

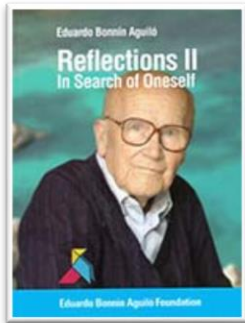


Cursillos in Christianity National Newsletter

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

God Comes To Encounter Us

Source: Reflections II, In Search of Oneself by Eduardo Bonnín.



Eduardo Bonnín was known for using index cards for writing his thoughts. He used the information as an outline when he had to speak to an audience. Some of the index cards contain a single thought or idea, but others are actual outlines.

This is the most revolutionary statement found in the New Testament: God seeks man because He loves us. He comes to encounter us pretending He has just bumped into us, and He does so even with the person who would never seek Him.

Maybe it's because we have let ourselves be carried away by Greek metaphysics, that we have put forward the problem of God's dealings with man in an erroneous, non-biblical perspective. The Bible portrays a God who seeks us and pursues us with a comprehensible interest. The mystery of the Incarnation is proof of this.

God is inaccessible, but He made Himself accessible in Jesus Christ. The "Unmentionable" became a man and took the name of Jesus, which means Savior. The God of the Cursillistas is the God of Jesus, not the God of the philosophers. He is a faithful Father whose paternity is evident in His goodness and love.

God makes Himself quite close to man. Through His love, God removes the distance between Himself and man, and all His majesty becomes intimacy and servitude. He who is Lord, is also a friend, and He who once asked us to confess our sins, brings us to the affirmation of our possibilities. Our hope, interest and desire are revived because we are in the presence of the Master and Friend.

If God is love, as revealed in The Holy Scriptures, God can only be known through the experience of love. It is not through pure intelligence that man attains the knowledge of God. "He who doesn't love", says John the Evangelist, "has no idea of God, because God is love."

The knowledge of God and personal experience are therefore inseparable. It is impossible to speak of God from the outside, with logical deductive arguments. Only someone who has been encountered by Him, who has had a personal experience of this divine encounter, can break the silence and talk about the Divinity. "Everything I've written about God seems pure hoax or sham to me," admitted Thomas Aquinas at the end of his Summa Theologica. He left this work unfinished, abandoning the conceptual way to set out on the path of love and contemplation.

When someone realizes that God loves him, the fact that one day they will have to account to Him for their life, is now hardly of any account, because it is now seen from a different perspective.

Every single religion teaches, in one way or another, what man has done and is doing to approach God. The Christian religion — Christ's religion — lies in believing and bearing witness with one's own life to what God has done to approach man.

Any idea of God that doesn't depict Him as love, is actually distorting His true image.

The wonderful astonishment that God loves me places me at a level at which the first commandment becomes unquestionable. And it emphasizes that, besides it being so nice to act gratefully, it is undoubtedly right and necessary. Then you realize that God does not observe you as a policeman would, but He looks at you with interest and passionate love, as a father watches his son or a grandfather his grandchildren.

The biblical tradition shows that man's encounter with God always occurs in the world, in the particular life of man. It is in this specific context — sometimes painful — where the person should strive to discover the traces of God. Moreover, I consider it dishonest to parcel reality out and assert a partial presence of God in it. God is present in the whole of reality; He is mysteriously involved in all areas of history and human experience.

We should speak less about God and talk more often with Him. We should, above all, listen to Him when he speaks to us. Let God speak to you; listen to His word, His Gospel, that is the bridge that unites truth with reality and reality with truth.

I believe in just one God. Psychologically speaking, this means that there is only one source, a beginning, an entity from which all life flows and to which all life returns. We can never get lost, because we are already home.

God loves us. He knows that we exist, what we are and who we are. He knows us, He accepts and loves us. He marvels at us and gets excited about us. He always has us in mind. He does not want us to be accountable to Him for what we did, all He wants is that we take into account that He loves us; that He is not only seeing us, but He is looking at us. That He not only hears us, but He is listening to us. You need to move from the commandment of having to "love God" to the Good News that God loves you in Christ.

