

PASTOR AND CONGREGATIONAL  
INFORMATION

GOOD NEWS!  
**Via de Cristo**  
A Method for Christian Renewal

Via de Cristo is a three day seminar for all Christians who seek more joy, purpose, and meaning in their lives. It is for those who desire to grow in their faith and learn more about prayer, Bible study, and sharing their faith with others.

For more information please check us out  
on our website: [www.gnvdc.org](http://www.gnvdc.org)



THE WAY  
OF  
CHRIST

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# THE ROLE OF VDC

## The Role of Via de Cristo Within the Congregation

“You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church.” (Matt. 16: 18) The Church is Christ’s chosen method for evangelizing the world and sustaining the people of God. It is the Church that has received Christ’s command to go into the world making disciples and teaching them to obey everything Christ commands. Tragically, the Church has been torn in pieces by not only false teaching, but also by good teaching emphasized inappropriately. The Via de Cristo method seeks to appropriately support pastors and congregations in their home church. Although the Via de Cristo is not for everyone (and does not profess to be), it has demonstrated an effective method for renewal. Since Cursillo began in 1943 it has spread around the world, encouraging the lives of many and building up the Christian Church.

Via de Cristo is a tool for Christian renewal. A tool always works best when it is used for the proper purpose and in the proper way. Via de Cristo is a corporate experience of the Gospel for the whole person. It is neither a head-trip nor a heart-trip. Practiced correctly, it will speak to the whole person. It is not an individual experience, but one shared with others. As such, it is *not* a tool for individual conversion, but for corporate growth. Via de Cristo is for the renewal of the Church. It is a leaven within the body of Christ.

The Via de Cristo is designed to encourage a significant partnership between laypersons and clergy. In fact, one of the most beneficial outcomes after a weekend is that the participants are able to view clergy as friends and co-workers in the gospel. It is well said in Via de Cristo materials “the Via de Cristo is a movement of the Church, lay in leadership and commitment to winning the world to Christ.”

The Via de Cristo participant should bring strength and renewal to the whole Body. Everything that is taught and occurs within the movement is to be consistent with, and derived from the original teachings of the Church, those in existence since its foundation. Nothing is taught on the weekend that is not consistent with Lutheran theology. Because of its corporate nature, Via de Cristo should not be mixed with other kinds of more individual tools. It is not a vehicle of the neo-Pentecostal experience.

The Via de Cristo method is intended to be a lifelong disciple for every participant within the movement. On a three-day weekend, new participants, *both lay and clergy*, are taught a method which, when practiced, will encourage openness to the Holy Spirit and effective work for Christ. We describe this method in terms of Piety, Study and Apostolic Action.



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# WHAT IS TAUGHT

## What Is Taught On A Via de Cristo; What Happens?

### Thursday

In Thursday's worship, two meditations are given: Know Yourself, an introspective look at our lives, what motivates us, and how we stand in relation to our God; the second is on the Prodigal Son parable in Luke, and how the Father sees his relationships to us, always happy to welcome us.

*On Friday, Saturday and Sunday the team and participants engage in worship and Holy Communion. The sermon usually is a "shared Homily" with comments from all on the meaning and application of scripture.*

### DAY 1

#### Friday

Friday morning's meditation is, "The Three Glances of Christ," in which Jesus gazes at the Rich Young Ruler, Judas, and Peter in the midst of their denial with a look of love and longing. Five talks follow that day:

**Ideal** (Layperson): We are encouraged to examine our priorities in life. What is our ideal? What goals do we set to reach it? What steps do we take to achieve it? Is it attainable?

**Habitual Grace** (Pastor): God's ideal is to love His creation. Grace is God's free gift of love to us. The Father is seen as always loving, always giving freely, no strings attached, always creating newness.

**Laity** (Layperson): The nature of the church is defined; the local community is the nurturing, sending Body of Christ. Pastor and laity work together to accomplish the mission of Christ to "go and tell." Ministry is the vocation of every believer.

**Actual Grace** (Pastor): God's grace, showered on all, also is poured out in real and tangible ways in each of our lives—in relationships with spouse, children, friends. God's spirit is in us to enable us to believe and to love. God's grace overflows our own lives to touch other lives through our ministry to them.

**Piety** (Layperson): Various kinds of piety and piousness are presented, both false and genuine. We discover that we are practicing some forms of piety, even though we're not feeling "pious." Piety is seen as totally directing our entire life to God as we worship, study, grow and serve.



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# WHAT IS TAUGHT

## What Is Taught On A Via de Cristo; What Happens? *(continued)*

DAY 2

### Saturday

Saturday morning's meditation is "The Figure of Christ." Here Christ as both God and Man is presented. Jesus is "The Word made flesh dwelling among us." Jesus is completely God, existing before He created the universe, and completely human. He was born as any other child, lived the life we live, and willingly died, and rose from the dead, bearing God's grace to us in love. This theme is enlarged upon during the talks.

**Study** (Layperson): The role and need for study in nurturing our spiritual life are explored. The goal and purpose of study, and the obstacles to overcome, are discussed along with the resources available to enrich our understanding of the faith. References to books, Bible studies, devotions, tapes, etc., are provided.

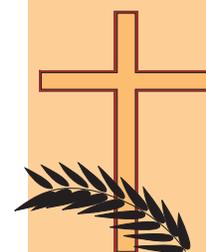
**Means of Grace** (Pastor): God's Word is the living, active presence in our daily lives. His Word is also enfleshed in sacrament. Here Christ is seen to be THE Sacraments as in water, the bread and wine, earthly body of Christ in God's grace made real and personal, "given for you." Two Sacraments, Baptism and Holy Communion, are discussed at length. Some emphasis is also given to the special times in our lives in which we experience the love and grace of God in deeply meaningful ways—for example, birth, confirmation, marriage, and death.

