



The Rainbow



A Via De Cristo Community of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia
January 2012 Newsletter

Greetings and Happy New Year!!

By Keith Sessions, Lay Director

Greetings and Happy New Year to you! First and Foremost, I want to extend my thanks and gratitude to our departing Lay Director, Rob Shaw-Fuller. Rob has been such a willing and faithful servant to this community and I only hope that with God's help, we will be able to continue the good work by Rob and by the Secretariat to nurture and carry forth the mission of the Via de Cristo movement.

As we embark on this new year, this is a good time of discerning where we are going – or rather, where God is calling us to go – and a time to reflect on where we have been. As I begin my new role serving the community as Lay Director, I need to look ahead to where God is leading this community. We all need to be open to where the Holy Spirit is leading our community while not losing sight of the fundamental mission and purpose of Via de Cristo. This will help us build upon the movement and not inadvertently drift away from its roots.

To ensure I am grounded in the fundamental mission and purpose of Via de Cristo, I read through foundational documents of Via de Cristo, including the “Essentials of the Via de Cristo”, compiled by the National Lutheran Secretariat, as well as our Rainbow Via de Cristo Constitution and By-Laws. These documents can be found on our Rainbow Via de Cristo website. While this may seem to be legalistic and boring reading, I actually found it useful and enlightening to read through these documents.

From the “Essentials of the Via de Cristo”, the Mission Statement of Via de Cristo is as follows:

“By grace, with the Holy Spirit, we challenge leaders to discover and achieve their personal calling, assisting them to influence their environment with the Gospel.”

Reading through the essentials, some key points I noted include:

- The purpose of Via de Cristo is, above all, to see the world reconciled to Jesus Christ.
- Via de Cristo is a lay led movement within the church of Jesus Christ. It is not intended to function independent of the Church, but is designed to help us strengthen our relationship with the Church. The Via de Cristo method assists individual Christians to actively be the Church.
- Via de Cristo is not just a three day “mountaintop experience”; it is a method for renewal of Christian life, a strategy to affect our daily living.

This last point is particularly important in that it serves as a reminder that Via de Cristo is intended to be an integral part of our daily lives and not just two weekends a year. Just as your involvement in your church should be more than showing up Sunday mornings for an hour of worship, Via de Cristo

depends on a community of faithful disciples working year round between the weekends to ensure the weekends meet God's purpose to the best of our ability. If you're not currently serving on the Secretariat, there are still things you can be doing. First and foremost, pray for the Rainbow Via de Cristo community on an ongoing basis. If you're not involved in a fourth day reunion group, it's never too late to start one or join one. Come to the Ultreyas -- the next one will be on 14 January. Consider serving on a team, if not this weekend then perhaps the next. Prayerfully consider pilgrims for this Spring's weekends (12-15 April for the men and 19-22 April for the women). Now is the time to do this so that calendars and schedules have a better chance of accommodating the three day weekend and the pilgrims themselves have sufficient opportunity to pray and consider participating in the upcoming weekend.

I look forward to serving you and continuing to participate in the Via de Cristo mission.

God loves you – and so do I!



Parting Thoughts and Prayers

By: Rob Shaw-Fuller, Outgoing Lay Director

Some thoughts from the Apostle Paul:

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11, NKJV)

These words perfectly describe my own prayers concerning Rainbow Via de Cristo. Above all else, I pray that our community continue to be a place where love abounds in knowledge and discernment. We love God, we love each other, and we live out that love in our daily lives. During the Weekends, Ultreyas, and any other time I spend with brothers and sisters in Christ, I can see and feel the love of Our Father all around me!

As I look back on my service as Lay Director, I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude. I am grateful for my brothers and sisters in Christ who have served alongside me. I am grateful for the new servants – Keith, Ted, Rick, and Mary – who have stepped forward to serve on the Secretariat. I am grateful that I can pass the calling as Lay Director to Keith Sessions, a good and faithful man who will serve well. I am grateful for our pastors who help us to grow in fellowship with Our Lord Jesus. I am grateful for our wonderful, beautiful, joyous, precious community of grace. Most of all, I am grateful for the grace of God in all three Persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – which sustains us and leads us! I urge you to keep the Secretariat in your prayers. Each of these men and women have volunteered to give their time, talents, and treasure to lead our shared ministry of Via de Cristo. Their task might seem difficult at times, but God's grace is sufficient for every challenge! As for me, I am not leaving you, merely stepping back a bit. I look forward to continuing to grow in grace with you through the Way of Christ, also known as Via de Cristo. God loves you with an overflowing, exuberant love ... and so do I!

Rob Shaw-Fuller, Men's Rainbow Walk of Faith #6, Table of John



Essentials of the Via De Cristo Manual

By George Milcetic, Leadership Coordinator

One of the key resources for leadership is the "Essentials of the Via De Cristo Manual". I encourage cursillists to read this manual. It is located at the "Rainbow VdC Applications and Documents" page (<http://rainbow-vdc.com/documents.html>). I extracted a few paragraphs related to the working of the Holy Spirit and Sponsorship.

