



The Taste

Newsletter for
Taste of Grace Via de Cristo

November, 2008

Dear Heavenly Father

You are the Ultimate Healer, please be with all those fighting cancer and all those terminally ill. Be with them for healing; give the medical profession wisdom and loved ones comfort. Lord, hear our prayer

Let us be open to feeling the comfort of being wrapped in your loving arms. Help us to overcome the feelings of sadness and despair. Lift us up and help us to overcome the dark void of depression and mourning. Lord, hear our prayer.

Be with all whom are recovering and/or undergoing surgeries. Give them strength and wrap them in your healing arms. Comfort their families with your love and compassion. Guide the doctors and give them wisdom and knowledge. Continue to be with and strengthen them. Lord, hear our prayer.

Please guard and guide all of our troops and those commanding them. We pray that those making decisions seek and follow your will. We ask that you keep them wrapped in your protection. We ask that you comfort their friends, family and loved ones. Lord, hear our prayer.

Continue to watch over all Cursillistas in their 4th day journey. Help them to remember the mountaintop as they work in the hills and valley. Please be with your children whom you are calling to attend the upcoming fall weekends. Lord, hear our prayer.

Be also with Rectora Sue Scruggs and the team you have formed, that it is able to be Christ's hands, heart and ears to the pilgrims attending. Lord, hear our prayer.

Thank you for those you place in our lives, for our marriage partners, our reunion brothers & sisters and all others that help shape us into who you would like for us to become.

We give thanks and praise for all the joys you give us.

Thank you Lord, for your never ending love, grace, and forgiveness in our lives.

And all God's Children say Amen

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As I am writing this letter, our much anticipated women's TOG #12 weekend is right around the corner. Where has the time gone? Our team trainings have been amazing. God has given the Taste of Grace community a fabulous group of God-inspired children. We have listened to God through His chosen rollistas, we have enjoyed worship, we have prayed for each other and for the furthering of God's kingdom, we have laughed---a lot!---, we have shared confusion (usually due to my instructions!), and we have rejoiced with answered prayers. When I was first called to this awesome task, I began to journal my thoughts about Taste of Grace. I really searched, almost 2 months, for a theme verse for the weekend. The searching itself provided an "AHA" moment with God and He showed me Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will direct your paths." Since the beginning of team selection Susan Lacy and I have had many detours on this delightful journey. Each time we saw that yellow sign, God appeared within minutes with a very large arrow

pointing the way. I find myself hearing about the next challenge and I just smile and say, "OK God, I can't wait to see you work. Let's go!" The busiest group of servants on this Taste of Grace #12 is definitely our Prayer Warriors. I contact them often and give them lots to pray about. What a blessing their knees have been to all of us. We have 8 confirmed pilgrims and a few more to pray for. It's not too late to invite. Know that your neighbor, friend, relative or co-worker will enjoy 72 hours bathed in God's grace surrounded by some of the finest angels you might ever meet!! Thank you for trusting me to lead this adventure; but know that it is truly GOD in front of that big arrow that I am following. Join us at send-off, serenade and most importantly, clausura. What a pleasure to welcome new pilgrims into this loving community. We are grateful for all of your prayers and have definitely felt them. Please be blessed by spending ½ hour or more with our Heavenly Father for this weekend. You can sign up for the prayer scroll on-line and I am sure those details are in this newsletter. I can't wait to see many of you Nov. 13-16.

For the Fame of His Name, God Loves You and So Do !!!

Sue Scruggs, LWVDC #18
Rectora TOG #12

Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Women's Weekend #12

Pilgrims

Kristy Foster
Nikki Isaacson
Marie Etter
Priscilla Huffman
Margaret Lazars
Armandina Goetz
Olga Hamilton
Jane Thiel

Spiritual Directors

Pastor Anne Strickert
Pastor Mary Graves
Pastor Kevin Weeks
Pastor David Pavesic

Rectora

Sue Scruggs

Head Cha

Susan Lacy

Chapel Chas

Karen Peterson
Pam Destri

Table Cha

Kelly Scruggs

Prayer Warriors

Anne Faber
Anita Kube
Annemarie Doughty
Cindy Hart
Dick & Mary Dorsch
Kevin Scruggs
Linda McCabe
Sandy Thompson
Sarah Kiser
Ed Wolff
Laurie Anderson

