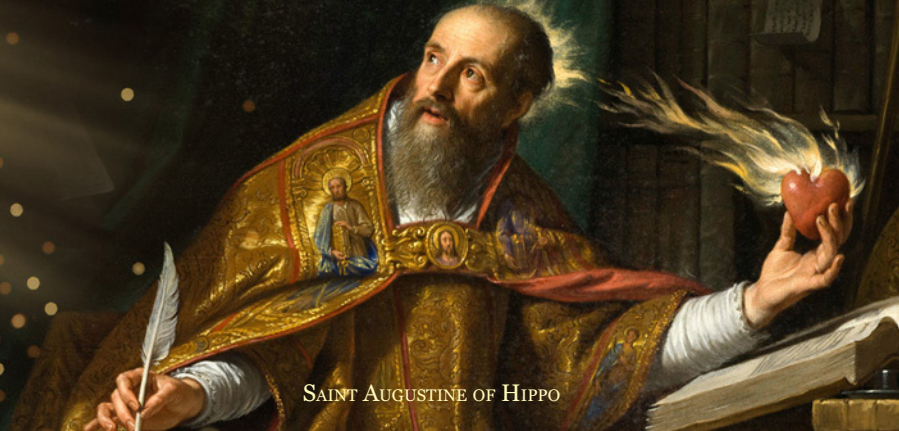


CURSILLOS

in CHRISTIANITY

National Newsletter

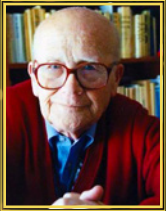


SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

EDUARDO BONNÍN AGUILÓ

100 YEARS

BIOGRAPHY AND MENTALITY - PART 14



Servant of God
Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló
Founder of
Cursillos in Christianity
1917 – 2008

August 2022

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PERSON, CHARACTER, PERSONALITY

In Cursillo the person is the focus of our concern. We see the person as a being for love. Many people feel alienated from the Gospel because we, Christians, have not managed to convey to them — through friendship — that the love they are seeking is, thanks to Christ, within their reach, within themselves and in their brothers and sisters.

The person is the reflection, the expression, and the splendor of God's specific plan for the human being. Being a person is a reality always open to becoming more of a person and a better person. Cursillo favors and encourages the person to emerge, to become aware and to revive through believing the truth and enabling the propulsion of "good" through friendship.

A person is he who knows they are capable of loving and worthy of being loved, who knows he is limited, conditional, and an integral part of a whole. The real revolution of concepts that Cursillo presents, is focused on helping the person discover their own worth, because of what they are and for their capacity to love and to be loved; certainly not because of their power, their knowledge, or their possessions.

People who attach more importance to their social position: being a doctor, a mechanic, etc..., than to the fact of being a person, and people who systematically mistake their asset as a person for their physical, cultural, or financial situation will end up relinquishing their identity as a person.

Each person is an individual and is a permanent source of living values. He is someone singular, unique, unrepeatable, nonexchangeable, nontransferable, open to their own worth and that of others, with critical insight to be aware of the values he esteems and of his own successes and failures.

A person is not a finished, static, and delimited creation, but an open, dynamic, and free being. God's 'doing' and actions, become our actions as they are assimilated by the person so that, by a kind of evolution, Christ becomes the culmination of our development. This fact tinges reality with some nuances and provides us with a certain way of looking at it. The greatest realities of God fulfill the highest aspirations of the person.

Cursillo was born with the express purpose of being a Movement, not an organization; and it rejects, therefore, any form of overcrowding. The concept of "person" is undoubtedly one of the essential constituents of Cursillos' foundational thinking.

Cursillo is not, indeed, an organization; it is not trying to bring people together and organize them. Cursillo wants to be a Movement that will move each person inwardly toward the truth that can motivate them, guide them, and bring them to their personal fulfillment. The impulse, that the Cursillo weekend drove the Cursillista to move, must be manifested by them in the very normality of their daily life. This means that only their intention will distinguish them from others, and even this intention should not be too characteristically or clearly highlighted.

