

Fully Alive



THE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CURSILLOS

“Lord make sure that we don’t need miracles to believe and act but that our faith be such that we deserve that miracles happen.”

I’ve always been more impressed by the silence of God and his patience than by the miracles and apparitions.

*Eduardo Bonnin
Signs of Hope*

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OFFICERS' CORNER

In Jeremiah 29.12-14 we read, "When you seek me you shall find me, when you seek me with all your heart; I will let you find me (-- it is Yahweh who speaks).

"What a wonderful memory it is to go back to Toronto, in January 1992, when I met Eduardo Bonnín for three days of 'retreat', to listen to the history of the origins and the spirit of the beginnings. It was like being part of the beginning of the Church as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles. The Holy Spirit was being made present through Eduardo's enthusiasm and deep faith. Inside of me, a wave of joy swelled up and a great beam of light shone in my mind and suddenly I discovered a new image of Cursillo. I was like a new convert. I loved that new vision because it made complete sense to me. Before that, some parts of the puzzle were missing and I found them. Listening to Eduardo, I understood some of his comments: "Cursillo has yet to be tried." I agreed, because the Charism is not fully grasped and lived. "What has been done is not wrong, but can always be better". Take another look at the *Why*, because this is *it*. A lack of understanding of the *Why* will confuse and give no precise meaning to the *how*, therefore creating more confusion."¹

For many years Fr. Gaston was an integral part of the Officers Group and freely shared in the give and take of our meetings. His advice to me when I was a new officer was to listen and, when I was ready to engage, to do so without ever forgetting that what I share with others and what I hear others sharing are merely steps along my road to understanding and are not to be taken or treated as final positions. This

understanding is at the heart of the OG. We strive to build a consensus which respects the person and freedom of the other by allowing people to share, to think out loud, without fear of being ridiculed or attacked or dismissed. The OG is a place of learning. It is part Group Reunion, part Ultreya, and part School. There is a collegiality that is heartening, liberating, and affirming. It is both incubator and think tank for those who come knowing the value of the Cursillo yet also knowing that they have so much more to learn about its Charism and its method. It is a place to continue in their personal conversion process. It is not a place for swollen egos or for persons who think that the way they understand the Cursillo is the only legitimate view point and that anyone who disagrees with them is obviously wrong.

What we do routinely as an Officers Group must also be done in the Schools of Leaders that should be at the core of all Cursillo movements. There needs to be this place, this mentality, that ensures that all of those who seek to know God and who have chosen the Cursillo to aid and assist them in this great purpose have the chance to study, to reflect, to share, to grow, to hear their own voice, and to do so in a loving and supportive community. By having a functioning and authentic School we provide ourselves and others with a place where we can grow in friendship and learn to listen to God, to ourselves, and to others. In this way we deepen our understanding of the Charism of the Cursillo and learn to live that reality in our everyday circumstances.

Because we begin again with each new person who joins the group, we get to plough the same ground many times, sowing questions and, in time, reaping an epiphany or two along the way. The surprising thing about this process is that we never become bored or jaded or disinterested because we are all actively engaged in deepening our own understanding

¹ Fr. Gaston Rioux, o.m.i.: "Leaders Who Think", *Christianity in Action: Living the Fourth Day*, Canadian Conference of Catholic Cursillos 2003 Annual Conference, Saint John, New Brunswick, p. 16

of the Charism. Hearing a new cursillista struggle to convey his/her understanding of an aspect of the Cursillo has value for the presenter and for the listener. The thoughts, the discussion, and the sharing that is engendered are what help each participant to add to their own understanding of this marvellous gift. Sharing an older cursillista's 'eureka' moment of 'a great beam of light shining in his/her mind' can provide for movements who ask, search, and knock inspiration and affirmation.

As an Officers Group our primary reason for being is to share the fruit of our study with all of our affiliated movements. We do this through the complication of resource documents which, before we publish, we have reviewed by the Mallorcan Secretariat to ensure that we have remained true to the essence, purpose, and mentality of the authentic Cursillo which the Charism called into existence and to which the method gives shape and direction. We do this through our quarterly resource publication, *Fully Alive*, a complimentary copy of which is mailed to the Lay Director of each affiliated movement. Our annual CCCC Conference is a further means of disseminating what we have learned through our study of primary and secondary sources. In recent years we have also travelled to various affiliated movements at their invitation to assist them in School of Leaders workshop preparation and presentation. We are also available to Cursillistas through our website and through e-mail. We are presently studying various forms of social media, trying to determine ways to use this to connect with individual cursillistas to provide them with the access to reliable information and to respond to

questions and concerns that they might have. This is our job and our joy.

As I come to the close of my time on the OG I am still convinced that the Cursillo, understood and lived daily, is the answer to all of our problems. It provides a method rooted in friendship with self, God, and others that, as an integral part of our daily life, make everyday a gift that draws us closer to the one who has always loved us first. When lived as a part of and not a part from our life, Cursillo can make us Easter people filled with hope even in the darkest of times. Nothing can separate us from the love of God and the Cursillo can provide us with a means to actively participate in building that relationship so that we become more like Christ in our manner and action each and every day.

James Russell Lowell, in *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, said

*Not that which we give, but what we share,--
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,--
Himself, his hungry neighbour, and me.*

Although he lived long before the advent of the Cursillo, Lowell's lines remind me of the three lifetime encounters of the Cursillo weekend. We need to inculcate the lessons that the Cursillo teaches, study to make them our own, and live them authentically and with normality in our daily lives. We need the Group Reunion, the Ultreya, and the School to inspire, encourage, and affirm us in our journey to the Father.

Ultreya!
George Henry



It's not too late to book for
the CCCC annual conference.
See page 12 for details

ESSAY

“ESSAY” is a column, in which the talks and reflections from Cursillo leaders around the country (and abroad) can be shared with the larger audience. Hopefully these ‘essays’ will provide the basis for further discussion. If anyone cares to respond, please feel free to send your commentary to Fully Alive. While these essays are subject to editing for space, clarity and subject, they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the CCCC.

ESSENCE AND PURPOSE

Rollo given by Sheelagh Winston at the Cursillo of Cursillos in Prince Edward Island, 2010

What is this thing called Cursillo?

I lived my 3 day weekend in 1976 and I am almost embarrassed to admit that it wasn't the experience that most people have. This was in a small way due to the way the weekend was presented but for the most part it was me. However, obviously through God's grace, I did somehow manage to become involved in the 4th Day and was soon asked to become part of a weekend team. I cannot just do something because 'that's the way we do it', I have to know the Why, not just in Cursillo but in my life also.

In retrospect, I realize that from very early in my Cursillo journey I somehow knew what Cursillo is. For me it has always seemed very clear that it is plain and simply a method for bringing the Good News of the Gospel into the lives of ordinary people, into the marketplace, the normality of our everyday lives. It makes the Gospel live; it takes the words of Jesus off the page and Him out of the tabernacle, into my reality where I can experience Him as real, alive, and close to me.

Of course I only knew all this deep inside of me, I couldn't articulate it, couldn't explain it to the other Cursillistas I was beginning to work with. For most of them, back there in the late 1970s and into the 1980s Cursillo was simply a three Day weekend; exciting, emotional, uplifting, but with very little attention paid to the 4th Day, very little understanding, if any, of the purpose and almost no understanding of the history and origins. I used to drive them crazy by saying, "If you only understood the

whole of it". They would then ask me what I meant and I couldn't tell them. Grouping was 'iffy' and the Ultreya was nothing more than a social event, pleasant but not really satisfying in terms of life itself.

