

# Fully Alive



THE NATIONAL BULLETIN OF THE CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CURSILLOS



E d u a r d o   B o n n i n  
Founder of the Cursillo Movement

## CONTENTS

Officers' Corner	3	Jesters Corner	8	From Our Readers	16
Conference 2004	5	Witness	9	Matters Spiritual	17
Around the Country	6	Essay	11	You Asked Us	18
		Manna	15	In Conversation	19

# OFFICERS' CORNER

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*Sheelagh Winston recently went to Mallorca on behalf of NA/CG, (North American Caribbean Group) of which Canada is the host country. She brought back some interesting notes that I would like to share with you here. The Officers' Group found them to be very enlightening and they address one or two topics that have been the subject of our own discussion and reflection. SMacKinnon*

## NOTES FROM MALLORCA

While in Mallorca I took the opportunity to sit in on some of the day to day meetings and discussions that are held on several aspects pertaining to their Movement. Although I cannot of course understand what they were actually saying, I wanted to see the dynamic of how they operate. I especially asked to attend the School and then discussed at some length what had taken place, with the head of the School.

### School of Leaders

There are two main sections to the School of Leaders which meet separately. One section could be described as the administration section, while the other concentrates on reflecting and dialoguing on the Foundational Charism, the weekend Rollos etc. In addition, a third section meets when necessary to plan special events such as the annual gathering at San Honorato.

Each section meets every two weeks and several times a year they come together for a combined gathering. The reflection and dialogue section is open to all interested Cursillistas. The administrative section is by invitation.

All members of the Secretariat attend the administrative section of the School. The result therefore, is that the School and the Secretariat are of one mind and the decisions taken at the Secretariat level are a direct result of what is discussed and reflected upon at the School. The main task of the administrative section is to ensure that the Ultreya is reaching its goals.

The Ultreya is discussed, each one sharing their observations, i.e how did the person leading it fulfill their task, was the Witness rollo what it should be, were the responses in keeping with the mentality and were the new candidates there, did they seem

comfortable, what measures could be taken to improve the Ultreya?

The School chooses the Ultreya leader for each week and that leader chooses the Rollista, and those who will respond. What is probably the biggest difference between Mallorca and Canada is the amount of effort that goes into planning the weekly Ultreya. Also, the difference between there and here is the way in which they solve any problems. If the Ultreya is not accomplishing its proper objective, instead of finding innovative things to introduce to 'liven' it up, they seriously discuss the different elements that are part of the authentic Ultreya and look for ways to improve those.

The section that reflects and dialogues on the Charism and mentality is open to anyone who is interested. A member of secretariat facilitates the School and selects a person to give a Rollo on a particular topic pertinent to Cursillo and this is given to begin the session. Several people who have been asked previously then respond in the same manner as at an Ultreya. They share how they personally live the topic that has been presented. i.e if the topic is pre-cursillo, they share how they themselves are living the pre-cursillo and how they perceive its meaning in their lives.

Following these responses, anyone present can then share their own thoughts and reflection on what was said in the presentation and the responses. All is done in an atmosphere of friendship and respect. The interesting thing is that Cursillistas who have been involved in the Movement for years, as rectors, secretariat members, or leaders on teams, attend this section of the School. That perhaps is the big difference in attitude between Canada and Mallorca. There is the constant belief that they can always learn, always be better and that they learn from each other. The Rollo is taped and is available for anyone who wishes to hear it.

The third section of the School is responsible for organizing special events such as the meeting in Mallorca between Eduardo Bonnin and the OMCC. They also organize the annual gathering at San Honorato. This is probably what we would call a Grand Ultreya. It begins with a Rollo on a specific Cursillo topic. When I attended the topic was Faith. There are responses to the Rollo from the body at large. A Pot luck type meal is shared followed by

singing and joke telling. The day which begins mid morning with mass, culminates around 5pm. Sometimes, two days such as this are held during the course of the year.

### **The Post Cursillo Meeting.**

These meetings are between the Rector/a, the team, and the Spiritual Advisors of the last weekends. They are held for the specific purpose of ensuring the well being of the new candidates. The team shares which candidates they have had contact with, whether or not they are attending the Ultreya, whether or not they have found a Group reunion. They also talk about what steps have been taken to encourage and support them and what steps could be taken if there are any who need extra encouragement. The team was planning on sending a Christmas card to each of the candidates. A small gesture, but one that strengthens the connection. This personal follow-up is in keeping with the friendship in which everything is done. These meetings continue for several months after the Cursillo weekend. The meeting took place immediately prior to the Ultreya.

In speaking to the head of the School later, I asked about sponsoring and the responsibility for the new candidates. Because real and genuine friendship is at the heart of the whole Movement in Mallorca, the problems that surround 'sponsoring' in Canadian Movements, does not exist. Because they not only know about pre-cursillo, but genuinely live it, those who are invited to the Cursillo weekend are done so by people who have befriended them. This does not mean living in each other's pockets but it does mean wanting to share the Good News that they themselves are living and it means showing a genuine interest in them as persons before any invitation to attend a weekend is given. The team from the weekend remain vitally interested in and concerned for the Candidates, long after the weekend and therefore, the whole concept of sponsoring has a very different meaning. The 'sponsor' is the one who brings the candidate to the Cursillo and makes sure that the team knows what they need to know about them, but it is the team, which helps them in the three days and into the fourth day. As is evident in the post Cursillo meetings, no candidate is ever just allowed to drop through the cracks and the friend who brings them to the Cursillo, and the team, work together to ensure that they are supported until they feel comfortable and become part of the community. This is not to say that every candidate that makes Cursillo in Mallorca becomes a part of Cursillo. As is true in Canada, for some it is not something that they wish to continue. These candidates are carefully observed for three or four months to ensure that the support is available if

they want it but they are not pressured into anything. If they do not appear to be interested then their decision is respected.

