

2009 Printer's Row Lit Fest

This year the Printer's Row Book Fair changed its name to Printer's Row Lit Fest. It is still sponsored by the Tribune Company and is consistently well managed and organized. Brethren from past efforts filled the open time slots so quickly that no announcement for volunteers was needed. The weather threatened rain and storms, but nothing more than a drizzle ever came. We had the same location as in past years.

New this year was the offering of the DVD on "Where was God on 9/11". This was the Powerpoint presentation from a few years back in Chicago by Bro. Bob Gray. While it has been available on the CBS web site, this has just recently been made into a DVD. It is amazing how this theme is still fresh in the minds of so many people. It has such a great answer for "Why God permits evil."

Also new this year was the use of a magazine rack. It easily handles magazines like Bible Study Review, the Herald, the Ft Worth DPA, and newsletters on current events up to 8 ½ X 11 in size. This made it convenient for people to browse through a number of topics without it taking up a lot of table top space. A great number of pieces were taken. It was all free.

Newly formed "FREEBIES" included a new version of "Who are the Bible Students" and an experiment of inserting the "billboard" calling cards. On one side are brief messages you might see on a billboard. On the flip side are references to web sites in addition to chicagobible.org that have a variety of current events articles, the presence and Revelation web sites. There's no way to know the effect of this by response... but you never know.

One man walked up to the display and recognized the material from the Alsip flea market... that was over a year ago, so people do remember. Another man checked out the set and walked away. He came back... and walked away. He came back again with his wife and they both bought a set, so they could study together.

It's always encouraging to see the brethren that continue to return for another opportunity to serve, but it's also encouraging to see those who come for the first time. The other area of encouragement comes from seeing Emilia and Sebastian return to help out at the fair. They didn't have to be asked, they just took it for granted that they would be coming. How great is that!

I thank all the brethren that made this possible by their vote, their encouragement, their assistance and co-labor in the work... not to be forgotten, Srs. Gretchen Sandler, Chris and Ollie Grigalunas.

Bro. Mark Kandel

I consider it a great privilege to work at the book fair. It is a fantastic honor to place truth literature in the hands of the public, whether it is tracts, booklets or volumes. I have been somewhat shy most of my life, but now I enjoy talking to people and sharing their experiences.

I appreciate the zeal and enthusiasm of my fellow workers to place truth literature in the hands of the public. This is a great one-on-one experience to hear and share their beliefs and hopes.

I hope to participate in this effort as long as I am physically able.

Bro. Erwin Kalinski

This was my fourth year at the Printer's Row Fair, along with Erwin and Mark. The Book Fair is a good venue to introduce people to God's plan for the ages. The weather cooperated with us and we had a beautiful morning. We were presenting the booklet "How to Study the Bible and Have it Make Sense" and the six-in-one volume. On the table, were also various DVD's and books in different languages. This year, because of family commitments, I was not able to stay as long as I would have liked. However, before I left I was able to talk to an elderly Latino lady who seemed interested in learning the bible. She took several free Spanish booklets and bought 2 DVD's also in Spanish. We never know how the seeds we plant will be made to grow by the Holy Spirit. At this time of the harvest, we need to take all opportunities to plant the word.

Bro. Bob Giovannoni

We were again privileged to work at this year's booth on Saturday afternoon. The periodic rain and the recession didn't seem to dampen the enthusiasm of the public to come out and view the books we had on display. A new feature of a revolving display rack of free literature was especially attractive to many who visited our booth. The DVD on "Where was God in 911?" was also of special interest to many visitors.

Of special interest was a man from India who was fluent in English, who stopped to tell me of his success in establishing the "Studies in the Scriptures" as a core instructional aid at a Christian Learning Foundation in India, where he teaches. He told me how much he appreciated getting six sets of the volumes at our booth in previous years, and how difficult it is to leave the Hindu religion and become a Christian in India. He was glad to get additional literature to take back with him from our display, and encouraged us to keep holding up the Christian Standard.

One other interesting experience was with a man dressed in biking clothes who was biking down the street past many booths and suddenly stopped his bike in front of our booth. He came over to me and extended his hand for a handshake, and said: "I want to greet my brother!" This was a bit surprising, but then he went on to explain that he wanted to commend us for dispensing the Lord's word to people who need it so much today. He took several pieces of literature from our revolving stand, and placed them in his backpack, and rode off saying "God bless you!"

