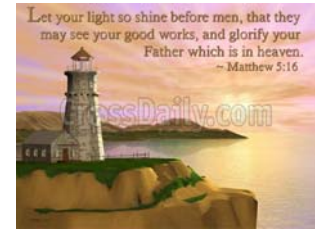


The Upper Room



Fairfield County Tres Dias

August 2009 #257

Editor: Nancy Gasper tdfcngasper@gmail.com

FROM THE PRESIDENT....

While planning for a church officer retreat a few years ago, I had occasion to read through the Epistles attempting to draw out guidelines for running a church. The Epistles were written to churches, and we were running a church, so it seemed like a good match.

The results were several pages of what I called "The Epistle's Greatest Hits". This compilation had some great stuff in it but I was surprised to find relatively few guidelines on how to actually run a church. In writing the Epistles, the Apostles seem far more concerned with encouraging their audience in their walk with Christ. Be it for the church in general, or to the leaders specifically, the basic message of the Epistles is; "Turn from sin, have faith in Jesus and follow His teachings."

Reflecting on this, you see that Christian leadership is NOT about serving on a church board, chairing one of its committees or organizing the annual XYZ program (even though that is 99.9% of our experiences as lay leaders). True Christian leadership is encouraging people in their walk with Christ!

*In this light, one could say that **Tres Dias** serves as **a living Epistle** to the church today. Tres Dias is all about encouraging people in their walk with Christ. Our very purpose is to bring people closer to Jesus, to build up leaders for the church and encourage Apostolic Action. We do this in many ways; obviously by holding weekends, through Secuelas and reunion groups, but also through the weekend team process.*

Tres Dias develops leaders by first letting them serve as auxiliaries, and then inviting them to give one of the simpler Rollos before building in witness to one of the more significant ones and then, if the Spirit so moves, into weekend leadership. In each step, our community encourages people in their Christian walk as they learn to model Piety, Study and Action to the candidates and live it in their daily lives. Within Tres Dias, you learn that a true leader is not someone who can get a weekend to run on time, but a person who can inspire others in their walk with Christ!

I pray that all that we do can serve to inspire you in your walk with Christ and encourage you to be an inspiration to others.

DeColores,

Gordon Quimby

TEAM - MEN'S #91

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Rector | John Braun |
| Asst. Rector | Nate Christian |
| Chief Aux | Duncan Brown |
| Spiritual Director | Christopher Leighton |
| Spiritual Director | Carlton Knight |
| Music Director | Bill Cusano |
| Ideals | Matt Winward |
| Church | Chuck Schif |
| Piety | Tim Peiffer |
| Study | Ken Cornish |
| Action | Steve Lindeberg |
| Leaders | Don Bohl |
| Environments | Bill Meyer |
| Christian Community | Frank Johnson |
| Auxes | Chris Lackowski |
| | Dave Wechter |
| | Steve Temple |
| | Richard Kelly |
| | Rich Schnell |
| Ex-Rector | Mark Thunem |
| Ex-Rector | John Monroe |

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Weekend scripture Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me",

I have been blessed to have been given this group of men to serve the Lord with. It is true we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We have almost completed our meetings and are ready to serve the Lord, and the men you send on this up-coming weekend.

God bless...

John Braun
Men's #91 Rector



UPCOMING WEEKENDS

Men's #91 – Rector: John Braun – September 17-20, 2009

Women's #91 – Rector: Lauren Thunem – October 22-25, 2009

Men's #92 – Rector: TBA – March 25-28, 2010

Women's #92 – Rector: TBA – May 13-16, 2010

WEEKEND UPDATE

The Spiritual Life Center will now include a prayer/palanca room for the community. It will be on floor B1-rooms 13-14. It will be furnished with writing supplies at the desk, or you might just want to stay and pray. This room can be located by entering the front circle driveway and parking past the candidate entrance. To your right will be a sidewalk that goes down several stairs, once inside, go up one flight of stairs, it will be your first room on the left. There will be outside signs. The Chief Aux on the weekend will make sure the door is unlocked in the morning and locked at sunset. This room has been given to us by the courtesy of the sisters. Please enter and exit using this door only and do not use any other rooms or hallways. We are grateful to have these new rooms available to us, it will be a great way to get that last minute palanca in.

TRES DIAS COMMUNITY NEWS

People are Afraid of NEW Things!

- + *Tres Dias of Fairfield County has been around for over 30 years!*
- + *We have held over 180 renewal weekends.*
- + *More than 4,000 people have participated just in our area!*
- + *TDJC is just one community. Tres Dias is international in scope with over 3 million people having participated world wide!*

ESSENTIALS

Celebrating the Essentials

You may never have thought of it this way but the Essentials of Tres Dias are a gift that truly should be celebrated! They are a set of instructions that guide our ministry in fulfilling its unique calling. The Essentials enable those within the Tres Dias community to work together as brothers and sisters in Christ and to minister to each other in an inter-denominational manner.

