

Fully Alive



THE NATIONAL RESOURCE DOCUMENT OF THE CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CURSILLOS

HAPPY EASTER



"Jesus said: I am the resurrection. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live" - John 11:25

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OFFICERS' CORNER

Muriel Brideau, CCCC Treasurer

Good day friends and Cursillistas,

As I write this, we are well into Lent, and I can only hope and pray that you are making the most of this time towards the preparation for Easter. I do appreciate this season in our church year which offers me a time to reflect and attempt to make healthier and more life-giving choices. The word that has come up a lot for me is "self-restraint" - most likely because it is what I require and need to practice more regularly and consistently. God is offering freedom from; so that I may better enjoy freedom to... To do what? Freedom to be more present and aware, to be of service, to indeed be more fully alive - what we are all called to and that I cannot be if I am slave to my devices, to a T.V. program(s), videos, games, name your distraction or poison. Lent has never been a sad time for me but rather an opportunity for great possibilities and certainly if I do not fight that which needs the most transformation within myself. A work in progress to be sure. It is similar to the joy of spring with the days that are lengthening, and we know the flowering of change is nearer each day. The seed planted will be transformed to a plant and continue onto its new life and growth and that too is what I seek as I nourish my soil during lent. I offer continued prayers for all of you during this Lenten season so that we may all rise just a little more for Easter. Our cover on this issue depicts the reality of the culmination of our journey through Lent and the Passion. The empty tomb and cross assure us that he is risen, he is alive, he walks with us.

I truly hope that you are all aware by now of our National School of Leaders that occurs monthly. (Next one is April 2nd with our Mallorcan friend Juan Aumatell) We have to admit that Covid has not been all bad since it

has given us occasion to gather all across Canada via Zoom. Firstly, you must know that all Cursillistas are invited and welcomed to attend, and always feel free to do so. We hope this information is reaching all our Canadian Cursillistas, via their lay directors and representatives. And if you happen to have missed some or all, not to worry, you can jump back in at any time. No one is keeping score and the welcome mat is always out. We have come together in friendship to deepen our understanding of the Cursillo charism, and we are presently covering the Ten Topics of the First Conversations of Cala Figuera. It may be my second or third reading of this valuable resource but there is always something to be gleaned as we hear and listen one another into deeper understanding of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as passed on through our most dedicated and convicted founder, Eduardo Bonnín. Do contact the resource center cccresource2@gmail.com if you want to be included in the emails or for your questions pertaining to the Cursillo Movement.

Your Officers Group meets monthly as well via Zoom where the friendships are solidified and deepened as we continue our study of the charism and share our moments most aware prior to getting down to the work. We are looking towards meeting in person in the near future to get busy and to also invite all of you to be that Christian community for one another and to delve into Cursillo as a way of life. For the participants in your Officers group, it is our primary apostolate; not because it is a must (even though it is preferable) but mostly we know what value it gives to our action, our choices and how to be. We can come to know more about this topic of "Criterion" at the next NSOL. For me it is not so much knowing by heart as it is wanting to know and to love whole-heartedly.

We want to give thanks to a few people who have stepped into positions that were needed as well as express our gratitude to Father Bud Gallant, for all his previous participation and spiritual input for our group. We would like to wish him well and be assured of our continued prayers in his multiple commitments in his lovely home province of PEI. Archbishop Pettipas of the Archdiocese of Grouard McLennan, has graciously agreed to act as Spiritual Advisor to the CCCC. Archbishop Pettipas attends almost every session of the NSOL, for which are most grateful. Reino Pitkanen has accepted to be the temporary representative for Atlantic Canada in order that we may keep the lines of communication open with all our most easterly Cursillistas. Two of our group were invited to give presentations to two diocesan movements and an NACG workshop. Allan Forsberg, our Western Region Officer spoke via Zoom to the Ottawa secretariat and also, participated at the bi-annual meeting of the CCCB and Lay Movements and Lay Associations. A presentation from this event,

given by Sister Nuala Kenney, was published in the previous edition of Fully Alive. Sheelagh was asked to do a presentation to the Oakland, California School of Leaders, also via Zoom, speaking of her personal knowledge of Eduardo Bonnin and a brief history of the movement.

Well friends, with the three encounters, group reunion, ultreyas, SOL, the essence and mentality of Cursillo, this movement has everything we need to deepen our faith and say yes to Jesus who says, "Come follow me". I am attempting to use that as my North Star and to be sure, frequently falling short this lent but perseverance and conviction do remain key and ongoing commitment to it with the help of good friends and I will forever keep it on my 'to do' list. Continued prayers for all of you as you attempt to follow your North Star and that which you value and consider essential and a top priority.

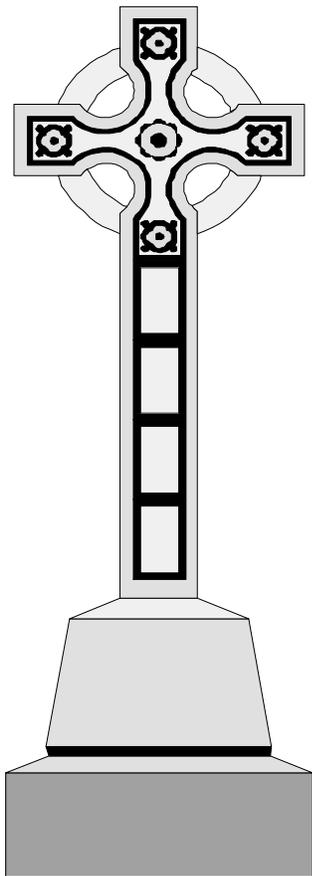
Ultreya!!

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

Rollo given by Father Ed Ehrer C.Ss.R., at the Grande Prairie Ultreya

I'd like to begin with a scriptural passage taken from the gospel of Luke:

When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

This passage should sound familiar – it was the gospel for the past Sunday and Fr. Leo preached quite eloquently about this very significant event in the life of Christ. Here our Lord is at the beginning of his earthly ministry; so, he reads this passage from Isaiah to announce to the world what his mission is all about – bringing the good news to the poor, to announce liberty to captives. Really and truly, this is the mission statement of Jesus.