Needless to say the movement in my diocese died long ago for that is what happens when we don't understand the gift that we have been given. Sometimes the demise is very rapid and sometimes it is slow and painful. The only remedy for this is to go back to the source, forget what we think we know and have the humility to open our minds and hearts to the truth.

I am only mentioning this because it seems important to understand that this notion that there is much more to Cursillo than many of us realized is a valid one. Cursillo isn't a 'thing' that we do or something that we belong to. It is quite simply something that we live. It forms our mentality as we live a method that has withstood the test of time.. It is this method that enables us to continue to live the 4th Day as the perennial Cursillo that it should be.

As I said, the Cursillo is quite simply a way to live the Gospel in everyday life. Therefore it is Christ, the person and a method. The method as we know is based on friendship and through friendship, which is the best means, we share the best news, which is the Gospel with the best that is in each person.

When we live the Gospel we are living what is fundamental to being a Christian and that fundamental truth is that God love us; he loves

me and he loves you, and in doing so he enters into the best that is in each of us, into our very being.

Deep inside each one of us is the capacity for conviction, decision and perseverance. The truth of God's love impacts me, Sheelagh, deep within, in that place where I am really me. It doesn't direct itself to what I can do, not what I have, not to what I know or how generous and industrious I might be, but at my deepest level. Everything that I am flows from this place and affects who I am. It is the place within each of us where only God can enter. It is where my freedom, meets God's spirit. It is in this place that I experience conviction, where I exercise my God given freedom to make decisions and it is here that my will is strengthened into perseverance.

Cursillo is a means that facilitates making the three encounters, with ourselves, with Christ and with each other; not just on the weekend but every day of our lives.

It isn't possible to make an authentic encounter unless we have knowledge and the Cursillo is a way for us to gain that knowledge by hearing the Good news through the lived experience of other Cursillistas, which then leads us to conviction and that conviction propels us into life so that we cannot help but share what we have discovered, always by means of friendship.

The Purpose of the Cursillo.

As I said, Cursillo isn't just anything, it is something specific and it has a specific purpose. Its purpose is to help us to live what is fundamental for being Christian thereby becoming fully human, fully alive.

To do this we need to:

- know God loves us
- accept it as the truth
- be convinced of it and therefore able to convince others
- allow ourselves to experience it
- share it with others

This, in a nutshell, is what it is to live what is fundamental to being Christian.

To understand what this is, is to understand the nucleus of our Christian faith:

That God became man in Jesus Christ and entered our history in a tangible way
That Christ redeems us and remains with us in and through the Church
He is present and alive in us through Grace
That we receive this through baptism

If we lack this fundamental Christianity then Christianity doesn't exist

Accepting and living these precepts is the mark of being Christian. We all know people who call themselves Christian but who don't accept any of this. Being Christian isn't inherited nor is it acquired through being born in a so-called Christian society; we are Christian because we live it

It is what all Christians agree is true (this is what we mean by fundamental. We all agree on the fundamentals)

If we deny the fundamentals, it isn't that we are less Christian but rather that we are not Christian at all.

Christianity is ours through our baptism but we must choose to let it live and grow within us. To live it, means to live in Grace and this enables us to see everything with new eyes, life itself looks different. The only way to true happiness is the same now as it was in the beginning and will be to the end of time. God has done everything possible to show us how we are loved. He poured out His great love in giving us a glorious creation and we blew that through pride. He told us who He is through the words of the prophets and we killed most of them. Finally, He sent His only Son, to show us who He is. As Jesus said, whoever has seen me has seen the Father. I am always moved by the scripture where God seems to be lamenting over us when He says "What more could I have done for my vineyard that I have not already done?" Is. 5:4

We are called to accept that we are loved, loveable and capable of loving in return. We are called to this as Christians; this is at the very heart of all that is Cursillo.

A child who knows that he or she is loved, lives happy and free, secure in the knowledge of being loved. Children who are not loved live in fear for they have no security. Very often these children manifest their feeling of being unloved in anger or violence. We may not be children but we are no different. In this day and age we are all very aware of the violence in the world but perhaps we fail to recognize that all the small daily annoyances can push us into violent reactions or anger. We are afraid of being imposed upon so we snap when someone asks too much of us; we feel ignored or snubbed so we react by being nasty; we feel inferior or experience jealousy so we gossip. All of this stems from fear which has its roots in feeling unloved and therefore insecure.

What we all do when we are afraid is to run towards something but in doing so we lose sight of where we are going simply because we are looking backwards, not forwards

We try to overcome:
 loneliness by looking for pleasure
 Poverty by striving to get rich
 Other people by seeking to be powerful
 When we are afraid of being free we look for security
 We do all of this just trying to be happy.

Through Cursillo we can discover that happiness is only found in knowing that God loves us. We discover that truth that makes us free, free from fear.

As I said, my own Cursillo weekend was not the life altering experience that many of you had but when I came home my sponsor asked me how I had enjoyed it. All I could say was that if I had learned anything at all it was not just that God loves, it is that He is love, that is what He is; that is His essence. Whenever we are touched by love we are touched by God; whenever our hearts are moved by the beauty of creation or our spirit is stirred in any way, it is God using our senses to whisper His love. I

now know that this is the very essence of the Cursillo and this is what we are trying to share with all those whom God sends to us.

This is what enables a martyr to face death and what enables me to live my life as it is. God loves me, He has looked for me, continues to wait for me, understands me, accepts me, puts up with me and my stumbling and bumping, He cries with me, feels my sorrow, delights with me in my joy. He is my friend. My pastor, who is a very dour and seemingly unemotional guy surprised me last week by saying in his homily, 'God is crazy in love with His people and if we ever doubt it, sit and contemplate a crucifix for a few moments'.

The Purpose of all aspects of the Cursillo is to help every person believe this for themselves. God entered our reality in Jesus and Jesus calls us into discipleship, to go and share the message that has been shared with us. The purpose is to have every person believe for themselves that through God's love, life makes sense and life itself is a gift that has been given to us to enjoy. We are created as human beings, with the capacity for great love, great sorrow, great joy and great generosity. Our goal and the purpose of Cursillo, is to help every person to become fully human and fully alive.

Before my Cursillo I had the feeling that it was like God was playing a heavenly game of chess with all of us and that He was just waiting for me to make a mistake, keeping account of my wrongdoings. I had heard something of predestination and not understanding, I had decided that there was no point in trying, He already knew where I would end up so why should I bother to try. I was orphaned at 11 so it wasn't easy to believe that God loved me. I was convinced that God loved the world, I just didn't believe that that world included me. I guess that came from my excruciating sense of abandonment. Looking back I am convinced that those painful years of feeling so alone were the path that lead me to this place that I am now in.

When we are convinced of God's love, we value it so deeply that we want to share it with all those in our everyday lives in what we call

our environments. It's like being in love; we want the world to know and we want everyone to love what we love. The difference is that Jesus, the One I love and who is my friend, also wants to be in friendship with all those I know.

The Cursillo method isn't just for the three day weekend to pass on the Good News but more it is a means to facilitate a way to live in and with Christ for the rest of our lives, to live the message of the Gospel in whatever circumstances we find ourselves.

