

Connecting National and Local Secretariats

CONEXIONES

Volume 31
Number 4
Dec. 2013

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

2014 National Via de Cristo Gathering - Baltimore, Maryland
July 24 – 27, 2014
Hosted by Journey in Faith, Rainbow and Vineyard Secretaries

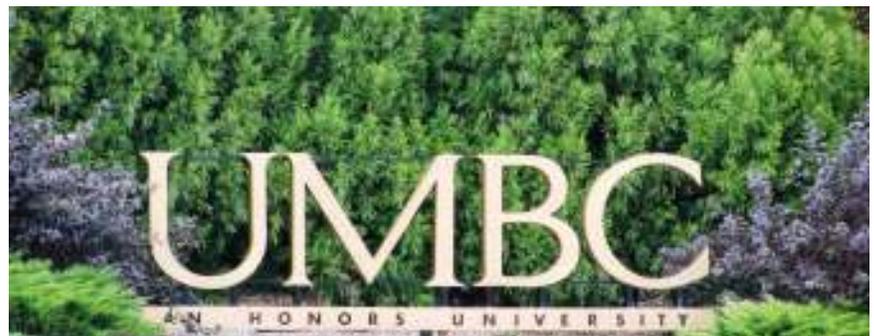
2014 National Via de Cristo Gathering – Baltimore, Maryland **July 24 -27, 2014**

The Journey in Faith, Rainbow and Vineyard communities have come together and we are so honored to be able to host everyone at next year's NLSAM.

The NLSAM 2014 will be located at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). It is located 6 miles from the Baltimore/Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI) and is situated just outside of the Baltimore Beltway (I-695).

UMBC in Catonsville, Maryland is just 9 miles from the Inner Harbor in downtown Baltimore, 40 miles from The Mall, monuments, and museums in downtown Washington, D. C., 28 miles from the Chesapeake Bay in downtown Annapolis, and only a 2-hour drive from the eastern shore beaches of Maryland and Delaware. Come early or stay after the meeting to enjoy some of the activities and history which makes the area a popular tourist destination.

Reserve the dates of **July 24 - 27** on your calendar now and join us in Maryland to experience God's love and grace in action - and have a taste of our famous blue crab while you're here. Watch future Conexiones for updated information.



“NEW NAME” **2014 National Via de Cristo Gathering**

At the midyear meeting in Baltimore, Maryland the NLS board spent time in discussion of how to increase attendance at the **National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting (NLSAM)**. Part of the conversation looked at do we change the name to be more reflective of what is done at the Annual Meeting. The word “meeting” may be keeping some from attending as they may feel this is an event for only leaders of the Secretariats. A few ideas were shared and discussed. The board decided the name will be changed to: **(Year) National VdC Gathering**.



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NLS Executive Committee

President - Ed Broestl
 1420 Glenview Drive
 Berthoud, CO 80513
 970-481-3827 (C)
[e_broestl@comcast.net](mailto:ebroestl@comcast.net)

Spiritual Director - Pr. Paul Schmidlin
 11461 Sylvania Ave.
 Berkey, OH 43504
 419-829-6463 (H)
prschr@aol.com

V P of Administration - Carolyn Hawkins
 2410 Kings Farm Way
 Indian Trail, NC 28079
 704-651-4230 (C)
carolyn.nls@carolina.rr.com

V P of Outreach - Tedd Smith
 1255 Royal Birkdale Circle
 Rockledge, FL 20124
 321-794 3321 (H)
mrtedd7777@aol.com

Secretary - Alice Alison
 2655 Monaco Terrace
 No. Richland Hills, TX 33410
 817-999-8549 (C)
alice.fa@att.net

Treasurer - Steve Barnett
 5091 Oley Turnpike Road
 Reading, PA 19606
 610-301-9900 (C)
sgb121266@aol.com

NLS Appointed Positions

NLS Executive Director -Nancy Peterson
 1237 St. Clair Ave., #3
 St. Paul, MN 55105
 651-249-7897 (C)
execdirector.nls@gmail.com

