



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

De Colores!

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January 21, 2018

A Voice in the Night by *Bethany Celmar*

January 10, 2018

Dear Friends,

I want to share a story of something that happened to me last week. I was astonished to come into church last Sunday and hear the Pastor speak about the Holy Spirit's voice in our lives because that is exactly what happened to me.

I woke up in the early hours of the morning. As I dozed in bed trying to get back to sleep my mind started up with thoughts about what other people in the world are doing at that very moment. I recalled the children in war torn Syria, the famine in Africa, child sex slaves in Cambodia, and all the refugees living in tent cities. Then there were the thoughts of what make the headlines of our news, and the daily gross display of foolishness in our government.

(Read Proverbs this week and compare).

Just as I started to get overwhelmed at the absolute mess of our existence, another voice came into my head. "It's Ok," it said. "It's OK because of the **The Word.**" An immediate sense of relief and peace came over me. This voice said "The Word" as if it was the name of a dear friend. I could sense the joy and anticipation in the voice as it was telling me, "It's going to be ok because: "In the beginning was The Word and the Word was God and the Word was with God." As more thoughts of suffering surfaced, the voice of peace kept speaking.

Many times I wonder at what can be done to stop evil in the world. But the voice was telling me that Jesus (the Word) was there in the beginning and he already knows how all this can be undone. And he did it! He knows every situation and how to bring it to justice. He will have the last say.

This was not my voice; it was the voice of the Holy Spirit. I knew this as it was talking to me. My thoughts only ever take me to anxiety and depression. Any time I try to comfort myself, the message is "just power through it," which isn't really comfort at all. I haven't read the first chapter of John in years, and I have never felt like I fully understand the mystery of those first few verses that were quoted to me. So this definitely was not me thinking these things.

Here is the other amazing thing; there is nothing special about me. I can't think of any good reason why the Holy Spirit would care enough to visit an ungrateful, middle aged woman in rural Ohio on a Thursday morning. I haven't been good about spiritual disciplines. I am prideful, angry and mostly discouraged about where I am in my life right now. My life, like many others, has been shaped by things out of my control that are a result of the sins of other people. Most days I feel like a combination of invisible Hagar in the desert, desperate, childless Hannah praying in the tabernacle, and bitter Jonah because God decides not to destroy people who have caused such pain to others.

I didn't get a big message to share or better direction for my life. But apparently God loves insignificant people like me enough to send his Comforter to help me get through life. *He is just looking for people willing to hear him.*

Bethany Celmar

UPCOMING EVENTS

Co-Ed Weekend #3 May 3-6, 2018 at St. Peter and Paul Retreat Center in Newark
Rector Sharon Gsellman and Head Cha Bob Gsellman (330-688-4965)

Clergy Experience #3 Monday October 1-Thursday October 4, 2018
St. Peter and St. Paul Retreat Center, Newark

Rector Dick Brenneman (740-398-4664) and Lead Spiritual Director Pr. Doug Pretorius
Invite some Pastors to introduce them to Via de Cristo methodology and to love on them and show them Grace.

Further information for ALL of these will be in upcoming Newsletters

If you would like to be part of a Team, contact the Rector or Lay Director Butch Seeley (514-332-1357) !!!

A Letter from Sharon Gsellman, Rector of Co-Ed Weekend #3

It's January!

The Lord has not returned.

Instead, He chooses a different plan: a new year.

I have high expectations for all those as yet unscribbled calendar blocks. Do you also sense each day of 2018 will be a gift to open as You walk with Him in the light of His steadfast love?

Do you have an awareness that you are positioned each day of 2018 to reflect the light of God's glory? He will give us many opportunities to honor Him this year. One big one for me will be May 3-6.

Please write May 3-6 onto your calendar, too: VdC Co-ed Weekend #3. Let's use this opportunity as our method to honor the Lord those days. Although always said, it's true: each of us in the Ohio community has an important role to play—a way that the Lord wants to use us in accomplishing His good purposes on those days. What is He asking of you?

Let's redeem those days as a time together with the Lord and each other in some specific way—that is, if He doesn't return for us before then. 😊

You have my love and prayers in 2018. Please pray for me, too.

Your sister in Christ,

Sharon Gsellman

P.S. I'm in the Team Calling Phase of weekend preparation now and especially looking for members who have not recently served. Because I want to navigate this phase using every form of wisdom and discernment that the Holy Spirit gives, I will give you my e-mail: sagsellman@gmail.com. If the Lord has given you a heart's desire to serve as well as other blessings like health, ability to get off work, and ability to give Him time on Mar.10th, 24th, April 14th, and 28th for team meetings, please write me. Maybe you belong in the community with the 14 of us who have already committed to serve.