Eduardo's main concern at the very beginning was to take the Good News of the Gospel to the Faraway, those who did not know that God loved them, or who perhaps had turned their backs on Him due to events and experiences in their lives. Now this has been something of an eye opener for many of us for from the literature that was available to us for years, we were lead to understand that the Cursillo was to form leaders for the Church. This was never the intention; it was always focussed mainly, though not exclusively, to the Faraway. If we have a problem with this then we only have to contemplate those to whom Jesus went. He reached out to the sinners, the poor, those who were without hope and it was these people who responded to him. These Faraway people are found everywhere, in every walk of life, young, old, rich, poor, married, single, educated or not. The Sermon on the Mount was directed to a diverse group of people; people from every walk of life. The focus of Cursillo is no different. For this reason the message of the Cursillo must be simple, easy to understand, embracing all and avoiding language that is only understood by those who have always been in the Church. The message is kerygmatic, meaning it is the Gospel shared through the lived witness of the rollistas.

Because we are who we are, we cannot seem to accept simplicity; we seem to think that if we make things more complicated then it must be better. For this reason in many places, almost universally, the method and purpose of Cursillo has often been distorted, manipulated, used to accomplish things that were never part of its original and intended purpose.

In terms of distorting the method we often hear that we need to read the signs of the times and the movement has to be updated. Although the problems and difficulties we face today may be different, their root is still the same as it has always been, selfishness, pride, greed. The solution also has not changed nor will it. The solution has always been and will always be, Jesus Christ, alive and present to His people.

Likewise the purpose is often distorted because some think that it is a way to recruit people who are then steered into all manner of ministries, apostolates, social or charitable work. This would be the same as exploiting their enthusiasm and generosity.

The Cursillo is not an organization, a service group like the CWL or Knights of Columbus, it has one purpose, to help people to understand that God loves them. What a person does with that knowledge after they are convinced of that fact is between them and God. Its aim isn't to convert people to our favourite cause or to furnish the parish with workers or ministers of the Word or music.

Now that is not to say of course that Cursillistas should not serve in these place, all these things are good in themselves, but it does mean that whatever a person chooses to do after their Cursillo is between them and God, it must be something they choose to do, feel called to.

Apostolic Action is not primarily ministry within the Church, it is rather, being and living the Gospel in our environments. Eduardo Bonnin said that anyone who understands the Study of the Environment rollo understands Cursillo and study of this rollo is extremely helpful in understanding the authentic purpose of the Cursillo. If we are to channel the candidates into anything, it should be back into their own environments, making Jesus present wherever we live. Not being involved in parish ministry does not make one less of a Christian or Cursillista.

When Miguel Sureda gave this rollo at the Cursillo of Cursillos held in Mallorca he said. Cursillo is not intended to satisfy the hunger for God but to create a hunger for Him so that

we live always hungry for more of Him. We are to be happy and joyful but never satisfied.

Life makes sense when we want what we actually do, not when we do what we want or what we are told to do. This freedom to choose can only flow from a genuine and personal conviction and this is what is nurtured and supported in the Ultreya.

The purpose of Cursillo is not to bring new life to the existing structures that already exist in the Church but to bring new life to life itself, to our everyday lives.

It is easier to be a Christian and to do good things outside of our closest environments than it is to do good where we are called to be. In my life at the moment I have just opened my door to my grandson. He has just come through a stage in his life where he was less than easy to have around. He has severe diabetes and this can cause terrific mood swings and sometimes over the top reactions to minor things. He is currently on the outs with his mother, my eldest daughter, and hasn't lived at home with her and his brother for a year. The friend with whom he was living has gone away to school so he asked me if he could move in with me, into my very small apartment. I have lived alone for more than 10 years and one gets set in ones ways. He is over six feet tall and a bit erratic. Knowing all this I was wishing that I lived somewhere else but I know to what I am called. I know what it feels like to be thrust into responsibility when it would be much more comfortable to remain a child with someone to look after me. It's not going to be easy and working for Cursillo or doing some other Christian thing would be a lot easier with more sense of gratification, but I am called to my own environment, my grandson and whatever it is I can give him for as long as he needs me. I ask for your prayers, dealing with a teenager again might be a bit of a challenge.

I already mentioned how Eduardo reacted to the young men in the barracks and was motivated to find a way to help them and others like them, all people in fact, to the understanding that God loves us. He was greatly influenced by listening to a message

from Pope Pius XII² who while addressing priests and pastors told them that they were also responsible for those who had lost their faith. He talked of studying to determine how to reach the people in the different areas of the parish. Go street by street, make an inventory. This was the inspiration behind the Study of the Environment rollo.

We are called to live in the world, to live real life where it happens. We and all those we live our lives with and those we are yet to meet need to discover that Jesus did not come to save the world but to save us, we the people.

We have already talked about how Cursillo was born but I think it's important to emphasize that it is essential to go back to our roots, to rediscover our origins, to explore the thinking of the Founder. By doing so we will absorb his mentality, the mentality of the movement and the essence and purpose of the Cursillo will gradually become clearer and clearer. If we consider Jesus as the Founder of the Church then by contemplating His life, His

² Then, a book entitled "H.H. Pious XII and the Catholic Action" came into my hands. I read a paragraph which reads literally, "Of this dual aspect of his parishioners it is the duty of the parish priest, with a quick and agile look to form a clear and carefully detailed picture, we would say topographically, street by street, of his community, i.e. on the one hand the population of the faithful..., and on the other hand the groups that had moved away from the practice of Christian life. They are also sheep that belong to the parish, lost sheep, and also of these, and even of them particularly, you are responsible custodians, my dearest children, and as good pastors you must not dodge any effort or work to find them and win them over again, nor must you indulge in any rest until all of them have found asylum, life and joy in the return to the fold of Christ." (Address to the parish priests and Lenten preachers in Rome, on February 6, 1940).

That letter had an unusual effect on me and brought me to the decision that the most important thing to start with was to have at our disposal, as the Pope advised, a "detailed study" of the situation... That conclusion led me to examine each of the constellations of individuals in the world, in my world and in the Church that I knew and frequented.

teachings, we move deeper and deeper into becoming true Christians. There is a saying which has always made a deep impression on me; We become like those we contemplate.

Cursillo speaks of us being restless and I suppose it is the kind of restlessness that we experience when we want so much for our children that we will go to all lengths to help them reach their potential. No good parent just sits back and allows life to just happen to their kids, we are always willing to help, to sacrifice our own needs and desires.

The Cursillo is a movement that seeks to bring a Christian mentality to every environment where Cursillistas live. This is what we mean by giving a backbone to Christianity. It makes it something tangible, something that can be seen to be effective, it moves Christianity from a group of abstract ideas to something that has a reality. On visits to Mallorca I see the rollos being lived in the lives of the Cursillistas, if I wasn't a Cursillista I would surely want to know what it is that they have that makes them so different.

Cursillo has always sought and through the Grace of God is on the way to achieving its purpose of bringing the Good News into the lives of ordinary people who then come to life by sharing it with others in friendship.

Structuring Christianity, giving it backbone is achieved by creating a world where friendship is the means by which the Good News is shared in a way in which it becomes real and authentic. Eduardo did not set out to form a movement, the movement has evolved from this gathering of friends who lived and acted with the purpose of making their Friend the friend of all. This has given birth to a mentality and from this has come the method.

We will hear rollos on Group Reunion, Ultreya, School, Secretariat, the Three Days and we will hear how each and every one of these different groups is first and foremost a group of friends.