Archivist/Historian - Gerry Olsen
 10768 Lake Oak Way
 Boca Raton, FL 33498
 561-852-9711 (H)
seekfocustrust@gmail.com

Distribution Center - John Bradford
 6992 South 160 East
 Midvale, UT 84047-1207
 801-834-8261 (C)
joab@xmission.com

Financial Advisor - Diane Purcell
 651-459-7249 (H)
 651-768-0624 (FAX)
dspurcell@msn.com

Newsletter Editor - Judy Laabs-Foss
 4495 Margaret Street
 St. Paul, MN 55110-3773
 651-429-6762 (H)
jer2911@comcast.net

Palanca Coordinator - Paul Sabatier-Smith
 5026 Log Cabin Drive
 Lakeland, FL 33810
 863-603-9044 (H)
dcolor9@attglobal.net

Web Page Coordinator - Rick Hanzlik
 10276 Ashley Hills Circle
 Sandy, UT 84092
 801-631-4518 (C)
rickh@specialtv-art.com

2014 Host Committee Chairs

NLSAM in Baltimore, MD
Mark Carlson
 Baltimore, MD
 xxx-xxx-xxxx (C)
mark@timelessglass.com



National Lutheran Secretariat
Conexiones-on-the-web
E-Mail Notification Request Form

E-Mail Notification — execdirector.nls@gmail.com

Please notify me by E-Mail when the latest edition of Conexiones has been posted on the NLS Web Page

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Write in large letters - be very clear, computers rely on EXACT information

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Volume 31
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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 97,500 who have participated in 48 movements across the U.S. Via de Cristo is a Lutheran expression of Cursillo®, a renewal movement developed within the Roman Catholic Church in the late 1940s. The Lutheran movement had its beginning in Florida and Iowa in 1972. The purpose of this publication is to inform all members of each NLS affiliated secretariat, Lutheran Bishops and District Presidents about the activities of the National Lutheran Secretariat and its affiliated secretariats. Subscriptions to the above named positions are free. If you know one of the above is not receiving **CONEXIONES**, call a member of the board at the numbers listed on the side.

Subscriptions for the general public are \$6.00 per year, and are available by sending your name, complete mailing address, and phone numbers to **CONEXIONES** Treasurer, **Steve Barnett**, 5091 Oley Turnpike Road Reading, PA 19606 or contact him at; 610-301-9900.(C)

Material for CONEXIONES: If you have information for **CONEXIONES**, items, requests and/or information, address corrections, changes or additions - even inspirational bits - send them to the **CONEXIONES** Editor at the address on the side. **DEADLINES:** January 15th, April 15th, August 15th, and November 15th.

NLS President's Report

Greetings my dear brothers and sisters in Christ,



I received an email a few weeks ago announcing the release of a new book: "The Cursillo Movement in America" by Kristy Nabhan-Warren. I am making my way through it – it is not a "tough" read. Rather, it causes me to pause every few pages to reflect. At the

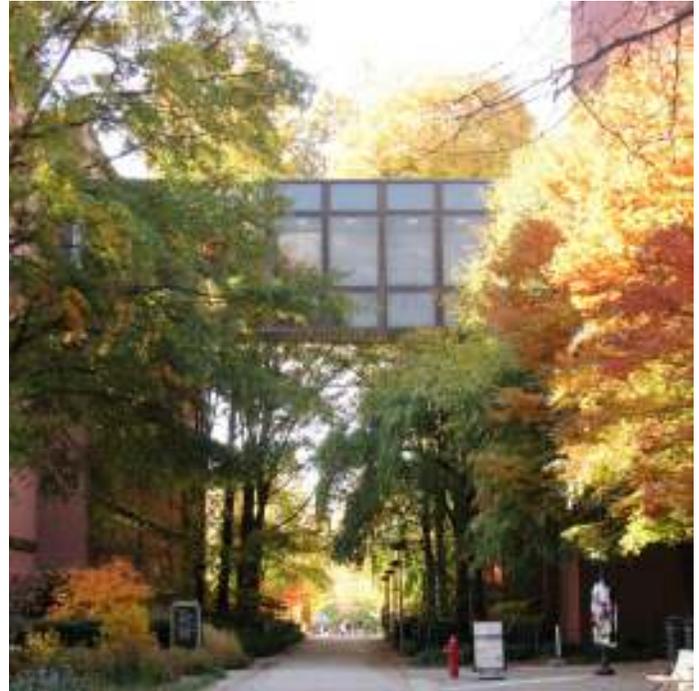
bottom of page 39, Kristy writes: "What Bonnin [Eduard Bonnin – the founder of Catholic Cursillo®] insisted upon was that a friendship with Jesus would remake the world. He wrote that 'Jesus must be visible in our friendship with others. It is this kind of friendship that has the creative power necessary to transform the world as Christian men and women acting as leaven in their environments.'"

