

G.R.A.C.E. NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 5

MAY 2004

More from the Girls Epiphany No. 3 at the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center:

Friday - Faith in What We Don't See.

Hebrews 11: ¹The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see. ²The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors set them above the crowd. ³By faith, we see the world called into existence by God's word, what we see created by what we don't see... ³⁰By faith, the Israelites marched around the walls of Jericho for seven days, and the walls fell flat. Or as the much loved song says, "And the walls came tumbling down."

What a strange prayer to come to mind at the beginning of an Epiphany. Normally we pray for strength for the volunteers, focus for the kids and for God to work through us. But this morning as we walked the gym to pray, I kept hearing over and over to walk around the gym and pray for the walls to come tumbling down. Well I began to sing that song as a team of us walked the edge of the gym praying. "Joshua fought the battle of Jericho and the walls came tumbling down."

Typically the first day of an Epiphany is all about loosening up the kids so they will listen to the words that God has prepared for them. We typically see their walls start to come down either the evening of the first day or the morning of the second day. But God was the one who was playing this song and we did see the walls come down much earlier in the day. It is almost inconceivable that 44 teenage girls would open up to us and begin to tell us the stories of their lives. We got to know more about these girls on the first day than some of us have shared with our own kids in the past few months. We heard stories of little girls' lives that would break our hearts. Stories that would later drain us emotionally yet open us to the hope they each have through Christ Jesus.

Lisa was the first volunteer to talk to the girls about Goals. What a difficult talk for us since this is the talk that is purely secular and not one mention of God is made. Oh but the beauty in which Lisa gave her own testimony left the girls wanting to know just how she was able to achieve these nearly impossible goals in her life. I believe that this talk opened their ears and eyes to what God could do in their lives.

I was to give the next talk and I felt that maybe there was nothing I could say to these girls that they could identify with. Then the Super-Stars (girls who have been on an Epiphany and come back to serve their sisters) prayed over me and I knew that God would use me to speak to the hearts of some of these young girls. I can't remember

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Dear Community;

Greetings, all of my Emmaus friends, from the Rector of Kairos No. 24. Some of you may like to know how it's going on the front line at the Michaels Maximum Security Prison. This Kairos, a short course in Christianity, which is a mirror of the Walk to Emmaus, it was a huge success. The 42 men in white (pilgrims) confessed that they were blessed beyond all expectations and many of the men received Christ for the first time. What a blessing it was to lead this awesome group of free world team members on this 4 day journey. Their love for Jesus was shown through the copious amounts of love they poured out for the brothers in white; all were blessed by their expressions of God's Agape Love. Everyone worked together and did so without having to be prompted as to what

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The **May G.R.A.C.E.**
Gathering

Will be at

1st UMC, Mineola, in
their New Ministry
Center

Thursday,

May 13, 2004 @ 7:00P.M.

See the website at

www.gracemmaus.org

For maps and more info.

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what Crystal said when she prayed except that there would be one girl who needed to hear what I had to say. How precious were their prayers they prayed over me that day. I wish everyone could have a moment like that in his or her life; Sweet, pure and straight to the heart of God. No embarrassment or fear but a prayer from one sister to another. I will hold that memory forever near to my heart.

Shortly after my talk a few of the girls began to approach me and open up about their own lives. One even said that she would pray for me. For me! I was so touched that these young girls would forget their worries to pray for my past. What a selfless act of kindness – that's Grace from Grace.

As I left that day I knew in my heart that God was doing a work within me. I cried and fought my own battle of walls as I cried out to God saying, "Lord, show me what to do. I don't know what to do for these girls. Work in me and show me your way. "Prayer – that's what God told me. Pray like I had never prayed before. With all my heart and with all my soul, these were sisters in Christ.

Saturday – Casting out Demons

Matthew 8:31-33 ³¹The evil spirits begged Jesus, "If you kick us out of these men, let us live in the pigs." ³²Jesus said, "Go ahead, but get out of here!" Crazed, the pigs stampeded over a cliff into the sea and drowned. ³³Scared to death, the swineherds bolted. They told everyone back in town what had happened to the madmen and the pigs.

