



Daily CONEXIONES

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat of Via de Cristo

Volume 16.4

Sunday Edition

July 27, 2008

MORNING WORSHIP

As a surprise to the delegates, the estimated 250 Arizona Cursillistas serenaded us as we came into morning worship. We learned that this resembles the AZ Sunday morning *Mananitas* service on their weekends. The serenade was received with big smiles, clapping and the blowing of kisses!



Pastor Dave Poedel welcomed the group and led us in worship. The Scripture reading from Romans 8:28-39 was shared by **Pastor Shealds Smith**, reminding us that nothing can separate us from Christ's love.



After welcoming all to Arizona and the "dry heat", **Pastor Rick Bezanson** shared the message of Christ, based on the Holy Gospels of Matthew 13: 44-52, and Luke 17:20-21. In Luke, we are taught that the Kingdom of God is within us! It comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ, who comes to us and abides in us always. As Christians, we carry the King everywhere we



go due to our relationship with Jesus. The Kingdom of Heaven, or the Kingdom of God is mentioned 27 times in the Gospels, 18 times in present tense. God does reign – here and now!! We experience God's power, glory, peace and love through Via de Cristo and Cursillo and are called to share our faith with others.

In Matthew, we are challenged to examine our commitment to Christ. In the parable of the hidden treasure in the field, the man sold everything he owned in order to obtain the treasure. Jesus wants us to be that committed to Him.

Pastor Rick invited us to recall the joy, love, peace and power from our weekends and asked: "How much is that worth"? Once we meet Jesus, there is no price too high. Pastor Rick shared the story of a friend with a powerful drug addiction. The man had sold out completely to crack cocaine. After coming to Christ through his weekend, our Lord Jesus touched him and healed him. He is two years clean and on *fire* for Jesus Christ! He threw away what he thought was most valuable and is sold out to Jesus! He is actively sharing Christ's love with others and is doing God's work to change lives. The Kingdom of God is here!

In the parable of the fishing net, Pastor Rick asks us: "What is our job?" We are to cast our nets – far and wide – to bring people to Christ. It is not our job to sort the fish – or judge them – but to receive God's power, glory, peace and love and

share it with others. This is the Kingdom of God!

The message was followed by God's gift of Holy Communion and His promise of the forgiveness of our sins. Pastor Poedel offered a closing prayer and the congregation sang "God With Us".



The Saturday evening meal was presented by the host committee with tables being formed in a shape of the Jerusalem Cross with a portrait of Christ at the head. Arizona Host Servers were formally attired and escorted participants to their seats at the cross. Singers serenaded the attendees as they were seated and during their meal. Pastor Dave Poedel led an opening prayer inviting guests to enjoy their special meal with Christ. Attendees were served buffet style, with host servers offered and served beverages.

We were so blessed by their servant hood which went above and beyond. A number of AZ host team members held up trays to block the blinding sun from faces of the attendees as they ate their meal.



Presentations were awarded by **Tracy Schmidlin** and **Judy Laabs-Foss** to the outgoing executive board officers, **Jerry Lemcke**, **Pastor John Propst**, and **Bob Northrup**. As is traditional, the NLS banner was passed from the Arizona Host Committee chairpersons, **Joyce Dickerson** and **Rick Knopf** to 2009 Florida Host Committee chairs, **Dave Rankin** and **Don Armbrust**.



SATURDAY BUSINESS MEETING

The third business meeting of the 2008 NLS was preceded with music and joyful singing. **Pastor Diane LaFauci** opened the meeting with prayer. **Dale Anderson** clarified for the attendees the purpose and intent of the Head Spiritual Director (HSD) Manual offered by Arizona Lutheran Cursillo's HSD James Hofer. The Host Committee was introduced and thanked for their hospitality and smiles while serving the needs of this community.