To be absolutely clear, without friendship there is no Cursillo, The whole thing can be wonderfully organized with Group Reunions,

School, secretariat and Ultreya but if that is all it is, without friendship, there is no Cursillo., Without friendships, everything is a lie.

In the words of Eduardo
Cursillo is a song to life and in this song we realize

People are important
Life is beautiful
And it is worth living

De Colores



What is a Cursillo?... It is Christ... What does a Cursillo aim for?...Christ...What keeps the 'Cursillistas' on their path?...Christ does!...Therefore the Cursillo has Christ at its centre...If Christ is at the centre, all other things will fall into place". Eduardo Bonnin.

FROM CHARLIE

I just read the beginning of your 2011 Talk. It reminded me of a story I read in the late 60's in the Saturday Review (I believe). It told the tale of a child prodigy from Australia who decided to ditch his dreams of a career in Medicine to pursue his musical talent. He attended the Julliard in New York and became a world renowned concert pianist. After a couple years on the concert circuit he fell in love and concluded that it would be much better to support and raise a family as a physician than a travelling musician. So he went back to school and eventually became chairman of the neurosurgery department at Walter Reed in DC. Because of his prior career he stayed in touch with the world music community.

At the time, Pablo Casals was training young cellists in Cuba, if I remember correctly, The leading young cellist in the world was finishing his time with the master and invitations went out for the world musical community to attend his final recital. The doctor was invited and decided to attend. At the concert it finally came time for the young musician to play his final piece. It was one of the most difficult and beautiful pieces for the instrument and the young person played it masterfully. Later members of the audience all agreed that it was technically and interpretively the best performance of the piece any of them had ever heard. At the conclusion the hall erupted with applause and cheers as the young person was given an extended standing ovation.

The applause seemed that it would not end until people caught sight of the old master. Pablo was walking slowly across the stage. By the time he got to the performer the audience, at his signalled request, had re-seated themselves. Casals took the bow and Cello from the performer, seated himself, and began to play the same piece. When he finished there was no applause. The hall was dead silence. The community of world famous musicians had just experienced the piece played better than anyone had ever heard or imagined and now, the old master, had rendered it far beyond what they had just heard.

This experience set the doctor to thinking about music. That there must be something there that goes far beyond our understanding, perhaps it is the criterion. He set about to find some way to measure the phenomenon and using his knowledge of the human brain he developed a contraption that linked a small handheld transducer to a computer. A musician could be seated and given a score of music to read. As he read it the computer sampled input from the transducer and eventually produced a graphical representation from the session. When the graphs from different musicians reading the same piece were compared a similar pattern was found. This did not vary so much from musician to musician, though the more accomplished could be discerned from those with less skill. The graph did not vary much from one selection to another by the same

composer, but selections from different composers showed quite different patterns.

The deduction was that there was something very basic in the brains of people that a composer was in touch with. It coloured all or at least most of his work. Musicians in their interpretation of the composer's work were able to touch this (for lack of a better word I will call it criterion), and the more accomplished were those who could most faithfully do so. One of these days I am going to try to find that article again and see if there was ever any follow up. Nevertheless, I do so feel that this is the spiritual experience of people in touch with Jesus (we all are to some extent). In my mind He is the Criterion, the only valid Criterion. The more faithfully I am able to "interpret" him for others the more they experience Him at work in their lives.

Charles Green
Houston/Galveston Cursillo
1977, Wheeling, West Virginia

Editor's note. Charlie often contacts the Resource Centre and is an avid reader of Fully Alive and some of our resource documents that he passes on to Cursillistas in different areas. He has discovered what a great resource Fully Alive can be.

A friend is someone with whom you can think out loud!

Open letter to Montreal Cursillo Community

In the next few weeks I will be celebrating my 81st birthday. For over half of my life I have been living the effects of my Cursillo weekend in November 1969.

The experience of the weekend opened my eyes to the power of love and the community and it showed me how to be myself and to live my life to the full potential.

The subsequent trip of life, taught me the potential of Group Reunion which gave me the opportunity to learn about myself, about people surrounding me and about life. My

friends in my Group Reunion, in which I have been a member since my weekend, carried me through the illness and loss of my wife Helen seven years ago. For me that was one of the darkest times in my life.

The motto: Make a friend, be a friend and bring your friend to Christ.taught me to accept people as they are and to walk a mile in their shoes before judging them.

The Cursillo experience allowed me to analyze the most precious concepts of my upbringing, to analyze them as a goldsmith analyzes precious metals: by cutting, scraping, and melting. This led me to arrive at what is the essence of my faith and my being. It allowed me to know what is real for me. In other words the experience of the weekend has made me free. Free to live, to love, to be myself.

It is therefore with great sorrow that I see the whole structure of the Montreal Cursillo floundering as though they no longer know the way.

To my mind this is too important a movement to be allowed to die a slow death. There are too many people who could benefit from this experience. But to revive the movement is too great a task for one person or even a small group. I believe it requires commitment from the whole community to accomplish the task.

In that spirit I am calling everyone who feels like I do, to consider how this task could be accomplished.

To start, the School of Leaders has to be brought back to life to allow us to find and determine the way in which the Montreal movement can be restored and fulfil its role as envisaged by our founder Eduardo Bonnin.

Secondly, a new secretariat has to be chosen from the members of the school and dedicated to the task.

And lastly a way must be found to draw Cursillistas, who have become distanced, together again.

But first the call has to be made and I feel that it is my duty to call everyone to the task. At my age this may be the only thing I can do.

To this end I am sending this open letter to all my Cursillo friends and am asking them that if they think this is a worthy task to please forward this letter to their Cursillo friends and to consider what action may be taken.

I am leaving the results in the hands of the Spirit. Christ is counting on us.

De Colores

Peter Jankowski,

Montreal Cursillo #17, November 1969

CONFERENCE 2012

“The Conversations, The Path to Understanding!”

Hosted by the Cursillistas of the London Area Cursillo Movement

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WITNESS

daily we touch him

My Band of Brothers in Christ

I have been deeply blessed after my Cursillo weekend to be able to link up with a Group Reunion and to keep that going now for over 15 years. I began my Cursillo journey in Grande Prairie, Alberta attending the weekend in the fall of 1996. The three days were an awesome experience of God's love for me, as witnessed and poured out by the incredible team who led the Cursillo. I realized how much closer I could draw to Jesus and wanted to keep the Spirit alive and burning in my heart. Almost immediately I was able to join with four others who had made the weekend and we began a very regular and uplifting group reunion, a wonderful start to the Fourth Day. The process was interrupted for a time as our family moved from Grande Prairie to Sherwood Park in June 1998 and I had to leave my group reunion behind.

One of the first things that I did after settling in to our new home in Sherwood Park was to inquire around about Cursillo and see if I could find a group reunion to join. I was fortunate to meet a wonderful friend, Ron Stephens, who introduced me to the Saturday morning group reunion that meets at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. So with little more than a few months without a group reunion, I was welcomed into a very warm and supportive group!

Since the fall of 1998 our group has met every Saturday morning at 8 a.m. (only Jesus could get me up that early on a Saturday morning!). The face of the group has changed a bit over time as some men leave and others join us, but there is a core of five or so that have made this a regular "pit stop" in their week. This group reunion has been a fabulous "refuelling" stop every week for me. It is in the group that my strength to follow Jesus has been bolstered and supported by my brothers in Christ. I love to hear my friends talk about where they have

encountered Christ this past week and what kinds of challenges, joys and breakthroughs they have experienced. The group reunion keeps me honest and accountable about my own piety, study and action as I reflect on my own journey. We have shared so much of our lives with each other in that grouping, that we have become very close friends. I have many friends that I have known longer, some since high school, but I have such a deep sharing of faith with my Cursillo brothers that is not present in those other friendships.

