

Cursillo *Notes*

www.natl-cursillo.org/bridgeport

Diocese of Bridgeport, CT • Winter 2009

Welcome to Cursillo: *Pray for these new Cursillistas*

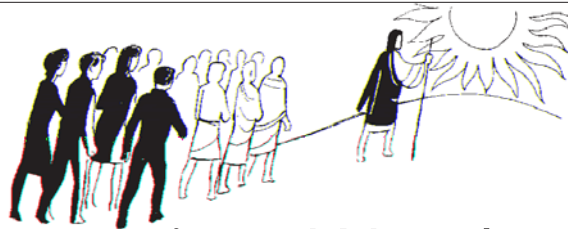
Please keep these new Cursillistas in your prayers and the team members who touched their faith lives in the name of Jesus Christ.

Women's 63rd Cursillo Weekend: May 15-18, 2008

Amy Barnard	St. Jude, Monroe
Susan Constantino	St. Joseph, Shelton
Ginny Gillen	St. James, Stratford
Jeanette Kovacs	St. Joseph, Shelton
Adele Massimin	St. Rita, Hamden
Christine Moore	St. Peter, Danbury
Michelle Murphy	St. James, Stratford
Marilyn Murray	St. Mary, Bethel
Maria Cristina Moccia	Sacred Heart, Stamford
Christine Nagy	St. James, Stratford
Coral Presti	St. Mary, Bethel
Patty Quirk	St. Joseph, Shelton
Kristen Siclari	St. Jude, Monroe
Rosemarie Sotomayor	Our Lady of Good Counsel, Bridgeport

Men's 60th Cursillo Weekend: Sept. 18-21, 2008

Larry Anderson	St. Mary, Bethel
Henry Beary	Our Lady of the Lakes, New Milford
Paul DiMarzio	St. Mary
Bob Duval	St. Matthew
Bob Nagy	St. James, Stratford
Mark Rasmussen	St. Jude, Monroe
Phil Ricci	St. Thomas the Apostle, Norwalk
Dave Robertson	St. Mark, Stratford
Steve Skarupa	St. Joseph, Shelton
Fr Bob Uzzillio	St. James, Stratford
Chris Vaum	Sacred Heart, Georgetown
Joe Warren	St. James, Stratford



Upcoming Weekends

Men's 61st Weekend:

March 26-29, 2009 • Orientation will take place on March 11, 2009.

Coordinator: Mike Bonomo • Spiritual Director: Fr. Paul Merry

Women's 64th Weekend:

April 23-26, 2009 (Easter is on April 12 next year.)

The orientation will be Wednesday, April 15 (the Wednesday of Holy week).

Coordinator: Jan Glennan • Spiritual Director: Fr. Nick Pavia

A note from the *The Directors*

Dear Cursillo Community,

Many in our Cursillo Community and our other environments are being directly affected by the economy. During times of job loss, financial and personal difficulties we may tend to withdraw or pull away from community. Isolating ourselves can lead to loneliness and even depression. This is not a time to attempt to resolve these issues alone. Continue to group and come to Ultreya. The support that's needed to sustain you spiritually is available as well as the opportunity to share your needs.

During this year of St. Paul, twelve Cursillistas from our Diocese made a pilgrimage to the Cursillo National Encounter at Catholic University and the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC. Our community has also welcomed new Cursillistas, shared in our "Friendship Groups," heard motivating witnesses at Ultreya and been blessed with Spiritual Direction from our Religious and Clergy. We have enjoyed each other's company in prayer and fellowship at our "Day of Reflection," annual picnic and Sponsorship Workshop.

At School of Leaders we studied the lay talks from the Cursillo Weekend and the Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*. Our Cursillo Community is

flourishing thanks to the faithful who serve on our committees that meet at School of Leaders monthly. The work is not done yet. They need your help. In 2009, step forward and serve. You will be blessed!

This last year the founder of The Cursillo Movement, Eduardo Bonnin passed away. Sixty eight years earlier on the same date, February 6, 1940 Eduardo obtained a copy of the text of a speech that Pope Pius XII had given to parish priests and parishioners of Rome.

Pope Pius XII called on the faithful to seek new ways to let everyone know the love of God, both the "near at hand" (those practicing their faith) and the "faraway" (those who had some how become distant from Christ and His Church). Eduardo took the Pope's challenge and developed the rollo, "The Study and Evangelization of the Environment" which gave birth to The Cursillo Movement.

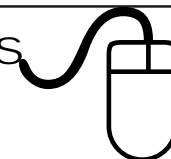
We "the faithful" of today are called upon to follow Eduardo's example. Remember when we seek out someone to attend a Cursillo weekend, we are giving them a great gift, one which we ourselves had been given. Why not share that gift with our fellow Catholics who have not yet received it?

