

Fully Alive



THE NATIONAL RESOURCE DOCUMENT OF THE CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CURSILLOS



The Canadian Cursillistas at the Cursillo of Cursillo held recently in Mallorca. The event was held in conjunction with a great celebration of the 75th anniversary of the first Cursillo in 1944.

CONTENTS					
Officers' Corner	3	Around the Country	10	Essay	16
CCCC Annual Conference	4	Cursillo Prayer Line	12	You Asked Us	22
Food for Thought	5	Witness	13	From Eduardo	24
Matters Spiritual	7				

OFFICERS' CORNER

Linda Pitkanen, Chair of CCCC

Happy New Year, and may you and your loved ones be filled with abundant grace this year! Hello my friends! It is incredible how fast the time has flown since I last wrote. Winter is here. We have snow on the roads, in the fields, in our back yards, and on the trees. Winter has spread her mantle of white upon our section of God's creation. It is so beautiful to see although the high today is -14oC, and I haven't felt warm since October when we were in Mallorca for a C of C's.

There was a group of seven Canadians that attended the C of C's in Mallorca this past October. It was such a joy to be there with our friends, making new friends, being reacquainted with old friends. There were twelve countries represented there with a total of 250 Cursillistas. The rollos topics on the weekend were ones we had heard before, but I received nuggets of wisdom from each rollo. It is quite incredible to listen to the same rollo outline, but when given by a different person, with their witnessing, it makes it all new again with greater depth. The Ultreya rollo was fantastic. Presented by a man who talked from his heart, he did not use notes. The Holy Spirit flowed through him as he spoke. He followed the outline in proper order and had us mesmerized. He had a captive audience once he started to talk, and he only lived his Cursillo in 2015. It just goes to show us once again how much the Holy Spirit is present in us and flows through us.

That is what we would like Cursillistas in Canada to be able to do as eloquently. To be able to take a rollo outline and to be able to make an old topic new and relevant again through the personal witnessing of how Cursillo has changed our lives, our now God-filled lives, and helped another person become closer to God. Our mission as given to us by

Christ. To evangelize and spread the Good News.

The Officers Group is actively working on your behalf behind the scenes. We are giving aid to those that are requesting it, working diligently on the preparation for the next national conference, working hard in our environments, and trying to make them a better place for all.

Many thanks to the lay directors that answer the monthly call from the Officers for reports from their region even if they have nothing new to report. It keeps us connected to you, and we can share your successes with others. It unifies our Canadian Movement. So thank you once again for sending the Officers a quick monthly email informing us of changes on your secretariats, how your movement is going, and if we can answer any question or send you supplies or supply you with reference material for your School of Leaders or personal growth. There is so much information that we can lay on hands-on for you, and it pleases us to be able to serve you.

Times flies, and by the grace of God, we can go joyfully into the New Year and spread the Good News, that Jesus loves every one of us, to others in our environments! I hope to see you at the National Conference this year being held here in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

De Colores and Ultreya!

CCCC Annual Conference 2020

Please keep in mind that the 2020 conference will be held at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario June 25-28th

The theme of the conference will deal with the preparation of rollos, being a team leader in all aspects of each Cursillo and the essence and purpose of the Three Day Cursillo.

We are currently working on rollo outlines and the preparations that are a necessary part of each CCCC Conference. We pray that we will see you there. Please keep your CCCC Officers in your daily prayers as we reflect and pray as we prepare.

Further information will be distributed to Lay Directors as soon as possible.

Father Brendon Gallant, CCCC Spiritual Advisor

In Luke's gospel chapter 2, when the shepherds heard what the angels told them about the birth of Jesus, they went with haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the infant Jesus lying in a manger, and they made known the message that had been told

them about this child. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them and pondered them in her heart. In Luke's gospel chapter 2: after Mary and Joseph found the child Jesus in the temple, he said to them, "why were you looking for me, did you not know I must be in my father's house?" And once again Mary kept all these things in her heart.

In a meditation from Franciscan media it states in part, "we cannot see God with our physical eyes, nor can we know God through the logic of reason. The more we try to see God with our physical eyes or find God through logical analysis, the more we fail. We will become increasingly frustrated and God will become more distant to us. To see the extraordinary ordinariness of God is to see with a different set of eyes, the eyes of the heart, and to know God by a different logic."

Pope Francis tells us in his admonition that we must contemplate the mystery of God. ... the way to contemplate the mystery of God's humble love, according to Pope Francis is in the Eucharist."

As we reflect back on the coming of Emmanuel, "God with us", and his birth, take the time to read the scriptures during this New Year, pondering them in your heart. As you do so, allow the word of God to fill your entire being, ponder each word like Mary did and as you do so the word of God will become alive and active within your being. We celebrated a great mystery on Christmas day. Every time we celebrate Eucharist this mystery takes place, Jesus' birth, His ministry,

His death and resurrection. We cannot see God with our physical eyes, nor find God through the logic of reason, but we can know him as we ponder this mystery in our heart.

I pray that the whole family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph will bless you, your home and your family throughout the coming year of 2020.



*This is the third part of a three-part document excerpted from a presentation entitled *The Theology, Psychology and Pedagogy of Cursillo*, given by Fr. David Smith, at the US National Encounter 2018, Seattle, WA.*

THE SOLUTION

Confronted with a fragmented world of isolated individuals and the myriad related problems and dysfunction, the Cursillo solution is simple: *"Make a friend; Be a friend; Bring a friend to Christ"*. As I mentioned earlier, each of the "3 Encounters" (with oneself, God, and others), each of the three phases of the Movement (Pre Cursillo, 3-Day Cursillo, and Post Cursillo), and all the organizational and operational structures of Cursillo serve to facilitate friendships. In fact, *Cursillo spirituality is a spirituality of friendship*.

Cursillo teaches that friendship is the authentically human form of communication between persons. This presupposes that the communication in friendship is authentic and sincere. In authentic friendships, persons don't have to "photoshop", falsify, or embellish their images. Elbert Hubbard, a writer and philosopher at the beginning of the last century, declared that "a friend is someone who knows everything about you and still loves you". This truth touched home at the clausura of my Cursillo in 1976. I received a scroll in the handout packet that read "Always Be Just Yourself". For the first time in 26 years, I encountered friends who loved me and accepted me as I am.

The Catechism states that, "friendship is a great good for all. It leads to spiritual

communion". Eduardo Bonnín declared, "When friendship with Christ exists between friends, the joy of friendship is multiplied". Psalm 101 agrees; "He who walks in the way of perfection will be my friend".

The Greek philosopher Aristotle taught that, "Without friendship no one would choose to live, even if he had all other goods". He continued: "Friendship is a single soul dwelling in two (2) bodies". This is echoed in the annual January 2nd celebration of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, "We shared the same aspirations, as if we were two bodies with one soul in common."

One of the reasons St. Teresa of Avila initiated her reform of the Carmelites, was her experience of the size of her original monastery (150 religious, segregated into three different castes that had little communication with each other). She initially limited the number of sisters in a given monastery to 21, but finding even that number inflated, set the limit at 13. She saw that deep friendships were the essence of the spiritual life and of the life of a religious community. We have many examples of saint-friends who spurred each other on to holiness, notably St. Francis of Assisi and St. Clare, and St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane de Chantal. Aelred of Rievaulx was convinced that "friendships must begin in Christ, continue in Christ, and be perfected in Christ".

Both, Cardinal John Newman and Chuck Colson, the late founder of Prison Fellowship, concurred that the world is changed, not by great schemes, but by friends, one relationship at a time. This is seconded by pro-life activists Stephanie Gray and Lila Rose. Even Mother Teresa declared, in accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, "the best way to change the world is to love your family; this will bring peace and happiness". That is, "begin in your most basic moveable square meter, your family environment".

In a Burger King near Fort Lauderdale, I once saw a sign taking a shot at the “golden arches” – “We don’t serve billions, we serve PERSONS, one a time”. Boston College professor and author, Peter Kreeft, once observed; “One person can make a million dollars but 3 can make history”. Mathew Franck contributed this observation: “One person at a time...is really the only way to do good in the world, for human beings are individual personas in communities, not statistics in a collective or part in a machine”. Eduardo in “Evangelization through Conversion” would agree. “Persons make and shape history and, thus, by transforming persons, history will be transformed in a visible form, thereby changing every environment and all of life’s circumstances.” My translation of these statements is that, through Cursillo, we seek to change the world, not with the “long ball” (great pastoral plans and programs) but with the “small ball” of friendships.

