



# The Taste

January, 2008

Newsletter for  
*Taste of Grace Via de Cristo*

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## Our prayers....

Ultimate Healer, please be with all those fighting cancer and all those terminally ill. Be with them for healing; give the medical profession wisdom and loved ones comfort. Our prayers include, but are not limited to:

- Craig Christensen
- Harry Benner
- Linda Vai

Heavenly Father, please keep wrapped in the comfort of your loving arms those who mourn the passing of loved ones. Help them to find peace in the knowledge that their loved ones are in Your loving presence.

Dear Lord, please be with those of us who are depressed and/or struggling with other emotional issues. Help us to overcome this dark void of sadness and despair. Wrap Your loving arms around us and lift us up and give us the strength to overcome.

Gracious Father, be with all whom are recovering and/or undergoing surgeries. Give them strength and wrap them in your healing arms. Comfort their families with your love and compassion. Guide the doctors and give them wisdom and knowledge.

Continue to be with and strengthen them. We especially lift up:

- Paul Dubois

Heavenly Father, be with those of us sick and struggling with medical problems and issues. Help our Doctors in diagnosis, give us patience as we await results, and let us find comfort and peace in Your presence. Our prayers are especially with:

- Anne Marie Zan
- Lorien

Dear Lord, please guard and guide all of our troops and those commanding them. We pray that those making decisions seek and follow your will. We ask that you keep them wrapped in your protection. We ask that you comfort their friends, family and loved ones.

Father continue to watch over all Cursillistas in their 4th day journey. Help them to remember the mountaintop as they work in the hills and valley.

Lord, please be with your children whom you are calling to attend the upcoming spring weekend.

Be also with Rector Frank Marshall and Rectora Lenae Kirchner and the team you are forming, that it is able to be Christ's hands, heart and ears to the pilgrims attending.

We give thanks and praise for all the joys you give us.

Father God, thank you for those you place in our lives, for our marriage partners, our reunion brothers & sisters and all others that help shape us into who you would like for us to become.

Thank you Lord, for your never ending love, grace, and forgiveness in our lives.

*And all God's Children say Amen*

Nearly twenty years ago, a friend of mine and her husband returned home from a "Walk to Emmaus" weekend retreat. "Walk to Emmaus" is similar to Via de Cristo and is held in conjunction with the United Methodist Church. They both came home changed. At that point, there was no local Via de Cristo community and so I was envious of what had happened to them.

Nearly ten years ago, my daughter attended a youth centered "Cursillo" which was held in conjunction with the Episcopal Church. When she came home, it was obvious that the experience had a profound impact on her life. Once again, there was no local Via de Cristo community, so all I could do was hope for the day when I would be a place that had a Via de Cristo community.

In 2006, God provided that opportunity for me as I moved to a new community that had a Via de Cristo group. I attended the Taste of Grace weekend #8 experience and my faith and my life have been deeply touched.

There are six components to this life changing experience that I want to share with those who might not be familiar with Via de Cristo:

1. Via de Cristo is prayer grounded. People pray for the Via de Cristo weekend before, after, and during the event.
2. Via de Cristo is Biblically based. The Bible serves as the basis for the conversations that are shared – not that participants must be fluent in their understanding of the Bible, but that the Bible helps expand our understanding of God.
3. Via de Cristo is theologically sound. Via de Cristo is grounded in Lutheran theology. The role of the Spiritual Director(s) (usually one or two Lutheran Pastors) is to help participants understand God's Word through the lens of Lutheran theology.
4. Via de Cristo is faith oriented. The purpose of Via de Cristo is to help participants to grow in their faith; it is a faith development enterprise, which helps participants make the connection between their faith and their daily lives.
5. Via de Cristo is grace centered. God's grace comes to us unconditionally; it is free and unearned. Participants begin to experience God's grace first hand and how to share that grace with others.
6. Via de Cristo is community/fellowship supported. Christians exist in community with others. Via de Cristo seeks to strengthen the participants understanding of how we are inter connected as members of the Body of Christ.

