



DIVAS CONNECTION

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It all started as a 6-8 week online seminar!

By Roline Thomas (DivaT)



Roline
Thomas

Since the very beginning, I have been a member of a Learn Gospel Music (LGM), an internet ministry which has a message board for musicians all around the world to share, vent, give support and encourage in the world of gospel music. There I have made a reputation for myself of saying what's on my mind in a very "keeping it real" style.

Because of a passion to minister to women and relationships, whenever a topic concerning marriages or sisterhood was posted I was one of the first to respond with candor and simplicity allowing the Bible to be my inspiration and source. It became obvious to the members that I have a down to earth, Christ centered marriage. It was suggested for me to lead a marriage seminar message board for some of the women of LGM. That was back in May 2006, the birth of DIVAS Ministry, a ministry for sisters who are Divinely Inspired Virtuous Anointed Sistas!

Now let's fast forward to January 2007. The Divas Ministry has grown from it's original 25 members to over 80 members. DIVAS Ministry now has its own website, www.DivasMinistry.org and has developed it's own newsletter, DIVAS CONNECTION. All glory is given to God!

DIVAS Connection is an informative & inspiring quarterly eNewsletter. It contains great material, designed especially for a DIVAS' spiritual enjoyment.

My heartfelt thanks and love goes out to all of the many women who not only allow me to serve as their leader and teacher, but have also imparted into my life. Over the last 10 months, my DIVA sisters and I have grown spiritually, laughed, cried, and formed a bond that will never be broken. A few have departed, but as one of our DIVAS stated, "Once a DIVA always a DIVA!"

A special thank you to the leadership crew, Cathy, Kerpasha, Vanessa & intercessory team, Valeria, Annette, Carla, Berle & Angela who all keep me on track, keep the DIVAS at heart, and cover us all in prayer.

Enjoy your first issue of our publication, DIVAS CONNECTION!

DIVAS Leaders

Roline Thomas

Founder/Director

DivaT@divasministry.org

Cathy Jacobs

DIVAS General Coordinator

DivaBear@divasministry.org

Kerpasha Davis

DIVAS Relations Coordinator

UniqueDiva@divasministry.org

Vanessa Miller

DIVAS Newsletter Assistant

DivaLynn@divasministry.org

DIVAS Website - www.divasministry.org

Earnest and Roline Ministries - www.earnestandroline.com

What Do I Say?

By Roline Thomas

In an episode of the TV sitcom "Everybody Loves Raymond", the rambunctious Frank Barone is caught by the store manager sampling trail mix. While Frank's son Ray and granddaughter Ally look on, a heated argument ensues between the store manager and Frank. As a result, Ally becomes frightened by her grandfather's public display. When the three returned home, Ray speaks to his father about the negative impact his behavior had on Ally. Initially Frank defends his actions, but later he decides to talk to Ally. Frank asks Ray, "What do I say?"

Frank doesn't know what to say to Ally because he never talked to her before. He admitted to reading stories and singing songs to her, but he never had a real conversation with her. As I listened to Frank Barone's confession, I thought about a time in my life when I did not know how to talk to God. Indeed, I was saved, attended church services, read my Bible, and sang songs to Him, but I really did not know how to talk to God. I listened to people whom I labeled "prayer warriors" pray in a powerful and confident manner. I didn't know anything about sending up timbers and expecting a blessing. Being a city girl, I did

not understand the meaning of being mindful that "my bed was not my cooling board and my blanket was not my winding sheet."

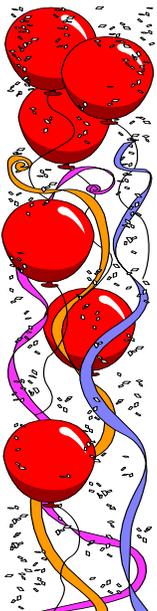
Prayer is our lifeline to God. Prayer unleashes God's power so that he is able to work in our lives. God is waiting for you to talk to him. He is waiting for you to acknowledge him, think about him, and show him love, honor and respect.

Matthew 6:7 says. "When praying, do not say the same thing over and over again, just as the heathens do, for they think that they shall be heard for their use of many words." When you talk to God he doesn't want to hear the same prayer over and over. Prayers prayed in that manner lose their meaning and becomes insincere.

God deserves more than memorized prayers. He deserves to hear your own heartfelt words. Acknowledge who God is in prayer. He is our Father in heaven. Confess your sins. Thank Him for all he has done, is doing and will do in your life. Talk to him in detail about your needs, hopes, dreams, joys, and everything else that is having any kind of importance or effect on your life.

Consistency is a key in prayer. If you don't talk often to God, you will find yourself not knowing what to say, much like Frank Barone.

Let's Celebrate!



BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|------------|------|
| DivaMika | 3/10 |
| Springbird | 3/26 |
| DivaJ | 3/3 |
| SportyDiva | 4/14 |
| SharpDiva | 4/20 |
| UniqueDiva | 4/24 |
| PraznDiva | 4/3 |
| XaltedDiva | 5/7 |

ANNIVERSARIES

| | |
|-----------|------|
| PraznDiva | 4/14 |
| ValDiva | 5/15 |

THE NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU!