One final observation before closing -

We need to set as a priority for Cursillo to return to our roots, emphasizing outreach to youth and the “alejados” (outsiders). Pope John Paul II in his preparatory document for the Jubilee Year (2000) wrote, addressing the youth: “You are thoughtful, seeking meaning and true friendship and eager to pray”. Eduardo, lamenting the situation of the “alejados” said; “No one should live without knowing that God loves him or her”. The

“alejados” and the youth were the reasons why Cursillo was conceived, prayed for, and structured. Of course, everyone needs to grow in the shared awareness of God’s love.

I am convinced that the Cursillo Charism of friendship undoes the isolation and fragmentation caused by sin and forms an answer to Jesus’ prayer “May they all be one” on the way to “restoring all things in Christ”, which is ultimately, the fullness of salvation, the Kingdom of God. The “Communion of Saints is the key to and the goal of Christian friendships. Note that the “New Jerusalem” of Rev. 21:2 is a city, not an amalgamation of individuals praising the Lord. The Kingdom of God is a Kingdom of relationships. Christian friendships, NOW MORE THAN EVER, are necessary to humanize and divinize the world. I believe that Cursillo is uniquely situated for the challenges that lie ahead.

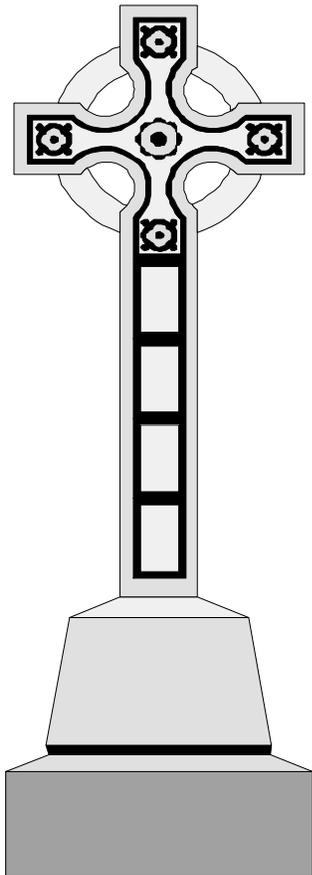
Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter; whoever finds one finds a treasure. Faithful friends are beyond price, no amount can balance their worth. Faithful friends are life-saving medicine; those who fear God will find them. Those who fear the Lord enjoy stable friendship, for as they are, so will their neighbors be. (Sirach 6:14-17)

To borrow a phrase from the 12-Step meetings:

“Cursillo – Keep Coming Back. It Works When You Work it!”



Ultreya rollo, given in a very unique way!



MATTERS SPIRITUAL

STEWARDSHIP

Fr Syd Miffen, 2012 CCCC Conference

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other servants their allowance of food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find at work when he arrives. Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions.” Mt. 24:45-47.

“The gifts he gave were that some would become apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.” Eph. 4:11-13a

Master/Disciple

When we think of our relationship with Jesus, we often have trouble focusing on one particular aspect. We think of Jesus as God, and our relationship with Him as that of Creator to creature; or we think of Him as man, and our relationship with Him as friend to friend. We have perhaps more difficulty in thinking of Jesus as Lord or Master, and ourselves as disciples. Yet it was very clear to the Apostles and the first Christians that such was their relationship with Jesus. Conscious of the mission they had been given to complete His work on earth, and conscious similarly of the action of the Holy Spirit in them to help them in this mission, they understood the responsibility that had been entrusted to them. The Apostles could recall not only Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit, but the moment when that gift was received. Furthermore, they acknowledged as disciples of Jesus those who gave evidence of having received the Spirit.

The servant to whom Matthew refers, the one whom the Master has set over his household, is elsewhere called a steward. The steward is one who not only looks after his Master's goods to be sure they are not wasted, but also sees to it that those under the Master's care are properly looked after.

In the Church today, it is still Jesus who is Master. There are many who occupy the position of steward – anyone to whom is entrusted any portion of the Master's goods with the mission to see to it that those goods are looked after and are shared properly with the Master's disciples. Matthew's reference is to be understood of those stewards.

The two marks of the good steward that Matthew points out are faithfulness and wisdom. Faithfulness relates to one's basic relationship to the Master, what in the Old Testament is referred to so often as 'righteousness'. This is at the heart of our relationship with Jesus as Master. To be righteous is to acknowledge the superiority of the Master in a positive, not a negative way. It involves true humility, where one's gifts are recognized, as is the source of those gifts. It also involves obedience - a correspondence with the will of the Master, whether that will is expressly stated or understood implicitly.

The good steward accompanies this faithfulness with wisdom. This wisdom allows him to discern how best to distribute the Master's gifts to His disciples, while at the same time conserving resources and maintaining the appropriate dependence on the Master. Dependence here is not a restraining force but rather a true acknowledgment that without the Master, the disciple is helpless. The steward is wise enough to know that he does not own the Master's resources, and has no more right to them than any of the other disciples.

Cursillo

Why all this stuff about stewardship in this place and at this time? What relationship does this have to Cursillo?

Cursillo is a movement in and of the Church. It is based on a particular charism given to Eduardo Bonnín for the good of the whole Church. It is different from other ecclesial movements, each of which has its own charism. Through His Holy Spirit, Jesus entrusted Eduardo and thenceforth all Cursillista leaders with something very special, to be cherished not simply for its own sake, but to be shared in various degrees with all whom He was calling to know the

Good News that God loves them. I say 'in various degrees' not to indicate any exclusiveness but to acknowledge that the object of Cursillo is not to make everyone Cursillistas but to give everyone the opportunity to know that God loves them.

Let me say a word about ecclesial movements, since I used the term a few moments ago. The word 'ecclesial' is an adjective meant to describe something as belonging to the Church. An ecclesial movement is a movement approved by the Church and recognized as having a particular and proper charism to assist in a particular and proper way to complete the mission of Jesus. Some of these ecclesial movements take the form of religious orders within the Church. Some are specifically lay movements. Cursillo is one of those that is specifically a lay movement. Its primary but not exclusive target is the person who is in some way distanced from God, Christ and the Church - the one sometimes referred to as the 'faraway'. Its message to all is simply that God loves them. This is the Good News. Its means is friendship and the example of a life lived in grace, made manifest to those within the environment of the one living it.

As an ecclesial movement, Cursillo is subject to the authority of the Church and owes obedience to the Church as the manifestation of Christ's presence on earth. This is a safeguard for us as well, and it prevents us from straying too far from the specific goal of our movement. The interaction between the Cursillo Movement and the hierarchy of the Church is two-way: Cursillo reports to and is obedient to the hierarchy, but at the same time the hierarchy must respect the fact that Cursillo is a lay movement and that its charism was given to a layman. When problems occur in Cursillo, they should be dealt with as much as possible by the lay members of Cursillo, as befits their status as stewards of the gift. At the same time, the

hierarchy may lay down principles that affect ecclesial movements in general, and lay leadership should implement those principles in their movement.

Cursillistas must be good stewards in the sense that I have used this word above, in the sense indeed that it is used in the passage of Scripture quoted at the beginning of this presentation.

To be good stewards as Cursillistas means that we must take care of the resources provided to us and share them properly with God's people. We must cherish the charism of Cursillo, preventing it from being distorted, and using the means proper to Cursillo to attain its goal, the spreading of the message that God loves all people. Cursillo has developed its own method for achieving that goal, which includes Group Reunion, Ultreya, School of Leaders and Cursillo Weekends. These are not independent of one another; they work together, and where one or the other is lacking or is poorly implemented, Cursillo will be deficient in its responsibility as the lay ecclesial movement it is meant to be.

For almost two decades now the Officers of Cursillo in Canada have been studying the Charism of Cursillo very deeply, and its various aspects have been topics of the National Conferences and Encounters during that time – especially since 1994. This is so that we will know and understand what has been handed on to us as Cursillistas. We must realize that it is not ours to alter or adapt to our own ideas, but something very specific that has been given to the Church through Eduardo by the Holy Spirit. What we care for and hand on must be the same as what was given by the Holy Spirit and received by Eduardo.

