

Fully Alive



THE NATIONAL RESOURCE DOCUMENT OF THE CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CURSILLOS



Let nothing disturb you.
 Let nothing upset you.
 Everything changes.
 God alone is unchanging.
 With patience all things
 are possible.
 Whoever has God lacks
 nothing.
 God alone is enough.

St. Teresa of Avila

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OFFICERS' CORNER

Linda Pitkanen, Chair of CCCC

I am sitting in front of my computer, on a beautiful sunny afternoon, reflecting on the past few months. The world has gone through so much upheaval, and I feel guilty because Reino and I have been enjoying our quiet time in isolation. We feel retired at last. We have been busy catching up on work in and around the house.

I was thinking about how blessed I am to have this technology around me during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic. Isn't it amazing how much our world has changed over the years? It has been made much smaller with the advances in technology. We can see news from around the world as it is happening instead of waiting for it to be in print.

I have been using my social media for evangelizing through my Facebook page. I do not normally look at Facebook often; it was a way for me to keep in touch with my children and grandchildren. But I thought that since I cannot go out into my environments that I would bring the world to me instead. Years ago, one of my friends had asked me not to pass on religious stuff as they didn't care for it, I listened to them and tried not to send them things that would offend them. But now I thought that I would post things publicly and potentially reach more people. If they got offended, they could just ignore me. Not one person has complained so far. God is indeed good.

I have been connecting with one of my group reunions weekly now instead of having monthly reunions. It has been a blessing. Another of my group reunions has been meeting once every two weeks, another blessing from God. The Hamilton movement holds weekly Ultreyas on zoom. The Toronto movement has held a Grand Ultreya. All over

Canada, people are using this technology to hold online group reunions, secretariat meetings, School of Leaders, and Ultreyas.

I have been participating in a weekly Wednesday evening Ultreya on zoom that is open to all Cursillistas in Canada. You need to download WhatsApp on your cell phone and then join the Group link, <https://.chat.whatsapp.com/FEMJJ5J7POrGnSpjQ2mlXO>. Ten to fifteen minutes before the Ultreya is to start, they will send you a Zoom Meeting ID. You then use Zoom to join the Ultreya. The Ultreya is a bilingual one, English and Spanish. There is a witness rollo and then three echoes followed by a commentary by one of the priests. Cursillistas from Canada, the United States, the Caribbean, South America, and as far away as Australia and Mallorca have attended these Ultreyas. I invite each one of you to come and check it out for yourself.

The Officers Group has been meeting every couple of weeks by Skype, keeping in touch, and continuing any work required. It was a difficult decision to cancel the national conference this year, but we are looking forward to holding it next year. Contact Sheelagh at the Resource Centre if you are looking for material to aid the growth of yourselves and/or your movements.

With my computer, iPhone, and iPad, I can look for and watch many things. I have attended several free virtual Catholic Conferences, the Virtual National March for Life Rally and March. Plus, all the online Masses, what a choice! I have been watching a daily Mass in P.E.I. Along with some Masses said by the Pope, Masses on EWTN, Mass at St. Joseph in Grande Prairie, Mass with the Marian Brothers at Divine Mercy, and Mass

with Bishop Barron. There are so many positive things that I have found on the internet. Bishop Robert Barron said at one point that he hoped that after this was over, that people wouldn't continue just to watch Mass online and another priest noted that he was concerned that those who come to Mass out of habit would not return.

This morning I watched three Masses back to back. The first one was from California with Bishop Robert Barron. The second Mass was with my parish priest, Father Jerin Lewis, and the third Mass was with Father Terry Sawchuk of Schreiber/Terrace Bay. The Holy Spirit has given these priests the gift of preaching the Good News. They do so with such eloquence and ease of communication. They speak such down to earth and easy to follow truths that make it seem as if they are speaking directly to me. I take to heart so many things from their sermons.

Father Terry was echoing what has been in my heart these past few weeks. He spoke of our self-isolation, Covid-19, how people are reacting to it, and how it echoes the exodus in the bible. He was talking about how, when the Israelites were in the desert because it was taking so long to reach the promised land, people were starting to talk about going back to Egypt even though it meant going back to slavery. They simply wanted to get back to something familiar to them no matter how bad it was. Not everything, however, is worth returning to. Certain mentalities and habits are better left behind.

This past week we have heard encouraging news that some of the Covid-19 restrictions are slowly relaxing. Father Terry kept talking about the hope that some have called the "Great Re-Opening" might happen. Now we are faced with a similar choice. Do we continue towards a kinder, more caring, and connected, more loving way of life, or do we return to what we had before?

He talked about the material things in life that we have done without for many weeks now. Do we need all those material things? In Cursillo, it teaches us that our Ideal is to move towards the love of Christ and to share that through the best means possible, friendship. It is easy to get distracted by the material things of life - to let things matter more than people. We get so caught up in the internet, social media, television, the need to purchase material goods that we lose sight of our Ideal amidst all the noise of our material world. Is that the normal we wish to return to? Shall we use this pause that the Covid-19 pandemic has given us, to focus on Christ first, and continuing building friendships?

You will find Father Terry Sawchuk's full homily in this issue of Fully Alive in the section titled, Matters Spiritual. Please read as he is indeed much more eloquent than I, and it is so interesting!

I am looking forward to attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist! To singing in the choir and bringing communion to my mom. I am looking forward to being with my mother, who is in a long term care home. I miss her so much. I am looking forward to being with my sisters and my friends and hugging them. It would be nice to enjoy the physical intimacy of sitting down at the same table for game night or going camping with our grandchildren or visiting a lonely friend. I hope that our world is a nicer, kinder place. I hope that people continue to appreciate other people just as much as they do right now! Let us pray together that when the vaccine is discovered, it is given free to all people around the world, not just people who can afford it!

