

2023 Annual Report of the NLS Spiritual Director

I was elected as the National Spiritual director at the 2022 Annual Gathering in Seguin, Texas. Reflecting on this past year, I feel like I'm still learning about my role as the National Lutheran Secretariat Spiritual Director. I believe my role is to advise the Executive Committee on theological implications of what we do in Via de Cristo.

My primary work this past year has been composing a weekly devotional that appears each Sunday and prayers that are posted Monday through Friday each week.

In January, I facilitated a Spiritual Directors Roundtable via Zoom. There was discussion about what was going well and some areas that needed improvement. Everyone who participated shared what was happening in their secretariats. I thought it was a very positive exchange of ideas. At this writing, we will be having another SD roundtable on June 6th, 2023.

I have also written two seasonal messages for the *Conexiones* newsletter; one for Christmas and one for Easter.

I attended all but one of the NLS Executive Committee and board meetings and also attended the mid-year planning meeting in Indianapolis.

Via de Cristo is finally rebounding from the pandemic. More and more secretariats are scheduling and implementing weekends. One concern most secretariats have is the difficulty of engaging SD's for their weekends. Certainly, that is a prayer concern, but beyond that, we need to encourage our pastors to serve on weekends. Hopefully, the SD Support Committee will be able to find some ways to address that concern.

I am here to serve Via de Cristo and to assist members in their ministries through Via De Cristo. Please feel free to contact me about any questions, concerns, or ideas you have.

God loves you, and so do I,
Pastor G. Karl Gaston
NLS Spiritual Director