Where Cursillo fails to achieve its goal, much of the problem is with the failure to

understand its charism and its special means, and the method of bringing that means to bear on the environment. This means that to be good stewards of the resources provided to Cursillo, its members must study the charism, the method, and the environments in which we live. Otherwise, we are bound to fall into error and to make Cursillo into something it is not intended to be. To say that this has happened in some cases is to make a huge understatement. In most cases the result of the alterations or adaptations has not been something bad in itself, but simply something different from Cursillo. The School of Leaders is one of the principal means of assuring that we do not fall into these errors and that we retain an authentic Cursillo Movement. It is here that the Movement is studied deeply, and where each Cursillista contributes, through the grace of God, to a better understanding of its charism, its purpose and its means.

Some years ago the Cursillo Leaders in Mallorca, which of course included at that time Eduardo Bonnin, decided to invite leaders from all over the world to Mallorca to spend time in conversation about Cursillo – its essence, purpose and method. They organized their conversations around ten topics, all related to the charism. This exercise proved to be so helpful that they issued another invitation a few years later, and a third just last year, so that there are three sets which we now know as the three Conversations of Cala Figuera. It is the content of these conversations that will provide the stimulus for this Conference. They are indeed part of the treasure of which we are the stewards.

May we continue to move forward and strive to be ever more knowledgeable about this treasure that has been entrusted to us, accepting the responsibility to use the gift of Cursillo for the benefit of persons and for the glory of God.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

- ◆ **ATLANTIC,**
Antigonish (Tri County,
Cape Breton East, Cape
Breton West) Halifax, St.
John's, Charlottetown,
Halifax/Yarmouth
(Yarmouth, Valley) Saint
John. (Miramichi)
- ◆ **QUEBEC,**
Montreal English.
- ◆ **ONTARIO,**
London Area,
Essex/Windsor, Kent
County/Chatham)
Peterborough, Toronto,
Hamilton, Ottawa,
Kingston, Thunder Bay,
Korean.
- ◆ **WESTERN,**
Vancouver, Edmonton,
Grouard-McLennan,
Northern Native Cursillo.

ATLANTIC REGION

ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S, NL ST JOHN'S CURSILLO

Although the diocese of St. Johns covers a large region, the only place currently active is the St. Johns area. The Marystown group has not been active for some years and our St. Johns group is certainly dwindling each year. We have not had a weekend this past year and we have no potential candidates. We find there is a lot of competition for people's time with programs like adult faith formation, Alpha and such. Also, our current members are aging with the youngest active members now approaching mid-life (50-60s) and many older than that.

Carol Mason, Lay Director

CENTRAL REGION

HAMILTON DIOCESE HAMILTON CURSILLO MOVEMENT

Hamilton has had several weekends now using the Step by Step Rector's Guide. We no longer call it the new method... it is THE Method. We hold our men's weekends in the fall of the year and our women's in the spring. Following the weekends we hold what we call a 4th day reunion. This reunion is a time for the new Cursillistas, teams and sponsors to gather together to share their weekend experiences and how their lives have been impacted since they lived their Cursillo weekend. Everyone is welcome to attend to build and/or renew friendships and to get to know and encourage the new Cursillistas to attend the Ultreya, the School of Leaders and to assist in forming Group Reunions. Our teams take this responsibility seriously. We try to hold School of Leaders monthly in 2 areas of the Diocese and it is growing in numbers.

We are very blessed to have the full support of our Bishop Douglas Crosby. The secretariat members meet with him once a year. A letter of encouragement from Bishop Crosby was read at the Clausura and was a powerful witness for the new Cursillistas.

building bridges from coast to coast



When one of the members of our Cursillo family passes into their 5th Day, with the permission of the family, a number of Cursillistas will gather at the funeral home to do a 5th Day service which consists of songs and prayers. We feel this is a witness to the love and friendships that has developed over the years with the person and to wish them to "Rest In Peace" with the Lord.

As prayer is the foundation of Cursillo, we pray that others come to know the love and mercy of God through the Cursillo movement.

Marg Weber, Lay Director

ARCHDIOCESE OF OTTAWA, ON OTTAWA CURSILLO

During this past year, July 2018 to June 2019, the Ottawa Cursillo Movement prepared four teams and held four Cursillos—two women's and two men's—resulting in another 73 new Cursillistas joining the community.

The Central Ultreya (using the Mallorcan model for over the past decade) has continued with regular weekly Ultreyas as well as occasional special 'send-offs' for the Cursillo teams and 'welcome-backs' for the new Cursillistas.

A meeting of the School took place in late May and plans are to resume regular sessions in the fall of 2019.

The Ottawa Movement publishes a quarterly Fourth Day newsletter (on-line) and has an

email news and prayer-line service as well as a 'network-style' website.

Bernie Reilander, for Marc Lamarre, Lay Director

LONDON DIOCESE CHATHAM-KENT CURSILLO

The Chatham-Kent movement includes the City of Chatham and surrounding rural areas, towns and villages – Blenheim, Ridgetown, Pain Court, Tilbury, Merlin, Dresden, Bothwell, Wallaceburg.

Chatham-Kent has not changed the format of the 3 days to the Mallorcan model. We are still using the Grey manual. Consideration is being given to converting to the Mallorcan model. A number of our leaders have attended CCCC workshops and have brought back information to secretariat.

We send the bishop an annual report in June.

Peg Johns, Lay Director

LONDON AREA CURSILLO

Our movement covers the area from West Elgin to Tillsonburg and north to Goderich.

Overall, the focus of this past year stemmed from the annual conference of 2018 - the importance of the 3rd day of the weekend. Our School of Leader evenings used the themes of the third day rollos. Our secretariat decisions were made through the lens of the 3rd day rollos. For the past year, our focus has been the implementation of the

Step-by-Step Rector's Guide for the Cursillos. Our weekends are held annually at the Michaelite retreat house just north of London. Our movement holds an annual fundraiser to help those who may not be able to afford the weekend. This is the first year that we have used the Step-by-Step Mallorcan Rector's Guide for the Cursillo with much success!! To quote one of our Cursillo leaders from last year "The method works. It's very clear. It's intentional."

Each year, at the School of Leaders and the Ultreya, we announce the annual conference to our members and will send out the registration information to them. Our movement plans on sending the Lay Director and the Vice Lay Director so that we ensure that our movement remains consistent with the original charism.

Marg Phillips, Lay Director

DIOCESE OF THUNDER BAY THUNDER BAY CURSILLO

The Diocese of Thunder Bay Cursillo covers all of the towns from Manitouwadge in the east to Kenora in the west. From Red Lake in the north and the American border in the south. It covers 222,000 square kilometres. There are 227 Cursillistas in the Diocese with about 30 active Cursillistas in the city of Thunder Bay and about another 20 in the other towns in the diocese.

We fully utilize The Step by Step Rector's Guide, in facilitating weekends. We have many leaders who participated in the CCCC workshop offered to assist in using the Step by Step for our weekends. We are in direct communication with the CCCC to ensure we are following the Foundational Charism as closely as possible.

Our Cursillistas are aware of the CCCC Resource Document, Fully Alive, as it is sent out electronically to all Cursillistas in the

Diocese. There are also several who subscribe to the hard copy who do not have computers or prefer the printed document.

Our movement has an annual face to face meeting to report on the activities of Cursillo to our bishop. Bishop Colli provides an annual stipend to our movement.

Reino Pitkanen, Lay Director



CURSILLO PRAYER LINE

Let us help one another lighten our burdens and what better way than to join regularly in prayer for one another. The Cursillo prayer line has been established especially for this and we want to encourage the greatest number of people to benefit from it. When we have occasions to pray in gratitude for the many blessings, we gladly share this and multiply our joy. We want to also care for one another through all occasions of life, to erase worry, lighten the burden, be a presence in hardship, to share with God's people who are in need. As a community, united, we want to look ahead in faith, and unwavering trust that God is indeed by our side in every battle and we are strengthened by the faith and confidence of all his people.

**Become a member of the prayer line by contacting Yvonne,
cursilloprayerline@gmail.com**

Witness

Daily we touch Him

From Morrell Ultreya, Charlottetown diocese

Hello, my name is Alida, and I did my Cursillo in 2017 at the table of St. Teresa of Calcutta.

Since my Cursillo in November 2017 I have found I have a very different relationship with God...maybe it can be described as a more personal relationship. I know this is such a cliché, but I learned to think of myself less and others more. For a number of years, I have kept a spiritual journal. When I look back at it now this includes notes on books I have read which were about personal growth, homilies that I liked, articles on CBC radio that touched me, etc. So, this now seems more of a study rather than about my own personal growth. I realize now it is easier to read how to do personal growth than to put it into daily practice.

