

Notre Dame graduation leaves us speechless!

Every now and then God does something so special that it leaves you speechless. And today Claudia and I had one of those moments.



We've just witnessed the graduation ceremonies at Notre Dame. Among the 2,000 graduates who packed out the indoor gymnasium was one who arrived on a motorized wheelchair: an amazing lady named Karis Kornfield. Many call her a miracle. I do.

Three years ago I held Karis' hand while she lay near death in a Pittsburgh hospital ICU. Her medical problems could only be solved by a five-organ transplant (stomach, duodenum, intestine, liver, and pancreas). The surgery was grueling and her recovery slow.

But there she is! In spite of more pain than any of us could handle, innumerable hospital stays, countless medical tests, she has not only graduated ... but graduated with honors from Notre Dame! We join with so many others who say, To God be the glory!



Karis has never wanted her life to revolve around her medical situation. Rarely will she talk about her pain. Nor does she boast about the awards she has earned at Notre Dame: winner of a schoolwide essay contest, special recognition as an honor student, and an overall A average!



Her dreams are to serve the Lord in ways that will impact the Muslim world. A fluent speaker of English, Portuguese, French, and Arabic, she desires with all her heart to be God's tool wherever He sends her.

So, today has been a day that has left us speechless, in awe of God's power and grace. What a day of celebration!

But we also recognize that Karis' story is not over. She will face more challenges down the road, for which she needs our continued prayer:

- Karis' anti-rejection meds have corroded her hip joints. She's now in Pittsburgh for hip replacement surgery. Please ask for God's special touch. Any surgery is extremely risky due to the immunosuppressants she takes.
- Let's pray for God's blessing and clear direction for Karis' next steps: recuperation, job, and future ministry.
- You can track with Karis at www.karisblog.com



Many of you have been praying for Karis for years. Thank you for your continued prayers now.

TED + CLAUDIA

From the President...

In response to requests from American church leaders, as well as a sense from the Lord within our mission leadership, OC opened the USA as a field of ministry in 2004. Our first resident team consists of four families who reside near Seattle, Washington.



*Greg Gripenrog
OC President*

One area of ministry that has opened wide is that of mobilizing the church to reach out to those who are immigrating to America from countries around the world. Many of these people come from lands where Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism are prevalent. Here in the U.S., they have an opportunity to hear the gospel in unprecedented ways. OC missionaries Ken and Joyce Morse work to research who these people are and what needs they have, with a view to alerting churches as to how they can minister to them. Lyn Rasmussen teaches English as a second language (ESL) to new immigrants from Africa and Asia.

The U.S. team of OC International is working with many other groups in building the Ethnic Impact Network, which seeks "to interconnect and mobilize the church of all cultures in the Northwest to cooperatively demonstrate and proclaim the supremacy and love of Jesus Christ." Bob Rasmussen, our team leader, coordinates this network which sponsors seminars and conferences. To receive the monthly e-newsletter about the network, e-mail bobrasmussen@oc-us.org.

Beyond reaching out to such newcomers, the church in America has much to learn about welcoming into fellowship those who are from different cultural and economic backgrounds. In spite of the rapid diversification of our society, churches lag far behind. In fact, approximately 93 percent of churches in America are monoethnic. To help change this scenario, our U.S. team recently worked in partnership with three other ministries to convene a Consultation on Coaching Churches in Intercultural Transformation. Eighteen experienced practitioners from Canada and the U.S. came together to begin strategizing how to help churches reflect the diversity of their cities and put into practice the welcoming character of God's kingdom. Already, coaches are available to work with pastors who want to move toward intercultural inclusion.

By your prayers, the harvest from the nations will be full to overflowing, and our church life now will whet our appetites for heavenly worship where great multitudes of "all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues" will sing praises together (Rev. 7:9 NKJV).

Greg Gripenrog

Did You Know?

82% of births in America are to an ethnic minority family.

67% of all public school students in the USA belong to an ethnic minority.

By 2050, the majority of Americans will be foreign-born or born to immigrant parents.

Our Vision

Healthy churches working together to disciple all nations.



OC One Challenge.
Reaching the world together

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