If you are seeking a faith deepening experience, I invite you to consider attending a Via de Cristo event. You will not be the same.

Pr Robert Dealey

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Just having come off another powerful weekend, I have been reflecting upon God's ability to work through me in spite of me; as Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12:9, "...for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." That lesson really came home as time and again, as weaknesses, obstacles and mishaps were later revealed to be part of God's plan.

One example was found in a 50-pound bag of sand that was too wet to be used for its intended purpose. I thought it a wasted effort and left it to dispose of in the dumpster. A few days later, a need arose to provide stabilization of the podium for one of Sunday's rollistas. That bag of sand which I had deemed garbage was the answer-in-waiting. God's plans are surely awesome, even transforming garbage to his glory, if I am patient and prayerful!

They say the greatest distance traversed is the 18 inches from one's head to one's heart. Mark 9:23-24 states, "...Everything is possible for him who believes...help me overcome my unbelief!" My mind can read the words, pray the words... but do I live my life with the conviction of those words? Do I trust Him implicitly? Do I pray and wait all the while trusting God's way is best?

As the ToG #11 co-rectora, I have a request, an assignment for each of you as part of the 4th day community. Don't be afraid to read on :-), just trust in Him. We would like a list of potential pilgrims to begin praying over. So, say this prayer right here, right now. Don't put it off.

*Dear Lord, you know the people you have placed in my life and whom you wish me to sponsor. Please place their names on my heart and in my mind right now. Bless them and remove the obstacles that would prevent them from answering the invitation to attend a ToG weekend. Bless me and remove the obstacles that would prevent me from gently leading them to You and inviting them. I trust in You and in Your kairos, Your timing. Lead me to serve You and this community with an open heart, with renewed commitment, and with patience and perseverance abounding. Amen.*

Now that wasn't so hard, was it? Next step, please do this right away. Email several names (first + last; first only; or even just initials) to [togpotentialpilgrims@live.com](mailto:togpotentialpilgrims@live.com). Do not second guess yourself at this point, even if your thoughts have by now turned to all the reasons why this isn't the right time for them. Just send the names to me and I will compile a list and enlist help to lift up these potential pilgrims.

I'd like to end by promising that we will NOT harass you in any way regarding these names. We will leave the timing and direction of your relationships up to God, okay? There are no strings attached to this exercise, just the offer of support for each of you. And if any of you find you need additional direction, please feel free to contact our spiritual director, Pastor Anne, Frank or myself, or a member of the secretariat.

So, whether God calls these potential pilgrims to attend ToG #11 or another weekend years in the future, we will leave that in God's hands. However, God **IS** calling together a team to serve in the immediate future and I would like to enlist your assistance on that as well. Please begin praying daily for the team and pilgrims. Also, pray for the gift of discernment for Frank and myself as we begin the task of assembling the team and assigning roles.

Let me end by thanking each of you  
 (a) for reading this rather lengthy article to the end :-)  
 (b) for your support, patience and perseverance as work toward the next weekend begins  
 (c) for letting your spiritual lights shine so brightly that the next leg of the journey is becoming illuminated (Frank, you and I had better get our sunglasses on, because I can feel the light of this community exponentially brightening our path by the moment. :-D)

May the Lord in all his abundant love, bless you and yours through these epiphany, Lenten and Easter seasons!

Your humble servant in Christ,

Lenae Kirchner  
 ToG #11 co-rectora  
 708/503-4116 (home)

P.S. Team formation meeting dates for the April 24-27 ToG #11 co-ed weekend are as follows: Feb 16, Mar 1, Mar 15, April 5. Check your schedules and please feel free to call me if the still, small voice is telling you to serve on this weekend team and you haven't been contacted!

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Thoughts on Taste of Grace, men's weekend #10

What a joy it is to now take the time to sit and ponder our fall men's weekend, I'm amazed at how quickly that weekend passed. After, what seemed like such a long busy journey of preparation and planning, - - - of endless phone, calls, - - - times of great joy, times of disappointment and frustration.