We have shared our great joys when we are celebrating the good news of God's workings in our families and at work. We have cried with each other as we mourn losses and sadness that also is a part of living. We have prayed with each other and for each other in these challenging times. Through the highs and lows, I know that this is a group of men who, like me, love God and want to follow Jesus in a close and personal relationship.

I have experienced, through group reunion, a small glimpse of the Christian community that Paul describes in the Acts of the Apostles "All the believers continued together in close fellowship..". Because of the strengthening that I have experienced through this small group of Christian men, I have been more confident to become involved in my own Catholic parish community. I have served on Parish Pastoral Council as well as a number of ministries. The challenge we face in our parish because of it's large size, is to establish a warm, welcoming and friendly community. What I have learned through group reunion is that the many parishioners who I do not yet know, are friends waiting to be discovered. They are my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, who I would get to know better through sharing our stories together. May God grant us the opportunities to share faith and grow closer to each other and support each other in our walk with Jesus!

De Colores,
Dave Kornder, Edmonton Cursillo

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

ATLANTIC

- ◆ ATLANTIC,
Antigonish (Tri-Counties,
Cape Breton East,
Cape Breton West
Halifax,
St. John's,
Charlottetown,
Yarmouth,
Yarmouth Valley,
Saint. John'

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

My name is Leo Shea and I am the Lay Director for the Diocese of Charlottetown, Cursillo Movement. I replaced Arlene van Diepen in June of 2010 and so I am providing a report to you on my first year in the position of Lay Director and our activities associated to it.

Secretariat

Our Secretariat consists of Lay Director, Past Lay Director (one year term), Spiritual Advisor, Pre-Cursillo Coordinator, Post-Cursillo Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, Palanca Coordinator, Cursillo Weekend Coordinator, and Special Events Coordinator. We meet once a month with the exception of July and August.

In addition to Secretariat, we have a communications manager who provides updates and messages to our community at large, and a website manager who keeps the information current on that venue.

- ◆ CENTRAL
Montreal English,
Spanish, Hungarian,
Korean
London,
Kent County/Chatham,
Peterborough, Toronto,
Hamilton, Timmins,
Ottawa, Thunder Bay,
Essex, Latin American

National Cursillo Conference -Antigonish July 2010

I was not able to attend this conference and so our past Lay Director and another member of Secretariat attended on our behalf. There was no report brought back to Secretariat and so I cannot make any comment on same.

- ◆ WESTERN,
Vancouver,
Nelson,
Calgary,
Edmonton,
Grouard-McLennan,
Native Cursillo,

Atlantic Conference September 2010

We were the host diocese for the 2010 Atlantic Conference. Instead of holding the normal Atlantic Conference, National CCCC took the lead in scheduling a Cursillo of Cursillos which was held from September 16th to 19th at Cavendish Gateway Resort in the community of Mayfield, PEI. Sheelagh Winston and George Henry were instrumental in setting up and facilitating this conference. Our number in attendance was disappointing however the conference itself provided a wealth of knowledge and comments received indicated that it was enjoyed by all. There was a great deal of work went into the planning by the host committee and I wish to acknowledge the hard work of Secretariat and thank them for their efforts.

building bridges from coast to coast



Cursillo Fall Retreat Weekend

Unfortunately we didn't have enough candidates to hold Cursillo weekends this past Fall and so Secretariat decided to have a Cursillo retreat weekend instead. The retreat was held at Belcourt Center and was almost filled to capacity with Cursillistas from all parts of the Province. There was a mixture of new Cursillistas along with some seasoned veterans from many years past. Presentations on topics of Cursillo were made by both lay people and our Spiritual advisor. There was an abundance of discussion resulting and those in attendance agreed that the retreat weekend was a success. This provided an opportunity for us to educate our community on the Cursillo movement as it should be.

Spring Cursillo Weekends

We recently completed both men's and women's Cursillo weekends where a total of 31 new Cursillistas were welcomed into the larger community. In preparation for same, we held our Team Formation workshop to prepare members of both team for their role as leaders on the weekends. At the workshop, members on Team heard rollos on the History of Cursillo, the Elements of Cursillo, the First Day, the Second Day and the Third Day of the weekend, and How to Write a Rollo. Thirteen candidates on the men's weekend is one of the largest held in recent years. From the candidate sharing and witnessing heard at the Sunday invasions, it was clear that both weekends were indeed successes. Additionally, we already have a number of candidates eager to make their Cursillo weekend in the Fall.

Island Wide Ultreya

We recently held our Island Wide Ultreya on March 27th, 2011. We had a terrific turnout for this event. Fourth day witness talks were

outstanding and it was evident that the Holy Spirit had a presence in the selection of the two who presented. It was both comforting and encouraging to see that our attendance at the Ultreya had grown substantially since last year.

Announcements were made to the community regarding both the National conference in June and the Atlantic conference being held in September, hosted by NFLD and Labrador.

I also made mention of our Annual Meeting scheduled for June of this year and that three members of Secretariat are in need of replacement. I am confident that we will be able to find three interested and hard working replacements for these positions.

Group Reunions and Ultreyas

At present we have 13 active Group Reunions within the Diocese. We have a Post Cursillo position on Secretariat and we are working to increase the numbers in this regard.

Over the past year, we held twelve (12) local Ultreyas in different areas of the Diocese that, for the most part, were largely attended. Our number of Ultreyas held annually has been growing and so we are confident that this important part of Cursillo will remain stable.

That's my report from Prince Edward Island for this past years activities. I regret that I won't be attending the National Conference in British Columbia. After careful consideration, we felt that it was just too costly for attendance this year.

I trust you will find this report satisfactory for your needs. We will continue to pray for the success of the National Conference and for the Cursillo movement overall.

De Colores
Leo Shea, Lay Director

ST. JOHN'S ARCHDIOCESE *NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR*

Greetings from Newfoundland and Labrador. This year we had changes on our Secretariat. Three of our members finished their terms, Terri Bailey as lay director, Gerard Horan as Post Cursillo and Isabelle Croke as Pre Cursillo. We thank them for their past works and for their continued support of Cursillo.

In St. John's have weekly Ultreya's from September to June and a monthly Ultreya in July and August. Attendance averages around 30. The last Saturday of each month we end Ultreya with a celebration of the Cursillista's who have had birthdays that month. We have a light lunch and birthday cake & send some extra time together.

The Burin Peninsula holds monthly Ultreya. They average 10-15 people.

Each summer we have a Grand Ultreya, alternating between St. John's & the Burin Peninsula. This year we have decided to postpone this due to the September conference. We also promote fellowship with our annual Christmas dinner and dance. A very committed group of Cursillistas prepare an excellent meal which is followed by a dance. We look forward to this each year.

This spring we had a soup supper followed by a dance and later this month a BBQ and dance is scheduled.

We have focused on the spiritual aspect of Cursillo with our 5th Day Celebration and reflection sessions. Fr. Leo English celebrated mass on November 4, 2010 for our 5th day celebration. This year we remembered 10 of our Cursillo friends who left us last year and who are now home with Jesus.

