



Cursillos in Christianity National Newsletter

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National Cursillo Center • P.O. Box 799 • Jarrell, TX 76537 • 512-746-2020 • www.natl-cursillo.org

America in Our Pilgrimage

Source: Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló Foundation.

In the joyous atmosphere at the Clausura of the first Cursillo in history almost 40 years ago, on that small island in the ancient Mediterranean Sea that is Mallorca, one of the leaders manifested in a bold and almost daring expression the certainty of success and the conviction of the universality that characterized that small group of laymen that were beginning the Movement.

“We won’t stop until we’ve held a Cursillo on the Moon!”

This expression was not an illusion, naivety or arrogance; it was hope springing from faith. The whole method had been developed – despite the lack of understanding of the learned – from the person and for the person. And from that certainty emerged the conviction, never more resigned, that what had been born had universal value. It would move through land and sea, borders and continents – maybe even outer space - because no matter where the person wanted to be happy or regretted not being so, the method and the Cursillo Movement would have something to tell him and there would be much to learn.

Shortly after, our hope had turned into joy and this experience brought forth new hope. The Cursillos first extended to different parts of the Spanish mainland. Later, in 1953, came the historic leap to Colombia. In 1957 Cursillo was introduced in the U.S. and the following year in Mexico and soon after in Venezuela. From there, now unstoppable, to the rest of the American continents – of the New World. At the same time or shortly after, to all the major places through a process without end.

For those who began the adventure of Cursillo, America offered an image of being a continent of colors, of strong contrasts, of welcoming hosts, with a new vision, whereas in very few other places the affirmation of the person and the sense of others and the group were combined. Fortunately, based on our understanding, although the Gospel was introduced with a conquering tone, there seemed to be more music than lyrics, more echo than a stern voice, and more guidance than norms.

Our American dimension, in the first stage, was centered essentially on prayer and written communication. We never thought that we would learn so much geography to be able to accurately direct our prayers towards a distant place where a new Cursillo was taking place, and from where someone was writing to us with the same hope with which we deepened our own reality.

However, the Lord who has the first signature on this article, wanted me to travel to America to come in direct contact with the reality of the Cursillo Movement in that continent.

And what we perceived there was a renewed and transparent incarnation of what we were already living here: that is, at any given time and place, Cursillo can count on a group of lay persons rooted in the normality of their lives, concerned and dedicated to their secular environments, and in communion with a group of priests – or perhaps with only one – the Cursillos remain alive, dynamic and with the vigor of its debut. However, when the Cursillo gravitates around pastoral initiatives that are specifically intra-ecclesial, to nurture or improve parish work or organizations as a primary effort, then the Movement adopts a sacrificial overtone that causes it to languish, or converts into a closed-circle where the organization chokes the mysticism and where we see with sadness that those who used to be distant from their faith draw near but later feel confined.

Now that Cursillo is present in the five continents, we believe we can affirm that the witness that reaches us from America is globally the most enriching, however, without being able to deny that it also has some gaps since its character is so diverse and at times different.

We are especially concerned that the limitations of the Cursillo Movement in America may be the result of our defects or deficits that may have been transferred there from Spain. For charity's sake, let no one link the shock wave of Cursillo from Spain to the rest of the world – and specifically to America – with memories of conquest or nostalgia. The Cursillos are not of one culture, and therefore, not of one nation either. This is the way we wanted them to be from the beginning: gentiles with the gentiles.

We believe that the differences of rhythm and direction that we have alluded to, that are present in all the geography of Cursillos' are the transposition to our era of the differences of accent in the message of the Gospel that we contemplate in the Acts of the Apostles, between Peter and Paul or between the circumcised and uncircumcised. Let's hope that we know how to create an atmosphere of Group Reunion that pulsates in the apostolic account and convert those differences into creative action, and do so within the charity born out of the respect and attention we give the person which is at the deepest core of Cursillo.