This mission statement also resonated in the heart of a young Neapolitan nobleman by the name of Alphonso di Liguori back in 1732. So much so, that Alphonsus embraced this mission of Christ as his own and set about building a community of men who would share in this mission. That community would eventually become the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, otherwise known as the Redemptorists. Years later, this passage has also come to resonate in my own heart, because it expresses my own approach to mission – To see the gospel as Good News and to make it known to others.

As with any vocation story, mine has its share of ups and downs. Thankfully, there are more ups than downs, although the downs can also be instructive. Since ordination, most of my Redemptorist life has been spent in parish work, which I love. But a couple of years ago, I was asked to be the director of novices for the North American Redemptorists. Novitiate is a yearlong retreat for young men aspiring to become a Redemptorist; at the end of the year, they would profess religious vows, typical of members of religious orders. The

new appointment meant a move to the town of Lima, Ohio.

Let me tell you something about Lima, Ohio - it's kind of like Grande Prairie, Alberta, except with corn! It's surrounded by farmland, has a college, and many people work in the oil and gas industry. It even has a Tim Horton's. But that's where the similarities end - it is quintessentially an American town and the 2020 US election loomed large on the horizon while I was there.

Of course, setting up a new program had its share of challenges; in particular, very few resources for speakers or conferences. But we managed to keep things interesting for the novices and I think we did a good job - the five novices under our care all professed vows at the end of the year. But the year came at a personal cost for me. Even though it was a Redemptorist community, it was not a community that I knew. The parish and Redemptorist confreres were friendly but there was no emotional support, and I felt a bit isolated and alone.

And then Covid hit! Beginning the pandemic in the US was a surreal

experience, to say the least. Borders closed, lockdowns were put in place, Masses shifted to live streaming and parish life ground to a halt. At first, we naively thought, "Well, novitiate is an in-house thing anyway," and in many ways the program ran as planned, although we were frequently scrambling to adapt (e.g., our year-end retreat turned to an on-line version at the last minute).

As we settled into the lockdown, the isolation became more intense, and I was aware that depression was creeping into my life. I had struggled with depression in the past, and during this year, there were times I was feeling quite low. The only advice I seemed to get from my superiors was, "Hang in there."

Community

My lifeline proved to be my computer and the link to my support-system back in Canada. Now, full disclosure: Before all this, I was never a big fan of FaceTime or Zoom - I always felt self-conscious and awkward. And even today I still feel self-conscious and awkward. So I shyly got connected with family and friends electronically and found my lifeline. And so, on a regular basis, I'd sit down



with them, usually with a cup of coffee in my hand, and I'd join them for breakfast or brunch.

Community is such an important part of our faith, something I learned through the Cursillo Movement. Cursillo certainly expanded my sense of Church and community. At certain times, the faith community is there to strengthen me when I am in doubt or struggling; at other times, I am there to strengthen my brothers and sisters when they are struggling. It may be offering a word of encouragement. Or a question, "Do you want to talk?" Just by being present, we can help one another when we're dealing with something. You never know the impact you have on others. When the program ended in July of 2020, I packed up and returned to Toronto. I literally shed a tear as I crossed the border into Canada.

One-on-One

Back in Toronto, I started thinking about what's going to happen post-pandemic.

Everyone was having to readjust their priorities, whether in their workplace, or in their affiliation with various institutions. The Church took a major hit, for obvious reasons - as a faith community, we rely on

in-person gatherings. Yes, it's true we rolled with the punches, and as I mentioned before, Zoom and FaceTime were useful tools. But something that is

central to our faith life, the Sacraments, can't be done on-line. One Catholic media person used a word to describe where many parishes are today: *inertia* - the property of an object at rest to remain at rest without the addition of an external force. This is when the gears started turning in my mind, about what that external force might be. If making disciples is the role of the Church, what's the best way to do it?

Again, looking at my Cursillo experience, it was the power of one-on-one evangelization that came to mind. Going back to my first Cursillo weekend and the times I was on team, it was often the conversations during the breaks that "God moments" appeared. Although I've done back-up talks and been a spiritual director many times, my most joyful experience was working in the kitchen. Chopping vegetables, setting the table, doing dishes, all for the Kingdom of God! Often, it's in

informal encounters that we can bring the good news to others.

The group reunion is a perfect example of this. This is actually the model that I have in mind

to kick-start the parish to a more active one. Small Christian communities might offer a way back to a more vibrant community.



Discernment

Another recurrent theme in my life pops up regularly and that's discernment - trying to figure out where God is calling me. Early on, it was a real struggle. My prayer was usually, "O God, tell me what to do." But through others I learned a little something about understanding the will of God, and these insights have really helped me in the last couple of years.

The first is, God leads by attraction. God is so respectful of our freedom, that he allows us to find ways to use our gifts and talents for building the kingdom of God. I have often joked that God is truly Jewish because he answers a question with a question -

So to the question, "What do you want me to do?" God answers, "What do YOU want to do?"

The second thing that I learned is that discernment comes out of a dialogue - a dialogue with God, with my Redemptorist brothers, with friends and family, with the world. Again, it is a sign of God's respect for us that we engage in a conversation.

Many years ago, one of my Redemptorist confreres would often say, "Your pathway

is something you work out with God." God doesn't want unwilling servants; he doesn't want to drag us into mission kicking and screaming. God's call is really a question, "How will you use your gifts and talents to build up the kingdom of God?"

Another confrere, Fr. Remi Hebert, had a great insight on God's call. As a vocation director, he would often talk to young people about making important life choices, and the discussion inevitably turned to discerning God's will. He told them that it's not so much a matter of 'God's will,' as it is, 'will God?' As in, "Will God accompany me in this direction

in my life?" "Will God be my constant companion as I head down this road?" Again, it speaks of God's respect for our freedom. In whatever way we choose in our lives, we have to find ways to serve the Lord and others. We all receive a universal call

to build the kingdom of God. How we respond is something we must discover and discern with the help of God, and the occasional nudge for good measure.





