spirit, for we believe that we can not by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ our Lord or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit calls us through the gospel, enlightens us with His gifts and sanctifies and keeps us in the true faith (see Luther's explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles Creed.). All activity during a Via de Cristo weekend whether it be that of the team member or the tasks performed by volunteer workers is done with the express intention of being a channel through which the Holy Spirit can work more effectively in the lives of the participants. The presence and work of the Holy Spirit is vital to every dimension of the Via de Cristo.

The Via de Cristo is not to be identifies with the Charismatic movement. The express use of the gifts of the Spirit or the active seeking of such gifts during a weekend is not

the intention. Rather, the purpose and intent is to provide a method whereby a participant can become increasingly equipped with the power of God's grace to be an effective member of the Body of Christ. Great care must be taken so as to keep the focus on what God has done for us through Jesus



Christ is counting on you...

Christ and what that means for his people. In every instance all glory and praise should be give to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In the same way the Via de Cristo weekend is intended primarily for baptized individuals who already know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It is true that the faith of many

people who have participated has been vitally renewed or awakened. But the intention is not to convert the participant but rather through the use of this method a participant is encouraged to persevere in the faith and to become an effective channel of God's grace to others. It is assumed that there already is a desire on the part of the participant to grow in faith and to become more intimately involved in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ. †



Editors:

Kevin & Joanne DeHetre
(888) 468-3295
communications@gnvdc.org

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Find us on

facebook

If you haven't joined already, Facebook is a great way to connect and share with friends. We have a facebook group, and we'd love you to join. (You must have a facebook account and ask for permission to join, as only community members and other, pre-screened individuals are allowed.)



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Good News! Via de Cristo

Reaching Out and Serving Others

Serving on The Women's Keryx Prison Ministry

I have had the humbling experience of serving as the Rectora for the 3rd Women's Keryx Prison Ministry at Huron Valley Woman's Correctional Facility in Ypsilanti, MI, in 2008.

What a blessing it was for me and the team to be able to share Jesus with these women telling them of His great love and hope for them. They hunger to hear about Jesus and to know that there are people on the outside who really do care about them.

The Ultreya is held the second Saturday of every month for the outside team members and the - inmates to meet with each other to hear how God has continue to bless them in their daily situations.

Our next Keryx #7 will be held April 26 - 29, 2012 with sixty inmates attending the weekend.

God's love compels us to imitate Christ and do as He would do. Love brings life and hope to a troubled world.

Neither my gifts nor your gifts were given to us for our own benefit but for the benefit of others and for His glory. If we do not use our gifts we are given, we are all cheated. God will never ask us to do something we have not talent for. He never leaves us where we are comfortable. He is always stretching us and growing us into the person He intends us to be.

Christ is counting on you and I, as a group of Christians to put our love of God and our talents into action. He expects us to offer what we have BUT all that we have. We are guided by the Holy Spirit to go and bear witness of His love, to be moved by our Christian love to serve the truth.

Be ready to hear God's call and when you do, be ready to say: "Here I Am Lord - I Will Go - Send Me"

God loves you and so do I!,
Judy Sutherland, LVCCM #39 †

Doing My Time For Jesus

My Good News Via de Cristo weekend experience was nothing like anything I could have imagined. The relationship with Christ I had heard about throughout a lifetime of Sunday school, catechism, worship attendance, Bible study and conversations with friends became personal and so intimate during my weekend, it took my breath away. On returning home I found that I could hardly put into words the love I had experienced.

Working on team wasn't anything I had thought of doing but now I found myself praying that I

would be asked to serve. It's funny how God works through us. I have worked in a number of different positions, often feeling challenged, uncomfortable and stretched but, always blessed and helped to grow in my faith.

Last fall I was invited to work on my first Kairos Prison Ministries Team. Most everyone on team had attended a "street weekend." Whether it was a Cursillo, Emmaus Walk, Great Banquet or a Via de Cristo, we came together with an open heart, a loving spirit and desire to allow Christ's light to shine

Serving on The Men's Keryx Prison Ministry

through us. The transformation of the residents we served was nothing short of amazing! One of the men in my table family shared on Saturday night that, "I thought my life was over when I came to this place. But now that I've been here with you guys, I'm not going to be doing my time for the State of Ohio, I'm going to be doing my time for Jesus."