First, let me start with the mission statement of Via de Cristo: By grace, with the Holy Spirit, we challenge leaders to discover and achieve their personal calling, assisting them to influence their environments with the Gospel.

I follow with statements on the power and work of the Holy Spirit. You'll see that planning does not deny the Holy Spirit. Rather, it actually provides a framework for Him. "Via de Cristo presents a method for renewal of the Christian life, a strategy to affect daily living. It uses careful selection of participants, an inspirational weekend, and friendship/accountability groups as outward tools. However, it only becomes effective through the work and power of the Holy Spirit."

"These natural leaders will then influence others for Christ. This is done through a planned and systematic approach. Often, when people fail to plan, they deny the Holy Spirit lordship over their efforts and lean in favor of chance, or worse, fall into laziness. The effectiveness of the Via de Cristo method seems directly related to careful preparation and planning."

"[I]t is difficult to describe and impossible to prescribe the work of the Holy Spirit; He moves when and where he wills (John 3:8). As you use this manual, "Do not put out the Spirit's fire" (I Thessalonians 5:18-21). Good doctrine and this manual are intended only to build the framework and to "test the spirits" (I John 4:1). Never resubmit to law, even if it comes in the guise of doctrine (Galatians 3:15)."

The section on Candidate Preparation amplifies the "careful selection of participants." "The participant for the weekend is a baptized Christian, reasonably stable and mature, with a desire for God's love and a longing to be set on fire with a zeal to do God's work in the Church and in the world. Before we ever sponsor a person to a weekend we take a prayerful look at her Christian life. Do you see Christ in this person? Is this person able to see Christ in others? Will the person grow from the experience?"

"Experience helps when identifying a good participant. We are looking for the one who will derive the greatest benefit from Via de Cristo and at the same time produce the best fruit because of it. There is no place in Via de Cristo for discrimination (Galatians 3:28). People of any social class will be welcome. People who are dissatisfied with the way things are in the world and people who have a natural aptitude for

living in community will make great participants. People who have depth to their personality, an ability to make decisions, a healthy independence and a natural affinity for giving love will be excellent participants. Wisdom and Charity ask that we not bring those who cannot benefit from the weekend, or have problems beyond the weekend's designs (those with deep psychological disturbances, or those living in an irregular state of life that cannot be presently rectified)."

Finally, I want to advise you of a change to the pilgrim application.

The following statement was added; "the recommended age for pilgrims is 21-65 due to the content of the weekend and physical aspects." Is this "law?" Well, it would appear to be. Yet, the Secretariat understands the power and work of the Holy Spirit. The sponsor of the pilgrim is encouraged to dialog with the rector or rectora with respect to the selection of a pilgrim. God's blessings to you.



Tips for Selecting and Sponsoring Pilgrims

by Kari Campbell

Remember, before asking someone to attend a weekend, first pray for that person.

When you decide to sponsor a pilgrim it is your responsibility to be there for that person. There are 7 things that you must consider:

- (1) Prayer for that person;
- (2) Bringing your pilgrim to and from the weekend;
- (3) Help him/her get into a reunion group;
- (4) Bring him/her to an Ultreya;
- (5) Help them with their 4th day, if needed; and
- (6) Continue prayers for them.

The weekend cost \$200.00 per person. Sponsors have always paid for their pilgrim to go on a weekend. We realize that some people have difficulty paying that amount. If you cannot afford to pay \$200.00, please ask for help. We can make suggestions in finding a way to make sure that they will be able to attend. The most important thing for the sponsorship of a pilgrim is the 6 items mentioned above.



Kairos Prizon Ministry

By Cheryl Hollar

If you don't already know, Kairos sprang from the Cursillo movement and started in Florida in 1976. It is currently in 33 states and growing along with approximately 8 countries around the world. Kairos is a New Testament Greek term that means "God's Special Time". Kairos currently has 3 separate ministries, Kairos Inside (it's the same sex as what's inside that prison – i.e. men go into the men's and women into the women's). Kairos Outside is for the female family members of those incarcerated, and Kairos Torch which is for the youth offenders

I'm asking you to prayerfully get involved with this ministry. You don't have to go inside, each inside team needs a support team to prepare meals and pray for those going "inside". The support team consists of both men and women. There are men's Kairos teams in the Hagerstown area along with a start committee to start one in the Jessup area at MCI-J, the women's Kairos is held at MCI-W which is in Jessup. A Kairos Torch weekend was held in Cumberland, MD and is scheduled to come to this area within the few years. There's a Kairos Outside held in Northern Virginia and another near Hagerstown.

Prayer. We all remember seeing the prayer banner showing the 72 hours and everyone praying for that weekend? Imagine a literal paper prayer chain surrounding the Rollo room with names of individuals praying for that particular weekend. That's exactly what happens in Kairos. Everyone who signs up to pray has their name written on a piece of paper that is then made into a giant prayer chain. Those names are also added to a giant paper scroll.