President **Tracy Schmidlin** educated the delegates regarding issues that have occurred with vendors. There have been requests to use the NLS logo and materials of this movement as they wish for profit. Additionally they are ignoring the parts they may not wish to use, such as ignoring the Essentials and policies that are vital to our movement. Any sale or use of materials and logo are to be for the benefit of the local secretariat and NLS for fund raising purposes only. This has been an unwritten policy that will be formalized and presented as a resolution in the future.

The nomination and election process was reviewed, the candidates were introduced and the election process proceeded. Three past presidents collected and counted the 88 ballots. Those elected were: Spiritual Director – **Pastor Doug Givan**, Vice President of Administration – **Nanette (Nu) Helgager**, Treasurer – **Bob Northrup**.



A beautiful butterfly DeColores banner was presented to the new Secretariat in Eastern Pennsylvania. Their first weekend will be held in the spring of 2009. The community learned that Symbols, Inc. provides crosses as Palanca for the first set of weekends of new communities.

All of the committees presented verbal and/or written reports with discussion and questions addressed as necessary. Clarification re: payment of dues by May 31st annually with descriptive details available is in the constitution. Dues amounts vary from community to community as outlined in the constitution.



The delegates accepted the letters of intent for Florida to host the 2009 NLS. The 2010 annual meeting will be in Minnesota, with North Carolina hosting in 2011, and in 2012 we will be in Colorado. Currently over 92,000 people have attended a Cursillo or VdC weekend and are members of 47 secretariats within the United States.

The seven Secretariats of Florida extended an invitation for all to COME to the NLSAM. Chip Spear narrated a DVD presentation enticing us by showing a preview of the Florida scenery, activities and hosting campus. The theme will be "One in the Sun" based on John 17:21. All of us are one in the Spirit with Him.

After announcements the meeting was adjourned. The Florida hosting committee gave each of us a bag containing pamphlets and its attractions of Florida as we left.



EVENING WORSHIP

The Saturday evening worship opened with the band leading us in some boisterous singing. **Rev. Carroll Lang** provided us with a special treat as he showed us a unique demonstration of "Days of Elijah." He shared, "At our Brother's in Blue prison VdC weekends, the participants go wild with this song when the Palanca (servant) team taught them the actions." We enjoyed watching Rev. Lang and those around him "go wild for God."

Pastor Dave Poedel shared that he had some good news and bad news to share. The good news was we would be skipping parts of the lengthy liturgy printed in the book. The bad news was that the sermon was being replaced with the installation of the new 2008-2009 NLS board members.

Pastor Dave read in John, the first chapter, how the Word became flesh. Following the scripture reading outgoing Spiritual Director John Propst conducted the installation of the new NLS board:

Spiritual Director – **Doug Givan**
 President – **Tracy Schmidlin**
 VP of Administration – **Nanette (Nu) Helgager**
 VP of Outreach – **David Erdman**
 Treasurer – **Bob Northrup**
 Secretary – **Katie Sistar**

An offering designated for NLS Outreach was collected at evening worship. We closed with more singing. After worship we enjoyed an ice cream social with a local Christian band for entertainment. Our time together is drawing to a close. What a special time it has been to "Fan into Flames the Gifts of God" together.



“Comfort and Joy Quilts”

Joy Ambuehl’s quilts are derived from basic patterns inspired by many themes both, Christian and non-Christian: De-Colores quilts, animals, roosters, frogs, butterflies, flowers, and themes of teaching, seasons and baby nurseries. Joy plays on these themes by varying the color and design of the print, all the while maintaining very consistent square patterns. The bindings are color coordinated.

The secret is in the cutting. Using a rotary cutter on a cutting board with a ruler, where squares are cut and the size of completed squares in quilts vary from two inches to seven inches makes the work quicker. This method can not be totally used if a large picture is in the quilt design.

Over the years, Joy became more and more proficient with her machine; she made clothes for her daughters and even square-dancing duds for nights out with Harold. But it wasn’t until Joy began producing her legendary quilts that she began to enjoy great esteem and joyful praise! Inspiration comes mostly from Joy’s home life and keeping an eye out for material she might like. She has added an embroidery machine and that allows her to add a very personal touch to her quilts. You will often find “Comfort and Joy Quilts” embroidered in a corner of her latest quilts.