4th Day Chas

Janeen Tietjens
Kiri Tietjens

Music Chas

LaDonna Strakis
Bev Hanson

Utility Chas

Deborah Herrman
Donna Effner
Nancy Claude
Lenae Kirchner
Mary Kocourek

Rollistas

Ideal	Karen Effner
Laiy	Ann Caudill
Piety	Debbie Claar
Study	Susan Ginocchio
Action	Linda Henize
Leaders	Deb Meyer
Environment	Margie Bregante
CCIA	Michele Koniewicz

4th Day Speakers

Randy & Sandra Holaway

Womens ToG Fall Weekend #12 Nov 13-16, 2008

Rectora is Sue Scruggs

- Send off: 7:00pm Thursday Nov 13, 2008

Dedication of the crosses immediately following Send Off

- Serenade: 6:00pm Saturday Nov 15, 2008
- Clausura: 4:00pm Sunday Nov 16, 2008

<p>Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Weekends are held at the: Dickson Valley Camp and Retreat Center 8250 Finnie Road Newark IL 60541-9573 630-553-6233 fax 630-553-6240 www.dixonvalley.com</p>
--

Grace and peace to you, my sisters and brothers in Christ!

How is your three legged stool holding up? How are your piety, study and action? Right now my study leg is a little longer than the other two. Lenny and I started the diakonia program, which requires a LOT of reading and studying.

Our first class was on the New Testament. The very first thing I learned was how ignorant I am. I've heard scripture in worship services over the last 25+ years and participated in many Bible Studies, and still realize how much there is to learn and ponder.

The class we've just completed was on the first 400 years of church history. I've never been a big fan of history, but the 'The Story of Christianity' by Justo L. Gonzalez was very easy to read and class discussions helped bring significant points into clearer focus.

One of the things I seemed to find a renewed sense of respect for was the hardships that the saints who have gone before us endured. The early church was at first rejected by the Jews and scattered after the fall of Jerusalem. Being rejected by the Jews was nothing compared to the persecution that followed. There were periods of time when the persecution was severe in one area, but basically nonexistent in other areas, as well as, periods of time without persecution at all.

Depending upon who was ruling, it might be hazardous to one's health to be a Christian. Many were martyred, had their property taken, or were separated from loved ones to slave in mines or to be sold into slavery. And yet, in spite of, or perhaps because of, their willingness to lose everything in exchange for a relationship with Christ, the church continued to grow. They continued to pass the flame of faith.

Do we have that kind of faith? What are we willing to endure so that others may know Him, or know Him better? Are we willing to sacrifice something, anything so that others can enjoy a relationship with Christ? Is our flame still burning hot and bright? Are we passing that flame to those we find in our environments? (Two logs burning together burn brighter, longer and hotter than when burning separately.) Have you committed yourself to a reunion group in order to hold yourself and others accountable to maintaining your relationship with Christ?

We've only finished two of the twelve classes required to complete this two year program and I'm totally enjoying it! I know several of you have already completed the diakonia program, but I've pasted in some information from the Northern Illinois Synod website for those of you who might be interested.

Program Overview and Course Descriptions

What is diakonia?

Diakonia is a two year process of spiritual formation and theological education for baptized members of the Lutheran Church. This process occurs in three basic ways:

- By thorough grounding in the classic seminary disciplines of practical, systematic, historical, and Biblical theology;
- By identifying particular skills and aptitudes in ministry, and encouraging their use in the local parish;
- By providing spiritual growth through worship, retreats, and a supportive community of fellow students, mentors, and instructors.

These are the tools diakonia uses to help equip God's people for service in parish and neighborhood ministries. The primary theme and focus of the diakonia experience is the word of Jesus in scripture (e.g. Mark 10:43): "Let the one who would be great among you be your servant (Greek: Diakonos)."

What is the emphasis of diakonia?

Diakonia emphasizes the baptismal vocation of all Christians to serve as did our Lord Jesus. Participants are usually already leaders in their parishes, and have a high degree of commitment to the ministry of the Church. They want to deepen their life of faith and ground their baptismal commitment to serve in the scriptural, theological, liturgical, and historical traditions of the Church. They are committed to serve through the Church in a variety of ways: teaching, administration, liturgical leadership, action for social justice, evangelism, visitation of the sick, community organization, youth work, ministry among the elderly, and the like. In every way they seek, and are helped by diakonia, to grow closer to the image and example of Christ the servant.

How is diakonia structured?

