

Leadership



Diana L. Walters, DPhil, recently retired as director of an assisted living program, where she continues to work three days a week with responsibility for life quality for both independent and memory impaired residents. This affords her opportunity to combine her remarkable talents and training to lead Bible studies and other activity groups. The materials are developed with her husband, a retired practicing psychologist and professor. All materials developed by Touching Grace are tested before publication, are non-sectarian and consistent with traditional Christianity. Diana's devotional writing has been published often and she is in her fourth *Chicken Soup* book.

How Touching Grace Began

Touching Grace grew from Diana's doctoral program in gerontological studies. Her research validated the use of methods described by Dr Maria Montessori, showing how a ministry visit can penetrate limits imposed by dementia. When Diana saw the possibilities she wanted to equip others with tools that would enrich the lives of lonely people.

Funding of the Acts 9:17 Project

There is resistance to ministry with late-age elders. Not picketing, boycotts, or even insults, but apathy—quiet and polite apathy from godly people, pastors, and churches. Apathy, a silent spiritual killer, gets no press. The xx,xxx men and women who will die today in nursing homes need your help. You can help by enlisting others in your church or community to get equipped and start visiting. Once you learn how meaningful new connections can be for both you and those you visit, you'll wish you had started long ago.

Fee for Acts 9:17 action team members: none. Your obligation to serve is between you and God.

Fee if taken just for family use: \$30.00

The Bottom Line

Equipping



Enables Ministry



A Letter from Maudie



They tell me to count my blessings, so I do, but I feel empty. They tell me to be optimistic, to look at the bright side. I do, but I feel gloomy. They tell me to pay cards and table games. I do, but I'm still lonely.

Okay, nothing wrong with their advice I guess; it's what I said before I moved here two years ago. It's officially called "Golden Garden" but I call it "Gentle Jail." I'll explain.

I'll give them "A+" for effort. The place is clean; the meals are good; the staff is okay. If you like a regimented lifestyle. But I'm bored. Playing Go Fish all day or just existing until the next Bingo Day is not my idea of living well.

I'd like to learn, to help other people, to be useful. To have someone or something to care about. To care for. Not as an ego trip, but to help them and grow the inner me.

Last Sunday we had a group come to sing to us. No kidding, they said that, "We're here to sing *to* you." Not *with* us, *to* us. No conversation, no one-on-one, nothing personal. I was just a small piece of an audience to them. They didn't even talk to us. It wasn't for us; it was for them. Forget it!

Years ago I used to go sing like that with my church. The leader told us, "Most of these folks have dementia and won't understand anything, but they will like the music so sing your hearts out!"

Okay, maybe I can't remember all that I wrote in the first paragraph up there, but trust me, I can go back and read it, understand every word, and fix mistakes of grammar or improve the rhetoric of the whole piece. Rhetoric. How about that word? Dementia makes you forgetful, not dumb.

This seems like solitary confinement! Where's my family, my church friends, my pastor? I may sound cranky but I'm not; I'm lonely. Really, really lonely. And scared.

Help! I think I'm going stir crazy.

Maudie

THE Acts 9:17 Project



Touching Grace

Delivering God's comfort and good news to elderly women and men, in Jesus' name.

A year is a long time to wait.

Sixty to sixty-eight percent of people in nursing homes do not get more than one visit in one year with a person from outside the facility. Could you tolerate that?

Including those who are confined at home, there are at least three million men and women who no longer enjoy the freedom and companionship they once had.

Relationships wither away. Work and other activities that once brought a sense of meaning and proper pride are no longer available. Depression and anxiety fill the gap.

Surely this grieves the heart of God. The Bible mandates the church to care for all people in distress. There are at least 38 relevant commands about this in scripture.



Yet nursing homes are the mission field most neglected by the American church!

The Acts 9:17 Project is about obedience and being a difference maker!

Ananias was a Christian living in Damascus when Paul arrived, blind from his encounter with Christ on the road. God told Ananias to go see Paul but Ananias didn't want to because Paul was a persecutor of Christians. Ananias was obedient and it turned out joyfully. You and I, "God's legs and voices," are also called to enter situations that may intimidate us. The **Acts 9:17 Project** will prepare you to obey and serve. We offer free training and materials to Christians who are ready to enter this exciting, desperately needed, and meaningful ministry.

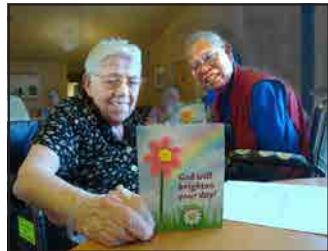


↑ After playing dominoes, Bob shows a friend the story of Noah, teaching how much God can be trusted.

↓ Residents enjoy Bible verses and stories.

The Acts 9:17 Project begins with a 3-hour workshop led by Diana Walters. It is interactive: step-by-step development of skills along with information. Each participant will receive the ministry materials shown below. How they are best used and why they are effective is explained. The objective is for each participant to be fully prepared to engage a person who lives in a facility or who is homebound in a visit that is (1) meaningful to them and that (2) increases their awareness of God's love and presence.

This can be done by any humble Christian who is ready act in partnership with God. It is not a calling to every believer, but the church as a whole is clearly commanded to care for all who are in distress. What is *your* part in this part of God's work? Are you called to work at the front lines or are you an advocate who nudges your church? Either way, obey God boldly.



Attendees leave with skills, knowledge, confidence, four books and a supply of SmilesUp cards to use and share.

regular price is \$60.41



The Mission of Touching Grace

is to equip and motivate Christian men and women to enhance the quality of life of those who live in a residential facility or are homebound by visiting and developing friendship. **The Acts 9:17 Project** does exactly that. The outcome is seen in our logo. The gold center is a person surrounded by the loving nurture, care, and protection of the Trinity. "IGV" (I go visit) represents a volunteer who has accepted God's call to regularly visit, encourage, and pray for and with wonderful people who become new friends. When visits are given God's way, both people grow.

This Is Why It Can Be Done

We've helped it be done before. For evidence, see the results that obtained when we recruited a group of people who thought that unvisited people in nursing homes should be visited and wanted to do it but were, by their own confession, afraid to do it. They prayed the old "Lord, send *them*" prayer.

Seven self-identified fraidies came for training and **wow** what changes occurred! Videos and assessments before and after tell the story convincingly. Visitation of late-age elderly in nursing homes is fun for everyone. To see the report and a 6-minute video go to: CenterForBoldAction.org > click the Acts 9:17 tab.

Our Statement of Faith

Touching Grace, an activity of the Center for Bold Action, is guided by principles of Christianity held by the majority of believers since the time of Christ. More details are at the Statement of Faith of CBA's website.

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