Q. We are receiving comments from various places about the much smaller teams that the Step by Step Rectors manual recommends are to be used for Cursillos.

A. The Step-by-Step Rector's Guide gives a clear explanation of this question. There are several movements in Canada who have begun to use the Step by Step guide in its entirety, with great success. This includes adopting the practice of reducing the size of the teams. The ideal is to have one team leader for each table group and to eliminate the use of extra people providing music, acting as sacristan etc. The guide itself is self explanatory once the effort is made to study it with an open mind. The rationale for using smaller teams has been validated by those movements which have used it to present the Three Day Cursillo.

What is apparent and is universally confirmed, is that the Cursillo leaders have found that the new Cursillistas leave their Cursillo with a clearer grasp of the message of the rollos and a greater commitment to participating in the fourth day of group reunion and ultreya. The leaders express amazement at the fact that by following the Step by Step, there is more time for the corridor work which is essential to achieving the purpose of the Cursillo. The leaders and the new Cursillistas really get to know each other and in so doing, the new Cursillistas are eager to hear the message of the third day which is intended to turn the focus from the weekend to the world. The third day should

build to a crescendo, filling the Cursillistas with a desire to go back to their environments and to share there, what they have found. In the Total Security rollo they hear about group reunion and ultreya, and the message of these rollos presents the idea that their apostolic restlessness will not lead to a journey that they will need to take alone, there is a community of Cursillistas who will be there to support them, to help them persevere.

Too often we hear how exhausting a Cursillo can be. If this is true, it is little wonder that the important message of the third day is lost and, in many instances, the participants have already shifted into 'going home' mode.

The Cursillo is held so that the Cursillistas can make three important encounters: with self, Christ, and others. The first two encounters are understood, although perhaps not easy, but the third encounter, that with others, is very often misunderstood. The 'others' are not just the friends that are made at the Cursillo, they are mainly, or they may also be, the friends, as yet unknown, waiting to be found, in the environments from which we come. The Cursillo three days begins the process of becoming apostles for Christ, in the world, in those very environments, using the method of friendship. The purpose of the Cursillo itself, begins with self, but the culmination of that purpose, is to bring the Good News that God loves us, to all.

If the overloaded activity of the weekend has exhausted the Cursillistas, they will not understand the meaning of the encounter with others as fully as is intended. We, therefore, should not be surprised if they totally miss the message of the third day in its fullness, if they don't hear that group reunion and ultreya really do offer them *total security* in their fourth day. This results in disappointment among the veteran Cursillistas who do not see the new Cursillistas eager to begin a group reunion or be present at the ultreya, and even

greater disappointment in the new Cursillistas. Many do experience a zeal to actually become an apostle, but very often the so important message of the third day, is not heard. The purpose of the Cursillo is not to form leaders for the church, its purpose is to send the new Cursillistas as apostles into the world.

Most movements have traditionally held an actual group reunion as part of the Total Security rollo. Rather than forming a reunion within their table groups, the Step by Step explains that ideally, the groups should actually consist of those who live in the same area or share an environment, who live in close enough proximity to each other to enable them to actually continue that group reunion in their fourth day. If there are Cursillistas present for whom there is no other Cursillista from their area, then the leaders invite one or more Cursillistas from the ultreya that the new Cursillista will be attending, and they join the Cursillo to make group reunion with that person. The caution is that only as many as needed should be invited, no more than three, and absolutely only for the Total Security rollo, leaving immediately afterwards. This initiative and the much-simplified Cursillo, outlined in the Step by Step addresses the aforementioned problem.

Initially, it may seem daunting to have as few as one Rector and three team leaders on a Cursillo; how do you present 11 rollos with so few rollistas? The Rector and 2 team leaders give 3 rollos each and 1 team leader gives 2, or some combination of that. Those who have followed the Step by Step have not found it to be a problem, partly because the rollos are more succinct, more to the point. However, it must be emphasized that it is essential to have an active School of Leaders. The team leaders are selected from among those who attend the school and the ultreya and it is at the school that the Cursillo rollos are studied so anyone

selected to be a team member is already familiar with the rollo and is prepared.

As stated above, the normal makeup of a team is the rector and three team leaders. This changes of course if there a too few new Cursillistas, or more than usual. The ideal number for new Cursillistas making the Cursillo is between 20 and 24. All team members sit at tables, with the exception of the rector and the spiritual advisor. The ideal ratio is one team leader for every seven new Cursillistas. If there are fewer new Cursillistas, naturally there would be fewer tables, so the number of team leaders is reduced. It is vitally important to maintain the proper dynamic at the tables, not overpowering the new Cursillistas. A crucial point to realize is that the work at the tables must be done by the new Cursillistas, the team leader is there to quietly support, not to direct in any way. If the new Cursillistas do not give themselves to the process, taking ownership of the task at hand, they do not gain all the benefits that the Cursillo has to offer. At the beginning of the Cursillo, all are asked to give three things: enthusiasm, dedication, and a spirit of love. This is what the request refers to; what the Cursillistas will get from the Cursillo is in direct relation to the effort that they put in.

We should eliminate the idea that going as a Cursillo team member is a reward for Cursillistas, or an opportunity to boost the spirit. It is also inadvisable for team members to be closely associated with any of the new Cursillistas. The rationale for this is simply that the Cursillistas must be free to be themselves, to respond naturally, not having to be concerned that someone they know well may be observing their reactions, thus causing them to perhaps respond and react in a manner in which they think would be expected of them, rather than being free to be themselves; the encounter with self can be very profound and having an audience is not desired. By the same token, for a team member

to have a close family member or friend among the new Cursillistas may be distracting, constantly watching to ensure that the one in question is responding as they would wish. This detracts from the table group to which the team leader has been assigned.