You can never judge anybody from the outside because a person is exactly what their intention is. And we will never be able to know somebody's intention unless the person who embodies it opens and expresses it to us during their voluntary and thoughtful direction. The center of the target aimed at from the deepest intention inside a person, can never be interpreted, let alone seen, by anyone other than the person in question. The person is a value in himself which we must consider and value.

A person reveals themselves to a greater and deeper extent through their reactions than through their actions. Their way of reacting to a success, a failure, or an event, reveals their real self. Therefore, more important, and illustrative than the action, is the reaction that occurs inside the person.

Cursillo acts in a person as ferment, stimulating, and fermenting their life. It dilates, expands, and widens their vision, and establishes and affirms their conviction. It motivates and stimulates their decision and makes perseverance pleasant and attractive. The Cursillo Movement has enabled millions of men and women in the five continents to discover the value of their being a person and the value to cease being a mere individual.

“No matter how valuable a person might be they will never excel the value of their being a person.” (Antonio Machado). The highest value of human things will captivate and mesmerize people to a higher degree than the great value of science, technology, art, or skill. All these works, while capable of creating important celebrities are not able to bring out in them their value as human beings.

A person reveals themselves as being a better person through their reaction when confronted with things they are not able to do, than for the things they can do. A person arouses admiration. An important figure or celebrity causes envy amongst their peers and admiration amongst the fools. An uncontrolled “personage” ends up swallowing his own person.

The person — what we really are — is more valuable than the “character” we are driven or compelled to play in the great theatre of the world. We are always more important than our “role”. Hence, one can sometimes realize that there is “more of a person” in the bank teller than in the bank director.

The person affects the group, they influence the community and the world through their normal spectrum of coherent identity, by displaying their capacity to love, understand, forgive, and carry out what is possible, and asking God to make the impossible happen.

To have personality is the ability to keep in mind that we are a person every time circumstances require us to play a “role”. Or also, the speed with which we resume our place as a person once there is no need to play our “role” any longer. We must endeavor to prevent the character from subduing or eliminating the person.

All persons are equal ... although some of them are more equal than others. Someone “is”; another one regrets the fact that “he is not”; the one over there “wants to be”.

Since creation, the person is substantially the same, they have not changed, i.e., they flee from their fears and move towards their aspirations. The constant awareness of this alternative is essentially what makes them become a person; it gives them the power to pass from being an individual to becoming a person, and to feeling frustrated when they deviate from their personal path. The path that will lead them to their concrete and specific fullness: that is, to feel they are loved and able to love.

We need to be strong, capable, and useful; strong with active and passive strength; capable with aptitude and attitude, and useful to serve others and serve ourselves, always with conscious uniqueness, originality, and creativity. Being singular is not

tantamount to setting oneself apart from the rest. Having originality and creativity does not mean hogging the limelight.

When somebody is acting too bossy, it reveals he is not the boss in his house. Those who never get angry are almost never right when they eventually do. When a couple of lovers are driving a car and both can drive, they will always be arguing, and if they don’t argue, one of them will get tired of braking nonstop. The order of the values is expressed in the product.

Conviction is far away from fanaticism - “sacrificing people to ideas”, as from triumphalism - believing in the magical power of ideas with no need for the person to make any effort.

People who are satisfied with “the how’s” - mere indicators of a possible way to personal fulfillment - can only obey rules. Whereas those who are worried about the “why” of things, can embody criteria. The first ones know how to explain things external to them. The others can become aware of the real problem, in an act of acceptance and appropriation of it.

In the classroom, if he is not silly, the teacher is the one who learns the most.

A gossip or scandalmonger talks about others; the “pain in the neck” talks about himself; the conversationalist talks about you; traders talk about their partners; thieves about their accomplices, and revelers about their peers. But sincere people talk about their friends.

When human concerns and worries don’t find a channel or way to be formulated, expressed, and communicated, they become sour, they rot and get distorted. Deep down in their heart, what each person wants is to be taken seriously in earnest.

