



The Taste

Newsletter for the
Taste of Grace VIA DE CRISTO
Community

Check out our website at www.tasteofgrace.com

“Palanca” is cornerstone for successful Via de Cristo weekend

Weekend #1 for Taste of Grace Via de Cristo is quickly approaching. With that said, “palanca” will be on everyone’s mind. Prayer (palanca) is the strength of the Via de Cristo weekend. God’s grace is granted to prayer and God’s grace is essential in bringing the world to Jesus.

True palanca is intense prayer and sacrifice on the part of the outside community for the community being formed in the Three Day weekend.

The greatest contribution and the primary role of the outside community during the weekend is offering of palanca. Palanca is a witness to the participants that God is present in the world through groups of people who live His Gospel.

Banners, food, palanca letters, bookmarks and other small, inexpensive trinkets are nice and fun things that contribute to the good feelings of the weekend. If palanca is a piety act on the part of an individual or group on behalf of another individual, then “palanca” received during the three days should be a physical representation of those piety acts.

March 1st ULTREYA will be a “Celebration of Palanca”

A very special Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Ultreya is planned for March 1, 2003 at Shepherd of the Hill Church in Lockport. Potluck at 5:00, Worship at 6:30.

Bring your community palanca or a special donation (see list on page 10) for Weekend #1 and help us gather together the gifts to start Taste of Grace Via de Cristo off with a celebration of prayer and giving. We will have our brand new “empty” storage bins waiting and our grateful hearts will be there too!

Come join the celebration. We may even sing a few verses of DeColores. All roosters welcome!

Prayer times still available for our **72 Hour Prayer Scroll.**

Sign up now - call Christina Spiros at: 815-740-6369
or send email to: cspiros1101@attbi.co

Be sure to check out our [Prayer Vigil Resource](http://www.tasteofgrace.com) at
www.tasteofgrace.com

From the Lay Director

"The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus, son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." - John 1:43-46

Dear Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Community,

The teams for our first weekends are now starting to form but they are useless without the most human part of the weekend – the pilgrims. If you know someone that you believe could be strengthened in their faith and brought closer to Christ in their lay ministries by experiencing a Via de Cristo weekend, **and you have been praying about that person**, now is the time to approach them. Participant registration for Men’s and Women’s Weekend #1 is in process.

Remember back to your weekend – how many times did you hear “MAKE A FRIEND, BE A FRIEND, BRING THAT FRIEND TO CHRIST” ? Now is the time to focus on your responsibility and mission to encourage others to grow in Christ. If you need an application form you can download them right from our new website –

<http://www.tasteofgrace.com>.

All applications should be mailed to Harry Benner, Pre-Weekend Chairperson.

And don’t forget about our fall dates. If the spring weekend is too soon for them, then talk to them about weekend #2. It’s never too early to plant a seed!

You’ve probably already heard that Pastor John is leaving us to take up new challenges in Arlington, VA. I would like to thank him for his prayers, love, encouragement and support over the last 6 months. Don’t worry, he’s not getting away that easily, we’ll keep him busy as a prayer warrior!

God loves you all and so do I.

Simon Prior
Lay Director
Taste of Grace Via de Cristo

Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Secretariat

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simonprior@aol.com

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Tim Mulder
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Post-Weekend Coord.
815-254-0198

Ed Walter
edward.walter@attbi.com

Pastor John and Dorann Bradford

New address...

3313 North First Street
Arlington, VA 22201

New email...

JohnBradford@aol.com

New church...

Faith Lutheran Church
3313 Arlington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703-525-9283

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ of Via de Cristo,

We hope this greeting finds you all well and happy and enjoying the great blessings of God's love and grace in abundance.

Although the word has already gotten out through the grapevine, we wanted you to know that we are leaving Illinois to take a call in Arlington, Virginia. We truly love being where we are and it was a very difficult decision, but as I have said many times, we must go where God tells us to go and do what God tells us to do! Yes, indeed! While it will be very hard for us to leave our Abundant Life and Via de Cristo families here in this area, we are going to a place where we know God wants us to be and where we will continue to be embraced by God's love by dear people just like you – but we will miss you all and hope you will stay in touch with us.