What do you miss? What are you looking forward to? We all have things that we are looking forward to and things that we could easily leave behind. We have a chance now to make our world a better place. Let us not waste this chance! De Colores and Ultreya!

Father Brendon (Bud) Gallant, CCCC Spiritual Advisor

There is a thirst in every human heart. Each of us is like the lonely Samaritan woman at Jacob's well at times. We are thirsting for something. Something that will satisfy all of our longings. But often we search in the wrong places. We draw water from many different wells: the water of praise to quench our thirst for self-esteem, the water of success to quench our thirst for self-importance, the water of pleasure to quench our thirst for joy. And, yet, we still remain thirsty for only God can cause springs to well up inside us, and this water will sustain us in our journey to the promised land of everlasting life. (Anonymous)

With the pandemic of Covid-19, so many people are yearning for this living water that will quench their thirst. Grandparents want to hug their grandchildren, grandchildren wanting to hug their grandparents, the elderly who are living alone, residents in nursing homes who cannot have their children visit them. The depressed, loved ones who cannot celebrate a funeral with loved ones who have died. Doctors and nurses and staff who hold the hands of someone who is dying for a family member who cannot be at their side. Front line professional workers who act as husband, wife, son, daughter as they hold their hands. And the list goes on.

Who can we turn to at this time in our lives to sustain us? Like the woman at Jacob's well, Jesus is the only one who can quench our thirst. As fellow Cursillistas, we have to be Christ for them. Make a phone call, drop by a person who lives alone and leave something for them on their doorstep. Saying a big "Thank You" to the essential workers that we meet.

As we approach the Feast of Ascension and Pentecost, let us invoke the Holy Spirit of God

asking Him to fill our hearts with His divine love, "Come Holy Spirit," and as we receive His gift's, let us pass it on, pay it forward.

Keep safe my brothers and sisters,
De Colores

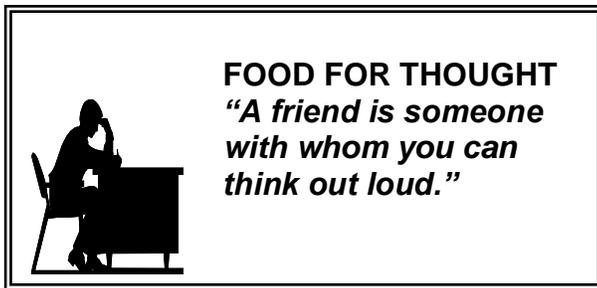
Western Region Officer

The Officer's group is delighted to announce that Allan Forsberg from the Grouard McLennan Cursillo Movement has accepted to be the Western Region Officer. Allan is a long time Cursillista and has a solid grasp of the mentality and method of Cursillo and the Foundational Charism. Allan lives in Grande Prairie, Alberta with his wife Mindy. Some of you will remember Allan from recent Cursillo Conferences.

Sadly, with Allan's arrival we say farewell and a huge thank you to Muriel Brideau from the Edmonton Cursillo Movement. As a long time Cursillista Muriel has brought much to the OG for the past four years. Part of her responsibility was to act as the CCCC Treasurer in which she has done a truly fantastic job. We are grateful to Muriel that she has agreed to continue in her role as Treasurer. This of course means that we will maintain close contact with Muriel which is a blessing. The Officers do their best to keep past Officers engaged in the work of CCCC as resource people and mentors.

Thank you to both Allan and Muriel for their service and their commitment to the Cursillo Movement in Canada.

Allan's email address will be cccwestern2017@gmail.com. Further contact information can be found on the back of this issue of Fully Alive. Allan will be in contact with the Western Region Lay Directors shortly.



**EXTRAORDINARY MOMENT OF
PRAYER**

PRESIDED OVER BY POPE FRANCIS

Sagrato of St Peter's Basilica

Friday, 27 March 2020

“When evening had come” (Mk 4:35). The Gospel passage we have just heard begins like this. For weeks now it has been evening. Thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets and our cities; it has taken over our lives, filling everything with a deafening silence and a distressing void, that stops everything as it passes by; we feel it in the air, we notice in people’s gestures, their glances give them away. We find ourselves afraid and lost. Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat... are all of us. Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying “We are perishing” (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together can we do this.

It is easy to recognize ourselves in this story. What is harder to understand is Jesus’ attitude. While his disciples are quite naturally alarmed and desperate, he stands in the stern, in the part of the boat that sinks first. And what does he do? In spite of the tempest, he sleeps on soundly, trusting in the Father; this is the only time in the Gospels we see Jesus sleeping. When he wakes up, after

calming the wind and the waters, he turns to the disciples in a reproaching voice: “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” (v. 40).

Let us try to understand. In what does the lack of the disciples’ faith consist, as contrasted with Jesus’ trust? They had not stopped believing in him; in fact, they called on him. But we see how they call on him: “Teacher, do you not care if we perish?” (v. 38). *Do you not care*: they think that Jesus is not interested in them, does not care about them. One of the things that hurts us and our families most when we hear it said is: “Do you not care about me?” It is a phrase that wounds and unleashes storms in our hearts. It would have shaken Jesus too. Because he, more than anyone, cares about us. Indeed, once they have called on him, he saves his disciples from their discouragement.