In December 2010 we had an Advent reflection with guest speakers, Fr Paul Lundrigan and our own Carol Ann Mason and in April 2011 a Lenten reflection with guest speaker Sister Marie Crotty. Both of these events were well attended and helped focus us for these important times in our faith live.

Our phone tree is running well due to the dedication of Isabel Croke. She reaches us by email and then we in turn phone Cusillista's who do not have computer access. This is used for prayer requests and for Cursillo news and updates.

Our focus now is the ACCC conference which we are hosting at Burry Heights from September 16-18.

We are very excited about this. We know that one of the best things we can do for ourselves is to spend time with other Cursillistas. Hope to see some of your there.

Florence Harvey
Lay Director

HALIFAX *NOVA SCOTIA*

Lay Director's Information

My name is Gary McVeigh. I am the Lay Director of the Halifax Cursillo Community. I lived the 20th Men's Cursillo in Halifax. I sat at St. Peter's table and we were called the 'town-criers'.

Core Group/Secretariat Information

The Secretariat is part of the Core Group of the School of Leaders and it is the Secretariat that carries out the decisions and the directives that are made by the Core Group of the School of Leaders. The Core Group and the Secretariat meet together.

Following the conference in Barrie in June of 2007, we developed our School of Leaders to include not only a discussion group but also an administrative group. The Administrative/Core Group is the group of leaders who discuss the Vision of Cursillo and the direction that our movement in Halifax is heading toward. It is also the decision making body for our Cursillo movement here in Halifax. The main purpose of the Core Group is to review Ultreyas in order to ensure that everything is going as it should and to make suggestions as to how to improve what

is taking place.

The School of Leaders discussion group meets once a month for an hour before the monthly Ultreya. This group meet to share opinions and ideas about things that are of interest and of importance to Cursillistas. Some topics are suggested by the group itself.

The Cursillo Community

The question has been raised here in Halifax as to the vitality and viability of our Halifax Cursillo Community. Is Cursillo still working here in Halifax? Our Cursillo Community is made up of people who made the earlier Cursillos right up to the the most recent ones.

Some Ultreyas we had as few as 6 people. A most recent one we were excited because there were 18 people in attendance.

Group Reunion

We have a number Group Reunions that are considered to be active. Being active, for the most part, does not seem to include being active in School of Leaders and Ultreya.

Ultreya

The Ultreya meets once a month, preceded by a School of Leaders from 6:30 to 7:30, then followed by a short break for fellowship. The Ultreya begins at 8 o'clock.

The Ultreya agenda begins with Gathering Music, the Prayer to the Holy Spirit, announcements by the Lay Director.

The next part of our Ultreya is the sharing of what the Holy Spirit has been doing in our lives since the last Ultreya.

We do not choose a witness speaker. We experienced a lot of difficulty trying to get people to agree to give a witness talk. So, after much prayer and discernment we decided that we would invite anyone who felt called and inspired by the Holy Spirit to stand before fellow Cursillistas and to share what had been happening in their lives. The reaction seems to

be that this model is working well for us.

We moved our Ultreya to a different location (from Dartmouth to Halifax) and to a new day (Tuesday to the last Wednesday of the month). The reaction was positive. Our numbers have increased.

The Ultreya seems to be a supportive environment for those who come.

Cursillo Weekends

We made a decision three years ago, not to have Weekends so that we could work on strengthening our Pre-Cursillo and our Post-Cursillo.

At the end of that period of time we had decided that if the circumstances were right, then we would have Weekends. The circumstances for holding a Weekend would include , that a Cursillista would have to be walking in Friendship with a potential candidate over a long period of time. Then, after prayer and discernment, it was decided by the Friend/Cursillista and the Cursillo leadership, that if the candidate would benefit from a Weekend, then an invitation would be extended to that person.

As of now, the circumstances are still not right. We will not be having Weekends in the foreseeable future. We do not have enough people who are active in Cursillo to be able to form teams.

So, we wait to see where the Holy Spirit is leading us.

Other Events

Each year we have a Mass of Celebration to remember those Cursillistas who have gone on to their eternal rewards. This Remembrance Mass (usually held in November) seems to gather people.

This year we will continue another tradition. Over the last two years, a musical group-Hearts of Worship-who see as part of their ministry to share their musical talents-has led us in song ,

praise and prayer, during Advent, to prepare us to receive the Lord into our hearts in a special way. This event has allowed us , as well , to raise money to support the Cursillo Movement.

This year we have invited Hearts of Worship to lead us in a celebration of Joy at Easter. Our Lay Spiritual Advisor (Barbara McVeigh) brought up for discussion at a Core Group meeting the point that the church encourages us to spend the season of Lent preparing us for Easter.

Easter Sunday comes as a day of celebration, then the Church goes right back in to Ordinary Time.

Her point is that we do not really have much of an opportunity to really celebrate the joy of Easter.

So, this year we are going to have a Celebration of Joy , after Easter on Sunday, May 1st.

Day of Prayer and Discernment

Over the last few years, we have become increasingly aware that our Halifax Cursillo Community is experiencing some pain as our numbers are decreasing at Ultreya and School of Leaders.

After much discussion, prayer and discernment, we decided to invite the whole Cursillo Community to a day of prayer and discernment, to be held on Saturday, April 9th.

The process we adopted to prepare people for this important day, included:(1) an invitation(all of these were sent out through our gmail account) to attend; (2) some prayer material to pray about to help in their discernment and (3) the keeping of a prayer journal so as to write in words what their prayer was telling them.

So, when people come to the day of discernment they will have in front of them what the Lord had spoken to them in their prayer.

The first email to the wider Cursillo Community presented them with a Grace, some prayer material-Scripture passages-a suggestion to keep a prayer journal and questions regarding the

vision and future of the Cursillo Movement here in Halifax.

These are the questions that we were asked to consider and to write about in our prayer journals:

- (1) What does Cursillo mean to me?
- (2) What do I love about Cursillo?
- (3) What do I believe is God's dream for us?
- (4) What do I sense that God is calling us to do next?

CENTRAL

MONTREAL

QUEBEC

The group consists of the following:

Father Jim MacDonald/Father Sunny P. Abraham Spiritual Directors

Deanna C. Wilson Taylor-Cline Lay Director

Tony Kinlough Financial Officer

Roch Lemay Pre-Cursillo

Michel Chartrand Post-Cursillo

Cynthia Beauchamp Secretary

Deanna C. Wilson Taylor-Cline Palanca

Tony Kinlough Men's Weekend Co-ordinator

Deanna C. Wilson Taylor-Cline Women's Weekend Co-ordinator

Roland Major Correspondence/Communication Officer

As human beings continue to evolve, so do our conceptions of God. With every step we take toward deeper wisdom and greater compassion, our understanding of God expands through every aspect of life, as we live daily with all aspects of our being.

As I look at the history of the Cursillo Movement, there was no accident when this movement developed with a group of men who dedicated themselves to bringing the young men of their city, Mallorca, Spain, to know Christ better. However, this effort became effective as the men who not only prayed but together also worked together to bring the light of Christ to this Cursillo Movement.

The Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism explains: "For it is through Christ's Catholic church alone, the universal help toward salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained." (Catechism of the Catholic Church). However, when the founder, Eduardo Bonin, saw that the Cursillo Movement's birth was part of the renewal which preceded the Second Vatican Council.