"Doing your time for Jesus." What better way to spend your time, wherever you are?

Blessings,
Jim Nicolai, GNVDC #20 †

Remain True To Its Roots

Why It is Essential to Learn and Understand What Via de Cristo Is About

Grace and Peace to each of you!

“ My name is Tracy Schmidlin and I made Good News Via de Cristo #3 in Ottawa Lake Michigan in 1988 where I sat at the table of Deborah.” I have been introducing myself that way for over 20 years now - in good ol’ fashioned Via de Cristo style. I have been blessed to serve on many weekends, to serve the Good News Secretariat in many capacities and also on the National Board where I was honored to meet people from around the country who believe in this movement called Via de Cristo; who understand what a gift it truly is.

The years I served on the National Board taught me a great deal about our roots, things I didn’t know or didn’t think I needed to know, some I didn’t know that I didn’t know. And, like most areas in life, without the deeper knowledge I would miss out on deeper meaning. I could miss out on knowing much about God’s people and the paths he has for us to follow.

As I write today, it seems like just yesterday that I sat waiting for my name to be called as Weekend #3 began. The time has gone by quickly since then with many unexpected turns. The years have not been easy for the Church; nor for those of us who love her. It has not been easy for Via de Cristo either.

Our boundaries have been tested and, I believe, they will continue to be tested. Boundaries regarding who is qualified to be a Spiritual Director on a weekend; denominational matters

and gender issues; what, if any, technology belongs on weekends; communion issues; leadership issues within Secretariats as well as on weekends; copyright laws and music licenses. The list goes on and on.

Via de Cristo must remain true to its roots! We are offering a method to help Christians be more effective as God’s people. The National Lutheran Secretariat has tried to be very clear that we are not about the issues, we are about the grace. Via de Cristo

teaches a method for renewing the face of the earth! We are here to create, renew and build relationships, with Christ and with each other.

I truly believe that one of the best ways for Cursillistas to learn about their roots – to learn what is essential – to understand what we are about - is to attend the national meetings. There the essentials are always celebrated as fundamental to who we are and why we exist!

This year the National meeting will be held in Colorado. It will be a celebration of our 40th year being Lutheran. We will talk about what it means to be Lutheran and hold to Lutheran theology on our weekends. It promises to be another quality opportunity for us to find out more about who we are – to go deeper. Check out www.viadecristo.org to learn more about the National meeting. I hope to see you there!

God Loves You and So Do I!
Tracy Schmidlin, GNVDC#3 †

GNVDC Mission Statement:

“By Grace with the Holy Spirit, we challenge leaders to discover and achieve their personal calling, assisting them with a method for influencing their environments.”

What is VIA de CRISTO?

VIA de CRISTO is a Spanish phrase meaning “Way of Christ.” VIA de CRISTO is a highly structured three day weekend designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people and bring them to a new awareness of living in God’s grace. It is a combined effort of lay people and clergy toward renewal of the church.

History of VIA de CRISTO

The movement originated as “Cursillo” in the late 1940’s in the Spanish Catholic church and moved to the United States in the late 1950’s. It began in the Lutheran church when lay people and clergy attended a Catholic Cursillo in 1971, both in Iowa and Florida. The first Lutheran sponsored weekends were held in 1972 in Iowa and Florida and have now been held in over 25 states and some foreign countries. VIA de CRISTO is the Lutheran expression of this method which is currently being used in many denominations including: Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian and Reformed churches.

Purpose of VIA de CRISTO

VIA de CRISTO is based on the fundamentals of Christianity, concentrating on the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. The focus is not on VIA de CRISTO itself, but on the environment of the community of believers. The objective of the movement is to inspire, challenge and equip people for Christian action in their homes, churches and communities.

Who should attend a VIA de CRISTO weekend?

VIA de CRISTO is intended for lay people from every walk of life, for pastors, for people who live strong and active lives in Christ, and also for those who seek to be renewed and strengthened in their relationship with Christ and the people around them. VIA de CRISTO is open to married couples, and single men and women.