What struck me was how this is the heart of both Pastor Joe Nilsen's and Pastor Al Sager's keynote addresses in July 2012 and July 2013, respectively. Pastor Joe reminded us that "it is *not* the experience – it *is* the journey." Our three-day weekends, the experience, revitalizes our relationship with the living God and provides tools to live a Christian life for the remainder of our lives, our journey. Pastor Al gave us the essence of the weekend in the phrase: *Come2Go!* The revitalization of our relationship with the living God is not meant for just us... it is meant for us to go and share - to act as leaven everywhere we go!

This ministry we call *Via de Cristo*, like all ministry, is simultaneously exciting and confounding. Many describe ministry as "messy." There is no question that a life transformed by the understanding of how much God loves us is both humbling and energizing. God did this for me? WOW! We respond not to gain God's love – but – in response to God's love for we know that it is not possible for God to love us more than God already does and has since the beginning of time. Yet ministry is perplexing. One minute it is doing really well and then, for no apparent reason, not so well. It is during these latter times that we pause, reflect, and persevere in the messiness knowing that we were and are being transformed to be leaven in the places and spaces we go.

May you, the reader, the seeker, the leader, the one feeling alone in ministry, know to the depth of your being that the God that created all that is visible and invisible loves you. Know that you and God are an overwhelming majority!

God's blessings –
Ed Broestl,
NLS President



NLS Board News

I am sad to tell you of Pastor John Bradford's has left the NLS Executive Committee. I accepted his resignation just prior to Thanksgiving. His resignation was in part due to health issues: over the past months Pastor John had back surgery and contracted pneumonia. Please keep Pastor John's health and ministry in your prayers. Pastor John's resignation did not come easily for he has a deep, deep love for the body of Christ. Over the coming months, he will concentrate his efforts on healing and ministering to the congregation that called him. Pastor John, we all wish you the best! Get well – and – continue being the dynamic pastor and friend to many, inside and outside this community.

Please join me in welcoming Pastor Paul Schmidlin to the NLS Executive Committee as our interim Spiritual Director. As many of you know, Paul is no stranger to *Via de Cristo*. His passion and love for this ministry is fervent and deep. I invite you to pray for Pastor Paul and the other members of the NLS Executive Committee as the Lord leads. There is much to be done to continue to grow this ministry and encourage people in their discipleship as followers of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Thank you Pastor John for your service but most of all for your heart – please know you are dearly loved! Welcome Pastor Paul, may God gift you with insight and surround you with His presence.
In Christ - Ed

NLS Distribution Center

I'm John Bradford, manager of the NLS Distribution Center. I've been asked to present details about some items sold through the NLS Distribution Center, this month I'll discuss the **"4th Day Manual"**. This 5.5 x 8.5 inch booklet contains 32 pages of valuable information about Via de Cristo weekends.