Blessed New Year! De Colores!
Cindy Bruno and Fr. Paul Merry

The support that's needed to sustain you spiritually [during these difficult times] is available as well as the opportunity to share your needs.

NEWSLETTER/SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAILING UPDATE



Help us save on printing and postage costs: Consider receiving the newsletter by e-mail.

Would you like to receive this Newsletter and special announcements by email?

Name: _____

Please check ONE and mail to Dolores Pace, 87 Toddy Hill Rd., Sandy Hook, CT 06482:

E-Mail: Current **e-mail** address: _____

OR, send your e-mail address to Dolores Pace at dodofloss@earthlink.net; *we will do our best to keep your e mail address restricted to Cursillo business only.*

Regular mail: Current **street** address: _____

World Youth Day 2008 *With the Pope in Sydney, Australia*

By Gina Donnarummo

In July I was privileged to travel with 19 other young people from our Diocese to Sydney, Australia to experience World Youth Day. The theme was from Acts 1:8: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses.” These were the last words Jesus spoke before his Ascension.

During our 12-day pilgrimage, I was able to have many different encounters with God, others, and myself. We attended daily Mass, met Jesus in adoration, prayed the rosary, experienced the power of reconciliation, participated in the Stations of the Cross, and attended three catecheses sessions with bishops from around the world—the third one was with our own Bishop Lori.

What impressed me was the sea of people, Catholics, from all over the world, 170 countries, who came

together to experience God’s awesome love and power. On Saturday, July 19 thousands of people pilgrimaged six kilometers to Randwick Racecourse for an outdoor vigil with our Holy Father. We were surrounded by people of all ages who craved to seek God, and we found Him in our brothers and sisters.

That night, adoration was held outdoors with Pope Benedict XVI in the moonlight under the great Australian sky. Everyone lit candles from a single flame which was passed one onto another so we were able to shine with Christ’s light. Here is his part of what the Holy Father spoke to me, “Tonight, I am praying for you and for young people throughout the world. Be inspired by the example of your Patrons! Accept into your hearts and minds the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit! Recognize and believe in the power of the Spirit in your lives!” The pope went on to speak on *how* to become those witnesses for Jesus Christ. He spoke of the somewhat neglected person of the Blessed Trinity: the Holy Spirit. A clear understanding of the Holy Spirit seems almost beyond our reach. All the talks had this central theme: to understand the Holy Spirit more.

After that experience, we crawled into our sleeping bags to go to sleep with the sound of Christian music playing from the stage. When we woke, we celebrated Mass with our Holy Father and 500,000 Catholics from around the world. This was truly a universal experience. Although we all spoke different languages, we were able to share the love and peace of Jesus in the Eucharist and show our catholicity.

This experience will be one I will never forget and I will cherish forever as an opportunity of a lifetime. I thank you for your prayers while I was there, and I thank God for our safety during our time in the Land Down Under.

Cursillo of Fairfield County

Now on Facebook!

Did you know that Cursillo of Fairfield County is on Facebook? Facebook is a way to keep connected with friends by talking and sharing photos and video online. If you have a Facebook account, search for “Cursillo of Fairfield County” and join the group. If you are not on Facebook, getting an account is easy and free, just go to www.facebook.com.



Visit our web sites!

www.natl-cursillo.org/bridgeport

- Calendar and contacts have been updated.
- Cursillo applications are available online.
- Watch for additional updates and changes.

www.natl-cursillo.org

On the National web site you will find:

Information and registration
for the National Encounter

Cursillo Literature • National News Letters
School of Leaders Articles • Cursillo Gift Shop
Link to Lighthouse Catholic Media
USA Cursillo links to local web sites

All about the Cursillo *Sponsorship Workshop*

On Saturday November 8, 2008 Cursillo of Fairfield County piloted a Sponsorship Workshop written by National Cursillo and attended by 25 Cursillistas.

The afternoon began with lunch and fellowship followed by two talks and table discussions. The talks were helpful, even to experienced sponsors, and were well received by the attendees. The following is a brief summary of the teaching points of this workshop.

The Cursillo consists of three phases. In the Precursillo (before the weekend) the person is **seeking** Christ. In the Cursillo (on the weekend), the person **encounters** Christ. In the Postcursillo (after the weekend), the person **follows** Christ. Sponsoring is an important service provided in order to ensure the best possible experience as the candidate journeys in faith from the Precursillo to the Postcursillo.

