

## **LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE CURSILLO MOVEMENT**

*Source: National Cursillo Center Mailing – December 2009*

The last two National Mailings included two articles about Leadership. In the August National Mailing there was a general article on, “Leadership within the Cursillo Movement”. In October we looked at “The Call to Leadership - a vocation.” In this article we would like to be more specific as to the different roles and responsibilities of the Cursillo leader within the Cursillo Movement.

### **A Cursillo Leader**

In the Leaders talk it states that: in Christianity, leaders are those who, having heard Christ’s call, throw themselves decisively into apostolic action with the capacity to influence others guiding them to encounter the Lord.

A Cursillo Leader, therefore is a dedicated apostle; a person who puts all of his/her abilities in the service of Christ. As Pope Pius X exclaimed: “They must be mature Catholics, convinced of their faith, solidly instructed in the ways of religion, sincerely devoted to the Church, and in particular to this Supreme Apostolic See, and the Vicar of Christ on earth; persons of genuine piety, of manly virtues, of clean habits, of a life so blameless that they may serve as an effective example to all.” (St. Pius X, The Firm Proposal).

Fr. Frank S. Salmani in the Epilogue of his book, “Whom Shall I Send?” stated, “If we decide our particular calling is to the Cursillo Movement as a Cursillo leader, we must understand that this calling, like any calling from God is a vocation – it is not something we choose. The Lord chooses us. Accepting that call means, making a commitment to God and His work. It involves directing our will to all that God wants. It means that we must be responsible stewards, sharing our time, talent and treasure with the world. If we accept the task of being a Cursillo leader, it also implies that this should be our primary apostolate. Not everyone is called to do everything. We are not called to do everything, but whatever challenge we do accept should be given our undivided attention.”

We need to find ways to maintain our commitments. First of all, we need to constantly work at our progressive conversion, especially when we assume a Cursillo leaders role. Conversion is not something one can say “*I’m already there.*” Sometimes we may forget that our “doing” (Christian things) would be far more effective and realizable when we are conscious of our “being” (Christian) and when our service to others (love) is in “full gear.” The first thing we need is a strong life of prayer and study. Holiness and formation are the “fuels” of evangelization and the apostolate. Without a strong life grounded in the Lord, we will run out of gas very quickly. As long as we take time for prayer and study, we will have the tools we need to continue to transform our society. (Whom Shall I Send, p. 126)

As Cursillo Leaders, one of our responsibilities is to safeguard the integrity and authenticity of the Cursillo Movement by embracing and promoting the Foundational

Charism. This is whether we are serving in the School of Leaders, as a member of the Secretariat, or as a member of the Regional Service Team.

### **School of Leaders & Responsibilities of its Leaders**

As leaders, our responsibility within the School of Leaders is to seek to be more centered, more committed and more united, to accelerate the living of what is fundamental for being Christian among ourselves, in the Cursillo Movement and in our daily lives.

We need to get rid of the idea that the School of Leaders is just to plan Cursillos, prepare “rollistas” and teams. The School of Leaders is not a factory to produce rollos, or rollistas or 3-day weekends; it is not a school of catechism or a center of pastoral studies.

The School of Leaders is above all a group. Something which is and exists before, during and after its sessions (meetings). Something that acts inside and out of the "School". It is above all, Christianity in action. It is unity and communion made possible by a climate of dialogue (a group reunion), where all are able and have something to teach and to learn, to ask and to give suggestions. A Climate of sincerity, trust, authenticity, freedom, conformity (rights and duties), pluralism (of vocations and positions), of unity in the diversity, and of humility, as much individual as communitarian.

Leaders seek each day to be:

- More centered to make what is fundamental for being Christian the center or axis of their lives. And the mentality of Cursillos, the center of their action as leaders in the Movement.
- More committed, involved with Christ on behalf of His Kingdom here on earth and united as leaders; one body.
- Active, doing their work of “sounding” and channeling restlessness.
- Understanding of others, knowing each others gifts and talents and working in coordination with others. A leader must be willing to make sacrifices, putting aside personal needs and directing the time, talent and treasure to the Lord’s work. (Whom Shall I Send, p. 124)
- Measuring the pulse or inciting the groups and their reunions. Promoting “friendship.”
- Preparing and perfecting the Ultreya. The School of Leaders is to the Ultreya, what the team of leaders is to the 3-day Cursillo. Behaving at the Ultreya just as we would by being part of “a team” on a weekend.
- Accelerating and perfecting the conversion of persons that makeup the Ultreya.
- Finding and promoting leaders for the Movement. Again, Father Salmani reminds us, “Those who are in the School of Leaders must seek out new leaders who wish to make a commitment to the work of the Movement. We exist only to find replacements, to develop more co-workers to help serve the larger community of Cursillistas, to support them in their work of transforming environments. This is what sets the Cursillo Leader apart from other cursillistas.” (Whom Shall I Send, p. 71)

One essential session of any School of Leaders is the reunion of the different groups or “committees”. The leaders divide into the three sections of the Movement. All the leaders, headed by the representative on the Secretariat of each phase, will meet in one of sections: Precursillo, Cursillo, and Postcursillo. Some, will meet with the Precursillo committee to work with the different parts which entail the precursillo; others will work with the Cursillo phase, and the larger group will work on matters pertaining to the Postcursillo. The groups will examine the different situations and needs of the community in each of the three phases of the method and work on finding solutions.