We were thankful for the opportunity to sell several sets of the volumes to people who wanted to better understand their Bible, and to see the public's interest in taking many of the free booklets and literature on Bible topics.

Br. Ed Bushlus

We are thankful to the Lord for being able to be at the booth this year to tell the Truth to those interested in His Word. The free packets of booklets, etc. were quite well received by those who were not sure about the other material offered on the table, as well as by those who were interested to a greater degree.

A Spanish woman was glad to see the free packet was in Spanish; and said "there is not much literature like this in Spanish". Later on she came back to take other free literature from the display rack.

An older man came and said that he has translated the New Testament and offered an excerpt from his translation. I asked if he knew about the Diaglott and went on to describe its contents, but he was not familiar with it. When telling him that the Greek word for hell means the grave, he was already aware of it. However, then he went on to say there was a place of torment. A lengthy discussion ensued with asking him: Where do the people who have never heard about the true God or Jesus as the Savior? Does God have a plan? What about the Scripture that all that are in their graves shall come forth? While he was not aware of all the features, he said he believed God had some plan for mankind.

Sr. Estera Mezra and Geri LeBlanc took the free booklet packets and went around to the different booths and in the aisles to distribute them to those who had an interest; and placed all that they could carry with them.

May the Lord and His Truth continue to go forth to those hungering and thirsting for it!

Sr. Rachel Bushlus

For me the best part was being there and talking to people! By the way, Sr. Gerry said this was her best experience since she came to Chicago five months ago. Both of us really enjoyed it and we were ready to go back Sunday morning, but things just did not work out.

Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to do this. May the Lord continue to bless the work you continually do in His name!

Sincerely,
Sr. Estera

I found it to be quite an experience. I was impressed by the fact that this event draws so many people and of different ethnic groups.

I liked your approach with the people, not pushy or forceful, because I think most people can be turned off if it were the other way... Thank you for introducing me to this function, I felt very blessed.

Sr. Joanne Haig

"We both enjoyed being at the fair very much. It was a blessing for us to be able to see God's hand and overruling as the brethren talked with different people. We think that it this a wonderful way to witness!"

Emilia and Sebastian.

We look forward to the opportunity to serve at the Book Fair each year. This year the weather looked a little unpredictable and we were hoping we didn't get washed out, as we did last year on our shift. But the Lord provided a wonderful afternoon for people to be out strolling and looking at books of all kinds. We did not have a large number of people stopping at our booth, but almost everyone that stopped was someone that we were able to engage in to a conversation. Bro. Mark had a lengthy witness opportunity with a Catholic man who ended up purchasing a 6 in 1 set of volumes, even after Mark mentioned our views on Hell and the Trinity. Bro. Mark also had the unique opportunity of witnessing to a gorilla. This kind of caught the attention of passer-bys. Actually this was a "strolling gorilla" doing advertising for someone, but he stopped and asked a couple of questions that led to the opportunity to give a witness message.

A highlight of working at this booth the last couple of years is having Emilia and Sebastian with us. It's important for young people to have opportunities to participate in various methods of witnessing and learn how to approach people with the Truth. Last but not least, each year a couple of the unconsecrated brethren that live downtown come to visit us at the booth toward the end of the Fair and then help us clean up and carry boxes to our car. This is a very helpful service, which we appreciate.

Lord willing, we'll have the opportunity to have this witness opportunity next year and personally be able to participate.

In His Service,

Bro. Mark & Sr. Roberta Tabac

Literature	
DIVINE PLAN (PAPERBACK) ENGLISH	3
DIVINE PLAN (PAPERBACK) SPANISH	3
6 VOLUME SET PLUS TS	5
7-IN-1 VOLUME	5
TS	1
FOR THIS CAUSE DVD SPANISH	12
911 DVD	12
MISC DVD ENGLISH	14
BOOKLET PACKETS SPANISH	75+
BOOKLET PACKETS ENGLISH	200+
BOOKLET PACKETS POLISH	5+
MISC MAGAZINES AND NEWSLETTERS	75+