

JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS

June Newsletter

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. ~ [Jeremiah 29:11](#)

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

Even though we are already into the sixth month of 2021, it is a new year for the Journey To Damascus (JTD) Community. We follow the calendar of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, so June is the first month of their fiscal year. A new year comes with new goals and commitments! As a board, we are finally meeting in person after 14 months of Zoom meetings!!

We have added a few new board members and are ready to get back to work planning the 2022 weekends. We're so excited at the thought of welcoming new pilgrims to our JTD Community! But we cannot do it alone. We absolutely need and welcome your help in bringing new people into our Community.

Think back to when you were invited to attend. Maybe you were hesitant. Maybe you were intrigued. Then think about how you felt AFTER the weekend was over. Was it a feeling of renewal? Of hope? Of commitment to being the fishermen we are all called to be? Weren't we created to help one another?

As a government contractor, I think back to five years ago when I was given an opportunity to bid on a grounds maintenance contract for the Navy. It was something completely out of my company's expertise of electrical contracting. I had to give a quote on the maintenance of approximately 2,500 acres; including mowing, weed eating and clearing land on a 24/7 basis. I had no clue how to begin putting numbers together. All I knew was that I was going to add 20 new employees just to keep this contract running.

I asked my employees for help, but they had no clue. I asked my business associates, but they had no clue. I asked family and friends, but they had no clue. All I heard was: "Sorry, but I have no idea." I was beginning to feel so defeated because I was going to have to give the opportunity back and say, "NO QUOTE." I went home one Friday night and found two of my reunion group ladies waiting at my house. They could tell I was stressed and asked what was wrong. I explained to them how frustrated and overwhelmed I felt. One of them said to me: "I will help you."

Those four little words gave me hope beyond explanation. My spirits were lifted immediately, and the weight of the world was released from my shoulders. That weekend the two of us started with basic attempts in putting the package together. I was only given three weeks to get a 25-page bid package together, but WE did it. We were awarded the contract. It amazed me that all I really needed was SOMEONE to offer help; to let me know I wasn't alone. So don't ever turn down an opportunity to tell someone: "I will help you." That help could easily be an invite to a Journey Weekend. You never know the hope you could bring to someone in a critical time of need.

De Colores!

SAVE THE DATES

All of the weekends have been moved to 2022 and these are the dates we have scheduled with the Pax Christi.

Corpus Christi Men's
March 24 - 27, 2022
Shane Beckwith

Corpus Christi Women's
April 21 - 24, 2022
Marivel Garza

Corpus Christi Men's
June 16 - 19, 2022
Joe Willisden

Corpus Christi Women's
July 28 - 31, 2022
Edna Lopez

Corpus Christi Men's
September 15 - 18, 2022
Rick Oliveria

Corpus Christi Women's
October 27 - 30, 2022
Janie Riojas

Anna Adrian

President, Journey to Damascus – Corpus Christi

journeybod@gmail.com

General mailbox for JTD Board of Directors



2022 Weekend News

Contact us at:

Journeybod@gmail.com

Shane Beckwith
JTD # 197
March 24-27

Dear Journey to Damascus community,

All six team meetings and all 13 talks were complete, the prayer vigil and agape list were full, the music team was in perfect tune, the cook team was sharpening their knives and the team of JTD #197, as one Body in Christ, was less than two weeks away from welcoming pilgrims to the best Journey ever.....and then COVID struck. To be so close, yet so far away had a new meaning for this team. Finally, after a two-year postponement, we are finally able to move forward with JTD #197. Our St. Elsewhere team will begin meeting again over the next few months to devise and set a plan in motion to continue this great journey. Over the course of the past two years, people have changed, their lives have changed and I'm sure some talks have changed, so we will have at least three additional team meetings to rekindle the fire of God's love built within us as a team. We look forward to your continued love and support as we, once again, prepare for JTD #197 and the pilgrims God is calling to the weekend.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the JTD Annual Gathering on July 17th!