The storm exposes our vulnerability and uncovers those false and superfluous certainties around which we have constructed our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities. It shows us how we have allowed to become dull and feeble the very things that nourish, sustain and strengthen our lives and our communities. The tempest lays bare all our prepackaged ideas and forgetfulness of what nourishes our people’s souls; all those attempts that anesthetize us with ways of thinking and acting that supposedly “save” us, but instead prove incapable of putting us in touch with our roots and keeping alive the memory of those who have gone before us. We deprive ourselves of the antibodies we need to confront adversity.

In this storm, the façade of those stereotypes with which we camouflaged our egos, always worrying about our image, has fallen away, uncovering once more that (blessed) common belonging, of which we cannot be deprived: our belonging as brothers and sisters.

"Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" Lord, your word this evening strikes us and regards us, all of us. In this world, that you love more than we do, we have gone ahead at breakneck speed, feeling powerful and able to do anything. Greedy for profit, we let ourselves get caught up in things, and lured away by haste. We did not stop at your reproach to us, we were not shaken awake by wars or injustice across the world, nor did we listen to the cry of the poor or of our ailing planet. We carried on regardless, thinking we would stay healthy in a world that was sick. Now that we are in a stormy sea, we implore you: "Wake up, Lord!"

"Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" Lord, you are calling to us, calling us to faith. Which is not so much believing that you exist, but coming to you and trusting in you. This Lent your call reverberates urgently: "Be converted!", "Return to me with all your heart" (Joel 2:12). You are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a *time of choosing*. It is not the time of your judgement, but of our judgement: a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord, and to others. We can look to so many exemplary companions for the journey, who, even though fearful, have reacted by giving their lives. This is the force of the Spirit poured out and fashioned in courageous and generous self-denial. It is the life in the Spirit that can redeem, value and demonstrate how our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people – often forgotten people – who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines nor on the grand catwalks of the latest show, but who without any doubt are in these very days writing the decisive events of our time: doctors, nurses, supermarket employees, cleaners, caregivers, providers of transport, law and order forces, volunteers, priests, religious men and women and so very many others who have

understood that no one reaches salvation by themselves. In the face of so much suffering, where the authentic development of our peoples is assessed, we experience the priestly prayer of Jesus: "That they may all be one" (Jn 17:21). How many people every day are exercising patience and offering hope, taking care to sow not panic but a shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday gestures, how to face up to and navigate a crisis by adjusting their routines, lifting their gaze and fostering prayer. How many are praying, offering and interceding for the good of all. Prayer and quiet service: these are our victorious weapons.

"Why are you afraid? Have you no faith"? Faith begins when we realise we are in need of salvation. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we flounder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars. Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them. Like the disciples, we will experience that with him on board there will be no shipwreck. Because this is God's strength: turning to the good everything that happens to us, even the bad things. He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies.

The Lord asks us and, in the midst of our tempest, invites us to reawaken and put into practice that solidarity and hope capable of giving strength, support and meaning to these hours when everything seems to be floundering. The Lord awakens so as to reawaken and revive our Easter faith. We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved. We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love. In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and

chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things, let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: he is risen and is living by our side. The Lord asks us from his cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look towards those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame (cf. *Is* 42:3) that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled.

Embracing his cross means finding the courage to embrace all the hardships of the present time, abandoning for a moment our eagerness for power and possessions in order to make room for the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of inspiring. It means finding the courage to create spaces where everyone can recognize that they are called, and to allow new forms of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity. By his cross we have been saved in order to embrace hope and let it strengthen and sustain all measures and all possible avenues for helping us protect ourselves and others. Embracing the Lord in order to embrace hope: that is the strength of faith, which frees us from fear and gives us hope.

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Dear brothers and sisters, from this place that tells of Peter’s rock-solid faith, I would like this evening to entrust all of you to the Lord, through the intercession of Mary, Health of the People and Star of the stormy Sea. From this colonnade that embraces Rome and the whole world, may God’s blessing come down upon you as a consoling embrace. Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts. You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak, and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the storm. Tell us again: “Do not be afraid” (*Mt* 28:5). And we, together with Peter, “cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us” (cf. *1 Pet* 5:7).

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<http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2020>.

For more wisdom from Pope Francis in this time of uncertainty and change, you may be interested in another talk entitled “Why the Only Future Worth Building Includes Everyone”

Use this link

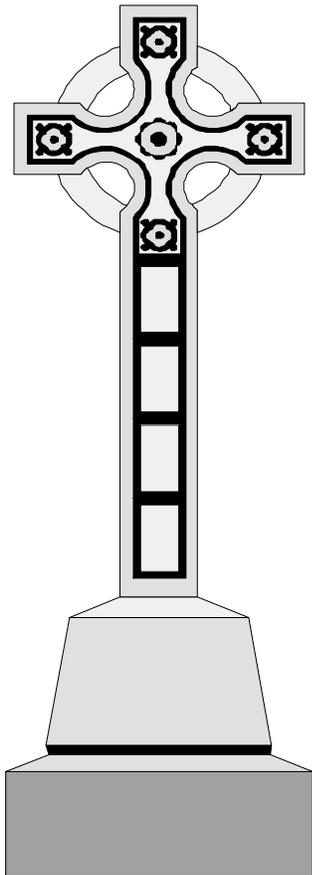
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36zrJfAFcuc>



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



MATTERS SPIRITUAL

Father Terry Sawchuk of Schreiber/Terrace Bay Member of the Thunder Bay Cursillo Movement

This past week we have been encouraged by news that some of the COVID 19 restrictions are being slowly relaxed. There is hope to believe that what some have called the “Great Re-opening” may actually happen. Even as we find ourselves eager to get back to normal, I think we can admit that not everything is worth rushing back to.