I had been asked to attend Cursillo a number of times over the years, but I always said no because I felt I was not that religious. I liked to think of myself as a good person and spiritual but did not want more from the church. In 2017, Arlene, my sister-in-law, had asked me again to consider Cursillo, but I didn't commit right away. A lot had happened in the three years prior to her asking me. In 2015 my sister Joanne died of melanoma cancer after 2 years of treatment. A couple of months after she died, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. At the same time my mother who had been living in an apartment in my house was getting worse with her dementia and other physical issues that needed additional care so in 2016 she moved to a community care home but within

a couple of months needed nursing care and then passed away in December 2016. Also, my brother in law, Joanne's husband Joe, died of brain cancer in June 2016 after a year of treatment. I survived my cancer after receiving treatment for a year and a half. So, in the spring of 2017 when Arlene invited me again to go to Cursillo I wasn't sure. I thought I do need to do something that will help me to take the next step for my faith but perhaps what I wanted was a pilgrimage, a time completely away from my ordinary life activities to build my courage so that I would be more open to the joy of living and not feeling guilty for surviving. I thought, oh well, perhaps if I can't go on pilgrimage maybe this weekend would at least give some new perspective on my religion.

When I registered, I was told it would be good not to bring my phone or watch so I would have no distractions. I was OK with my phone, but I always wear my watch! How was I going to deal with not knowing the time? But I thought well if I am going to do it, I must completely commit so I left both at home. The first night this proved to be very challenging. I woke up and thought it must be morning, so I took a shower and got dressed but there was no sound coming from outside my room, and I had no idea what time it really was. So, I thought I might as well do some yoga as we probably would not get a lot of exercise. Then I prayed the rosary, then I waited some more. I wonder what time was it??? I laid down again and fell asleep and was woken by music in the hall. We all had a great laugh when I told the

ladies at my table about my night without my watch.

Before I went to the weekend, I wrote down what I hoped to achieve by going to Cursillo. This included:

- Courage to do things for myself
- New experience – mini pilgrimage
- To take me out of my comfort zone
- To learn about the love of God

I was dropped off at the beautiful Our Lady of Hope Retreat Centre by Johnny and Arlene and when they left, I felt like a kid left at boarding school. Everyone was a stranger and here, I had committed to a whole weekend! What was I thinking to agree to this! But when I sat down at my table the first thing I saw at my place was a little white book called Cursillo in Christianity Pilgrim's Guide. WOW. I got so excited thinking I am on a pilgrimage after all!

At Cursillo Fr. Bud presented beautiful meditations and told how God had to call him many times before he chose to be a priest. The rollos showed how much God's presence impacted each of the Cursillistas. It was so amazing to me to hear people talk about such personal crisis of the soul and how when they were able to trust in God's providence, they were able to move on, even if the situation was not resolved.

After Cursillo I noticed I was able to listen better when my coworkers were speaking to me. When I was speaking to my coworkers, they were more open to talking about issues they were having in their personal life. I felt more present and less likely to want to offer advice. Most people know what they need but just need to be heard without judgment. Even at the grocery store it seemed conversations with people I bumped into were less trivial and I was more open to say I would pray for them.

After Cursillo I was invited to join a group reunion with 3 others. They are such a great support and help me to practice living my faith. Going back to normal life after Cursillo is challenging because you want to tell others about it but unless you have gone through the weekend yourself it is hard to share the experience. In our secular culture everyone is so sceptical of the church. So, it is good to share with others who had gone to Cursillo.

Everyone in GR is at a different place on their path to holiness but we each can relate and learn from the other's story. As one person may be on a high another is struggling with a difficult situation and must dig deep to hold on to their faith. The group is such a wonderful community of God's people who benefit each other even though their situations vary significantly. By committing to piety, study and action each week we keep moving forward by reviewing successes and failures. Here are a few examples of how we help each other. One person in my GR said she keeps a daily gratitude journal. I thought about the spiritual journal I kept and realized there was no personal gratitude in it, so I started my own personal gratitude journal.

At first, I was not making daily entries because so many of my days were routine. But I had read an article in *The Word Among Us*, 2018, about how St. Ignatius of Loyola taught people how to pray. It was called *A Guide to the Daily Examen*. It is an examination of conscience but from the point of view of gratitude, rather than what you did wrong. It helps you become aware of God's presence in your journey in living and helps you reflect on your feelings when you reach out to others that day. It also helps you think about the upcoming day's activities and possible challenges. Now I can write daily in my gratitude journal about all my encounters with others that day. It is hard to stop writing now! If I say a prayer for someone who is sick or needs support, I now

take action more quickly to support that friend or neighbour in need. Unfortunately, there are so many distractions that it doesn't take a lot to throw you off your prayer routine or your action. If you have a guest in the house or are away from home, it seems much more difficult to keep to your commitments. GR helps you get back to your commitments in a supportive and non-judgemental way.

Another member uses her phone to beep as a reminder at 3PM to say a short prayer during the day. It really brings you back to the presences of Jesus. She said at first it wasn't working as she found it was often in the middle of something she was busy at and would let it go without a thought but gradually it started to work for her. I have included that in my prayer routine. It is still a practice I need to work on.

Another member is such a great visitor. I need to be more open to those who are shut in or struggling. It is amazing how we each inspire the other in our practice to live a wholehearted life.

Now every morning when I write in my

gratitude journal I always look forward to the upcoming day to activities and challenges and make sure I stay connected with others by more than a Facebook post. I now make a point to contact at least one person a day outside my immediate family. I stay more present when I am with someone. When my granddaughter is at my place, I focus on her more that making sure family dinner is perfect. I am more willing to give money to people without judgement, such as panhandlers. This was a real challenge for me. I don't normally do things spontaneously so now I set an intention to give money before I actually encounter them. When you give genuinely rather than begrudgingly the joy you get back is double. The love of God is now present in my normal everyday life and with the support of my group I hope and pray that the grace of God will remain active in my life.

As a friend once said to me, "Living your faith is not so much the doing but rather it is "being". Being love, being Christian, being all that God wants and needs you to be. From that living faith will come your apostolic action. Bringing God's love to those around us is the most important action.

De Colores



Don't forget to send the dates
of your weekends to the
Resource Centre so we can
include them on the website
cccresource2@gmail.com

ESSAY

This is the second part of a rollo given at the US National Encounter in San Antonio, July 2017 by Marg Weber, Hamilton Diocese Movement, ON

The method of the Cursillo is to live a balanced life of Piety, Study and Action. It's like a 3 legged stool. If one leg is missing, the stool will not stand firm. Piety is growing in relationship with God by every means available and recognizing our closest moments to Christ. Study is growing in knowledge of God. Action is living out what is learned through Piety and Study.

The mentality of Cursillo is that if Christ is within us, we will have Christ like attitude. Our role in the mission of the church is to infuse the Christian spirit into our mentality, through our behaviour, our laws and the community in which we live by making a positive difference whenever we are able to do so by reaching out to others in friendship, compassion and love.

It is in the natural environments of family, neighbourhood and work that Cursillistas are called to live out their spirituality, not preaching the Good News but BEING the Good News, being Christ in the world. The spirituality of Cursillo is based on friendship with Christ, and with the brothers and sisters who are placed on the journey together.

We are stewards of this gift of Cursillo. We can identify with the early apostles whom Jesus chose to share the gospel message. The apostles were unprepared, some doubted, others were fearful, and they lacked the full knowledge and courage of what Jesus was asking of them. The only assurance they knew was that they were being called to witness to His word and to carry on Jesus's mission and work in the world. As Cursillistas we too are called to BE stewards,

to BE the Good News in the square meter that surrounds us.

We are not expected to preach on the street corners, but we are called to be the spark that ignites the world for Christ doing the little things that God is calling us to do. Saint Mother Teresa said, "Doing the little things but with much love!" It can simply be a smile or a helping hand or a kind gesture. There are lots of little things that God is calling us to do, and by responding to His invitation, He will complete the bigger picture. I am just the SPARK while God is the flame. He uses us little sparks to set a blaze.

God knows us as we are, warts and all. He sees all that we do and knows all we think. He knows our deepest and darkest secrets and He loves us as we are. Patiently, He knocks at the door of our hearts and waits for us to respond to His invitations.

