



National Cursillo® Movement

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National Cursillo Center – Synergy and Update

Source: Presented by Hoang Tran at the 26th National Cursillo Encounter held at Lewis University in the Diocese of Joliet – August 6, 2016.

My dear Friends in Christ,

It's a great joy serving you again at the 26th National Encounter in the Joliet diocese! I'd like to thank hosting Lay Directors of Joliet - Barb Linek and Tim Moore, all volunteers of Joliet and region V, Jorge Velez - National Encounter Committee Chair, Jackie DeMesme-Gray - National Encounter Liaison, National Staff, National Spiritual advisors, and many more who had put all their hearts and minds in the preparation of this Encounter. I am so honored to be a part of this awesome Team! You're inspiring all of us here. You're playing the Love Symphony #26 beautifully. The conductor of the Symphony, Jesus Christ, is so proud of you. Let's thank all volunteers again with a big round of applause!

When I reviewed your special requests for lodging at the Encounter, I said to myself, Wow, there is no way Lewis staff can accommodate all of your requests, such as staying in the same building with someone but not in the same room, roommates with someone in city or diocese XYZ, especially requests from those who registered late wanted to be in the same room with early registrants, etc. So I chose to work on the housing roster myself so that I could address your needs as much as possible because you are so dear and important to me even though I haven't met you at all. I chose to stay late until 2 or 3 am so that I could greet you personally and hand you the room keys. I don't have to do it but I choose to do it out of Cursillo friendship. I asked all volunteers to do the same, to deliver the "Kerygma in Action" by serving all participants with utmost attention and love no matter who they are: bishops or laity, National Secretariat members or ordinary Cursillistas... because they are all close friends of our best friend: JESUS CHRIST!

This Encounter is so special to me because it marked "Three years in action" of the \$3 Campaign that I initiated 3 years ago at the 23th National Encounter at Hofstra University in New York. Number "3" is a sacred number to me. Interestingly, we have quite a lot of "3's" in Cursillo: 3 Encounters, 3-Day Weekend, 3 Stages of Cursillo, Tripod, etc. Therefore, I'd like to share with you a secret behind the launching of the \$3/yr. campaign. Do you want to hear about this?

Well, I'd like to tell you more info about myself that is not included in my biography. I am an introvert type of person and I hate fund raising, hate asking for people's money even though I know how to do it. Three years ago, I was brought to National Cursillo Center (NCC) in Jarrell, TX after the interview for the position of National Cursillo Service Administrator, and I was struck immensely by its simplicity and humbleness!



I told myself I must do something for the Cursillo, and that deciding moment pushed me out of my “introvert shell” and I have actively found ways to help the National Cursillo Center. I asked Jesus “How can I help the National Cursillo Center to recover its financial stability? Please give me an easy solution because you know I am an extreme introvert!” And behold, the \$3/yr. campaign idea came right to my mind and I knew right then it was from Jesus! Some Cursillistas praised me for the idea of \$3/yr. campaign but I told them it was Jesus’s idea, not mine. Having confidence in Jesus’s companionship and out of love for Cursillo, I don’t mind to be a “broken record” asking \$3 from each one of you again and again until we reach our goal. ☺

Let’s talk about the relationship among us, among National, Regional and Diocesan movements. Is it a contract or an exchange of service? You pay NCC \$400 a year and you expect something in return. Posting palanca on our website, or receiving 20 % discount on book orders, or receiving a visit or workshop from national? If we just stop right there, we somewhat turn our movement into a vendor. Let us ask ourselves this question: are we the outsiders or insiders? To be honest with you, I used to be an outsider. However, after I saw the National Cursillo Center, my paradigm shifted immediately from an outsider to an insider. In order to be ONE in the Mystical Body of Christ we need to change our mentality as follows:

- Outsider → Insider
- Bystander → Steward
- Follower → Apostle/Leader
- Business → Vocation
- Hierarchy → Communion

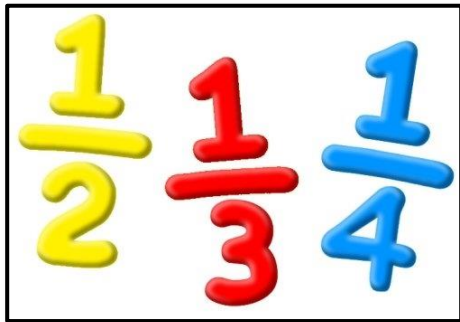
Indeed, after surrendering my own will and saying YES to the Lord, our family was swept by His Tsunami of Love from California to Texas!

