



PRECURSILLO

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I.-INTRODUCTION

I have been begging the Lord for a long time now, asking him to help me hit the target with the subject that I am now presenting to you, namely the “Precursillo”.

If you ever visit the website of the Foundation E. Bonnin and you listen to Eduardo’s voice, you will discover that when he talks about “Precursillo”, he always addresses all of us; he doesn’t just speak to the Weekend team leaders.

*He wishes that we all can understand once and for all that **the Precursillo belongs to all of us; it is not only a mission of the team**, and if we have understood what Cursillo aims for ... that the Best News that God loves us reaches the most possible people ... we all should always be in the attitude of Precursillo to ANNOUNCE AND INFECT OTHERS WITH THE JOY OF THE FAITH, THE JOY OF FEELING BELOVED BY GOD. And, with the attitude of “Postcursillo”, we should accompany in friendship all those who have already attended a Cursillo weekend.*

II.- DEFINITION

WHAT

IS

PRECURSILLO

Yesterday, in the rollo of “Essence and Purpose”, we were told what The Cursillo Movement is and what it is aiming for.

Well then, PRECURSILLO is the first phase of the method of the Cursillo Movement. It is the first phase of a circular movement.

The Precursillo generates Cursillo weekends, Cursillo weekends generate Postcursillos, and, in turn Postcursillos generate Precursillos.

III.-PURPOSE..... 1) The purpose of Precursillo is the same as that of the other two phases - Cursillo and Postcursillo.

THAT THE GOOD NEWS THAT GOD LOVES US, IS HEARD BY AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE.

THAT NOBODY LIVES WITHOUT KNOWING THAT GOD LOVES THEM

THROUGH FRIENDSHIP with oneself, with God and with the brothers.

2) Precursillo is not for our friends to go to a Cursillo weekend, the Precursillo, as well as the whole Movement, is there for our friends to discover that God loves them.

From the very beginning, in Cursillo we say that it is not about presenting ourselves as nice people and do our best to invite them to attend a Cursillo weekend but “ to become friends with them in order to make them friends of Christ”

Today’s man is living lost and overwhelmed, and he needs to entertain himself and have a good time; his purpose is to have fun, without realizing that everything is set up to prevent us from thinking and to lure us into consumerism.

It is important that in our relationship with friends, they come to start wondering and increasingly to realize that “they are missing something” and that everything that entertains them is no longer satisfying ... Love, Money and our bodies are continually being depleted.

It is about realizing that we are connected to something that never fails.

IV.- THE TEAM LEADERS

I would like to tell you how we manage in Mallorca, from the beginning of Cursillo, the Team Leaders election in each Cursillo for men and women. The Secretariat appoints a Rector and this person, through prayer, looks for his leaders team. He chooses the leaders among cursillistas who have group reunion and normally attend the Ultreyas. It might happen that a good cursillista cannot temporarily attend Ultreya or have Group Reunion, but he is really regretting not being able to share Ultreya or Group Reunion. In that case, he could also be a good Leader for the Weekend Cursillo.

V.- HOW THE PRECURSILLO SHOULD BE

And all this wonderful instrument that we manage is beautiful and important enough to prepare it without reflection.

The PRECURSILLO, like any apostolic plan, has to be: PRAYED-PLANNED AND PERFECTED.

VI - PRAYED FOR. 1) *I start with prayer as the first and most important requirement for a Cursillo (to take place).*

Of course we throw out the nets and put the work, but if the Lord does not produce the wonder, nobody will discover that God loves them.

2) *And for this, the first step is to put the Precursillo and our action in the hands of the Lord. And prayer must prevail over all the*

actions of the Precursillo, prayers of all the cursillistas in the Ultreya; prayer of the leaders when they prepare their rollo. Retreats or prayer carried out by the team leaders.

In the Precursillo, the team leaders would have to dedicate the biggest percentage of the time praying for the spiritual success of the Cursillo weekend, and the rest of the time getting to know the candidates and preparing the rollos.

The rollos have to be prepared but, above all, they have to be prayed about, in the conviction that the Lord will supply the spirit, otherwise they will be just words, words more or less well pronounced but they don't touch anyone's Heart.

3) And of course, we count on the "palancas and prayers" that we ask and receive from outside our country, from cursillistas all over the world. The prayers that we ask and receive from parishes, convents and monasteries in our country.