Agape. Kairos uses the term Agape instead of Palanca. Kairos teams are always looking for placemats decorated by children (but there are do's and don'ts) along with writing letters. Please contact me directly for information and requirements on these items. If you have any questions and/or concerns about getting involved with this ministry, please contact me at 301-627-4094 or C11Sep@comcast.net – Remember: Matthew 25:36 "I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me."

De Colores

Cheryl Hollar

Women's Weekend #44



A Few Comments from Our Upcoming Rectora

By: Charisa Aclin

Planning and preparation for the women's spring weekend is well underway at this time, even though the actual weekend is several months away. God is daily working through each team member who's been called to physically serve as God's hands and feet on the weekend. What blessing it is to have each woman and man serve whom God has called!

But serving on a weekend team, men's or women's, is more than the 30 plus team members who are at the camp that weekend helping to meet the needs of the pilgrims. It's really about the Rainbow community that helps to make the weekend possible. Those who already have the weekend dates penciled in on a calendar; those who have signed up for the prayer vigil; those who plan to serve on the outside; and those who help financially meet the needs of the weekend are also part of the greater team that God has called to help on this weekend.

As rectora for women's weekend #63, please know how much your prayers are appreciated for the upcoming weekend, as well as your commitment to make the weekend a positive, Spirit-filled weekend for the pilgrims God has chosen to attend. Thank you for your support in making weekend #63 possible!



The Three Squared Structure

By George Milcetch, Leadership Coordinator

Brothers and sisters, I provide the following as a reminder that **"Jesus is counting on us!"** and **"We are counting on Him!"** We have been lifted up by the Holy Spirit and no longer do church but we are the church. To be the church requires a sound relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit.

An extract from "The Essentials of the Via de Cristo" manual that is subtitled, "A Manual for the Training of Leaders in the Via de Cristo Method of Renewal."

An effective Fourth Day is the fulfillment of the Via de Cristo method. It is the tree that produces the fruit. It is the structured expression of Christian lifestyle. The trained and empowered participants become witnesses that penetrate the environment from which they were called. Martin Luther said, "Even if your job is a dishwasher or stable boy, yours is a divinely appointed vocation, as sacred as that of any pastor or church official." The participants are called by Jesus, inspired on the weekend, empowered with effective tools, and now are called to return to their individual environments and live an

authentic Christian life. Jesus will use these renewed witnesses of his to influence those environments.

“To attribute greater importance to the three days than to the Post-Cursillo would be to prefer the solemn to the decisive, the ‘extraordinary’ to the authentic.

It is important, indeed, to have souls encounter God, but it is even more important to motivate them to follow him” (Structure of Ideas, written jointly by Eduardo Bonnin, Francisco Forteza and Bernardo Vadell). Yes, it is vital, to have individuals meet God during the three days, but these encounters become truly significant for the world if the participants are motivated to follow him in their daily lives.

The “Three Squared” Structure of the Via de Cristo Method and Movement.

The “Three Squared” Structure has three categories and each category has three characteristics. The three categories are Via de Cristo, Post-Weekend or 4th Day and Individual Participants within the Movement. Each of these is further divided into three characteristics as follows:

Via de Cristo

Pre-Weekend -- Weekend -- Post-Weekend or 4th Day

Post-Weekend or 4th Day

Reunion Group -- Ultreya -- Spiritual Direction

Individual Participants within the Movement

Piety -- Study -- Apostolic Action

The Via de Cristo structure is both three levels deep and three dimensions wide. The Group Reunion Card reminds us to plan a balanced Christian life. Within the movement we must also maintain a balanced approach to the Via de Cristo with emphasis placed at each level and dimension. Each characteristic or cell is vital to the health of the movement and each must be encouraged. If a Christian focuses exclusively on piety they have missed the power of the method and become unbalanced. If a secretariat only puts on weekends it is equally unbalanced. As stated in Ecclesiastes 3:2, in life there are times and seasons, a time to plant and a time to harvest. So also there are seasons of emphasis, but care must be taken to not neglect any cells of the structure. If neglect occurs, the subsequent unbalance could be difficult, dangerous and even deadly to the movement in your community.



Upcoming Events

Ted Petito, Secretary

Spring 2012 Weekends:

Men's April 12-15, 2012 Rector: David Russell

Women: April 19-22, 2011 Rectora: Charissa Aclin
(The women's weekend will be held at Peach Orchard Retreat in Silver Spring, MD).

Ultreya: March 10, 2012 at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton, VA
Save the Date: May Ultreya - May 12, 2012 (Location to be announced)

Prayer Palanca: The 72 hour prayer palanca sign up will be on the web site soon.
Please remember to sign up to pray for the team and pilgrims of Men's #59 and Women's #63.

2012 Fall Weekend Dates:

Men's October 11 - 14 Women's October 18 - 21



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