Our last Sunday at Abundant Life will be February 9. Of course we would love to see any of you again before we leave, but if not, we trust our paths will cross again as God has brought us together for eternity! God bless you and keep you all as you do his work!

Please look us up if you're ever in Northern Virginia – we're just minutes away from DC, so come and do some sightseeing and visit us!

Shalom to you all- Pastor John and Dorann Bradford

Food for Thought from our Spiritual Director

“RUBBERBANDS FOR GOD”

Dear Partners in the Gospel,

Last January, my daughter and son-in-law signed up to attend a Via de Cristo weekend, and I was delighted to sponsor them. I had no idea of the profound events that would take shape around them after that weekend. A new Secretariat, based in the greater Chicago-land was the vision that my on-fire son-in-law (Simon Prior) took away from the weekend. Inspired and encouraged to act upon that vision by Pastor John Bradford, Simon took the first steps necessary to bring the vision to life. More people jumped on the bandwagon as the vision gathered momentum, and the Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Secretariat became a reality in the autumn of that same year. I was asked to serve on the secretariat as a Spiritual Director. Knowing that I would be working alongside the capable leadership of Pastor John Bradford, I answered the call without a shred of anxiety.

So now, a new year is at hand, and with that year comes the disappointing news. Pastor John (my beloved friend, mentor, colleague and pastor) has accepted a new call. For many of us in the Via de Cristo community, Pastor John's absence will leave a great void. He has given selflessly to Via de Cristo over the years, and has served on team in our area at least 11 times. His charm, charisma and unabashed love of Jesus Christ has been indelibly stamped into flavor and character of Via de Cristo in our area.

I think that many of us are left asking the same question. “Now what?” Will it be the same without Pastor John? How will we be able to carry on without his wisdom and leadership? I myself, was reflecting on that very question. And suddenly, in between bites of my breakfast toast, an insightful image unfolded.

A disciple is a rubberband for God. But rubberbands, in order to be useful, have to be stretched. If you try to put a rubberband around an object that doesn't challenge its circumference, the rubber band uselessly slips off. A rubber band is totally ineffective, unless its elasticity is tested.

I think, as unstretched members of any particular church or religious movement, we are like rubberbands that we find in our desk drawers. We are merely 'there,' and not much use to anyone or anything. And the longer we lie around uselessly, the more brittle and dried out we become. Have you ever found a pack of old rubberbands that haven't been used in a long time? Dry-rot sets in. What happens the first time you stretch them? The first time they're stretched, they break.

Disciples of Jesus are a lot like rubberbands. They are meant to be stretched and put into service. And the more they are used, the more flexible and resilient they become. As Pastor John leaves our Via de Cristo community (in flesh, but not in spirit), we are all called to stretch ourselves in faith, to take up the challenge of leadership and step into the gap his leaving creates. We are called to become rubberbands for God!

Stretch forth in joy and peace,
Pastor Kathy Flores
Spiritual Director, Taste of Grace VDC



“Life on earth is just a brief encounter on our journey to wider fields of usefulness where we can work together forever in the vineyard of the Lord.” -Helen Steiner Rice

From our Rector

It's an exciting time now, issuing the call to be a part of Taste of Grace's first men's team for conducting a weekend. As I'm dialing the numbers I'm thinking of one of my favorite songs, "Here I am Lord", and hoping that the person picking up the phone will respond with "It is I Lord."

Our head cha for the Weekend, Dr. Randy Mullin, and myself have prayerfully been assembling the team, keeping in mind that we want this "first-ever" Taste of Grace Mens' Weekend to be a wonderful Christ-centered and directed experience for the Pilgrims, team and community.