And really because we are convinced of the power of prayer, in one of the last Cursillo weekends held in Majorca, apart from the ones mentioned above, we asked Majorcan parishes (about 150), and more than 100 convents and prayer communities on the island, for support prayers.

VII – PLANNED..... 1) *We all know that in any task of life we never rely on improvisation. That is why there are apostolic plans. Apostolic plans that are born in Group Reunions and the Ultreya.*

A Group Reunion and an Ultreya, without the apostolic wish of Precursillo and the attendance and support of the Postcursillo, may fall into a state of atrophy. The plan of Precursillo and Postcursillo is a plan for our whole life as Christians. It is a plan that begins in the Gospel. It is the only commandment of Jesus: To love God and to love people.

2) *I think that one of our failures is that we work on Precursillo only in the previous weeks of Cursillo weekends. We are not looking at the person always through the lens of our friendship; sometimes we are just looking for a candidate.*

When Eduardo speaks of Precursillo (I refer to C. Cursillos of the year 1998) he talks about dates and candidates.

It happens sometimes that due to dates and other unforeseen problems, although the team leaders, with the help of Ultreya, have done their best to organize the Cursillo Weekend there is only a short time to prepare the Cursillo. In such a case, when it turns out that there are only 5 or 10 candidates, and the Cursillo cannot be postponed, in that case the Weekend should not be cancelled. But of course, this is an exception.

3) *What is also clear is that this exception cannot give way to stop aiming for the true goal of Cursillo, that is that as many people as possible can discover that God loves them I would say more ... as the Cursillo is such an uncommon gift of Generosity towards God, towards men and towards ourselves, it cannot be improvised and we think that it takes a prudential time of about three months if we want to prepare the Cursillo properly with its whole full potential so that the most candidates possible can have a place in it.*

In three months there is time enough for a personal contact with the possible candidate. This way, when Cursillo Weekend is near, all the candidates have had one or several meetings with at least one of the team leaders and when Cursillo begins, all the candidates are prepared and the rector and team leaders have the appropriate and necessary knowledge of all the participants.

4) *Experience tells us that a Cursillo that is organized one or two months in advance, is a Cursillo where normally you have to work against the clock in order to have a sufficient group of candidates,*

and at the end to resort to prayer to ask God for a miracle. And the lack of time makes us excuse ourselves by saying that the Cursillo is worth doing even if there are only five or ten candidates. Another excuse is that it is not easy to find candidates and that the situation is difficult.

But the true reality is that our cities and our surroundings, perhaps more than ever before, are full of unhappy people, people who are looking for a sense of meaning in life. And each time there are more and more depressed and distressed people who apply or turn to psychics or psychologists.

Eduardo used to say that now the world has exchanged the priest for the psychologist. The priest has been always free of charge and now the psychologist costs a lot of money in order to heal the same thing, to heal the emptiness that each person has inside.

5) We are talking about giving the Precursillo: enthusiasm, dedication and love. Either we surrender ourselves to the service of the Lord, or to the service of our laziness and our comfort.

With three months of preparation, if the Ultreya lives in a climate of Precursillo, if the team of leaders works seriously with the help and action of the whole Ultreya, you can get Cursillo Weekends with 30 participants. For this , you have to work on 50 or 60 possible candidates.

And if the Precursillo has been done as it should and the leaders know the candidates very well, not just by phone, nor on the first night of the weekend but because they have met with them several times and are now friends , Then the work of the groups at the Cursillo weekend is quite positive and the people there get the ONE MILLION dollars from the short story of the beggar, that Miguel

Sureda mentioned in His Presentation Talk.

VIII- PERFECTED..... 1) When Eduardo was talking to improve anything related with Cursillo, he used to say:

It is not all right, if what is good, could be better.

According to Eduardo, Precursillo has to be more perfectly prepared each time. Someone has said that history is a great teacher; if we have done wrong, it places us on the road to improve our work.

Remember what we said at the beginning of this C.Cursillos: for our Lord and Friend Jesus we never resign ourselves to give 100 when we could give 10.000.

2) *The ONE MILLION \$ also have to be given in Precursillo. It is about becoming friends with the candidate, putting all the prayer, all our enthusiasm and all our love in order that he can see that with the Cursillo he can find the real solution for his life.*

IX - MESSAGE AND ATTITUDE IN FRONT OF THE CANDIDATE

More than talking about selection of candidates, it seems more appropriate to talk about our attitude and our words when it comes to inviting someone to a Cursillo.