The diakonia curriculum consists of twelve courses, six per academic year. Each course is 5 sessions in length, and meets weekly for 3 hour sessions. Weekly assignments and reading reflect the twin purposes of relating subject matter to the students' context of life and ministry (family, parish, neighborhood area of ministry), and of giving a solid background to the topic. Students work at their own level, and assignments reflect the understanding that students are already busy in their families, jobs, and parish. Typically, students average approximately two to five hours of studies per week in addition to class time.

<http://www.nisynod.org/diakonia/>

DeColores!

God Loves You and So Do I!

Michele Koniewicz

Lay Director

Grace and peace to our brothers and sisters in Christ,

This is a very difficult note to write as it marks a time of sadness, as we move away from the "Taste of Grace" community, that we've come to love and move on to our next great adventure that is the 'rest of our lives'. I would be hard pressed to define what it is that makes this community so different. Then I realize that it's not the community that's different, but its members. It's Christ in us that makes this difference. When we give our lives to Him we learn that "life is not about us" it's about Him and our relationship with Him. It's about reflecting His love to the cares and concerns of others, the elderly, the sick, the hungry, and the dis-enfranchised people of this world. As long as we work to show God's grace and love to **the world that we touch** we are all

part of His greater community joined forever regardless of time or distance.

Ruth and I are so very grateful for the acceptance, love and encouragement that we've received from this community over these past years and for the many kind words, and gifts, as we prepared for our move. This has made it a somewhat bittersweet experience, hard to leave and excited about going. Please know that we will be praying with and for you in all that you do. We urge each one of you to stay involved, get to know and understand the love that is there for you as well as the many opportunities you will have to share your love. So, work weekends, attend Ultreyas stay in, or join a reunion group - - - stay involved.

"God loves you and so do we."

Ruth & David VanZant
379 Sunflower Drive
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234

Greetings to all my fellow Cursillitas. I hope this wonderful fall season finds you doing well and enjoying the changing of our foliage and seeing God's handiwork in it all.

As we approach the new year and new beginnings it's time to prayerfully consider new ways in which you might serve God with your time and talent.

January 10, 2009 is our annual meeting and there are several Secretariat positions that will need to be filled. Below is a list of positions that will become vacant as of January 2009 and I ask that you prayerfully seek God's discernment as to whether He is calling you to serve Him through one of these open positions.

The open Positions are; Communications, Leaders, Outreach, Post-Weekend, Pre-Weekend and Property. FYI...the people currently in the Leaders, Post-Weekend and Property chair are willing to stay in their position for another term. Each position is a two-year term.

For your reference, the "job description" for each open position will be at the end of this newsletter. However if you have any questions or would like to discuss a position in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact Michele Koniewicz, Lay Director at 815/725-4928 or if you prefer email, her address is shellen1@comcast.net, you can also contact me at 773/645-3088 or by email at dawn.constantino@jpmorgan.com.

***"For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many."
- Mark 10:45***

God's Blessings to you all,
Dawn Constantino
Secretary

This that and the other

If you are interested in working on team for any future weekend, please contact the leaders chair:
Lenny Koniewicz; 815-725-4928; shellen1@comcast.net

Joe and I would like to thank everyone for the honor to have served the Taste of Grace Community as Communications Chair. Our second term is up this January. DeColores. God Loves You and so do We.

2008 CALENDAR

Fall Taste of Grace Weekend #12

Womens ToG Fall Weekend #12 Nov 13-16, 2008

Rectora is Sue Scruggs

- Send off: 7:00pm Thursday Nov 13, 2008

Dedication of the crosses immediately following Send Off

- Serenade: 6:00pm Saturday Nov 15, 2008
- Clausura: 4:00pm Sunday Nov 16, 2008

Men's Spring Weekend #13 March 19-22, 2009

Women's Spring Weekend #13 March 26-29, 2009

THE NEXT ULTREY IS:

December 13, 2008

Shepard of the Hill Lutheran Church

925 E 9th St., Lockport

5:00PM Worship with SOTH

Ultreya with potluck to follow

Taste of Grace
Via de Cristo Weekends
are held at the:
Dickson Valley Camp
and Retreat Center
8250 Finnie Road
Newark IL 60541-9573
630-553-6233
fax 630-553-6240
www.dixonvalley.com

Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Secretariat

- **Lay Director** Michele Koniewicz 815-725-4928
shellen1@comcast.net
- **Secretary** Dawn Constantino 773-645-3088
dawn.constantino@jpmorgan.com
- **Treasurer** Andrew Kjos 708-606-0051
akjos@gobcs.com
- **Spiritual Director** Pastor Anne Strickert 309-394-2208
annestrickert@yahoo.com
- **4th Day** Sandy Verdooren 708-799-1549
Verdooren@msn.com
- **Communications** Debbie & Joe Claar 815-436-1676
tasteofgracevdc@comcast.net
d.claar@comcast.net
j.claar@comcast.net
- **Leaders** Lenny Koniewicz 815-725-4928
shellen1@comcast.net
- **Outreach** Dave & Ruth VanZant 815-834-1293
davevanzant@comcast.net
ruthvanzant@comcast.net
- **Post Weekend** Linda & Fred Henize 815-467-2705
fchenize@att.net
- **Pre Weekend** Joan & Hugh Brems 630-232-9670
jmbrems@yahoo.com
- **Property** Janeen Tietjens 815-933-4685
janeenj@ yahoo.com

Taste of Grace Website: www.tasteofgrace.com
Taste of Grace Email: tasteofgracevdc@comcast.net

Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Weekends are held at the:
Dickson Valley Camp and Retreat Center
8250 Finnie Road Newark IL 60541-9573 630-553-6233
630-553-6240 fax www.dixonvalley.com

Taste of Grace Secretariat Open Position "Job Descriptions"

Communications Responsibilities

- Send out prayer requests as they are received.
- Prepare newsletter quarterly.
- Post newsletter on website and email community that it is there.
- Update database:
 - With new email addresses.
 - Changes of address, phone, etc.
 - Update weekend add new cursillistas.
 - Add cursillistas from other communities whom have moved to the area and would like to be part of our community.
- Update website:
 - Secretariat changes - you have to watch on this because many of the screens seem to be the right ones when I update them, but they aren't when I put on the website.
 - Prayer requests - the website should be updated as prayer requests are received.
- Brochure:
 - Update as needed and post to the website.
- Attend scheduled Secretariat Meetings.

Property Responsibilities

- Organizes TOG property by maintaining an inventory of all our property and provides a printed copy of this inventory to the Rector|Rectora (and other Head Cha positions as needed) at the beginning of each weekend
- Purchases materials needed for the weekends (\$200.00 annual allowance)
- Coordinates getting our property from the storage unit to the weekend site and vice versa
- Has access to the storage unit so as to maintain, repair and organize TOG property
- Prepares newsletter articles as needed especially a "needs list" prior to the weekends
- Attend scheduled Secretariat meetings.

Leaders Responsibilities

- Work backwards from the weekend dates with the Rector/a(s) and set team formation start up dates and weekend manual training dates.
- Meet with the Rector/a(s) to discuss future possible Head Chas and Spiritual Directors for upcoming weekends.
- Review, update, and prepare all team manuals for team preparation and for the weekends.
- To assist the Rector/a(s) with any supplies needed for team preparation.
- Using the Secretariat database and provide the Rector/a(s) the names, addresses and phone numbers of people eligible to serve for the upcoming teams.
- Meet with the new Rector/a(s) to review all materials and give lists and instructions prior to beginning team-calling process.
- Work closely with the new Rector/a(s) in supplying additional names if needed during the team calling process.
- Work with the Spiritual Directors to train any Spiritual Directors for the upcoming weekends and see that materials are handed out in a timely manner.
- Conduct training classes twice a year. Make the arrangements for the training and provide a light continental breakfast of juice, coffee, bagels, etc.
- Collect all manuals from the team after the weekends and check them.
- Collect all team preparation supplies after the weekend.
- Collect all team evaluations and debrief the Rector/a(s) after the weekends and meet with the Secretariat to review the evaluations, attendance, address concerns and make recommendations to the full Secretariat.
- Write an article for the newsletter from time to time as needed.
- Attend scheduled Secretariat meetings.

Pre-Weekend Responsibilities

- Distributes, receives and processes pilgrim applications.
- Functions as "registrar" for the weekend.
- Conducts dedication of the crosses/send-off service.
- Provides pilgrims list to rectors and/or rectoras, communications/publicity coordinator and leaders coordinator (including home address, congregation, etc.)
- Prepares newsletter articles as needed.
- Attend scheduled Secretariat meetings