Today was almost funny. We walked the gym again to claim this territory for the Kingdom. We proclaimed this gym to be Holy ground. After walking and praying, my prayer partner reminded me that we had not prayed over the bathrooms and that this was an area that the Girls would sometimes use to get their minds off track from Jesus. Well we gained strength in numbers as we grabbed another partner and went to where the restrooms are, but the door was locked. Well a locked door has never stopped these women of prayer so we laid hands on that bathroom door and began to pray. Later we all went to separate areas and continued to pray till we were filled with the spirit. We were all casting out the devil and proclaiming. God's will with every breath we took and we prayed till there were no words left to say. As we breathed a sigh of completion for the prayers we prayed, we looked up and realized that we were on camera. Well we just knew that the school would send the white coats after us, but they didn't and we knew that God has a purpose and can use all things so we prayed for God to use our prayer.

Giving a talk is really a blessing and I thank God for the opportunity to tell these girls that there is hope for a better life through Christ Jesus and encourage them to seek the Lord. However, the prayer of Commitment was even more personal to me and I thank God and our Spiritual Director for the opportunity to lead so many in that prayer. I don't believe that I have ever witnessed such deep Christian love that a Pastor would give up a piece of his preaching and allow a layperson LIKE ME, unequipped and undeserved, to offer up the opportunity for EVERYONE to pray the prayer of Commitment; Grace, another moment of true grace. I learned so much this weekend about grace, love and joy through the characteristics of the other Volunteers.

Later that evening we knew that the Holy Spirit was lifting up our prayers when we heard two Satanists confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. This declaration came unprompted and unsolicited. You could tell the honesty of these young women of faith as they later sang and praised God, lifting their hands up high. One of these young ladies was the mother of a young boy and she wanted to go back and tell her son about Jesus Christ. Another young lady said that she wanted to be a Christian but she was afraid and didn't know what to do. Our Lay Director, Brent, lead her in accepting Christ right there with 60 people looking on and she was not at all fearful.

It was open mike night and we heard the stories these young ladies had shared with their table families. One little girl was never allowed to attend school. Her mother said that she didn't get to go to school and neither would she. Another young woman has been there since she was 12 and is now 20. There is little hope for her without Christ.

She suffers from multiple mental health issues and no agency can take her case but at age 21 she will be out and ill equipped to deal with her issues. The hope of the Lord is her Salvation. Another had been a stripper since she was 14 and a prostitute since she was 15. All of this pain to gain the approval of her boyfriend. One little girl looked like the cute little tom-boy girl that lives next door. But at age 12 she had had enough and tried to kill her mom. She is turning 16 soon and will be going home to an alcoholic mom and a step-dad who believes that you pay for everything in life and has forced her to have sex with him in order "to pay her way". Another young lady approached me about not having anywhere to go. She loves her Grandma but Grandma tried to kill her with a gun and Grandma is her only relative.

Later, a prayer for "Prissy"

"Prissy" cuts her arms in order to feel the physical pain that takes away her focus on the emotional pain. The Holy Spirit lifted prayers for her and told me that she is not to cut herself anymore. Jesus has paid the price for her by His bloodshed and she was not to shed her blood anymore. He took the stripes (that's what their arms look like from all the marks they leave behind from cutting) for her and shed His blood for her. I prayed that God would show her a way out of this violent cycle she is in and that she would talk to God when she felt like cutting.

Sunday – "The Comforter"

Luke 10:21 At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and earned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

Wow can these kids dance with joy from the Holy Spirit. We saw their joy played out in the music that was shared with us this weekend. They truly praised God in song and dance. As the curtain was parted to reveal the support of community, they danced and made a beautiful noise unto the Lord. I am sure that God was pleased for these are truly His Children.

John 14: 16-18 ¹⁶I will talk to the Father, and he'll provide you another Friend (Comforter) so that you will always have someone with you. ¹⁷This Friend is the Spirit of Truth. The godless world can't take him in because it doesn't have eyes to see him, doesn't know what to look for. But you know him already because he has been staying with you, and will even be in you! ¹⁸"I will not leave you orphaned. I'm coming back.