Marivel Garza
JTD #198
April 21-24, 2022

"The Lord will hold you in His Hand for all to see-A Splendid Crown for the King of Kings."
Isaiah 62:3

In 2020, we had five team meetings completed. In 2021, we started team meetings both in person and zoom and had completed two. In April 2020 (the weekend JTD#198 was to take place) we had a complete virtual JTD for all of team.

And have had connection with team through FB, traditional mail, zoom reunion groups, and zoom meetings to keep everyone in touch and up to date throughout the time to present.

Agape List and Prayer Vigil list were completed in 2020. They have not been reviewed for completion since April 2020.

We are looking for a new assistant spiritual director to fill the shoes of Sister Teresa as we wish her our best with her move. We are also looking for enthusiastic music team members and a music director.

Edna Lopez Alonso
JTD #201
July 28-31, 2022

Let All That You Do Be Done with Love. 1 Corinthians 16:14

Our team completed 2 team meetings with 4 talks presented. St. Elsewhere meetings were held prior to team meetings and continued to remain in communication via zoom, text, email. Our St. Elsewhere continues to keep our team in prayer along with our JTD community. Our team was able to host a JTD Community Agape Drive-thru collection event 1/30/2021. Items donated were dropped off at the Mother Teresa Shelter, Purple Door, Good Samaritan Shelter and Communities in Schools.

We completed an online prayer vigil during our original weekend dates. We also collected items to donate to Sr. Teresa at Pax Retreat Center at a time when masks, cleaning supplies and household items were difficult to find.

Agape List is 75% complete. We will need to update any additional items that may be needed. Prayer Vigil will need to be updated with new dates.

Janie Riojas
JTD #204
October 27-30, 2022

Show me your ways Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God My Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. Psalm 25: 4 - 5

We have had two "unofficial" team meetings. These meetings were inspired to start our team bonding since we are the last Journey of 2022. They have been small gatherings but full of the Holy Spirit and we are excited to begin having our official meetings next year.

Agape is being updated to accommodate Covid-19 guidelines and to make sure we meet the requirements set forth by the Diocese of Corpus Christi and Pax Christi.

Prayer Vigil is in the process of being created with hopefulness and prayer as we look forward to 2022.

Website & Pilgrim/Team Applications

If you are looking for a member of the Board of Directors, look no further! Pop on over to the Journey to Damascus website and you can find all of the email addresses for each of the current Board members. Please feel free to reach out to any of the Board Members anytime..

<https://www.journeytodamascus.org/>

Annual Gathering - 2021

2021 ANNUAL GATHERING

SATURDAY July 17th, 2021

St. Pius X Parish Hall

747 Saint Pius Dr. Corpus Christi, TX 78412

6:30 – 9:30 PM

The Journey to Damascus Board of Directors cordially invites the entire JTD Community and your family to the annual gathering for fellowship, music and sharing a meal together. The BOD will be providing beef and chicken fajitas, tortillas, rice and beans.

The community is asked to provide appetizers and desserts.

Please bring enough to feed 10 – 12 people.

Last Names A – L: Provide Appetizers

Last Names M – Z: Provide Desserts

The music and celebration begins at 6:30 pm, with a blessing and meal at 7:15 pm. There will be one speaker highlighting the impact of the Journey to Damascus weekend on their spiritual and personal lives.

Please RSVP to journeybod@gmail.com with the number in your party that will be attending. It is very important that you RSVP so we can make sure we have enough room for everyone within the guidelines of the Diocese of Corpus Christi.

Board News

Board of Directors Elections

The Board of Directors is proud to announce the following new and returning members:

Anna Adrian -President
Paul Pilarczyk – Past-President
Robert Marraro- Vice President
Mariza Rodriguez - Treasurer
Cindy Garcia – Historian
Rebecca Esparza - Secretary
Janie Riojas
Alex Bayarena
Dale Hernandez
Angela Wendel
Casey Mengele
Doug Walker

Missions and Retreats

If your church is hosting Silent Retreats or Missions, please let Angela Wendel

(sunshineaggie@gmail.com) or another board member know so we can include it in our newsletter for the community. In an effort to continue to support the community we are trying to make everyone aware of activities around our community.

