



Via de Cristo of Ohio Newsletter
Affiliated with the National Lutheran Secretariat

De Colores!

VOLUME 37, ISSUE 3

March 5, 2016

Happy Leap Year and Leap Day

Most people think the length of the year is to regulate the seasons; that's untrue. There are different ways to measure a year, but for the purposes of the civil calendar, it is the amount of time that elapses between the successive vernal equinoxes--the date in spring when day and night are of equal length.

The date is important to Christians, because we celebrate Easter on the First Sunday after the vernal equinox. The current pattern of leap years was designed to keep March 21, the ecclesiastical date of the vernal equinox, aligned with the astronomical event. There is roughly a 1 in 1461 chance of being born naturally on leap day (we are expecting a grandson, Luke, any day). People born on February 29th are called 'leaplings' or 'leapers'. Leap years are always divisible by 4 but century years that are not evenly divisible by 400 are not leap years. Britain didn't adopt the modern leap year pattern until 1752.

So there you have it. We just celebrated the third Sunday in Lent, preparing for Easter. The risen Jesus Christ invites us to "leap" into his arms of trust and peace. Via de Cristo is one of the tools available to encourage us into the leap of love and trust. Group reunion, Ultreya, fellowship, piety, study and apostolic action are way points in our Lenten journey.

Do you participate in a reunion group? If not, invite other Via de Cristo people near you to form one with you. If you don't know any, contact Dave Lann from Secretariat for help. (See list on right.)

Thank you Jesus, we love you,

Warren (Butch) Seeley # 28
Lay Director

PS--A note of special thanks to Linda Morton, Sherryl Patterson, Paul and Nancy Martin who helped part of several days to organize, hand address, prepare, and assemble 545 "special invitations", sent snail mail to Pastors around the state of Ohio. These invitations are to Clergy Experience # 2 that is scheduled Monday, September 26th-Thursdays, September 29th. Your tireless sacrifice of time is recognized and I thank God for you.---Butch

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Contact Butch for info @ open positions.

Secretariat meetings are held the third Saturday of each month. You are welcome to attend. Contact Lay Director Butch Seeley for the place and time of each meeting.

God loves you and so do we!

See What You Remember

Hi, my name is Kevin Hoch. I worship at Trinity Lutheran Church in Mt. Healthy, Ohio. That's a suburb of Cincinnati. I attended Men's Weekend number 17 where I sat at the table of Mark.

Men's weekend number 17 was in the spring of 1988 so it's been over 25 years since I sat at that table in the Cum Cristo center in Columbus. While I'm sure there is much I have forgotten, there are still many things that I remember. I remember my uncertainty on Thursday night about what I was getting myself into. I remember where I sat for the weekend and wondering who those "hidden" men were at my table that would get up there and give a rollo.

I remember the tangible signs of grace that kept pouring out as the weekend progressed and I remember struggling through my sharing at the closing.

Since that weekend, I have had the privilege of giving the above introduction on multiple occasions as I have served on teams where I have filled a number of rolls.

So why have I stayed with this Via de Cristo movement all these years? Well I suppose it's because I see God at work in this movement. As I've served on teams, I've seen people change as their eyes have been opened to God's love and grace. My reunion group and Ultreya have kept me mindful of the tripod's three legs of piety, study and action keeping them in the forefront of my mind which helps me focus better on my own walk with Christ.

My weekend had an impact on my life as it has had on yours. What friend of yours has not attended a weekend? Pray about that friend. Do you feel God calling you to talk to your friend about attending a weekend? If so, there is a weekend coming up in May. Ask your friend to attend. Chances are it will have an impact on their life as it did on yours as God once again shows the pilgrims how deep His love and grace for His children is.

God loves you and so do I
Kevin

Co-ed Weekend #2 Set For Thursday, May 19 – Sunday, May 22, 2016 At Camp Otyokwah outside Butler, OH

Rectora Jeanne Gaston and Head Cha Mary McGinnis are finishing the formation of the Team and beginning the Team Meetings. It's time to pray to ask God whom you should invite to attend. They may be individual women or men or married couples. Look in the May Newsletter for Jeanne's article with the theme and other information as well as the Team Roster. With that Newsletter there will also be copies of the registration forms for both you, the sponsor, and your Pilgrims. (The sponsorship fee is \$15).