Team members should be those who strive to live in Grace. A good rollista is willing to communicate through the rollos, their life, what they live, what it costs them when it is not lived and how it hurts them not to live it. This is done using anecdotes or by using the anecdotal stories in the Step by Step. It is also important to have an acceptable knowledge of how the Cursillo unfolds, what the purpose and the aim and of each activity really is.

Being a team member does not begin on Thursday night of the Cursillo, it should have started back in the pre-cursillo. The team member is willing to befriend as many new ones as possible in the pre-cursillo, and at the three days and to journey with them into the post-cursillo, the 4th Day. They are those who are convinced that Cursillo is the best way to continue to affirm that God in Christ loves us through friendship.

That being said, the number of Cursillo team members at the beginning of the Cursillo Movement in 1944 can be clearly seen, a rector

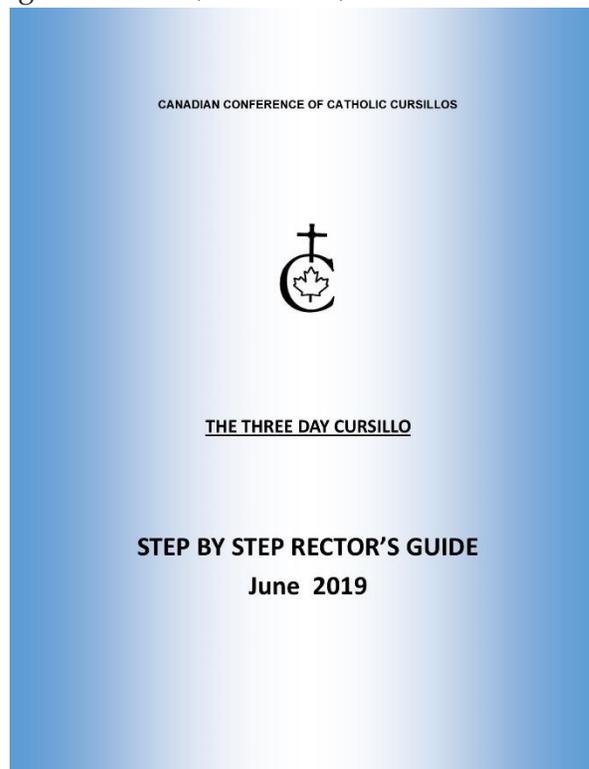
and 2 leaders for 14 candidates. Of course, this example, seen with common sense, may need to be adapted to our own reality. How prepared are the leaders to work in this way? However, it is the ideal towards which we strive. The success of the three-day Cursillo is closely tied to the School of Leaders and the ultreya.

One thing that can be done is to review the positions held by the team members. Over time, positions have been added, thus adding members; in a simplified Cursillo, the rollista/team leaders, are more than able to fulfill the necessary tasks.

So many Cursillo movements struggle because the focus of their movement is 'the weekend' which is only one of the three phases of the method, and in Eduardo's thinking, the least important. A Cursillo should not be held to attempt to rejuvenate a languishing movement, or to bring back Cursillistas who have dropped out of sight. The

whole purpose of planning and holding a Cursillo is to bring people from where they are, to where they could be; as it states in the front of our Pilgrims Guide, on that great pilgrimage back to the Father, bringing our brothers and sisters with us. And all this is done through friendship, working as if it all depends on us, and praying as if it all depends on God.

As stated at the beginning, serving on a Cursillo team "is not a reward", it is a service to Christ, and this should be done with humility, efficiency, and love.



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.

CENTRAL REGION

THUNDER BAY CURSILLO DIOCESE OF THUNDER BAY, ON

2021 was a very quiet year for Cursillo in Thunder Bay. We have had no Ultreyas, School of Leaders or Secretariat meetings, all due to Covid.

The Annual CCCC conference was again postponed also due to Covid.

Small group meetings are carrying on over Skype or Zoom.

A few Cursillistas are attending the CCCC School of Leaders and the NACG Ultreyas, both on Zoom.

Sadly, we have lost some very dedicated and active Cursillistas as they moved on to their 5th day. They will be deeply missed when Thunder Bay Cursillo resumes activities.

With the continuing mutations of the Covid virus it is difficult to predict when in person activities will resume and how many Cursillistas will be actively participating.

We leave the future in God's hands.

Reino Pitkanen, Lay Director

HAMILTON CURSILLO MOVEMENT HAMILTON DIOCESE, ON

These were trying times for our diocesan Cursillo movement, as they have been for all of us. Since March of 2020, we have had no in person meetings of any kind, until October of this year. When things went into stage 3 in Ontario, the Ultreya in Owen Sound began meeting in person every second Saturday. Until Oct we regularly had 50-60 people attend the weekly zoom Ultreya. Since then, we regularly have 35-40 attend and up to 50 every second week when the Owen Sound group is not meeting in person. All of our other Ultreyas remained meeting every week via zoom. We have had no weekends since 2019 and have a tentative weekend scheduled for May of 2022, depending

building bridges from coast to coast



solely on the permissions from the Health Unit and our Diocese, as well as people's confidence of being safe.

We have held our diocesan Ultreya/school of leaders weekly via zoom since March of 2020. We had plans to discontinue the zoom Ultreya and go back to in person Ultreyas in Nov. We had announced that the Ultreyas would reopen in Jan. Of course, the omicron variant has seen to it that we will continue the zoom Ultreyas for the unforeseeable time being.

There have been 16 deaths of Cursillistas from our diocese since 2020. We have held 5th Day services for all of the families who wished to have the service. They were recorded on zoom and shared with the families.

Peace of Christ,
Dan Brown, Lay Director

OTTAWA CURSILLO MOVEMENT ARCHDIOECSE OF OTTAWA, ON

The previous Lay Director of the Ottawa Cursillo Movement had to step down from her duties in mid September for health reason. She was a person of action wanting to reawaken the sleeping giant from its COVID nap. She had organized a beginning of the year Mass for her Secretariat and everyone in support positions.