I had at one time wondered what had made me agree to take on this task and wished that the weekend would quickly come so that I could get back to my "normal" life. **O-O-P-S**, my mistake, I was thinking that I was in control and that the success or failure of the weekend depended on me and that I had to make sure that everything was perfect and that everyone was prepared. At the times of greatest concern (yes, there was more than one) I fell to my knees and gave it all up to God, after all wasn't this His weekend? I prayed for forgiveness for my prideful thinking and asked for humility, discernment and peace. And yes He granted me that peace, in those final weeks I was at peace knowing that He had everything in His hands and that the weekend would exactly as He desired it to be. I can also remember talking to Ruth on the phone, tears of joy flowing freely, when both of

our Spiritual Directors had agreed to serve - - - at last our inside team was complete. Praise God!

Yes, we were a small team (almost everyone was doing double duty, triple duty for the outside team) and yes there were only two pilgrims and you can ask if ends justified the effort and expense. Of course the answer is YES! For you see this was God's weekend and everyone was blessed just as He had planned. I understand that the weekends are not only for the pilgrims, they also serve to renew and encourage each team member to stay on the path, to continue to walk in God's grace, to serve each other with humility and to stay connected to the larger Christian community.

Yes, as I sit and ponder the weekend I thank God for having had the opportunity to serve Him and all of my brothers in this capacity. And I thank Him for surrounding me with such a selfless and dedicated team of Christian men - - - I was truly blessed and humbled by their efforts and their brotherhood. My deepest respect and thanks to each of them and to the fourth day community for their help and support throughout the weekend.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow ... .."

"God loves you and so do I" - David R VanZant (Tog#4), Rector, men's weekend #10

Greetings, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ –

My name is Sandy Verdooren, I worship at Trinity Lutheran Church in Park Forest, and I attended TOG #8 as a pilgrim where I sat at the table of Candace. This past fall, I was honored to serve Christ and my fellow sisters as a team member for TOG #10.

In this first month of 2008, I begin my service on the TOG Secretariat as Palanca Chair. God has blessed me abundantly through my involvement with our Taste of Grace community. My heart is filled with joy because through this small role, God continues to draw me closer to Himself, to all of you, and to the larger Via de Cristo community!

One of my tasks as Palanca Chair is to be the liaison between Taste of Grace and the larger Via de Cristo community. Primarily, it is my goal to keep all of you informed of Weekends happening in other communities and to keep other communities informed about our weekends. It is also my goal, with your help, to provide palanca for those other communities. At our last Ultreya on January 12, I brought a very simple palanca letter written on behalf of Taste of Grace for five upcoming weekends; we prayed together for God's love and grace to be with all the pilgrims, potential

pilgrims, and team members as they prepare to attend the weekends. After that, everyone at the Ultreya signed the letters. I have to tell you I was worried because, frankly, these little letters were a bit drab and lifeless. But they came to life, became expressions of God's love, once everyone added their names and prayers! God certainly has a way of making great transformations!

I brought these little palanca letters home with me, and they have been or will be sent off to communities in Florida, Minnesota and South Dakota which are having weekends in January and early February. Look for more palanca letters to sign and pray over at our next Ultreya on February 9 at Cross of Glory Lutheran Church in Homer Township!

I thank God for all of you, who so readily share His love with others, myself included! And remember, palanca in its truest form is prayer; *your* prayer will serve as the lever, the "instrument that allows a person to move something beyond his/her strength." God listens to the prayers of His people!

GLYASDI,  
Sandy Verdooren  
ToG #8

P.S. Here are some upcoming weekends to keep in your prayers: Lutheran VdC of Minnesota, Women's #499-Jan. 24-27, Men's #500-Feb. 21-24, Women's #501-Feb. 28-March 2; South Dakota VdC, Men's-Feb. 7-10 and Women's-Feb. 14-17; Wisconsin Sunrise VdC, Men's #61-Feb. 28-March 2.

From the Rectora of TOG #10!

