



Overcomers Outreach

**"Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Recovery and Churches"
September 2013 Newsletter**

From the Director -



This time of year is a time of transition for many. Back to school, back to work, or back to the "old routine", the daylight lessens, the nighttime lengthens, and we may find ourselves a little uneasy with the new season. Then autumn bursts forth in the beauty of change - the time of harvest - and we are reminded of the abundant life - life with Jesus at the center. The new life Christ brings to us is complete and full. We share this abundant life in Christ with others as we reach out in love to help and encourage them. Our "Bridge" is a relationship with God and each other. Our groups are where we can start, then grow these relationships, and as we grow in Christ, so we grow in our relationships with others. When our groups begin to work together, the opportunities for stronger relations with others increase. When groups get together for events and sharing, we have yet more opportunity to invite others from outside fellowships to get to know our Lord, and us, and new life in the community grows.

Take a moment and ask God to show you the blessing you have in this life right now. Ask how you can share this blessing with others. Perhaps you can offer an invitation to a meal, take someone to a meeting, or to church. If you do not see the blessing you have, perhaps it is time to ask the Lord Jesus Christ into your life. Come to a meeting, come to church, and come to know Him, for He cares for you.

Another "time of harvest" is when we reconcile with others. We restore our broken or damaged relationships through forgiveness and making our amends to those we have harmed, clearing the way for love and grace to flow. We obey and glorify God when we love one another.

"Spaghetti Feed"

Some of the groups in and near the San Fernando Valley gathered for a night of fellowship and a spaghetti dinner, followed by a guest speaker meeting.



Dinner and Fellowship

It was a great evening, and several people (including our guest speaker) were introduced to OO and who we are. A great meal, good message, and sincere fellowship resulted in a lot of smiles and contentment. A lot of interest in starting other groups was expressed by several of those in attendance.



Speaker Meeting

The San Fernando Bible Chapel group hosted the event as a "fund-raiser" for the OO Central Office, and a generous donation was made.

These events are great ways to get together and reach out to the local recovery and church communities - to "carry the message"!

Upcoming Events:

The Overcomers Outreach World Convention, January 17th-18th, 2014, will be in Cedar Hill, TX, at the Cedar Hill Church of Christ. Special room rates available, program details are on the [Events](#) page of the website. There will be life skills workshops, speakers, food, childcare, and more - all free!

The Mailbox - Philippines Writes:

Greetings in the blessed Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I just browsed your website and the joy of seeing some of your blessed ministry cannot be expressed. I am very grateful and interested your ministry. Would you send us some of your inspiring literature? Keep up the good works for the Lord and especially your love of sharing the gospel in your community. May the Lord continue to bless and to give you more of His inspiration for His kingdom works. My family and I stand with you in our daily prayers, please count us as your covenant prayer partners (Matt. 18:19). The blessing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will overtake unto you. "To God Be the Glory!"

I am *Pastor Edilberto M. Senonis Sr.* my nickname is "Bert", serving the Lord at an independent and community church here in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. Our vision and mission is to share the Gospel here in our community through evangelistic crusade, food ministry to the poor kids, church plants, TV and radio broadcasts, and to extend the small expressions of Love to the very poor native families.

I am happy for the ministry that God has given to me. Praise God that he used me in that kind of ministry. All the Glory and honor is for the Lord. As servant of Jesus Christ, I need others to be encouraged to pray in partnership. I must say that I need you to pray for Great God works here in the Philippines, so please remember our community in your daily prayers. Pray for our dreams to come out in reality to the Glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

May the almighty who has called us continue to lead and guide us to do His will to His Glory. May God bless you and prosper your ministry.

Yours in the Love of Jesus- Pastor Bert

Nebraska Writes:

Greetings - My name is Keryl A and I live in a small town called Wahoo, Nebraska. I work as an activity director at a recovery house in the afternoon. We have about 37 people there and some of them are recovering from some type of addiction. Many of their families are no longer involved in their life. We have tried AA here but it has not really taken off yet. I am looking for someone who has a heart for this in our area. They may respond to me at albertsville@hotmail.com and list Overcomers as the subject.