An outdoor Paise and Worship bonfire at Waupoos Family Farm was planned with appropriate social distancing and mask wearing. It was cancelled as only three out of one hundred possible people had registered.

The planned Secretariat retreat/team building exercise was also cancelled due to insufficient attendees.

Thus, I began my term as her replacement.

A June Grand Ultreya was held via a video conferencing platform. Similarly in December one was held via Zoom and in person church participation (40 people) with appropriate COVID safety protocols. There was no social meet and greet at the termination of the worship space events.

A women's Team was in preparation prior to the March 2020 COVID lockdown. This team will host the next Women's Cursillo when it is considered safe to do so.

COVID safety protocols have resulted in our weekly Central Ultreyas and regional parish Ultreyas being suspended. Some, but not all parish Ultreyas have resumed either via Zoom video conferencing or in person gatherings with appropriate COVID safety protocols.

The winds of change are blowing through the Ottawa Cursillo Movement. The way Cursillo weekends, and Ultreyas were conducted in the past, may not be the way they would be implemented in the future. With the permanent closure of La Maison de la Providence, the Orleans Retreat House which our Movement has used for forty years, we are searching for a new venue. This change is now forcing us to re-evaluate our approach to future weekends.

Brian Sarsfield, Lay Director

ATLANTIC REGION

YARMOUTH CURSILLO MOVEMENT HALIFAX-YARMOUTH DIOCESE, NS

Our Cursillo Community consists of Yarmouth and area, Clare, Tusket, Wedgeport, Pubnico with occasionally Cursillistas coming from the Digby area.

The focus prior to Covid was to increase the number of people in Group Reunions and to start meeting regularly as a School of Leaders.

Cursillistas have been encouraged to attend the online national SOL sessions. Some members have attended and found them to be helpful.

No Ultreyas have been held during Covid. Some members have attended online Ultreyas from other areas. No weekends were held in 2021.

Our Cursillo movement stays in touch with email messages and some Group Reunions have met virtually and when health guidelines permit, in person. I only know of a few Group Reunions who are meeting.

Email was the only means of communication with the CCCC in 2021. The annual report is sent to the Archbishop's office in Halifax yearly.

We continue to pray for the Cursillo movement and its momentum to continue once the pandemic is under control.

Liz Richard, Lay Director

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND RECONNECTION GATHERING

Now that restrictions are being lifted in most places in Canada, the Officers are tentatively planning an in-person meeting to be held in Grande Prairie, Alberta. The date will be August 20th, 2022. The Officers will hold their meeting beginning on the Wednesday, 17th, prior to the gathering. Anyone who is planning to be in Grande Prairie at this time is welcome to meet with the Officers and the Grande Prairie Cursillistas.

The plans, as yet are tentative; however, we will have our Annual General Meeting, in person, for those who are present and via Zoom for those who will not be present. Saturday will be dedicated to a downsized version of our annual conference. We will celebrate mass together, listen to a meditation, two rollos, followed by group sharing and corridor work. The day will end with an Ultreya.

The facility at Grande Prairie has an audio visual room which will make it possible to Zoom the proceedings in a manner that will enable the participants to feel that they are part of the group.

Some billeting will be available for those who can travel to Grande Prairie and meals will be catered at cost.

We will keep you informed of further details as soon as we are reasonably certain that it will be wise to travel and gather.

Witness

Daily we touch Him

FULLY ALIVE

Rosemary MacNeil

Rosemary MacNeil is a Cursillista from Waterloo, Ontario. She is a member of the St. Anthony Daniel Ultreya in Kitchener, Ontario.

My name is Rosemary MacNeil. I made my Cursillo in 2012 and I sat at the friendship table of St. Therese of Lisieux.

In a book by Matthew Kelly, I came across a quote from a 2nd century saint and newly named Doctor of the Church, St. Irenaeus, who said,

"The glory of GOD is man, fully alive".

As I read this line over again, I personalized it by saying,

"The glory of God is ME, fully alive."

That statement really got me thinking and some questions began to surface, "What does it mean to be **fully alive**?" "What does being **fully alive** look like, feel like?" "When have I felt **fully alive**?"

I stayed with the last question knowing that it might answer the other two.

I started looking back over my life and was drawn to an event that occurred when I was about 15 years old. I belonged to my parish

youth group. One of the guys in the group had a friend who asked if he could host our weekly meeting at his house and speak to our group. His name was Kevin, and he was 16 years old. We accepted his invitation.

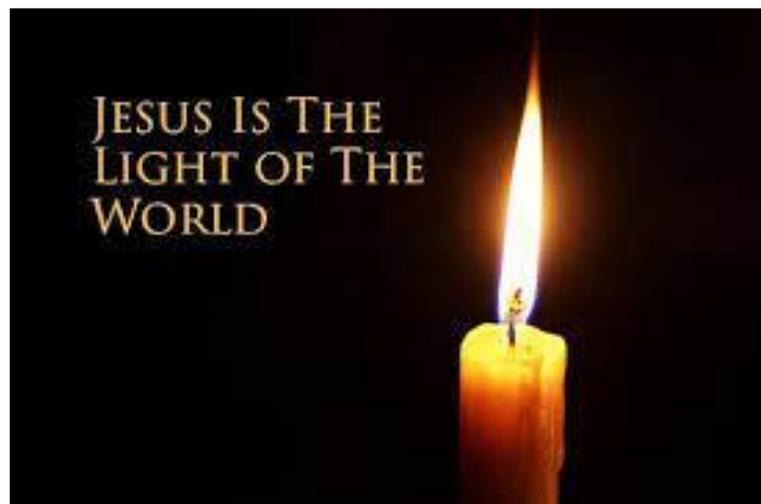
When we arrived at Kevin's house, we were welcomed into the basement rec room. Being teenagers, we sat down on the carpeted floor in a big circle. We **watched** as Kevin lit a candle and placed in it the **centre** of the group. He then began to share with us how the Lord had **touched** him and how something in him had **awakened**.