As the song "Abba Father" says, "You are the Potter, we are the clay." And I assure you our clay will be ready to be molded as Christ desired.

GLY&SDI
Dick Volker, Rector
Taste of Grace VDC Men's Weekend #1



WE NEED YOUR HELP - BANNERS ARE NEEDED FOR WEEKEND #1

Think back to your weekend... what were some of your favorite sayings or Bible verses? We all know what an impact the banners have on a weekend as they remind us constantly of the messages that are being delivered to each participant.

Touch someone else with your talent and generosity... if you are interested in creating a banner to be used for our upcoming Taste of Grace Via de Cristo weekend, please fill out the Banner Form in this newsletter or contact Christina Spiros at: 815-740-6369 or by email: cspiros1101@attbi.com

From our Rectora

As I sit here trying so hard to think of what to write, I listen to the wind blowing out my window. Hearing that sound takes me back to my weekend. What an awesome experience it was to know that the sound and feel of the wind blowing, was like the Holy Spirit coming into my life. For so many years the wind had been just that, wind. Now when I hear, see and feel it, I know the Holy Spirit works the same way in my life. It is not the "Burning Bush" I had once thought it was. The Holy Spirit can be a gentle sway of a breeze, so quiet it is almost a whisper, or as strong as a tornado. The Holy Spirit is always there with and for us.

At the Grand Ultreya in Naperville a few weekends ago, you could see the Holy Spirit in action. People renewing old friendships and making new ones. I've always thought one of the important things an Ultreya does is to bind us together. For me, I really enjoyed seeing someone I hadn't seen since we were Dorm Cha's back on LWVDC weekend #18. Before I attended a VDC weekend no one could have ever told me I'd look forward to cleaning toilets. Now I know there are many ways to serve the Lord.

We've started putting together names and positions for team selection from the many applications that we have received. If the spring weekend was not convenient for you, please send in your application to be used on a future weekend. Weekend #2 isn't far away.

I hope and pray each and every one of you is thinking of someone you want to sponsor for this wonderful Taste of Grace Weekend #1. Think back to your weekend, who do you want to share that experience with. But first, speak to God about _____ before you speak to _____ about God.

God Loves You and So Do I,
Jan Curry, Rectora
Taste of Grace VDC Women's Weekend #1



***“Taste and see
that the Lord is good;
blessed is the one who
takes refuge in Him.”***

- Psalm 34:8

Grace given to equip the Saints (Leaders)

As #1 weekends approach, your chair in concert with the secretariat is making Continuing Ed plans for the teams. (You who have already attended...don't groan!) The NLS 101 course will be the resource for an interactive presentation. Because these first teams will have some members who only recently completed a weekend and may have many questions and others on the team that have already attended a Continuing Ed Program or the NLS Leadership Training, we will call upon the people who have all the answers to help us out.

The approach will by definition be "inter-active." That's where you come in. Here's your assignment Team Members.

First time team members: Bring to each training 3 questions about the weekend or Via de Cristo that you want answered or clarified. **Those who have already attended a Continuing Ed:** Bring 3 questions you still have or issues of confusion you'd like clarified. **Rector(a), Spiritual Directors:** Bring 1-2 legends regarding the weekend that you can share, plus 1-2 reasons why the "Essentials" must remain Essentials... as well as the "Why & How" to retreat, meditate and pray. With everyone's help and participation we'll avoid dull lectures, get to know one another and in the process learn how to effectively carry out our mission for Taste of Grace VDC #1.

Loretta Volker
Leaders Chairperson

Evangelism – Outreach

“Come and See”

The message of Via de Cristo will be heard in church in the northeast part of the state with the invitation to “Come and See.” I am contacting pastors requesting the opportunity to address their congregations in temple talks. If you have an interest in doing a temple talk in your church that would be great. Let me know and I'll send you brochures and applications. On the other hand, if you would like Loretta and I to address your congregation, please call us (815-) 875-1330 and we'll be happy to do so. Your assistance is needed and will be appreciated as we “Come and See!”

