



Succession Planning

Presented by Gloria Miranda, Region I Coordinator, at the 28th National Cursillo Encounter held at Seattle University in the Archdiocese of Seattle – August 18, 2018.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

My name is Gloria M. Miranda.

I'm from where Maria left a big mark, Puerto Rico. I will not make a personal presentation because it is in the Program that we all received. I urge you to read it.

I am going to talk about "Succession Plan".

You might ask, what does Succession Plan in Cursillo mean, since there are no kings and no heirs that can take the succession of the movement, because in Cursillos, there is no king. In the United States, we have a president, and if that president cannot complete his term, the vice president automatically assumes the presidency. It also happens in private companies. However, from the beginning of the Movement there was already a **Succession Plan.** (let's see how)

According to the History of the Cursillo Movement in Spain, "The Cursillo Movement was born with a universal vocation and, starting in Mallorca, it will expand throughout the world." A letter from Father Joseph Angel Saiz Meneses in Barcelona in 1993 says: "*We cannot live from our memories. Life is something more. We cannot stagger (paralyze) thinking of yesterday. We have to project tomorrow's impression and the lesson of the days, which by the grace of God allowed us to live.*" ... "*We clearly see the intention of continuity. The view of the future is clear and determined ...*"

In the book "*My Spiritual Testament*" by Eduardo Bonnín, it said the following in Chapter II: "I am entrusted to those who come after me: "*As it is said that the knowledge of the Cursillo Movement of Christianity is the most important of the goods that I possess and I believe that the best that I can bequeath to those who come after me, is to leave written and detailed what it consists of, what is its purpose and what are the objectives that the Movement should pursue.*"

If we have read about Cursillo, we will realize that the future of the Movement was planned from the beginning as a Charism, not by the work of the founders, but by the work of God.

It was here, when I was looking for a description on succession, that I found in the newspaper El País - El Empresario - of Uruguay: *"The succession plans are the planning and execution of an orderly continuity of the people in critical positions, and it has a restricted character. Why restricted? Because the focus is on critical positions and key people."* Although, this description is heard of more in companies that want to be successful, it is also the key point for the success of the Cursillo.

I am going to mention four steps to follow, which you can write down, but leave space after each step to add something else:

1. Identify people with potential and availability;
2. Discover the potential or talents, and knowledge of the person;
3. Engage and include the person in activities as a leader; and
4. Improve the commitment of the person.

○ **Let's take a look at the First Step: Identify people with potential and availability.**

In the Leaders Manual, under Precursillo, Selection of Candidates states: *"The selection criteria must always be made taking into account the effectiveness of the candidate as a ferment of their environment and circumstances."* As we can see, everything in Cursillo begins with the Precursillo. That is why we need to know the candidates to recognize their potential and their circumstances. However, the reality in our dioceses is that the cost and limitation of the number of candidates that we can take to a Cursillo has become a problem that leads me to ask the following question: Does your diocese focus on having weekends and not on incorporating new Cursillistas on the fourth day?

It also tells us that *"The purpose will always be to structure Christianity, wherever it is, with strong vertebrae and life-giving energy."* And it goes on to say: ... *"it will be necessary to look at those who are the backbone of this society today, that is, the people who make up the living nerve of opinion, influence and prestige."* If we do not encourage the new Cursillistas to incorporate the fourth day, they will not be agents of change. Eduardo Bonnin said in Stories of a Charism: *"When the Gospel and its latent and powerful effectiveness flows, it influences and converges where it should, and portrays humanity authentically, it makes it dynamic, guides it and directs it towards its most wholesome plenitude. And this happens without any agents to entangle it, and without plans drawn up by others, that seek to build Christian structures, where one can easily obtain the Christian label without being one, neither in spirit nor in truth."* Likewise, it is when we have our own plans for the new Cursillistas, often with good intentions, that we obstruct and entangle their potential and availability, and therefore they do not reach that complete wholesomeness.

When new Cursillistas have the help needed to persevere in their diocese and share the three fundamental elements of the Movement: Piety, Study and Action in their Group Meeting and in the Ultreya, this is when a person will forever live the Fundamental Christian experience. And through the love of God and love of neighbor, they will encounter themselves with Christ and with their brothers and sisters. As such, the new Cursillistas will return to their environments as an instrument of encouragement and will themselves mold society with Christianity, making them authentic Christians; but we, as leaders, have the responsibility to sustain them in their continuous and progressive spiritual growth in our Ultreyas as well as in the School of Leaders.

