



The Servants of the Word

Easter & Pentecost 2004

The Servants of the Word website tells you more about our Call & Mission!

See how God uses us to change the lives of young and old by clicking on our website that was designed by our own award-winning webmaster Don Schwager. You'll find us at www.servantsoftheword.org.

Check out some of the following:

- Our 30th Anniversary
- Living Single for the Lord
- Our Call & Mission
- Reaching Out to the Youth of Today
- Our Brotherhood Households

Did you know we have a new worship CD? Find out more on page 4.



Christ Is Risen!

Ways We Are Making a Difference

Dave O'Connor: Brother and Teacher

The day begins early and ends late for Dave O'Connor, middle school teacher and alumni director for Cornerstone School in Detroit. Bright and early he joins his fellow faculty and staff for the workday and sometimes well past bedtime he is entertaining former students, college students on break, and Cornerstone connections of one sort or another.

The Servants of the Word has made reaching the next generation a target of our mission, and Detroit youth are no exception to our strategy. For 12 years, our brotherhood has been involved in youth activities in downtown Detroit, and for the last four years, seven men from The Servants of the Word have been living there.

Dave first joined the Cornerstone faculty in 1992. After teaching at the school for four years, he then spent several years working among the urban poor in the Philippines. Dave was eager for the challenge of living and working in Detroit when he returned to the States in 2000, so he renewed his ties with Cornerstone

and took up teaching math in the middle school.

The Cornerstone School system is an ecumenical and "Christ-centered" educational institution in Detroit, started in 1991. The idea for its founding came from the Catholic Cardinal of Detroit, Adam Maida, who proposed some new initiative to meet the challenge of abandoned local neighborhoods and schools. An interdenominational coalition of civic, corporate, and political leaders responded to the call in the form of the Cornerstone School System. With its ecumenical mission to reach youth, The Servants of the Word was invited to join the new effort. Dave is only one of many brothers who have served in the school system since it began.

As a mathematician Dave once worked for the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, and has been known to read mathematics texts for recreation. Even so, in the classroom Dave is often called

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TO LOVE HIM AND TO MAKE HIM LOVED

Q&A

What is the process of commitment to The Servants of the Word?

For us, it takes between six to eight years for a brother to determine if God is calling him to our way of life. The process of discernment consists of graduated levels of commitment. Men interested in our life are invited to become Affiliates, where they can be linked with one of our households and get acquainted with our way of life and mission. This is followed, for those who sense a call to our life, by four years of formation and training, after which a brother is invited to make a full commitment for one year. This can be renewed a year at a time for several years. After this, if the brother is convinced that the brotherhood is the best place for him to live out his Christian vocation and the life-long brothers are likewise convinced, he may then make a "lifelong commitment". This is a solemn promise to live as a Servant of the Word for the rest of his life.



In This Season of Our Freedom

Beloved family and friends,

We wish you joy and peace in this special season, this greatest of all

feasts, "the season of our freedom." For while every Sunday of the year celebrates the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, Easter is the culminating victory celebration of our freedom—from sin, from death, and from all evil. We pray that in this season you may know more of the joy and the

power of the Resurrection in your own lives.

Easter is the victory celebration of our freedom—freedom from sin, from death, and from all evil.

Easter 2004

is especially joyful for the Christian people, because this year the calendars of the Eastern and Western Churches coincide on the date of Easter (and therefore of Pentecost, as well). Rather than being separated by a week or more, as more commonly occurs, the Easter season this year unites Christians of every tradition and of every place in our celebration of Christ's victory. This has special significance for The Servants of the Word as an ecumenical and international missionary brotherhood, and serves to increase our hope and our hunger that one day all of Christ's followers will be truly and fully one.

We have many other reasons for joy and gratitude in The Servants of the Word at this time, as we continue to experience God's blessing upon us in many ways. One such source of blessing for us recently has been the increasing number of fine young men who are sharing our life with us in various ways. Some are living with us temporarily while they join us in our missionary endeavors. Many are investigating our life more personally, by becoming "affiliates" in the brotherhood. Some of our affiliates live with us in our houses, while others maintain a non-residential connection to us as an initial step in their

consideration of this call, frequenting our houses and joining us for our more important events. From Michigan to Mexico, from the UK to the Philip-

pines, we are encouraged at the growth in number of the young men who are investigating our life, and we are strengthened by their energy and their zeal for God's glory. They are a source of inspiration and joy for all of us, and have increased the sound of laughter and the sound of worship in our homes.

You are also an important reason for our joy and gratitude at this time. Thank you for your love and support for us, manifested in so many different ways. Be sure that you remain in our thoughts and in our prayers. 🏔️

In the risen Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Keating". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

John Keating
Presiding Elder

Congratulations, Martin!