*S Winston*

Have you heard it? The steady hum of communication and conversation which has been ongoing since our National Conference last June?

Christianity in Action - Living the Fourth Day, the theme of that conference, provided an overview of The Third Day of the Cursillo weekend. The talks and Rollos presented were compiled in booklet form, some are available on the CCCC website, and the Resource Centre has sent off many of the booklets via Canada Post to interested Cursillistas.

CCCC's focus has been on the 'why' of the Cursillo. Looking at the Third Day, where we have found the most distortion to the Cursillo method. Sharing what we have found in studying the Foundational Charism and the Founder's vision, we brought what we are learning and asked the delegates to take this home to their own movements. We asked them to join us on the journey back to the basics of the Cursillo mentality and method.

Workshops, study groups, Schools of Leaders, have begun. Some movements have taken the step in faith to use the original Mallorcan outlines recommended and distributed by CCCC. The feedback we receive has been very positive.

Change is never easily accepted or accomplished. This is especially true when the 'change' involves a weekend which, for many, has been life altering. What many of us have now learned is that the 'change' happened a long time ago. For some of us who have been Cursillistas for many years, this 'going back' brings us to what we experienced when we came to our own Cursillo weekends. This is very evident in the feedback received from various Cursillistas who are studying, and/or using the new manual of outlines.

In all, this has been an encouraging and blessed time for your CCCC Officers. We thank God for the dedication and commitment of our Cursillista brothers and sisters who keep in touch, encourage, and support us as we strive to serve Cursillo in Canada.

*S MacKinnon  
Chairperson CCCC*

# CONFERENCE 2004

## JUNE 17-20<sup>TH</sup>

GRANDE PRAIRIE, ALBERTA  
Hosted by  
Cursillistas of Grouard-McLennan

Please put this important date on your Cursillo calendar of events for 2004.

Come as a Group Reunion or an Ultreya group and meet your fellow Cursillistas from across the country.

### *The Why of the Weekend – To Be A Pilgrim*

*A continuation of the journey. Do our weekends bring us new friends for the journey, pilgrims on the way, or are we adding to an ever growing list of tourists who have 'made a weekend' as if it were a three day event rather than the beginning of a new way of living?*

*The Conference will provide for a deeper look at the weekend Rollos and meditations, the role of the Leader and the necessity for all Leaders to have a thorough understanding of what the Cursillo weekend is designed to achieve.*

### *To Make of Life a Perennial Cursillo*

The Conference will be held at the College in Grande Prairie. Billeting is being offered by local Cursillistas or single room accommodations are available on site. The rooms are situated with five rooms per unit and each unit has two bathrooms and a sitting area. Those travelling in groups can specify if they wish to be housed together. We encourage as many as possible to stay on site to preserve the continuity of the community spirit begun during the day. Registration forms will be made available on line at the CCCC website. [www.cursillo-canada.org](http://www.cursillo-canada.org) or from your local secretariats. You may register on line or by fax or mail.

Grande Prairie is in northern Alberta and air connections are normally through Edmonton or Calgary. The business meeting will take place on the afternoon of Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> prior to the start of the Conference. Details will be forwarded to secretariats as soon as possible.

It has been suggested that secretariats consider fund raising events in order to assist as many as possible to attend the Conference.

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

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- ◆ ATLANTIC, Antigonish (Tri-Counties, Cape Breton East, Cape Breton West) Halifax, St. John's, Charlottetown, Yarmouth, Yarmouth Valley. St. John

- ◆ QUEBEC, Montreal English, Spanish, Hungarian, Korean

- ◆ ONTARIO, Sarnia , London, Kent County/Chatham, Peterborough, Toronto, Hamilton, Timmins, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Korean, Latin American

- ◆ WESTERN, Victoria, Vancouver, Nelson, Prince George, Calgary, Edmonton, Grouard-McLennan, Kamloops, Native Cursillo, Winnipeg.

## ATLANTIC

Greetings from the Cursillo Community of the Archdiocese of Halifax, Nova Scotia! We are excited to have this opportunity to use Fully Alive to share a part of our journey "Back to Basics". In June 2003, a new Secretariat was named. Several of those individuals, along with other Cursillistas from our community, had the pleasure of attending the National conference, which was held in New Brunswick at the end of that month. We returned home with a renewed interest in studying what has become known as the Rainbow Manual, which is the manual containing the original outlines for the weekend Rollos that was published by the CCCC Resource Centre and made available at the conference.

Our School of Leaders took on the joyous task of developing a workshop that focused on the Third Day of the weekend, and we titled it "Back to Basics". We were blessed to have both Sylvia MacKinnon of the National Officers' Group and Sheelagh Winston, Resource person for CCCC, join us to share their reflections and Rollos on the Foundational Charism and the Three Encounters.

Approximately 80 Cursillistas from our diocese and other parts of the province of Nova Scotia attended, and we even had a Cursillista travel from Montreal to share this experience with us.

This workshop solidified our community's commitment to returning to the founder's vision for Cursillo. It was gratifying to hear many of the Cursillistas who had experienced the early years of Cursillo in Halifax indicate that what they heard at the workshop was what they remembered as being the life giving event they had experienced on their Cursillo weekend. A strong testimony to the founder's vision for Cursillo working is that those Cursillistas remain active in both our movement and their environments as vibrant, fully alive Christians today, some 27 years later.

We have continued our back to basics journey by throwing out the old Leader's manuals in our community, and providing all team members for our upcoming weekends with the new Rainbow manual. The School of Leaders developed a two day teaching session, using the Rainbow manual and the information from the National conference as a base, to deliver to the teams of the upcoming weekends at the beginning of their team formation. These teaching sessions stressed the importance of returning to the **why** of Cursillo. It is humbling to note that whenever I start to become flustered now about **how** something in our community is going to happen, there is an entire community reminding me to get back to the **why** ... and that reminder works!