Dick Volker
Evangelism-Outreach Chair

LOVE & GRACE go hand in hand

It's the time of year when "love" is in the air. But we as Christians know God's love and grace are not seasonal. They don't appear just for a day!

Here are some of Taste of Grace Secretariat members' favorite scripture verses about "love."

Harry Benner: *The following verses demonstrate the depth of God's love for us...* "This is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins..." – 1 John 4: 9-10

Pastor Kathy: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this" While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." - Romans 5:8 *This is my favorite passage because it continues to remind me that God loves me regardless of what I have done, am doing, or will do. No strings attached!*

Christina Spiros: "Faith, Hope and Love but the greatest of these is love." - 1 Corinthians 13:13

Donna Weaver: "For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations." - Psalm 100:5 *What a comfort to know God's love is the same today, tomorrow and always!*

More "Love" scriptures on page 11.

*Dear Lord,
You reign over all things and hold the earth in the palm of Your hand. Thank You that You shower each of us with Your love and grace. We ask that as we are privileged to participate in Your harvest, that you allow us to show the same love and grace to others. We pray that we would use every opportunity, whether in person, by telephone, or in a letter, to be a witness of Your gift of grace. Amen.*

Calendar of Events

Taste of Grace VDC Ultreya

March 1, 2003
Shepherd of the Hill
925 East 9th Street
Lockport, IL 60441
5:00 pm - Potluck (bring dish to pass)
6:30 pm.- Worship Service

Upcoming Weekends

03/06/03 Living Water VDC Men's Weekend #27
03/13/03 Living Water VDC Women's Weekend #27
Palanca – Tim & Theresa Oloffson
122 E. 2nd, Box 207
Wyanet, IL 61379

03/13/03 Way of Christ Men's Weekend
03/20/03 Way of Christ Women's Weekend
Palanca – Julie Sword
25454 Straddle Creek Road
Lanark, IL 61046

04/24/03 Taste of Grace VDC Men's Weekend #1
05/01/03 Taste of Grace VDC Womens Weekend #1
Palanca – Christina Spiros
1101 Highland Avenue
Joliet, IL 60425

9/30/03 – Taste of Grace Men's Weekend #2
10/7/03 – Taste of Grace Women's Weekend #2
Palanca – Christina Spiros
1101 Highland Avenue
Joliet, IL 60425

Check out www.viadecristo.org/palanca for other weekend dates and contact information.

Secretariat Meetings

March 1, 2003 – 3:00 pm (prior to Ultreya)
at Shepherd of the Hill, Lockport



Check out our website for
up to date Calendar of Events...
www.tasteofgrace.com

From our Menu

PIETY STUDY ACTION

Each issue of "The Taste" features an article based on the Via De Cristo "tripod".

When you think back to your weekend do you ever wonder how you, an imperfect Christian, were chosen to be on a Via de Cristo weekend at that very time in your life?!

Do you remember hearing, "God doesn't call the prepared, He prepares those He calls"? What about, "God does not let us lie in the rubble of our failures. He meets us where we are and puts us on our feet again and again."

Many of us have felt that we just don't do this Christianity thing right. Do you ever feel like you don't pray enough, read your Bible enough, share your faith enough, love God enough, aren't committed enough or aren't spiritual enough? I recently read those exact questions on the back cover of a book. And all I could say was, "yes, yes, yes..." It went on to say, "Maybe messy disciples are exactly the kind of imperfect people Jesus came to earth for and whose company he actually enjoyed – and still enjoys." Well, that was enough to catch my attention. "Messy Spirituality" by Michael Yaconelli takes a down to earth and fun look at how our "messes" are God's opportunities. They're where he meets us, opens our eyes to the fullness of his love and transforms us with His grace

Another book that is along the same topic is "The Ragamuffin Gospel" by Brennan Manning. Through VDC we have all experienced God's Grace, but are we applying it to our daily lives. God continues to give us His grace, willingly, no matter what we've done. We come to Him as ragamuffins – dirty, bedraggled, and beat-up. And when we sit at His feet, He smiles upon us, and says, "My grace is sufficient for you for My power is made perfect in weakness."