The apostle Paul proclaimed "in order that I might live for God, I have been put to death with Christ on his cross, so that it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." (Gal. 2:19-20). As the Lay Director, I have asked the Father to understand and experience His love and the unchanging and deep goodness that the mission of this movement brings to everyone who has made his/her Cursillo weekend. I believe we have a sure hope that God's grace will have the last word in this Montreal Cursillo Movement.

As the Montreal Cursillo Movement continues to work there are challenges. Everyday happenings in families, such as sicknesses, death of loved ones, misunderstanding amongst the family. From the last CCCC Conference, the ten topics of Cala Figuera has been the focus in a number of our discussions. Despite the conversations of many of the members, we continue to understand what is asked of us for the movement.

Following discussion with secretariat and community members, we look at the possibility of doing a more constructive leader school with the community. As a result one member of the secretariat works together with the team, planning the sessions to facilitate the community.

The School of Leaders began by reading the book "The Power of Kindness" and with this book, every discussion helps to work at Cursillo in Christianity and to live the gospel in this context of friendship. This is held twice monthly; following the guidelines of the 'Leaders Manual'.

Ultreya's are still a gathering that many Cursillistas look forward to with new purposes to its members. Because of the big City of Montreal, we are divided into locations/cities. As in the South Shore every second Monday, there is an Ultreya. Third Sunday after the 11:00 am Mass an Ultreya in Lasalle, Quebec, and every third Monday our Central Ultreya in Montreal, Quebec. Two Ultreya's closed, one in Chateauguay, Quebec and the other in the West Island. The Secretariat finds it disappointing to have those closures, however, with the new member to the post-Cursillo, we can only be supportive to those members and their environment although most of them participate in their other apostolic activities.

As we move into the new year, it is our hope to open with suggestions and input from all towards activity to bring groups together. In an effort to bring about Cursillo Charism in its method to prayer, meditation and a true friendship, we the members of the secretariat bring together our apostolic action to all; with the intent to respect each other with our gifts as they serve each member of the community. The year ahead as seen, is to focus and provide leadership skills to all.

At the same time, there has been two weekends which were successful; some of its members are grouping, some continued their activities in their various parishes with new zeal to the movement.

It is with some disappointments, frustration and great trials we are at the end of this year. However, I look forward to continue to renew the commitment of Christ who is counting on us as we rely on His grace.

It is our hope that in the New Year, i.e. September 2011, to have some activities to rejuvenate the enthusiasm with the guidance of

the Holy Spirit as we continue to encourage each other.

Decolores!

Deanna C Wilson Taylor Cline

Lay Director

Editor's note. These reports are taken from what was submitted from the various movements, to the CCCC annual report. They are unedited as to content. The intent is to keep Canadian Cursillistas informed of the activities in other movements. Their inclusion here does not necessarily confirm that CCCC agrees with the content.

WESTERN

NELSON DIOCESE

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Diocese of Nelson Cursillo Movement is going through an ongoing metamorphosis as we continue to work towards becoming authentic to the Foundational Charism.

We continued with our monthly School of Leaders until April of this year and because of diminishing interest we held our last meeting in April 2011 and will recommence in October

- Our School of leaders meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month
- We have Ultreya in Kelowna on the 1st Thursday of the month and in Summerland on the 2nd Thursday of the month.
- The Secretariat meets on the 1st Thursday each month.

We held a small women's weekend last fall followed by a men's weekend. For the first time in our movement we used the latest guide and timetable provided by National. This resulted in some changes to what we were used to and some things left out of our traditional weekend. The biggest difference was in the way the teams approached the weekend and the talks. Feedback after the weekend was positive with the comment that it seemed far more relaxed and adapted to the candidates and that the talks were more natural

Our biggest disappointment was the low response from our main Cursillo community to the Mananitas and Clausura.

At our School of Leaders we were reminded by one of our leaders of the importance of prayer in all our efforts for the movement. As a response to this we hosted a Mass, followed by meditational prayer on our call to be leaders within the movement. This was followed by some personal sharing on our own 4th day journeys

We continue publishing a monthly newsletter sent to 300 local Cursillista's "Going Fourth" where we have a witness story, news items, Leaders School discussions and articles about the Charism of the Founders.

We have spent 2 years trying to rekindle interest from our local Cursillistas with only limited and often temporary results. The secretariat will be looking at ways to provide a new approach and new goals for the coming year together with a new action plan

We ask all our brothers and sisters to keep our movement in their prayers

De Colores

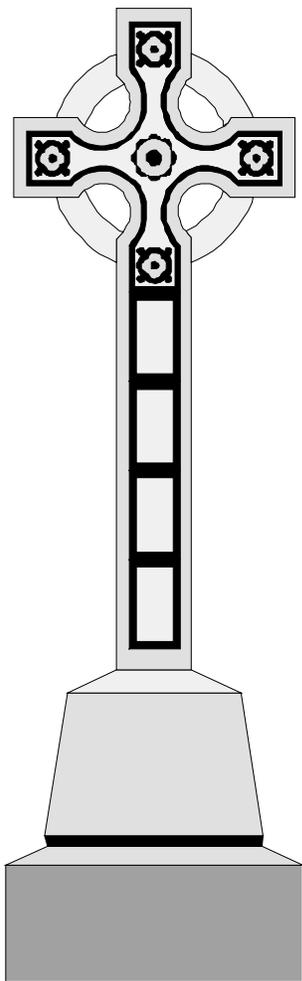
Les Symes, Lay Director

WORKSHOPS FROM CCCC

The Officers Group and the CCCC Resource person have continue in the work of facilitating Schools of Leaders workshops in various movements across the country.

As you will have read in the CCCC annual report of 2011, several workshops were held last year and that endeavour has continued into 2012. By the time this newsletter goes to print, workshops will have been held in Edmonton, Yarmouth and The Valley movements.

Any movement which is interested in having CCCC facilitate a workshop for them should contact the Resource Centre at cccc@cursillo-canada.org or any of the Officers.



MATTERS

SPIRITUAL

Reflection on Piety, Study and Action

Fr. Pat O'Meara,

Assistant Spiritual Advisor to CCC

In the videotape - "God in the Dock" which invited viewers to consider the problem of innocent suffering or why bad experiences happen to very good and outstandingly upright people, there is a scene in which God is asked why people so full of love and devotion for others experience such pain in their lives. In this scene, God responds that human freedom - particularly its abuse - is one of the keys that begin to unlock this aspect of the mystery of evil. God's interviewer comments that God is willing to risks danger in making freedom possible for all people. God responds by saying that God embraces this danger - not because God wants destruction in life but because the risk reveals the love God offers everyone without condition - the risk reveals God's sense of piety.

Creation is a part of God's offer of love to everyone without condition. God Who needs nothing insists on sharing all that God is and all that God has with everyone. The result is the making of light, darkness, sun moon, stars, water, dry land, plants, animals and people. How did God feel about the divine effort known as our world and the people in it? How many times do we read that creation is good and that God was, is and will always be pleased with this work? Even when people as represented by Adam and Eve abused creation by trying to be God, God looked and continued to work for the good for which people could be responsible. Such was God's sense of piety. Even when Cain killed Abel and even at the time when Cain thought that his life was worthless - that his life would be destroyed - God promised Cain that his life would always be precious to God by putting a mark on Cain so that anyone who would kill Cain would suffer death - such was the piety of God!