For example, her new ROOSTER quilt features many rooster printed fabric and related farm items such as fabric of corn, straw, chicken feathers, chicken wire with a 15” square rooster in the center. The center picture is surrounded by 5” squares in a pattern. The best part of this quilt are eight embroidered roosters, four in hearts and four different roosters. With so many rooster designs to choose from, each quilt is slightly different.

A pastel baby quilt featuring frogs reminds us through nature to Fully Rely On God.

The response to Joy’s quilts has been great; quilts are finding their way to churches and the private homes of her friends. Her popular “DeColores” quilt is exactly 44” x 76”, (perfect for retreat bunk beds) and backed in red, purple, blue, green, orange and yellow. They are 100% cotton including the filling of Warm ‘n Natural[®] or Warm ‘n White[®], and they are hand or machine washable in cold water. The website for Comfort and Joy Quilts can be found at www.comfortandjoyquilts.com or by e-mail at Joyzgr8@aol.com.



OTHER CHRISTIAN VENDORS



NLS DISTRIBUTION CENTER

During this Annual meeting videos have been taken of all Forums, Seminars and Worship Services. Those videos will be edited and available in the months ahead from **John Bradford** who operates the Distribution Center. The quarterly newsletter will announce when they are ready. For any other questions John can be reached at joab@xmission.com.



THANK YOU ARIZONA

As the sun sets and the flames of the desert heat die down for another evening, the 2008 NLSAM is winding down for this year. Numerous AZ team members have spent many hours prior to our arrival and during this weekend to host this event. This daily Conexiones is meant to be a motivating publication that you can take home to share with your renewal groups, Ultreya groups, and local secretariats. The newsletter is a team effort and the AZ host team provided me with the following people who took pictures, wrote the articles, proofed the material and printed the copies. I would like to thank: **Ceri and Greg Ahlborn, Robyn Bezanson, Gina Bouk, Karla Burt, Betty Christenberry, Tami Haas, Mary Elizabeth Kilber, Kris Larson, Mike Reed, Gloria Rice.**

Please remember that when you thank me for the results of the daily newsletter; I give all the praise to God and the team that he has provided to me. Thank you Arizona, for making me feel so *warmed* with your love and support.



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Turn in your evaluation forms if you have not already done so.
- Each year the NLS takes one offering for outreach and that was done at the 7:15 Evening Worship. If you were not able to attend that service and still want to donate to the NLS, please give your donation to one of the board members.
- Before you leave make sure you pick up a check-out form from registration, complete and turn it in with your pass card and key. If lost it will cost you **\$50.00!**
- Don't forget to tell transportation you need a ride to the airport. *Thank you!*



Don't forget to visit the NLS website:
viadecristo.org

Web Master / Coordinator Position

Do you (or someone in your VdC Community) have a servant's heart and experience in Web Site design and Audio Video? If so, do we have your dream geek-job. Call **Bob Northrup** for more information at: [919-272-6560](tel:919-272-6560).

EMERGENCY 24/7 PHONE NUMBERS:

The campus emergency phone number is [602-639-8100](tel:602-639-8100). Host Committee Nurse **Carol Widney**: [602-686-2789](tel:602-686-2789). Other emergencies: Host Committee Co-Chair **Joyce Dickerson** at [602-620-3195](tel:602-620-3195).



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CONEXIONES is the official publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, a national association of the Via de Cristo (Way of Christ) movement, representing over 92,100 who have participated in 47 movements across the U.S. The purpose of this publication is to inform the delegates about the activities of the Annual Meeting.

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Schedule for Sunday, July 27, 2008

Time	Event	Building	Location
7:30 a.m.	Breakfast	S C	Student Center
8:45 a.m.	Worship with Communion	E T	Ethington Theatre
10:00 a.m.	Board Meeting	TBA	TBA
11:00 a.m.	CHECK OUT BY 11:00 A.M.		