A quick but accurate description of this booklet would be "Answers to almost every question a pilgrim could ask about the weekend he/she has just completed". I'm sure that each and every one of us had some unanswered questions after attending a VDC Weekend, I certainly did. The 4th Day Manual does an amazing job of explaining what a VDC weekend is, recapping the weekend, explaining what "Living the 4th day" is, how VDC fits into a church environment, Charismatic Renewal and VDC, Organization of the VDC Movement, and an amazing glossary of VDC terms.



About half of all local VDC Secretariats give 4th Day Manuals to every pilgrim as take home palanca, usually provided Sunday in take-home bags along with other palanca items.

I strongly recommend this practice as an additional source of VDC information for the pilgrims. This booklet will always be where they can get a quick answer to questions such as:

- What was the name of that talk we heard Friday afternoon?
- Who should/can attend a VDC Weekend?
- I need more information on Renewal Groups.
- Where did the pastor say that VDC started?
- Tell me exactly how VDC and the local church exist together?
- Is VDC Ecumenical? Explain please.
- Is a VDC Weekend a good place for

non Christians?
Are Rollistas part of the breakfast menu or a dessert?

If your local VDC isn't providing these booklets you should consider giving this a try, the information in the booklet is valuable, easy to find, and also a lot of fun, the glossary will surprise anyone who hasn't already read through it.

Visit <http://www.viadecristo.org/> and click the "VDC Materials" link. Open the "Items" link to see what is available. Open the "Order Form" link to place an order.

I'll be waiting here to ship your 4th Day Manuals asap.

John Bradford,
NLS Distribution Manger



UMBC in Baltimore, Maryland



NLS Executive Director

Grace and peace to you this day. We are in the beginning of Advent as I write this. I have always loved Advent, as we prepare for our Savior's birth. A few years ago I had the opportunity to visit the Holy land and go to many of the places we read about and hear about in the Bible. Seeing many of the sites was great, but the feeling of Jesus and that holy birth was strongest while standing in the Shepherd's Field similar to where the shepherds saw the star that led them to Bethlehem. Standing there, praying, envisioning, preparing for the Lord's birth. - a very humbling, touching time, a time when you really realize that you need to get ready. Just as Advent is the beginning of the church year, it is another beginning for each of us. Do have a blessed Christmas as you rejoice in this Holy birth.



While at the annual meeting in West Palm Beach, FL this past July, changes in the NLS constitution and bylaws were made. Those changes are not effective until affiliated secretariats ratify them and send me the documentation as requested. Please, please have your secretariat vote on the changes and forwarded on the signed ratification papers to me. I sincerely thank you for what I believe you will do.

And after the first of the year, I will be requesting information on your weekends and candidates. Please watch for that email form and request. - that information is used to determine the number of delegates your secretariat may have at the meetings in July. We are excited to be going to Baltimore and look forward to seeing you there.

Blessings to you!

Nancy Peterson, NLS Executive Director

Palanca!!!

2014 WEEKENDS:

- Jan 2014 - MN: **Minnesota VdC of Metro MN**, Men #602, Jan. 16-19, & Women #603; Jan. 23-26, Send palanca to: Jackie Campeau 6239 Baker Ave. NE Fridley MN 55432
- Jan 2014 - SD: **South Dakota VdC**, Men's, Jan. 16-19, & Women's; Jan. 23-26, Send palanca to: Deb Burmeister 26375 399th Ave. Mt. Vernon, SD 57363
- Feb & Mar 2014 - WI: **WI Sunrise VDC**, Men #87: Feb. 27- Mar. 2 & Women #88; Mar. 6-9, Send palanca to: Richard Pettit 772 Dogwood Dr. Beloit, WI 53511
- Mar 2014 - MN: **Minnesota VdC - Southern MN**, Men #604, Mar. 20-23, & Women #605; Mar. 27-30, Send palanca to: Marian Mallory 106 Monet Place Mankato, MN 56001
- Mar 2014 - NC: **Western No. Carolina VdC**, Mixed #38, Mar. 27-30, Send palanca to: jzander5@att.net
- Mar 2014 - TN: **Notes of Grace VdC**, Men #16, Mar. 27-30, Send palanca to: Terry Sanders 2615 Slate Dr. SW Huntsville, AL 35803
- Mar & Apr 2014 - MI: **Good News VdC**, Men #604, Mar. 27-30, & Women #605; April 3-6, Send palanca to: Cindy Jurosek 2715 Apache Trail Wixom, MI 48393
- Mar & Apr 2014 - MN: **Minnesota VdC - Northern MN**, Men #606, Mar. 27-30, & Women #607; April 3-6, Send palanca to: Nancy Barker 6699 Industrial Rd. Saginaw, MN 55779
- Apr 2014 - IL: **Prairie Sonshine VdC of Central IL**, Women #16; April 3-6, Send palanca to: Tonia Holloway 742 E. Chambers Jacksonville, IL 62650
- Apr 2014 - IL: **Prairie Sonshine VdC of Central IL**, Women #16; April 3-6, Send palanca to: Tonia Holloway

