



Cursillos in Christianity National Newsletter

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The Contribution of Cursillos in Christianity in the Renewal of the Parish

Source: Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló Foundation (FEBA). An intervention by Eduardo Bonnín at the General Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome, September 21-23, 2006.

I have no other merit than to witness to what I have lived since the beginning to the present, that is, a journey of over sixty years of the Cursillos in Christianity Movement.

Cursillos in Christianity, through the grace of God, the prayers of many and the firm will of a few others, have enabled men and women to be conscious of being persons and therefore, to have a receptive ability to understand the Good News that God in Christ loves us.

When the person encounters the spirit of God, the person believes in Him and then tries to respond to his invitation by changing his perspective, focus, and horizon and therefore, experiences a sense for living.

When the 3-Day Cursillo is over, Christ can count on a few Christians who savor with much joy, the grace of being baptized and of being Christian. They are new Christians, or rather renewed Christians because they have understood the grace of being Christian in spirit and in truth.

It is not unusual that Cursillistas felt challenged by the Conciliar Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, when we read: “the Christian laity exercise their apostolate both in the Church and in the world”. The laity of true apostolic spirit provide what is lacking in their brothers, and return to the Church those who perhaps were faraway.

At the same time we understood with reason what the Pontifical Council of the Laity advised based on the quote from the Conciliar Decree, “the parish structure is at the same time, too narrow and too vast to satisfy the pastoral needs and the formation of the faithful”.

We are in line with the Synod of Bishops when they urged parishes to be truly missionary, since the pastor cannot personally follow all of his parishioners and since the parishioners cannot develop their personal lives fully in a parish environment.

We are strengthened and encouraged with the words of His Holiness John Paul II pronounced at the IV National Ultreya of Cursillo in Italy. “Your movement asks of you to be leaven in the ‘dough’ of the world.”

We are equally encouraged by the theme that his Holiness chose for the II World Ultreya in Rome: “Evangelization of environments: a challenge for Cursillos in Christianity” because that ‘dough’ and ‘environments’ is the goal and purpose of Cursillo since its origins.

Because that ‘dough’ and ‘environments’, that world, especially that of the faraway, is the place where Cursillo centers and carries out its apostolic action.

Regarding the contribution of Cursillo in the renewal of the parish, I begin by underscoring that our movement, since its inception, has a clear vision of the role of the laity in the Mission of the Church which is the apostolic objective of all the baptized and in which we must converge the person, the Gospel and the world in which we live.

An idea oriented above all in the perspective of the approach of the faraway, which are usually in the best position to understand the identity between their longing for happiness and the life of Christ as they see it being realized in other Cursillistas in whom they immediately find true friendship.

It is then when the faraway embrace and understand the Good News. The absence of previous religious-historical restraints brings out an amazing evangelical creativity in them which creates an environment in which this evangelical creativity is not an excuse, but an encouragement.

This motivation and none other is what helps make the encounter with the faraway a success. It's about a key environment that must be based on friendship and two essential elements; intimacy in the Group Reunion and universality in the Ultreya.

In Cursillo, what we have always wanted and what we joyfully commit to, through fidelity to our ideas and Foundational Charism, is a relationship and an alignment with the most genuine and pastoral focus, while proclaiming to be a Movement that has no other spirituality than that of the Church.

All this is consistent that Cursillos in Christianity is not the result of an empirical search, but rather an intuition that is progressively being transformed into a wonderful instrument whose deep foundations are rooted on the Gospel, validated by the Vatican and encouraged by recent Popes.

I believe that Cursillos in Christianity are placed beyond the individual apostolate which Vatican II ratified as essential in the life of the laity who have faith; more so than the co-associated apostolate, which seems to many people, to be the alternative vocation recommended. I believe that Cursillos are neither an organization, nor a community with specific aims, although they may have some of both.

I consider that Cursillos in Christianity are a Lay Movement; but, without being exclusively lay, as it is evident for those who have lived them in a perspective of complimentary creativeness between the laity and clergy.

In terms of the recruitment of Cursillistas, especially those who recently lived a Cursillo at the request of certain parish priests, in hope of incorporating them into various tasks or parish apostolic fields such as catechism, social justice, visiting the sick or other ministries; I consider that such requirements will not constitute a step forward in ‘being Christian’ for the Cursillista. Especially when the dispensing of new ecclesial responsibilities will take time away from their

basic Christian action in their everyday living, which is to give witness to Christ in the environment in which the Lord has placed them. Moreover, the Cursillista, like every person, has an urgent need to be understood, that is, to be loved and feel loved.

It is sad not to realize that the automatic involvement of the newly converted [Cursillistas] in parish ministries, might be depriving a genuine pastoral action from the elements most human, most spontaneous and more in tune with society and therefore the one that has more possibilities of completely 'being Christian'.

What is most innovative in Cursillo is that it motivates the lay person towards the apostolate in their specific environment [moveable square meter] with a style that is normal, his or hers, the one that God has given them, inspiring them to the joyful experience of simplifying and facilitating the path of encountering oneself and from there, to discover that the encounter with Christ and with others can be prolonged and turned into true friendship, in proportion to how it is becoming a reality in the Group Reunion and the Ultreya.

It is important to acknowledge that in the shadow of parish ministries and associations, many men, women, young people and children have been able to grow, develop and mature for the glory of the Holy Church and among them are people who are living witnesses of the efficient productiveness of the parish.

I want to stress that the type of community the world and the Church need today is one that is brought forth united in gratitude. We must take each person seriously, not for what they have or for what they know or what they can contribute, not even for what they can collaborate in the Church since all these can impede the person's maximum transparency of the fondness of God because the sense of this reality coincides with the meaning of the Gospel, which is love.

It is incomprehensible to understand the pretense of those who want to take away the role that Cursillos in Christianity has given the laity. It is, as if wanting to remove one of the liveliest stems that the Gospel, lived by the clergy and laity, have achieved in the Church, that is, to persevere and grow in Christ by means of friendship in a personal way in the Group Reunion and as a community at the Ultreya, means by which Cursillo specifically counts with to mature and grow.

The Group Reunion, which is friendship taken to the supernatural level, creates a circumstance that facilitates in life a continuous and progressive living of what is fundamental to being Christian, where the personal sharing with others enables us to give our best to as many as possible.

I conclude with the words of Pope Ratzinger's report on Faith: "What resonates from one end to the other of the universal Church with tones of hope, is the birth of new Movements that nobody plans or summons and they arise out of the intrinsic vitality of the Church. A wonderful encounter that the Spirit is once again, more powerful than our projects . . . The renewal is quiet, but it advances with much efficacy."

2017 National Encounter – 60th Anniversary of Cursillo

The National Encounter will be held on July 27-30, 2017 at Trinity University 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 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 or more Cursillistas by May 31st, they can request their own workshops.

It is expected to be a fully packed National Encounter as we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Cursillo in the United States. Come meet the Cursillistas of the First 3-Day Cursillo held in the USA in 1957! 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 March 30, 2017, the National Cursillo Center (NCC) has received a total donation of \$143,294. This amount is up 4% from January 2017. The \$3/YR Campaign was introduced in June 2013. 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 \$13K to \$7K. 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

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