He who neither considers nor respects the amount of truth and deepness that may exist in another person of opposite feelings, is not an upright person. Whenever the spirit cannot understand it must foresee, and wherever it cannot foresee it must believe.

In my opinion, the best thing about a person is their capacity to think. But things have gone to such an extreme, that the person today seems to be happy only when they do not think. I am surprised at hearing people returning from vacation boasting of having spent their vacation without thinking about anything, when in fact it was the right time to have thought about everything.

We, ourselves, are our best work. It is said that a person in their forties is responsible for the face they have. The fact is that throughout our lives we have the chance to gradually go sculpting the features that will shape us as a person.

If a person is to act as such, he must have both conviction and determination. Conviction alone produces theoreticians; determination alone produces reckless, unwise people.

The person affects the world through their conviction; they drive their impact on people through their decision and support it through their disposition. The world, in turn, affects the person by weakening their conviction; making them doubt their own decision and arousing confusion and disorientation in them.

You want, Oh Lord, that each of us has, in the eyes of others, the one and only value that you ascribe to each one of us, with that unmistakable name with which you usually call each person.

The person cannot merge into any sort of whole; they cannot even become “just a part” of the whole. For a person is not just a brushstroke or touch in the picture, he is a whole picture that God’s providence has placed next to other pictures, and which the unique and unparalleled gaze of God rescues every moment and frees them from discredit, from oblivion and nothingness.

The person has four interior cornerstones: Truth; that gives meaning to life; Good; that gives them joy; Friendship, that gives them encouragement; and Art, which is the contemplation of life. They also have three outer angles: love, work, and amusement. What the person must achieve is that their attitude fits their capability. This is easy, but each person must discover it by himself.

The Cursillo Movement, using a method of its own and by the grace of God, makes the essential realities of Christian life become incarnated in the uniqueness, originality, and creativity of each person. The person is the most important thing in our Movement. If we neglect this aspect, Cursillos’ purpose will be distorted, and its structures will be maimed.

Being a person in a conscious way, requires and demands being aware of something or someone, being watchful, awake, and with hands on the steering wheel of one’s life, to be aware of what is going on. Devoting our attention to reality enables a person to face their existence and bring into play all their potential. Nevertheless, a person often chooses to be dependent or independent. With this decision they take the stance of submissiveness or rebelliousness.

The person who depends on something or somebody does not think for himself, the independent person is usually thinking


wrongly. A conscious person devotes their life and attention to others, but the personage depends on the role it has to play, and personality is independent of the one and the other.

In each of us there are three dimensions: *our person, our personage, and our personality*, through which we gradually express, convey, and make our style of life transparent: The person is what we really are. It is the reflection, the expression, and the splendor of the specific intention of God for a human being. To be a person is to have conviction, determination, and the ability to affirm these two features in our living. The person is a “what”, an absolute value.

The personage is what we are driven or compelled to play in our normal living or in the abnormalities that crop up before us. The personage expresses, conveys, and reveals the “how”. When the personage devours the person, something occurs that is tragic for the person involved and amusing for the other people.

Personality is the ability to never forget that each one of us is a person, even when we must act as a personage. It is the faculty of being always one’s very self, no matter the circumstances.

Recently, especially in the villages, people thought that only the doctor, the teacher, the priest and one or two landowners or political bosses or chiefs were considered to be “persons”. The other residents counted for nothing. It was thought they had been born to obey and act in the service of the boss in command.

“THE PERSON is the reflection, the expression, and the splendor of God’s specific plan for the human being. Being a person is a reality always open to becoming more of a person and a better person.” (Reflections II, In Search of Oneself, page 69) 

2nd National Priest Encounter in Cebu Philippines

I was kindly invited by the Philippines National Secretariat President, Bro. Conrado Dixon, to be a guest speaker at the 2nd National Priest Encounter in Talisay City, Cebu, Philippines, which was held from June 6 to June 10, 2022.

