

# Near the Cross Emmaus



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## It's Time to Sponsor a Pilgrim: Here are the Steps

### Who Can Sponsor?

Anyone who has made an Emmaus walk can sponsor a pilgrim so long as they understand the aim and responsibilities of sponsorship and remain dedicated to fulfilling them. Sponsors should not serve as team members on Walks. If they are called to work, they should ask someone else to sponsor the pilgrim.

Trying to be a team member and a sponsor diminishes both roles. Sponsors must be able to attend Sponsor's Hour, the 72-Hour Prayer Vigil and Candlelight.

### Not Recommended for Walks

- ◆ Non-Christians  
Christians whose theology and/or practice is notably different or incompatible with the traditional theology and practice represented by The Walk to Emmaus.
- ◆ Persons undergoing an emotional crisis or who are psychologically unstable.
- ◆ "Church hoppers," members who always have an axe to grind against the church, persons who will use Emmaus as a tool to divide the body, to further their own theological agendas, or who will try to create "an Emmaus church."
- ◆ People who are always looking for another spiritual high or another experience to help them "arrive."
- ◆ Candidates who cannot become part of the team formed at a table because of health issues that require them to sleep in a room alone or eat apart from the common table.

### Whom Do We Sponsor?

Emmaus is for active Christians and members of churches whose own renewal will mean new energy, commitment and vision in the church. Those sponsored could include the following:

†Church leaders (laypersons and pastors) who will bring new vision, commitment and understanding to their congregations and who need the renewal and grace channeled by Emmaus.

†Dependable church members who are the quiet backbone of the church.

†Less active members who need the awareness of grace rekindled and their commitments renewed.

†Christians who are hungry for "something more" and who want to grow spiritually.

†Members and leaders who represent a cross section of the church and who will help Emmaus remain theologically sound, centered on the essentials of our common faith, and open to different perspectives.

†Respected laypersons and clergy whose participation, support and leadership will encourage others to take the Walk and will build a solid balanced leadership base for the church.

### Step 1: Pray

Pray for the candidate's openness to God's call, not how to get him or her to go on a Walk.

### Step 2: Make an Appointment

Make an appointment with the candidate or the couple for the purpose of discussing participation.

### Step 3: Extend Invitation

Clarify the basic elements of the Walk, its purpose and follow-up dimensions that help us live in grace the rest of our lives. Share your faith. Take the attitude you are giving the candidates a wonderful gift rather than saying they need to go. Explain that a Walk seeks to give a closer relationship with Jesus Christ.

### Step 4: The Commitment

Ask the candidates to make a commitment by filling out the registration form. If it's a couple, encourage an equal commitment by both. Mail the form, with registration fee, to Bob Rogers, PO Box 11, Blytheville, AR 72316. The fee can be paid by candidates or the sponsors.

### Step 5: Sponsor's Duties

Contact one of their best friends and/or a relative to secure names and addresses for agape letters. Write 10 to 12 people, requesting a personal letter addressed only to the prospective pilgrim. Provide a blank envelope so it may be sealed by the writer. Provide a self-addressed stamped envelope so the pilgrim's envelope can be enclosed. When you receive the letters, write the pilgrim's name on the outside and turn in to the agape committee or an Emmaus official.

### Step 6: Support the Walk

Sign up for the 72-hour Prayer Vigil, using the Emmaus Website. Plan to take the candidates to dinner and drive them to Send-Off. Attend Send-Off, Sponsor's Hour, Candlelight and Closing. Offer to baby-sit, water plants, pick up mail, feed pets, etc. Drive them home after Closing.

#### Fall Walk Dates

Men's Walk #21  
Sept. 29-Oct. 2

Women's Walk #22  
Oct. 6-9

Bob Rogers, Registrar  
PO Box 11, Blytheville AR 72316  
bobgoeagle@att.net

Next Gathering  
Aug. 6 at noon  
Jonesboro UMC

# Ye Shall Know the Truth

And the truth shall make you free. John 8:32 (KJ)

## Perry Hope remembers Men in Vietnam War...

*(Editor's note: As our nation pauses to celebrate Independence Day, we reflect on the people who have paid in blood, sweat and tears for our freedom. Perry Hope, one of the early workers in both Noah's Ark and Near the Cross Emmaus, served 12 months in Vietnam out of a total of 30 years of service, with three tours on active duty. He retired as a major in the Army. Currently, he teaches nine-month Disciple Classes and Sunday School at First United Methodist Church, Jonesboro, in addition to working Emmaus walks.)*

Our men were magnificent. I came out of Vietnam with the clearest knowledge that the most important thing in this life was my personal relationship with the Lord God Almighty, and if I had this right relationship, the things that were second (my wife and kids) would all be in place and taken care of properly. It was in Vietnam that I really internalized the fact that "it" was not all about me, but about others! Our soldiers also knew that fact and demonstrated it every day!

I was privileged to serve with the 199<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, the finest military unit I ever served with, and I was further honored to be a member of the Third Infantry Regiment. (This is the unit, called the Old Guard, serves the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.)

When our flight landed in Vietnam we were greeted by a mortar attack. We were all but shoved off that United Airlines jet which never came to a stop. Then we transferred to a bus with bars over the windows to prevent grenades from being thrown in. We had personal protection in the form of two sweaty Military Policemen with automatic weapons and flak jackets. The bus almost ran over everyone on the road, traveling at ludicrous speed! Very impressive!

Despite our training, I was not prepared for the heat blast when I got off that plane! Sweat? Just to have been able to merely sweat would have been wonderful! That fiery jungle was hot. No breeze. Just hot and hotter! The Vietcong didn't have to listen for us. They could smell us a mile away.