The method of Cursillo is Pre Cursillo, Weekend and Post Cursillo. The Pre Cursillo is where we make a friend, be a friend and bring that friend to Christ. This is the beginning of the friendship stage as we pray and prepare our friend to make the weekend. The weekend is the bridge. Unfortunately, some movements put so much emphasis on the bridge. We call this weekenditis! However, if the foundation of the bridge is not secure, meaning the pillars of the Pre and Post Cursillo are unstable, then the bridge will prove faulty and it will not last.

All parts of the method are important but the Post Cursillo is where most movements fall short. By continuing the friendship that has started in the Pre Cursillo, it is the duty as sponsors and as team to walk with these new friends and help to get them into group reunion and attend the ultreya where the

tripod of piety, study and action is carried out.

I think we can truthfully say that in most areas, the Post Cursillo needs a lot of work. It is great to sponsor and bring people to the weekend but if we don't continue the friendship after the weekend, we leave them high and dry and their environment may not change as it should. The method continues as the Post Cursillo becomes the Pre Cursillo for those coming to the bridge and who may attend the next weekend. We need to realize that Cursillo is not just about having a nice weekend experience. We all need to practice perseverance in the Post Cursillo with forming group reunions. The group reunion is friendship elevated to the highest level, friendship that is converted into a permanent actual grace.

Eduardo Bonnin says that "Reunions of the Group are not made so that there might be people to assist at the next Cursillos, but Cursillos are made so that there will be people who can make group reunion". This certainly emphasizes the importance of the Post Cursillo.

Prior to my Cursillo, my faith life was somewhat mechanical. I seemed to be doing just what I had to do. Mass on Sunday was pretty much it. I was a busy stay at home mom of our 3 children. Then suddenly our family was struck with some unexpected health issues and mid life crisis, and we were lost and devastated. I was lonely, yearning and searching for comfort and consolation and meaning to my life.

By the grace of God, I was invited to a Cursillo weekend and it was there that I found what I was looking for. It was friendship! Living the first encounter, I got to know myself. Delving into my inner self is something I had not done before. It was no surprise that I didn't like what I found

there. I knew then that some things definitely needed to change. It was certainly a wake up call for me! I met friends during the weekend who listened, who loved and cared for me. I developed some genuine friendships that are still strong today. But most importantly, I discovered a friendship with Christ. When I think of my first encounter with Christ as a personal friend, it was truly a moving experience I will never forget.

Over the years I have come to realize that through friendship, we can overcome our weaknesses and manage obstacles that are put in our path. A true friendship can take us from where we were to where we should be. I now know that I really didn't have genuine friends prior to my Cursillo because Christ was not always a part of the equation of the relationship. We can put no value on a genuine friendship. The element of friendship in Cursillo is so vital that Eduardo has been quoted as saying "If there is no friendship, there is no Cursillo!"

God is love and it is love that is at the core of true friendship. When Christ is the common denominator there is a unique bond that unites us and brings us to a deeper relationship. It is this unconditional love that carries us through the daily challenges we may encounter.

We need to ask ourselves some very important questions and evaluate the future of the Cursillo. Have we used the Gift of Cursillo to its fullest potential? Do I put effort into all of the areas? Have I sponsored people for a weekend lately? Do I continue to walk with them after the weekend? Have I helped those I sponsored to belong to a group reunion? Do I take those I have sponsored to the Ultreya? Do I do my part in being a leader in the movement? Do I study the Charism and attend School of Leaders, or has my lack of commitment to the Cursillo method dampened the fire

within me that was set ablaze on my weekend? Has your fire literally gone out? Is it time to rekindle the flame?

Each and every person plays an important role in rekindling the flame. We can point fingers and try to determine why Cursillo seems to be dying in certain areas of the country, but it really starts with each one of us. We all have to take responsibility. We cannot leave it to the others.

The Holy Spirit has given us the whole package. We just need to unwrap and use it as it was intended. We also have to do our part by inviting Cursillistas back to the movement. Show them they are missed and loved and that we want to share in their faith journeys. The love and support of the community is so vital in keeping Cursillo alive.

Rekindling the flame starts with each one of us. We can ignite the world by our love and set it on fire. Enthusiasm about the Cursillo methodology can be passed on to others by our little spark. It however means giving of our time without expecting any reward. The benefits will come back to us naturally. We need to concentrate on forming Group Reunions and faithfully attend Ultreya and School of Leaders. It means challenging others with loving kindness to do more to reignite the life of our individual movements.

For me, my group reunion friends are like sisters and my weekly ultreya friends are like extended family. I look forward to sharing our Christian lives which keep me on the right path. We spend the winter months in Panama City Beach, Florida. About 10 years ago, by the grace of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit we met some people at the church that we attend, and we started talking about Cursillo. There was no active Cursillo movement in the area at the time. After a few

conversations over coffee, this led us to starting an ultreya at the church for the "Snowbirds", the Cursillistas who were spending the winter in the area. Sometimes we've also had local parishioners come out because they were curious what Cursillo was all about. This has led to developing friendships from across the country. Each year when we gather again in January it's like there has been no time lapse at all. We continue to share our faith journeys, our joys and sometimes each others pain of sickness or loss of a loved one. This has led some of us to do prison ministry or nursing home music ministry, with Jesus as the common denominator working together to bring the joy of Christ to those we encounter.

There are many movements in Canada, and I believe around the world, that seem to be struggling. We have to ask ourselves this question: Have we deviated from the original Charism of the Cursillo?

In chapter VI of Eduardo Bonnin's Spiritual Testament, he writes "If we compare the Cursillo Movement to a tree, we are happy to see that it has grown, but it also hurts us to see that in some places, no doubt with the best of intentions, they have taken the tree of the Cursillo for a Christmas tree and have been hanging lights and decorations - their favourite brilliant ideas - and have gradually been spoiling its clear and simple profile"

Have we put so much effort into the "How", of doing and organizing instead of understanding the "Why"? Have we spent so much time decorating the Christmas tree of Cursillo that we have not left room to see Christ at the top?

In Canada, we have embraced the foundational Charism and have been working with the Mallorcan people to get back to the original Charism. We have been on a journey since 1992 to study and discover

the Charism given to Eduardo and to embrace what was intended. We have tried to undecorate the Christmas tree! My diocese of Hamilton implemented the Mallorcan weekend Step By Step model last year and I was blessed to serve as the Rectora. The weekend was authentic and genuine and proved much more effective with its simplicity. I hope and pray that your movements here in the US will also discover the gift of the original Charism by embracing this Step By Step model. The comment from the Spiritual Director at the end of last year's weekend, and by the way, he has worked several weekends, said he found that there was definitely more depth and less hype, and more candidates came for spiritual direction and reconciliation, some came more than once. With ample free time in the schedule, he did not go home totally exhausted after the weekend. He is totally convinced of this Step by Step method.

I had the opportunity to meet Eduardo on 3 occasions, twice in Mallorca and once in Canada. I saw firsthand how he treated each person as being special. He treated everyone with dignity and respect as if they were the only person in the room. Is this not how Jesus would have treated those in his presence?

My last visit to Mallorca was the III conversations of Cala Figura and I had a memorable experience. A friend and I were sitting at a table eating when Eduardo and his companion stopped at our table and asked if they could join us for lunch. We were just a little ecstatic to be in his presence as everyone was trying to get near him throughout the weekend. Everyone wanted to smell his fragrance! It was much like wanting to touch the hem of Jesus' garment.

At that time, my daughter was expecting her 3rd child and unfortunately just that morning, I received word that she had miscarried her baby. During our lunch I

shared this news with Eduardo. He looked at me with his baby blue eyes which were filled with compassion and love, I knew right then, that I was looking into the eyes of a saint! He folded his hands and turned his eyes up toward heaven as he prayed. I know he was praying for my daughter and her baby. We shared a beautiful meal together and he was very jovial and just so natural as if we were best friends. Then of course, he picked a sugar packet, started folding one of his paper Pajarito birds. He signed it and gave it to me to give to my daughter. She still cherishes this memento to this day. She's not a Cursillista yet but I am working on her.

Eduardo was the symbol of a genuine friend by his attentiveness to each person, treating them with dignity and respect. Being in the presence of any of the Mallorcan people was truly amazing. They just made you feel so welcome and special. Love and friendship oozes out of their pores so naturally. It does not seem to take any effort at all. As Cursillistas, we should all have this mentality. If you want a friend, it's simple - BE A FRIEND.