When you think of different denominations it is human nature to think first of what separates those denominations from your own. It is easy to note how their worship style, traditions, form of government or even how their rules for ordination differ from your own. Those well-versed in the specifics of their denomination might even be aware of how they differ in their theology and church history.

Experts will tell you that it is only natural that you would want to think well of yourself and the groups that you are associated with because they reflect on you. So it is human nature for you to become convinced that your church's way of doing things is the best way, and the other church is inferior. Rare is the person that sees another denomination and appreciates their uniqueness and the noble attributes that body of believers possesses.

As you may know, the other communities within the 4th Day Movement (Cursillo, Walk to Emmaus, etc.) tend to be denominationally specific, each keeping to their own kind. We are the only community where all the denominations come together to be one in Christ. This is something to celebrate about Tres Dias. It is an Essential that we not only have a variety of denominations present on each weekend but that we also emphasize that which unites us in Christ and that we respect our differences. Within Tres Dias people from liturgical traditions can learn to appreciate more informal styles of worship. For others, the liturgy of Tres Dias worship and the readings from the Pilgrim's Guide will be a new experience. As we sit around the table on a weekend or visit with each other at Secuelas, we can learn to be one in Christ. That is so rare in this day and age and is part of our Lord's special calling for this unique community we call Tres Dias.

Submitted by: Gordon Quimby

ACTION

Jesus said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news..."
Here's the story of how one Texan answered the call

By: Don Bohl

“One beautiful thing about working for Jesus—you’re not responsible for results. You’re just responsible for showing up. He shows you what to do from that point on.”

This is how Ray Skaggs, a Texan who once lived the good life as an executive in the oil and gas business, then lost everything and turned to truck driving to survive, describes the ministry that the Lord has guided him into. Ray *has* been showing up in some unlikely places, not just at Central Texas and Rocky Mountain Tres Dias weekends, but also at weekends in Lima, Peru, and Guayaquil, Ecuador, with side-trips to Chiclayo, Arequipa, and Pucallpa, as well as remote villages along the headwaters of the Amazon River in the mountains east of Iquitos. For many of these trips, a case of 500 Bibles has gone with him.

Many of those who attended the March meeting of the Tres Dias International Secretariat had opportunity to sit down with Ray to hear his improbable story. Ray looks every bit the Texan, a short man in his mid 60s with a lined, weathered face who speaks with a gentle southern drawl. There is tranquility in the voice and general demeanor that appears to come from a peace that passes understanding.

Ray explains that a pivotal moment his life came when his daughter gave him a copy of Rick Warren’s *Purpose Driven Life* on tape. This was in 2004, when he was working as a truck driver—a lifestyle markedly different from the earlier decades. Ray had lived all over the world. He had established a manufacturing business in the Philippines, set up a sales company in Japan, and covered the US and Canada as VP of sales and marketing for a major corporation.

Then, he lost everything. Broke and with nothing to eat, he signed on as a driver for a trucking company he had dealt with during his days as an executive.

“I started to listen to the tape,” Ray says, “But I never got past the first chapter. I realized. *It’s not about me.* It’s about *Him*. Possessions own you; you don’t own them. When you stop living for yourself, and you start living in Him, everything changes. The joy of doing everyday what God wants you to do is more valuable than anything you can imagine.”

Tres Dias provided one opportunity for the “joy of doing.” It was in the airport in Lima, Peru, on his way to support the emerging Tres Dias community in that city, that Ray happened to meet a young minister and his family traveling to their home in Arequipa, some 70 miles south of Lima. Memories of the meeting lingered. Back in the states driving an 18 wheeler, Ray happened to talk with another trucker in Montebello, CA, who told him about a man in Omaha who had some free Spanish literature. When Ray drove through Omaha, the man met him in a parking lot and brought him cases of materials—not only brochures for new believers and for those who had fallen away from the faith, but also cases of New Testaments.

On his next trip to Peru, Ray showed samples of the literature to the young minister from Arequipa. This was exactly what his church, and others in that city, needed to support their ministries. A shipment of 500 Bibles, thanks to connection with the man from Omaha, was on its way.

Ray’s travels have what one fellow pescador describes as a “ripple effect.” The chance meeting with the minister from Arequipa was the first of many. Each trip to Peru and subsequent trips to Ecuador widened the circle of people he met, and who would be blessed with Spanish New Testaments.

As Ray describes it, “Wherever I go, that’s where a door opens, and I meet someone who invites me to go somewhere. I go, not knowing anybody, and leave knowing a lot of people, and miraculous things happen.” For pure adventure, nothing tops the trip, in November of 2008, downriver from Iquitos, a city of approximately 500,000 in the Peruvian rainforest 600 miles from Lima. The city is reachable only by plane or boat. From that point Ray, along with Pastor Cesar Campos and fellow pescadores Stephanie and Sean McLaughlin, launched a four-day boat ride down the headwaters of the Amazon, delivering Bibles and other literature to seven churches along the way.

