



PALANCA PRESS

Yakima Diocese Cursillo Movement
(English Speaking)

Issue 1

2013

De Colores!

To all my friends in Jesus Christ, may His peace be with you!

As Lay Director of the English-speaking Cursillo Movement for the Diocese ...

As I have mentioned, the Secretariat, a group of lay Catholics, and I shepherd the Cursillo Movement. Recently, Flora Matt completed a long term on the Secretariat. I can't thank Flora enough for all her hard work. Flora will be greatly missed. Fortunately, Steve and Kathy Kearny (Holy Apostles, E. Wenatchee) have joined the Secretariat and I look forward to their insight. Also, Don Curet has officially joined the Secretariat and has taken on the chair of the Post Cursillo committee. We remain fortunate to have Fr. John O'Shea as Spiritual Advisor and Deacons Kerry Turley and Tom Richtsmeier as Assistant Spiritual Advisors.

The National Cursillo organization needs your financial support to maintain and grow Cursillo around the country and introduce Jesus to everyone. This year, the National Cursillo is starting an annual funding campaign and asking each Cursillista to consider a \$3 per year tax-deductible donation. Of course, you're welcome to donate more.

There are four options to donate:

- donate at <https://www.natl-cursillo.org/donate/>
- if you can't use the Internet, bring donation to Ultreya or group reunion and ask someone to make the donation thru the above website.
- mail donation to Diane Turley (304 E. Woodin Rd., Sunnyside, WA 98944). Make checks payable to the Yakima Diocese Cursillo. We will then send a check to National for the total.

Please consider contributing to this important work.

In March, we held successful men's and women's Cursillos in Moses Lake at Our Lady of Fatima. We hosted 13 men and 17 women. For the men's Cursillo, we were pleased to have as spiritual

directors Bishop Emeritus Carlos Seville, Msgr. Robert Silar, and Fr. John O'Shea. The women's weekend proved challenging due to scheduling issues for spiritual directors. Fr. O'Shea and Fr. Alex Trejo (Our Lady of the Snows parish, Leavenworth) began the weekend with the help of Deacons Kerry Turley and Tom Richtsmeier. However, after Fr. Alex was called away, Fr. Dan Dufner and Fr. Mauricio Munoz came to the rescue. Other than attending late-night confessions in their pajamas, the women enjoyed a typical, spirit-filled weekend. (Is any Cursillo ever typical?) Thank you Fr. Dan Dufner and Fr. Mauricio Munoz!

Soon, we'll begin planning Cursillos for Winter 2014.

Also, I want to encourage Cursillo communities to establish and maintain Schools of Leaders. These schools meet once a month or so to teach and solidify the Cursillo philosophy, or Cursillo Method. This will help preserve the integrity of the Cursillo Movement and its focus on personal relationships with Jesus. Leaders from these schools will then be better equipped to facilitate and witness at Cursillo weekends and in the community.

I would also like to see Cursillo become better known in the parishes. It seems we've been keeping the Cursillo Movement too quiet and hidden. Instead, we need to get the word out. This is a constant, daily witness for each of us, but the parish Cursillo communities can play a role collectively. For example, local Cursillo communities could host information nights, activities, and socials. Not all these need be religious or spiritual, since we're called to praise God in all aspects of our daily life. However, the event should at least acknowledge God's pervasive love and wisdom. Cursillo communities should consider hosting presentations by guest speakers on current social, ethical, and religious topics. Also, consider movie nights, ice cream socials, potlucks, and other celebrations of Christian community. For the Cursillistas we haven't seen in a while, consider a "Cursillista Come Home" event.

I enjoyed visiting with Cursillistas from the Tri-Cities and the Wenatchee area at a summer picnic in Ellensburg on August 17. Hopefully, this will become an annual event and bring together Cursillistas from around the diocese.

Also, a group of Cursillistas from around the diocese hosted a half-day introduction to Cursillo at St. Andrew Parish in Ellensburg. The event drew about 16 lay people from Ellensburg and Cle Elum/Roslyn (St. John the Baptist/Immaculate Conception). Fr. Tomas (St. Andrew) and Fr. Beaulaurier (St. John the Baptist/Immaculate Conception) also attended. Fr. Kuykendall presented on the spiritual advisor rollos while the lay team presented on the lay rollos. The event was well received with many attendees excited about a Cursillo weekend.

I look forward to visiting the various Cursillo communities and renewing friendships. I ask for your continued prayers and support in this ministry. Thank you for your efforts to spread the Gospel. May God bless you all.

In Christ,
Dan Sisk
Lay Director
Yakima Diocese English-speaking Cursillo Movement
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Spiritual Director's Insight

Dear Cursillistas,

De Colores!