It is not Cursillo that will change the world, but it is the person whom the Cursillo experience has freed to become fully alive in God that will make a difference. These are the persons who will bring about change in the world one person at a time.

We often come to the end of a Cursillo weekend, a conference or encounter and say, "Isn't it so sad that this is coming to an end?" Well, instead it should be just the opposite; we should be thinking of it as the beginning of a new chapter in our life, having new insights, to go home filled with great enthusiasm. We know that enthusiasm is infectious and so events like this should be a real shot in the arm for all of us.

When a seed is planted, one does not know what will happen, but it can grow into something great and wonderful. The world is beautiful, people are important, and life is worth living. Each and every person is important in God's eyes. We must live the Gospel not every day but every moment, in our hearts and on our minds at all times, so that Christ can be seen clearly through us, as we emanate His fragrance.

We must commit ourselves to the vision of working together to advance this great work started by God through Eduardo. We cannot allow ourselves to become discouraged or disheartened so we need to pray and stay connected and support each other, building bridges of understanding and of LOVE from one heart to another. If we can win the heart, the head will soon follow.

My Cursillo cross that I wear is a reminder that Christ is counting on me, Jesus called me to Cursillo, and I responded. I have learned to love myself for who I am and who He created me to be. By the grace of God, He changed me from who I was, to the person I am today. I am a better wife, mother, grandmother, volunteer and friend because of my Cursillo way of life. I am a person fully alive in Christ through friendship with myself, with Jesus and with all those I encounter on my life pilgrimage.

My life has not always been easy and has had it challenges. I came from a relatively poor family who endured many struggles along the way. My father died from leukemia when I was only 6 and I am the youngest of a family of 8, 4 boys and 4 girls. We didn't have much in material wealth. We lived on a small farm and it was a lot of hard work for us to sustain our family and put food on the table, but my mother had faith, a precious gift which she passed on to all of her children.

I was a victim of physical and sexual abuse as a child and through my teen years I became a bit of a rebel. I can honestly say that it was my husband who rescued me at the age of 16. It has been through the Grace of God and Cursillo, that I have been able to forgive my abusers and have overcome the lack of confidence and self worth that this had caused me.

Today, I know that I am a child of God with a COG degree. I know that I am loved unconditionally by Him. I don't have any official University or College degrees, but I have a degree in Motherhood, a degree in listening and loving and a degree in friendship. I am forever grateful for the blessings I receive each and every day from my God, my family and my friends. I was one of the faraway but found my way back when I was invited to make the Cursillo. I found myself, Christ and friends in Christ. I try each day with God's help, to BE the Good News. Of course, sometimes I fail but I am confident and know that my friend Jesus will always welcome me back.

Cursillo for the past 32 years has been my passion and my way of life because this is where I see Christ in the friends and family who walk the journey with me and encourage and sustain me on a daily basis. Cursillo is a way of life to reach the destination of our life pilgrimage in the company of friends.

We came here this weekend to go deeper and to learn more about Cursillo, to be with friends, to make friends and to share our lives in Christ, so that when we go back home we will infect those we come in contact by our fragrance of enthusiasm and love.

In today's world of so much unrest, lack of morals and full of all the "isms" of materialism, individualism and the list could go on, we are being called by God to be

stewards of the Gospel, children of God and to help bring more souls to Christ. We are called to be saints, in the square meter that surrounds us, to infuse our fragrance of love and friendship and Be Not Afraid, for HE is always with us. I also believe that if He brings us to it, He will bring us through it. Jesus, I Trust In You!

From little acorns, mighty oaks can grow. From Mallorca to the USA, to Canada and around the world that same seed was sown. Some seeds have fallen on fertile soil and some on rocky ground and some in the weeds. In 2018 we will be celebrating our 50th anniversary in the Diocese of Hamilton and I am blessed that the seeds planted on the soil in my area of Canada has fallen on fertile ground and that Cursillo is going strong despite all the other movements we have in the church today. We give thanks to the pioneers of our country who have stayed true to the course and have pointed our diocese in the right direction.

In summary, there is a dire need to bring love back to the world. We can do this by loving one person at a time. By our baptism we are called to carry on the mission of the church, to BE the light of Christ, the Good News and

to infect one person at a time with God's love, to evangelize the moveable square metre that surrounds us by putting on the mind of Christ and always being the best "You" possible. Then, I believe, through friendship we become the fragrance that will infuse those that God has placed in our midst with joy, His Light and His love.

Don't go home following this encounter all excited to change your family and friends but ask God to change YOU first. As Mahatma Ghandi once said so eloquently, "Become the change you want to see in the world"

So WHY do we have Cursillo? Through its Essence, Purpose and Mentality, as children of God, living our lives infecting those in the square metre that surrounds us with the enthusiasm of the Charism of the Cursillo as our way of life, we will spread peace, joy and most of all love. Cursillo is based on friendships, with self, Christ and others. No friendship, no Cursillo!

CHRIST IS COUNTING ON ME and YOU

God Bless you all, Jesus Loves you and so do I!



Fun at the 75th anniversary fiesta



Q. I was hoping that you could answer a question for me. I was looking at a Cursillo website in southern Ontario some months ago and I read on their website that the first Great Ultreya was held at the St. James Shrine at Santiago de Compostela in 1948. That is not what I was given to understand. Could you clarify this for me please?

A. What is written on the website is not entirely wrong in some of what it says but the pilgrimage was not held at Santiago de Compostela, it ended there after the pilgrims had walked 'The Way', hundreds of miles across Spain. Santiago is Spanish for St. James and the cathedral in the city of Compostela houses his shrine. It wasn't the first pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, pilgrims have been walking 'The Way' since the middle ages and still do today. Several of our own Cursillistas have completed part or all of the walk.

Contrary to what the internet article states, the Pilgrimage was not a Cursillo event. The 1930s had brought depression and bloodshed even to Mallorca and the events that had taken place and their effects on society ignited a burning passion in many of the Spanish youth. Consequently, they responded to a call from the pope to begin a crusade declaring Christ as Saviour.

In an attempt to show the world that faith was alive in Spain, thousands of youth were organized into a spiritual army that was destined to make a great pilgrimage to

Santiago de Compostela, the ancient shrine of St James the Apostle, in northern Spain.

The organization of the pilgrimage was undertaken by Catholic Action, created in Italy by Pope Pius XI, and which had later spread to Spain. It operated at the diocesan and national levels and its sole purpose was to take 100,000 youths to Santiago on the pilgrimage. The method entailed training leaders in what was known as 'Cursillos for Pilgrim Leaders', at the diocesan level, and 'Cursillos for Pilgrim Guides', at the parish level. Catholic Action cursillos (short courses) had the specific purpose of preparing, spiritually and materially, for the pilgrimage to Santiago. They were focused exclusively towards the wealthy young men from the upper classes, students of the schools and colleges run by the great religious orders and who already belonged to Catholic Action. Each 'cursillo' lasted for an entire week.

Cursillo as we know it, evolved initially but with a much different focus, from the years of planning for the pilgrimage. The Cursillo that we know in Canada began on the island of Mallorca in 1944, the pilgrimage took place in 1948. What happened at the climax of the Pilgrimage was not called Ultreya. It would have simply been the naturally exuberant celebration of the completion of the great pilgrimage.

The first Ultreya was not held until 1953. Those on the Pilgrimage were not Cursillistas, they were members of Catholic Action although some of the approximately 600 from Mallorca, including Eduardo Bonnin, had lived the Cursillo Three Days that he had authored, in the years from 1944 to 1948.

Ultreya was not part of the first Cursillos that were born from the Charism that Eduardo received. He created them, as

stated, in 1953 because once the frequency of Cursillos being held increased to sometimes one a month, it was impossible to keep track of all the new Cursillistas that were in the Group Reunions. Eduardo was convinced that there should be a method whereby everyone could keep in touch with everyone else in some way. As Francisco Forteza writes in *Historia y Memoria. Hence, the plan was devised to establish a weekly, collective reunion, open to all Cursillistas, with its basic purpose very similar to those meetings of pilgrims on the way to Compostela.* (Anyone who has walked 'The Way' knows that along the route there are refuges, simple huts, where people can spend the night and share a meal with other pilgrims. As they rest, the pilgrims share the journey that they have travelled that day. Not everyone on the journey travels at the same pace or even stops at the same places. It is in these resting places that the pilgrims encouraged each other with the archaic word, 'Ultreya', meaning onward. In colloquial English this would be something like, Bye for now, be seeing you, 'til we meet again). *They were simply encouraging one another and with a promise to meet again, joyous that they shared the same pilgrimage. So what Eduardo devised he called Ultreya.* Nothing to do with the pilgrimage in 1948 other than that the use of the name seemed appropriate.