What is a story of faith you could share with others? (You don't have to write it perfectly—I can fix it if you like.) You know how you feel when you read the stories in the Newsletter. Help someone else to feel that way. Send your story by email to vdcnewsletterohio@gmail.com or by US Mail to 4025 Andrews Rd., Bellville, 44813.

VdC Co-ed Weekend #2

Via de Cristo Ohio Co-Ed weekend #2 is coming up quickly. It's May 19-22 at Camp Otyokwa outside Butler, southeast of Mansfield.

Before taking part in Co-Ed weekend #1 as Observing Rectora (and all-round cha), I wondered how or if a co-ed weekend would really be effective. I found that indeed God can work in any way He wishes. The weekend was grace filled and, I know, meaningful to all the pilgrims, men and women, whom God brought to the Weekend. Please pray for the pilgrims who are God's choice to attend the up-coming Weekend and listen to God's leading on whom you should ask to participate as a Pilgrim.

There are still several openings for the Team, so please be open when being contacted and prayerfully consider being a part of the Weekend. I have talked to several people with whom I have not connected back yet, and have had several people let me know they would be willing to help. I will be contacting each of you in the coming week.

The first team meeting will be held on April 2nd and I will be sending an email out to the team members to let them know where the meeting will be. I will have a complete listing of team members in the next newsletter so the community can keep all in their prayers.

God's Blessings!

Jeanne Gaston

Rectora, Co-ed Weekend #2



A Message from Secretariat Music Cha

When you made your Pilgrim weekend, you probably remember being awakened by singing on Sunday morning! The song of choice? "This Little Light of Mine/Do Lord". (My favorite part is always Doug Burrows, calling out the verses!) "Do Lord" was written by Julia Ward Howe, who also penned the "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". Julia was a speaker, a promoter of women's rights, an author and spent her life as an outspoken proponent for many causes. "Do Lord" was also sung by slaves as a tempo work song, to drive home the point that they were tired of being oppressed and hurt and wanted to be treated with dignity and respect. Some of those verses include "When I'm sick and by myself, Lord remember me" and "When I'm crossing Jordan, Lord remember me" and "When my time is over, Lord remember me". We also have lots of verses to this song. My favorite has always been "I've got a home in Glory Land that outshines the sun!" What's yours?

God loves you, I love you
Jen Briner

Ultreya News

<p>Ultreyas in the Akron-Kent area of Ohio are often the third Saturday of a month, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Kent, at 4:30 pm at 600 S. Water Street, and potluck will be included. For more information, please call Dave Lann, 330-296-6929, or Pr. Doug Fidler, 330-673-5445.</p>	<p>Cincinnati area Ultreyas are usually the first Saturday of each month at 4:30pm at Trinity Lutheran Church in Mt. Healthy. Address is 1553 Kinney Avenue, Cincinnati 45231. For questions, please call Kevin Hoch, 513-931-8797.</p>	<p>Bellville Ultreya will be the second Sundays of January, April, July and October at 3:00pm. It's at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 48 Church Street, Bellville 44813. Worship and Holy Communion are followed by Potluck, table service and drinks provided. Call Ken and Josie Riling with questions, 419-886-2437, or Paul and Vicky Sakala, 419-884-1573.</p>	<p>North Dayton Ultreyas are usually the third Saturdays of every month at 7pm at the United Christian Church, 8611 Hoke Rd, Clayton, OH 45315. (Bring snack to share.) For questions, please call Wes Scoates at 937 533-7605.</p>
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We had just returned from burying Dayton Hohmann, my mother Erline Sager's older brother, in West Texas the day before, when my spouse Doug suddenly and unexpectedly learned he had lost his employment, work that had moved us across country to Texas. Our family held each other in a close circle immediately, offering prayer in the realization that our grief had now doubled after the funeral.

In the months that followed, I found as many as five part-time jobs that took me all over the greater Dallas and sister city Fort Worth and the environs. I worked in different denominational churches, higher educational institutions, and individual homes, with many folks. Doug sought employment in north Texas through various avenues, networking with many agencies, organizations, and recruiters. We were baffled as to why he continued to be without work.