**Apostolic Action** (Layperson): The apostle's action in "going into all the world" is the model for examining our evangelical vocation. We are encouraged to act in a way that fits our personality to "make a friend, be a friend, and bring a friend to Christ." (fellowship evangelism)

**Obstacles To Grace** (Pastor): The things (sin) that keep us from being aware of God's grace and following Him are presented: the devil, the world, our flesh. We are the ones who do not allow Christ's atonement to overcome the obstacles. God's grace is sufficient.

**Leaders** (Layperson): The definition and qualities of a leader are presented as well as the spiritual qualities. Each possesses enough to be used in ministry to influence and lead others to Christ.

On Fridays and Saturdays, the participants share in a small table groups, and discuss their reactions to the talks given. They draw posters based on the talk, and give a recap of their table discussion later that evening at "Decuria."



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# WHAT IS TAUGHT

## What Is Taught On A Via de Cristo; What Happens? *(continued)*

DAY 3

**Sunday**

Sunday morning's meditation, "Christ's Message to You" begins with the descent from the mountain back into life and ministry. Likewise, we will descend from the mountain and go back to home, job, community, church, and the nitty-gritty of our daily lives. The five talks that follow build on this theme.

**Environment** (Layperson): What individuals can do to relate to, enrich and/or change the environment in which we live, work and play; how we can be a leavening agent in our families, at work, at church, in small groups, with our friends; how we can bring Christ into all environments.

**Life in Grace** (Pastor): Sustaining our life of apostolic action takes regular feeding and encouragement and training—all provided within the community of faith, the Church. Worship, prayer, family devotions and a weekly plan of action are presented. We are encouraged and nurture each other while living in God's grace.

**Christian Community in Action** (Layperson): Here the content of the Apostolic Action talk is enlarged upon. The heart and soul of Christian community is apostolic action, something we never do alone. There is strength in community, which empowers us to act.

**Total Security/Fourth Day** (Layperson): How we find security in life is compared with the total security we have been promised by God. We tap all walks of life by sharing our pilgrimage, encouraging, building up, strengthening and loving each other. How to form a small group is presented. After this third day, we resume our daily lives—on the fourth day, our vocation (calling), issued in Baptism, moves us to mission. It won't be easy. We are encouraged to be a leaven in our home community, and to serve without being discouraged.



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# WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

## Where do we begin?

Some of the options include:

- ✦ Give us a call and/or set up a time for a personal visit.
- ✦ Invite a Temple Talk Team to visit your church. A group of men and women will speak about their experience at Good News! Via de Cristo during announcements, sermon time, or Sunday School. A music team is also available. Led by guitar, music of the weekend can be woven into your service.
- ✦ Show a DVD of men and women who have attended a Via de Cristo.
- ✦ Brochures and applications are available, and may be copied.
- ✦ Attend a weekend held in spring and fall.
- ✦ Invite one or two leaders within your congregation to attend.
- ✦ Model the methods of Via de Cristo.

## Your Congregation Will Find That:

- ✦ They will experience more joy, happiness, and satisfaction from their Christian faith.
- ✦ They will experience a closer walk with Christ as they learn and witness Christ's love for them.
- ✦ More joyous fellowship develops with their brothers and sisters in Christ.
- ✦ Sharing their faith with others is easier and more enjoyable.

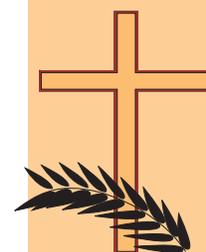
## The Affect of Via de Cristo on the Local Church

Supplements what we learn in our own congregations;

Equips us to help strengthen and renew the faith of other Christians and through them, their families, congregations and the environment in which we all live, work, and play; and

Encourages men and women to grow in Christ through their worship attendance, Bible study participation, congregational involvement, renewed sacramental life, and sharing the love of Christ.

For more information please check us out on our local website: [www.gnvdc.org](http://www.gnvdc.org) or our National website: [www.viadecristo.org](http://www.viadecristo.org).



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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions

*What if I've attended another weekend with another movement? May I serve and be active in Good News! Via de Cristo?*

YES...we are made up of community that have attended Catholic Cursillo, Walk to Emmaus, DeColores and other forms of the Cursillo method. Let us know you are in our community and we will put you in our database to receive our newsletters, email communications, and general information about up-coming weekends. You may also be asked to serve on a team.

*As a Pastor, am I required to attend a weekend before sponsoring members of my congregation to attend?*

NO...however, we do encourage pastor attendance in order to develop a deeper understanding of the weekend. We do ask that you talk with your members who will attend as you sign their application, and then again after they have made their weekend.

*Could my church host a weekend?*

We are always open to having a weekend at a new facility. Each weekend has approximately 40 team members and 20-30 participants. We need several rooms for sleeping, a large room for the talks and table discussions, use of a kitchen, dining area, and sanctuary or chapel, and adequate bathroom space.

*What is the cost to attend a weekend?*

There is a suggested donation for the weekend of \$100.



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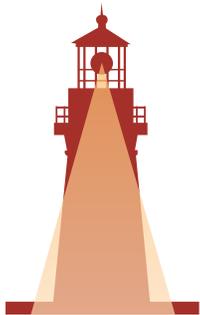


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