Ideally, Ultreyas are held weekly, the Cursillistas come together to share what they have experienced on their journey since they were last together (the last Ultreya), they listen to each other and encourage each other for the continuing journey. It is easy to see the parallel between the pilgrimage to Santiago and the pilgrimage through life.

Eduardo designed the Ultreya to be the Reunion of the Group Reunions with very specific elements that must be present in an authentic Ultreya. These would not have been part of anything that happened in

Compostela at the end of the Pilgrimage. The Ultreya consists of:

- The individual aspect, the group reunion beginning with the prayer to the Holy Spirit.
- The communal aspect, which is the Ultreya rollo, (Witness rollo) and the responses.
- Visit to the Blessed Sacrament with prayers of intercession.
- Our Father.
- De Colores.

Eduardo liked to say: "At the Group Reunion we are like a wave, at the Ultreya we are the sea".

Its purpose is to provide an atmosphere where all may learn from each other how to be better without wanting to be the best. To build friendships on which the Cursillo method is based and to encourage each other in the restlessness that they all feel, their concern for the environments and the people with whom they share their daily lives. Eduardo wanted every person to know that God loves them, Ultreya is part of the method to help that happen.

Eduardo gave them the name Ultreya because it seemed like an obvious choice, a word which means what attending the Ultreya strives to emulate, to encourage each other to persevere on the journey.

Unfortunately, the internet has much information about Cursillo and its origins which is not accurate. Eduardo is the recognized founder, the cause for his beatification has begun. The Canadian Cursillo movement looks to Mallorca for guidance. The Movement where Cursillo began and where it is lived to this day in the same way as Eduardo created it, is our Pole Star.

FROM EDUARDO

An Excerpt from Eduardo's book, History of a Charism

THE MAN IN GOD'S GRACE FERMENTS THE STRUCTURES WITH THE GOSPEL

THE MAN IN GRACE FERMENTS; THE STRUCTURES FOMENT

The title of this essay is undoubtedly a normal requirement that is supposed to be alive and active in every Christian, and this is generally the goal a person who has encountered Christ today is advised to follow. Sometimes we forget that it is man who must go out to ferment the world with Christianity. The most that structures can do is only "foment" (stir up). Only a man can make the Gospel of Christ come alive in his life. He is the one who, through grace, has to gradually develop all his potentialities, becoming more of a person. This is something that is usually achieved when his encounter with Christ sends him seriously and in truth towards an encounter with himself.

THE DANGER OF DEACTIVATED CHRISTIANS

When a man dispenses himself from personal effort and relies on the structure to achieve a certain goal without putting in anything himself or putting in very little, it makes him less of a person, instead of helping him to be a person. It is like a student who, instead of working hard to take advantage of the course work, takes the final exam in confidence that he will end up with good grades. He does not study, or does not study enough, but instead he counts on the intimate friendship that he knows his father has with the most prominent members of the school board.

The Christian structure, when it is served by disengaged Christians, can be a slippery slope that facilitates pretending and craftiness, because that's human nature.

ORIGINAL OBJECTIVE OF THE CURSILLO MOVEMENT

Since its beginning - in 1944 - we have been trying to avoid as far as possible producing this kind of attitude in those who have come to the Cursillo Movement. This is, exactly what we have been pointing out over and over and on so many occasions. We, the founders, have been saying: the Precursillo, the Cursillo, and the Postcursillo are thought out for, programmed for, and directed to the concrete, real, and ordinary man who lives his everyday life with normality, and encounters himself before anything else. This is the only way his encounter with Christ can be profound, and his encounter with the brothers rewarding and effective.

This is what we ask of the Lord when we plan each Cursillo, and this is what, by the grace of God, has been achieved naturally and in a human way when the Cursillo is carried out as it was thought up and structured, that is, where genuine Cursillos are given. Ones not mixed up nor mystifying, with things that are diametrically opposed to its essence and its basic purpose. If one begins from the role that he thinks he is called to play in life and does not begin with his own life itself, there can be no encounter with himself.

Every encounter between people, to be of any value and also consciously experienced, requires that each one has previously encountered himself.

EVANGELIZATION IS NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT THE GOSPEL

Evangelization is not only talking about the Gospel. It is trying to make the Gospel come alive in each person's life, right here, right now, and from oneself. We can approach this if we try to be guided by the accurate orientation that Christ prints out for us by His way of operating.

Most of the alive and direct encounters that Christ had in His historical life, the ones the Gospels record for us, clearly and reliably show that the Lord's intention was first of all that each person encounter himself; we know well, although sometimes we overlook it, that the kingdom of God is inside each person and that when this reality becomes conscious, it also becomes, all by itself, communicative and contagious.

VANISHING POINT

What is important is not to barge in on the natural process with apostolic "offers" that tie the encounter to a structure and dislodge it from its normality in the person. This is the breaking point, the vanishing point, that usually sterilizes and trivializes the spiritual energy that the Cursillo provides and will continue to provide, if we use the means specified to achieve it.

COMMITMENTS BETWEEN PERSONS AND COMMITMENTS TO PERSONS

A person should have personality when he is invited to a Cursillo. This is the only thing required so that in the three days and after them fundamental Christianity can support and motivate his life. Without a doubt what interests him most, what he finds more attractive, is encountering and getting to know other persons and developing a bond of friendship with them. When one invades the terrain of the most personal self, he tries

to link it to a structure. This forces his decision in a more or less hidden way. We are making the most obvious mistake by creating an obligation to live together as a way to get people to live. We tend to forget that, unless people are already alive, living together contains a latent falsehood that blunts the cutting edge of each one's personal witness. On the contrary, relationships between persons are always vibrant by themselves, although they are no less demanding.

Structural commitments lead to loyalty, affiliation, activism, or others that are, perhaps, purely emotional. We can get to such a feeling, but always through the other thing that we have just mentioned, the bonds of friendship. But we, the leaders - not the "responsible ones", we are all responsible ~~ones~~ - we, the leaders need to know, that not all of us are called to the same thing.

Basically, the Christian creates. He specifies and uses the commitment among persons. He is committed to love, not to a behavior, but to love one or more people, and he will continue to love even if his friend or friends change their minds and even if they change the structure. But when we have neglected this commitment between people - which is the touchstone that tells us if the Movement is in its genuine and authentic channel - Christians become dedicated to creating works that create links to people, with a motivation that is outside their area of interest.

Today we face the failure of many Christian structures, which are Christian in name only, structures that insist on relationships of persons, but only address lay structures of general interest, with the naive purpose of Christianizing them. Some believe, doubtless in good faith, that with a simple mandate everything is going to come to order and succeed, without first counting on men who, because they have encountered

themselves, they feel the grace of God and know with firm conviction, not as passengers, but with a personal decision, not one imposed upon them, and with a constancy that, having to live in their own world, this is only possible because of a few relationships among persons that were created and are still alive and rewarding. (Group Reunion and Ultreya).

This is so because the only commitment with any substance for the Christian is the commitment between persons. In heaven they have no structures.

One who has assumed a bond to his person can only continue being Christian to the extent that it (the bond) does not abolish the relationships that he already has with other persons. Hence, all Christian commitment is not merely an option, it is an all-inclusive option. It loses its reason for being if it makes victims.

Reality advises us to opt.

The Gospel allows us to opt for all reality.

IF WE OPT FOR SOMETHING, IT IS FOR MAN

If we opt for anything, we opt for man, each man in particular. Then we can opt for other ideas, organizations, works, etc., knowing that the commitment must be possible. The commitment has to respect me as a person, it has to let me continue to respect others and to be of help to them in achieving their goals.

Christianity excludes some commitments to persons, but it imposes none, because it has created the prior singular commitment, whose potentiality is so often ignored.

In the same way that the Christian has to commit himself to all men, the Cursillo Movement has to commit itself to all reality. The Ultreyas, if they do not reflect the real

structure of the current world (if they have the richer, the wiser, etc., than the man in the street), show that we have not chosen to be committed to all reality, but only and in excess, to some part of it.