Outreach Responsibilities

- Those community members holding this position should;
 - Have attended a weekend.
 - Be active in a reunion group.
 - Be active in the community, Ultreyas, team participation, etc.
 - Have a thorough understanding of the "Via de Cristo" movement.
 - Theory, purpose and history.
 - Know and understand the history of the "Taste of Grace" community.
- Make the "Via de Cristo" movement and the Taste of Grace community known by;
 - Writing letters and post cards to area (pastors) congregations telling who we are as a community (Taste of Grace) and as a movement, what we are about and how we can help their congregation.
 - Send out periodic reminders of our functions.
 - Offer to speak/witness to congregations and small groups within those congregations about your experience with "Via de Cristo" and how it has affected your relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - Creative events and inclusion in church wide events that will advance the knowledge of "Via de Cristo"
 - Support all functions of the "Taste of Grace" secretariat and the community.
 - Reach out to Lutheran congregations first, but be ecumenical in your total out-reach.
 - Encourage community members and pilgrims to become active leaders within their congregations and to advance the knowledge of the movement within those congregations.
- Attend scheduled Secretariat meetings.

Treasurer Responsibilities

- Pay appropriate bills(vague).
- Collect payments from Rector/a.
- Collect donations and post it.
- Make financial arrangements with Camp.
- Keep detailed records/reports of all financial dealings.

Secretary Responsibilities

- Work with the Lay Director in the planning of meetings and in preparing the agendas.
- Accurately update and maintain all meeting minutes and documentation, and be sure to distribute to all Secretariat members shortly after each meeting.
- Maintain all Secretariat documentation; make updates to documents as decisions are made and keep all documentation organized.
- Should be familiar with all documentation and be able to note applicability during the Secretariat meetings.
- Provide each upcoming Rector and Rectora with all the current documents they will need for planning the weekend as soon as possible after the names have been announced, i.e. Weekend Planning Guide, Rector/a Script, Team Script, Team Manuals, etc.
- Prepare and copy Weekend Applications, Team Applications, Study Rollo resource list, Prayer Vigil Tips and TOG Via de Cristo brochures for the Pilgrims from the Secretariat.
- Provide articles for the Newsletter when needed.
- Perform miscellaneous duties as requested by the Secretariat.
- To continually lift up in prayer the Secretariat, Rector, Rectora, upcoming teams, pilgrims and the entire 4th day community for God's will and discernment.
- Attend scheduled Secretariat meetings.
- Attend scheduled Secretariat meetings.

Post-Weekend Responsibilities

- Arranges for Fourth Day activities, reunion group opportunities and ultreyas, including obtaining a host/hostess for the event.
- Prepares newsletter articles when needed.
- Attend scheduled Secretariat meetings.

❖ Fourth Day Activities:

• **Weekend Community Events**

- Encourage participation; maybe car pooling for those coming from the same general area. Help the Community understand that we must be a Christian Community in order to welcome new pilgrims into a Christian Community.
- Send-Off
- Dedication of the Crosses
- Volunteer to assist with responsibilities outside the rollo room, e.g., set-up and/or clean up for Saturday night, relieve Chapel Chas for a meal, etc.
- Serenade
- Clausura

(Post Weekend continued)

- **Reunion Groups**
 - If requested for assistance in finding a reunion group, identify members of the 4th Day Community in the same general area (the Communications or Leadership Chairs can help). Contact some of those individuals to determine if they would be willing to reunion with the person seeking a reunion group and put them into contact with each other. (The sponsor might be a good starting point too.)
- **Ultreyas**
 - With assistance from the Communications, Leadership or Outreach Chairs identify the churches represented within our 4th Day Community. Attempt to identify someone at those sites to be a representative for Taste of Grace. This person should be willing to help host an ultreya and recruit someone from their church to give the witness / 4th Day Talk.
 - Ultreya Elements
 - Worship with Holy Communion
 - Reunion (may be done during the meal or separately)
 - Witness / 4th Day Talk
 - Meal
 - Optional elements:
 - Palanca letters for other communities
 - Simple palanca projects that can be assembled during fellowship time
 - Save dessert for after worship to allow for additional fellowship time
 - Themes for the night, a holiday, scripture verse or favored song
- **Optional Events**
 - Serenades (currently discussing serenading nursing homes)
 - Sing-a-longs
 - Movie night & discussion of values, Christian or not so Christian
 - Group trips: Zoo, camping, Ravinia, etc.
- **Other**
 - Encourage the Community to maintain contact by: sending in prayer requests (joys and/or thanksgivings), to submit items of interest for the newsletter (lessons learned during a Bible study, a 'short, clean funny' joke, book or movie review) and to communicate any changes in contact information (phone, address, email, etc.).