Upcoming Events



SPRING WEEKENDS

Men's Weekend #50

April 12-15, 2012
St. Michael Lutheran Church
Ottawa Lake, MI

Women's Weekend #50

April 19-22, 2012
St. Michael Lutheran Church
Ottawa Lake, MI

ULTREYAS

Winter Ultreya

March 25, 2012
3:00 - 6:00 pm
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Livonia, MI

Post Weekend Ultreya

May 6, 2012
3:00 - 6:30 pm
St. Michael Lutheran Church
Ottawa Lake, MI

Summer Picnic/Ultreya

August 19, 2012
3:00 - 6:30 pm
St. Michael Lutheran Church
7000 North Sheldon Road
Canton, MI

Making A Difference, Praising Jesus

Why Millions of People Were Seeking Out Scripture

John 3:16 was the Bible verse that Tim Tebow was once banned from painting in tiny script onto his eye black.

But the Denver Broncos quarterback nonetheless delivered that Biblical message to the masses Sunday during an overtime victory against the Pittsburgh Steelers. The score was 29-23. But the game was significant for other -- some might say supernatural -- game-time numbers: He passed for **316** yards against the Steelers, and set an NFL playoff record with **31.6** yards per completion.

For Christians, John 3:16, of course, is arguably the single most important verse in the Bible. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 was the most Googled search term for much of Sunday

evening and into Monday morning, as sports fans and non-sports fans alike tried to make sense of the statistical coincidences (and maybe brush up on the Bible).

Oddly enough, Tebow himself did not seem to make a connection between his game stats and the Bible verse that he used to paint in white on top of his eye black until the National Football League barred all such personal messages.

But he did praise the Lord, as he has done throughout his career, a practice that has gained him plenty of fans and critics. "First and foremost I just want to thank my Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. He's done so much in my life," Tebow said to the media after the game.

Although he can no longer paint John 3:16 on his game face, Tebow still keeps it close, using it to sign off a message to fans on his website. †

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

DID YOU KNOW?

Commercial Inspired by Tim Tebow – John 3:16

It is estimated that over 100 million people google searched the bible verse John 3:16 following the Focus on the Family commercial, which was inspired by Tim Tebow, during the Denver Broncos vs New England Patriots playoff game. †

Evangelism: Thinking Out of the Box

God works in mysterious ways in all our lives. Have you thought about ways you could share your love and gratitude for Jesus? We are all called to bring others to Jesus, the way we accomplish that is up to us. Maybe you will be the next person that inspired millions of people to google a bible verse! †

Let Your Light Shine

I recently served on the Via De Cristo weekend #49, where I sat at the table of Mary Magdalene and gave the rollo on "Laity." The talk centered on: SHINING—Shining a light in a dark world. A world lost without knowing the one true light, Our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I watched 17 ordinary women transform throughout this weekend. These women went from not knowing "Why" they were called to this Via De Cristo, too becoming not only a light—but a fire! I witnessed the Lord weaving a beautiful tapestry. A tapestry not made out of strands of cloth but one made out of our very own humanity. Woman gathered together from all walks of life. Each one with there own families, successes, failures, strengths and weaknesses. Not perfect woman but willing woman. Woman, who as the weekend progressed, banded together, became sisters in Christ, and just as fire spreads, dedicated themselves to the igniting of a fire in there

own homes, churches, jobs, and communities.

The Via De Cristo is not a gathering for "do-gooders," or a seminar for self improvement the "Christian way," not even a weekend away from the responsibilities of life. It is an awakening of your Spirit; it's the breath of life; it's falling in love; it's JESUS!

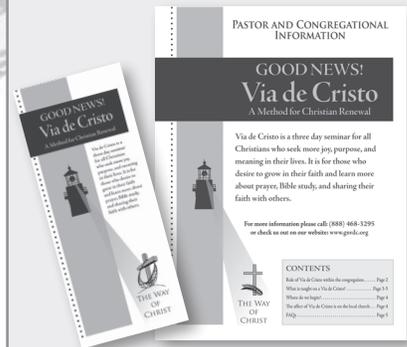
So with the new year, 2012, just beginning, and the dawning of another 4th day upon us, are we still filled with the same zeal and passion to shine that light? To be used by God in the spreading of the "Good News?" Does our walk lead others to the Cross? Does our confidence in Christ give others hope? And have WE loved others the way Christ loves US?