Thank You - Keryl A

Face Book posts:

I tried to help a person yesterday who is suffering from this disease but unfortunately they are still in denial and they say they can do it on their own. I'm praying for this person as they are very sick (physically) and homeless now, but I cannot jeopardize my recovery by taking them in. I gave them food, water and a ride. I can't FIX anybody but God can, so I pray. -- Jan K

I picked up my multiple year key tag tonight celebrating 6 years of sobriety by the grace of God! Thank you Jesus for Your grace and mercy and help me to get through the next 24 hours in Jesus name! - Scot H

Posted on our Blog - "The Bridge"

Our blog site serves as an online meeting. These are posts to the pages underlined:

Does Someone you Love - I just read this article and my life is like Donna's above; it is heart wrenching and destroying. I am glad we are not married, but it is hard to walk away from a relationship that 95% of the time is great. He is a good man, not abusive or demeaning, just loves his beer and a lot of it. He does not drink in moderation. I want to talk to others with my situation. My hardest to take is when he can't talk or walk; as if he is 17 again...it is hard when you are in your 50's dealing with this issue, but even harder to find someone without issues in their life. I know I have mine and I work hard at dealing with them on a daily basis...can someone please provide me advice. - Ruthee

Sharing Jesus - Did Alex's respond to his statement that Bill & Bob were not Christian? Also, I brought up the name of Jesus in a room once and felt scared to leave for fear of being stoned to death. It seems strange to me that people in the program can be so freaked out by Jesus. Are we not supposed to be honest open and willing? - Sean C

Prayers and Problems - I am struggling with anorexia. It has been a combination of having to eat a restricted diet due to stomach problems and emotional issues related to low self-esteem. I am seeing a Nutritionist and a Christian counselor. I am now at 80 pounds and have some physical problems due to my low weight. Everyone is worried about me. But I still fear gaining weight and bringing back stomach problems if I change my eating habits. I was hoping that blogging with other Christians who have struggled with anorexia would encourage me to make some changes. - Cindy S

Happy Birthday/Anniversary -

The following people celebrate milestones in recovery: Enrique 3yrs, San Fernando, CA; Rick H 11yrs, Burley, ID; Jeff M 11yrs, Whittier, CA; Jennifer B 12yrs, Lockport, IL; Helen r 13yrs, Fountain Valley, CA; David T 15yrs, St. Helens, OR; Shareon H 25yrs, Mack's Inn, ID; Judy H 31yrs, Cathedral City, CA; and Bette K 32yrs, Simi Valley, CA. They made donations for each year of their recovery to the Central Office to express their gratitude and help us "carry the message". The groups in Yorba Linda, CA and La Grange, IL both celebrated 24 yr. anniversaries this year. The groups make regular 7th tradition donations to the Central Office and continue, through their love and support, to help many people. If you or your group would like to be added to our list, please visit our "[Birthday Page](#)" or call the Central Office for details.

New Groups - Welcome to our newest groups in Ellenville, NY, Sedgwick, KS, Poway, CA, Peshtigo, WI, and Riverdale, GA. We pray that God will use you to help others and advance His Kingdom.

From our pamphlet "Restoration" - Step 9.

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

"You can pray for anything, and if you believe, you have it; it's yours! But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive you your sins too."

Mark 11:24-25

Direct-Straightforward and candid; frank: Having no intervening persons, conditions, or agencies; immediate
Wherever-In or to whatever place

We have our list of names and what we are willing to do to repair the injuries we have caused by our old behavior. Just as we sought to share our 5th step with another human being, it is important that we review our intentions with someone else before proceeding. Is our motive for the benefit of the other party? We want to make amends, not to cause more harm. In some cases it may be that the best course of action is not to reopen "old wounds" by bringing back painful memories of the past. The insight provided by others who have worked this step themselves is invaluable. Restitution should be made for all debts, and any apology offered should be accompanied with positive action and sincere effort to "clean our side of the street". We only present our own faults and make whatever reparation we can. We ask for the strength and guidance we need to do the right thing regardless of the personal consequences we may face.

Response to our attempts may range from being held fully accountable to being excused, but we must be ready for the full consequences of our past acts and take responsibility for the well-being of others at the same time. Forgiving others releases us from resentment toward them and making amends may release them from their resentment toward us.

Our amends are to be direct. We may find it necessary to travel, but we trust God to put the individual before us when the time is right. We may write letters or make phone calls to initiate the process, but we try to be as direct as we can. The most important amends we make is that we are no longer the person who would treat others so poorly.

Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the LORD a man avoids evil.

