



Cursillos in Christianity National Newsletter

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2017 National Encounter & 60th Anniversary Highlights

The 27th National Cursillo Encounter was held at Trinity University in the Archdiocese of San Antonio in Texas during July 27-30, 2017. The Encounter was an enlightening and spirit-filled experience with 740 Cursillistas from 7 language groups from all over the United States gathered in one place to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Cursillo in the USA. The Encounter was blessed with the presence of 4 Bishops, more than 50 priests and several deacons and 4 International guests. The Encounter was also an opportunity to share in friendship and continue the journey towards a *unity of purpose and understanding* of the Charism of Cursillo, its Founder, and its History.



The success of the Encounter, first of all, is attributed to God's grace, the Cursillistas' participation and the great teamwork among volunteer Cursillistas in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Region VIII, Trinity University Staff, National Encounter Committees, and National Secretariat and Staff. Everyone's enthusiasm, service, friendship, leadership, and contributions are greatly appreciated! THANK YOU!

The following presentations were provided during this year's National Encounter.

- The Keynote Address, ***Evangelization in the Environments***, was presented by Most Rev. Francisco Senra Coelho, OMCC Spiritual Advisor.
- ***Why We Have Cursillo*** was presented by Marg Weber from Canada.
- ***The History of Cursillo in the USA*** was presented by Louis Salinas and Fr. Stephan Jasso – Cursillistas from the 1st 3-Day Cursillo held in 1957 in the USA.
- ***Cursillo Past, Present, & Future*** was presented by Hoang Tran.
- ***Popes, Cursillo, and Charisms*** was presented by Gail Terrana.
- ***Step-by-Step Manual*** was presented by Conchita Mayorga.
- ***Cursillo and the Parish*** was presented by Fr. Joseph Vu and Vincent Pham.
- ***Group Reunion and Ultreya*** was presented by Holly Wentworth, Vincent Pham, Flor de Maria Alvarez, and Fausto Dâmaso from Portugal.

Copies of all the presentations will be posted on the Cursillo Resource Center at <https://www.natl-cursillo.org> in the near future.

As Cursillistas, we thank God and our Founder for the gift of Cursillo and for this opportunity to come together as the Mystical Body of Christ to celebrate this blessed milestone, 60 years of Cursillo in the United States, 1957-2017! Congratulations and Happy 60th Anniversary to all Cursillistas in the USA!

2018 National Encounter

Preliminary plans are in progress to sign a contract with the Seattle University to hold the 2018 National Encounter on August 16-19, 2018. More information about the encounter will be provided at a later date when the contract is finalized.

Convocation of Catholic Leaders

Sixteen National Cursillo delegates participated in this historical event with approximately 3,500 other Catholic Leaders in Orlando, FL in July 2017. For many of us, the joy of the Convocation felt very much like the joy experienced during a National Cursillo Encounter. The clergy and lay leaders who attended the convocation exemplified the Mystical Body of Christ.



The Convocation was a response to Pope Francis’s call to all Catholics in *Evangelii Gaudium*, The Joy of the Gospel and the need for us to become Missionary Disciples in America. Pope Francis encouraged the Church to enter a “new phase of evangelization” as Missionary Disciples – a phase marked by ongoing “missionary conversion”. The pastoral and missionary conversion called for by Pope Francis includes an initiation into the “art of accompaniment”. This accompaniment leads others closer to God as “a pilgrimage with Christ to the Father.”

The goal of the Convocation was to enter a deep reflection and creative movement that helps Catholics celebrate, implement, and live out the key principles of *Evangelii Gaudium*. The Convocation participants were enlightened by the many dynamic speakers, lay and clergy, and their witness of discipleship which naturally led to an open dialogue among the everyone. Participants listened to bishops and key lay leaders explore the major themes of the Convocation through stories, ideas, exhortation, presentations and panel conversations.

Below are some excerpts from the Convocation presentations.¹

Reaching everyone [including the faraway] is not a lofty, unattainable goal; it is the mission of the Church. It is vitally important for the Church today to go forth and preach the Gospel to all: to all places on all occasions, without hesitation, reluctance or fear. The joy of the Gospel is for all people; no one can be excluded.

Reaching everyone means providing the baptized with the means by which they encounter Christ, deepen communion with one another, and go forth to witness to the world in word and deed. We are a people of continual conversion in and through Christ, not simply as individual members of the community of faith, but as the Church, together. The important thing is to not walk alone, but to rely on each other as brothers and sisters.

The participants were called to follow the ideal of the first Christian communities, in which the believers were of one heart and soul because true unity – communion – fosters missionary

¹ This article is a compilation of ideas shared during the Convocation.

outreach, and mission nurtures and strengthens unity. The Convocation was a time to accompany one another and to collaborate for the good of the whole Church.

The Convocation stressed a team approach. We do not evangelize alone or in a vacuum; we need each other. All the baptized have a role to play. We are united as one Body of Christ, the Church, while recognizing the different roles and responsibilities that various members have.

The Convocation stressed the importance of studying the landscape [environment], that is, to be aware of the local landscape in the United States since effective missionary work requires knowing the people we are trying to reach: their hopes, fears, beliefs, engagement with the faith, etc.

Pope Francis has challenged the Church to continue to go out, to go forth from our comfort zone, to the peripheries in search of those who are in need of the light of the Gospel and in need of the Lord Jesus Christ and of his mercy and grace through the Church, his Body.

As missionary disciples, Catholic leaders are not just managers or administrators but spiritual leaders who love Jesus Christ, are faithful to the mission of the Church, and can inspire others by being responsive to the vocation, gifts, and charisms that have been given to them by the Lord.

Pope Francis defines the “Spirit-filled evangelizer” in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Leaders are people of prayer in tune with God’s voice. Leaders are conscious of the mission field around them and willing to go beyond their comfort zone to embrace and engage others. Leaders actively seek out the lost, like the shepherd who left ninety-nine and went in search of the lost sheep to bring them home. Leaders are well-formed for the work of ministry and apostolate: emotionally, intellectually, spiritually and culturally. In addition to these personal qualities, missionary disciples follow a four-step journey as leaders: regular reflection of their encounter with Christ, accompanying others on their journey toward Christ, making the community a place of welcome and fellowship, and finally, the leaders are sent to evangelize outside the walls of their communities and churches [moveable square meter].

Several of the topics and witnesses that were shared during the Convocation confirmed what the Cursillo Movement has been engaged in since its origins. God is good!

As with the 3-Day Cursillo, the Convocation was a personal encounter and experience; therefore, it is difficult to document everything that was lived by each participant. However, the renewed joy and enthusiasm lived during the Convocation, should lead us to become spirit-filled evangelizers with a renewed conviction of *being Christian* in our everyday environments in order to continue communicating God’s love through friendship to all men and women in all places and all circumstances. Mary, Star of Evangelization, Pray for us!

\$3/YR Campaign Update

As of July 31, 2017, the National Cursillo Center (NCC) has received a total donation of \$153,394. This amount is up 4% from May 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. Please 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.

Amazon Smile Foundation and Cursillo

The National Cursillo Movement has been successfully registered with the Amazon Smile Program as a non-profit organization eligible to receive donations through the 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 Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the eligible non-profit organization of your choice. Therefore, you can start supporting National Cursillo Movement by visiting <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/46-0563788>.

If we can inform 100,000 Cursillistas about this program, the National Cursillo Center will receive an annual donation of \$200K to \$400K from Amazon Smile.

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