**DECOLORES**, my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ! In-DEED, How **GREAT** is our **GOD!** For, He composed and created a special symphony for Women's Weekend TOG #10 last November and all we had to do is just "play" our little hearts out (and that we did!). So, what was created? A masterpiece that was so passionate and spiritually-charged that His grace and love just came pouring out of our instruments. And, what was the result? **CONNECTION!** That's right, we connected in some way with Jesus Christ. In fact, I surely didn't want to come down from the mountaintop experience. But...that's NOT God's way. He needs us down in the valleys to be His hands, His feet, His voice and His heart.

So, how do we maintain that "connection" with Jesus? By employing the 2 P's – *Prayer and Perseverance*. Remember the parable of the persistent widow found in Luke 18:1-8 (taken from The Message Bible)...

Jesus told them a story showing that it was necessary for them to pray consistently and never quit. He said, "There was once a judge in some city who never gave God a thought and cared nothing for people. A widow in that city kept after him: 'My rights are being violated. Protect me!'

"He never gave her the time of day. But after this went on and on he said to himself, 'I care nothing what God thinks, even less what people think. But because this widow won't quit badgering me, I'd better do something and see that she gets justice – otherwise I'm going to end up beaten black and blue by her pounding.'"

Then the Master said, "Do you hear what the judge, corrupt as he is, is saying? So what makes you think God won't step in and work justice for his chosen people, who continue to cry out for help? Won't he stick up for them? I assure you, he will..."

In-DEED, God keeps His promises and answers prayer, all according to His will and His timing, of course. So, what does that leave us? **HOPE**...immense hope as well as tremendous peace. Our **GOD** is truly **GREAT** (especially, since He's that much more kind, loving and gracious than the corrupt judge)!

In addition to the 2 P's, let us not forget about some other tools of choice, like Reunion Groups (meeting frequently with a few of our dear Christian friends who help to keep us accountable), Ultreyas (monthly gatherings of reunion groups who cheer each other "onward"), Church, Bible Studies, etc. These all help to keep us mindful of our piety, study and apostolic action and thus, connected to Christ our Lord. And, I'd like to add one more "tool"...**DANCING!** What??? Am I "crazy"? Not entirely. © According to the following devotion, dancing is something that we should all strive to do with God (and that includes all you men out there). Surely, we "danced" with God on Women's Weekend TOG #10. But as you discern God's will for YOUR life, it's my prayer that you allow Him to lead or "guide" your steps and movements in the dance OF life.

#### **Dancing With God (author unknown)**

When I meditated on the word *Guidance*, I kept seeing "dance" at the end of the word. I remember reading that doing God's will is a lot like dancing. When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement doesn't flow with the music, and everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky. When one person realizes that, and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the music. One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back or by pressing lightly in one direction or another. It's as if two become one body, moving beautifully. The dance takes surrender, willingness, and attentiveness from one person and gentle guidance and skill from the other.

My eyes drew back to the word *Guidance*. When I saw "G": I thought of God, followed by "u" and "i." "God", "u" and "i" "dance." God, you, and I dance. As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust that I would get guidance about my life. Once again, I became willing to let God lead.

**God loves you with all His heart, and so do I! Janeen Tietjens**

Taste of Grace  
Annual Meeting

January 12, 2008

Participants: 39 people in attendance (including 5 children)

Information:

- ◆ Minutes approved as corrected
- ◆ Treasurer's Report – Income Statement reviewed. Approved as presented.
- ◆ The following Secretariat positions were filled:
  - ◆ Lay Director – Michele Koniewicz has agreed to run again. Motion made that the nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast (Fred Henize/Gary Constantino) passed.
  - ◆ Secretary – Dawn Constantino has agreed to run again. Motion made that the nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast (Bill Callister/Gary Constantino) passed.
  - ◆ Treasurer – Andrew Kjos as agreed to run. Motion made that the nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast (Linda Henize/Gary Constantino) passed.
  - ◆ 4<sup>th</sup> Day Chairperson – Sandy Verdooren has agreed to run. Motion made that the nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast (Susan Lacy/Gary Constantino) passed.
- ◆ Non-Secretariat positions – need volunteers from the community to fill the following positions:
  - ◆ Banner Cha – if interested talk to Janeen Tietjens
  - ◆ Book Table Cha – Susan Lacy volunteered.