Candlelight Committee

The Board is looking for volunteers from the community to help with our Candlelight Committee. Please contact anyone on the Board or send an email to our general mail box journeybod@gmail.com or contact Rebecca Esparza @ rebeccaesparza2@gmail.com. Rebecca is our new Committee Chair to the Board for the Candlelight Committee.

New Email address for the Board of Directors!!!

journeybod@gmail.com

Reunion Groups



CHRIST IS COUNTING ON YOU

We have no words to express how heartbreaking it has been to have experienced two straight years without Journey Weekends due to a global pandemic. However, our saving grace has been our Reunion Groups. Some groups have not stopped meeting, while others have gone to virtual meetings. We realize many groups stopped meeting altogether, which is understandable considering CDC guidelines, mask mandates and the lack of a vaccine. However, we have persevered through all of these obstacles and now need to refocus on getting back on track and resume regular Reunion Group meetings. Think back to your 4th Day experience and how important it is to preserve the feeling of your Journey experience every day. Reunion Groups are meant to help you stay focused on your faith and help you understand how you can continually strive to be better.

Here are some tips to getting back on track with a Reunion Group:

- If you've lost touch with your group or never found a group, click [here](#) for a current list of all Reunion Groups (men and women).
- If you are forming a new group or reestablishing a former group, pick a day and time each week and stick to it. Regular attendance is important and will eventually develop into a habit.
- What is said at Reunion Group, stays at Reunion Group. We are a prayer group seeking support in keeping the fire of God lit in our hearts, not a gossip circle.

- Use the Reunion Group cards given to you at the end of your Journey Weekend to keep your meetings focused on sharing about your experiences with your Holy life. We know it's easy to get off topic but keeping group meetings the same length of time consistently will keep members coming back.

If you need help with your Reunion Group, need more Order of Reunion Group cards or have any specific questions regarding this topic, please feel free to reach out to any Board Member. We are here to help you succeed and thrive with your Reunion Group! Remember, once we start having Journeys again, our pilgrims will need Reunion Groups to attend. Now is the time to start up again with regular attendance. God bless and De Colores!

Some Words from the Wise

From the desk of Deacon Rey Rojas

Love is patient, love is kind, It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 1 Corinthians 13: 4-5

As I reflected on many years of service in various capacities, I have found myself hurt by others, I have also hurt others, and I am sure that I have hurt others that I did not even know that I have hurt. I selected this particular reading for both of my daughter's weddings and have reflected on it many times.

Do you recall your first Journey or Walk? I was a newly ordained deacon assigned to a spiritual formation that I knew nothing about. The weekend had been very moving and reached deep into my heart. I have heard Isaiah 6:8 many times and it was very familiar with the hymn "Here I am, Lord". That evening as I listened to the hymn that I knew well, at the question "Whom shall I send?", involuntarily my hand went up. I often hear that question when I find myself upset with someone, or myself, or I recognize a need that needs attention. Many years ago, I heard a story that often comes back to me, and I would like to share it with you.

Night after night, she came to tuck me in, even long after my childhood years. Following her longstanding custom, she'd lean down and push my long hair out of the way, then kiss my forehead.

I don't remember when it first started annoying me—her hands pushing my hair that way. But it did annoy me, for they felt work-worn and rough against my young skin. Finally, one night, I lashed out at her: "Don't do that anymore—your hands are too rough!" She didn't say anything in reply. Never again did my mother close out our day with that familiar expression of her love. Lying awake long afterward, my words haunted me. But pride stifled my conscience, and I didn't tell her I was sorry.

Time after time, with the passing years, my thoughts returned to that night. By then I missed my mother's hands, missed her goodnight kiss upon my forehead. Sometimes the incident seemed very close, sometimes far away. But always it lurked, hauntingly, in the back of my mind.

Well, the years have passed, and I'm not a little girl anymore. Mom is in her mid-seventies, and those hands I once thought to be so rough are still doing things for me and my family. She's been our doctor, reaching into a medicine cabinet for the remedy to calm a young girl's stomach or soothe a boy's scraped knee. She cooks the best fried chicken in the world . . . and still insists on dishing out ice cream at any hour of the day or night.

