



LTi E-Newsletter  
December 2003

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

From the Ministry Journal of Steve Macchia

Wow – the world of spiritual transformation within and among leaders is positively awe-inspiring! What a delight it is to serve the spiritual formation needs of leaders and the spiritual discernment processes of leadership teams in church and parachurch ministry settings. We celebrate the fact that so many have responded to our invitation to join us in this pioneering ministry with prayers, participation, and practical support. We’d love to hear any comments and questions – your feedback matters a lot to us, particularly as we launch this new work together.

#### Personal Reflections...

We are only starting our 6<sup>th</sup> month of ministry, and God has already seen fit to invite us into the spiritual formation worlds of many servant leaders. One of the richest privileges to date has been our first big “project” at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, directing the Pierce Disciple-Building Center. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed setting up the LTi office on the GCTS South Hamilton campus, interacting with students, faculty and staff on this relatively new – and very exciting – ministry initiative. Our prayer is that God will use the Pierce Center to heighten interest and involvement in spiritual formation groups and disciple-building relationships and activities across all three campuses (South Hamilton, MA Boston, MA and Charlotte, NC) and into the wider community.

#### Coming Alongside...

We are engaged in regular spiritual direction relationships with several ministry leaders who are interested in going deeper in their daily walk with Christ. These have been fruitful times of one-with-one ministry. Also, we are in dialogue with several leaders of churches and other Christian organizations, who are coming to us with a keen interest in discovering more about spiritual formation as the basis of their leadership development efforts. They are intrigued by how we can serve as a catalyst for their personal reconnection with the Spirit’s work in and through them as leaders. In particular, there are two denominations that are asking us to help them with church leadership training, including spiritual formation and church health assessment/planning. The LTi board is engaged in diligent, prayerful discernment about our focused energies for the future. We want to be engaged in high leverage ministry relationships with key leaders and teams who are ready for us to come alongside them for these purposes. I will share more about our ministry plans for 2004 in our next issue of this e-newsletter in early January!

#### Recommended Readings...

Larry Crabb is a new friend and swiftly becoming a mentor for the LTi leadership team. In preparation for my recent involvement in his “School of Spiritual Direction” I read three of his latest titles (*Shattered Dreams*; *Safest Place on Earth*; and *Pressure’s Off*). While we were participating in the school, we received a copy of his latest book, *Soul Talk*. This new title is well worth the read...especially if you are passionate about speaking the language of the soul with those you relate with most deeply. *Soul Talk*, like all of Crabb’s books, is refreshingly honest and spiritually renewing. I’d highly recommend this enlightening book for each member of the LTi family.

## Renewal Yearnings...

In an effort to get off on the right spiritual footing as a leadership team, the LTi board (Kevin Parke, Iain Whitfield, David Schultz, Diana Bennett, Kathy Crowell, Brian Lacey and yours truly) prayed through a 40-day series of spiritual readings, Scripture passages, and written prayers this past summer. As a result, our spiritual bonding as a team is strong, as it proved to be a spiritually enriching journey for all of us. Now, we are committing to the year-long *Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God* (Reuben Job and Norman Shawchuck, Upper Room Books, 2003) to continue to deepen our spiritual commitment to one another and to the discernment of God's unique plan for the ministry of LTi ...

In one of our recent readings, Reuben Job asks a probing question, "What are you searching for that consumes all your energy and attention?" He answers, "The quest for God is a search worthy of our all-consuming passion and energy. The biblical record indicates that such a search is always generously rewarded. Jesus asked two of John's disciples (John 1:38) what they were looking for and invited them to come and see where and how he lived. The desire to know and be near to God has been placed within as an invitation to a lifelong quest for companionship with the divine. And yet, from personal experience we know that sometimes we look in all the wrong places. These disciples of Jesus were invited to continue their search where Jesus was, and not where he was not. Our directions are certainly as plain as theirs are.

What are you looking for today and where will your search be successful? The quest for God is always successful when carried out where God is to be found. Where shall we begin the search? The deep inner rooms of our soul, sacred Scriptures, the book of history, current events, the lives of the saints, the poor and oppressed seeking our companionship, and the creation itself offer places where God has been most readily found in the past. Today pay attention to what has your undivided attention and follow the clues to a closer walk with God." (Guide to Prayer, page 376).

Thanks for joining us on this new 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!

Your brother in Christ,

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