Our School of Leaders meets on the first Monday of every month, and has turned its attention to studying the Rainbow manual. Members of the School of Leaders are studying the outlines, preparing teaching talks that are followed by another Cursillista actually giving a Rollo using the manual's outline. This is followed by discussion. It is our hope that through this method, we will continue to develop leaders and future team members.

Through it all, it is evident to us that the Holy Spirit is at work in our community. We continue to hold regular Ultreys, and we also gathered the Secretariat together to begin our year with a retreat that was led by our Spiritual Director. This retreat allowed us to reflect on our personal relationship with Jesus, called us to remember why we

# building bridges from coast to coast



have been given this awesome gift of Cursillo and how our living out of the Cursillo method in our daily environments can indeed transform the world.

May our loving Father bless each of you and strengthen you to carry His Word to the world.

Respectfully submitted  
Sandy Spencer  
Lay Director  
Archdiocese of Halifax Cursillo Community

## QUEBEC

### MONTREAL SPANISH CURSILLO

The Hispanic Cursillo community in Montreal held a workshop in March. They are currently creating a Rector's Guide and the focus of the workshop was to study the three days of the Cursillo weekend, step by step from Thursday night up to the Clausura. Topics that were studied were how to form team and the purpose of team preparations, emphasizing the need for the team to be a witness of the mystical Body of Christ.

The Structure of Ideas was used as a resource document for the presentations focusing on the different aspects of Knowing, Situating, Enlightening and Journeying Together.

The Method, what is being done  
The Mentality, why it is being done  
The Purpose, for what reason it is being done  
The System, with what and how it is being done.

Cursillistas from Montreal, Sherbrooke, QC, and Toronto were in attendance.

### QUEBEC REGION SCHOOL OF LEADERS

Cursillistas from the three cultural groups in Montreal continue to meet to reflect and share together in the Regional School of Leaders. The presentations from the 2003 Annual Conference in Rothesay have been the focus of their reflections. They will gather in April for an Easter celebration. All are welcome.

## ONTARIO

### Hispanic Cursillo Movement

The Spanish speaking Cursillistas of Ontario and Quebec, will gather in Kitchener, ON, September 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the V Hispanic National Ultreya. Bishop Tonnos of Hamilton diocese will celebrate the closing mass at 1.30 pm, Sunday, September 5<sup>th</sup>.

More details on the gathering will be published in future issues of Fully Alive or can be obtained from the Group Co-ordinator, Carmen Orellana, (519) 749 1237, e-mail [alfred047@hotmail.com](mailto:alfred047@hotmail.com)

### THUNDER BAY

The Cursillistas of Thunder Bay meet every third Saturday of each month for the "Apostolate Leadership Gathering", held at Corpus Christi Church. The gathering is open to all those who are interested in further exploring the weekend talks and who may eventually work on a weekend as part of the team.

Thunder Bay Cursillistas also have Ultreyas on Tuesday nights at Corpus Christi and on Wednesday nights at St. Elizabeth.

Thunder Bay has recently created its own website. [www.cursillo-thunderbay.org](http://www.cursillo-thunderbay.org)

## WESTERN

### WINNIPEG

The Winnipeg Cursillo community will celebrate a Grand Ultreya on April 17, 2004 beginning with a pot luck supper at 6.00pm. The Ultreya rollo will be given by a Cursillista from Thunder Bay, a community which has done much to assist the new Winnipeg Cursillo Movement to become a reality.

Information on the Grand Ultreya from Ron Storozuk. Email [ronstorozuk@mts.net](mailto:ronstorozuk@mts.net) ph. 204 782 6306



# JESTERS' CORNER

.....NO SAD SAINTS HERE!!

*Jesters' Corner is a regular feature open to all Cursillistas and intended to serve as resource material for Cursillo weekends. Please forward submissions to the editor.*

## CHALK ONE UP FOR THE OLD FOLKS, ONE SMART SENIOR CITIZEN!! HOORAY FOR HER!!

*The letter to the bank, shown below, is an actual letter that was sent to a bank by a 96-year-old woman. The bank manager thought it amusing enough to have it published in the New York Times.*

Dear Sir:

I am writing to thank you for bouncing my check with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month. By my calculations, three nanoseconds must have elapsed between his presenting the check and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it. I refer, of course, to the automatic monthly deposit of my entire salary, an arrangement, which, I admit, has been in place for only eight years.

You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity, and also for debiting my account \$30 by way of penalty for the inconvenience caused to your bank.

My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to rethink my errant financial ways. I noticed that whereas I personally attend to your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you, I am confronted by the impersonal, overcharging, pre-recorded, faceless entity, which your bank has become.

From now on, I, like you, choose only to deal with a flesh-and-blood person. My mortgage and loan repayments will therefore and hereafter no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank, by check, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee at your bank whom you must nominate. Be aware that it is an offence under the Postal Act for any other person to open such an envelope. Please find attached an Application Contact Status, which I require your chosen employee to complete. I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative.

Please note that all copies of his or her medical history must be countersigned by a Notary Public, and the mandatory details of his/her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof.

In due course, I will issue your employee with a PIN number, which he/she must quote in dealings with me. I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required of me to access my account balance on your phone bank service. As they say, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Let me level the playing field even further. When you call me, press buttons as follows

1. To make an appointment to see me.
2. To query a missing payment.
3. To transfer the call to my living room in case I am there.
4. To transfer the call to my bedroom in case I am sleeping.
5. To transfer the call to my toilet in case I am attending to nature.
6. To transfer the call to my mobile phone if I am not at home.
7. To leave a message on my computer, a password to access my computer is required. Password will be communicated to you at a later date to the Authorized Contact.
8. To return to the main menu and to listen to options 1 through 7
9. To make a general complaint or inquiry. The contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service. While this may, on occasion, involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration of the call.

Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee to cover the setting up of this new arrangement. May I wish you a happy, if ever so slightly less prosperous New Year?

Your Humble Client

# Witness

*Daily we touch Him*

**H**ello. My name is Doug Graves and I made the 43rd Men's Cursillo in March 2002 where I sat at the table of St. Augustine's Monks.

I would like to personally welcome you to this Ultreya and thank you for this opportunity to share my witness of God's work here on earth during my fourth day. It was during my Cursillo weekend when I truly opened my heart and invited God to work His will through me, and became an obedient child in the Lord's family of Christians.

To begin I want to briefly visit my past struggle concerning my willingness, or more to the point, my understanding as to what I thought faith and God were and what it meant to be a Christian. From an early age (10 or so) I was involved in the church, although in another denomination. I had at this very early age invited God to walk with me, but not having the experience or the wisdom to know what living in Jesus' image felt like or looked like, I very honestly thought I had failed.... or more importantly.... thought God had failed me.

As I led my life through my teenage, early adult and adult hood years, I had this nagging struggle of wanting to be a good person, wanting to be considered a Christian, and wanting to completely believe in God whole heartedly that I often acted the part and spoke the part.... but always struggled with whether or not I was truly living the part. What was being a faith filled Christian and what did it feel like to be embraced by God and truly witness His presence in my life?

Well, I pretended I knew and thought I knew until my faith, my life, my entire world met a crisis that as a human I could not handle alone. I turned my back on God and chose to turn to worldly escapes and desires. I needed help as my entire belief system, my entire world, was turned upside down and thrown into chaos at the age of 33. I faced a long road out of the woods, to put it mildly.

I was humbled by God. I felt like Zacharias, who lost his voice and could not speak until his son John was born and named, for not truly believing in the awesome power of God and not whole heartedly

turning my life over to His mysterious ways. Instead of asking Him to join me, I eventually understood that it was I who had to join Him. I felt like my voice had been removed from me because I had lost the respect of my peers, the love of my family and my words could not be trusted.

I recognize now that God was still with me, but I thought I was alone.

I had begun my journey back, but still felt empty. During my chaotic years there was a bright spot. I had the fortune of meeting one of God's children who had been moved by the Holy Spirit to invite me to participate in a Cursillo weekend, which I understood to be a weekend of prayer and reflection. At the time I thought it sounded like a good rest from the craziness I had invited into my life out of misguided free will, and the influences of the evils that roam and exist amongst us here on earth.

I had, in the years leading up to what I call my chaotic years, developed an empty hole inside of me that in some way I knew was there because of my lack of faith, my failing in thinking God had abandoned me which I now recognize as me blaming God for my own doing.

The servant God sent to me, being committed to serving God, followed through on her action and promise...and delivered me to the Men's 43rd Cursillo and left me on the doorstep of God's kingdom. All I had to do was knock and enter. This I did and as it turns out, my time was at hand. I opened my heart and experienced a life-altering encounter with God and His servants. I truly understood that I had abandoned God and it was up to me to do His work, and not His job to do my work by fixing my failings.

So I began my fourth day! I was filled with a strength and a determination and I knew my life was about to change.

Of course at first I was feeling very good, a little excited, and wanted to run out and tell everyone about my weekend, but somehow I knew that wasn't God's plan. I still had a lot to learn. I began meeting with my sponsor and discussing God, faith and our

role as God's workers. So I was very fortunate to be able to share my experience I had with God and keep things in perspective. I was able to get a little drink from God's well every day, which gave me an opportunity to truly look at my role as a Christian and begin to understand what God wanted from me.

First, I felt it very important that if I was going to do the Lord's legwork here on earth I should have a better understanding of what God wants or hopes for us, and also how He communicates His vision to us.

Secondly, I knew He wanted me sober and of sound mind, so I put into practice asking God for help whenever I was challenged on my journey. I would take hold of my cross, which I had been given on my weekend, and which I have never taken off from being near my heart, and I would pray and all would be well. I felt this deep down inside.

I also began reading literature and continued going to Masses, and truly trying to understand what was being said in scriptures and homilies and put it into practise. Then I came across what was to become the greatest piece of literature in helping me understand the communication process for God. This book helped me to understand how God speaks to us which allowed me to truly listen and hear what God wants me to understand about living in Jesus' image. Mind you there are days I struggle but I am very vigilant to God's ways and His words. And I am so confident that God is always there, I never hesitate to ask for His help, His guidance or His love and understanding.

Soon after my weekend rebirth I began sharing prayer time every day with Sandy and asking for strength and guidance. My eyes, ears and heart really started to see, hear and feel God's presence. I clearly remember one day during prayer there had been a nagging issue for me...one that I had been mulling over for a couple of days trying to answer on my own as an intelligent human being. It was as if God threw a charge of energy with a message on it for me. A flash that spoke "do not be afraid...you are new people".

Because of my past transgressions I struggled with my forgiveness of myself and it was as if God told me my heart was new and He forgave me, so I must forgive myself. It was a flash, a quick instant, but so perfectly clear and concise. I instantly recognized its origin. That was truly the beginning of my open dialogue with God.