Certain attitudes, habits and ways of doing things may be better left behind. Letting go is not always an easy thing.

Our ancestors in faith, the Israelite people, experienced this firsthand as they made the long journey from slavery in Egypt to a new beginning in the Promised Land. The journey was not an easy one, and as they faced trial after trial, many became nostalgic about the past. Many actually preferred to go back to the familiarity of slavery rather than to press on to the Promised Land.

(Some have noted that it was far easier to get the Israelites out of Egypt than it was to get Egypt out of the Israelites).

As we find ourselves in our own kind of miniature “Exodus experience” - making our way through new and unfamiliar terrain - it can be very easy to crave for how things were, not necessarily because they were better but because they are familiar. Not everything, however, is worth returning to. Certain mentalities and habits are better left behind.

We have been, for example, driven by consumerism for many years, caught up in a desire to have more, only to find out how little we actually need. We have come to prefer technology over people, only to have our personal interactions and social gatherings severely limited.

We have forgotten the needy and vulnerable, only to have our own poverty and vulnerability exposed. We have neglected our sacred duty to keep holy the Lord’s day, only to have our churches and places of worship closed. We have watched in shock as hundreds of our elderly and infirm are snatched

away by disease, even as we have legalized euthanasia in our country to take of these same people.

An attempt at the Great Re-opening is slowly underway, but it would be a lost opportunity if it did not also include a great re-opening of our minds and hearts.

Over and over during the Easter season we are given a vision of Our Lord Jesus who calls his people forward. The shepherd goes ahead of the flock and calls them to follow. (John 10:4).

Our Blessed Lord said, "I go to prepare a place for you..." (John 14:3), and "I came that

you may have life and have it in abundance" (John 10:10).

Placed before us is an opportunity to embrace this "abundant life" anew, to leave behind those familiar but unhelpful attitudes, habits and ideas. We are given an opportunity to grow in our respect for the great gift of human life, an opportunity to pursue greater wholeness and holiness of life.

The Great Re-opening may be underway. However, before we rush too quickly to get back to normal, let us take a moment to consider what is really worth returning to and what is better left behind.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Due to the pandemic that we are living with all personal Cursillo activities have been halted for the past several months. We know that many movements are engaging in virtual Ultreyas, Schools of Leaders, Group Reunions and Secretariat meetings, to a more or lesser degree. The Officers have been enjoying Skype conference calls on a biweekly or monthly basis to keep in touch with each other and to discuss any business that comes up. During this time, the Officers have been engaged in ongoing projects, working with Mallorca, finalizing the Step by Step Rector's Guide and the New Rollo Guidelines, and keeping in touch with diocesan movements.

What we have found is that many are seeking a deeper relationship with God in these difficult times. As the evangelizers that Cursillistas are, we need to be aware that there may be many for whom the Cursillo method of, 'Make a Friend, Be a Friend and Bring Your Friend to Christ' could be helpful in their search during these troubled times. However, we must be aware that our goal is not to bring people to Cursillo but to introduce them to the God who loves them. We as Cursillistas can do that using the method and the witness of our own conversion. If when it is possible, they are open to living the Cursillo, this time of preparation will stand us in good stead. As Jesus said, 'the harvest is ripe, but the labourers are few'.

Let us pray for hearts that are open to those who are searching, the strength of will to answer God's call and the wisdom to know how best to answer that call.

Witness

Daily we touch Him

From Dave Kornder, Edmonton Cursillo Movement

Ultreya Witness Talk

“Wherever two or more are gathered in my name, I am present among you” Jesus spoke these words to His disciples to ensure that they understood the value of small communities of fellow believers.

After completing my Cursillo weekend in 1996 in Grande Prairie, Alberta I immediately began grouping with four other men who were present on the weekend. What a great experience! We met every Tuesday morning at the school where I worked and talked of our piety, study and action. It was a rich experience in that I had never had a friendship group that met so regularly to reflect on my faith growth and worship practices. I had attended many retreats and faith formation events, but they were fleeting, and I did not have the sense of continuity with the same friends every week.

Socrates said, “The unexamined life isn’t worth living” I have taken a different approach that the “Unlived life isn’t worth examining!” During my working life as a principal, and even now in my retirement, I have been guilty of being too busy, too pre-occupied, taking on too many tasks. I think there is a tension in living between “doing” and just “being”. We can get caught up in the busy nature of our jobs and family and be in constant “DO” mode. Do, do, do. What I have found lacking often in my life is to slow down, relax and just “BE”. Frank Sinatra had it right when he proposed a balance “Do, be, do, be do!” What the Saturday morning

grouping has added to my faith life is the ability to reflect on the actions, events and thoughts of the previous week and to assess where I have really been in my relationship with Jesus. Have I placed Jesus at the center of my week? Have I forgotten Jesus in the busy hustle of the days? Have my actions been worthy of the name Christian? Have I devoted time to be in prayer and conversation with my friend Jesus through the week? If I did not stop to look back weekly and reflect on my faith life, the weeks would blur together, and I would lose the way. I would not make progress in my goal of becoming more like Jesus. This reminds me of my years of playing football for the Edmonton Huskies. After every Sunday game, the Monday practice session would end with a review of the game film. Coaches would talk, players would listen! Every play was analyzed and commented on. Often, if the play ended badly, there would be critique or constructive criticism about how this could have been done better. Good plays were celebrated also, and these were the only times when it was permitted for teammates to make a positive comment. This reflecting on the past week (or game) is an effective way to improve in my striving to be a better Christian.