Action Required:

- ◆ Articles needed for the Newsletter

Motions Made:

- ◆ Motion made that for the years 2009 and 2010 we hold single gender weekends in the Spring and co-ed weekends in the fall, and that we re-evaluate this decision in January of 2010. (Gary Constantino/Fred Henize) passed.
- ◆ Motion made to close the meeting (Simon Prior/Gary Constantino) passed.

The next meeting: January 11, 2009 – Location to be determined

Respectfully submitted by Dawn Constantino

NOTE: After the meeting closed Tammy Mack volunteered for the Banner Cha position.

## What's For Breakfast?

Living in this world, we have tons of choices before us every day. The level of stress that some people feel is easy to understand given the bombardment of advertisement we are under all day, all the time. Have you seen the new billboard on the Stevenson expressway around Des Plaines Avenue? Giant LED displays! (The "jumbotron screens" at the ball parks in the old days look like caveman drawings compared to this!) Now when you are stuck in traffic, you can watch a series of advertisements without moving an inch!

The other day I visited 'Wally-World' to pick up a few items. While there I took the time to count how many different kinds of breakfast cereals are available from which to choose. Ready? There are 227 choices!!! Every texture, color, flavor, size and shape under the sun. Can't eat sugar? No problem! Want so much sugar that cavities begin to form by simply reading the box? That's no problem either! Chocolate? Strawberry? Honey-Maple? Coconut? Whole oats? Multi-grain? Or my childhood favorite now reduced to one word, POP – aka, Sugar Pops.

So much of the world is like this today. I remember reading a book back in the late 60's or early 70's named something like "Future Shock" that addressed the level of over saturation of products we would have to endure in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In retrospect, I am impressed at how accurate the author was in the telling of his story. Everywhere we go today there are hundreds of choices for just about everything imaginable. So much of what is touted as 'must-have' by the ad-people didn't even exist thirty years ago. How have we been able to survive without all this stuff?

For Christian men and women, not only the survival, but thriving guide for our lives is found in one precious book. We read in Psalm 119:129-133, "*Your decrees are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple. With open mouth I pant, because I long for your commandments. Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is your custom toward those who love your name. Keep my steps steady according to your promise, and never let iniquity have dominion over me.*"

Where the world emphasizes individualism, our God tells us to rejoice in our similarities. Be you Swede, Chinese, African, French, man, woman, - we are all precious creatures created in His image. The mercy, grace and love from our Lord is what binds us together into one family with one Father, Savior and Holy Spirit. How great is our God!

As we quickly move towards the TOG #11 weekend, I am humbled by the expressions of love and encouragement expressed, and the willingness and joyful desire to serve our Lord. As I expressed to one of my reunion brothers, to be asked to participate in this 72 hour celebration of God's love, with loving Christian men and women is wonderful beyond words. I am honored that you are allowing Lenae and I to 'carry the baton' this time around. I look forward to our time together during trainings, and let us all remember to pray for each other, our families, friends, and our Pilgrims! God bless you!

**Frank Marshall**  
**Rector ToG #11**

Being Still in 2008

Well, here we are, in the thick of 2008 - a new year with new opportunities and new resolutions to keep... or not. I don't know about you, but this time of year can get me down. So much hopefulness and so many high expectations for the future, yet the flurries of my life can seem to match the flurries outside---not to speak of tornado warnings, flooding and erratic Chicago-style temperature changes we've experienced in the first few weeks!

So, where do I turn when my future feels like it's spinning out of control? One of my not-so-new resolutions is to make more time for meditation, for actual quieting of my mind with the intentional purpose of listening to God. This is a herculean challenge for me! (a) forcing myself to sit still... (b) forcing myself to sit still without falling asleep... (c) forcing myself to sit still, awake and not review the mental lists of all the responsibilities in which I am behind... (d) forcing myself to sit still and be mentally awake, but mentally quiet. Honestly, I feel successful if I attempt step (a) in any given day!