He had had an **encounter** with God and that "something that was awakened" was the **desire** to grow closer to God by following Jesus. Just like us, Kevin had gone to Catholic school and attended Mass with his

family on Sundays. But his **experience** had allowed everything that he had learned **about** God to **travel** from his **head** to his **heart**, and he wanted to **share** this good news.

That longing to grow closer to

God had been an undercurrent throughout my young life **but that night "something happened"**..... the Holy Spirit was most definitely in our midst.



By sharing his story, Kevin had **given voice** to the longing that was in all of us. We knew that God was calling us to Himself, and that we, too, could truly **experience** the Father's love. The flame of faith that was ignited by the Holy Spirit at our baptism had been fanned into an inferno by the **bold witness** of Kevin.

I don't recall the specifics of Kevin's story ... I don't think I was meant to remember..... after all, it's **his** story. I **do** know that our youth group **changed** that night. It became obvious to us why Kevin had lit the candle and put it in the centre of our circle.

It represented **Christ** and from then on, when we gathered, a lit candle burned brightly in the midst of us. Our group became Christ centred and we grew in our **faith** and in our **love** for God and one another. *****Being part of this faith-filled group of friends made me feel **fully alive**.

In his book entitled "Fully Human, Fully Alive", Fr. John Powell explains that "**to become fully human, fully alive, one must be ALIVE in Jesus Christ and allow the Spirit of God to GROW US UP in Himself.**" I just love that "To become fully human, fully alive, one must be **ALIVE in Jesus Christ** and allow the Spirit of God to **grow us up** in Himself."

Whenever I'm able to share faith with others I feel fully alive. As a teen and young adult, in addition to our parish youth group, I was involved in the COR Movement and again knew the joy of sharing faith with others.

I have three **very close** friends from those days with whom I continue to share faith in spite of us being spread out across the country. Over the years in my various places of employment the Lord has provided some special, faith-filled individuals who were

open to talking about their walk with the Lord. What a blessing!

Through **Cursillo** I have **especially** experienced being **fully alive in Jesus** because of the **community** of believers I find here. Through you and this movement **The Spirit of God continues to "grow me up in Himself"**. Being part of this group of friends who **desire to grow in faith and love** for God, and who are willing to **share** their journey, is such a gift.

When I hear one of you **witness** to how the Lord is moving in your life, I feel grateful and privileged to be trusted with your sacred story. I'm reminded of Kevin, and how the Holy Spirit **used him** to change so many lives when he shared with my youth group his **own** sacred story of what the Lord had done in his life.

Matthew Kelly talks about being **fully alive** in **all the God-given aspects** of our life physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. **Cursillo helps me to do this.**

When we were **able** to gather, being **physically** present at Ultreya was so important. The **sacrifice** involved in getting up early on a Saturday morning and heading to St. Anthony Daniel was quickly forgotten when I was met with smiles, hugs and caring that warmed me even more than the hot, delicious coffee.

All around the room you could see people connecting and sharing how their week had been. If someone was absent -- they were missed. Thanks to Sandy and Dan we've been blessed to still be able to gather via Zoom. **Sure, things are different** but it's just as important to be **physically** present in support of one another. And it's still true.... If someone is absent -- they are missed.

When I **listen attentively** to the witness, not only with my ears but with my heart, when I reflect on the message and perhaps share a response, I feel alive **emotionally**. On more than one occasion something that was shared was just what I needed to hear that day to lift my spirits.

The **Study** I undertake, which **as you know** can come in many forms stimulates my mind, touches my soul, and helps me to be **intellectually** and **spiritually alive**.

Piety, the orientation of my **WHOLE life towards God**, helps me to live my life in grace, which is fed by prayer and frequent reception of the Sacraments. When my relationship with God is **growing**, when I'm living the Christian life with **courage**, when I'm willing to **share the cause of my joy** with others -- I can't help but feel **fully alive**.

I **often pray** that my **life** here on earth will **give glory to God**.

Maybe **that's** why the quote from St. Irenaeus, touched me.

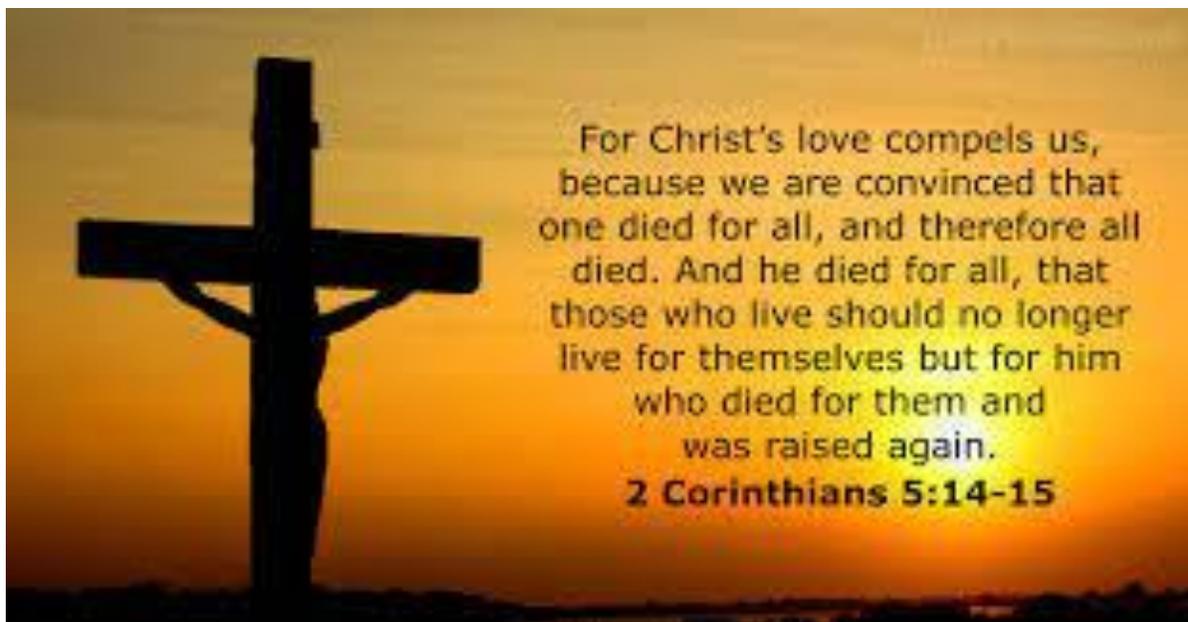
"The glory of God is me..... **fully alive**." **THAT'S** how I can give glory to God not just by existing but by being **fully alive**. I'll repeat what Fr. John Powell said that to become fully alive in this world, we need to - "**Be alive in Jesus Christ**, and **allow** the Spirit of God to **grow us up** in Himself."