We are pleased to announce that Martin Steinbereithner has earned his doctorate in Social and Economic Studies. Martin, who lives in London, will receive this distinguished degree on March 19, 2004 at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration graduation ceremony. His thesis was in organizational behavior on "Career Success in Not For Profit Organizations". Congratulations Martin! 🏔️

Affiliates' Weekend: Getting Away Up North

Twelve brothers—four life-long committed and eight affiliates— headed up north to Grawn, Michigan, just south of Traverse City, for the second annual affiliates' weekend. The weekend was a great opportunity to find refreshment in the beautiful surroundings, rich fellowship, and most importantly, the Lord.

"The Lord's Day celebration was a

spiritual highlight," said Brian Laba. "John Keating addressed the affiliates, exhorting us to make every decision, especially in this season of the forty days, deliberately for Christ. Doing this is one of the most tangible ways of expressing our love for the Lord as we as affiliates seek the Lord and his will for our lives."

The affiliates are already anticipating their return to northern Michigan in the fall for their first affiliates' steelhead fishing trip near Beulah, Michigan.



Affiliates and committed brothers attending the weekend



Getting a jump on the year's trout fishing



Taking a snowy hike up Sleeping Bear Dunes

Friday evening we landed from Lansing, Detroit, and Ann Arbor at the Grey Goose Lodge, our weekend abode. Some guys played a laid-back card game while others really relaxed, watching a basketball game and enjoying one another's company. Saturday morning was spent in prayer together and personal meditation

times. After lunch, we split up into various outdoor pursuits, with some taking a snowy hike up Sleeping Bear Dune and others getting a jump on the year's trout fishing. Alas, the later activity had no effect on our dinner plans. We gathered back at the lodge and enjoyed the Lord's Day together. 🏔️

Where are The Servants of the Word located?

The Servants of the Word live together in households throughout the world. These households are located in the United States in Michigan; in London, England; Belfast, Northern Ireland; Monterrey, Mexico; and Manila, Philippines.

Our brothers come from the aforementioned countries as well as Austria, Belgium, France, Fiji, and Nicaragua.

How do brothers relate to their own local churches?

We are committed to the different churches to which we belong. We encourage each brother to participate fully as a member of his local parish or congregation—in worship, service, and financial support.



Here's a look at the Pillars of our Ideal. In upcoming issues, brothers from around the world will comment on these principles that support our common life.

"single-hearted devotion to the Lord and the love of prayer"

"The prophet Jeremiah said it best: 'You have seduced me and I let myself be seduced' (20:7). Returning to the praise of our God time and again throughout the day has become my joy, my satisfaction, and my life!"

Pepe Vasquez
Monterrey, Mexico



upon to supply more than lessons on Euclidean geometry. He stands out in many a broken life as a mentor, faithful friend, and sympathetic father figure. (It is for all these reasons that Dave goes by the name "Doc.")

Where many social programs, inner city initiatives, and even families have failed, Dave has proved to be unflinching in his presence at Cornerstone. School principal Dennis Wrosch says, "Dave is an example of holiness and servanthood not just for our students but also our staff."

In 2000, Ernestine Sanders, President of the school system, asked Dave to establish the Alumni Office as a way of making the Cornerstone experience stretch into high school, college, and beyond. Dave now focuses beyond the classroom into his students' careers. To do this, he has set up a network of communication among CS graduates to keep their vision and faith fired up.

At one of the first alumni meetings, there were more than 20 attendees—and all

were in a post-high school college or training program. Some CS grads are now attending historic black higher education institutions that produce strong African-American leaders. The achievements of these CS alumni are remarkable in light of Detroit's low rate of graduation from public high schools—currently less than 50%.

At another gathering that Doc hosted, more than 50 alumni showed up to celebrate the Cornerstone vision. The room of that downtown jazz club was filled with electricity as the alumni shared their lives and dreams with one another. Says President Sanders, "Dave's relationship building with our alumni is invaluable."

All this fills Doc with the energy to get up early and go to bed late. When you add prayer and fraternal support to a brother's life, you can see why he is filled with hope for the mission of The Servants of the Word in Detroit. 🏴‍☠️

—By Mark Whitters

"Sing a New Song to the Lord"

Contact one of the following brothers for a copy of our latest CD:

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WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP

The Servants of the Word gets its support through the financial earnings of the brothers as well as by donations from our benefactors. Many of our brothers work for sacrificial wages or for no pay at all. Please consider if you can become a financial sponsor of The Servants of the Word. Your prayers and support are appreciated in our work with young people and our community development work.

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