Alas! After two years of this grouping in Grande Prairie, our family moved from GP to Sherwood Park and I was unsure what the future might hold for my grouping.

One of the first things I did as we settled into the faith community of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was to ask around to see if anyone knew about Cursillo and whether or

not there were any groupings that I might join. I went for lunch with a great gentleman named Ron Stephens who invited me to join his Saturday morning grouping that met at OLPH Church. Twenty-one years later, I still group on Saturday morning at OLPH Church! There has been a change in the makeup of the group as a few members have gone on to their Fifth Day (Red Geoff and Henri Helmers), some have moved away and some have left the group in search of other ways to fulfill their need for Christian community. Other new Cursillistas have joined and we continue to have about 4 to 6 men who join in the fellowship every Saturday.

In reflecting on the value of grouping and how it has brought me closer to Jesus Christ, I have several things that I think I have learned.

The friends in my grouping are true, deep friends. I can talk with any of them about how I am struggling or succeeding in my efforts to be a better follower of Jesus. We all share the same goal: to make our lives linked more closely to the ways of Jesus. So, it seems very natural and comfortable to be able to relay stories of my journey to them and them to me. I liken this to members of a football team who have a common goal of playing high quality football. They talk to each other, coach each other, compliment and critique each other so that they can all be better together. We support each other in the week to week challenges of living a Christian life.

Because there is continuity, we have grown to understand each other very well and to be able to ask each other about our progress, to listen to the progress (or lack of it) as we share details of our family life, faith life, work life and social life.

The Saturday morning grouping has kept me honest and accountable for my actions of the

week. Often, I will get to the group and barely remember what the events and actions of the week were. By slowing down and taking the time to think back on the days and experiences I am better able to see where I have walked with Jesus and where I may have forgotten all about Him.

Many times, I will arrive at group and have little preconceived idea of what I might share about my journey of the past week. Often, it is through comments that a friend in the group has made, that I realize the stirrings in my own heart of God prompting me to reflect on a particular idea.

It is great to reflect back on my actions of the past week and to realize how I have followed or failed to follow Jesus. But, in a way, this is like trying to drive a car by looking only in your rear-view mirror! One of the elements that I have certainly learned as a teacher is that planning is important! There is an adage among teachers that says, "If I fail to plan, I plan to fail." One of the elements of the grouping is to look at Plans for the Future. Can I take a look into the week ahead and realize that I need to plan to bring the love of God and the friendship of Jesus to others? Where will the opportunities be for me to do that? Can I pray to God for strength and grace to help me with situations this coming week that I am worried or fearful about? I recently worked as the Assistant Returning Officer for Elections Canada in Sherwood Park. Even though this is very secular work, I look into each day to ask God to grant me peace and patience in dealing with stressful situations with electors and co-workers. I have shared with my group that I am planning to meet awkward and challenging moments with the love and service attitude of Jesus. I seek to live up to that wonderful last line in the Archdiocesan Stewardship Prayer "Help me to be a gift to others in your name!" By voicing this to my friends in group, I take a risk. I may have to admit to

them next week that I failed in my efforts and lost my temper or didn't handle a situation well. But these are my friends!

They support me, encourage me, share ideas with me that may help me do better next time. The honesty with my friends helps me to reflect more genuinely on the areas of my life where I can use God's guidance more. I also appreciate that the thoughts that I share in group are respected in confidence. I trust my friends to respect and honour my sharing and not to have it become gossip outside of the group. This does take a solid commitment to each other and time to develop that level of trust.

I have to admit that when I first started grouping, the sharing around the circle seemed to be a little too much like a shopping list or a laundry list. Simply listing off the number of rosaries prayed, or the number of extra masses attended, or the titles of books read did not seem like a way to share a faith journey with others. Since a change was made in the format of the Order of Group Reunion, it appears to me now that it is more important to share HOW any of these elements of piety, study or action have influenced me or helped me to grow closer to Jesus. What changes is God trying to work in me through any of these activities? Have I allowed God to begin to chip away at my hardness of heart in any way?

The topic we always share on that is the most powerful for me is the Moment Closest to Christ. It is humbling to me to think that God is touching the hearts of every one of us in such varied and sometimes simple ways. Often these sharings are about "mountaintop experiences" - times of great joy. Being with grandchildren, having an experience of God in nature, etc. However, my friend Denis has also helped me to see that sometimes our moment closest can be in some dark or challenging experiences

because Jesus, too, knew heartbreak, disappointment and betrayal. Perhaps our unity in Christ brings us in touch with pain and suffering sometimes. These moments are not to be feared or shunned but embraced as a moment to understand Jesus a bit deeper and our oneness with Him.

These moments closest to Christ are so diverse for each of us. It reminds me of the poem "**The Blind Men and the Elephant**".

It was six men of Indostan, to learning
much inclined,
who went to see the elephant (Though all of
them were blind),
that each by observation, might satisfy his
mind.

The first approached the elephant, and,
happening to fall,
against his broad and sturdy side, at once
began to bawl:
'God bless me! but the elephant, is nothing
but a wall!'

The second feeling of the tusk, cried: 'Ho!
what have we here,
so very round and smooth and sharp? To
me tis mighty clear,
this wonder of an elephant, is very like a
spear!'

The third approached the animal, and,
happening to take,
the squirming trunk within his hands, 'I
see,' quoth he,
the elephant is very like a snake!'

