

# 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 2014 • VOLUME 30

## 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 identified 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 and what that means for his people. In every instance all glory and praise should be given 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. †



**Christ is counting on you...**



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Intent Of The VDC.....	Pg 1
Spiritual Checkup.....	Pg 2
Upcoming Events.....	Pg 2
Remain True To Its Roots ....	Pg 3
How Is A Rector Selected ...	Pg 4
How Is Team Selected .....	Pg 4
Group Reunion.....	Pg 5
Participant Selection .....	Pg 5
Hosting NLS Meeting.....	Pg 6
Secretariat Openings.....	Pg 7
Weekend Events .....	Pg 8



## Upcoming Events

### SPRING WEEKENDS

#### Men's Weekend #54

March 27-30, 2014  
St. Michael Lutheran Church  
Ottawa Lake, MI

#### Women's Weekend #54

April 3-6, 2014  
St. Michael Lutheran Church  
Ottawa Lake, MI

#### Post Weekend Ultreya

April 27, 2014  
3:00 - 6:30 pm  
St. Michael Lutheran Church  
Ottawa Lake, MI



**Deadlines for Weekend #54 applications: (10 days before the weekend OR earlier if full)**

- Men's - March 17, 2014
- Women's - March 24, 2014

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/community](http://www.gnvdc.org/community)

# Spiritual Checkup...

## "Will The Christians Please Stand Up"

By Anonymous Author

I would venture to say that most people reading this, and most people in general, have roll models-shining stars who stood out among the rest when we were growing up or seeking support in difficult times.

My question today here is simply this: are you and I that shining star for somebody else? Whether we know it or not, my guess is that you and I are probably one of somebody else's shining star. This is a great honor, to say the least, yet it is one that carries the burden, and the blessing, of great responsibility.

As brothers and sisters who are making our Fourth Day, lets remember the following points:

1. Somebody is always watching: "You may be the only Gospel somebody is reading."
  2. Our good works and "light" are from God alone, not of our own doing. (Think of the moon and how it has no light of it's own, but only reflects the light of the sun).
  3. Faith is not private. It is definitely personal to be sure, but it is not private. As Jesus says, only a fool lights a lamp and then hides it.
- Let us pray for those who may be watching us and for ourselves, that our hearts be attentive and ready to hear God when he calls us. In this way we can bear effective witness to those around us of how life-transforming the Gospel really is. †



## 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

# 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 Maryland. It will be a celebration of our 42nd 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](http://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 †

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**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.”*

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## 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.

# How is a Rector Selected?

It is often asked, How is a Rector Selected? For a better explanation, you can refer to the Leaders Manual which explains this in great detail. Here are a few points taken from the leaders manual (pgs 67-68):

A Rector for our weekends should be given at least forty (40) weeks to prepare. This would mean that approximately one year before the weekend a Rector will serve, the Rector selection process should begin. The Rector Selection Committee includes the Lay Director, the Past Lay Director, the Spiritual Director, and the Leaders Committee.

When they meet they will select three (3) individuals as nominees for the Rector position.

The following qualifications should be considered in selection:

- Active in their own church
- Have served in several varied positions on weekends and have given two Rollos
- Active in a reunion group
- Active in ultreyas, send-offs, Clausura, and in other ways demonstrate leadership in Via de Cristo
- Member of a church with a faith consistent with Lutheran theology



The nominees will be ranked, by the selection committee. The Lay Director will then contact the nominees, in order, as soon as possible after the ranking. A short time can be allowed for the nominee to consider prayerfully the calling. In the event that all three nominees decline, the selection committee will meet again to provide more nominees. †

# How are Team Members Selected?

It is also often asked, How are Team Members selected? Here are a few points taken from the leaders manual about team selection.

Suggested Policies for Team Selection:

- Approximately half should be FIRST timers (never served) in order to build experience
- Approximately one half the team should be experienced (having served) on previous weekends
- We encourage a Rector to have her group reunion serving on the team
- Other than group reunion, team members should only be asked to serve one team per year
- Except in rare compelling situations no one should serve in the same position twice, or give the same rollo a second time
- Team members should be in group reunions, actively involved in their church, and supporting Via de Cristo activities

Much prayer and careful consideration is put into selecting team members. Accepting the call to serve on a team involves the commitment to attend ALL team meetings, the entire weekend, and be willing to serve in ANY position.