The committee of Precursillo, for example, could work on sponsorship and its responsibilities; candidate preparation, follow up, etc; candidate application, deadlines, etc; and other particular situations within the precursillo.

The group of the 3-day could work on the needs and the different situations of the weekend; team selection, preparation and responsibilities; rectors and their responsibilities, etc. Although this group may be the most attractive one, it should be the smallest group among the three.

The third group will meet to dialogue and work with everything dealing with the Postcursillo. That is: Ultreyas, Group Reunions, retreats and workshops, etc.

Let us remember that this is just one session within the time frame of the School of Leaders which divides in groups; there are other sessions in the School of Leaders which will deal in general with any of these phases and their particular situations. Belonging to any of these groups does not take away from performing our normal and personal duties and responsibilities in any of the three phases.

After the session, it would be beneficial to provide a brief reporting of what was discussed and the conclusions of the group. A written report of suggestions could be given to the Secretariat to be examined and prioritized according to the local necessities. It is also important that there be continuity.

### **The Diocesan Secretariat - Role & Responsibilities**

The Diocesan Secretariat is a service group. As an agent of service they are responsible for conserving and strengthening the mentality, purpose and basic methodology which defines and characterizes the Cursillo Movement. It is not a command or control tower giving orders.

Their functions may be compared with those of a traffic police officer. The traffic police officers are there to direct, to orient and to accelerate the traffic; but each person chooses their vehicle. The police officers are not the one who impose it.

It is required from those who form the Secretariat:

- To be affiliated with the National Secretariat (Please see appendix “A” of the Leader’s Manual)
- Support and participation within the Region

- To have Fidelity to the mentality, essence, purpose and strategy of the Movement;
- To Abide by the National Policy of the USA and by the Regional Structure
- To Make use of the official literature of the USA (Please see appendix “A” of the Leader’s Manual)

Every Secretariat should be formed by Leaders who:

- by having criterion, are already orienting;
- by having spirit, are already motivating and propelling “others”;
- by having enthusiasm, are already serving the Movement, from the groups, or from the Ultreya, or from the School.

The Movement is not propelled by the mere fact of belonging to a Secretariat, but rather according to the measure of the integration in the Secretariat of the persons’ criterion, spirit, and enthusiasm.

The service to the Church in the Cursillo Movement, by means of its real and efficient insertion in the pastoral work, asks of the members of the Secretariat:

- a sense of Church;
- intimate, constant and friendly relationship with the Hierarchy;
- intimate and authentic relationship with those responsible for the Pastoral;
- sincere and generous contact with other Movements, apostolic works and Associations of the Church.

#### *Organization of the Secretariat*

- It should be organized to oversee the needs of the diocese.
- It is necessary for its members to be replaced every 2 to 3 years.
- For more details, please see Chapter 7 of the Leaders Manual.

The service to the Movement in the Diocese requires:

- To know and to make known the method of Cursillos and its mentality, in order that it be properly applied;
- to orient and to impel the Movement in its three phases;
- to oversee that only the necessary Cursillo weekends are held;
- to seek for the proper operation of the School of Leaders, assuring that it complies with its assignment.

#### **Regional Service Team**

The Regional Service Team is a supporting group dedicated to the service and the needs of each diocese within each Region. It is the “working arms” of the National Secretariat within the dioceses in each Region.

#### *Role and Responsibilities*

The Regional Service Team is composed of one Regional Coordinator, three Service Team members, and one Spiritual Advisor. The Regional Coordinator is an official member of the National Secretariat “with voice and vote.” All the Regional Coordinators from each Region and all represented Languages form the National Secretariat. They are

the ones who establish, develop, endorse, and fully implement the official documents of the Cursillo Movement in their respective Regions:

- Regional Structure Guidelines
- Articles of Operation
- National Policy

The Regional Service Team should make every effort to:

- Contact each Diocesan Secretariat in their region for introduction purposes and thus open the door to a two-way communication.
- Visit all the dioceses within the Region and practice “personal contact”
- Assist (put on) at least one workshop a year in every dioceses within their Region.
- Regularly send out (via e-mail or US mail) a Monthly informative Bulletin of what is going on in their Region and any other pertaining information.

The Regional Service Team meets at least twice a year, in Spring and Fall and makes a commitment to participate at all National events.

De Colores