It was a busy day but in the back of our minds were the upcoming goodbyes. Some of the girls were dreading the goodbyes so much that we feared they would miss out on the present – letters and their cross. What fun as we prayed over the girls and spoke those words that Jesus spoke over 2000 years ago. "I will not leave you orphaned. I'm coming back."

The main characteristic trait that these girls share is fear of abandonment. Always afraid that someone is going to leave and never come back. But God says He is with us always and I know they felt it as the hug line formed. When the girls began to leave, I heard a few shout out; "The Comforter". God is with them just as He is with us.

My heart is still heavy as I pray for these young ladies each day and night. I don't think I could have ever prepared myself for the emotional heaviness of their lives. But it is with joy that I hand over these burdens to Christ for while we were yet sinners He died for us, for them; little girls who need the hope and joy that the love of Christ brings to everyone who believes in Him. I am grateful that God choose me to be an extension of His love this very special weekend in April 2004, at the Corsicana Girl's Epiphany #3.

Matthew 18:6, and now I pray, "But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea." For these are kingdom kids and have been bought with the blood of Christ.

May they forever seek the will of the Lord. – Amen
Epiphany Team Member - Laura Avery

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENT: MAY 1ST

PLACE: **ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 3232 JAN, TYLER**

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

Rainbows in Concert. Come hear some great Cursillo and Emmaus music.

SPECIAL EVENT: MAY 1ST

PLACE: **MICHAEL UNIT, TENNESSEE COLONY**

TIME: **7:30 A.M.**

Instructional Reunion training for new candidates of Kairos No. 24.

SPECIAL EVENT: MAY 8TH

PLACE: **MICHAEL UNIT, TENNESSEE COLONY**

TIME: **7:30 A.M.**

Second Saturday Monthly Reunion.

SPECIAL EVENT: MAY 13TH

PLACE: **1ST UMC, 612 N. NEWSOM, MINEOLA**

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

Monthly gathering in Mineola at 1st UMC's new Worship Center. Come on out and Worship our Lord.

SPECIAL EVENT: MAY 20TH

PLACE: **MARVIN UMC, TYLER**

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

Monthly G.R.A.C.E. Board Meeting.

SPECIAL EVENT: JUNE 1ST

PLACE: WEBSITE AT WWW.GRACEMMAUS.ORG

TIME: **IN HIS TIME**

Monthly G.R.A.C.E. News for June will be posted.

SPECIAL EVENT: SEPT. 30TH – OCT. 3RD

PLACE: **CAMP GILMONT**

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

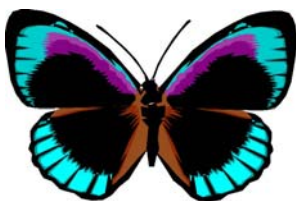
G.R.A.C.E. MEN'S WALK NO. 30 BEGINS THURSDAY SEPT. 30TH.

SPECIAL EVENT: OCT. 7TH – 10TH

PLACE: **CAMP GILMONT**

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

G.R.A.C.E. WOMEN'S WALK NO. 31 BEGINS THURSDAY OCT. 7TH.



needed to be done next, they just did it. We had a great bunch of new volunteers this weekend, and they really got a blessing from serving our Lord at the prison. If you would like to get involved in this exciting ministry, or if you know someone, who would be right for the prison ministry, the **next Rector for Kairos No. 25** will also be from our community. **Mike Nix of Tyler and his wife Shawni** have accepted the reigns, for the Kairos weekend in the fall. If you feel you would like to be a part of the team or have a desire to serve in some other capacity, you can reach **Mike** at: **903-509-1810**, or e-mail him at smnix@juno.com.