One other "God incidence" I experienced was one day I was driving through town and this particular

day it seemed I was spending the day driving here, there and everywhere, and it seemed every time I had to be somewhere I was pushing the time limits set upon me by human conditions of our daily routines. Got to be here by this time, have to be there by that time, it was crazy. Also throughout this day I had had some difficulties with a friend and it was driving me crazy to the point of me being quite upset and really bothered by it...and I couldn't get it off my mind. It was in fact stopping me from enjoying my day, enjoying my friendship, enjoying my job, enjoying my new romance. It was consuming me. Well, in the course of one of the drives I was on, I was desperately trying to pass cars, catch lights, be at the front of the race up the highway, but there always seemed to be a road block.... a crosswalk, a red light, a slow moving truck, a construction zone, a school zone with kids.... and it dawned on me. God was telling me, or showing me, what not letting go of things that are out of my hands or things that I can do nothing about at the time because of work commitments or daily routines can do to me. It can stop me from enjoying life in the present moment if I couldn't learn to focus on life in the moment. There is an appropriate time and place to deal with things and at that time, worrying or fretting was just getting in the way of living and enjoying my work that day, or the beautiful sunny day it was. Let it go until you can appropriately deal with it. It was an awesome revelation! The remainder of my day went great. I did get to work out the difficulty with my friend, and lo and behold, we are still very good friends...but I also did not lose a day in my life fretting over things I could not control at that moment.

There is one last experience of witnessing God's presence that I would like to share and this one for me, is the most significant and moving for me personally.

I'm sure we all have periods or experiences in our life that we would sooner forget or regret having put ourselves through them in the first place, and beat ourselves up for having been so weak, so human, even referring to ourselves as so darn stupid. What was I thinking, or how could I not have seen that coming, or how could I not have listened to my instincts?

Well, having struggled with my faith there was a time in my life that I constantly beat myself up for being human or weak and not reaching out to God, and not putting a stop to what I knew was wrong. Well, there was one particular week that I struggled with forgiving myself and letting go. As my fiancée and I reflected on past decisions, past failing and past journeys, we realized we could not enjoy today and

the blessings that we were given since truly asking God to walk with us in our lives.

Well, as we know, God knows our hearts. He knows our very name and knows what we need and our desires.

We had had one particular engaging conversation, which brought no resolution to our past inequities or what we view as not following our hearts. We prayed that evening, thinking we don't have the answers so we have to hand it over. Before I give you the obvious outcome I must say that included in our prayer time, we have also incorporated readings from two very useful and inspiring devotional books. Well, the very next day after asking God to intervene, a particular reading came up and spoke to us so clearly that we were both so moved by it. It was the reading that spoke about even when we were wandering in the desert, God provided for us by turning stones into manna, and once we had survived the desert, He led us to the beautiful and lush valley.

This reading lifted our burdens and we truly understood that God has a plan.

God sees the whole parade and in going through our personal deserts we had been shown the lush and bountiful valleys and hills overflowing with life and beauty. Instantly we were both moved to tears of joy and true understanding and love for God and His will. He knew what we needed to know in order to truly appreciate life and where we were. Without

those journeys through the desert, true beauty would not be seen for what it is.... paradise here on earth.

I have truly experienced God's presence here on earth during my fourth day. I have gained the insight of God's ways through study and the more I engage in my quest for knowledge, the more present I am to God's daily guidance. It is very much a conscious effort but one I truly love and whole-heartedly engage in doing. I see now that God is always there. I just have to continue to put Him at the centre of my daily life. I enter each day by inviting God to walk with me and show me His will. I thank God daily for the good and the not so good things that I encounter because I really believe the not so good is His way of enforcing the important aspects in life. Love of humanity, respect for yourself (or love thyself) and act in the image of Jesus. Be kind and truthful.

My life has improved one thousand fold since my rebirth and I shall ask God's forgiveness and thank Him constantly, and serve others in the way God wants me to. I know now what faith and God looks and feels like. It looks like you and I, and feels so good when love, honesty, and respect for one another is present. I don't wake up and go to sleep anymore with that empty feeling. I am so filled with God's presence and love today that I know that my fourth day will be a wonderful journey. Through prayer, piety, study and action I shall never be (or feel I am) alone again. God will always be with me.

Thank you.... and De Colores.

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# ESSAY

*"ESSAY" is a column, that provides a vehicle in which the talks and reflections from Cursillo leaders around the country (and abroad) can be shared with the larger audience. Hopefully these 'essays' will provide the basis for further discussion. If anyone cares to respond, please feel free to send your commentary to Fully Alive. While these essays are subject to editing for space, clarity and subject, they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the CCCC.*

The following is the presentation given by Fr.Gaston Rioux, o,m,i. at the 2003 Annual Conference.

## Introduction.

Any gift from God is never understood in-depth from the first instant in a human life. It takes time, reflection and a good connection to God through the Holy Spirit as Jesus told us before leaving earth at the Last Supper. "When he comes however, being the Spirit of Truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will

not speak of his own, but will speak only what he hears..." John 16:13.

This Conference will be a success, as long as everyone accepts the invitation to join the journey. This is an invitation to study with us, to reflect with us and dialogue with us. Let the fire of better knowledge

about Cursillo bring us, you and me, a renewed enthusiasm back to our diocesan Movements with the intention that what is presented at the Conference can become the basis for deeper study in our diocesan Schools. These annual Cursillo Conferences have not authoritative power to coerce, but are the sharing of some food for thought. As human persons, not to think is to condemn oneself to the state of remaining a child and not to grow. What a pity!

### 1. Leaders who think.

Many years ago, as a young student, I was touched deeply by a sentence from some author, I no longer remember who. It was this: "The world is in the hands of those who think." What the world needs now are Leaders who think. What the Church needs now are Leaders who think and love. And Eduardo Bonnin, the Founder, said, "What the Cursillo needs, is Leaders who think."

Why be a leader? Why think? Because Jesus told us: "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world..." (Matt.5:13;14) Those who lead must think in order to give flavour to human life, to bring people out of their darkness.

What does it mean, "Leaders who think?" They are not only people who have ideas. They are not only people who have the ability to read and absorb ideas from books, but they are to be people who connect ideas with the meaning of life, with the meaning of their own life. They are to be people who connect with the ideas of others and with new visions of life in order to be able to cast a greater light on situations, on values. They are people who find more light in the shock of ideas and values to open new avenues and to be innovative in building a new world and the Kingdom of God. How do we know that leaders who are thinking are good leaders and who's thinking is on track?