A) WHO SHOULD EXPECT TO GO TO THE NEXT CURSILLO?

1) *Briefly I wish to point out what Eduardo says about when is the right time to go to a Cursillo weekend. He explains this in the book "Structure of Ideas" and it is mentioned in the Precursillo talk.*

Those who should not attend a Cursillo:

The candidates without personality; candidates who are not mature enough; the unbalanced person due to some disease or vice.

2) We consider that in the cases I mentioned , it is not that they cannot go, but they will have to wait to be in better condition, because the most important thing is that the candidate knows that the three days are intense and require all the attention .And if they are immature or sick or blocked by an addiction and their head is somewhere else, it is better to wait.

In any case we have to manage these situations with all our love and precaution, like the surgeon who handles the scalpel, because we are dealing with people who are DEEPLY beloved by the Lord and we have to do our best to consider all possibilities .

3) And what about the young people?Are they mature enough?

In Mallorca, the young ones really give life to our Movement.In fact we know that there are some people aged 40 that are less mature than youngsters.

Since the World´s first Cursillo in 1944 it has always been a definite wish of Eduardo that the important thing is not their age but the personality of the future cursillista.

B) HOW SHOULD WE INVITE A FRIEND TO ATTEND CURSILLO?

1) To discern our attitude when it comes to inviting someone to a Cursillo, Eduardo tells about a personal experience he had with one cursillista.

A cursillista who had attended a Cursillo 30 years previously,telephoned Eduardo. It was midnight and asked

Eduardo to speak with him urgently. And although 30 years had passed without him attending the Ultreya or having Group Reunion, he was still carrying the seed of the Cursillo and went to Eduardo's house.

He explained to Eduardo that this same day his wife had left their home and gone away and he couldn't overcome this big problem.

"I wish and need that she comes back tonight, otherwise I'll make a fool of myself. "Eduardo said: "You do not want her to come back tonight".

"Yes , answered the cursillista, otherwise I'm going to throw myself off the balcony; she has to come back tonight. " Eduardo tried to clarify and said: "If you want her to come back tonight, we can call the firemen or the police to force her back home"

but you do not want her to return."

"what you want is that she might wish to come back " ... this is what you want, right? And this is not fixed in 1 minute.

The friend answered ... you are right ... I want her to wish to come back".

In Precursillo sometimes we do the same and we want to fill the Cursillo, to put pressure on the candidate, even telling them that if they don't attend the Cursillo they will disappoint our friendship or Christ. What we really want, what Jesus really wants is that they wish to attend the Cursillo. Giving respect to our friendship and to their freedom.

2) Eduardo says that the Precursillo has to be selective, not looking for the easy or difficult people .Among easy people, to fill a Weekend, in some places they invite those very good Christians

that go to everything that is put on by the church and they are already involved in so many Christian things that they don't have time for Ultreya or Group Reunion.

And Cursillo is mainly pointing out those that need to find the Way, the Truth and the Life. And among those who can go, Eduardo pointed first to the faraway people, the leaders in their environments. And in order to know them we have to approach them, through friendship. If we do not approach them, we will never know the emptiness they have.

And sometimes we have done the opposite. We invite people to Cursillo who have prestige, some authority, a bank manager, an important lawyer to give prestige to Cursillo Movement. It is Christ who gives prestige to Cursillo.

So, Cursillo doesn't need any more prestige than the prestige of Christ.

3) The only thing that is within our hands during Precursillo is to communicate the Joy of Faith. If you are convinced that God loves you. That the Lord is alive in you by Grace. That Jesus is also in the candidate ; if This is in your mind and your heart , then when we will start speaking, I think something important is going to happen to the person in front of us. But if we only think that we have to fill the next Cursillo because it turns out that we are 5 and we have to be 35, then comes the Ego ,the pride and a whole amount of things.

What you have to inspire (in them) is that they wish to come and for this there are many ways to get it. Many times the best way is to talk to someone while those of the Group Reunion are in front of the Tabernacle because the most important thing is that God gives the Spirit to our words.

4) *It is also a question of not deceiving them, or advancing anything of the acts of the Cursillo Weekend.*

One way to deceive them is to invite them to Cursillo and not journeying with them in the Postcursillo.

