



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the President, Dick LaSell,  
and the Board of Directors.

We are excited to have a newsletter again and wanted to bring you up to date on what is happening with Charis.

God has truly been faithful to the Charis ministry over the years, and He alone knows all the hearts and lives that have been blessed. Since we began as Kairos in 1981, we have had the privilege of bringing Christ's message into many institutions. At the present time, we are involved in FCI Sandstone, FMC Rochester and FCI Wasesa, as well as MCF Shakopee, MCF Rush City and MCF Faribault.

We are happy to report that, in April 2004, we began our Charis ministry in MCF Faribault. At the invitation of Commissioner Joan Fabian and Warden Connie Roehrich, we toured their facilities and discussed our future relationship. MCF Faribault presently has approximately 1,250 residents. We are excited about this new opportunity to share God's message of salvation and to bring His unconditional love and understanding to our incarcerated brothers in Faribault. Some of the insiders have attended Charis weekends and reunions at other facilities; they are spreading the word about Charis, and we hope to have some of them serving on our first team. Monthly Ultreyas have been held at this facility in preparation for the Charis weekend, which will be held from Sept 17-19, 2004.

Because MCF Rush City is now a Level 4 facility, we are unable to share with the men our three-day Charis weekend, but will continue to meet with our brothers at monthly reunions.

Charis is unique because it is a ministry of ongoing presence. By going back on a regular basis, we get to see those who first came to Christ at a Charis weekend start to bring friends to the monthly reunions. These people are now living the Christian life by their actions.

Because our ministry is so blessed by the Lord, it is expanding, and we are in need of new volunteers who are called to share Christ's love with our incarcerated brothers and sisters. It is a commitment, both of time and of love, and requires a obligation to attend the team meetings, the weekend, and the reunions for 12 months following the weekend. Please pray about this opportunity to serve and encourage others who have attended a Cursillo-type weekend to consider serving as well.

Please pray, too, for the Charis ministry and for the Board of Directors.

We praise the Lord for what He is doing throughout Minnesota, and we are excited to see what He is going to do in 2004 and beyond! Praise be to God for this ministry!

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Letter from the President
- 2 Updates of God's Grace from...
- 3 Updates of God's Grace from...continued
- 3 Prayer Request and Calendar of Events
- 4 Bible Trivia and Board Member Directory



## *Updates of God's Grace from ....*

### **MCF SHAKOPEE CHARIS #24 WEEKEND October 30 – November 2, 2003**

Lay Director: Shirley Boeser  
Assistant Lay Directors: Sue Rasmussen, Sharon Solberg,  
Maria Thaelke

After much prayer, the Lord called and anointed 57 men and women to serve on Charis #24 (37 from the outside and 20 from the inside). We came together as Christ's body, and let the Holy Spirit take over and lead the weekend. We were truly blessed by the sensitivity of all the team members, as well as their love for the Lord and commitment to prayer. Our theme for the weekend was Proverbs 3:5&6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths." We did trust the Lord, and He truly did direct the weekend in a mighty way.

On Thursday evening, 36 weekenders arrived, most of them eager to experience the weekend. During the course of the weekend, some lives were changed completely and many recommitted their lives to Christ. There were those who went from despair to Spirit-filled wonder. We were all blessed by our 36 new 4<sup>th</sup> Dayers who joined our family, and we look forward to our continuing relationship with them. During the Closing, they shared how the Lord had changed their hearts during the weekend. Warden Mark Carey and Commissioner Joan Fabian shared from their hearts as well.

It's exciting to see a strong Charis community growing inside Shakopee! We want to thank the Shakopee staff for being so helpful and for extending us every courtesy. We consider it a privilege to be able to go into Shakopee, and it is truly a blessing for all.

We also want to thank those of you who prayed for us, and we thank God for answered prayer. We feel this was a powerful weekend, and we give all the thanks and the glory to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Shakopee Charis #25 was just completed and was led by Maria Thaelke. We will update you on that weekend at a later date. Please continue to pray for our sisters in Shakopee as well as the staff.

### **Charis #37 F.C.I. Sandstone October 2003**

**"Those that have hope in the Lord, will renew their strength "**

Team Leaders: Daryl Sandberg, Mic Dahlberg, Fred Jonasen and Duane Krause

We were met at the Security Room the first night by Chaplain Randy Wendt. He told us he was so glad we were there because an insider had just lost his wife and needed a

family of God to be there to support him. This man stayed the whole weekend and it truly brought the team and the weekenders together.

The inside table leaders proved, once again, to be a marvelous addition to the outside team. They had already prepared everything needed for the weekend by the time the outside team arrived. The inside Palanca team members presented a Stations of the Cross that really touched the hearts of the team and the weekenders.

On Monday we could really feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. God took control and made time to have an Altar Call along with the Act of Remembrance. The men stood at their tables and received Jesus Christ into their hearts. The results were completely in God's hands as seven men requested to be baptized. Chaplain Randy and the Spiritual Directors made the decision that the men needed to have time for a mentor to teach them what the act of Baptism really meant in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Chaplain Randy appointed an inside strong Christian mentor for each man to meet with for the two weeks, and he also held two classes. The seven men presented themselves for Baptism at the Saturday reunion. They each made a public commitment to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Praise God! Forty-eight Spanish and English Bibles were presented to the men along with their certificates and crosses.