When it can be seen that they are living what they are saying, as Jesus said: "It's not enough to say, "Lord, Lord, to enter into heaven; one must do the will of my Father in heaven." (Matt. 7:21), when they bear good fruit, (Matt.7:16), in the long term and in the general orientation of their lives, fruits of love, care and of help. When they are concerned about people and do all they can to build a world where each person will have their own place and be happy. Otherwise, they are not good leaders who think.

So it is more than finding ideas, playing with ideas, connecting ideas together, but because of new ideas and reflecting on them to have a better life, more enthusiasm to live and to help others so that they may

live more and better. This calls for a time of silence and reflection on a regular basis for a clearer sense of purpose and determination to make a difference in this world now. Having ideas and nothing more is useless and worthless because we cannot operate at the level of the head, we must move out towards others from our hearts. Leaders who think and love are important people because they mould the world, they attract by the witness of their lives, and they give joy because of their enthusiasm. That is the kind of leaders we are called to be.

The Cursillo needs more than a small elite body of thinkers in the Movement, it needs a great number of them, so that through their interaction, more light will shine, more depth will be achieved in understanding the Foundational Charism and will bring about the better world that Jesus dreamt of. Because I have acted on my own decision to think about the Foundational Charism, I have received enthusiasm, knowledge and a deep desire to share it. The quality of the Cursillo and its effectiveness is proportional to the quality of Cursillo Leaders who think. Truth goes hand in hand with humility and commitment to the truth. Last year there was a presentation with the same title as this. The Cursillo Movement is in desperate need of Leaders who think, it was true last year and it is still true this year. The lack of Leaders who think debilitates the life of Cursillo and jeopardizes its mission. The Leaders needed are those at the service of Jesus Christ and their brothers and sisters in the Cursillo, in humble dedication, away from power seeking and self-indulging domination, both of which destroy God's gift.

One of the functions of the Officer's Group is to study and reflect on all that is Cursillo, and since 1992, that study and reflection has been specifically to try to rediscover the origins, to find out what the Founder, Eduardo Bonnin, wanted to accomplish when he and his young friends brought life to this Movement which has now spread around the world. Cut off from its origins, Cursillo is no longer Cursillo, even though it retains the name. Separated from the origins the well runs dry and the Movement will not produce its intended fruits.

What we have discovered and shared in the years since then is known as the Foundational Charism. In sharing the fruit of our reflections, our aim is to give you, the Leaders, something to think about. It is not intended to give you the impression that all the good things that you have accomplished in your Movements over the years has not been tremendously effective in transforming your environments. We may be very effective, but we can always be better, as individuals and as Movements. We only ask that you

listen, and think. In the words of Bonnin, "far better to know that you believe, than to believe that you know".

## 2. What the journey has been

At past Conferences we have looked at information that we received from Mallorca after being invited there to attend the I Conversations of Cala Figuera. At this event, as many of you know, Leaders from around the world gathered to 'Converse' with each other, to dialogue and share together what is Cursillo. The Founder and the Mallorcan School of Leaders have come to the realization that although the Movement is spreading around the world, the Charism is in danger of being lost. As the Movement spreads, the tendency is to adapt and supposedly update it until in many places it is becoming something else. Canada has joined that journey and has continued to work closely with Mallorca since 1994. We invite you to be part of this exciting and joyful journey. It is work, but it is deeply fulfilling. What we have learned and have asked you to reflect upon were the following key aspects: person, liberty, love, friendship, conviction, sincerity, criteria, life, normality and joy. All these elements are part of the mentality of the Cursillo and each one of them has been presented as part of these annual Conferences since 1994.

## 3. Rediscovering the origins

What a wonderful memory it is to go back to Toronto, in January 1992, when I met Eduardo Bonnin for three days of 'retreat', to listen to the history of the origins and the spirit of the beginnings. It was like being part of the beginning of the Church as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles. The Holy Spirit was being made present through Eduardo's enthusiasm and deep faith. Inside of me, a wave of joy swelled up and a great beam of light shone in my mind and suddenly I discovered a new image of Cursillo. I was like a new convert. I loved that new vision because it made complete sense to me. Before that, some parts of the puzzle were missing and I found them. Listening to Eduardo, I understood some of his comments: "Cursillo has yet to be tried". I agreed, because the Charism is not fully grasped and lived. "What has been done is not wrong, but can always be better". Take another look at the Why, because this is "it". A lack of understanding of the "Why" will confuse the focus and gives no precise meaning to the how, therefore creating more confusion.

To date we (the officers) have looked back at the origins. It has never been the intention to look back with nostalgia trying to recapture something from another time but rather to understand the depth of

our Movement and to find the most effective means for all our Movements to reach their full potential. Understanding the Why of Cursillo negates the need for endless discussions about the How.

Last year, some of our leaders attended the II Conversations of Cala Figuera and in his presentation, the president of the Mallorca Movement had this to say. "The Foundational Charism being proclaimed today is not a solution which asks us to look backwards. Christ is the way, and Christians always walk ahead.

However, we must remember that in order to get to a specific place, we must know where we started from and how far we have already walked." What Canada is doing, is exactly what Mallorca and the world are doing. Examining our origins so that we might better understand where we are going and how to get there.

At last year's conference we began the process of the next step of rediscovering the origins, we began to look at the weekend Rollos, to implement some of what we have learned and to give some kind of guidance to those Movements who are interested in finding ways to apply it. As you remember

*It is far better  
to know that  
you believe,  
Than to  
believe that  
you know.*

*E. Bonnin*

last year in Ottawa, we spent time on "Study of the Environments", very often misunderstood. Try to study it because of its importance in the Cursillo. With this year's theme, "Christianity in Action", we continue to pursue the second step in our journey.