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE AND SHINE BRIGHTLY!

Remember God Loves You and So Do !!!!

De Colores,
Victoria Clifton, GNVDC #43

Get The News Out!



We have new Via de Cristo brochures, new Pastor and Congregational informational booklets, a 12 minute DVD, posters for the church bulletin board with upcoming Via de Cristo dates, and people that are willing to come to your church and let them know what Via de Cristo is all about! If you need any materials or are interested in a temple talk, you can e-mail Angie at accolbeck@comcast.net or call (734) 453-3105. †

Humble Servant Leaders

Excerpt from "Meditations for Reunion"

A Christian leader is a humble servant leader. Humility is essential for Christian leadership, but it is also the most difficult virtue to achieve and maintain. Humility is difficult to achieve and practice because leadership opportunities and leadership experiences foster power and control, which contradict humility. Humility does not mean giving up power. Humility is power, but it is power constrained under

the strength and direction of the Holy Spirit. The strength of humility and the courage to follow Gods direction are essential while leading others, as God's direction is often resisted and opposed by the conventional wisdom of the world.

"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant for all."

Mark 9:35

If you liked this excerpt, you can purchase this book online directly or contact communications to purchase a copy.

Online:

Meditations for Your Fourth Day
www.powerfulpalanca.com

GNVDC Communications:

Call 1-888-468-3295

or email:

communications@gnvdc.org

Cost: \$2.00 ea

SPRING APPLICATION DEADLINES

Reminders from our Registrars

With another set of weekends approaching, it is important that our application process runs smoothly.

Sponsors, please note:

- Applications need to be filled out completely.
- Pastors signatures must be included.
- Neatness counts! We want to have accurate information for our participants, so please take time and print legibly.



Deadlines for Weekend #50 applications: (10 days before the weekend)

- Men's - April 2, 2012
- Women's - April 9, 2012

Please mail or fax application to:
P.O. Box 549
Sylvania, OH 43560
(888) 468-3295 phone
(888) 468-3295 fax

Applications are available on our website:
www.gnvdc.org

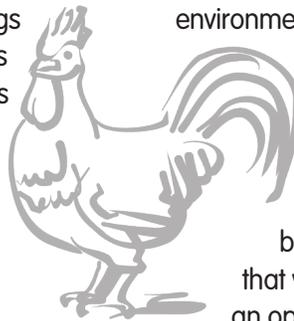
God's blessings to you,
Bob and Nancy Rieck
Registrars

From Our Lay Director

Phil Meuser, GNVDC Weekend #27

Well, 2012 is off and running! If you are like Carol and me, there have been some challenging times with the loss of friends and fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. We are so thankful for a loving and caring God to be at our side. He may not make things crystal clear as to why things happen as they do, but He is there at our side to help us get through these difficult times. We also have each other that can be there to listen and offer prayers for each other as a support system. Thanks be to God for that!

We have a new National Executive Director by the name of Nancy Peterson. I have had a phone conversation with her and she extends De Colores to all and to let us know that she is available to listen to us regarding Via de Cristo. She is



hopeful that many of us will be able to attend the NLS Meeting in Denver this summer.

Weekend #50 is rapidly approaching and hopefully we are all in tune with those within our environments that might be in a position to be a participant. Let us keep our ears, eyes and hearts open to those around us.

The Secretariat has been planning a calendar that will hopefully give everyone an opportunity to attend an Ultreya or Annual Picnic. That calendar will be coming out in the near future.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you in the near future at a Send Off, Closura or Ultreya.

Good Loves you and so do I.
Phil Meuser, GNVDC #27 †



Don't wait until it's too late...

† Pray for God's guidance

† Reach out and invite those on your heart

† Get those applications in early

We Need You!!!