You can go to our website [www.gnvdc.org](http://www.gnvdc.org) and take a Team Availability Survey if you already haven't done so. Team meetings & locations are posted on our website. This survey is used for both NO and YES responses to let our rectors know of our availability. †



# Are You REALLY Willing to Serve on a Team?

Have you been asked to serve on a team in a position that might feel a bit out of your comfort? Maybe it was something you felt you could not do or you don't have the skill or time. When we are called to serve on a team, trust is needed that the rector has prayed about filling this position and felt lead to call you to that position. God is always with us and sometimes we need to take that leap of faith and stretch ourselves.

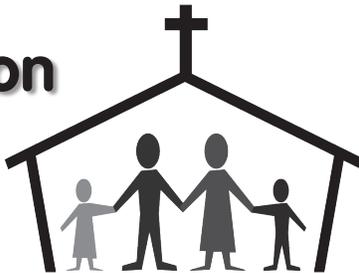
When responding Yes to serving on a team, we need to be willing to serve in ANY position, placing our trust in God to help us with the rest.

Some have physical limitations that might prevent them from serving in any position which is understandable. Please let the rector know when you respond to the survey or team invitation letter. As for the rest of us, take that leap of faith, trust in God and do your best. You will be surrounded by lots of people praying for you! †

# About Group Reunion

Taken from the GNVdC Leader's Manual

Here are the primary disciplines of the group reunion method:



- † The group meets weekly at a mutually convenient time and location
  - † It is a primary commitment for its members
  - † The members use the Service Card distributed on weekends. The format includes: the Prayer to the Holy Spirit, group sharing, and touches on piety, close moments to Christ, study, and action.
  - † The members share plans of apostolic action, what they have done and will do to bring another person closer to Jesus Christ - this could be at home, work, church, or any other environment
  - † The members report how last week's plan fared, holding one another accountable for planning and executing apostolic action
- † They pray daily for one another and then lift up the detailed plans they have discussed together
- When we say that the group is primary, we imply that there is very little that will interfere with a participant attending the group reunion. When Jesus speaks to us about the Kingdom of God (Matt. Cpts.5-7), clearly, to Him, there is nothing more important than service in the Kingdom of God.
- Group Reunion is an essential and valuable part of the Via de Cristo method and must not be neglected. Those of us who have invested ourselves generously in Group Reunion can testify that God

## Reunion Group List

There are several people that have expressed the need for a reunion group and we have compiled a list of active reunion groups with a contact person.

**This list is available at all GNVDC events and online at [www.gnvdc.org](http://www.gnvdc.org)** under the community tab after you log-in.

If you need to add your group to the list, you can contact:

Contact Communications  
Phone: (888) 468-3295  
[communications@gnvdc.org](mailto:communications@gnvdc.org)

has honored the commitment by increasing faith, hope, and love. He sends us into our daily lives with renewed courage and desire to bring the world to Jesus Christ.

It should now be clear why small accountability groups, like group reunion, are prerequisite to team service. †

## 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. †

## Congratulations to our Spring Rectors:

Men's Rector

**Alan McGowan**

Weekend #41

Women's Rector

**Wendy Staup**

Weekend #32



*Please pray for our new Rectors and their families as they devote so much of their time and talents preparing for this special weekend.*

## GNVdC Secretariat 2013-2014

**Lay Director** - Phil Meuser  
laydirector@gnvdc.org

**Spiritual Director** - Pr Jim Wenger  
spiritualdirector@gnvdc.org

**Secretary** - Tina Gans  
secretary@gnvdc.org

**Treasurer** - Mark Belcik  
treasurer@gnvdc.org

**Communications** -  
VACANT  
communications@gnvdc.org

**Leaders** - Tony Selk  
leaders@gnvdc.org

**Palanca** - Cindy Jurosek  
palanca@gnvdc.org

**Pre-Weekend** -  
Scott & Laura Koenig  
preweekend@gnvdc.org

**Post-Weekend** -  
Victoria & Dana Clifton  
postweekend@gnvdc.org

**Kitchen** - Alan & Lynn McGowan  
kitchen@gnvdc.org

**Supplies** -  
Gary & Debbie Maxwell  
supplies@gnvdc.org

**National Lay Delegate** -  
Diane Lupo  
laydelegatevoting@gnvdc.org  
Judi Lado  
laydelegatenonvoting@gnvdc.org

# Good News! VdC is Hosting the NLS Annual Meeting in 2016!!!

GN!VdC Secretariat recently voted to host the National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) Annual Meeting in July of 2016. So what does this mean? First, this is a great honor to served the larger VdC community. It will take many volunteers to host, offers an opportunity for wonderful fellowship, and a time to learn and share what others are doing.