The fourth reached out his eager hand, and
felt about the knee:
'What most this wondrous beast is like, is
mighty plain,' quoth he;
'Tis clear enough the elephant is very like a
tree.'

The fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,

Said; 'E'en the blindest man
 can tell what this resembles most; Deny the
 fact who can,
 This marvel of an elephant, is very like a
 fan!

The sixth no sooner had begun, about the
 beast to grope,
 than, seizing on the swinging tail, that fell
 within his scope,
 'I see,' quoth he, 'the elephant is very like a
 rope!'

And so these men of Indostan, disputed
 loud and long,
 each in his own opinion, exceeding stiff and
 strong,
 Though each was partly in the right, and all
 were in the wrong!

So, oft in theologic wars, the disputants, I
 ween,
 tread on in utter ignorance, of what each
 other mean,
 and prate about the elephant, not one of
 them has seen!

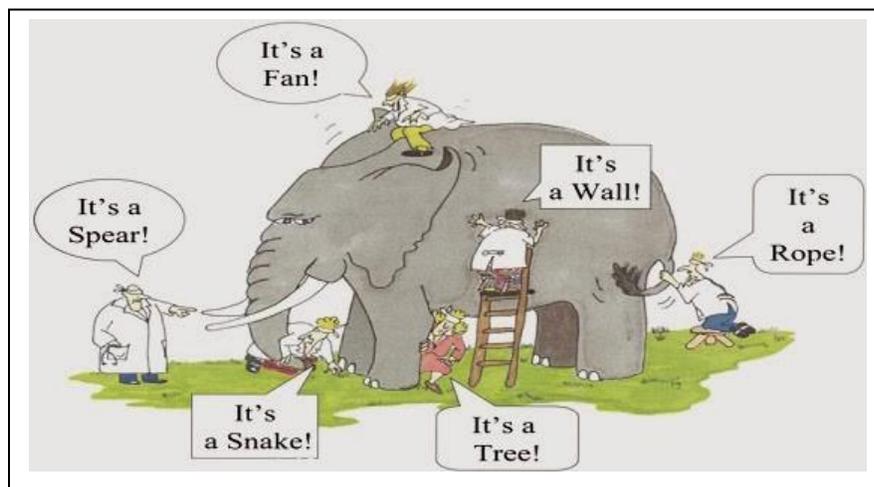
[John Godfrey Saxe](#)

We all are pilgrims on this journey through
 life, seeking meaning in our lives and
 attempting to understand our relationship to
 our God. In many ways we are like the blind

men who each have their limited
 understanding of God. Jesus has given us the
 gift of community as a means to share and
 deepen our own limited understanding. It is
 in my listening to other friends tell me about
 their discovery of God, their walk with Jesus,
 that I deepen my knowledge of this beautiful
 mystery. Even if I immediately do not agree
 or understand their story, it is a rich part of
 the "whole picture" that I seek to see with
 greater clarity. I personally need to stop
 judgemental thinking that I have the "right"
 view or the only view of God. If each of the
 blind men were open, to honestly accepting
 the impressions of the other, they would
 each have a fuller understanding of the
 elephant.

I am very grateful for the gift of the
 friendships that exist in our grouping! I
 thank God that we have developed the trust
 and openness to share our journeys, painful
 as well as joyful. If we look to the Trinity, we
 see that God exists in relationship - that
 perfect unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 May we all continue to be blessed in our
 groupings with relationships that strengthen
 and support our faith in God and our love of
 Jesus!

De Colores





Q. Does CCCC have an official outline for giving the Ultreya rollo?

A. CCCC does not have an 'official' outline for giving the Ultreya rollo and it should not be necessary. One learns how to give an appropriate Ultreya rollo by listening to appropriate rollos at the Ultreya. It is called a rollo and not a talk because it is a sharing of a lived experience in the life of the rollista. Like the rollos at the Cursillo itself, the rollista witnesses to how he or she is living their fourth day, the word 'talk' or 'presentation' simply does not adequately describe the style and manner of what is said. There is no word in English that accurately translates the Spanish word 'rollo' so like Ultreya and De Colores, the original word has been retained.

In discussion with the Mallorcan leaders we have learned that what is shared in an Ultreya rollo is based on the tripod of Friendship, The Person and Christ. It can be a witness to how you have offered or lived friendship, the kind of friendship that is not based on feelings but as an attitude; how you as a person have lived Christianity in Action or how the Group is living Christianity in Action and of course your life with Christ. A person can say whatever is in his or her heart, how God has or is working in their life. It doesn't have to be 'an event' it can be just your living. It should be current. It is not a relating of your life story but if it is a new Cursillista it might be something about how their life was before Cursillo and what it is now. It shouldn't be

about the action you do in some other apostolate. The rollo is supposed to be on something that the listeners can relate to, something that flows from being a Cursillista. It can of course be some apostolic action which happened as a result of being involved in say the food bank or St Vincent de Paul but the focus should be how the apostolic action was a result of their life as a Cursillista, i.e. do not dwell on the activities at the other apostolate. The listeners must be able to relate to what is being said so if the focus is on some group or activity that the listeners do not belong to, relating becomes more difficult. The rollista is not recruiting for their favourite thing, the rollista is sharing how living his life as a Christian using the Cursillo method, helps him live his life with Christ in all his or her environments.

As we have tried to emphasize, the plan section of the Group Reunion is where apostolic success or failure is born. i.e. Fail to plan, plan to fail. If we are faithful in making a plan to guide our action, there will always be something to share, whether it be a success or not. It can be a moment when one became aware of Christ's presence but as with everything in Cursillo it should be part of normal life, not some grand event or mystical experience.