○ **Second Step: Discover the potential or talents and knowledge of the person.**

This is what happens when a new Cursillista becomes the new man, the man or woman redeemed in Christ. He makes use of every opportunity to employ the gifts and talents he has received: faith, hope, charity, and his openness to the word of God, his life of prayer, his availability to the Spirit, and the love that characterizes our relationship with Christ. "*Know yourself*" is an expression attributed to Socrates, who recommends paying attention to the inner voice, the voice of conscience, of the soul, knowing oneself is very complex because it is something that is changing all the time.

A recent study from the University of Santa Clara, CA, suggests that having a vocation is essential for emotional well-being. It is also important for new Cursillistas to know, that it is never too late to discover their potential and talents, since this can happen at any age, resulting in a major change in motivation and well-being, both for them and for others.

The book *Fundamental Ideas* defines the structure of the School of Leaders as follows: "*It is a group of Christians who, united by and in a climate of Group Meeting, seek to be more focused, to accelerate the experience of the fundamental Christian in themselves, in the Cursillo Movement and in the environments where they move.*"

We all know that during the Three Days of the Cursillo weekend, there is no mention of the School of Leaders, however, it is important and necessary to speak to the new Cursillistas about the School in their diocese, the days, place and time they meet, and invite them to attend as soon as they leave the Cursillo to be presented. Also, their Sponsors should attend with them, to both the Ultreya, and the School of Leaders. It is at the School where they come face to face with those who live the 4th Day in a different way. There, they will also see many people who attended the Closure, they should feel welcomed, and this should give them a sense of belonging. It is good that they understand the importance and the purpose of the Schools, because there they will realize that the Movement goes beyond the Three Days, that there are Cursillistas at the diocesan, regional, national and world levels. It is at the School where Cursillistas who have questions should receive answers. The School is essential for the continuous development of the Movement. My question to you is: ... did you know that there was a School of Leaders before living your

Cursillo? I think the answers will vary. I didn't know anything about the School and like me, neither did other people in my diocese.

Testimony:

After living my Cursillo, I was invited to attend the School of Leaders, which I did immediately. The more I attended, the more I was struck by the dynamics and the knowledge I was acquiring. I was one of the youngest at that time, I was only 35. I started reading, because I was thirsty to learn and learn more about the Movement ... And the more I read, the more questions I asked, and the answers at the beginning were answered, but over time, I questioned some things, because they did not correspond with what I read. However, I felt frustrated, and I felt that I was bothering people with my questions and so I felt turned down. Then, for many years I did what was told, but always thinking that there had to be a way to correct the things that I thought had to be corrected. However, it took over twenty (20) years for changes to happen and although everything was done with the best intentions and all those who served in the Cursillo did it with a lot of love, things got worse. Since then, I always worried about a "Succession Plan". Who can take this movement forward as faithfully as possible? And here I am, 26 years later, ready to take this torch to others for the good of the Movement, because it is not mine to keep. Is something that I was entrusted with? When I was selected to serve as Regional Coordinator, I was very upset with God because I did not want to be in service at my age, so I asked for forgiveness. I also asked Eduardo Bonnín to intercede for me, because I'm not the best apprentice and I told him to be clear about what he wanted from me, but to help me. And I tell you brothers and sisters, that he has been with me all the time, and not only have I felt the help of Bonnín, but the hand of God.

In the book: Vertebración de Ideas, under Treatment of the Individual (pág. 65), it says: "One month after the Cursillo weekend, approximately, the attitude of those with the most or better aptitude will be observed. Those who stand out, by order of those who have the most to offer, will be invited to a personal "treatment"... and it continues: *its purpose is shaping their mentality and pushing the intentionality needed to become effective lay leaders.*" I have not personally heard of this "Treatment", but I think that I was identified before and after the Cursillo by my brother and sister Cursillistas, which allowed me to develop my potential and talents both known and unknown to me, which I have put in the hands of the church and of the Cursillo movement ever since I lived my Cursillo.

○ **Third Step: Engage and include the person in activities as leader.**

Something we should understand as leaders is that, in the Cursillo movement **DOES NOT** need ambitious people or those with a desire for power. As Cursillistas, we need to understand that, our primary mission is to keep our service intact, and that we do not have control of the Movement. As Leaders, we need to be responsible and transparent in the legacy entrusted to us. Within the Cursillo Movement, Lay Directors, Spiritual Advisors, and members of the Secretariat are called to be firm in the truth, even if it makes them more

or less popular, because it threatens the security of the service of others. As Cursillistas and good Catholics, because we were baptized we have the responsibility to take our brothers to God no matter what title they may have. And as Cursillistas the responsibility becomes more important, because we are called to evangelize our environments.