### The purpose of the NLS Annual Meeting is four-fold:

- (1) Its a gathering of delegates from all member secretariats to conduct necessary business of the NLS.
- (2) It is to learn and share. This may be accomplished through forums, workshops, seminars, small groups and/or guest speakers.
- (3) It is to hold true to and teach the basic fundamentals, while visioning for the future as we change and grow, while maintaining continuity.
- (4) It assists the hosting secretariat in furthering its own movement and developing its' leadership in a non monetary way.

### Here are some of the Hosting Secretariat Responsibilities:

- (1) To obtain a contract
- (2) To provide housing
- (3) Provide meals for all attendees
- (4) To provide space for the annual meeting
- (5) To host the mid-year NLSEB Meeting
- (6) To provide equipment
- (7) To handle all funds received
- (8) To provide transportation
- (9) To provide maps

So you might be asking yourself "how can I help?" There are many jobs that will need filled. On our website [www.gnvdc.org/community](http://www.gnvdc.org/community) is a link to the entire guidelines for hosting a NLS Annual meeting, in detail. Here are some highlights of some positions that will need filled. Each chairperson may have several sub-committees.

- † General Chairperson
- † Assistant/Co-Chairperson(s)
- † Spiritual Director(s)
- † Treasurer
- † Secretary/Record Keeper
- † Registration/Housing
- † Meal Liaison
- † Facilities/Physical Arrangements
- † Communications Audio/Visual
- † Hospitality
- † Transportation
- † Music
- † Palanca
- † Public Relations/ Fund Raising

We will need approximately a minimum of 30 people in advance with an additional 30-45 people on site during the weekend.

Please pray about whether you are feeling lead to step up and help out. If you are interested contact:

Phil Meuser, Lay Director  
(419) 842-0507  
or email [laydirector@gnvdc.org](mailto:laydirector@gnvdc.org) †



# 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. The Nominating Committee Chairman this year 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 Phil Meuser our Lay Director. He 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. †

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For more info or to nominate someone, please contact:

Phil Meuser at (419) 842-0507  
email: [laydirector@gnvdc.org](mailto:laydirector@gnvdc.org)

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God speaks in the silence of the heart.  
Listening is the beginning of prayer.

*~Mother Teresa*

## Secretariat Openings and Brief Descriptions

### **Spiritual Director**

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

### **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.

### **Communications Chair**

Responsible for overseeing social media, website, publicity materials, and database management. Coordinates the creation and mailing of newsletters, emails, printed materials.

### **Kitchen Chair**

Responsible for menu planning and food purchasing for the weekends. Oversees or delegates setup and tear down of the kitchen each weekend. Responsible for training of head cook and head server prior to the weekend.

### **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 upcoming events for them to share in their congregations.

### **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.



**GOOD NEWS! Via de Cristo**  
 OF SE MICHIGAN & NW OHIO  
 Newsletter Editor  
 30434 Bock Street  
 Garden City, MI 48135



# 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 #54 Events

#### Join us!

Mark your calendar for the upcoming events for Men's and Women's GN!VdC #54. For maps and more information, go to our website at: [www.gnvdc.org](http://www.gnvdc.org)



#### Men's Weekend #54

March 27-30, 2014  
 St. Michael Lutheran Church  
 Ottawa Lake, MI

#### Set-Up

Wednesday, March 26  
 7:00 pm

#### Send Off

Thursday, March 27  
 7:30 pm

#### Serenade

Saturday, March 29  
 6:00 pm

#### Clausura & Clean-up

Sunday, March 30  
 4:30 pm

#### Women's Weekend #54

April 3-6, 2014  
 St. Michael Lutheran Church  
 Ottawa Lake, MI

#### Set-Up

Wednesday, April 2  
 7:00 pm

#### Send Off

Thursday, April 3  
 7:30 pm

#### Serenade

Saturday, April 5  
 6:00 pm

#### Clausura & Clean-up

Sunday, April 6  
 4:30 pm