There are so many things that can be included in the DIVAS CONNECTION! You may have an inspiring story or testimony, a funny happening from your congregation, your children, or from your marriage. Perhaps you have enjoyed writing and would like to simply share your gift with us. Please feel free to contribute, comment and suggest items for OUR newsletter.

This newsletter is for you, and preferably from you. I'm sure you would get tired of always hearing from me, and not from anyone else so submit your article(s) soon. Deadlines are as follows:

For April issue - Feb. 10th

For July Issue - June 10th

For October Issue - September 10th

For January Issue - February 10th.

Guidelines are listed on our website, www.DIVASMinistry.org. Articles can be emailed to DivasConnection@divasministry.org.





DIVAS in the SPOTLIGHT

by Vanessa Miller



CATHY JACOBS
"DivaBear"
DIVAS General
Coordinator

Cathy Jacobs, better known to us all as Bear, hails from Baltimore, Maryland. She is a Native American, and was born in North Carolina. As a single DIVA, Bear manages to keep herself very busy as the CEO of her own home-based business, and a Training Manager for FedEx Ground. Bear is also a proud member of Covenant Living Fellowship in Randallstown, Maryland, where she serves as Church Sexton, and an usher. In her spare time she enjoys listening to music, watching movies, hiking, and travelling.

Bear is the eleventh of twelve children, seven boys and five girls, and she has more nieces and nephews than she can count. When asked about the single most life-changing event in her life, Bear says that she has dealt with the deaths of her parents and one brother, and is now dealing with another brother's recent diagnosis of an untreatable cancer that has left him with three months to live, according to the doctors. It is challenging to live so far away from him at this time, and the situation makes her feel somewhat helpless. She says that from these experiences she

has learned that death is something we all must face one day. "It is difficult knowing that time is very short," she says.

When asked to pick one woman in the bible who she would like to be, Bear chose the Woman with the issue of blood. Bear's testimony relating to why she chose this character is best explained in her own words:

I can relate in so many ways to this woman with the "issue of blood" I, too, had an issue. In a word, it was one of blood. I refused to allow the "Blood of Jesus" to heal me or make me whole. For many years I lived a life outside the realm of faith. My sin took me farther than I wanted to go, made me stay longer than I wanted to stay, and it cost me more than I could afford.

My lifestyle of sexual sin eventually caught up with me in the form of a Sexually Transmitted Disease called Chlamydia. This disease is a common STD, caused by the bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis, which can damage a woman's reproductive organs. Even though symptoms of Chlamydia are usually mild or absent, serious complications that cause irreversible damage, including infertility, can occur "silently" before a woman ever recognizes a prob-

lem. (An estimated 2.8 million Americans are infected with Chlamydia each year. Women are frequently re-infected if their sex partners are not treated.) I was one of the unfortunate ones. Due to this fact I was never able to bear children. That will mess with your mind after a while.

Like the woman with the issue of blood, I was alone, insecure, and weak. Knowing that I could never have children (most men want children) began to get in the way of relationships. I eventually had to have surgery that resulted in a complete hysterectomy. That was devastating, and created more insecurities. Shortly after surgery, I, like the woman, began to press past the obstacles of life that stood in my way (depression, insecurities, doubt, unbelief) in order to be completely healed. I was healed, but I was a long way from being made whole.

Bear's reason for joining the DIVAS Ministry is to fellowship with other women. She shares her life experiences and teaches the everlasting truths of the Word of God to DIVAS. She says, "I hope my life will be a living testimony to others about the awesomeness of God." Bear's work in the DIVAS Ministry is personified in one of her favorite quotes, "We cannot conquer what we do not confront."

Words of Inspiration.....

*A dark, lifeless room housed the weak, frail frame
Twelve long years, her condition the same*

*As her life drained from her, hope drained as well
And she slowly sank into her own private hell*

*So dismal a future, that sometimes it appeared
The only escape was to die, she feared*

*But then at that darkest and lowest point
She heard the broadcast of a wonderful noise*

*Jesus, the Healer, would be soon passing by
Just the sound of His name sparked hope inside*

*And from that spark, she built her resolve
Though she realized the struggle that was involved*

*If she could just get to Jesus she knew
That her pain and her toil would all be through*

*So within herself, she made a decision
To leave the house that had long been her prison*

*To take a step forward, and never again
Would she return to the state she was in*

*As she reached the outer edge of the crowd
She decided that nothing would turn her around*

*She kept on toward her goal on the other side
Of the cruel remarks, as the crowd did chide*

*And as the Savior came in to her view
She gained strength to continue her relentless pursuit*

*And with her very last ounce of strength
She stretched herself over the final length*

*She grasped for a brief moment, His garment's hem
And immediately she felt healing within*

*And from that touch she was completely made whole
In her mind, her body, her spirit and soul*

*From that day forward her whole life was changed
Never to go back to being the same*

--Vanessa L. Miller

DIVAS Chat

Join us each **Sunday, 7 p.m. CST** for a live chat sessions. Some of the past topics of discussion include;

*Strongholds
Bitterness*

Compromising your Witness

To join, register with the DIVAS Forum, www.divasministry.org/divasreg.html, and receive additional information.