But in Psalm 46:10 it says, "Be still and know that I am God." In John 10:27, Jesus says, "My sheep listen to my voice; I **know** them, and they follow me." If I desire **to know God and be known by Him**, I must be still and listen.

Just referencing the word "listen" in my concordance brings up 388 references! So listening must be an important action verb. While I listen to God through weekly sermons and my reunion sisters, as well as study, songs and other people, it's not enough; I need quiet, intimate one-to-one time to listen and actively seek His will.

Listening is an act of love (it's also the title of a book, but that's another story). I know that I feel disrespected whenever someone doesn't listen to me. Shouldn't I accord the greatest respect to my Lord by listening to Him? I also know how lousy I feel

whenever I need to raise my voice to get my children to listen to me. God should NOT have to shout to be heard by his children. Nor should He have to wade through the murky incessant chatter of my mind, nor get shut out of my one-sided prayers. So, realizing all this, I must act to make time to be still and listen to God.

As co-rectora for the spring 2008 weekend, I am in need of guidance and discernment as much as ever. The team is coming together and I feel an overwhelming sense that God is in complete control. Each commitment brings such genuine joy, and actually each decline just feels alright, too... like God has a solid hand in the timing of each person's team service.

So, all this being said, I would like to ask you to be witnesses to my new year's resolution. I vow to make time each day to be still and listen to God. And I will not dwell on the days I fail (which are bound to occur), but will start each day anew to meet this challenge.

Thank you for listening to this one area of struggle in my faith journey (one of many) and giving me a public format in which to work on it. I plan to return to a book I put down midway a few years ago, Receptive Prayer: Prayer which Nourishes, Heals and Empowers by Grace Adolphsen Brame. I would love to hear from any who wish to share with me suggestions or even your own challenges. I am sure my GIFT (growing in faith together) reunion sisters will be keeping me accountable and on track! :-)

God's blessings to each of you this new year as we continue to support each other in our faith and service to Christ!

Lenae Kirchner, ToG#2  
lenaek@excite.com

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**"Taste of Grace" Outreach Comments**

God's love and peace to all of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Just a quick reminder that our "Via de Cristo" movement is about much more than just spending a weekend in God's grace - - - it's about building Christian community and changing the world for Christ. We can't do this if we are not involved. I realize that the time commitment for our weekends is significant, but remember many

people made that commitment for your weekend. If the result of your weekend is just a pleasant memory then we, the secretariat of our community, have failed in our responsibility to deliver the message that Christian community is critical to our spiritual growth and the growth of God's church.

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Recruiting servant leaders for the past fall weekend's, both men's and women's, was difficult at best. Both teams were understaffed, but successful thanks to the

dedicated men and women who shared in the joyful experience of serving our new brothers and sisters.

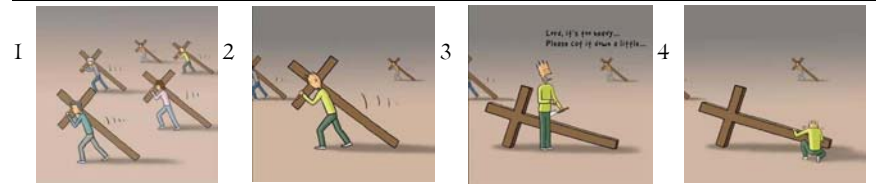
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We are in the process of planning a pastor's luncheon where we will be reaching out to approximately 130 ELCA congregations in our area. If your congregation is not a part of the ELCA, please contact either Ruth or David VanZant at 815-834-1293, and we will extend an invitation to your pastor. We