In order to do this we need Leaders who are willing to think. We are past the time when someone can stand at a podium and legislate what can and cannot be done. These Conferences are really gatherings of the national School of Leaders and what happens here this weekend is not for your ears only, you must be the messengers who can take it back to your Movements, be willing to share it and to encourage all your leaders to become those who think. The Movement will be healthy and thriving if many Leaders are those who think and who are not satisfied

with what is because it has always been, but are willing to get together and work together.

#### 4. We have looked at the mentality

The fundamental core of the Cursillo Movement is the School of Leaders and it is here that the Leaders in your dioceses will deepen not simply their understanding of Cursillo, but will in fact, deepen their understanding of the Gospel and the call on their lives as baptized Christians. The Cursillo Movement only provides a means, to help and support people to live out their vocation as Laypeople as Church in the world.

Its method provides a way:

1. to make the conversion experienced on the 3 day weekend, ongoing and progressive, as all authentic conversion must be.
2. To support the work of changing the environments, one person at a time
3. To allow people to become the best that they can be
4. To allow them to bloom where God has placed them
5. To do it all as Laypeople in the world, being Christians in the marketplace of everyday life

#### The Founders thinking is embodied in the message of the weekend Rollos

Let me make a short remark, here we use the term "Founders" out of respect for Eduardo Bonnin but, historically, he is the Founder. His six young friends backed him up and were with him as a team. Eduardo's humility created the term "Founders", but the truth has also a right to be heard.

Sometimes it seems as if the message contained in the Rollos is perceived as a message only for the weekend. The message of the entire weekend is a blueprint for our lives as Christians. We are more truthfully Christians, than Cursillistas since Cursillo is a method to live the Gospel as Laypersons. The message is not specific to Cursillo. Too often the focus of the Rollos has been changed and adapted, we must ask ourselves, "does the message given in the Rollos reflect the foundational ideas?" There is a real need to study the weekend outlines used in Mallorca since the beginning and which are now available at the Cursillo Resource Centre in Montreal.

This weekend we will explore yet another of the Rollos and one which has lost its original focus to a very great extent. 'Christianity in Action'. It is very important that we all understand that nothing is being changed, what is happening is a return to the

origins, to the actual Rollos that are in use in Mallorca today where Cursillo flourishes as it has for almost 60 years. The focus we have known is very different. It will require Leaders who think to adjust to this.

There are some who have been expressing the desire for CCCC to become an authoritarian body. We are being asked to provide a manual of rules and regulations, which say, This is Cursillo! This is the way it must be done. We are not an authoritative body; we do not have the answers. We have gone to the source, which is the best thing we could do, and now, we can only hope to be facing in the right direction. A good cook does not need a recipe book. He or she understands how the equipment works, understands how different foods work together and knows what he or she is trying to accomplish. It is the same with Cursillo Leaders. Being Leaders who think will help us all to develop a unity of criteria of: Conviction, Will, and Perseverance, which will result in an authentic Cursillo Movement. Cursillo provides a method through which we learn to LIVE the Gospel in the everyday circumstances of our lives. One does not need a manual to know how to do this; one learns to live the Gospel, through Piety, Study and Action.

For those Leaders who think, all the information is already available but although it is simple, it can appear to be very deep and requires a commitment. To be a Leader who thinks, one needs a clear goal, a firm decision to know and a commitment to act in taking time to reflect. A Cursillo leader should think about what makes Cursillo and should absorb the Foundational Charism through reflecting on it. Otherwise, the authentic foundations of the Movement will be lacking. It is not enough to read a book or a document and think that we have the answers, in the same way that it is not enough to read the Gospel once and think that we know Jesus. The truths of the Charism are revealed over and over and after almost 30 years of in depth study, some of our Leaders are still learning and what we are learning is, that the Foundational Charism of the Cursillo leads us to the Gospel and doesn't make us Cursillistas, it makes us Christians responding to the call of our baptism and the call of the Church.

All we can say to you is it is an exciting journey and we invite you to come with us.

De Colores!  
Fr. Gaston Rioux,  
o.m.i Spiritual Advisor



# Manna

Teachings From Our  
Catholic Heritage

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## THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The roots of this particular devotional practice go back to the fourth century. The Bishop of Jerusalem, a man called Cyril, was in charge of the *catechumens*, those seeking initiation into the Christian faith. (Our RCIA tries to mirror this process of the Early Church) During Holy Week he led his students to certain sites associated with the events of Jesus' last walk to Golgotha. Although originally planned only for those under instruction; as his students were initiated into Christianity, they continued this Lenten practice. Apparently the practice continued and flourished. There is an account from a woman pilgrim (her name was Egeria) who pilgrimaged in the Holy Land around 381 A.D. and wrote back to her community in Spain giving a glowing account of her experience of praying at the holy sites of Jesus' last walk.

Little shrines were erected at the various holy places in the 15<sup>th</sup> century but there was no guidance as to how many there should be and what should be the focus of veneration.

It was not until 1731 that Pope Clement brought order into the practice by stipulating 14 stations, each depicting specific incidents of Christ's Passion and Death. In the past, when there was widespread illiteracy, these plaques were used as a teaching tool to tell the story of Christ's walk to His Crucifixion. Pope Clement's list of the Stations remained in place until 1975 when it was changed to emphasize the Last Supper and the Resurrection, and in 1991 Pope John Paul II in his annual Good Friday celebration of the Stations of the Cross, omitted some of the familiar stations, substituting them with events recorded in the New Testament.