Will I try to see in the story of Noah and the great flood the piety of God Who devotes all that God is and all that God has by trying to bring out the goodness for which all people can be responsible? Do I try to see the piety of God in the story of Abraham and Sarah who with God's help brought forth new life in trusting that God would make it possible for Isaac to be born from the womb of Sarah, in trusting that in offering Isaac to God that they would become the parents of many generations of people of faith? Do I try to see the piety of God in the story of Moses when God made it possible for him to lead our ancestors to freedom and even though our ancestors and ourselves have abused this precious gift, God never tires of making it possible for people to be free. Nor, does God tire

of teaching everyone how to use the gift of freedom responsibly so that no one need be hurt because of this precious gift? Do I try to see God's sense of piety in His refusal to regret the opportunity God offers to all people?

An appreciation of God's sense of piety, of God's sense of humour, the surprise that God will always be comes out of a study of God's relationship with our ancestors and our contemporaries. what did Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Noah, Isaac, Jacob, Esau, Saul, David, Ahab, Jezebel, Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph, Herod, Peter, James, John, Zacchaeus, the Roman Centurion, the Rich Young Man, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the Man born blind, the skeptics who refused to trust that the Man Born blind had truly received his sight because of Jesus' work, the other critics of Jesus who insisted that Jesus' miracles were the result of the power of evil - what did all of these people have in common? Jesus - and therefore God - never tired of bringing out of them the good that they could share with others! If any of the people mentioned did not share the blessings received from God with others, search for the reason for this tragedy in their sense of piety, in their action or in their failure to act. If I search for the reason in the piety, the will or the action of God, my search will be futile. May I remember and remind others of God's work from which God never becomes tired of bringing out the goodness in everyone was expressed very powerfully as God in the person of Jesus hanging on the Cross cried out: "Father, forgive them they do not know what they are doing".

That great action of God is powerfully revealed in the story of Saint Paul who never tired of sharing his conversion so that others would realize the great hope God gives everyone in the Resurrection of Jesus. Can anyone calculate Paul's contribution to the growth of our faith? Paul's action comes out of God's self giving which eye has not seen, ear has not heard of that the human heart can't conceive of what God can make possible. May I appreciate the action God is pleased to undertake - even now - for me. How grateful do I need to be to Isaiah who described this action by sharing his vision of the Suffering Servant with me? How grateful need I

be to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John for their account of Jesus' ministry, passion, death and resurrection? How grateful do I need to be to God for the action God never tires of undertaking for me in my past, in my present and in my future?

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subscription to Fully Alive

Renewal forms available from
the Resource Centre
cccc@Cursillo-canada.org



FROM EDUARDO

THE AMERICAS IN OUR PILGRIMAGE

In the joyous atmosphere at the clausura of the first Cursillo in history, almost 40 years ago, on that small island that is Mallorca, situated in the ancient Mediterranean Sea, one of the leaders manifested in a bold and almost daring expression, the certainty of success and the conviction of universality that characterized that small group of laymen that were beginning "We won't stop until we've held a Cursillo on the Moon!"

It wasn't an illusion, naivety or arrogance; it was hope springing from faith. The whole method had been constructed - despite the lack of understanding of the learned - from the person and for the person. And from that certainty rose the conviction, never more resigned, that what had been born had universal value; and lands and seas, borders and continents must be travelled - maybe even outer space, because no matter where a person wanted to be happy or regretted not being so, the method and the Cursillo Movement would have something to say to him and there would be a lot to learn.

A bit later on, our hope became joy and new hope sprang to life. The Cursillos first extended to different parts of the Spanish mainland and later, in 1953, came the historical leap to Colombia. In 1957 they would also begin in the U.S., and the following year in Mexico and soon afterwards in Venezuela and, from then on, now unstoppable, to the rest of the American continents - of the New World. And at the same time or shortly after, to all the major places in a process that never ends.

For those who began the adventure of the Cursillo, the Americas offered the previous image of being "continents of colour", of very strong contrasts, of differing welcome, of new

vision, where as in very few other places the affirmation of the individual and the sense of the other and of the group were combined. Fortunately, even though at first our understanding had led Spain to carry the Gospel in a conquering way - there was more music than lyrics, more general echo than a stern voice, more guidance than rules.

The Cursillos seemed to us made to measure for the measureless Americas. That's the way it worked out. Our American dimension, in the first stage, was centered essentially on prayer and written communication. We never thought that we would learn so much geography in order to be able to accurately direct our prayers towards the faraway place where a new Cursillo was taking place, and from where someone was writing to us with the same hope with which we deepened our own reality.

And what we perceived there was a renewed and very clear incarnation of what we were already living here: that when in a certain place and time the Cursillo has a lay group rooted within the normality of their lives, and concerned and devoted to their secular environments, in communion with a group of priests - or perhaps with only one - the Cursillo then stays alive, dynamic and with the vigour of its debut. However, when the Cursillo gravitates around pastoral initiatives that are specifically intra-ecclesial, to nurture or improve other church work or organizations as a primary effort, then the Movement adopts a sacrificial overtone that makes it languish, or a closed-circle nature, where the organization eats up the mysticism and where we see with sadness that those who used to be distanced from faith first draw nearer and then become stifled..

Now that the Cursillo is already present on the five continents, we believe that we can affirm that the testimony that reaches us from the Americas is globally one of the most enriching, without being able to deny that it also has a few gaps that the diverse and even contradictory character of those attractive countries makes inevitable.

We are especially concerned that the limitations of the Cursillo Movement in the Americas may be the result of our defects or deficits, transferred there from the founding Spain.

For pity's sake, let no one link the shock wave of Cursillo from Spain to the rest of the world – and specifically to the Americas – with memories of conquest or nostalgia. The Cursillos are not from one culture, and therefore not from one nation either; at least that is the way we wanted them to be from the start: gentiles with the gentiles.

We believe that the differences of rhythm and direction that have been detected, that we alluded to before, that are present in all the Cursillos' geography are the transposition to our era of the differences of accent in the message of the Gospel that we contemplated in the Acts of the Apostles, between Peter and Paul, or between circumcised and uncircumcised. Let's hope that we know how to create at those crossroads the atmosphere of Group Reunion that pulsates in the apostolic account, and convert those differences into creative actions, and that we can do so within the charity born from respect and attention to the person that is at the deepest core of Cursillo.

In any case, the Americas have been the place from where the Movement has illuminated its definitive unitarian and communitarian structure: the National Secretariats, the International Groups and the World Office. Its radical vocation of universality as a movement has found its own dimension in the plural and cosmic core of the Americas.

After these nearly 40 years of presence in the Americas, we continue to believe that they are continents of colour, that are still waiting for someone who can tell them through experience

that those are the same colours of the soul in Grace, in such a way that it can be fully itself in the joy of the Gospel. We've already sung together some of the verses of this song, but it is necessary that we continue singing it and making the pilgrimage in pursuit of the person, here and there, so that the song may become chorale and magnificent.

And we believe that this will happen because we will not relinquish the idea of "giving Cursillos on the Moon" – if there should be someone there to receive them – and because we believe – as we've already said before – that:

*Some men, with the help of science and
Economical support, have travelled
The distance from a man's exterior
To the Moon;
We are trying to accomplish something
immensely more difficult,
That is, to get from the external to the inner
world of man,
So as to learn more about the way to know
ourselves
And the way to know others:
To better learn to live in harmony with other
men and women
The adventure of gradually becoming more of a
person.*

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