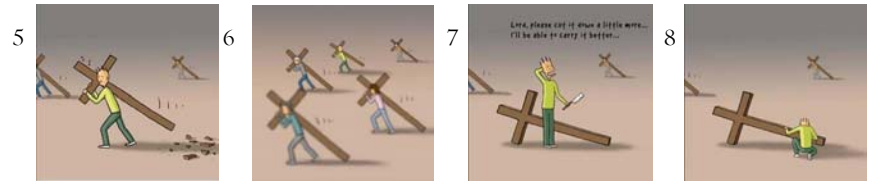
will be stressing the benefits of having "Via de Cristo" members in your congregation - - - remember we are all servant leaders and as such need to work within our congregations for the growth of God's church on earth. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Remember stay connected - - - **attend an Ulterya** - - - the schedule for this year is in this news letter.

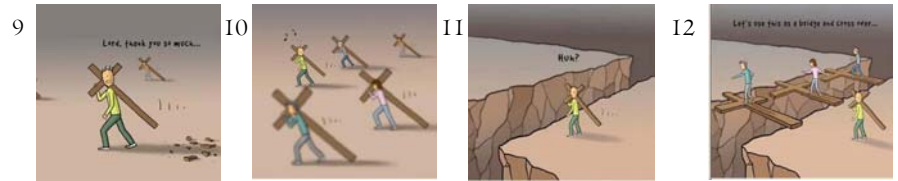
"God loves you and so do we" Ruth and David VanZant



3...Lord, its too heavy...Please cut it down a little...



7...Lord, please cut it down a little more...I'll be able to carry it better...



9. Lord, thank you so much... 11. Huh? 12. Let's use this as a bridge and cross over...



13. Ahh! It's too short I can't cross...

We complain about the cross we bear but don't realize it is preparing us for whatever is up ahead that God can see and we can't.

Whatever your cross, whatever your pain, there will always be sunshine after the rain...  
 Perhaps you may stumble, perhaps even fall; God's always ready, to answer your call...  
 He knows every heartache, He sees every tear, a word from His lips, can calm every fear...  
 Your sorrows may linger throughout the night, But suddenly vanish come dawn's early light...  
 The Savior is waiting, some where above, to give you His grace, and send you His love...



From the Property Chair of TOG Secretariat!

Below is a list of items that we frequently use during team formation meetings and on the weekends. If you'd like to donate any of these in-kind items OR make a cash/check donation to help offset our property costs, please contact me directly at home #815-933-4685 or by email, [janeenj@yahoo.com](mailto:janeenj@yahoo.com).

God Bless you for your generosity!  
Janeen Tietjens

**NEEDS LIST**

- Red Wine (for Communion)
- Paper Products (such as, plates, napkins, cups, paper towels, plastic silverware, ziplock bags, etc.)
- Coffee (Regular and Decaf)
- Notebooks (for note-taking on the weekends)
- 14x22" Posterboard (for poster-making on the weekends)
- Brown Paper Bags (Grocery-size) – used for team palanca on the weekends
- Books/Bibles (for the Book Table)
- Colorful or "DeColores" Items (for the Book Table)

**Resurrection Story Cookies**

One reason Jesus is such a memorable and engaging teacher is that he used culturally relevant stories to reach his audiences. Because we are commanded to receive the kingdom of God like a child (Luke 18:17) as well as to teach (Matthew 28:20), why not make our sharing of the Easter story memorable, engaging and culturally relevant? The following Easter activity is fun and meaningful for both the young and the young-at-heart. These cookies are made the evening before and cooked in a warm oven overnight so they will be ready to eat on Easter morning. Have a blessed, meaningful and spiritually-moving Easter!

Lenae Kirchner, ToG #2

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Preheat the oven to 300 degrees.

