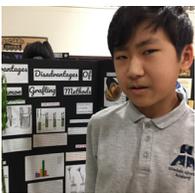


FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT  
RON AGUILERA

# FYI (For Your Information...)

A weekly e-newsletter for employees and friends of the  
Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists



April 3, 2019



## DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

“Everywhere I look these days, I see a message promoting instant gratification. “You can have what you want right now!” “You deserve it.” “You are entitled to it!”

“But I am in debt?” “No problem. Refinance.”

“You can’t afford it today? No problem. Get a Payday Loan. Easy terms. Buy now, pay later.”

Probably my favorite is, “Zero down—zero interest.” Zero down means instant gratification. It means I don’t need to have any money right now to drive the car off the lot. But, zero interest is a distraction, keeping our attention away from the cost of those monthly payments in the future.

When Jesus spoke of life’s greatest adventure and its everlasting reward, He did so with full disclosure. He did not sugar-coat the demands of discipleship. He said, *“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* (Mt. 16:24-26). Jesus was clear about the costs and demands of discipleship.

So, if we are looking for a quick-fix religion—get it now, pay for it later—we will be sadly disappointed in what Jesus has to offer. True discipleship focuses on future rewards and present responsibilities. It surprises some to learn that this provides life’s most satisfying experiences. When given opportunity to offer sacrifice without personal cost, David firmly responded, saying, *“I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God which cost me nothing”* (2 Sam. 24:24). Bring on the cost. Bring on the sacrifice. Bring on the inconvenience. In many ways, the value of our

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disciple-making  
churches*

You can contact me  
by writing:  
Illinois Conference of  
Seventh-day Adventists  
619 Plainfield Road  
Willowbrook IL 60527

by email:  
president@ilcsda.org

by phone:  
630-856-2880

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faith is determined by what we are willing to give in exchange for it. Keep your eyes focused on Jesus. Don't let the distractions or allure of the messages of this world draw you in.

## *I KNOW SOMETHING GOOD ABOUT. . .*

...J Michael Carlos, the science and math teacher at Hinsdale Adventists Academy. He wrote a grant to the Versacare Foundation and received \$10,000 to go towards technology for the middle school department at Hinsdale Adventist Academy. Thanks J, for going above and beyond to better equip your students

...Marietta Kellum, the school board chairman at Marion Adventist School. She also wrote for the same grant and received \$5,000 from Versacare for technology for the Marion School.

A little extra effort can go a long way to enhance the life of a child. Thanks to all the church members who invest their time and resources in Adventist Education. Your efforts may have eternal benefits.

## *CHURCH VISIT*

This past Sabbath, I had the privilege of speaking at the Merced SDA Spanish church. I made a quick trip to Merced, CA, to visit my dad, who is 95 years old and doing well (Praise the Lord!) and was asked to preach at my dad's home church. What a privilege!

## *NEWS*

☞ Pastor Travis Sager, senior pastor of the Hinsdale church, has accepted an invitation to pastor in Hawaii. His last Sabbath in Illinois will be June 1. We wish Pastor Sager and his family God's richest blessings as they transition to Hawaii.

☞ Fifteen Lake Union schools received grants totaling \$115,000 from the Versacare Foundation to fund Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education. Among the many uses of STEM funds are the purchase of classroom smartboards, providing tablets or Chromebooks for student use, equipping or updating student computer labs, installation of 3D printers and related software, initiating or funding robotics programs, instruction in software coding, and the equipping of chemistry, physics and biology labs, and more.

The STEM grant program is open to every NAD conference- or church-sponsored primary or secondary school and provides funding in three categories:

- \$5,000 for smaller schools of 3 classrooms or less;
- \$10,000 for larger schools of 4 or more classrooms and 12-year schools;
- \$10,000 for senior academies.

In Illinois Conference, the two schools below received funding:

Hinsdale Adventist Academy - \$10,000

Marion Adventist Christian School - \$5,000

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## RESOURCES

☞ ICISF Emotional & Spiritual Care Classes will be offered April 14-19, by NAD Adventist Community Services. Join Michael Lombardo, D. Min, BCC at the NAD headquarters in Columbia, Md., for the “Group Crisis Intervention” (April 14-15) course, and Martin W. Feldbush, D. Min., BCC for “Advanced Group Crisis Intervention” (April 16-17) and “Grief Following Trauma” (April 18-19) courses. Register online at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3fbhv3y>

☞ Attend the Voice of Prophecy’s “believe” Conference at the NAD this May! Join the Voice of Prophecy for the believe conference May 5-8 at the North American Division Headquarters. This event is free for NAD administrators, pastors, and lay leaders, and will feature Pastor Shawn Boonstra and other guest speakers. During this event, you’ll discover the latest tools and practices for growing your church. Learn more at [www.vopbelieve.org](http://www.vopbelieve.org).

## DID YOU KNOW . . .

. . .The Gallup Organization reports that the number of Americans who say God and religion is important is decreasing? In 1965, 70% of Americans believed God and religion were important. The number in 2018? 51%.

*“Never should a sermon be preached, or Bible instruction in any line be given, without pointing the Hearers to ‘the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ John 1:29. Every true doctrine makes Christ the center, every precept receives force from His words.”*

*Ellen G. White, Testimonies Volume 6, p.54*



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