The theme of this Priest’s Encounter was “A Renewed Cursillo Movement: A Help in the Renewal of the local Church. The purpose of the Encounter was really to revive the Cursillo Movement in the Philippines which was very strong and really help the local church in the evangelization during its beginning in the 1960s. However, due to many deviations and modifications, the Cursillo started losing its effectiveness and started closing their Schools of Leaders, Group Reunions and Ultreyas. In essence, its vibrant existence.

This Encounter was very well attended with more than 60 Priests, including the Archbishop of Cebu - Most Rev. Jose Palma and Archbishop of Durango - Most Rev. Faustino Armendariz Jimenez, who is also the Episcopal Advisor of the OMCC. There were also more than 50 lay persons, including Juan Adolfo Moguel Ortiz - President of the OMCC, Marge Morris and Peter McMahon - President and Vice president of the AP/G International Group.

After traveling for more than 15 hours in a flight from Los Angeles to Manila and 9 hours lay over for a flight to Cebu, I was so overwhelmed by the welcoming committee at the airport and at the Convent where we were staying, that I forgot that I hadn’t slept for almost two days. Our Philippines’

brothers and sisters were very warm and kindhearted and filled us with numerous attentions throughout our week-long stay at the convent of St. Francis.

After a “Welcoming and a History of the Cursillo Movement in the Philippines” presentation, Marge Morris spoke about the “OMCC and the history of the AP/G International Group”.

I then spoke about the “History and the Foundational Charism” and a second presentation on the “Cursillos Methodology”. Both were very well received and will be studied in the Dioceses of the Philippines.

On the following day, Juan Adolfo and Bishop Faustino spoke about “Why does the Organization consume the mysticism?” and “The Spiritual Advisor in the Cursillo”.

On the third day, Juan Adolfo spoke about the “School of Leaders and the Secretariat” and Bishop Faustino about the “Formulation of a Cursillo Pastoral Plan”.

The whole week was filled with the true Friendship and love of God in Jesus Christ and all the Priests from the different Dioceses made their “Reflections and Resolutions” to revive the Cursillo Movement in the Philippines.

I thank God for giving me the opportunity to share some of my life in this wonderful Charism of Cursillos with my brothers and sisters in the Philippines.

De Colores! – Juan Ruiz

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE MOVEMENT OF CURSILLOS OF CHRISTIANITY IN ITALY

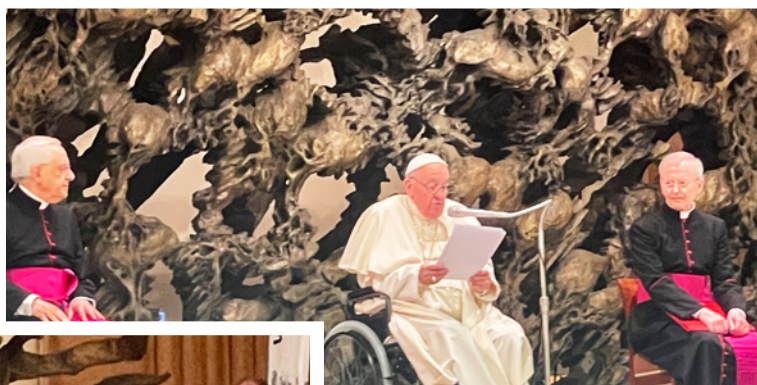
Dear brothers and sisters, good morning, welcome!

It is with joy that I greet all of you, members of the *Movement of the Cursillos of Christianity* of Italy, together with the bishops and priests who accompany you, who have gathered here in Rome for your seventh national *Ultreya*.

You use this ancient pilgrims' greeting, "*ultreya*", to indicate the meaning of these gatherings, which have characterized your charism since the beginning: they are moments of encounter, of proclamation, of witness and prayer, to urge one another to go "further", to "go beyond". They are not organizational meetings, not the "board of directors" of a company, but fraternal gatherings to rediscover the motivation and the impetus of faith that you have all experienced since the first *cursillo* in which you participated and which turned your lives around.