So let's apply these thoughts to our "tripod":

Study: Read books that encourage you to let God meet you right where you are ... here and now! Use your Bible study to find the encouraging words that God used when He walked with lepers, sinners and misfits.

Piety Participate, volunteer and get involved in ways that can use the talents and gifts you have now and let God prepare you, in His time, for the tasks He has planned for you.

Action: Accept others the way they are and where they are in their life. Do not judge but encourage each other and share the word that God loves us just as we are!!!!

PRAYERS & PRAISES

- Praises to God for the birth of Bob and Karen Deverick's first granddaughter, Kylie – born January 14, 2003. Please pray for the health of the baby and mother, and for God's blessing for the new family.
- Please pray for Byron. He is a Baptist minister, faithful servant of Christ, father, grandfather, and a loving inspiration to all who are fortunate enough to know him. His ministry spans 6 decades. He was recently diagnosed with lung cancer and was admitted to the hospital. Unfortunately, no one is sure what they can do for him as other health issues complicate treatment. Please pray for healing, blessed acceptance, and comfort for his grieving family and family of faith.
- Continued prayers for our country, people in the military, our president and all of the leaders in our continuing fight against terrorism.
- Please keep the following members of "His Hands Puppet Ministry" from Peace Lutheran Church, Morris in your prayers: Ken, Bonnie, Vicki, Kirsten, Steven, Mike, Lexi, Don, Kristen and Karen. Their ministry is rapidly expanding and they are looking for God's guidance in the scheduling opportunities for their ministry.
- Praise for inspiration and perspiration of laity in prayerfully supporting their pastors and other activities (such as VDC) in "being church" to their church and un-churched brothers.
- Please pray for Marian. Marian is a wonderful lady, wife, mother and grandmother. She has been battling cancer for two years and it has now spread to her pancreas. She is scheduled for surgery and to complicate matters, her husband is also ill – she is his primary caregiver – and he has become quite depressed. Please pray for God's divine intercession, healing for this woman of faith and peace for her family.
- Increased vocations to the religious life... more seminarians... gentle care and treatment of budding ideas in minds of our youth to the need for clergy and our gentle care and treatment of the dedicated ordained clergy serving and retired.
- Please continue to keep Living Water Via de Cristo Weekend #27 rector/rectora and team members in your prayers. Also, the sponsors and candidates – that God will call those who need to be there.
- Please keep Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Weekend #1 in your prayers, for the rector, rectora, spiritual directors, the team and those of God's children who have yet to taste His grace.
- "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good."

**REMEMBER TO PRAY
1ST, LAST
AND ALWAYS**



Like to cook...(or maybe just collect recipe books)...well guess what?

We are still looking for a few more recipes for our Taste of Grace Via de Cristo cookbook. The final deadline has been extended until April 1, 2003. We have been receiving recipes from Via de Cristo communities all over the USA but there is still time to have your recipe included in our "Potluck & Prayers" Cookbook.

It takes a lot of funds to start up a new secretariat and host a weekend, so one of our first fundraisers will be a personalized cookbook with all profits going to Taste of Grace Via de Cristo. The beautiful spiral bound cookbook will feature recipes from the Via de Cristo community nationwide. Each recipe will feature the donor's name, weekend # and favorite scripture verse. The books will be approximately \$8.00 each.

To submit a recipe, just fill out the form enclosed in this newsletter.

