

## **LIVING OUR FOURTH DAY WITH CONVICTION, DECISION, AND CONSTANCY**

*Source: National Cursillo Center Mailing – June 2011*

The title of this article is a reminder of what Eduardo Bonnín referred to when he spoke of the “Mentality of Cursillo.”

Eduardo referred to the Mentality of Cursillo as the proclamation of:

*“The best news of the best reality, that God in Christ loves us. This news is communicated by the best means, which is Friendship. It is directed towards the best of each one, their very person; their capacity for conviction, decision, and constancy.”*

This Mentality as expressed by Eduardo has its roots in the Precursillo. Most of the time we spend our time and efforts searching for the perfect candidate. However, if we concentrate more on the person who has the capacity for conviction, decision, and constancy, you can rest assured they will capture the message presented during the Cursillo Weekend, and therefore live out their Fourth Day helping others live their lives with conviction, decision, and constancy.

- Conviction (piety) – in directing our whole life to God, we establish an intimate relationship with Him, an open and personal friendship. It is absolutely necessary for us to have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ in order for our piety to be genuine.
- Decision (study) – putting our minds at the service of the truth or applying our minds to learn the truth. In essence, it is the process of learning to love and respond in faith to reach our potential as persons; fully human and fully Christian. Only by fulfilling our potential can we begin to understand God’s love for us, and begin to live in that love.
- Constancy (action) – is the perfection of piety, dedicating our very lives to God by aligning our will to His will, and then doing what we have been asked to do. Action is responding to the command of Jesus written in John 13:34-35. Simply stated, Action is exercising the power to love just as Jesus has loved us.

The Cursillo provides a call to be a Christian, to dedicate one’s life to Christ and to live Christ fully and completely. As “Fundamentals Ideas” clearly states:

*Christian life "stirs up every baptized person and requires each...to follow and imitate Jesus Christ, to embrace the Beatitudes, to listen to the Word of God and imitate it, to participate consciously and actively in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church, to engage in personal, family, and community prayer, to have a hunger and thirst for justice, and to put into practice the commandment of love in all circumstances of life and in service to others, especially the least, the poor, and the suffering." (FI #424)*

*This is, in short, the "new way of life" of which Pope John Paul II has spoken so often: the civilization of "new people." (FI #425)*

We have witnessed the spirit of generosity that fills the Cursillistas at the end of the Cursillo Weekend. In fact, many who have lived a Cursillo generally have a desire to

serve Christ and His Church through the different parish ministries. This is a well known fact in the Church. However, this does not presuppose that, although this service is gladly offered to the church that the Cursillo has to be exclusively for such activities. Cursillo awakens our desire to serve, therefore Cursillistas commit to the different activities, groups, ministries, etc. of their local parish.

We can also acknowledge the many vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, religious, etc. come from the Cursillo Movement. This does not mean this is the objective of the Movement either. Nevertheless, we thank God for these blessings. However, let's not forget the primary purpose of the Cursillo Movement, that is, the goal we want to achieve if we want to realize the "why" and the "how" of the Movement.

As Bishop Hervás states in his Pastoral Letter, men should be asked for a great response: *"very lofty goals should be proposed to laymen, taking into account that we find ourselves in a moment in which the breathing of the Holy Spirit is calling many souls to heroism and to complete surrender. Let us be bold in a holy way, proposing goals of the most exalted sanctity. If men are not asked for much, they will not even give what they are asked for."*

Cursillo provides us with a method through which we learn to live the Gospel in the everyday circumstances of our lives. It is a roadmap for our lives as Christians – to live the Gospel as laity. It makes us Christians responding to the call of our baptism and the call of the Church. A Christian is a person who has accepted the call of Jesus to make the Father's love tangible and felt by others. Their primary mission is to feed others with the conviction of their value, dignity and importance in the Father's eyes. The life of every Christian and their personal conversion undergoes continual change as they realize that every person, every event, everything one does, is a vehicle of new and different possibilities for the Gospel.

*"The Cursillo wants to accomplish, and by the Grace of our Lord it does, the Evangelical message – the Good News. Good for everybody and always new because it renews us. It reaches the greatest number, and above all reaches normal, everyday people. People who do not have time to relax, as they have to work to live and to survive. People, who have no other form of entertainment but to hurriedly read the newspaper, listen to the radio, and to wind up asleep in front of their Television without any of these activities resolving the vital problems of life. It is the man or woman who knows and recognizes God through Christ, a Christ who is alive, present, and human. Man then discovers that without going out of himself, it is possible to have Christ's friendship and nearness."*  
(Eduardo Bonnín –History of a Charisma)

The whole essence of Cursillo is simply to help the person, not only to live the Good News, but to become the Good News for the other person within the normality of their lives where they are at the moment.