The kingdom of God is within each of us. He wants a place within you. Make room for Him in your heart.

We make up a God that suits us best, because we do not know or do not accept the real measure of God. Men think that religion is a shelter that prevails against the dangers of the beyond, and an excuse to avoid having to face the problems that confront us.

God is an obvious reality in all of us, in each of us, either through its clarity or its obscurity, through His presence or His absence, on the surface or deep within. You are called to clarify it, to bear witness to it, to go deeper into it.

Although the world is “De Colores”, the x-ray images are still in black and white. If we are sensible and responsible Christians and the best of our intention is usually directed at God, we can benefit from everything that happens to us. If we like it, we thank God, if we do not like it, we offer it up to Him.

Since we were children, we have been told that if we do something wrong, God sees us, and we acquired the wrong idea that God was a policeman always spying on us. But the reality is quite different, rather than seeing us, the Lord is looking at us, and He looks at us with interest, with eyes full of hope and love; the way a father looks at his son, or a grandfather looks at his grandchildren. Between God and man there is a privileged unique and all-understanding relationship.

When someone is in a dire circumstance, an illness, an accident, the loss of a beloved person, etc., there is always someone who will speak to them about religion, and, in this way, religion appears to be very closely linked to something difficult or problematic. For these occasions we have a collection of uninspired phrases, not just a few, to get by. To someone who broke their leg, some pious soul will try to convince them that they should thank God for not having broken the other one also. But when that same person, under different circumstances, is enjoying normal hours of pleasure and happiness, nobody reminds them that God is sharing their joy and pleasure.

Friendship with God is the best guarantee of friendship with others.

God is not tantamount to a solution on which we can rest. He is rather a light that helps us find the solution. He never lets us sweet-talk Him into our words and schemes, our concepts or our experience. According to the well-known statement of St. Augustine He is always greater, always transcendent and yet close, more intimate to us than ourselves. He is the absolute remoteness and the absolute closeness. He is an absolute presence, like the presence of the beloved face, breathtaking scenery, the certainty of hope. He is the EVERYTHING.

A Christian must not audit God.

The Absolute is absolute by nature, always. The absolute act is God who became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Christ, the Absolute manifests Himself to you, because He wants your own good. Through the living and enthusiastic person of Christ, the Absolute is made attainable to you, and accessible and realistic in you, who are a conscious and growing member of His Mystical Body.

The eternal values are the only ones that give value, fullness and meaning to temporary values. Your personality will surface, progress and assert itself to the extent you project the Absolute into your life. The fullness of life comes only with the exact conjunction, in due time and place, of the absolute and the relative.

God is at the tip of your intention, in the bow of your being. He is not there for you to distinguish between good and evil, but for you to realize that being best is something more than good.

Yes, we must love God. But most important is the Good News that God loves us. Is it not a serious concern that so many people in our environment ignore that God loves them?

Everything God wills is clear and concrete. When the devil cannot tempt a person to do bad things, he tries to entrap them by suggesting to them to do many good things, to go beyond their limits, so that they will feel overwhelmed, tired and do them all badly.

Without a firm foundation in God, society breaks up, not all of a sudden, but in a kind of gradual and inevitable disintegration. Only the social acknowledgement and acceptance of a transcendent foundation can save society from its slow degradation.

The great values without which no true humanity can exist, reason, freedom, progress, justice, fraternity, will soon become unattainable if they are not nourished by faith in a living God. They will soon be reduced to lifeless ideals, constantly under the threat of lies and demagoguery.

We need to play fair with the things of God, and we must take the world of men very seriously.

If God was just an idea, an abstraction, something vague, our life would be meaningless. If our life is meaningful it is because we keep finding God in Christ, in a living, normal and near to us Christ, as He is described and portrayed in the Gospel.

God always forgives, men forgive sometimes, and life never does.