In every Fully Alive we try to include an Ultreya Rollo under the heading Witness. Some of course are more appropriate than others but if we receive something for inclusion that is really not appropriate, we wouldn't include it in FA. The Ultreya rollos we do include are examples of appropriate Ultreya rollos.

In the past we have included an Ultreya rollo that we heard given at the Mallorca Ultreya and which we felt was a wonderful example. It includes all the elements of what the Ultreya rollo should have. The man giving it

shared his action in the apostolate that he does as a Cursillista. The interesting point was that it included his failure, his sorrow when God showed him how he had not acted as Jesus would have done, how his attitude changed followed by a change in his actions. Of course, this man was a very experienced Cursillista.

I gave the rollo at the Ultreya in Mallorca once and I shared on how, as a long time Cursillista, I had been totally inspired by my attendance at the I Conversations of Cala Figuera, how aware I had been of God's presence throughout the whole 4 days. It could have been a lonely experience but for the Mallorcan Cursillistas who demonstrated to me what friendship really is, what it means to honour and respect the Person standing in front of you, as they always do; in a nutshell, what it really means to live the Cursillo method. This too they found to be an acceptable Ultreya rollo. We heard a very experienced Mallorcan Cursillista share at Ultreya how sometimes she becomes anxious or worried, kids etc. and how this demonstrates to her a lack of faith which then draws her into prayer and reliance on the goodness of God. Hope is not hope if its results are seen. In all these different types of Ultreya rollos, there are things that others can relate to and this supports the idea that we learn from each other how to live as a Cursillista. Eduardo intended that the purpose of the whole Ultreya, the Grouping and the rollo, was to help each one learn how to be better, without wishing to be the best. In listening to the rollos we understand how even small things, those actions that we can all do, can have wonderful results. As Mother Theresa said: "we do not have to do big things, but we need to do small things with much love."

In Mallorca they frequently ask a very new Cursillista to be the Ultreya leader for that particular Ultreya. This is part of drawing

the new Cursillistas into the community, it gives them a sense of belonging.

Rather than an outline it would be better for the rollista to understand the purpose. Here is what Miguel Sureda said at the Halifax Cursillo of Cursillos on the communal section of the Ultreya, the Ultreya rollo.

a) A Reunion of the whole community with a layperson talking about their recent experience

It is the time when someone speaks about their personal experience. If the speaker is new, he or she must be advised that the rollo should be about his or her experiences. This means that the speaker should speak on how he or she lives or tries to live out their faith, sharing this aloud.

The rollo should present how he or she lives out his or her life, how he or she would like to live it; or his or her sorrow for not doing so. The rollo may mark a watershed before and after the Cursillo, though not necessarily. This can be a big problem. There is no need to relate the whole of one's life since he/she was a child, but the major facts or convictions that lead the rollista's life.

It's better that the speaker doesn't read the talk. If this is done, most of the spontaneity and 'life' are usually lost. Neither should it be an "impromptu" talk.

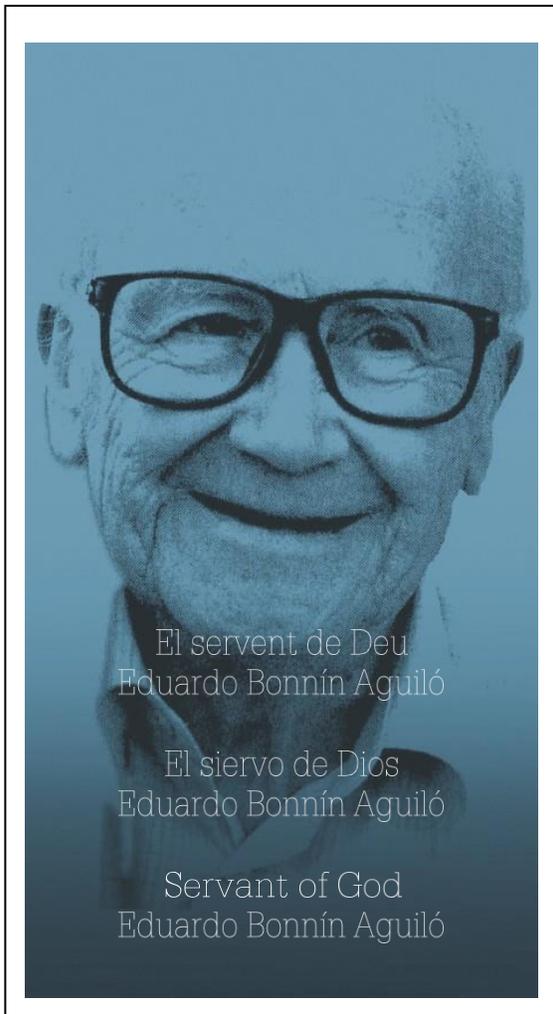
Rather than an outline, an experienced Cursillista could offer to assist the new rollista.

Each person has their own story to tell and it should stop precisely there; at what is mine only to share and tell. Other's possible shortcomings or actions have no place in **our** witness. As was found recently in a meditation in Word Among us: "Your identity comes from who God says you are, not from what other people might say or think." Or in the words of Pope Francis who once said: "Jesus never strikes. Jesus

cleanses with tenderness, mercy, love.” These are relatable values and attitudes that we can see and learn in another’s sharing. As this is normally a work of inspiration, we rely on the Holy Spirit to direct our thoughts

and to speak through us and to tell our story. And for those times when we are fortunate enough to have a Spiritual Advisor present at the Ultreya, the message is brought into the light of the Gospel.