#### *Being Christian/Being Church*

There is a quote that says: *"I don't count the seconds, I make the seconds count."* This is a good analogy of what it means to have conviction as a Christian. It is not a matter of

doing “an apostolate” in the evening after a day of work, or whenever we have some free time. What about the rest of our day? We are called to be apostles 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Structures of Ideas sums it up in a very simple way: *“Being a Christian consists in considerably more than doing “Christian things”, being Christian is to live Christ. Doing Christian things is to live for oneself in the name of Christ”. People can do Christian things, but they are not, therefore automatically Christians.*

Eduardo Bonnín has said that the Cursillo is not meant to satisfy the hunger for God, it is meant to create a hunger for Him. It is not meant to answer questions, it is more designed to provoke questions, the kind of questions that will send each one of us on our own journey of discovery, to go deeper and deeper into all that is Cursillo, not in order to be a better Cursillista but to be better and better Christians.

The beauty of the Cursillo Movement is that God sends us companions to journey with us, people whose paths would never have crossed ours had it not been for Cursillo, and yet they become so important to our journey that we wonder how we would make it without them.

*We are community by the mere fact of being Christians, of being Church. In its internal life, the ecclesial community characterizes by the realization of those four ‘perseverance’s’ of the primitive Church, described on the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2, 44-47) – (FI #428).*

Just as the Acts of the Apostles describes how the early Christians lived the message presented in the Gospels, so too Christianity in Action shows us how to be authentic Christians in the real World, which by the way, is how we penetrate our environments.

In Cursillo we learned that the primary focus for all our evangelizing efforts must begin with ourselves (Study of the Environment Rollo); we must be thoroughly convinced of God’s love for us before we can reach out and share that love and friendship with others.

Sometimes, in Cursillo terminology the word “evangelization” or “evangelizing” may sound somewhat strange for our vocabulary; however, Eduardo Bonnín helps clarify its meaning: *“When we speak of evangelization in the context of the Cursillo, we do not mean, or mostly mean it in the sense of simply passing on or spreading the Good News of the Gospel, but rather to succeed in making the person ‘become’ the Good News, that joyful Good News that Christ is alive in and amongst His people today, just as He was 2000 years ago.”*

We must begin with ourselves and become the Good News to those we encounter in our daily lives; in our moveable square meter. It is by becoming a living witness of the Gospel message that we can truly and effectively evangelize our respective environments. Our evangelical efforts in all phases of the Movement spring forth from a vibrant and living Christianity in Action.

It is in Christianity in Action, that is, in our Group Reunion and the Ultreya, that we live our Fourth Day, the rest of our lives. In our Group Reunion we journey together with a group of friends, sharing our lives and our experiences with each other; sharing with each other our successes and triumphs as well as our struggles. We all have different experiences, but share a common bond with each other; we are united by our common love of the Lord and the sharing of our Christian journeys with each other. We are friends, although more like a family since we don't just see each other at our weekly meeting, but some of us share other mutual social and church activities during the week.

The life of each member of the group becomes a witness that attracts others to the truth of the Gospel. We are living examples of what Christ has taught. By our words and actions we will hopefully convert those that are far away from God. We do not need to stand on the street corner and proclaim the Word; our actions should speak louder than our words. This is how we can have a positive effect on those we meet every day, and as a consequence, transform our environments to be more Christian.

In conclusion, here is a quote from the book *Whom Shall I Send, Discerning the Will of God* by Fr. Frank Salmani: *"We all know how difficult and awesome the task is that Jesus has placed before us. It takes a lot of work and dedication. The harvest is plenty. There is plenty of work to do, but laborers are few. The apostolic mission is a big job and cannot be done by a few. The time comes when leaders, whether among the religious or the laity, must take a stand and cut through all the excuses. God's work has to be done, and if we do not rise to the occasion, the work will be left undone. Therefore, let us remember our commission from Jesus: 'Go and make disciples of all nations.'"*

Cursillo is not only about proclaiming the Good News, but of becoming the Good News for as many people as possible as we live our Fourth Day through a life of conviction, decision, and constancy.

Ultreya!