God exists, He insists, and He assists. At the Three Day Cursillo the Cursillista becomes aware that God is and exists. Then, through prayer, he realizes that He insists through His Grace, and at the Group Reunion he perceives that He also assists, because “where two or three are gathered in His name, He is there among them.”

Only in the nearness of God, in communion with Him, can man find the meaning of his life.

For Christian people the signs of the times are a sort of assessment of the mess caused by the absence of God.

Human reality has neither explanation nor meaning if it is conceived as something separated from the real world. But the Christian God doesn't place man before a finished and perfect world, in front of which only acceptance or rejection would be possible. He rather calls man to transform and perfect the universe. The world is not a result achieved from the beginning; on the contrary, the world is full of fractures and non-transparency that call for nonconformity and a transforming effort.

Step by Step Rector's Guide Update

The Regional Coordinators and their teams have completed the one-day introductory workshop based on the Step by Step Rector's Guide during the April-May Spring 2019 Regional Encounters. The feedback has been positive and the attendance has been to maximum capacity in some regions!

Thank you for your presence and participation during the workshop. The next step is for each Diocesan Secretariat to continue reviewing and studying the Guide so they in turn can provide the same workshop to the School of Leaders. It is very important for the Diocesan Secretariat and School of Leaders to arrive at a “*unity of purpose and understanding*” of the Step by Step Rector's

Guide before using in the Three Day Cursillo. Take all the time needed, no need to rush.

The Regional Service Teams are available to assist the Diocesan Secretariat in offering the Step by Step Rector's Guide workshop to the School of Leaders if needed.

These are exciting times in the United States Cursillo Movement, because of the opportunity to continue living and sharing the 'legacy' of our Founder and the gift of the Foundational Charism of Cursillo.

“The recognition and acceptance of this legacy is not a question of principles, but of embracing a natural apostolate. The rightful heir of this legacy is the person who expresses their enthusiastic ‘yes’ to the invitation of the unique method that Cursillo proposes. Therefore, this legacy cannot be embraced by one person, but by a group of people who journey in the company of friends.”
(My Spiritual Testament)

2019 National Encounter

The 29th National Encounter will be held on July 18-21, 2019 at the University of Scranton, a beautiful Jesuit University, which is centrally located in the Northeast region of Pennsylvania. The University is located approximately 8 miles from the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport (AVP).

This Encounter will be special as the US Cursillo Movement joins Cursillistas from Mallorca in the joyful celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the First Cursillo which was held in Cala Figuera in August 1944. It is expected to be a fully packed encounter with special guests from Mallorca, hundreds of Cursillistas, clergy, laity, and religious from the United States Cursillos' various language groups consisting of English, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, and Vietnamese. The registration for the 29th National Encounter is open! Register today! See you there – bring a friend!

Visit the 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)

\$3/YR Campaign, Founder's Beatification Process & Amazon Smile

The National Cursillo Center (NCC) has received a total donation of \$203,523 to the \$3/YR Campaign from June 2013 to May 2019. The NCC has advanced \$195,000 to support Dioceses that are establishing or re-establishing Cursillo in the US, financial support for the North America Caribbean Group (NACG), provide book discounts, reduced National Encounter registration fee and vouchers to Diocesan Lay Directors.

The Beatification process for Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló will cost about \$45,000. Your prayers and financial support to further the Cause of Beatification is greatly appreciated. Contact the National Cursillo Center at admin@natl-cursillo.org or 512-746-2020 if you would like to make a donation for this cause.

Shop Amazon and they will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the National Cursillo Center. To-date, the National Cursillo Center has received \$1,899 from the Smile Amazon Foundation thanks to the participation of many Cursillistas' shopping at Amazon!

Continue promoting the \$3/YR Campaign and Amazon Smile through your Friendship Group Reunion, Ultreya, School of Leaders, Regional Encounters, workshops, personal contact, group email, etc. For more information about the \$3/YR Campaign and Amazon Smile, visit <https://www.natl-cursillo.org/donate-to-cursillo>. Thank you so much 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