At each stopping point, the embankment was filled with villagers—especially children—eager to welcome the visitors. “As we traveled,” Ray recalls, “I realized there were maybe 150 children for every 40 adults—60 to 70 percent of the population was under 25 years old.” Those children tugged at Ray’s heart, reminding him of a survey he had read stating that eight out of ten people had received Christ before age 20.

The ministry to those children continues, administered by a five-person board in Lima. Ray has arranged to provide one-half of the funds needed for each initiative to bring literature, Bibles, and coloring books to the seven churches along the river.

The Amazon odyssey is even more astonishing, in view of the fact that Ray organized and pushed the trip to completion shortly after recovering from a near fatal automobile accident.

There are dozens of such stories to tell. The most power are those stories in which he describes how foolish he felt ministering in a country where he did not even understand the language, only to feel his self-reproach evaporate when someone looked at the case of New Testaments and exclaimed, “I’ve been praying for these to come.”

As Stephanie McLaughlin explains, “I am amazed that when I walk with him down the street or in a church in South America, how many people are drawn to Ray. He has a smile for everyone, and that smile is contagious! He doesn’t speak Spanish and yet can communicate God’s love to each of them as he talks... . The people in the villages respect him, are excited to see him coming and they can’t wait to get a hug, especially the children.”

When Ray attends the next meeting of the International Secretariat, he will have even more stories to tell. For example, he can talk about his meeting, in June, with 30 pastors from the rural areas around Chiclayo, or about the pastor who has 84 rural churches that all need New Testaments, or about events in Ucraina, where 110 people said they had prayed and received Jesus. He’ll add, however, that the stories he tells (like the story published here) aren’t about him. They’re about a loving God and His Son, Jesus.

As we finish preparing the story for publication, Ray is back in Iquitos.

For Stephanie McLaughlin’s pictures and commentary on the first trip to the river villages, see her blog at http://trinitysangels.typepad.com/trinitys_angels/, December 2008 entries.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY SECRETARIAT

**Secretariat meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month (except for July, August and December)
at Noroton Presbyterian Church in Darien at 7:00p.m.**

All Pescadores are Welcome to Attend — Please arrive at 6:45 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 8, 2009

Future Meetings:

October 13, 2009

November 10, 2009

TRES DIAS INTERNATIONAL



Tres Dias International now publishes an electronic newsletter three times a year. Go to www.tresdias.org / newsletter / Spring 2009 for the most recent issue.

Upcoming Meetings

Oct 16-18, 2009 International Secretariat Tres Dias of New Hampshire

Upcoming Secuelas

If your church would like to sponsor a secuela, please contact Posey Griffin at:
posey@fogertyknapp.com or 203-938-3438

New Life Community United Methodist Church

1 Beaver Bog Road, New Fairfield, CT

Friday, October 2nd at 7:30 pm

Directions:

From East:

I-84 West

Take exit #6

At the bottom of the ramp, turn right onto Rt. #37

Follow into New Fairfield and past downtown (7 miles)

Take a right onto Beaver Bog Road (church is on the corner)

From West:

I-84 East

Take exit #5

Follow Down's Street 0.2 miles and continue onto Rt. #37

Follow into New Fairfield and past downtown (7 miles)

Take a right onto Beaver Bog Road (church is on the corner)

Nichols United Methodist Church

35 Shelton Road, Trumbull, CT

Friday, October 30th at 7:30 p.m.

Directions:

From West:

Merritt Parkway North

Exit 51 (Nichols Avenue)

Left on Huntington Turnpike

Right onto Shelton Road

From East:

Merritt Parkway towards NY City

Exit 52, towards CT108-Bridgeport

Exit towards Stratford

Turn right onto Nichols Avenue

Right onto Shelton Road

TRES DIAS OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY - COMMITTEES AND ROLES

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| Rotate off after Spring 2010 | Joe Sharp | Joe_sharp@ringsend.com |
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| New 2009 | Freddie Bell-Berti | fbellberti@gmail.com |
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| Member 2007-2010 | Lloyd Johnson | doralloyd@msn.com |
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| Weekend Committee Roles Sub-committee | | |
| 4 th Day Packets 2008 | Jimmy Lang | Jimmylang16@yahoo.com |
| Weekend Mananita Leader-Men | Margaret Doody | mldoody@aol.com |
| Weekend Mananita Leader-Women | John Monroe | John.monroe@us.nestle.com |
| Manuals | Mark & Lauren Thunem | lthunem@hotmail.com |

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CARRY YOUR BOOKS? A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
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