GI's were constantly giving the kids rations, candy, and gum. Our men were magnificent! Period! Most soldiers were caring, compassionate, obedient and trustworthy. They covered each other's backsides, and mine as well. I tried to keep from losing any men, but I was unable to do that. The most difficult thing I have ever tried to do was to write a letter to a wife or mother about the death of her husband or son.

In Vietnam I was introduced to "terror tactics" in 1969 by visual exposure and experiences. My attitude somehow changed, without any fanfare or ceremonial event, to that of a killer, eager to seek out and destroy evil. After seeing first hand the atrocities committed... women tied to stakes and disemboweled while their husbands also were tied to stakes and forced to watch... children of elementary school age and younger, raped and dismembered.

Every operation of our troops in the field had been "cleared" previously (and subsequently sent to the Viet Cong by sympathizers) before we were allowed to go on a "mission." The results? Being forewarned, the VC had departed or set up ambushes. Just think, fighting a questionable war with "hands tied behind you" and having to get permission from VERY high levels to shoot back! The cost of this was America's finest being wasted for what seemed to be political purposes!

My feelings about the Vietnam war became bitter and deep-seated as the Hanoi Jane episode hit the news. (The Viet Cong published a photo of actress Jane Fonda with a North Vietnamese anti-aircraft gun, the same kind as used to shoot down U.S. warplanes, including Senator John McCain who was held captive and tortured for five years.)

"Returning from Vietnam at the San Francisco Airport, I was spit at on my walk to the Dallas gate. After being called 'baby killers' and given a middle finger salute, some GIs gave the hecklers a knuckle sandwich while four uniformed police officers observed without comment or action. I want to add that several people applauded the troops and told them 'well done.' It has been some 41 years now, and I am a PROUD Vietnam veteran."

*(Editor's note: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington is the most visited monument in the city. Emotions run deep as relatives, friends and former comrades place their hands on one of the 58,272 names on the monument, leaving flags, flowers, notes and a lot of tears. Included are the names of eight women and 153 Medal of Honor winners.)*

"It was in Vietnam that I really internalized the fact that 'it' was not about me, but about others! Our soldiers also knew this fact and demonstrated it every day! You could see their compassion in caring for the wounded, maimed and butchered little children. Young men, hard and efficient at their trade, would be bawling and squalling when finding little ones, as well as their buddies who had taken hits or had died. These were guarded, cared for, prayed over and given extensive attention. Then you cannot imagine the fury that could be leashed on those who had caused these things."

"I loved the Army, even though there were times that I wanted out. Comradery! (continued on page 3)

# Ye Shall Know the Truth...

## Ye Shall Know the Truth...

Insights into character...learning traits that can be trusted and those that cannot...learning what to do and what not to do in positions of trust and leadership...learning what true responsibility is all about... learning how to 'stand in the gap' and how to make a difference...how to live with fear...how to place the welfare of others above your own...the rewards of submission when in the company of REAL leaders...lasting friendships from sharing hardships and the unknown."

All this leads to the reality of trusting Jesus and submitting to Him! (No, I did not share a foxhole with Jesus in Vietnam, but He was there!)

It was in the Army that I learned that little still small voice was God! Every job has joys and unpleasanties...no job is perfect, and there is always someone who can do the job better than you can! Everything I ever accomplished was made possible by other people.

### Perry's Testimony

On March 9, 1983, our older son, Pedy, was riding with a friend in a jeep. They were struck from behind and he was thrown 95 feet in the air, landing on his head and hip on the blacktop. In a matter of minutes a doctor, nurse and an ambulance all "happened" on the scene (without any call or notification). I had been at home less than a full day from surgery.

He was taken to St. Bernard's, suffering from a closed head cracked skull (normally fatal on impact). He was restored three times by paramedics and the hospital staff, then placed on life support systems. The swelling caused his brain to collapse from the pressure (often this is called "brain dead"). The next day while lying on a cot on the floor of the ICU waiting room, I took a Gideon New Testament from the Nightstand.

When I opened it, I saw 2nd Corinthians 12, and the only part of the page that was in focus were verses 8-10.



**REACHING FOR one of 58,272 names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial with Washington Monument in background.**

Everything else was blurred and unreadable. I read the verse...*For this thing I besought the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, "My Grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*

I prayed to God and, in effect, told Him that my son was a gift and I knew that, as much I loved him and wanted him back from this "deathbed." If it was Your will to take him home to be with You again, I would accept it...but, if Your will was to allow me to have my will, I wanted my son back!

Immediately I was filled with the surest knowledge that my son would be restored, on God's timetable, not mine, and that I would know when the healing was complete. Further, I was to be called on to bear witness and give testimony to the miracle God was about to perform. He did and I did.

Other people could open that Gideon Bible to any page at random. EVERY time I opened it, even with my eyes closed, it opened to 2 Corinthians 12....Coincidence? No thanks!

It was about six weeks after Pedy was discharged that I learned Barbara had the same answer to her prayer. She said, "I had that same knowledge as you at the same moment. I was in prayer across the room from you and I had no idea you were praying!"

Pedy came out of the coma after 11 days and amazed doctors with his recovery. He lost his sense of smell and 90% of his ability to taste.

We had to teach him how to read, write, cipher and regain balance after coming home. His speech impediment is no longer obvious unless he is tired. Now he is a big rig truck driver going from coast to coast.

**God answers prayers!**

### Walk Dates

**Men's Walk #21**  
Sept. 29-Oct. 2, 2011  
LD: Andy Slaven

**Women's Walk #22**  
Oct. 6-9, 2011  
LD: Wendy Jones

### 2011 Gatherings

July—no meeting  
August 6  
Sept. 10  
October—no meeting  
Nov. 5  
Dec. 3

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Find Reunion groups, plus  
Link for pilgrim forms,  
Work applications,  
Sponsor forms & more!