



LTi E-Newsletter
May/June 2004

*“Talk about Transformation!”
Depth of Soul ~ Vitality in Service*

From the Ministry Journal of Steve Macchia

“...here then is another reason why apostles withdraw to make a retreat: they need to be charged with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given to those who watch and pray and wait patiently, those who have the courage to get away from everything and come to grips with themselves and with God in solitude and silence. No wonder every one of the great prophets, indeed Jesus himself, retired to the desert for prolonged periods of silence, praying, fasting, wrestling with the forces of evil. The desert is the furnace where the apostle and the prophet are forged. The desert, not the marketplace. The marketplace is where apostles function. The desert is where they are formed and seasoned and receive their commission and their message for the world...”

from Contact With God by Anthony de Mello

Personal Reflections...

The LTi board has been using the same prayer book in our personal prayer closets throughout this first year of ministry. The above quote was in this week's readings, written by Anthony de Mello. It reminded me of what is becoming a centerpiece of the LTi ministry...inviting leaders and teams to enjoy the refreshment of soul that comes from large blocks of time on retreat. It is when we pause to listen and invite the presence of God's Spirit into our quiet hours of prayer and biblical reflection that we begin to experience the opening of the eyes of our hearts. This is when we truly see the handiwork of God all around us, as His grace and love envelop us and prepare us to enter the 'marketplaces' of our lives. Join us in this journey toward the abundant life in Christ!

Coming Alongside...

Our inaugural Soul Care Retreat was a fabulous time for the pastors and leaders in attendance. We praise God for this service to those who are hungering for a deeper experience of prayer and reflection. A few comments from attendees tells the story...

- *“The Soul Care Retreat was a huge “I love you!” from our heavenly Father. It was an especially precious gift to me as a pastor - 24 hours set aside to seek the Father's heart in gently guided silence and solitude. And the location - wow! Beautiful grounds, sacred space - the perfect setting in which to answer God's call to 'be still and know that I am God.'”*
- *“This 24-hr retreat was food and balm for my soul. I didn't know how much I needed this time away from the unremitting demands of pastoring and to take time to go deeper in my relationship to God. I had time to stop, look and listen. (Just getting away to stop is half the battle!)”*
- *“I can confidently say God touched me very deeply, through the silence, through the interaction with the other people at the retreat, and through my one on one soul care conversation - definitely. I rediscovered the number one priority of my life - intimacy with my heavenly Father. I regained my focus and perspective in life and everything else that was troubling me by the end of the retreat suddenly seemed to pale in significance to the blessing of being close to God once again.”*

Our next Soul Care Retreat is June 14 and 15 – please pray for us!

Soul Care Retreats for the fall will be for any pastor or ministry leader interested in joining us for 27 hours of spiritual refreshment! The dates are: October 25 and 26; November 8 and 9; and December 6 and 7...all Monday from 4pm through Tuesday at 7pm, held at Emery House in West Newbury. Information is on our website. Sign up soon...space is very limited.

Recommended Readings...

My first book, *Becoming A Healthy Church*, has recently been released in Chinese! This language version joins the previous printings in English, Spanish and Korean. And, it is soon to be released in the Russian and Thai languages. We praise God for the ongoing helpfulness of this resource for pastors and church leaders. If you have missionary friends serving in other parts of the world, you may want to mention this to them.

Two other books I have recently read and can heartily recommend are both written by Dallas Willard, a highly esteemed leader in the area of spiritual formation:

- *In Search of Guidance*(Zondervan, 1993) – developing a conversational relationship with God that leads to discernment in decision making as intimate partners with God.
- *Renovation of the Heart* (NavPress, 2002)– a wonderful, refreshing and stimulating text on spiritual formation as a priority for every serious Christian; tremendous material on transforming the mind, will, body and soul of the believer.

Renewal Yearnings...

Dallas Willard offers a challenge to believers of our day, when he writes “in this culture that cries out for direction, most Christians know that true direction comes only from Christ. But many well-meaning Christians try to serve the Lord with a narrow focus on acts and accomplishments, neglecting to build a personal relationship with their Creator.”

We are discovering that many serious Christian leaders...pastors and ministry leaders alike...are hungering to grow deeper in their walks with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If this is your longing as well, then I invite you to join the LTi community of like-hearted believers. Please let me know how we can be of service to you and your team.

Thanks for joining us on this exhilarating spiritual adventure...for the glory of God, the depth of your soul, and the vitality of your service in the kingdom. We're all in this together, and that is nothing short of pure joy!

Your brother in Christ,

Steve Macchia

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