They are deceived if we are not willing to accompany them after the Cursillo because what the Lord really wants is not that you just take him to the Cursillo, but that you love him ... just as The Lord has loved you.

Cursillo is a process of friendship that begins in the Precursillo. And Eduardo told us that a Process of Friendship is a process of acts of Kindness that go from heart to heart, because friendship is fed by small details.

5) *Another way to not deceive them is to make them know where they are going to and that it is not an Internet Weekend or socializing Seminar but a Weekend Cursillo of Christianity where they will find themselves, God and the brothers. Instead of talking to them of joy, sometimes we talk about responsibility, sacrifice and commitment, and that doesn't work.*

Eduardo said that if the Angels of Heaven had used these words (responsibility, sacrifice and commitment) on Christmas Night to the shepherds, no one would have gone to the birth of Jesus in the cave, and the shepherds went to the cave and even with gifts to the Lord. because the angels said to the shepherds:

A SAVIOUR , A LIBERATOR IS BORN AND THAT WAS SO NEW THAT SOME OF THE SHEPHERDS SHOULD SAY TO THE OTHER: Take care of the sheep because I am going to see what has happened.

And how do we give the great news to those around us ?.

Eduardo was telling that sometimes we phone a friend to invite them to a Cursillo Weekend. And we then say: "Well, we have to talk. Tomorrow I cannot because I have a meeting, the day after I have Ultreya, the next one I will be away ... And the candidate thinks: And you invite me to that..? You invite me to this busy nightmare?"

6) Finally we know that Eduardo said that the Cursillo pointed above all to those far from the Lord, to those rejected by Society, we know of Eduardo's lack of sleep going after friends addicted to alcohol, or drugs and also after prisoners. Once in his last years, Eduardo confessed to a great friend of mine: "sometimes I enjoy more going to the prison than going to Cursillo ". And talking about inviting the unlucky people of society to a Cursillo he warned:

"TO APPROACH A MISERABLE PERSON WITHOUT FEELING MISERABLE ONESELF, CREATES A KIND OF PRIDE THAT IS HORRIFYING"

The pride of feeling good. The pride of being a leader of the next Cursillo.

So much pride , that the Lord cannot enter, there is no room for Him.

That is why all of us in the Ultreya, not just the leaders, must be convinced that we are not masters of anything, that the only protagonist is the Lord and that we

are only poor instruments, often rusty, but always beloved and saved by Jesus.

*7) Definitely, It's about having things clear
What do we intend when we think of someone for a Cursillo?*

*Are we looking to fill up the Cursillo?
To have more people in the Ultreya?
To have this someone to become a good husband or a good wife?
To let him find a job?*

Have we lowered the target? Or we do not know where the target is?

Are we seeking to increase the hunger for God or are we inviting those who we believe are going to say yes?

Perhaps we have forgotten the ESSENCE AND PURPOSE OF CURSILLO that yesterday Miguel presented.

The person who really discovers in a Cursillo that GOD LOVES him, then all personal recordings and feelings change in his life. If he really discovers this, then this person leaves his prison, becomes a free man, a best friend, a better wife, a better employee and finally a better PERSON.

What we have to communicate is the Joy of Faith, the Joy that comes when we believe and feel that God loves us.

V .- CONCLUSION

I wish to finish this Precursillo talk by reciting a poem that Eduardo used to recite when he was giving this rollo in C.Cursillos .

This poem really summarizes the spirit of PRECURSILLO.

The author of this poem is the Mexican poet AMADO NERVO...The name of the Poem is “ THE SIGN” and although it’s Spanish poetry...I will try to translate it as well as possible in order that you can grasp its whole spirit and message.

“Don’t talk to everybody about the beautiful and essential things.

Do not cast daisies to the pigs.

Get down to your partner’s level to avoid humiliating or confusing them.

Be frivolous with the frivolous...; but from time to time,almost as if unintentionally, drop the rose petal of Fantasy in their Cup, on top of the foam of their frivolity

If they don’t notice the petal, pick it up and leave them alone,always smiling:

that means that the right time for them has not come yet.

But, if someone picks up the petal, as if un-noticed, and he caresses it, and he inhales its sweet aroma,then,right away,make him a small sign of recognition...

Then take him aside; show him one or several of the miraculous flowers of your garden;

Talk to him about the invisible Divinity that surrounds us... and give him the secret word, “the open Sesame” of true Freedom!”