I have been asked to share with you some aspect of the Ultreya. I thought it appropriate and necessary to reflect on the importance of the Witness talk. For it to accomplish its purpose, we need to have a clear idea of the purpose of the Cursillo movement:

Mission Statement

"The Cursillo in Christianity is a movement of the Roman Catholic Church that is committed to spreading the Gospel message utilizing a specific method and strategy." (National Mission Statement)
The Yakima Diocese Cursillo Movement is committed to use the specific method and strategy of the Cursillo to spread the Gospel message.

Vision Statement

"The Cursillo Movement, an agent of change, serves as a catalyst for the Christian transformation of the

person and of society's moral and ethical values. This is accomplished through a unified National, Regional, and Diocesan effort." (National Vision Statement)

The Yakima Diocese Cursillo Movement, as a diocesan agent of change, strives to transform environments to the Christian Ideal. Of course, all this presupposes that we are living the tri-pod (piety/holiness; study/formation; action/evangelization). If we don't have any Christian action in our environments, then it is not possible to give a meaningful witness. ("...without me you can do nothing." John15:5). There should always be a personal witness talk at our Ultreyas. Also there is never Action, the third leg of the tri-pod, without doing personal Palanca on a daily basis.

What is a Witness Talk?

A witness talk tells what Christ has done for someone else through me. (A testimony tells what Christ has done for me.)

How Should a Witness Talk be Given?

1. First do Palanca.
2. Remember to keep talk to 10 minutes, perhaps 15 minutes at the most.
3. This timeframe doesn't allow too much to be said. Therefore, it is better to make one point, one experience and tell it clearly.
4. If possible, prior to the talk give the theme of the talk to the Spiritual Director or Deacon to help him to relate it to the Gospels.
5. The talk should not be a sermon. It should not be sensational. It should not be too emotional.
6. Keep the talk as simple and sincere as possible.

No one should feel they are unworthy to give a witness talk. All of us are trying to be Christians. We have many failures in our lives, but sometimes we do have some successes. As we live our daily lives there are moments and experiences we can share with our friends. This is what a Witness Talk should be about.

Let's make our homes, churches, world more Christ like.

Prayers and best wishes
Fr. John O'Shea

My Cursillo

It has been a little over six months since I experienced my first Cursillo-a long enough time to reflect back upon that weekend and tally the residual effects it had upon my everyday life.

The first thing to establish is a reference point. I am a single man, trying to hold onto his job and maintain a small home that fits me perfectly. Being a 2nd-generation Italian-American, by default, I am a so-called cradle Catholic. But my active (and apparent shallow) participation in the Catholic church was suspended - except when I visited home - for about 20 years after I left home for college.

So what brought me back? Was it experiencing events that were out of my control and seemed not to make any sense? Or was it events in life that I did not pay attention to that eventually affected me? Slowly I realized there was something I could rely upon. Simply put it was the Holy Spirit within me, very quietly showing me a path. So I started attending Mass again, and studying the Bible so I could attempt to understand how its messages could guide me towards a more peaceful and fulfilling life—a better human being.

As I took a greater interest in my parish, I noticed the Cursillo weekend advertisement and contacted one of the Cursillistas listed as a contact. I wanted to find out what to expect, but besides a general outline of the schedule AND the fact that I would be sleeping on a cot and probably sharing a room and a shower with many more candidates. In other words, I did not know what to expect. So at that time (many years ago) I did not commit.

So what made me finally decide to commit last March? Frankly, it was the combination of my growing curiosity and having two priests and our Bishop emeritus listed as taking part during that weekend. These are men whom I have heard speak many times before and whom I respected for their insight. So my expectations going into that weekend was to have time alone with these men to learn more about their lives. Big surprise! Although I did have some moments with them, that weekend is one in which I learned more about myself and the deep fellowship and support that is present in the faith community in which I live. I will not try to put more words down to express what I experienced during and after my Cursillo except for this: If you think you are already a good Catholic, there is still a lot to learn about yourself AND the faith community around you. Experiencing the Cursillo is something I highly recommend.

Sincerely,
Edward Siciliano
2013 Cursillista

What is Cursillo?

I lived my Cursillo weekend in October 2007. Since then, as I gush about what Cursillo means to me I often get the question “What is Cursillo?” It never ceases to amaze me how hard that question is to answer. To answer with the facts around Cursillo’s history, organizational design, and purpose seems so inadequate. The Cursillo movement gives me the easiest answer “Make a friend, be a friend, and bring your friend to Christ”. Yet even that sometimes seems inadequate. The easiest answer for me to what Cursillo is, and what it means to me, is the word family. We are a family on our journey trying to live as Christ calls us. God designed the first Holy Family and I’ve learned that we can only move towards Christ in His love and His design. The Cursillo community is my family and I am ever thankful for our community. I meet with my family in my small group, at Ultreya, and many other events. How would we ever bear our crosses without the love, support and accountability of our family? Cursillo is such an important part of my faith life. I have no idea what I would do without it! God is good!