To reserve your copy of our Taste of Grace Via de Cristo "Potluck & Prayers Cookbook", send an e-mail to donna_a_weaver@hotmail.com

TASTE OF GRACE VIA DE CRISTO
"Potluck and Prayers" Cookbook Recipe
Please PRINT all information clearly

RECIPE TITLE: _____

FROM THE KITCHEN OF _____
Your name

Your weekend (ie. Living Water VDC #22) *Home Phone # (include area code)*

YOUR FAVORIE SCRIPTURE VERSE _____

(ie. "Taste and see that the Lord is good." - Psalm 34:8)

INGREDIENTS:

RECIPE INSTRUCTIONS:

Send recipe to: Donna Weaver, 1320 Butler Street, Morris, IL 60450 or e-mail to: donna_a_weaver@hotmail.com

**TASTE OF GRACE VIA DE CRISTO
PALANCA BANNER FORM**

Name _____

Weekend _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Banner Description

Scripture/ Saying _____

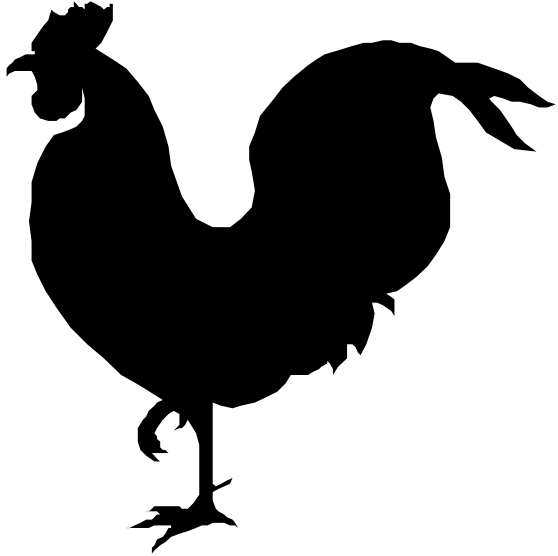
Main background color of banner _____

Finished size of all banners should be 3' x 5' (vertical) and have a 2 inch rod pocket at the top.

Scripture/ Saying Ideas:

- "Meet me at the cross anytime. All is forgiven. I love you." – Your Father in Heaven.
- You may be the only Gospel someone reads.
- "I can do all things thru Him who strengthens me." – Philippians 4:13
- "Apart from Me you can do nothing." – John 6:44, John 15:5
- "My grace is sufficient for you for My power is made perfect in weakness." – 1 Corinthians 6:1
- "Ask and it will be given." – Matthew 7:7-8
- "For I know the plans I have for you." – Jeremiah 29:11
- "I will be with you always." – "Matthew 28:20
- We are not generating our own light but reflecting the light of Christ.
- P-U-S-H Pray until something happens.
- Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend toward Christ.
- Without Christ I am nothing, but Christ & I are an overwhelming majority.
- Pray first, last and always.
- "Be still and know I am God." – Psalm 46:10
- It is in serving others that Jesus is met.
- Seek ye first the kingdom of God.
- Our God Reigns

Send form to Christian Spiros at: 1101 Highland Avenue, Joliet, IL 60425 or by e-mail to: cspiros1101@attbi.com



...quiri...quiri...quiri...quiri...quiri...

It takes a huge inventory of supplies to meet the needs of all the pilgrims for a Via de Cristo weekend. Below is a list of items that are still needed for Taste of Grace VDC Weekend #1.

- Flashlights
- Lighters (type used for grills, etc) (6-8)
- Small bud vases (for dining room tables)
- White Poster Board
- Crayola Washable Markers (for posters)
- Kleenex
- Small Wastebaskets (10)
- Water pitchers (10)
- Altar Cloth
- Staplers (3-4)
- Scissors (3-4)
- First Aid Kits (3)
- Toilet Paper
- Paper Towels
- Large Garbage Bags
- Small Trash Can Liners
- Sandwich Size Ziploc Bags
- Large Ziploc Bags
- Mop/Bucket
- Samples (lotions, toothpaste, shaving Cream, deodorant, etc)
- Pencils
- Masking Tape
- Duct Tape

If you would like to donate any items, please contact Tim or Fran Mulder at: 630-820-877 or email to: f.r.o.g.man@juno.com

something to think about!