BACON PASTA

Ingredients:

16 oz package penne
12 bacon slices
2 cloves garlic
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 cups heavy whipping cream
½ tsp. pepper
½ cup sliced green onions

Preparation:

Cook Pasta. Cook and crumble bacon, reserving 2 tbsp drippings. Sauté garlic in drippings. Stir in pasta, cheese, cream, and pepper. Simmer over medium-low heat until sauce is thickened, stirring often. Stir in bacon and green onions. Serve immediately.

Serves 4-6



DIVAS in the SPOTLIGHT

by Vanessa Miller



ROLINE THOMAS
 "DivaT"
 DIVAS Director

Roline Thomas, DivaT, or SisterT as some of us know her, is a woman

who wears many hats. Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, she currently resides in Little Rock, Arkansas. DivaT is the wife of Pastor Earnest Thomas, affectionately known as "Big Daddy". She is the proud mother of four daughters and "Mee-Maw" to two grandchildren.

Along with the full-time job of being a homemaker, DivaT is very involved in many aspects of ministry. She works alongside her husband who is the Discipleship Pastor of St. Mark Baptist Church, under the leadership of Bishop Steven Arnold. Prior to moving to Arkansas three years ago, Pastor Thomas was the Senior Pastor of True Believers Baptist Church in Wills Point, Texas, where she served as Minister of Music. Currently, she serves her local church as a Church Marriage and Pre-Marital Counselor, Marriage Ministry Facilitator, Teacher in Church-Wide Studies, and she serves with the Prison Ministry at one of the State Women's Units. There she delivers the Word, prays, and interacts with the residents.

DivaT has been preaching for over seven years, and teaching for about 15 years, but just recently accepted her call in October 2006. She says, "My Assignment is to minister the Gospel through preaching and teaching."

DivaT wears many hats metaphorically, but she also wears them literally. In fact, she formerly owned a business called, "Elegant Hats" where she designed and sold ladies hats. She travelled to conventions,

fashion shows, and conferences, exhibiting her designs. Some of her other hobbies include Christian Reading, Gospel Music, piano, and shopping.

DivaT cites her marriage as the high point in her life next to her salvation. Regarding her marriage, she says:

I married Earnest because of his example of being a Godly husband, one who loves me as Christ loves the church. He has helped me to grow into not only my role as a wife, but as an individual in Christ. His life and selflessness inspire me to be the best wife I can possibly be.

"He has helped me to grow into not only my role as a wife, but as an individual in Christ. His life and selflessness inspire me to be the best wife I can possibly be."

When asked which woman in the bible she would most like to be, DivaT selected the Woman with the issue of blood.

Like her, I have had a lot of issues to press my way through. I can relate to being crowded with barriers that attempt to keep me from getting close to Jesus. Focusing on Jesus has been the strength needed to get past obstacles which have tried to keep me from functioning physically, emotionally and spiritually.

With all of the other "hats" she wears, DivaT is our beloved founder of the DIVAS Ministry. She says her reason for starting this ministry was to minister to women via an online marriage seminar. After the first week, she realized that God's plan for the ministry was much larger than she had initially envisioned. As a result, the concept of ministering to the total woman was born. She views herself as a mere steward over the DIVAS, referring to it as "God's Ministry". Her goal while serving in this capacity is to "Inform, Illumine, Instruct, and Inspire women as it relates to being all they can be to the glory of God."

Behind DIVAS Ministry



Roline Thomas (DivaT) is founder and director of DIVAS Ministry and co-director of Earnest and Roline Ministries. A gifted and anointed teacher and minister of the gospel, Roline is married to Pastor Earnest Thomas and they have four daughters and two grandchildren. Roline, a native of New Orleans, LA, resides in Little Rock AR.
email - DivaT@divasministry.org



Cathy Jacobs (DivaBear) is the DIVAS General Coordinator, overseeing the total work of the DIVAS Ministry. Cathy is prayer warrior with a heart for ministry. She is passionate about her call to minister God's Word to women. Cathy resides in Baltimore, Maryland.
email - DivaBear@divasministry.org



Kerpasha Davis (UniqueDiva), DIVAS Relations Coordinator, serves as the ministry's human resource person. Kerpasha is responsible for discovering the needs and concerns of members by keeping in close contact with the women. A psalmist of the highest order, she sings words of inspiration and peace. Kerpasha resides in Albany Georgia with her husband, Ricardo, and their son.
email - UniqueDiva@divasministry.org



Vanessa Miller (DivaLynn), of Sparks Nevada, serves as the DIVAS Connection Newsletter Assistant. A gifted writer, musician, teacher of the Word, Vanessa is a compassionate and loving woman of God. She ministers messages of hope and encouragement in the DIVAS Ministry.
email - DivaLynn@divasministry.org

THE 411.....

DIVAS Ministry

www.DivasMinistry.org
newsletter email - DivasConnection@divasministry.org
MySpace - www.myspace.com/ladydivat

Earnest and Roline Ministries

www.earnestandroline.com
email - director@earnestandroline.com
MySpace - www.myspace.com/earnestandroline