In His Service
Charles Smith



New look and publishing method for the G.R.A.C.E. News

The Board has decided that in order to conserve costs of publishing and mailing, (*much less the increased loss of trees to the country side I may cause*), that the MAILED EDITION, of the newsletter will be mailed out two weeks before the spring and fall sets of **G.R.A.C.E.** Walks. That will allow everyone on the snail mail list ample opportunity to receive the newsletter and know who the team and pilgrims will be for those Walks. Those editions will also be available on the internet, at the community website, www.gracemmaus.org. All other editions will be posted on the website on the newsletter page on the first (maybe) of the month. I know some may not like this but we are trying to be good stewards with our resources. If you would like to be added to our e-mail list contact TPerdue@cox-internet.com, or just check the website after the first of the month each month. If you also would like to be removed

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from the snail mail list contact Al Tribe, the **G.R.A.C.E.** Community Registrar, e-mail him at Registrar@gracemmaus.org, and he will remove you from the list and notify the editor of your choice of delivery methods.

The Road of Life

At first, I saw God as my observer, my judge, keeping track of the things I did wrong, so as to know whether I merited heaven or hell when I die.

He was out there sort of like a president.

I recognized His picture when I saw it, but I really didn't know Him.

But later on, when I met Christ, it seemed as though life were rather like a bike ride, but it was a tandem bike, and I noticed that Christ was in the back helping me pedal.

I don't know just when it was that He suggested we change places, but life has not been the same since. When I had control, I knew the way.

It was rather boring, but predictable...

It was the shortest distance between two points.

But when He took the lead, He knew delightful long cuts, up mountains, and through rocky places at breakneck speeds.

It was all I could do to hang on! Even though it looked like madness, He said

"Pedal!"

I worried and was anxious and asked, "Where are you taking me?" He laughed and didn't answer, and I started to learn to trust.

I forgot my boring life and entered into the adventure, and when I'd say, "I'm scared," He'd lean back and touch my hand.

He took me to people with gifts that I needed, gifts of healing, acceptance, and joy. They gave me gifts to take on my journey, my Lord's and mine.

And we were off again.

He said, "Give the gifts away; they're extra baggage, too much weight."

So I did, to the people we met, and I found that in giving I received, and still our burden was light.

I did not trust Him, at first, in control of my life.

I thought He'd wreck it.

But He knows bike secrets, knows how to make it bend to take sharp corners, knows how to jump to clear high rocks, and knows how to fly to shorten scary passages.

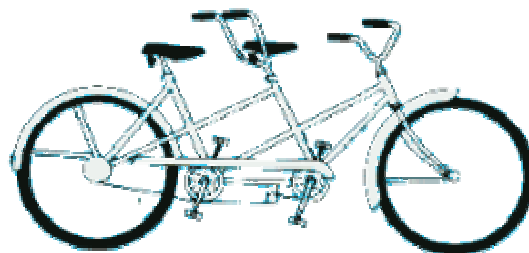
And I am learning to shut up and pedal in the strangest places, and I'm beginning to enjoy the view and the cool breeze on my face with my delightful constant companion, Jesus Christ.

And when I'm sure I just can't do any more,

He just smiles and says...

"Pedal."

-- Author unknown



G.R.A.C.E. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: How do I download the applications from the website?

A: The forms are created in Adobe Acrobat, to download a form just click on that button for the form [i.e. [Reunion Groups List](#), [Pilgrim's Application](#) or [Sponsor's Form](#), [Suggestions for Sponsoring](#), and the [Kairos Team Application](#)] and they will automatically open if you have Adobe Reader installed on your computer. If you don't have the reader installed follow the link on the home page of the website www.gracemmaus.org to the Adobe Corporations **free** download and install it on your computer.

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

Q: Where do I mail the Sponsor's Form and Pilgrim's Application to?

A: The mailing Address for the Registrar is:

**G.R.A.C.E. Registrar
P.O. Box 44
Judson, TX. 75660-0044**

Q: How do I apply for Team Service?

A: Click on the [[Team Application](#)] button on the home page of the G.R.A.C.E. Community website at www.gracemmaus.org.

Q: How do I get some G.R.A.C.E. labeled clothing?

A: Click on the [[G.R.A.C.E. Apparel and Goodies](#)] button on the home page of the G.R.A.C.E. Community website at www.gracemmaus.org.

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