

VIA DE CRISTO

A Christian renewal movement by
Laity and Clergy

For additional information
about attending a
Via de Cristo Weekend
please contact:

execdirector.nls@gmail.com

or

www.viadecristo.org

Produced by
National Lutheran Secretariat
of Via de Cristo

©2015 National Lutheran Secretariat



VIA DE CRISTO
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS



VIA DE CRISTO

A Spanish expression meaning "Way of Christ." Via de Cristo is the Lutheran expression of "Cursillo de Cristiandad." (Trademarked by the Catholic Cursillo Community.)

WHAT IS VIA DE CRISTO?

Via de Cristo is a three-day school which takes a New Testament look at Christianity as a life style. It is a highly structured weekend designed to strengthen and renew the faith of Christian people, and through them, their families, congregations and the environment in which they live, work, and play. Via de Cristo is a combined effort of laity and clergy working together to bring renewal to the Church. Via de Cristo recognizes that God's people are provided with many spiritual gifts. Via de Cristo, however, does not identify with the Charismatic movement.

HISTORY OF VIA DE CRISTO

The movement originated as "Cursillo" in the late 1940's in the Spanish Catholic church and moved to America in the late 1950's. It began in the Lutheran church when laymen and clergy attended a Catholic Cursillo in 1971, both in Iowa and in Florida. The first Lutheran sponsored weekends were held in 1972 in both Iowa and Florida and have now been held in over 15 states and some foreign countries. Via de Cristo is the Lutheran expression of the Cursillo method which is currently being used in many denominations including: Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Reformed churches. The name "Via de Cristo" was adopted by the Lutheran Community in February 1986.

PURPOSE OF VIA DE CRISTO

In today's world, can Christianity penetrate all areas of our secular lives? Can it live there? Can it grow there? Can it transform the world in a way that is more fruitful than the past, yet in keeping with the times? Those in the Via de Cristo movement think so! Via de Cristo proposes no new type of spirituality - only a simple method through which one's grace-filled life may, in a natural loving way, be lived and shared with others.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Christians who believe their spiritual lives need strengthening; who have many unanswered questions about prayer, study and sharing their faith; who understand being Christian involves responsibility and would like to have both the spiritual foundation and moral reserve to carry this out in their lives; who are willing to dedicate their everyday lives to God in an on-going manner, are the best candidates to attend a Via de Cristo. In other words, if you have a strong faith or questions about your faith, you are probably the best candidate to attend!

WHAT HAPPENS AT A WEEKEND?

Via de Cristo begins on a Thursday evening and ends on Sunday evening. While you are attending you spend three busy but very enjoyable days. You live and study together with much singing, prayer, worship and discussion. Discussions center around the talks given by laity and clergy. The talks center around the grace of God, its reality in your life and how you can live the life of grace, imparting grace to others. You have the opportunity to participate in the daily celebration of Holy Communion and you begin to understand the real presence of Christ in His Body of believers.

WHAT HAPPENS

AFTER THE WEEKEND?

You may attend a Via de Cristo only once in your life, but you are asked to build on it the rest of your life. Some say it is "Three days that last a lifetime." This post weekend activity is known as the Fourth Day. Those who have attended are asked to do two things during their Fourth Day: (1) Expand their inner spiritual life through study and congregational participation and (2) Become more active Christians in their daily lives. The Fourth Day community offers two means of perseverance: (1) Ultreya (meetings of the local community for encouragement and study), and (2) Group Reunions (small groups of men or women who meet for a short period weekly to help one another in their quest for spiritual growth and development). Participation in these two activities in an integral part of Via de Cristo and is strongly suggested but, as are all activities of Via de Cristo, it is voluntary.

SUMMARY

We ask you to keep an open mind and heart in making your decision. Many of those who have attended also wondered whether they should go. Now that they have attended, they want to share this wonderful gift from God. Please understand that their experience was unique, and all discussions in the world will not become a substitute for your weekend. You need to experience it yourself to obtain its full and life enriching value.