For me, being **alive in Jesus** means, being on fire for love of Him, being united to Him in **all** areas of my life, and living my life in Grace.

Allowing the Spirit to **grow me up in Himself** means to be open and attentive to His promptings, to allow myself to be stretched (sometimes out of my comfort zone) in order to be **used** by Him.

What does being **fully alive** mean for you?
What makes you feel fully alive?
Are you able to tell us about a time when you especially **felt fully alive**?

De Colores.



FROM EDUARDO

FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY

1. FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY THE DIFFICULTY IN DEFINING IT

Because of its radical simplicity it is very difficult, if not impossible, to define and describe it, but perhaps it is much more difficult to update it because since Christ became a man, He demonstrated it explicitly with His life, He asserted it with His death and he endorsed it with His resurrection, and thus He made the message of God the Father quite clear to men - to all persons of all time - that He (the Father) loves us all in Christ. This is the reality that underlies all other realities.

2. IT IS MADE KNOWN THROUGH WITNESSING

Compared to what this reality means when it is believed and lived out by man, all other realities fade and become relative. And, if this reality is brought to become a power in our daily life, and is allowed to govern it, and becomes its guiding principle, all other realities will not merely pale in comparison, but will be given preference in the order of our priorities.

Then, the values that man values, valued, from an always new perspective - the Evangelical perspective - will become meaningful, and thus we will gradually get to acquire a view of life and of things which is always alive, which gives life a willingness, enthusiasm, vigour, and elation similar to those of a debutante.

This means that we learn to calculate and assess the successes and failures we find in our life, using a scale that never fluctuates;

that is, the scale that will be used on Judgment Day.

3. LIFE MUST BE LIVED

Life must be lived, one cannot stand still, you must either move towards or flee from it. Life flows and its flow takes place in a changing world. Everything changes, things, ideas, events, structures, men/women. Only FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY always has the full compelling force of what is simple. It is the good and fruitful seed that when it falls on good soil - the heart of man - and is accepted by him, it gives birth in his heart to what Christ in the Gospel calls the Kingdom of God, and He tells us that it is within each of us.

All the slips and mistakes of Christians from every age have always been caused by the stubborn determination of wanting to have the Kingdom of God somewhere other than within us, where it really is, - a stubborn determination that is often even mandated. When this has been the case, when we have tried in vain to find it and look for it elsewhere, the one who lost out has always been the man, for whom Christian things do not include the essential position of being human. This often leads to fanaticism, moralism, ritualism, closed/exclusive spirituality, or aggressive proselytism. All these empty searches for the Kingdom, besides causing confusion, tend to disconnect the plain and ordinary person from his or her environment. Fundamental Christianity can only be incarnated, manifested, made visible, expressed, transmitted, and expanded through the human being.

4. THE HUMAN PERSON IS THE VEHICLE THROUGH WHICH "FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY" IS EXPRESSED

It is quite apparent that what God wants of man is a personal response to His love, because He knows very well that the best way to reach the person is through other men or women.

When the man or woman who, conscious of their dignity as a redeemed person, chooses to place the Gospel at the heart of his/her life, trying to live it out with conviction, determination and perseverance, it can truly be said that they are witnessing to FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY, and thus they become a vehicle of its expression.

For FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY is more than a theory to study, analyze and thereby complicate one's life and that of others; it's a wonderful adventure to involve the whole of life and that which - putting in the appropriate means - will give to life the light and the necessary momentum, if accurate and consistent, enables us to live life in its fullness.

FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY, as has already been said - cannot be defined or described from the outside. If it is not lived, it cannot be experienced, and it can only be experienced and made known by witnessing to it. And yet, in this world we are not going to be able to grasp or comprehend it, and much less to perform it in its entirety; this is not possible for now. However, it is possible to begin to comprehend some aspects of it as one ventures into the adventure of truly living it.

5. IT IS THE DRIVING FORCE BY WHICH WE ATTAIN LIFE'S GOALS

FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY is not to

be diluted by peripheral, prefabricated and remotely controlled behaviours, but to support and promote life's goals from within oneself, with a firm conviction rooted in faith, but without losing the sense of what is real and true.

When FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY is lived without reservations, which is to say, as the vocation to which every Christian can aspire, by the grace of God, this vocation, despite the difficulties, is always rewarding, attractive and pleasant as a longed-for vocation.

FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY is the constant centre and the permanent foundation of what is genuinely Christian; of Christ.

It's wonderful that Christ has redeemed us, but perhaps the awe-inspiring event of redemption may eclipse a reality so intense that, at times, we may not be able to perceive it with the required intensity needed to wonder at it and, to at least try to appreciate and be thankful for it.

Christ, becoming incarnate in our lives, has provided us with the motivation, orientation, and goal to be able to live and make the most out of life.

By any measure, or in any situation, conflictive or not, Christ is always the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Christ not only resolves any situation that may occur, but also ensures that no matter how involved a situation may be, or how complicated as it may appear, something good and positive will invariably be the outcome.

