

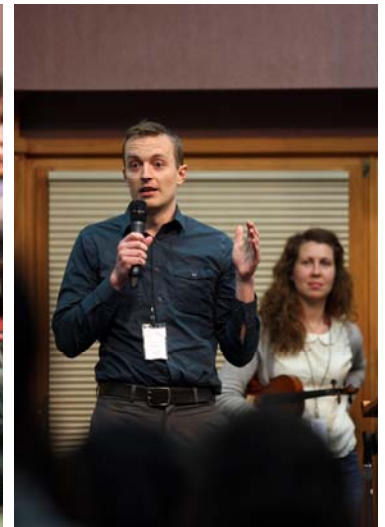
April 2016



The Sword  
of the Spirit



NORTH AMERICAN REGION NEWS



# INTO THE DEEP

The University Christian Outreach (UCO) Winter Retreat is a regional event that occurs every other year. This year it was held at Michindoh Conference Center in Hillsdale, Michigan. Over 180 people attended, including students from as far as Maryland, Florida and Los Angeles.

The retreat theme was *Into the Deep*, inspired by the passage from Matthew 14 when Jesus calls Peter to step out of the boat to walk on the water with Him. The Lord powerfully spoke to UCO students and staffers alike as God extended an invitation to each of us to offer our lives more fully to him. Nisha Seebachab, a sophomore from Maryland, said: "The retreat was amazing and gave me much-needed energy. What stood out to me was the amazing people who became instant brothers and sisters. Surrounding myself with students who are serving God with their whole heart made the experience all the more substantial me." Nico Angleys, the executive director of UCO said: "This was the best regional retreat we've had in years." Thank you to all who have supported UCO and enabled us to have the resources to put on life-changing retreats for our students. It is large-scale events like this that enable our students to feel connected to something bigger than their individual UCO chapters and meet other young people who are striving to live for the Lord.



## NAR Senior Women's Leader Conference

In November, 100 senior women's leaders from communities all over the North American Region gathered at the Wyndham Gardens Hotel in Detroit, Michigan, for a 4-day conference. The theme for the conference was **Made for Mission**. General conference sessions included a report by Paul Dinolfo, the regional president, on what the Lord is saying to us (photo, top left); a presentation by Rosemary Thornton and Molly Kilpatrick on the youth bridge; a talk by Deena Birk on what we have to offer, and a talk by Anne Kolar on loving the Lord. Several workshops were offered: care in women's groups by Joanne Beckman, women in community building by Deena Birk (photo, bottom left), discerning spiritual gifts by Sue Cummins, helping people make decisions by Christina Smith, spiritual warfare by Jan Munk, and a special workshop for Kairos leaders by Anne Kolar. Scripture meditations were offered by Stella Papa and Stephanie Smith. The regional women's leader conference is held every four years.



## Joseph Mathias, SW

Joseph Mathias had a busy year. In October, Joseph made his lifelong commitment to the Servants of the Word, an ecumenical brotherhood of celibate men (photo above). He also produced and published a music CD (insert). The CD is available from Tabor House: [www.taborpub.com](http://www.taborpub.com).



## Families for Christ, Vancouver, BC

In September the community held a Marriage Enrichment Retreat, a 3 day live-in retreat. The retreat was based on Ephesians 5:21-33, which concludes: "Let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

The goal of this weekend retreat was to strengthen the marriage relationship by developing intimacy in marriage. There were talks on the different areas of intimacy followed by guided dialogues between the couples. This retreat was a Spirit-filled opportunity for participants to reconnect as married couples.



### Families for Christ, Dallas, TX

In October, the community held a weekend men’s conference. Jim Kolar from Community of Christ the Redeemer in Saint Paul was the guest speaker. The theme of the retreat was *The Woman at the Well*, a Gospel story that transcends both time and gender.

### David Fischer, Saint Paul’s Outreach



David Fischer has joined the SPO National Headquarters team as Vice President for Advancement. David brings a wealth of corporate knowledge and fundraising expertise to SPO that will assist the organization in national development initiatives and ongoing expansion efforts.

David served with Net Ministries and on Saint Paul’s Outreach staff before graduating from St. Thomas School of Law. He has worked for the Archdiocese of Saint Paul as director of gift planning and legal affairs.



### Sword of the Spirit, Seattle, WA

The past few months have been momentous for our community. In September we received a visitation team, which evaluated and recommended Sword of the Spirit become an affiliate community. In February, the Community Building Team approved that recommendation. So, now we are on our way and delighted to be in formation.

### Brotherhood of Hope, Fr. Paul Helfrich



One of the founding members of the Brotherhood of Hope, Fr. Paul Helfrich, received a special commission from Pope Francis to serve as a Missionary of Mercy during the Catholic Church's Year of Mercy. Missionaries of Mercy are distinguished by their patience and will serve as special confessors to those wishing to repair their relationship with and re-engage life in the Catholic Church.



### Family of Faith Community, Newark, NJ

In December, the community had a joyful Christmas celebration. The celebration included lost of worship, skits by community children, symbolic gifts to Jesus, a performance by the high-school youth band, and a dance performed by the whole community to the song *Joy to the World*.



## Kairos North America: Winter Events

The Kairos office spent much of the winter preparing for its spring and summer programs. Even so, we had some very cool events over the last few months that are worth mentioning...

In early December, Kairos hosted a retreat for fathers and junior-high sons called the ***Preparing for Adolescence Weekend***. It was a great time to talk about the next stage of life for the young men, and a good chance to throw the football around with dad.

In January, over 160 young professionals assembled in Columbus, Ohio, for the second annual ***Legacy Conference*** (photo at top). We had an impressive roster of speakers: John Stevenson (SPO, Kanas City), Andrew Kebe (SPO, Columbus), Mike Shaughnessy (Kairos), and Martin Steinbereithner (Servants of the Word). People came from all over the United States, as well as Canada, Mexico, and even Scotland! The weekend was a huge success.

Kairos has sponsored two weekend training seminars for worship leaders in high school and collegiate environments. The first took place February 5-7 in South Orange, New Jersey (photo: bottom right). About 25 people attended, with representatives from SPO New Jersey, UCO Pittsburgh, UCO Maryland, the Brotherhood of Hope outreaches at Rutgers and in Orlando, FL, and more. The second took place February 12-14 in Lansing, Michigan (photo: bottom left). More than 50 people attended, from Lansing, Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids, Columbus, San Marcos, Kanas City, St Paul, Dayton, Cincinnati, and even Tempe, Arizona. What a group!

*The Sword of the Spirit* is dedicated to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ and strengthening Christian people (Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox) through active evangelization and by forming Christian communities.

In our youth outreach and community building work, we encourage men and women to give their lives fully to Jesus Christ, practice daily Christian discipleship, and to zealously proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to others.

The Sword of the Spirit is supported by charitable contributions. Your support is welcome! Contributions to The Sword of the Spirit are tax deductible in the United States.

Jerry Munk, Newsletter Editor

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