The sponsor should have an understanding of the purpose of the Movement in order to know why the selection of key people for Cursillo is essential. Cursillo is NOT a retreat. Cursillo pursues a two-fold purpose: The **immediate purpose** of Cursillo is to provide a foundation so that the person may live what is fundamental for being a Christian – that is, love of God and love of neighbor. The **ultimate purpose** of Cursillo is to vertebrae, or structure, Christianity in society – to leaven the environments with the Gospel. Therefore, the purpose of the Movement is not about “preaching the Good News” but of “**becoming** the Good News”! The mentality of Cursillo is to transform the person into being Chris-

We can't always fish in the fish bowl (our parishes), because those fish are already caught! God calls us to cast our nets into the deep oceans of the world.

tian so that once transformed, s/he can Christianize his or her immediate world or, their environments.

We can no longer afford to sit passively and “hope” that the world comes to know Christ. We must make a conscientious effort to be witnesses of Christ in the world. Sponsoring should be a deliberate act, focused on bringing Christ into the world.

Being a sponsor means committing yourself to the selection and preparation of a person for the Cursillo, and to provide assistance to that person in the Postcursillo – their 4th Day. This is an absolute necessity! If the sponsor is not willing to accompany the Cursillista in their 4th Day, they

A Reminder...

The Pre-Cursillo Committee is accepting completed applications at *all times*. Don't wait until a weekend date nears to send in applications! Forms may be downloaded from our website and e-mailed or sent to Ginny Gorman when complete. Questions? Contact Ginny at (203) 270-7143 or gormanfamily1@msn.com.

should not sponsor that person.

Personal contact, authentic witness and real palanca are necessary elements of sponsorship. Sponsors should practice the *make a friend, be a friend, bring your friend to Christ (not necessarily Cursillo!)* method when approaching people. Our objective, as sponsors, is to awaken in the candidate an attitude of openness to friendship and change. This can only be done through sincere and authentic witness of living as a Christian.

Prayer is essential before, during and after Cursillo. The sponsor should always be engaged in some form of palanca – prayer, sacrifice or works of mercy – for his/her candidate.

The study of the environment is the study of the person. We can evangelize those who surround us where we are (grocery store, work, football game, home, etc.). We can't always fish in the fish bowl (our parishes), because those fish are already caught! God calls us to cast our nets into the deep oceans of the world.

Following the workshop, Fr. Merry celebrated our annual 5th Day Mass with us. This Mass, said in remembrance of the Cursillistas now living their “5th Day” with the Lord, was also the Mass celebrating the Dedication of the St. John Lateran Basilica in Rome. We were reminded of the gift of the Church – both the physical building and the community of which we are a part – and the blessings that they bring us. This celebration was a fitting conclusion to a beautiful afternoon of formation and fellowship.

Cursillo *Calendar*

January-December 2009

Bethel-Area Ultreya

*at St. Mary Parish Center, Bethel at 7:30pm,
third Thursday of the month*

January 15 • February 19
March 19 • April 16
May 21 • July 16
August 20 • September 17
October 15 • November 19

Bridgeport Ultreya

*at the Catholic Center, Bridgeport at 7:30pm,
first Tuesday of the month*

January 6 • February 3
March 3 • April 7
May 5 • July 7
August 4 • September 1
October 6 • November 3

Central Ultreya

*at Our Lady of Fatima, Wilton, at 7:30pm,
first Tuesday of June and Dec.*

June 2
December 1

Day of Reflection 2009

*at St. James, Stratford, 9am-5:30pm
Mass at 4:30pm
February 7*

Upcoming Weekends

at Seton-Neumann, Danbury
Men's: March 26-29, 2009
Women's: April 23-26, 2009

Ultreya:

Team Up to Witness and Facilitate

Make a resolution in 2009 to witness or facilitate at Ultreya. Presenting an Ultreya is a great opportunity to work with someone from your weekend, a recent teammate, or one of your own group mates.

Our Ultreya co-coordinators and talk "work-shoppers" assist both the witness speaker and the facilitator. I am certain you will call it as a "Moment Closest to Christ" for both what you give and for what you receive. Make presenting an Ultreya part of your 2009 evangelization plans. Contact our Ultreya co-coordinators

Ultreya Co-coordinators

Bridgeport: Carol Twigs, caroltwigs@msn.com
Bethel: Phil & Gail Palermo, phil@palemoplanet.com
Central: Tom Restivo, thomasrestivo@aol.com

School of Leaders

*at the Nazareth Spiritual Life Center,
1428 Monroe Turnpike (Rte. 111), Monroe
9-11:30am*

January 10 • February 14 • March 14
April 18 • May 9 • June 13

"In hope we were saved," says St. Paul in Romans 8:24. These are the first words of Pope Benedict's second encyclical *Spe Salvi* which we are studying this year in School of Leaders. We are studying this important and timely document as a follow-up from Pope Benedict's visit to the USA in April and during this Year of Saint Paul.

We come together monthly to hear a presentation (a teaching) and then we share what the teaching and readings meant to us during our discussion. The mornings always begin with prayer, song, refreshments, and School of Leaders group reunion. Please join us and bring a group member. This is evangelization!