Some friends told me, “Wow, it's a huge sacrifice I made for the Cursillo by moving to Texas!” No, they're wrong!

In fact, it was a heavenly reward the Lord granted me and I kept praising Him every morning I got up from bed. The greatest reward I received from God is you, my friends! I lost count of how

many new friends I made during the past 3 years and it's been such a blessing and mystery to me. It was a great experience of getting out of "my comfort zone" to follow Christ blindly and I can assure you that the Lord never fails you! Following Christ is full of nice surprises and joys!!! Yes, it's a nice surprise that Jesus gave me the idea of \$3/yr. campaign and its **synergy**! So what is synergy?

Synergy is the creation of a whole that is greater than the simple sum of its parts. The term *synergy* comes from the Attic Greek word *συνεργία synergia* from *synergos*, meaning "working together".



For those who attended the 23rd National Encounter 3 years ago, you might remember the picture of these fractions and how they would need a common denominator to be added together and to increase in value, right?

Yes, we're on the right track by applying this principle: for 3 years, your fractions of \$3 have been added up to almost \$120,000 and I know many of you here have contributed to make it happen! Yeah! We did it! ☺

This is the mathematical part. But I'd like to show you its synergy part. How and why is the creation of a whole greater than the simple sum of its parts?

Very simple. Let's refer to Matthew 18:20: *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

Let me ask you this question. And if you can answer it correctly, you will get 10 free raffle tickets. Are you ready?

When two or three of us gather in the name of Jesus, how many are there total?

One, Four, Six, Seven ...? No, these are not correct numbers. ☺

Jesus is not there by himself. The Trinity is there. Our blessed Mother is always with Him and his angels are with Him. All the saints and millions and millions of angles are with Him. In short, all of heaven is with us when only 2 or 3 of us gather in His Name! How about more than 700 of us at the Encounter? Now are you feeling the presence of Heaven when over 700 of us are gathering joyfully here in the name of Jesus? It's just so amazing! Eduardo Bonnín once said "I am amazed that you're not amazed of what you see!" Our founder invited us to see beyond the physical realm and discern the synergy part of everything. We're doing the Work of God, my friends!

You will be amazed how your donation has made a huge impact on our beloved Cursillo Movement and the value of winning souls for Christ is much greater than the sum of your \$3 donation!

Your \$3/yr. contribution can make:

- Cursillo Weekends a reality for establishing or re-establishing movements. It broke my heart when I was told the Cursillo Weekend had to be postponed to the following year because they couldn't afford facility rent!
- Cursillo books affordable for all Cursillistas: the more you learn about Cursillo, the more you love Cursillo! (book vouchers & 20% discount)
- Make Cursillo de Cursillos (CDC) affordable for all Cursillistas
- Bring more Cursillo leaders to National Encounters (National Encounter vouchers)

National Cursillo Center received a total of \$118,576 as of 7/31/2016 from about 1,000 generous donors in 12 regions. Their donations range from \$3 to \$8,000 a year!

We also received more and more recurring donations:

- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually

How many Hispanic Cursillistas in Region I are present here? I'd like to share with you a close moment with Christ and with my friends in region I. While I was presenting the \$3 campaign benefits to the Hispanic community, I noticed some movements among the audience but I didn't really know what was going on. After 5 minutes, a representative from the Hispanic community came up and handed me an envelope with \$359 inside as an instant donation from Region I Hispanic community towards the \$3/yr. campaign. Wow, you made my day! And I just realized I was one of the highest-paid persons on earth! I made \$359 in 5 minutes, that translates into about \$4,000 an hour or \$700,000 a month, and over \$8 million a year. And I promise you, I will donate them all to our beloved Cursillo!

