

Spreading the Word

Words of Life devotional book unites Salvationists

By Kristin Ostensen –

[Beverly Ivany](#) When Major Beverly Ivany became an officer almost 35 years ago, she never expected that she would also become a writer. But today, as the author of *Words of Life*, The Salvation Army's international daily devotional book, Ivany spends her days praying, reading and writing messages that she hopes will inspire Salvationists around the world—and she keeps a globe on her desk to remind her of how far those messages can reach.

Ivany is in her fourth year of writing *Words of Life*, and it may be the most exciting year yet. For the first time in its history, *Words of Life* will be translated into Spanish by the U.S.A. Western Territory, to be hopefully released by the end of 2014.

“A fair percentage of The Salvation Army is Spanish-speaking so it will be a real blessing,” Ivany said.

Words of Life is also expanding into the digital sphere—an official app for phones and tablets is in development and is expected to launch by the end of the year.

These initiatives underscore the devotional's significance in a growing, international Army.

“The great thing about *Words of Life* is that, on any specific day, Salvationists from around the world are reading the same thing,” Ivany said. “It unites us and helps us feel connected to the larger Salvation Army as a whole.”

A new issue of *Words of Life* is published every four months. Each entry offers a Scripture reading, an encouraging message and a call to action. On Sundays, Ivany includes excerpts from The Song Book of The Salvation Army.

“My hope is that readers will be able to apply what they read to their lives in a practical way, and live out what the Word is saying to them,” she said. “It's not just informative; it helps them feel fired up for another day.”

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Over the past three years, *Words of Life* has covered every book in the Bible, following the overarching themes of faith, hope and love. Next year, *Words of Life* will focus on the Trinity.

In addition to the Bible, Ivany draws on a variety of sources, from newspapers to novels, as well as her own life and experiences as a wife, mother and officer. In her early years as a writer, Ivany wrote two devotional books for young people, *Kid Talk* and *Teen Talk*, which started off as devotionals for her own children.

Ivany is appointed to Toronto's Corps 614 with her husband, Major David Ivany. The corps is located in Regent Park, a neighborhood where nearly 70 percent of residents are considered low-income.

"A lot of the people at our corps are very vulnerable, marginalized people," Ivany said. "It's really front-line ministry; it's what the Army is all about." The appointment often provides illustrations for *Words of Life*.

"I really feel that writing this is a partnership with God," she said. "Sometimes thoughts come to me that I would never have thought of on my own, and I feel God saying that this is what people need to hear.

Ivany regularly receives letters from readers.

"People have told me how they were blessed on a certain day—that the message was just for them—and yet, it was written over a year ago," she said. "That encourages me to write more, if only for that one person who is going through a crisis."