Editor's note: The goal of Via de Cristo is to strengthen people of faith and to equip people of faith to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in their environments. That takes on many forms! Most Cursillistas (that means people who've been on a VdC Weekend as Pilgrims) become more active in their churches; many start new groups such as for Bible study or teaching children or serving their community; some boldly witness to strangers on the street or in a store; some become Christian mentors to family members or co-workers. They often stay connected to VdC through Reunion Groups and/or Ultreyas. Some become very active as Team members or Secretariat members. Some stay connected with the website, on Facebook or reading the Newsletter. Most value their connection by prayer.

I don't know all the possible ways that Christ is counting on you and you on Him. But I would love to hear your version, to share with others in the VdC Community. Contact me at vdcnewsletterohio@gmail.com or 419-886-4420 or 4025 Andrews Rd., Bellville, 44813. Nancy Martin, Editor

For assistance to find or form a Reunion Group for your Pilgrim—or yourself—contact Fourth Day shepherd Dave Lann, vdclann@yahoo.com or 330-296-6929. He can look in the VdC Archive for names of people in your area and give you their most recent contact information. But some of the info in the Archive is out of date. If you know people who haven't received a Newsletter or heard from a VdC friend in a while, please send their new contact information to **Secretariat Webmaster and Data Collector Christine Brill** (goosebrill@msn.com or 614-579-8586), or Newsletter Editor Nancy Martin (vdnewsletterohio@gmail.com or 419-886-4420).

Message from VdC Ohio Music Adviser Jen Briner

This newsletter we will look at the song, "Lord I Need You". This is one of my favorite songs to sing and is a newer song for weekend use. It's written by Matt Maher and four co-writers. They used the Psalms for inspiration. (Psalms 150:3, 33:3 and 40:17) Sitting together, they took turns, each writing one line at a time, like "passing a baton". Mr. Maher's favorite line is, "Where You are, I am free, holiness is Christ in me." He says it reminds him of the revelation that our worth and our value are established in the facts that we are made in the image of God, and we are redeemed by Jesus. When God looks at us, He sees His Son. That's a powerful truth!

A year later, Mr. Maher became a dad. He says he is even more impacted by the song now because he has a son who isn't afraid to need a dad. That type of honest needing of a Father by a son should not be a foreign concept to a Christian! God wants us to need Him and lean into Him. Mr. Maher's hope is that Christians not only "need" the Father when life is hard but in the joys of life as well. I will leave you with the chorus:

"Lord I need You, oh I need You, every hour I need You, my one defense, my Righteousness, oh God how I need You."

Amen?

God loves you, I love you,
Jen Briner

Treasurer Raleigh Sandy reports 2017 year-end balances of \$877.29 in checking and \$10,693.72 in savings accounts. Major expenses in 2018 will be for the Co-ed Weekend #3 of May 3-6 and Clergy Weekend #3 on October 1-4.

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

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 419-886-4420 or vdsnewsletterohio@gmail.com 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

Utreya News

Remember, Utreyas are open to everyone.

Cincinnati Area

Cincinnati area Utreyas are usually the first Saturday of each month at Trinity Lutheran Church in Mt. Healthy. Address is 1553 Kinney Avenue, Cincinnati 45231. Please call Kevin Hoch, 513-931-8797, for the time.

Stow Area Utreya

St. Stephen Lutheran Church, 3725 Kent Road, will host an Utreya in the spring of 2018. There will be worship, Holy Communion, a short talk and discussion. Dinner and child care are provided, but please bring your Song Book, Pilgrim's Guide and name tag. For questions, call Jane Koch, 330-688-0581, or Cathy Doering, 330-239-0027.

Bellville Area Utreyas

Bellville Utreyas will be the second Sundays of January, April, July and October at 3:00pm at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 48 Church Street, Bellville 44813. There will be Worship, Holy Communion, and Potluck with table service and drinks provided. Call Ken & Josie Riling, 419-886-2437, or Paul & Vicky Sakala, 419-884-1573 for questions.

Parma/Cleveland Area

The next Utreya will be in the spring of 2018 in the Chapel of Divinity Lutheran Church, 11877 Blossom Avenue, Parma Heights, 44130. We have a small group Bible Study led by Pastor Doug Gunkelman and Holy Communion with Potluck to follow. Bring a dish to share. Meat will be provided. All are invited. See future Newsletters for information. Call Leslie Crowe at leslie.crowe@aol.com, 440-263-4552 or Judy Junker at JudyJunkmail@aol.com, 440-537-0867 with any questions. God loves you and so do we.

North Dayton Utreyas

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.