The first is *moving towards communion*. It means going beyond oneself and beyond one's own group to form a community and grow in the Church, which is always a body and never unconnected, separate members. Therefore, never isolate yourself and never shut yourself in! Always maintain and increase vital links with the places of communion in which we are integrated.



At a first level, you are required to form community with other groups, at regional and national levels, to enrich yourselves with broader experiences and perspectives, which help you understand better the ecclesial and social situation in which you are immersed and which constitutes the concrete

field of your mission. In this way, faith and life, the Church and the world are unified in you.

On a second level, you are called to form community with the entire *Cursillos* movement. The great challenge here is to maintain a spirit of charity and unity, knowing that the founding charism of your movement is the one that was passed on to you by the initiators and the first generation and for which you are all equally responsible. Unity is not founded on the charism of a single individual or on the spiritual "line" of a "current". No, unity is founded on the spiritual heritage accepted by all, lived and shared by all, understood by all and entrusted to all. I know that in the next few days there will be a meeting of the World Body of *Cursillos de Cristiandad*, which will be attended by leaders from all continents. I hope that this meeting will be experienced as a synodal event of listening and common discernment among those responsible, that it will give space to all, and that it will welcome the different sensitivities and visions, to create spiritual harmony within you. Harmony of identity, of apostolate, of governance, so that you can be and present yourselves to others as brothers acting in unity.

At a third and even broader level, there is forming community with the Church, which implies being close to and listening to the pastors and participating in the pastoral initiatives of the local Churches where you live. Your groups and your whole movement, in fact, are not "beside" the Church, but are also part of the Church living in that territory. You are therefore called to identify fully with the feeling and action of the Church.

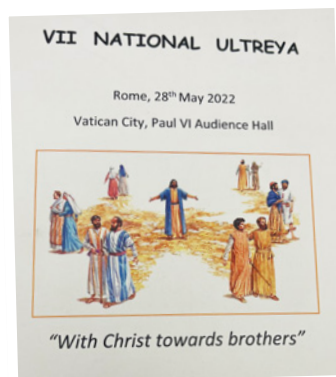
The second fundamental direction of "going beyond", and therefore of every *ultreya*, is *mission*. Going beyond means going on your mission. Your movement, too, is faced with



Already in your weekly group meetings you take a step "further". Indeed, you have the opportunity to go beyond a purely horizontal, earthly and materialistic view of life, to rediscover each time the new outlook that faith in Christ has given us on everything: on ourselves, on the world, on the meaning of existence. We are quick, in fact - out of laziness, out of inertia, out of timidity - to lose the outlook of faith and to conform to the mentality of the world, which extinguishes all zeal and all desire to remain faithful to the Lord and to bring Him to others. Now that the pandemic is passing, we are reminded of the admonition in the Letter to the Hebrews, "not neglecting to meet together ... but encouraging one another" (10:25). It is a great grace to have brothers and friends in the faith to support each other and keep alive the love for Christ, the foundation of everything, and to share it with others.

In addition to the weekly meetings, it is above all your "*ultreya*" that propel you "further". I would like to point out two fundamental directions for your "going further".

the challenge of forming communities of missionary disciples who go out to meet those who are far away (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, 24), going beyond the criterion of “it has always been done this way” (cf. *ibid.*, 33), which is not a Christian criterion. You have a particular charism, which has led you to rediscover and know how to proclaim in a simple and direct way the essential of the Christian experience, that is, God’s love for every man and woman. And you know how to convey this proclamation within the bond of friendship and closeness that you establish,



without pressure, with so many people you meet, even those with stronger personalities who seem almost indifferent or even hostile to the faith. I encourage you, therefore, to allow yourselves to be inspired by this charism that the Holy Spirit has granted you, to experience in this way the sweet joy of evangelizing, in all areas of life, private and public, that is, movement, movement for internal unity and movement to evangelize.