Proverbs 16:6

When we humble ourselves and ask God to rid us of our flaws of character, we begin to clear a channel for His love to flow through us. We seek to amend our wrongs toward others out of both love and justice. By loving our neighbors as we love ourselves we obey God's command and come to know His love for us even more. Our relationships with others grow as well.

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. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

1 Corinthians 13:4-6

As we continue to make our amends, we grow in our love for God, for others and ourselves as His servants. We continue to release the shame and guilt of our past by offering to set past wrongs right. Even when our offers are refused, we have planted a seed of love and forgiveness that still may blossom and bring healing later. The result of our action is a new freedom from the past for us and we see how our experience can help others. We begin to know peace and happiness as never before. The realization comes that God is changing us, indeed He is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

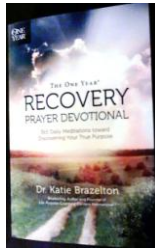
You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

Galatians 5:13

Literature Update

Our literature serves as "building blocks" for our groups and our outreach, but our foundation remains the "rock" of Jesus Christ.

We now have [wall posters](#) - "12 Steps with Scriptures" and "OO 12 Traditions". They are 20 inches wide and 30 inches long, with dark green lettering on white vinyl, with hanging grommets. Other sizes are available. Contact the office by phone or email for further details



NEW! ["The One Year Recovery Prayer Devotional"](#) is for those

who are seeking freedom and recovery from destructive habits and addictions. This daily devotional, which features the Twelve

Steps for Believers, will help you experience a life-changing breakthrough, liberating you from harmful patterns of behavior. Each day, the book encourages you to bring your struggles to God in prayer, asking for strength and power. - \$10 plus shipping

Our [Steps and Traditions Guidebook](#) has been revised and enhanced with study scriptures, prayers, and additional material, in a spiral bound booklet. We are offering the new guidebook for \$6, with extra volume discount pricing starting at 10 copies or more. We also have the **Newly Revised Group Traditions Guide** (traditions only) for \$3 each. Purchases from our online shop help support the Central Office. We feature the Life Recovery Bible, "Letting God" daily meditation book, "A Bridge to Recovery", and the key tags, signs, pamphlets, booklets and proprietary literature for meetings. All are available online or by calling the Central Office. Your support is both needed and most appreciated. We will continue to make every effort to reach out to others and advance God's Kingdom by providing materials to facilities at the least possible cost.

News from the Office

On our Blog site, ["The Bridge"](#), overcomersoutreach.org/blog, we have topics, step studies, "audio

brochures", pamphlet content, videos, and an open forum to post and share with one another – a virtual "online meeting". There has been interest in a separate online meeting getting started as well.

Our phone meeting has been "on break" and is looking for a host. If you are interested in being of service in this way, please contact the Central office for details. It is easy, and past participants have always been blessed. The meeting will resume in November, unless a willing host steps up sooner

"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 18:20

In Loving Memory

By Pauline Bartosch

Last spring, my dear "adopted daughter" Brenda Ricottilli found out she had cancer with just a few months to live. She decided to fly from Florida to LA to meet with her two daughters & to visit with me, one last time. Since Brenda had already met OO Director, Jeff, by long-distance telephone, she couldn't wait to visit the OO Central Office. After a leisurely picnic lunch overlooking LA, she and her daughters loaded into their van late that afternoon, where they had prepared a cozy bed in the back for Brenda. Tears flowed as we waved our final goodbyes and they began their adventurous cross-country trip back to Florida.



In her 35 years of recovery from drug addiction, Brenda touched many lives with her personal testimony of recovery. We at OO wish to thank God for the rich & full life that Brenda shared with us all. She was 62 when she was welcomed into Heaven on July 24, 2013.

To Be Reconciled -

When we clear the way between others and ourselves by our direct amends and our changed behaviors, we actually clear the way for God's Grace and Love to freely flow. He brings us together in our times of suffering and in times of healing. We laugh, we cry, we hurt and we mend under His care and direction – together.

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. – 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Let's pray together now:

Father God, we come before you to praise you, to thank you for the blessing of life we have received from Your hand. We ask for Your guidance and direction as to how best we may share this amazing and precious gift with all those about us – that we may share with everyone we meet the love and mercy as shown through Jesus Christ. Lord, heal our relationships, heal us, that we may love others as you love us.

Amen

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