COLUMBUS ULTREYA

Once each quarter in 2018, there will be an Utreya at All Shepherds Lutheran Church, 6580 Columbus Pike [RT 23], Lewis Center, Ohio. 43035. For more information contact Warren [614.332.1357](tel:614.332.1357) or Wendy [614.332.1352](tel:614.332.1352) Seeley.

KENT Area Utreyas

Utreyas in the **Akron-Kent area** of Ohio are often the third Saturday of a month at Trinity Lutheran Church, 600 S. Water Street at 4:30 pm. There will be Worship with Holy Communion, a topic for discussion, and potluck will follow with table service and drinks provided. For more information, please call Dave Lann, 330-296-6929, or Pr. Doug Fidler, 330-673-5445.

In quesso emergency, just call on Cheeseus!
(offered as Palanca to Pastor Al Sager from his granddaughter)

If you know of a Cursillista who has recently entered the Church Triumphant, please let Christine Brill know [(614) 899-7429 or goosebrill@msn.com] so that we can honor their memory as well as update our records.

The 4th-Day Movement, of which Via de Cristo is a part, is active under many names with many Christian denominations in the United States and throughout the world. VdCOhio Palanca Cha Sherryl Patterson regularly provides us with information about Weekends conducted by these groups so that you might choose to pray for God’s blessing on them, their Pilgrims and Teams. It’s another part of how Christ is counting on us.

- Keryx in Community, Alpena, Michigan, Free Methodist Church Sonkic Weekends
Women’s January 18-21 and Men’s February 1-4, 2018
- Midland, Michigan, United Methodist Cursillo Co-ed Weekend #65 January 25-28
- The Chapel Discipleship walk at Quaker Haven Camp, Syracuse, Indiana:
Men’s February 15-18, and Women’s February 22-25, 2018
- Lutheran Cursillo of Southern California: Cursillo Luterano en Espanol March 8-11, 2018

Secretariat

<p>Lay Director Warren Seeley (614) 332-1357 harleyrider751@ymail.com</p> <p>Asst. Lay DirectorChristy Brill (614) 899-7429 goosebrill@msn.com</p> <p>Secretary Kevin Hoch (513) 931-8797 khoch@cinci.rr.com</p> <p>TreasurerRaleigh Sandy (937) 885-1868 sandyjr@donet.com</p> <p>Spiritual Director Pastor G. Karl Gaston (614) 364-3110 jgaston550@yahoo.com</p> <p>coach Butch Seeley (614) 332-1357 harleyrider751@ymail.com</p>	<p>Logistics Coordinator Mark Ludrosky (330) 882-4244 mludrosky1@neo.rr.com</p> <p>Fourth Day Shepherd. Dave Lann (330) 296-6929 vdclann@yahoo.com</p> <p>Prayer Chain. Vicky Sakala 419-884-1573 prayingforvdc@gmail.com</p> <p>Music Adviser. Jen Briner (614) 901-0896 jenbriner@yahoo.com</p> <p>Palanca Cha Sherry Patterson (740) 262-0563 dcsfp20@the-franklins.net</p> <p>RegistrarKevin Hoch (513) 931-8797 khoch@cinci.rr.co</p>	<p>Rector/Weekend Orient Dick Brenneman (740) 398-0945 dbbrenneman@gmail.com</p> <p>Technology Media Specialist. .. Christy Brill (614) 899-7429 goosebrill@msn.com</p> <p>Newsletter Editor. Nancy Martin (419) 886-4420 vdnewsletterohio@gmail.com</p> <p>Central Ohio Regional Representative.</p> <p>Northern Ohio Regional Representative.</p> <p>Southern Ohio Regional Representative.</p>
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Contact Lay Director Warren “Butch” Seeley with your interest in serving on Secretariat.
 Contact 4th Day Shepherd Dave Lann to reach people in your area of Ohio to encourage them for Reunion Groups and Ultreyas.
 Secretariat meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month. You are welcome to attend. Contact Lay Direct Butch Seeley for the place of each meeting. For 2017, they will be in person at 10am in March, May, July, September and November. They will be by conference call at 10am in February, April, June, August and October.

A New Chapter With A New Opportunity

It is with sadness and gratitude that the Executive Committee of your NLS Board announces the resignation of Executive Director Paul Schmidlin. We sincerely wish to thank Paul for his years of committed passion and love within this Via de Cristo community and ministry. We truly wish Paul God’s joy and grace as he transitions into the next journey of service.

This news has opened up an opportunity within our VdC community. If you should feel called to apply for this significant servant roll, please contact me (president@viadecristo.org) for a copy of the job description and an explanation of the Board’s expectations.

We trust in God’s guidance and promise to provide. And please, continue to pray for our sisters and brothers in Christ who are suffering from the devastation of recent weeks.

Your Fellow Servant,
 Wendy Showalter
 NLS President