I would like to add one thing: being in the movement also means living the service of proclamation and Christian witness, and this is also up to the people who are in charge or responsible for each country or for the whole movement. A bad thing that you must avoid, before it happens – because it seems that it hasn’t happened with you, but I’ll tell you first – is “eternalizing” offices, that is, always keeping the same person in a given role. Please don’t. Everyone is good, but we are not all

indispensable. We are not indispensable. I finish this job as coordinator, I don’t know what it’s called over there, either of the group or of the countries or general, and I go home – that is, I go into the groups as an ordinary person, an ordinary person. “No, but I did this, now we need to...”. You don’t need to do anything, you have to let go! Is that clear?

And this renewal, to counteract personal ambitions, which are inspired by the devil, is a task in which you must persevere. Because so many movements have died out in the hands of a sole leader. We have much experience of this in the Church. So, renew the service of authority, let us say, renew it: no one is eternal in authority.

Dear friends, may the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, keep you always on the move, never still, always on the move, always ready to “go further”, towards communion and towards mission, and always in service, not scrambling for office. From my heart I bless you all and your loved ones. And you too, please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!

Bulletin of the Holy See Press Office, 28 May 2022



1st on-site Nat'l Encounter in 2 years urged Cursillistas to renew faith, shed light over Movement's history

By Harvey I. Barkin, Region XI, San Jose Filipino Cursillo Movement

More than 500 Cursillistas got together at Chapman University in Orange County, California last July 21-24 for their first National Encounter in two years since the pandemic forced all Cursillo gatherings to be suspended or online only.

It was the 32nd National Encounter and 65th year anniversary of the Cursillo Movement in the US with a thematic message of renewing one's faith and further understanding the roots of the Movement with a preview of new books translated from Eduardo Bonnín's notes.

According to NCSA Nadia, there were 19 priests, 11 deacons and two bishops who graced the event.

National Cursillo Service Administrator's (NCSA) Nadia Lopez, master of ceremony Marisela Rodriguez welcomed the Cursillistas on Thursday night before the Marian procession.

Romans came. And Magdalene prepared Christ's body for the tomb. Magdalene was the first person to see Jesus after His Resurrection, to tell his brothers that He is alive. God chose ordinary persons to proclaim Jesus, just like cursillistas in this National Encounter; to reach out to more people to encounter Jesus and be disciples to spread the Gospel.



In his meditation on Biblical prayer, National Spiritual Advisor Fr. Mark Seiker cited Msgr. Ronald Knox's book, *Window in the Wall*, as a reference. Fr. Mark said food of the Eucharist for growth is needed and that Christ's face is hidden in bread and wine.

On Friday, Seattle Auxiliary Bishop and NACG Episcopal Advisor Eusebio Elizondo talked about Eucharist in the Cursillo Movement. He asked Cursillistas, how long does it take Christians to learn what was being celebrated at Mass? Bishop Elizondo observed how people look forward to attending a party but not much when it came to the Mass. He said, people are broken like bread and are transformed at Mass. And that love can't be imposed but proposed. He warned people not to come to Mass with a Lenten face. He explained that at Mass, there is no resuscitation, but resurrection and people come out as a new creation. Eucharist is not a philosophy but life.

Los Angeles Archbishop Jose Gomez in his homily at Mass (feast of Mary Magdalene) asked, What have we become? What should we believe in? How do you find happiness? Bishop Gomez said Mary Magdalene is a model for people who are looking for Christ. Magdalene did not run away like the other apostles when the

Laity keynote speaker Carmen Golias talked about Christ, Person, and Friendship. Region X Regional Coordinator Vincent Johnson spoke about Why it is important to study the Cursillo Charism. Region I Regional Coordinator Ramon Zelaya did the same talk in Spanish and former Region XI Regional Coordinator Rachelle Yen Nguyen did it in Vietnamese.

In his study of the Movement, Johnson observed that the rollos outlined in the old manual were not the actual intended rollos delivered in the weekends. And that there was no cohesion in the talks even though they were still powerful. He also said God does not

call the qualified, He qualifies those he calls.

