

INTENT AND PURPOSE OF VIA DE CRISTO

Via de Cristo is a spiritual method for the renewal of Christian life. It is directed toward having the truth and the grace of Jesus Christ proclaimed to each of the participants in Via de Cristo. This is effected through the power and work of the Holy Spirit, for we believe that we cannot by our own reason or understanding believe in Jesus Christ our Lord or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit calls us through the Gospel, enlightens us with His gifts, and sanctifies and keeps us in the true faith (see Lutheran's explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles Creed).

All activity during Via de Cristo, whether it be that of the team members (including talks and liturgies), or the tasks performed by the volunteer workers, is done with the express intention of being a channel through which the Holy Spirit can work more effectively in the lives of the participants. The presence and work of the Holy Spirit is vital to every dimension of Via de Cristo. However, Via de Cristo is not to be identified with the Charismatic Movement. The express use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit or the active seeking of such gifts during Via de Cristo is not the intention of Via de Cristo. Rather, the purpose and intent of Via de Cristo is to provide a method whereby a participant can become increasingly equipped with the power of God's grace to be an effective member of the Body of Christ. Great care must be taken so as to keep the focus on what God has done for us through Jesus Christ and what that means for His people. In every instance, all glory and praise should be given to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Via de Cristo is intended for baptized individuals who already know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It is true that the faith of many people who have participated in Via de Cristo has been vitally renewed or awakened. But it is not the intention of Via de Cristo to seek to convert the participants. Rather, through the use of this method, a participant is encouraged to persevere in this faith and to become an effective channel of God's grace to others. It is assumed that there already is a desire on the part of the participants to grow in his faith and to become more intimately involved in his relationship with Jesus Christ