Through the years, my mother's hands have put in countless hours of toil, and most of hers were before perma-press fabrics and automatic washers!

Now, my own children are grown and gone. Mom no longer has Dad, and on special occasions, I find myself drawn next door to spend the night with her. So it was that late one Thanksgiving

Eve, as I drifted into sleep in the bedroom of my youth, a familiar hand hesitantly stole across my face to brush the hair from my forehead. Then a kiss, ever so gently touched my brow.

In my memory, for the thousandth time, I recalled the night my surly young voice complained: "Don't do that anymore—your hands are too rough!" I reacted involuntarily. Catching Mom's hand in mine, I blurted out how sorry I was for that night. I thought she'd remember, as I did. But Mom didn't know what I was talking about. She had forgotten—and forgiven—long ago.

That night, I fell asleep with a new appreciation for my gentle mother and caring hands. And the guilt I had carried around for so long was nowhere to be found.

As we pray and prepare our hearts for the formation of teams for the Journey to Damascus 2022 season and the pilgrims that will participate and join our community, let us find peace though love and forgiveness. I hope that this story prepares us for similar stories that we will encounter. Let us keep in mind ST. Paul's letter to the Corinthians where here teaches us the many attributes of love.

De Colores,
Deacon Rey Rojas

Agape Appeal

GOAL

Due to an increase in food and lodging costs over the last few years, the Annual Agape Appeal will be used to off-set these increased expenses for the Team and Pilgrims.

The Annual Agape Appeal's goal is to:

- Never turn anyone away by making the weekend affordable for **ALL**.
- Provide a sustainable, annual fund to insure the continuation of JTD for **ALL**.

The intent of this appeal is to assist those who need monetary support in order to attend this Christian weekend. No one should be turned away due to financial need.

By joining our resources, we can insure JTD's continuation for friends, family and strangers.

AGAPE DONATION

Suggested donations:

- \$5.00 each month
- \$60.00 Annually
- \$30.00 Semi-annually
- \$15.00 Quarterly
- \$100.00 Husband and wife

Or... Whatever you can GIVE

It's not about how **MUCH** each one can give.
It's about how **MANY** will give.

Only \$5.00 a month folks!

UNITY

With God all things are possible. And by uniting together, we can change the world!

Please sign up for the JTD News Letter at: www.journeytodamascus.org
All the information on how to send your Annual Agape Appeal will be available.

Please make checks Payable to Journey to Damascus and write **JTD Appeal** in note section of check. Please include your name, address, email address and phone number.

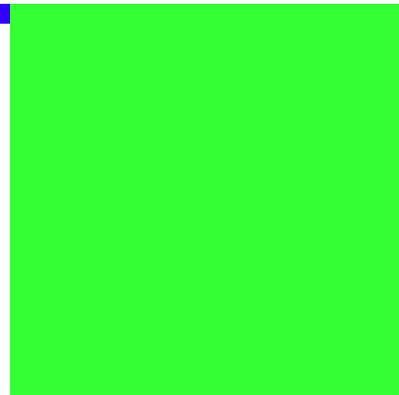
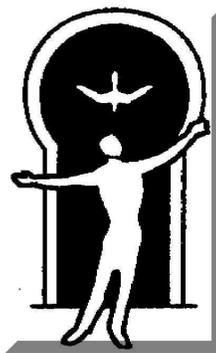
You may send it to **JTD Appeal**, P.O. Box 948, Corpus Christi, TX 78403.

Please help spread this opportunity by word of mouth or social media to encourage **all** the JTD community members to participate in this appeal.

De Colores

Sr. Angela Murdaugh Scholarship Fund

We are also very pleased to announce the establishment of the Sister Angela Murdaugh Scholarship Fund. The goal is to be able to pay the weekend fee for one pilgrim per JTD weekend from this scholarship. To raise money to fund this endeavor we are selling JTD car emblems. The cost of the emblems is \$10. If you would like to order emblems for yourself, as gifts for your Reunion group please contact Dale Hernandez at dale_hernandez@yahoo.com.



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