HD H– Hegel Dorm Hall, **S C**– Student Center, **NS B**– Nursing Science Bldg

Seminar: *PASTORAL INVOLVEMENT*

The seminar was facilitated by **Pastors John Propst** and **Charlie Carlson** and focused on the following pastoral involvement:

- Support of the movement within their congregation
- Willingness to attend a week-end
- Willingness to serve on a weekend.



The meeting was a mix of prepared questions, questions from the delegates in attendance, leadership from the pastors and discussion from the group.

Q. What makes it difficult to get Pastoral participation?

- May feel threatened by the movement
- Time
- Lack of understanding of the movement
- “One more thing” on their plate
- What will I learn from lay people?

Q. What if the Pastor is uncomfortable attending in their geographic area.

- Ask your pastor to express his or her goals for the church. Discuss how Via de Cristo or Cursillo can assist in furthering those goals and not take away from them.
- Encourage the Pastor to attend a weekend in another area if that is more comfortable, but be sure to have sponsor support for them in place.

Q. What is the best approach in discussing participation with your pastor?

- Don’t push! Pray! Find out what the obstacles are and offer to help make your pastor’s attendance a possibility. Actions speak louder than words.
- Show your joy, grace and faith.

The speakers mentioned that we can do damage to the goal of obtaining the pastor’s support by our level of enthusiasm following the weekend. Be careful that we don’t come back with the desire to “re-vamp the whole church”.

Pastor John suggested that it may be effective to have a “Pastor to Pastor” invitation extended. It was also reported that one church had the blessing of a retired pastor volunteering his services so the active pastor could attend and/or serve on a weekend. At no cost to the church – what wonderful Palanca!

Pastor Charlie suggested that the community have a Thank You event for pastors that have served in the past but are inactive. Fan the Flame! Light their fires again.

It was suggested that National Lutheran Secretariat develop a DVD of clergy speaking from the heart, sharing their Via de Cristo or Cursillo experience. The DVD could be used to invite and educate other pastors and generate interest in our

churches. It could be helpful in getting the support of the Bishop as well.

As lay leaders we need to have confidence in ourselves and in how God is working through us. This will allow us to effectively share the message of Via de Cristo and Cursillo. We need to make it more personal than corporate, to encourage both pastors and participants or pilgrims alike. Don’t forget the power of prayer and that participation will happen as God will have it happen. We need to gently and lovingly encourage our pastors and others.

Seminar: *SPONSORSHIP*

Marilyn Taulbee of the Good News Community in Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio (GNVdC) presented this seminar using materials generated from within her Secretariat. Oh, by the way, she warned us up front that there would be a “pop quiz” at the end of the class. Gee, that’s not fair!



Marilyn explained to us that she would teach us about caring for our participants before, during, and after the week-end. She provided us with a memorable acronym to help us remember – **RSVP**.

R is for **RESPONSIBLE** - You should always talk to God about man before talking to man about God, *PRAY*, and finally, evaluate your own Fourth Day

S is for **SPONSORSHIP** – Study the environments around you and then identify the natural leaders in that environment. Make a friend and *PRAY* for clear guidance. It is recommended that participants are baptized Christians, emotionally stable, and a reasonably mature Christian. Talk to their pastor about the weekend before they participate.

V is for **VALUES & INVITATION** – Your own life should reflect Christian values. Evaluate your own Fourth Day practices and the example you provide for others. Be a friend and share your personal story. Finally, extend the invitation, *PRAY*, and let the Holy Spirit work

P is for **PARTICIPANTS** – *PRAY* for your participant. Take seriously your responsibility before, during, and after the weekend.

Marilyn showed a wonderful DVD to “ignite” and clarify the responsibilities of Sponsorship. The GNVdC makes this DVD available to those in their secretariat who are interested in sponsoring.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY – it’s always good to have God involved, isn’t it?

PS: I got a 100% on the “pop quiz,” but then so did everyone else. Marilyn is a great teacher!