### **FMC Rochester CHARIS #28 WEEKEND October 10 – October 13, 2003**

Lay Director: Colleen Bocchi

The team of Charis #28 at FMC Rochester was truly blessed through their service. Several outsiders were called upon to serve in ways that were way out of their comfort zones but they did so with grace and hearts obedient to God and the end results were wonderful. From October 10 through 13, we worked with 60-75 men. At the end, about 45 shared with us what the weekend meant to them. It took over an hour and a half!

We saw healing in many forms: physical, emotional, spiritual and relational. Before the first day was finished one young man said that from what he had heard already, he decided that he needed to call his parents and try to reestablish relationships that he had broken off a long time ago. (And he did as soon as he got to his unit that night.) After the second night, a man who has been in a wheelchair



## PRAYER REQUESTS

Reo Uran, a team member from MCF Shakopee, had surgery on August 9. The latest news on Reo is that she is home recouping. The final test came back cancerous, however, they got it all and she has a clean bill of health and needs no further treatments. Praise God!

Due to policies changes, inmates and volunteers are no longer able to write each other through the Charis Post Office Box. Your continued prayers are needed for the Minnesota inmates and the correctional staff - that the grace of God be always present and that they know we are always praying for them.

Your continued prayers are needed for Rev. Carleton Peterson, a long-time Charis supporter who has served as a spiritual director for many weekends. Carleton is scheduled for more surgery September 10 at 7:45 am. Keep Carleton, his family, and the medical staff in your prayers.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CHARIS #38

PLACE: FCI - SANDSTONE

TIME: OCTOBER 8 –11, 2004

CHARIS #30

PLACE: FMC - ROCHESTER

TIME: OCTOBER 8 –11, 2004

CHARIS #25

PLACE: MCF - SHAKOPEE

TIME: PENDING – AUGUST 2005

**PATHWAY #3**

PLACE: FCI WASECA

TIME: OCTOBER 15-17, 2004

CHARIS #1

PLACE: MCF – FARIBAULT

TIME: SEPTEMBER 17-19, 2004

ULTREYA

**PLACE: MCF - FARIBAULT**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month

**PLACE: FMC - ROCHESTER**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of each month

**PLACE: MCF - RUSH CITY**

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month

**PLACE: FCI - SANDSTONE**

Every Tuesday of each month

**Place: MCF - Shakopee**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month

**Place: FCI - Waseca**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of each month



*FMC Rochester .... Continued from Page 2*

hours at a time because of the pain, slept all through the night for the first time in seven years! Many men talked about their newfound hope and their desire to spread God's love through the compound and to their families. One testimony really drove home to me the fact that, with all the great planning and work that goes into the weekend, it is often the little actions that make a huge difference. This insider was deeply appreciative of the way we referred to him by his first name - something no one at the prison had called him for four years. That simple gesture gave him a renewed sense of dignity and opened the door for him to receive the messages we were there to share. Wow!

God is certainly busy building Christian community among these men. On October 23, 2003 we had the opportunity to meet with them once again at a regular Thursday evening Ultreya. Over 40 men attended - quite a feat for a World Series night! Insiders told me about the groups they had joined and what a significant impact the Charis weekend had on them. It is really exciting to see so evidently that God is at work!

### **FCI Waseca Pathway #3 WEEKEND October 15 – October 17, 2004**

The Lord is ALIVE and WELL at FCI Waseca! The Charis community is in the planning stages for another Spirit-filled weekend to be held October 15-17, 2004. Prayers are requested as they present the third weekend of the Pathway program. This weekend has been reshaped from the regular Charis 3.5 day weekend to a 2.5 day weekend at the request of the facility due to timing constraints.

Because Charis believed 2.5 days is too short a period of time to be able to run a Charis weekend effectively, the Waseca Charis community modified the regular Charis program to include many parts of the Torch program used in Kairos, along with many of the powerful, Holy Spirit filled parts of the Charis program. Some of the parts remaining include the Posters, the Forgiveness/Healing Service, Stations of the Cross and the Agape Dinner. The program will include ten talks evenly split between five Charis talks and five Torch talks.

Although the program is shortened by a day, the Lord still works powerfully and miraculously during the weekend. God does His work in His timing! Praise God!

Please watch in the future for an update on the weekend and prayer requests that the team may have.

---

#### **Acts 20:24**

*"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."*

---

## BIBLE TRIVIA

QUESTION 1:

Moses' brother was?

- A. Aaron
- B. Nedab
- C. Eleazar
- D. Joshua

QUESTION 2:

Why was Pharaoh's daughter at the Nile the day Moses floated by?

- A. She had come to swim
- B. She had come to bathe
- C. She was out walking
- D. She came to rest

QUESTION 3:

What did the sons of Israel come to buy from Joseph during the famine?

- A. Farming equipment
- B. Animals
- C. Grain
- D. Meat

Answers: 1=A, 2=B, 3=C

Charis MN  
PO Box 97  
Excelsior, MN 55331

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## Directory of Charis Board Members

**President:** Dick LaSell  
**Vice-President:** Court MacFarlane  
**Treasurer:** Frank Vennes  
**Secretary:** Maret Ryan  
**Spiritual Advisor:** Greg Silker  
**Supply Coordinator:** Deb Eller  
**Communication:** Cindy Blomgren  
**Sandstone Liaison:** Dick LaSell  
**Rush City Liaison:** Dean Allen  
**Waseca Liaison:** Bruce Kemper  
**Rochester Liaison:** Andy Tscholl  
**Faribault Liaison:** John Troyer  
**Shakopee Liaison:** Maret Ryan  
**Board Member:** Bob Olson  
**Board Member:** Saturo Sudoh

Prayer requests and articles may be submitted to the board members for future consideration. God bless.

BULK RATE  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO.