I was so touched by Region I Hispanic Cursillistas' generosity and instant response to my appeal. I told them I was learning Spanish and by this time next year I will have no problem speaking Spanish. They said "Wow!" but I said "I am not finished. I have no problem speaking Spanish but whether you understand my Spanish or not is your problem!!!" ☺

This year's Encounter has a record of Spanish speaking in attendance, crossing the 400 mark! We must learn from you how you communicate and I know for sure you use personal contact instead of email, right?

Let's browse through the benefits of the \$3 campaign after 3 years:

- Offered extra 10% book discount for affiliated Cursillo Movements: 20% discount total for FY2015 and FY2016
- Reduced National Encounter registration fee in 2014, 2015 and 2016
- Frequent visits by National Language Coordinators and NCSA at Regional Encounters and workshops
- Assisted in establishing Cursillo in areas where it is needed: book vouchers, workshops, etc.
- Your donations have helped rejuvenate or establish 12 Diocesan Cursillo Movements:
 - Cheyenne - English Region 9 (R9)

- Denver - English R9
- Lafayette - Spanish R4
- Sacramento - Viet R11
- Portland - Viet R12
- Springfield/Cape Girard - English R4
- Ogdensburg - English R1
- Austin - Viet R8
- Las Vegas - Spanish R11
- St Paul/Minneapolis - Viet R6
- Houma/Thibodaux - English R8
- Ft. Worth - Viet R8

In summary, National Cursillo Center has given you back:

- \$70K during FY2015 & FY 2016: extra 10% book discount
- \$50K: National Encounter (NE) fee discount
- \$25K: 234 NE vouchers for Lay Directors
- \$5K: 12 book vouchers & workshops for establishing CM's
- Total: \$150K

But I have bad news for you:

- We have a negative balance! \$118K - \$150K= **-\$32K**
- The extra 10% discount will end by September 30, 2016 if the NCC does not receive at least \$30K from now till the end of September 2016.

The participation ratio is still very low:

- 0.1% from 1 million Cursillistas
- 1% from 100,000 ACTIVE Cursillistas

Where is the other 99.9% or 99%?

Indeed, the campaign is depending on the 1,000,000 plus Cursillistas in the United States. WE are the faithful stewards of Cursillo and this campaign. Without YOU there is no campaign. Without YOU there is no Cursillo. Without Cursillo, there is no Evangelization!

Christ is counting on YOU!

How to promote the Campaign far and wide?

- We have the best means: friendship and personal contact – Movable square meter!
- Become a recurring donors: visit the donation page on our new website
- Leave a Legacy to our beloved Cursillo: Will & Living Trust, Life Insurance, etc.

It's not about how much you donate, but it's about HOW you donate, about how much LOVE you include with your donation!

My Dream!

- Providing support to reviving or establishing Cursillo in terms of materials, workshop, financial aids
- Inviting all Regional Coordinators and service team, Spiritual Advisors, Lay Directors, School of Leader chairpersons to the Encounter for free. They are servant leaders and faithful stewards. They deserve it!
- Lowering book prices by 50%
- Lowering National Encounter registration fee to \$150 - \$200.

I have some Good News for you:

1. Eduardo Bonnín - Beatification

- The first step in the process for Beatification and Canonization of Eduardo began in Mallorca, Spain on February 5, 2015
- We put a Prayer card in your tote bag. Please pray for the speedy process of our beloved Eduardo Bonnín.
- Testimonies needed for his beatification process.

2. Celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the USA Cursillo at the 2017 National Encounter:

- Trinity University in San Antonio, TX
- Huge Auditorium: 2,500 seats
- 1,000 beds
- Save the date: July 27-30, 2017

3. Amazon Smile Program

Did you know that you can support National Cursillo Movement whenever you shop on Amazon? I am excited to share with you the good news that National Cursillo Movement has been successfully registered with Amazon Smile Program as a non-profit organization eligible to receive donations through the Amazon Smile Foundation.