Emily Johnson
Secretariat Secretary

National Encounter Highlights

The 23rd National Cursillo® Encounter was held at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY during July 25-28, 2013. Gene and Marie Dress and Bill Kitchen attended and found the Encounter to be an enlightening and exuberant gathering of 640 Cursillistas from 6 language groups from all over the United States.

ROME – Back to the Roots of Christianity

“We nearly touched him!” Yes, we were that close to Pope Francis – twice! Four Cursillistas were privileged to travel to Rome in June 2013 on a Priests For Life *Gospel of Life* Pilgrimage. Don and Sue Curet and my wife Nancy and I (all from Christ the King Church in Richland) joined about 120 others from all over the United States in a tour of Rome and Assisi in Italy. It is hard to identify just one highlight, but seeing the new Pope during his Wednesday General Audience in St. Peter’s square in front of St. Peter’s Basilica, and then attending his mass in that same square on the following Sunday were near the top of the highlights list. It was estimated by the local press that 80,000-100,000 people attended both events. We were advised by our guides to arrive early

so we could both get a seat in the square and also get as close as possible to the aisle where Pope Francis would likely drive by. The Pope spent nearly 45 minutes before the General Audience driving up and down the aisles of chairs, shaking hands, kissing babies, waving and blessing the cheering crowd. On Sunday, this was repeated, but he spent less time driving in the aisles so he would be ready for the beginning of Mass. Sitting on the aisle certainly put us closer to him when he drove by, but also made us vulnerable to the crowds on the inside of us who pressed upon us to get a closer look. It was a spiritual experience being that close and seeing how Pope Francis is loved.

Fr. Frank Pavone, President of Priests for Life, accompanied the tour, which was led by Steve and Janet Ray, popular guides and apologists who are featured regularly on EWTN TV and radio. Two other EWTN personalities, Teresa Tomeo and Janet Morana also accompanied the tour.

In addition to seeing Pope Francis, the group toured the city of Rome and visited many historic churches. Mass was said each day in one of these churches and much of the history of Rome and the early church as well as the city's art were described in detail by excellent English-speaking guides. The churches visited included St. John Lateran, St. Paul's Basilica, St. Mary Major, and, of course, St. Peter's Basilica.

One day was taken away from Rome for a bus trip to Assisi, located about 80 miles northeast of Rome. There, the tour learned much about the life of St. Francis of Assisi, and visited and had mass at the basilica dedicated to his honor.

The trip was both exhausting and exhilarating. Seeing places that are named in the Bible and that are at the very roots of Catholicism were certainly faith-strengthening experiences. Anyone who has the means and time to take a similar tour should definitely put it on their own "bucket list".

By
Mike Valentine

Meet Your Secretariat

The current membership of the Diocese of Yakima Cursillo Secretariat consists of: Spiritual Director – Fr. John O'Shea (Holy Spirit, Kennewick); Assistant Spiritual Directors –

Deacon Kerry Turley (St. Joseph, Sunnyside) and Deacon Tom Richtsmeier (Holy Apostles, E. Wenatchee); Lay Director – Dan Sisk (Christ the King, Richland); Secretary – Emily Johnson (Holy Spirit, Kennewick); Treasurer – Diane Turley, (St. Joseph, Sunnyside); Rita Warren (Holy Spirit, Kennewick); Debbie Patterson, Trish Wilmoth, Steve Kearny, and Kathy Kearny (Holy Apostles, E. Wenatchee), Don Curet (Christ the King, Richland), and Mary Garcia (St. Mary's, White Swan). Mary Garcia also is the liaison for the Native American Cursillo.

Note: Secretariat members are from Schools of Leaders and meet about every month or two. Secretariat members' two year terms are staggered and member posts are open to new members. Members from all parishes in the diocese are wanted on the Secretariat. **Please** contact one of the Secretariat members if you would like to help the Cursillo Movement by participating as a member of the Secretariat.

Region XII Gathering – All Invited to Attend

The Fall 2013 Region XII gathering will be held at St. Patrick's Church in Walla Walla starting on Nov. 15 at 7:00 p.m. with business a meeting. Starting at 8:00 a.m. on Nov. 16 there are presentations on Palanca and the 3-Days concluding with Mass at 5:30 p.m. which is followed by dinner and Ultreya.

All Cursillistas are invited to attend – especially the activities on Saturday Nov. 16, 2013.

For Info call Marie/Gene Drass at 509-375-0283.

ST.PATRICK'S CHURCH
415 W ALDER ST WALLA WALLA WA 99362

Upcoming Cursillo Weekends

The Secretariat is planning to hold Weekends at Holy Apostles in E. Wenatchee in February 2014. To have Weekends we need sufficient number of candidates. Contact your "Friends" to see if they would like to be candidates.

Dan Sisk – Lay Director