Nominations Sought for Secretariat Positions

There will be several positions opening this summer (see listings on your right) on the Good News Secretariat, due to term limits. Joanne DeHetre is Nominating Committee Chairman this year and will be serving with several other members of the Secretariat. Each secretariat member will make his/her best effort to consider folks who are active and have a love for the Via de Cristo movement. We will pray about who we believe God is calling us to suggest and make recommendations to the nominating committee.

This is where you can help! If you feel a calling to become more involved in serving the Good News Via de Cristo community or have someone in mind that displays a love for the movement and has leadership and organizational skills, please contact Joanne DeHetre. She will share the job descriptions of the positions available and answer questions you might have. Elections will be held in May with new member commissioning in June.

Please email or call with the name(s) & position(s) of your recommendations for nomination. †

For more info or to nominate someone, please contact:

Joanne DeHetre at 888-468-3295

email: communications@gnvdc.org

Criteria for Selection of Participants

The Via de Cristo is an instrument of renewal in which a specific method is developed. Through this method there is one objective: the Christian renewal of society.

The task of selecting participants is the greatest importance and consequence both for the effectiveness of the Via de Cristo and for the work towards the objective.

The Via de Cristo is NOT for everyone. Indiscriminate and haphazard distribution of applications is not desired. If you remember the rector at your Via

de Cristo said, "It is not for children or fools." Although there may be authentic experiences of conversion that occur at Via de Cristo from time to time, the weekends are primarily for Christian renewal. Also the Via de Cristo is not a place to send people to solve their problems. It is in this area that the participant's pastor can give helpful direction.

The Via de Cristo must never be concerned primarily with increasing its membership rolls, but must see its role in building and renewing Christian Leaders, so that they might more effectively Christianize their environment. †

**"Speak to God about persons,
before speaking to persons about God."**

Secretariat Openings and Brief Descriptions

Communications Chair

Responsible for website, social media, publicity materials, database management. Coordinates the creation and mailing of newsletters, emails, printed materials such as team manuals, forms, applications, service sheets, brochures, etc. Communications with The Good News Community, National Lutheran Secretariat and others.

National Lay-Delegate

Provide the point of contact between the Secretariat and the NLS on general matters. Attends NLS meetings and informs the Good News! Via de Cristo Community on NLS matters.

Post-Weekend Chair

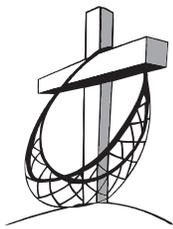
Arranges for follow-up of Fourth Day activities, reunion groups and ultreyas. Maintains a list of current parish representatives and provides information on coming events for them to share in their congregations.

Treasurer

Responsible for the finances of the Secretariat. Authorizes any expenditure of funds, keeps records consistent with good bookkeeping practices, provides written reports of financial status at each Secretariat meeting and provides annual audits and budgets.

Spiritual Director

Responsible for providing leadership on matters of faith and spirituality. Selects or delegates the spiritual directors for the weekends and ultreyas.



GOOD NEWS! Via de Cristo

OF SE MICHIGAN & NW OHIO

Our Mission: By Grace with the Holy Spirit, we challenge leaders to discover and achieve their personal calling, assisting them with a method for influencing their environments.

Spring Weekend #50 Events

Join us!

Mark your calendar for the upcoming events for Men's and Women's GN!VdC #50. For maps and more information, go to our website at: www.gnvdc.org

Men's Weekend #50

April 12-15, 2012
St. Michael Lutheran Church
Ottawa Lake, MI

Set-Up

Wednesday, April 11
7:00 pm

Send Off

Thursday, April 12
7:30 pm

Serenade

Saturday, April 14
6:00 pm

Clausura & Clean-up

Sunday, April 15
4:30 pm

Women's Weekend #50

April 19-22, 2012
St. Michael Lutheran Church
Ottawa Lake, MI

Set-Up

Wednesday, April 18
7:00 pm

Send Off

Thursday, April 19
7:30 pm

Serenade

Saturday, April 21
6:00 pm

Clausura & Clean-up

Sunday, April 22
4:30 pm

SINGS THE ROOSTER. . .



AND THE BABE-CHICKS. . .