The following prayer is the officially approved prayer to be said when seeking the intercession of Eduardo. The process for his beatification is continuing and all Cursillistas are encouraged to pray for this and to seek Eduardo's intercession.



Oh God, the dispenser of
all graces and charisms

You granted your servant
EDUARDO BONNIN AGUILO
the grace of dedicating his whole life,
with humility and generosity,
to the work of the
CURSILLOS IN CHRISTIANITY MOVEMENT.
He travelled the five continents
proclaiming that
God in Christ loves us.

Grant us through his intercession
the favour that we now implore Thee.
(Name the favour being requested)

Also grant us
the grace of his beatification for your
glory and the good of your Church that
shines out through the lives of its saints.

We beg this of You in the name
of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.
(At the end we pray The Lord's Prayer)

FROM EDUARDO

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

FOUNDATIONAL CHARISM OF THE CURSILLOS IN CHRISTIANITY

What is a charism - There are different charisms - The specific charism of the Cursillos in Christianity - What the charism accomplishes in the Church - In the world today - In the present time - Assuming the grace of God.

A personalized faith and the disposition of a few resources:

- Concrete (specific)
- Dynamic
- Continuous

A collective faith and the offer to express it in a way that is:

- Convinced
- Decisive
- Constant

The founding charism of the Cursillos in Christianity:

1. What is the charism, what does it consist of?
2. Elements that make up the charism
3. Purpose
4. Particular characteristics that express the charism
5. The way to live, to communicate, and to proclaim the charism
6. In the charism's spiritual dimension: prayer
7. In the charism's practical dimension: mentality, method, and style

1. WHAT THE CHARISM IS, WHAT COMPRISES IT

The charism is a gift that God gives for the good of the community. A gift that the Holy Spirit gives to the Church for the good of man and of humanity, which receives its authenticity when approved by the Hierarchy. It consists of four elements:
a gift from God,

to one or few specific persons, for men, the community, the Church, humanity, recognized by the Hierarchy.

Quadruple reference:

the Holy Spirit,
the specific persons,
for the good of the Church, the community, humanity,
the recognition of the Hierarchy.

2. ELEMENTS THAT COMPRISE THE CHARISM

A message: God loves you.

A vision: true, new, dynamic; more than loving God: God loves you.

One approach: basic, total, direct to the root of the Christian: life of Grace.

An awareness: of reality, study of the environment; time and space.

A proposal: concrete (specific), attractive, and possible.

One answer: convinced, clear, and joyful.

A proclamation: aimed at awakening in others the newly discovered proofs.

It addresses the individual, the person, by achieving the convergence of conviction, decision, and perseverance. It makes you see: indicating, outlining, and refining the indispensable, not to extract decisions, but to promote the maturation of convictions.

3. PURPOSE OF THE CHARISM

The goal of the Charism is that the good news that God loves us will reach as many persons as possible, that no one lives his life without finding out that God loves him.

4. DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS THAT EXPRESS THE CHARISM

The focus of one's thinking is the faraway, faraway because they are not informed,

misinformed, or uninformed.

They meet for a short period (three days) in an isolated place so as to focus their attention and sharpen their intention.

They will be given the essential fundamentals of Christianity, in a practical tangible way, condensed, concise, based on power-ideas, and in a way:

- simple: alive, testimonial, immediate.
- attractive: because it responds to their needs.
- available: to everyone, for everyone, if the leaders go first it is just in order to speed up the process.
- verifiable in its reality. The self-discovery of a great personal treasure, the hidden pearl; the spring of a powerful energy; the living water of which Christ speaks to the Samaritan woman.

5. METHOD TO LIVE, COMMUNICATE, AND PROCLAIM IT (THE CHARISM)

So that the encounter with oneself, with Christ, and with the brothers is transformed into friendship with oneself, friendship with Christ, and friendship with the others.

Communicated by contagion. Proclaimed with one's testimony.

6. IN ONE'S SPIRITUAL DIMENSION: PRAYER

Speak about God, speak with God, let God speak.

7. IN THE CHARISM'S PRACTICAL DIMENSION: MENTALITY, METHOD, AND STYLE

In its practical dimension, the charism is the attitude of thought that gives life to ideas and meaning to the person.

The method that supposes a minimum of organization: a system for achieving the purpose: Precursillo, Cursillo, Postcursillo,

and School of Leaders.

Group Reunion: life as a reality shared in friendship.

Ultreya: a means that makes the best of each one reach the greatest number of persons possible.

Style: Is the way it is lived. Is the grace of God packed into every gesture, detail, expression of what is lived with spontaneity, joy, and enthusiasm.

The Foundational Charism of the Cursillos in Christianity is an attitude that is characterized:

By its radical optimism.

By its joy.

By its audacity and its staying power.

By a person's constant decision that flows from his conviction.

By the values one values that are always valuable.

Because one knows and believes — something that produces a progressive amazement —, that everything Christian is sustained, motivated, and evangelically oriented by the logic of Christ, by the Christological that is summarized and synthesized in one's living faith in the Resurrection of Christ, the essential cause of our faith.

PROLOGUE

Not because of any desire to be in the limelight, but to do a service to the truth and clarify concepts and facts, we have thought it appropriate to make available to people who are interested in the Cursillos in Christianity Movement the facts of what happened at the beginning, and to explain that which, always because of the grace of God, has been achieved and can be achieved, if one tries to be faithful to the intention for which they were thought up prayed for, reflected on, structured, and for which we are very grateful.

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