At anytime, anywhere, the living Christ - in the person who lives in him by grace, as the Way provides direction, as the Truth renders clarification, and as Life is the source of dynamism, energy, vitality, and strength to

not give up until the fullest, most satisfactory and effective solution is reached, because what is Christian is always and, in any situation, the culmination of what is possible. This criterion requires and is indicative of the specific, accurate, and honest attitude we are to take when we ask God for the impossible, because only God can make all things possible.

6. THE VOCATION OF EVERY CHRISTIAN

When FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY is lived as a lively, conscious, and active lifestyle, it enhances the best qualities of the person, and assists in helping that person to make the one personal decision which marks that person as a Christian; i.e., to respond positively to the invitation of Christ when he asks: "Take up your cross and follow me." For anyone who wants to follow Christ, this means that one has to unflinchingly move towards all of the crucifying circumstances that one has or will have in his life. This means that irrespective of the circumstances, one has to be, first and foremost, a Christian.

When FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY is comprehended by generous people, they often feel called to make this FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY known, and it drives them to carry the cross for others, many of them believing that this act constitutes in itself FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY. This decision is undoubtedly good, provided one doesn't have the intention of leaving behind one's own cross. That would be dangerous, because sometimes one is taking more interest in "doing good", rather than trying to be good in spirit and in truth. This form of behaviour can even go so far - our frailty can reach such extremes, to do good is an attempt to exempt us from being good.

7. CARRYING THE CROSS OF OTHERS

Carrying the cross of others is a fact that requires that we do so with the absolute conviction that this is not repayable, that we should never expect to receive payment or reward for what we do.

Whenever someone expects to receive even an atom of gratitude for their efforts on behalf of others, their attitude has been distorted, and if what you expect is praise, and especially you already count upon it, you will sooner or later come to disappointment and bitterness, thereby fueling the number of those undergoing the fatigue of doing good, assuming they have saved themselves from falling into a painful and annoying resentment

8. THE UNAVOIDABLE ENCOUNTER WITH ONESELF

This is the reason why the most important of all, when trying to live the Christian adventure is the encounter with oneself, with the aim of accepting oneself as he/she is, understanding that we can get better, and to have the good taste of making our journey in the company of others.

Without this disposition, we run the risk that our contact with Christ may lead to an immaterial mysticism, where our behaviour counts more than our convictions.

We also run the risk that our contact with our brothers/sisters, especially with the neediest, will turn us into a 'busy body' - one who does not need anything except himself - and who sets out to fix the world: the church, the sacraments, priests, etc., etc.

9. THREE ESSENTIAL LINES OF ACTION

The Cursillo Movement, because it was designed precisely to live out and spread

FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY, is committed to also making known three main lines of action which, rather than interfering with the creativity and originality of those who have lived the experience of a Cursillo, work to bring about a sense of conformity wherever God has placed them and to acquire the knowledge to decide what is best for them to live a Christian life with joy and happiness, even when they are confronted with the offers coming to them from the well-stocked apostolic market.

10. TO BEGIN WITH ONESELF

These Essential Lines of Action include: To accept oneself as one is, to understand that one can be better, and to make the journey in the company of others.

To accept oneself as one is, as well as accepting the time and place that God has willed for you to be born and live, thanking God for your qualities, which, when taken into account, will help you to accept your limitations.

To understand that you can be better. This doesn't mean that you have to strive and fight however you can and to be stubborn to the bitter end to be the best. It means instead that you should always strive to improve yourself in all aspects of your possibilities and to trust fully that God can truly make possible what may appear to us to be impossible. Such an attitude is crucial, especially if we plan to go on the road to meet others, because we are cautioned by Scripture to "first take the beam out of your own eye".

To journey in the company of others. The Good News, when it is the motive and goal of one's life, is ever-new and ever-good, with a kindness and a novelty which tends to expand and be transmitted. But this expansion and transmission has to start with

oneself and from within and must be grounded in the full conviction and belief in FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY. If your actions are not the fruit of your conviction, how are others going to believe that you believe that God loves you? This means that one must always and above all orient one's efforts to being a true friend to those closest to us. Indeed, we should consider that the axiom, "love your neighbour as yourself", should now be more precisely interpreted for us as: "be a friend to the ones closest to you".

To worry about those in distant lands who suffer from all kinds of hardships, to pray for them, and even to send them our economic help, does not exempt you, nor anyone, of the joy that you can provide to those that are close to you, with your attitude of listening and understanding, and even with affection and tenderness if it's your wife or your husband or your children... friends, neighbours, everyone - Your new vision and spirit must somehow touch all of them.

Not through moral and paternalistic sermons, but simply by letting it filter naturally through your actions.

Being a Christian today, at a time when distances have been shortened so much, and yet people live so apart from each other, means facilitating environments that enable communication, first and whenever possible, with the ones closest to us, but later or maybe simultaneously, with those "Far-Away", those who do not know the Holy Spirit, because nobody has spoken to them about him, and who have been misinformed about Christ and his Church and who lack information about what moves, encourages and concerns us.

We need to bring FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY to the "Far-Away" because it may be, that when these individuals grasp

the meaning of it, they may grasp the message with much more interest and enthusiasm than us, so that those who are today a target, may tomorrow be our example and our incentive.

The life of the Christian is by essence communitarian and the community is the union of people. Someone once said, no doubt correctly, that the Church is God’s idea for people to live in community without losing their personality.

God wants to be firmly set in the conscience of all persons, to enlighten them with the

light and drive that are given by living out, namely the desire to live out, or the sense of sorrow for not living, FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY.

What matters is to gradually make what is possible, possible, first within the existing framework within which your life is located, and then where you can and want to get to; counting on the wealth that contact with Christ and with your brothers and sisters, will be providing for you.

Eduardo Bonnín
Francisco Forteza



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)

This prayer card is available through the Resource Centre for \$2 apiece.

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