The environments have: a degree of fermentation, its "climate", and a degree of vertebration, the adaptation of its structure to its climate.

Anyone can leaven an environment. Anyone can disrupt an environment, but not everyone is called to vertebrate it.

Sometimes somebody who is not the right one sets out trying to "vertebrate an environment," one who does not have influence, or who disorganizes his own proper group, or who lets himself be manipulated without realizing it.

When those who can vertebrate decide to do it, are always tempted to rise up, take advantage of, or simply "stir things up."

Fermenting Christianity is not "creating a religious/denominational environment," rather it is making the environment friendly, making friends in it (the environment), making them friends with Christ, and creating a favorable atmosphere for its interior vertebration. Primarily, it is making it Christian.

WHAT IS STRUCTURING LIFE IN A CHRISTIAN WAY

Structuring Christianity does not mean dismantling what is alive with the pretext of structuring Christianity. It does not consist in putting Christians in charge, nor in Christianizing those who are in charge, but in knowing that life is already vertebrated. And knowing that what is needed is that men, right from where they are living, and because they are living it in spirit and in

truth, animate and fill with meaning everything they are structuring

This means trying to make it really human and knowing that this is the best way to continue making it happen. It is not primarily in demonstrating one's religiosity, or in making apologies for one's faith, rather it is in activating those who are capable of being put into action. Then the oppressions disappear, and each person is valued. Each one knows well that to get others to the same place, one must begin with himself.

THE MOST ESSENTIAL THING: ENCOUNTER WITH ONESELF

We have already said that this tactic of starting with oneself is obvious from the Gospel which gives us accurate and incontrovertible proof of it in many episodes that it records for us.

John the Baptist, the Forerunner of Jesus, the Good Thief on Calvary, the Samaritan woman, Zacchaeus, ... even the apostles after Pentecost show that what the Lord intended first and foremost was that each one of them encounter himself, and that this would enable him, from himself and by himself, in the light of His Word, make the personal decision he, the person, wanted.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

We can verify that the Forerunner of Jesus had already followed the same strategy: proclaiming "Repent", has the same intention, the intention that people encounter themselves.

And also, if John the Baptist had not intended King Herod to encounter himself, no doubt the anxiety that his misconduct was causing him would have led him down a different path. For example, he could point out to King

Herod that many poor families lived in the suburbs of Jerusalem. They were living in lamentable conditions of misery and poverty. It is more than likely that bringing this bleak situation to the king's attention, might prompt Herod to make a large and "real" donation. And, who knows, perhaps if he suggested it to Herodias and her daughter Salome, they would have organized a wonderful charity raffle, surely there was enough hook and claw in them or, rather, aggressiveness - as they call it today -, to have a gigantic success, quickly selling all the tickets to their many admirers, people who must have been rich and powerful, and therefore influential.

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

The Samaritan woman, when she took off down the path of theoretical discourse, was trying to flee from herself. She asked the Lord whether she should worship God in Jerusalem or on Mount Gerizim; Christ put her entire situation in its precise place by simply telling her to go find her husband.

ZACCHAEUS THE CHIEF TAX COLLECTOR

We know that the encounter of this man with the Lord, an encounter he sought with such manifest interest that he climbed a tree to see Him, was rewarded by Christ's addressing him and urging him to go to his house, because He wanted to stay there. It seems that Jesus had an urgent need to see the overflowing generosity that would be produced by the encounter He had had with Zacchaeus. The well-known reaction of the wealthy man of Jericho was so generous that one cannot help thinking that it would certainly have been less substantial if somebody from

the synagogue had advised him what to do.

I have heard that some people think that Zacchaeus, after his encounter with Jesus, went off and joined the twelve. I have always thought that this was not the case. I mean, sincerely, that I believe he did not go off following alongside Christ, as the twelve did. I think that what followed his interesting episode was the fulfillment of the resolution Zacchaeus had made. It must have given him a small headache just to calculate half of his fortune, not to mention the accounts he and his employees had to make, because he had to have them, to calculate four times the amount he now owed to those that he had defrauded.

More than his making a generous gesture, what amazes me is the charity that he had to squander, without doubt, and in spite of the protests of the favored ones. It is already well known that whoever has become aware that he has been ~~deceived~~ cheated always claims for himself the right to demand a perpetual vindication.

THE GOOD THIEF

Dimas, the Good Thief, also encountered himself. He encountered his past and judged himself with truth before daring to ask the Lord to remember him when he came into his Kingdom.

THE APOSTLES AFTER PENTECOST

It is painful that the apostles of today have a behavior so different and even diametrically opposed to that displayed by Peter and John when they encountered the paralytic. According to the *Book of Acts*, the man was asking for

alms at the door called Beautiful. No doubt the door was beautiful, but even more beautiful was the attitude of faith that Peter showed, when he said: "gold or silver have I none, but I give you what I have, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth"

Today the pain is that we should be living an alive and *contagious* faith - able to infect - but we have a very different mentality, a mentality even contrary to Peter's, a mentality that if we had to express it in words, we would express it in many different ways and just maybe all of them are not in line with the criterion of the Gospel.

Perhaps we would say, at least to ourselves: "Since I have neither gold nor silver, I can't give you any relief. I do not know what to do for you, but I will try to help you, I will shift the fault to those who do have gold and silver. If they react, even if it's out of fear, and not because of love, maybe I can solve your problem." The funny thing is that when those who have gold and silver do respond generously, as a result of our handling of these super-jealous middlemen, besides feeling good and perhaps better than some others, we don't waste at all the opportunity to exercise our skill as flatterers. And if, to the contrary, they do not listen to us, we think that the gold and silver they have, ought to increase their faith and make them more generous. And we do not keep our opinion to ourselves, but we criticize and communicate it, judging that they are stingy, completely forgetting the warning of the Lord who says: **Do not judge so that you will not be judged.**

NOT DRAMATISTS, NOT PESSIMISTS

Without being dramatic or pessimistic,

but seeing and living in the world where living, real, concrete, and immediate realities take place, it can easily be verified that, mixing with, and sometimes dragging along, the personnel from the multitude of persons, puts us into a furious stream of selfishness, ambition, and pride.

The Christian man, feeling propelled, stimulated by that furious stream of selfishness... his Christianity, has no choice but to be anchored in his Christian conviction, because if he is not convinced, he is already defeated. But what he has to do at any given moment in his particular circumstances, is not so clearly marked out as in a dish of vanilla and chocolate ice cream, where you can clearly see where the vanilla ends and the chocolate begins. Because, although different, Christian morality, like that of all great religions, was in practice generally an ethic of prohibitions. And precisely for that reason, although it might not seem so, it left a great deal of room for initiative and personal creativity. This is because it did not usually prescribe what to do and how to do it, but limited itself to excluding behaviors that are easily identifiable as inappropriate.

Today, on the other hand, forms of modern morality - above all for the laity - are offered to us as authentic codes for individual and social conduct. They claim to liberate man, but instead, in the long run, only complicate things for him by lifting prohibitions just to exchange them for impositions.

Man increasingly is becoming more aware of the circumstances that surround him. And he realizes that the world is divided; in the social area, divided into men and women, into white and those of colour, into young and old; in the cultural area, divided into

knowledgeable and ignorant, into well-mannered and uncultured; in the economic area, divided into the poor and the rich, those with jobs and the unemployed, etc.

But the most important division may be that of men who have never gotten beyond themselves and those who have never entered into themselves. To be able to go out and enter when it suits one, a person needs to lean on something transcendent, and when the person discovers that this something is Someone, is Christ. It is the Lord, who is Himself alive, normal, and close, empowering a person to be the best version of himself, and pushing him in a convergent direction towards his human and spiritual fulfillment. When this occurs the person changes perspective and he learns to value everything from the value that is most valuable.

THE CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTAL, ALWAYS EFFECTIVE

The world is becoming smaller. Things change, ideas, facts, structures. Only the fundamental Christianity still has all the compromising force of what is simple. Do not forget that God made Himself a man. He did not make Himself a structure.

There was a time when it seemed necessary to use human things to protect the divine realities. Today we see that only the divine realities, made alive in persons who assume them with conviction, can give the exact criteria so that scientific and technical advances have the precise human dignity to contribute to real progress, so that all men feel that they are brothers.

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