Months later, with still no full time employment between us, we consciously changed our way of praying. We prayed with new openness to go where ever God needed us in all the world. Do you recall that last February, I journeyed to India as a missionary theologian? We were very aware of the risk involved with our sincerity of offering such a prayer!! We prepared ourselves to be completely receptive to God who would hear our petition and fill Gospel needs somewhere we could not yet even imagine, somewhere in all the world.

Very soon thereafter, a phone call came that led to conversations, interviews, and rather quickly to my new full time position. In all the world, it turns out that God needed us in our home country, back in a state where we still have dear family, including young adult children and parents with wisdom to share. Trinity Seminary's mission is to form leaders for Christ's church at work in the world. God took us at our prayed word, and has led us now to empower others to take the Gospel message into all the world! The Holy Spirit continues to surprise in ways that are unimaginable!

Doug remains in Dallas just until our house there is sold, and we solicit your prayers for the right family to find and purchase our home. He seeks employment in the greater Columbus area, holding a degree in electrical engineering and an executive MBA, while he has worked in customer service in the health care field for 15+ years. We appreciate your prayers for a fitting position.

Daily we are reminded that God's hand is the only sure source of security available to us. It's an adventure to walk where God has prepared a place for service. We know most certainly that I am in the place for a unique service to support the formation of leadership into all the world for the sake of Christ Jesus.

Dear Friends in Christ, we hope to see you soon! When is the next Ultreya?

Rev. Denise E. Sager
Vice President for Leadership Formation
Trinity Lutheran Seminary
dsager@tlsohio.edu [\(614\) 384-4637](tel:6143844637)

PALANCA: THE HEART AND LIFEBLOOD OF THE VIA DE CRISTO WEEKENDS!

This is a rather strong statement and the problem comes in with defining what exactly is Palanca? The first thing to keep in mind is that flyers, banners, posters and letters are **NOT** in themselves, "Palanca". They **represent** the Palanca offered to the weekend pilgrims, as well as team members, namely the **prayers** and **sacrifice** that one does during the 72-hours of the weekend.

My job as the General Palanca Chair for the Via de Cristo Ohio Secretariat is to solicit these flyers, banners, letters and posters from other Via de Cristo weekends, as well as other 4th Day Movements such as Roman Catholic Cursillo, Episcopal Cursillo, Lutheran Cursillo, Methodist Cursillo, Walk to Emmaus, The Great Banquet, Tres Dias, Pilgrimage, Chrysalis, Camino, Teens Encounter Christ, Kairos, Kairos Outside. When I receive these items by email or snail mail, I always receive a letter saying that we will be in their prayers for our weekends. And, I always offer back to them, as a representative to all communities in Ohio, **prayer** and **sacrifice** for their weekends.

Part of my responsibilities to all communities in Ohio is sending out a copy to the Newsletter editor all the future weekends coming up. Another assigned task is to remind Ultreya leadership to prepare posters and banners for upcoming Ohio weekends, to ask reunion groups to prepare palanca letters, posters and banners. This will demonstrate to the pilgrims that the 4th Day is a living and operating entity, and touches even the first 3 days of the "Way of Christ" living. This is usually done through our monthly newsletters.

It is so easy to take a prayer time that is convenient to your daily schedule; but perhaps you need to try a prayer time that may not be convenient to your schedule and is very much needed to be filled. For myself I always like to take the wee morning hours. It has truly made me closer in my relationship with God, it may not be convenient, but God makes it happen and brings a fulfillment in that appointed time!

I remember most of the weekends that I had served on in my 20 plus years, that communities after communities were being God's hands and feet preparing, serving and cleaning up after the meal for team members on Thursday before the start of the weekend. And, I have also seen communities come in to prepare, help serve, and clean up the Saturday evening meal for team and pilgrims.

There's another way for communities to do "Palanca". How about everyone out there in community-land: come and be part of the worship and music team at the 2016 National Via de Cristo Gathering in Sylvania, Ohio, July 21-24th. If you never have attended a National gathering, you are missing out on the most fun a Christian could ever have; lots of learning, sharing, rejoicing, praising, fellowshiping, glorifying our Almighty Father and God of us all!

Interested? Call me at 740-262-0563. God Loves You and So Do I!