742 E. Chambers Jacksonville, IL 62650
 Apr 2014 - IL: **Prairie Sonshine VdC of Central IL**, Coed #28: April 24-27, Send palanca to: Jill Rathe - ALVDCPalanca@outlook.com

May 2014 - NC: **Western No. Carolina VdC**, Men #71: May 1-4 & Women #72; May 14-17, Send palanca to: jzander5@att.net

Check Web for the latest updates for the upcoming 2014 weekends

PALANCA "Are you Listening?"

We have certainly experienced God's abundance in our lives during 2013. As we approach the end of 2013 and anticipate the New Year, our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving and Christmas. Both holidays involve giving thanks for blessings in our lives, reflections of the past years activities and those of others. Throughout the year we seek God's blessings and interventions for our families, churches, communities and Via de Cristo activities. We seek God's levers (palanca) to move by His powers what we cannot move on our own.

In one of the regular emailing I subscribe to – Men of Integrity¹ – I was challenged by the following. Sometimes, in our haste to seek assistance, we quickly fire of a prayer and then move on. We may not continue to pray for the concern or invest the "quiet time" to listen for God to respond. We may have heard several times that prayer can be likened to a conversation with our best friend. In our hurried and busy lives, if we only spoke to our friends and did not listen – would that be a conversation or a monologue - how would that work for us? From now on, I intend to pray and then be quiet and listen for Him to speak to my heart.

This is the season for thanks and remembering that giving thanks and praises at all times for all things should be first and primary as we seek Him for blessings and interventions. In that process, taking time to listen for His responses may lead to learning of new opportunities that He wishes us to pursue for His glory.

As the Palanca Coordinator, active and timely participation of the local Palanca Coordinators is critical in disseminating information. The local coordinators have been excellent in providing the critical link to the local Secretariats. The updates to the calendar for 2013 were greatly appreciated. Updates are provided in many forms but there is an update button on the web page (www.viade Cristo.org/palanca/index.php) for anyone to use if they wish. The 2014 Calendar is on the Website and awaiting your Secretariat's information.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support, but I would especially like to thank the Palanca Coordinators of the Secretariats. I thank and praise God for the opportunity to serve our community in this small way.

Only by His grace, He uses us as his tools to perform His work. My prayers are of thanks and praise to our Lord for blessing our Via de Cristo communities and all other three day movements.

Blessings,
 In His Service,
 Paul Sabatier-Smith <)))><

¹ www.christianitytoday.com/moi/

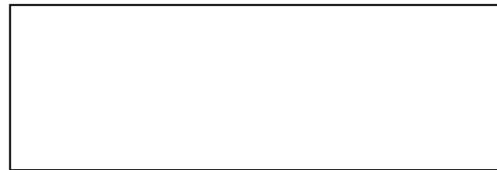


CONEXIONES

Judy Laabs-Foss
4495 Margaret Street
St. Paul, MN 55110-3773

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL, PLEASE EXPEDITE



Visited our Web Site Lately?
www.viadechristo.org
Webmaster: Rick Hanzlik