Ingredients & Supplies Needed:

- |                   |                              |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 3 egg whites      | Zip plastic bag              |
| 1 c. whole pecans | Wooden spoon                 |
| 1 tsp. vinegar    | Tape                         |
| 1/4 tsp. salt     | The Bible                    |
| 1 c. sugar        | Directions on following page |

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**Resurrection Story Cookies**

1. Place pecans in the plastic bag and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Discuss how after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. **Read John 19:1-3**
  2. Put the vinegar into a mixing bowl and let each child smell the strong aroma. Talk about how when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. **Read John 19:28-30**
  3. Add egg whites to the vinegar (eggs represent life). Discuss how Jesus gave His life to give us life. **Read John 10:10-11**
  4. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. **Read Luke 23:27**
  5. So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. **Read Psalms 34:8 and John 3:16**
  6. Beat the ingredients together with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. **Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3**
  7. Fold in the broken pecans. Drop cookies by a rounded teaspoon onto cookie sheet covered with waxed paper. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. **Read Matthew 27:57-60**
  8. Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door.
  9. TURN THE OVEN OFF.
  10. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door together. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. **Read Matthew 27:65-66**
  11. Now it's time to go to sleep.
  12. Explain to the children that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. **Read John 16:20 and 22**
  13. On Resurrection (Easter) morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice that the surface of the cookie is cracked. Take a bite. The cookies are hollow!
- On the first Resurrection, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. **Read Matthew 28:1-9 and Matthew 28:10-20**

Your input is valued.



Do you have anything you would like to share with the community via The Taste newsletter?



Stories, devotionals, bible passages that touched your heart that you would like to share with all of us?



Would you like to share with us what your weekend has meant to you?



Do you have a short, clean, funny joke?



What about an important event in your life, or one come up?

Let me know – send me an email or call me, and I will be happy to include it in the next edition of The Taste.



Have you moved?

Do you have a new address?  
New phone number?  
New email address?

Please let me know so that I can update our information.

Has someone in your reunion group mentioned they don't get emails, postcards, or phone calls from us. Have them contact us with their information.

God Loves You and So Do We

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2008 CALENDAR

**Spring Taste of Grace Co-ed Weekend #11**

**Co-ed Weekend #11 April 24-27, 2008**

Co Rector/a is Frank Marshall and Lenae Kirchner

- Send off: 7:00pm Thursday April 24, 2008

**Dedication of the crosses immediately following Send Off**

- Serenade: 6:00pm Saturday April 26, 2008
- Clausura: 4:00pm Sunday April 27, 2008

Men's Fall Weekend #12 November 6-9, 2008

Women's Fall Weekend #12 November 13-16, 2008

**ULTREYAS**

(Ultreya's are held on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 5:00 pm)

**February 9**, 2008 Cross of Glory Lutheran Church

14719 W 163<sup>rd</sup>. Homer Glen - Potluck with worship to follow

**March 8**, 2008 Alleluia Lutheran Church

Book Road & 103 d St, Naperville - Potluck with worship to follow

**April, 2008** – NO ULTREYA – Co-ed #11 **April 24-27**

**May 10**, 2008 Shepard of the Hill Lutheran Church

925 E 9<sup>th</sup> St., Lockport – Worship with SOTH, potluck to follow

**June 14**, 2008 Channahon Community Park

McClintock Road ,Channahon - Potluck with worship to follow

**July 12**, 2008 Living Hope Lutheran Church

21301 Pfeiffer Rd, Frankfort - Potluck with worship to follow

**August 9**, 2008 Rejoice Lutheran Church

North Mill Creek Drive, Geneva - Potluck with worship to follow

**September 13**, 2008 Westminster Presbyterian Church

Clara and Larkin Ave, Joliet - Potluck with worship to follow

**October 11**, 2008 Trinity Lutheran Church

2901 Western Ave, Park Forest - Potluck with worship to follow

**November 8**, 2008 - NO ULTREYA - TOG Men's Weekend #12

Dickson Valley Camp 6:0pm gather for serenade

**December 13**, 2008 Shepard of the Hill Lutheran Church

925 E 9<sup>th</sup> St., Lockport - Worship with SOTH, potluck to follow

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**Taste of Grace Via de Cristo Weekends are held at the:**  
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8250 Finnie Road Newark IL 60541-9573 630-553-6233  
630-553-6240 fax [www.dixonvalley.com](http://www.dixonvalley.com)