REALIZE

What is our spirituality when all is said and done? I see us silently, in a manner of speaking, doing little ordinary things men and women do everywhere, always with an immense burning love, knowing that love makes every gesture, step, word and work, redemptive. I see us loving each other, serving each other and all the world, because to our eyes of faith and truth, each is Christ to the other! That is all. The rest He will do through us. We are just lovers witnessing to love, servants reflecting the light of the Master, and torchbearers of love and light in our modern darkness, by being lovers and doing ordinary daily tasks for Love's sake and with great love.

- by Catherine Doherty

(taken from Women's Devotional Bible 2)

Team Plans set for Weekend #1

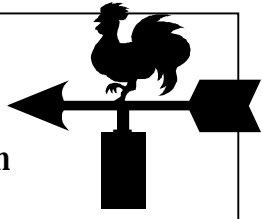
Men's Weekend #1
April 24 – 27, 2003

Women's Weekend #1
May 1 – 4, 2003

Team Training Dates and Locations

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 2/22/03 | 8:30 am–3:30 pm Shepherd of the Hill, Lockport |
| 3/8/03 | 8:30 am–3:30 pm Princeton |
| 3/22/03 | 8:30 am–3:30 pm Genesee |
| 4/4 - 4/5/03 | Men's Overnight 7:00 pm–3:30 pm To be determined |
| 4/11 - 4/12/03 | Women's Overnight 7:00 pm – 3:30 pm Peace Lutheran Church, Morris |

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

www.tasteofgrace.com

LOVE & GRACE

(continued from page 5)

Prior household: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Volker household: *I'm a Paul aficionanato (NUT), so even though 1 Corinthians' "love" verses are most popular with so many folks (often due to their use at weddings), my favorite is from Paul. Romans 8:38-39 pretty well sums up all he's bearing witness to and all the teachings from the book of Romans. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

**March 15th is the
deadline for April
newsletter items.**

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LINDA COVEY:

I think that it's a nice idea to pray together for peace on March 3 – here is a prayer that I've been using for several weeks as I've prayed for peace. I found it on a devotional site put out by Creighton University...

Lord, we turn to you in this time of great crisis in our world. The winds of war threaten our world with violence, the terrible loss of life, and even greater division and hatred. Please send forth your Spirit to inspire our world leaders to find the path of peace. Please help us work for justice that begins to heal the anger and violence in human hearts around the world. Amen.

Message from the Editor

The new year is here and as 2003 begins I think we need to consider the thought that we are not just a "weekend" community but a "community of partners in prayer." In the article on the front page of this issue we spoke about prayer (or as we refer to it, "palanca") being the cornerstone of our Via de Cristo weekend. The importance of prayer needs to be the focus of our everyday life. Instead of thinking about "resolutions" and changes we want to make for the new year, let's think how we can resolve to be more prayerful and change our lives and community to be centered around prayer daily.

This past week I received an email asking me to stop what I'm doing and pray on 03-03-03 at 3:00 pm and declare this "God's Day and God's Hour. At first I thought... what a great idea! But after considering the request, I asked myself... isn't everyday God's day and shouldn't I be taking time out each day to unite myself with God in prayer?

Don't get me wrong, I think declaring a God's Hour/Day is a great way to get others in our country to jump on the prayer bandwagon... united in prayer... what a wonderful concept! But when we made our decision to go on a VDC weekend, whether we realized it or not, we were making a decision to let God into our lives. The decision about regular prayer is exactly the same. Let's continue to take seriously the commitments of our Fourth Day, bring others to Christ and become a prayer warrior for ourselves, our families, our community, and our country.

I hope you have enjoyed our New Year issue of "The Taste". Our mission is to continue to strive to meet the continually changing needs of the Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Community. Any feedback or suggestions will be greatly appreciated.



Shalom,

Donna Weaver, Editor

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