Amazon Smile is a website operated by Amazon that allows you to enjoy the same wide selection of products and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on Amazon Smile (www.smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the eligible non-profit organization of your choice. Therefore, effective immediately, you can start supporting National Cursillo Movement by visiting and shopping at AmazonSmile at: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/46-0563788>.

Please share the good news with all Diocesan Secretariat members, Regional Service Team members and all Cursillistas in your respective Diocese by all means of communication; i.e. Friendship Group Reunion, Ultreya, School of Leaders, Regional Encounter, workshops, etc. If we can make 100,000 Cursillistas aware of this program, we will receive \$200K to \$400K annually from Amazon Smile's donation.

4. New Website Features:

- E-Commerce Shopping cart with enhanced security and accepting all major credit cards.

- Search Engine Optimization
- Dynamic
- Online forms:
 - National Directory update: Leadership change for Lay Directors and Spiritual Advisors
 - Newsletter subscription
 - National Encounter registration
 - Arrival/Departure form
 - Annual Regional/Diocesan report
 - Palanca request
- Memo
- Affiliation Fee invoice
- Cursillo Founder's page
- National Staff's contact info
- Links:
 - Diocesan
 - Regional
 - International: OMCC, FEBA

5. Cursillo de Cursillos (CDC):

CDC has been proven to be the effective and strategic move toward the Foundational Charism! Here's the introduction of the CDC on our website:

Simply stated, Cursillo de Cursillos (CDC) is a course on the truth and simplicity of the Foundational Charism of Cursillo. Make the decision to attend one in your local region. Allow the Charism of Cursillo to form you, inform you, and transform you...

During Fiscal Year 2016, National Staff and Regional Coordinators conducted several CDCs in their regions:

- Spanish CDC: 7
- English CDC: 7
- Vietnamese CDC: 3

Please check our new website to learn more about CDC opportunities & benefits and upcoming CDCs in your regions.

Vacation

I'd like to share with you a strange experience about vacation while I am serving the Cursillo full time. I used to work for high-tech companies as director of design engineering. I designed frequency generator chip in your computer which is also known as the heart of the PC. It provides heartbeats (frequencies) for the CPU, memory card, keyboard, etc. I managed 3 design teams: 2 in San Jose and 1 in Singapore. So you know how hectic and stressful my work is. I normally worked 12- 14 hours a day and I always looked forward to vacations so that I could relax and forget all the stresses at work or completely cut off from work. However, when I said YES and worked for Christ full time, I worked even longer hours, 14 – 16 hours a day, including weekend! The strange thing is when I took a vacation, I was still thinking of Cursillo, and

thinking of you, my friends! Then I realized that I can take vacation from my job, but I cannot take vacation from my vocation, from my calling. I asked myself this question: Can I take a vacation from my wife or my children? No way! Otherwise, I will be in deep, deep trouble! ☺

How about Cursilo? Can you take a vacation from Cursillo? A Cursillista complained that living the 4th Day was so demanding and time consuming. He said, “I will take 1 week break”. One week break from living the 4th Day? Are you out of your mind? Only 5-minute break will get you a non-stop and one-way ticket to your 5th Day right away! ☺ So never ever take a vacation from Cursillo, OK? Otherwise, our Lord Jesus will tell you as he told St. James and St. John: “You do not know what are you are asking.” ☺

I hope you're enjoying every moment at this Encounter and will bring home **JSK**. What is **JSK**?

- Joy in your heart,
- Smile on your face, and
- Kerygmic De Colores to the world with your conviction and living witness!

Yes, I love what Bishop Sevilla said in his keynote: “Cursillistas need to be models of Kerygmic evangelization that should be the DNA of every Catholic”. Yes, first and foremost, Kerygma must be the DNA of every Cursillista!

This talk sounds like a rollo. If you like it, it's your bonus rollo. If you don't like it, offer it as your Palanca for the Encounter. ☺

See, I offered you a win-win solution! I love you no matter what, my friends in Christ!

De Colores!

Love never fails! (1 Cor 13:8)