In any case, America has been the place from where the Movement has illuminated its definitive structures of unity and community: National Secretariats, International Groups and the World Office of Cursillo. Its radical vocation of universality as a Movement has found its own dimension in the diverse and universal core of America.

After nearly 40 years of Cursillos' presence in America, we continue to believe they are a continent of colors that are still waiting for someone who can tell them through a living experience that those are the same colors of a soul in Grace, fully alive and living the joy of the Gospel. We've already sung some of the verses of this song, but it is necessary that we continue to sing and continue the pilgrimage in search of the person so that the song may become a magnificent chorus.

And we believe this will happen because we will not relinquish the idea of "giving a Cursillo on the Moon" – if there should be someone to experience it – and because we believe – as we've already said before – that:

Some men, with the help of science and financial support have been able to go from the exterior of man to the surface of the moon. We [Cursillos] are trying to achieve something that is immensely more difficult, i.e. to go from the exterior of man to his innermost being, in order to learn to understand ourselves and to move towards other people, so that we may become more aware of the wonder of our life, to learn to live in harmony and love our fellow men and women and to share with them the challenge and adventure of becoming a true person.

2017 National Encounter – 60th Anniversary of Cursillo

The National Encounter will be held on July 27-30, 2017 at Trinity University which is located 7 minutes from the airport in San Antonio, TX. Bishop Francisco Senra Coelho, OMCC Spiritual Advisor, will deliver the keynote address.

The registration is now open! Please visit our National Cursillo website to register online or download all the forms at:

<https://www.natl-cursillo.org/> (English)

<https://www.natl-cursillo.org/espanol/inicio/> (Spanish)

<https://www.natl-cursillo.org/tieng-viet/trang-nha/> (Vietnamese)

If a Language Group registers 150 Cursillistas by April 30th, the group will be provided with simultaneous translation during the event.

There will be separate workshops in English, Spanish and Vietnamese on Saturday, July 29th. If other Language Groups register 50 Cursillistas by May 31st, they can request their own workshops.

It is expected to be a fully packed National Encounter for celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Cursillo in the United States. Come and meet Cursillistas from the “First 3-Day Cursillo held in the USA”! See you there – bring a friend!

5th World Ultreya

The 5th World Ultreya will be held in Fatima, Portugal on May 4-6, 2017. Cursillistas who wish to attend the Ultreya should follow the instructions provided on the OMCC Website at <http://www.orgmcc.org/en/>. The National Cursillo Center will not be involved in managing travel, lodging, registration, etc. for this event.

\$3/YR Campaign Update

As of January 15, 2017, the National Cursillo Center (NCC) has received a total donation of \$137,244. This amount is up 5% from November 2016. The NCC has advanced approximately \$150,000 to support establishing movements, book discounts, National Encounter registration fee reduction and vouchers to Diocesan Lay Directors. The negative balance of the \$3/YR fund has decreased from \$20K to \$13K. Continue promoting the Campaign through your Friendship Group Reunion, Ultreya, School of Leaders, Regional Encounters, workshops, personal contact, group e-mail, etc. For more information about the \$3/YR Campaign, visit <https://www.natl-cursillo.org/donate-to-cursillo>. Thank you so much for your continuous support and generosity.

Remember National Cursillo in Your Will or Living Trust

Structure your will to provide for your family first. Then include a gift to the charitable organization or movement you love. Consider leaving a legendary gift to the National Cursillo Movement when you make your will or living trust. Contact the National Cursillo Center if you decide to include the National Cursillo Movement in your will or trust so a proper gift acknowledgement can be made. Make a lasting impact through your donation. Thank you for your continuous support and generosity.

De Colores!

Hoang Tran – National Cursillo Service Administrator

Ceferino Aguillón, Jr. – National English Coordinator

Juan Ruiz – National Hispanic Coordinator

Vincent Tin Pham – National Vietnamese Coordinator