Does your Secretariat or the Schools of Leaders invite the new Cursillistas to serve in Cursillos? This is a good way to include them and commit them. Many times, we feel better inviting our friends, and people who have worked in other Cursillos, without taking into account that it is one of the best ways to engage the new Cursillistas. As we know, when we listen to the Rollos for the second time, we absorb much more than the first time, and have a better understanding.

Do we strive to form the Cursillo teams from those who attend the School, the Ultreya and participate in Group Meetings? It is important that the Leaders who serve the Three Days of Cursillo give a living testimony of their fourth day. I have heard of dioceses that struggle with this. However, we must work, to accomplish this goal little by little and motivate and help those who want to learn, grow and improve their commitment to the movement to achieve this. That is why it is necessary to identify these people immediately after the Cursillo.

Are we worried about maintaining a position, instead of looking for another person? Why is it so difficult for us to get others to participate in Cursillo service? Do you have ideas of what your diocese can do to help find solutions?

As a Regional Coordinator, I speak constantly with the Service Team of our Region. I ask for opinions and ideas, we plan as a team, sometimes by phone due to distance, we do everything for and by the Movement. I have an open dialogue with them and I count on them for everything, because one of them will be the next Coordinator for the Region, and it is very important that we all agree on what we do and how we do it for the good of the region.

- **The fourth and last step: *Improve the commitment of the person.***

One of the challenges we have in the movement is to encourage and develop a commitment to the people of the movement at all levels. The commitment is easy to define as Webster's Dictionary describes: "it is an agreement or commitment to do something in the future or a state of being emotionally driven."

After the weekend, we were on fire and ready to change and with a great desire to change our environment. I imagine that most of you felt the same, but how long did it last? That is why, if we do not do something to keep the candle lit, it will eventually fade, and that has happened to many people that I know. Are we allowing our members on the fourth day to forget what they experienced at the Cursillo?

We need to understand what commitment means. We need to determine the obstacles that prevent us from increasing our commitment, and a plan to overcome those obstacles. Because when we help others reach their full potential and commitment to the Cursillo Movement, it is when we make it stronger and more effective.

We already mentioned some of the ways to promote continued growth and what it means to be a full Christian, in the Group Meeting, Ultreya and School of Leaders. Another is the Secretariat- which is where the responsibility and service of all aspects of the Movement lies. Regional and national activities also offer opportunities for growth.

When was the last time your diocese offered a workshop or a CDC?

Have you had a retreat for Cursillistas?

Is the community of the 4th day promoting and encouraging people to attend the School of Leaders, the Ultreya, whether Parochial, Diocesan, Inter-parochial, or to the Closure? How about attending a regional Encounter?

How many of them have attended the National Encounter with people from all States and various linguistic groups?

Something that has improved the Commitment in our Region I in the last year has been the Cursillo de Cursillos. It is an excellent way to expand the knowledge of the Movement and the commitment on the 4th day. This three-day workshop offers a lot of information and a living experience of the mentality, essence, purpose and method of the movement. Four (4) of our eight (8) dioceses have had a Cursillo de Cursillos. The goal is for the eight dioceses to have a CDC.

Matthew 28:19 gives a mandate to his Friendship Group, to the apostles, and says, "*Go, then, and make all peoples my disciples.*" This is the same mandate that we received as an inheritance in Cursillo. All this through the Charism that God granted Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló, and that he voluntarily accepted to execute. Which, together with his friends after much prayer, much study and deep reflection, they thought, structured and set in motion in a silver platter.

The Cursillo de Cursillos are accomplished by having a Service Team that is committed, ready, and available to serve vigorously in order to succeed, like the apostles. And I thank God, because our Region I has an accountable team such as this.

To conclude:

In the book *My Spiritual Testament*, Jesús Valls Flores wrote the following:

Who are the heirs of Eduardo? It could be applied here, too, in regard to Eduardo's heritage, many are called and very few are chosen, in the most accurate translation of the "chosen ones". The one who can be considered an heir is he who embodies the grace of

this special Charism in the Church and remains enthusiastic in the continuous apostolic plan acknowledging that God loves them. The heritage of Eduardo cannot be embodied by a single person, rather I acknowledge, that it can only happen within the friendship of a group of people, that have understood what Eduardo intended with the Cursillos. It is not possible, then, from my point of view, for the existence of a sole successor rather it is only possible to share life, to think and pray in friendship. Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló 13 Testamento lucida 23/9/08 18:00 Page 13 , so that the genuineness, singularity and originality of the style of this method, which has given so many fruits, will continue to develop, being even more sure what it has to give of itself.

I ask you now:

Do you feel heirs of the Cursillo Movement? Only you have the answer.

The torch of which I spoke to you at the beginning, I share it, it is not mine, we all share it.

DE COLORES!