Sherryl F. Patterson, Palanca coordinator

UPCOMING WEEKENDS:

Reminder –

Northern MN – Women # 633 – March 3-6, 2016

Wisconsin "Sonrise" Via de Cristo – March 3-6, 2016

INDY VdC – Men #74 - March 3-6, 2016 and Women # 75 – March 10 – 13, 2016

Tennessee Lutheran VdC – A Retreat for the Development of Christian Leaders – April 10, 2016

Listing of new weekends –

Men's Discipleship Walk – March 31 – April 3, 2016 – Central Florida U.S.A. Discipleship Walk.

Faith Walk of South Louisiana – FWSL Men's #17 – March 3-6, 2016

and FWSL Women's #18 – March 10-13, 2016.

Georgia Mountains Vida Nueva weekends for Young ladies March 18-20, 2016; and for the young men on April 1-3, 2016 / If you could please send palanca letters to these young adults on these weekends, could be such a beautiful look of the Love of JESUS through all of you: Please send letters to

Anthony Franklin, General Manager, Ramah Darom Retreat & Conference Center, 70 Darom Lane, Clayton, GA 30525 – Phone number is 706-782-9307.

Northview Church Discipleship Walk in Carmel, Indiana – Men's Discipleship Walk – March 3-6, 2016; and Women's Discipleship Walk – March 10-13, 2016.

A Message from Our Prayer Chain Coordinator

I would like to introduce myself, my name is Vicky Sakala. I attended women's weekend #62 in 2007 where I sat at the table of Ruth. I am honored to accept the position as our new Prayer Chain Coordinator. Our prayer chain has been dormant for a few years but I am hoping to bring our prayer chain back to life. Until my weekend in 2007 I was not a person who was heavy into prayer. I prayed but I don't really think I prayed from my heart. The one thing that I felt the most for on my weekend was how honest and open we were the entire weekend concerning our prayers. From everyone lifting up someone they knew or the silent prayers we said to ourselves it was just a wonderful feeling that I felt by simply being a part of someone's prayers. I was amazed at seeing the large poster board and seeing all those different names of so many people who were praying for me on my weekend. Some people I didn't know, others I knew from my home church and then I saw one name that made me cry my husband Paul was on that list praying for my weekend. Since then Paul and I have been very active in getting to know our Lord and Savior even more through our prayers. We have opened our hearts to the Holy Spirit and allowing our prayers to be more open. We have been involved with study groups in our church concerning prayer and the importance of prayer. A few years ago we attended a Monday night Bible Study group and discussed the book written by Pastor Jim Cymbala, *When God's People Pray*. We discussed the book and watched videos and I began seeing prayer as an amazing opportunity to lift others up to the Lord. Do I need to know who these people are that I'm praying for, NO. Did I need to pray only for my family, NO. Everyone needs our prayers! As a result from studying Pastor Cymbala's book our group felt the need to open up our Church to anyone who wants to come to be prayed for or to just sit quietly and pray? Every Thursday evening from 6:00-8:00 p.m. our Church is open for anyone to come and pray. We pray over the members of our church, we pray for those who are sick, those going through difficult times and I hope to continue to pray at all times. I have witnessed many answered prayers and have seen someone's faith strengthened by having their prayers answered. It is a truly amazing feeling to know that God is as awesome as we say he is and that he really does HEAR OUR PRAYERS. Send me your prayer requests through our prayer chain and I will do the very best that I can in keeping our prayer chain active so that everyone will benefit from our prayers. In Colossians 4:2 it says to: *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving*. Let us continue our prayers, let us lift those up to the Lord who need our prayers and give our thanks and praise to the Lord for he is AWESOME.

Clergy Experience #2 Set for Monday September 26 – Thursday 29, 2016 At St. Peter and Paul Retreat Center, Newark, OH

Invitations to Pastors throughout Ohio will go out in February. Speak to your Pastor about it.

VdC Prayer Chain is prayingforvdc@gmail.com or by phone at 419-884-1573

If you know someone from the Via de Cristo Community who has changed their street address or email address or telephone number, or does not get the VdCNewsletter but would like to, please send the new information to Newsletter Editor Nancy Martin at vdcnewsletterohio@gmail.com or 419-886-4420 or 4025 Andrews Road, Bellville, OH 44813.



Via de Cristo of Ohio is now on Facebook!

We hope you will "like" our new Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/viadecristooh>

Get on the Web – Ohio Via de Cristo www.vdcoho.org
National Via de Cristo Website www.viadecristo.org
Kairos Website www.kairosohio.org