Johnson hinted at some little known details about Cursillo history from the book, *History of a Charism* by Bonnín. Notably, that "not everyone was comfortable that Bonnín is the founder of the Cursillo."

Johnson also revealed that a musician who grouped with Bonnín told Johnson that Bonnín said the music in the Weekend "was more of a distraction" if its not used just to soften the tension of the new cursillistas. That the "Cursillo should be simple, not complicated" and that "Cursillo is a gift from Christ and not from us."



Johnson also said that “Bonnin was silenced and kept out of taking credit (for the Cursillo)” and that “the Cursillo was misdirected.” Johnson said Bonnin’s last work before he died was “My Spiritual Testament”.

Himself an ex-military man, Schroeder discussed how Bonnin’s experience in the barracks during the Spanish Civil War “collided” with the mentality of his family life.

He explained how Bonnin formed his idea of environment

here, respecting the dignity of the individual and the quality of relationship with others which became the core idea of friendship.

Region II Coordinator Donna Valenti examined the Rector’s Guide and Step by step. Region VI Coordinator Jesus Vargas talked about it in Spanish and Region VII Coordinator Troan Tram, in Vietnamese.



At the Ultreya, Elizabeth Schroeder gave the witness talk. The echo responses came from Consuela Fernandez, Hue Ta, and Gerry Torres. Fr. Mauricio Tomas, newly ordained priest this year, summarized the talks.

On Saturday, Region III Regional Coordinator Bobbi LaVoie talked about The Chronology and Genesis of the Foundational Charism. Omelio Fernandez delivered the talk in Spanish and Long Nguyen, in Vietnamese.



LaVoie delivered Region I Coordinator John Wentworth’s talk on *1st Conversation at Cala Figuera*. Ruth Herrera delivered the talk in Spanish and Region XI Coordinator Chris Nguyen, in Vietnamese.

Region XI RST Heidi Shelton delivered the talk on Cursillo History and Memory. The same talk was given in Spanish by Region VII Coordinator Awaldo Eddie Gonzalez and in Vietnamese by Region VIII Coordinator Nga Nguyen.

Shelton described how, after finding their true selves, Cursillistas went back to their environment to reach the far-away. Keeping the Cursillo Movement “simple and honest with no discrimination from rank or title.”



LaVoie related how Bonnin formulated Christ, Person, and Friendship as key elements. She said, “The study of the Environment” is the birth certificate of the Cursillo Movement.” And that Bonnin was inspired while reading a document from Pope Pius XII.

She also revealed that Bonnin was involved with the Youth Catholic Action while writing the “Study of the Environment”. That Bonnin learned a lot and modified the Youth Catholic Action as his framework for the Cursillo Movement. And that since Cala Figuera, Bonnin used the same outline.

LaVoie commented on the unique charism of the Cursillo – she said that the message, God loves you is different from: God loves us. Because the message of the Cursillo is God “loves us individually and unconditionally.”

Ken Schroeder delivered the talk on Witness to our Study. His talk was in the context of Bonnin’s *My Spiritual Testament*. Schroeder said the book was Bonnin’s “last will and testament.”

The National Encounter at Orange County was made possible by Cursillistas too many to mention. Notably: Region XI coordinators Rosalinda Pascual, Thoan Nguyen, Jose Chumacero and RST member Heidi Shelton.

Committee chairpersons include: Vangie Bravo, Registration and Hospitality; Phong Le, Transportation; Linda Loreto, Liturgy; Chris Mino, Liturgical Supplies; Lupillo Lara and Gid Eugenio, Music; Robin Barkin, Photography; Mai Trang and Tess Alfonso, Décor; Andrea Robregado and Jaime Los Angeles, Ultreya; Marissa De la Cruz and Carlos Leyva, Fiesta; Menchie Monson and Rico Bagsic, Book store volunteers; Tess and Gerry Torres, Support; and Alice Ricafort and FCIC LA, Marian Procession.