In this new arrangement, the three falls of Jesus and the respective encounters of Jesus with His mother and with Veronica (which are not recorded in

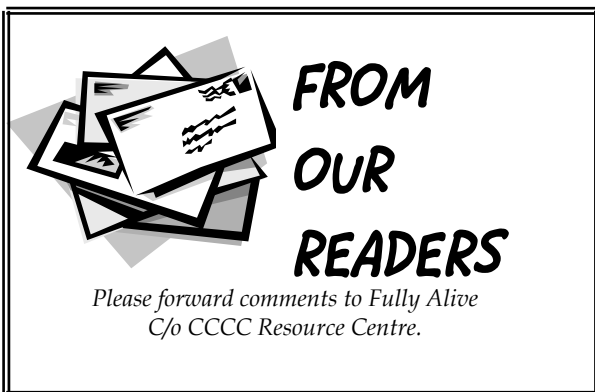
scripture) have been replaced with events found in the gospel accounts. In many places an extra station has been added: to commemorate the Resurrection, and veneration takes place before the tabernacle. This addition situates the Stations of the Cross within the Passion, Death and Resurrection.

Since it often takes time for "new" changes to be accepted, the Congregation for Divine Worship has authorized various versions of the Stations of the Cross; consequently we may still use the traditional form seen in the plaques you will find around the walls of many churches. By joining in praying this venerable and ancient form of devotion on Good Friday we continue the links in the chain of tradition practiced for almost two thousand years.

### Stations of the Cross as of 1991

1. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.
2. Betrayal by Judas
3. Jesus condemned to death
4. Jesus denied by Peter
5. Jesus judged by Pilate
6. Scourging and Crowning with thorns
7. Jesus carries his cross
8. Jesus is helped by Simon the Cyrene
9. Jesus encounters the women of Jerusalem
10. Jesus is crucified
11. Jesus' promise to the good thief
12. Jesus with his Mother and the disciple
13. Jesus dies on the Cross
14. Jesus is placed in the tomb

(As mentioned a 15<sup>th</sup> may be added before the tabernacle celebrating the Resurrection)



Dear Friends,

My name is István Maricza and I am a member of the Cursillo Secretariat in the Esztergom-Budapest Archdiocese in Hungary. Although the Movement has been around since 1989 in our place, an organized School of Leaders was started only a year and a half ago after I took part at the European Working Group meeting and I came to realize the immense importance of the School. It would be a pleasure and an honour for us if we could go by your example and try to rediscover the original meaning of Cursillo.

As of January I have been officially appointed as the head of the School and I started to look for some guidelines for our operation. I came across your excellent website and it turned out that your present focus is very much in line with what we would like to do.

The essays published on your site have been keeping me excited and they posed a dozen of crucial questions I can't wait to discuss with my fellow leaders. The depth of your work also indicates that there is a great concentration of cursillo expertise on your side, from which we would be happy to learn. It seems to me that it is imperative that we get our hands on the original Mallorcan outlines. Is there a way we could get a copy?

I very much hope that we can keep in touch.

De Colores!  
Istvan

*The above was posted on the CCCC website discussion board. If you have not done so already, check out the website and get involved in the discussions. [www.cursillo-canada.org](http://www.cursillo-canada.org) We have responded and offered to send copies of the new Rollos Manual to Hungary.*

I like "Essay" best; the one in the last edition is the best yet. I'm finally "getting it". I like the original Cursillo method. I like the jokes too!

Marilyn Huber, Thunder Bay, ON

I like 'Conversation with Eduardo Bonnin'. The answers to your questions give the true meaning of Cursillo, Ultreya, and Group Reunion; those meanings have somehow been changed or have evolved differently over time. I like Jester's Corner the least, most of the jokes don't seem funny.

Don O'Grady, Stittsville, ON

I sometimes read parts of Fully Alive to my Group Reunion. I like Witness, and In Conversation with the Founder.

- 1) The Witness allows me to see how Cursillistas live the 4<sup>th</sup> Day.
- 2) In Conversation with Eduardo Bonnin allows me to learn of the reasons for Cursillo and speaks of his way for Ultreyas, School of Leaders etc. I like to read News from Around the Country to keep me informed.

Thomas Hickey, St John's NF

The Group Reunion I was a member of for a number of years has been dissolved. Having my subscription renewed [to Fully Alive] gives me a sense of connection which I really like and appreciate.

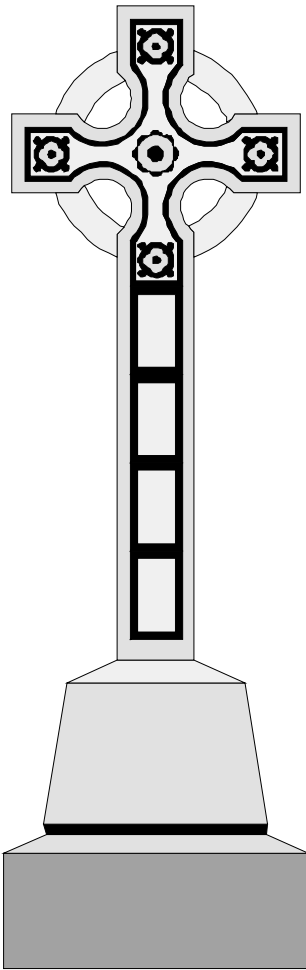
D Carreiro Hamilton

Some of those who have their own seem to put no stock in Fully Alive. I myself embrace it and I am grateful for it. I like the input of different Cursillos, which uplifts and up builds Cursillo greatly. Serves as encouragement to Cursillistas and authenticates its being and also action, i.e Cursillo being lived. Is Cursillo growing? Jester's Corner is uplifting.

Note: I wish there were more an ongoing teaching instructions to Cursillo and Cursillistas to show what Cursillo is and what it is not, lest anywhere falls onto itself and community is lost and also becomes social action and mere social activity turning into committee, club fed in lieu of Christianity being lived.

Madeleine Anta, Newmarket, ON





## MATTERS SPIRITUAL

### TRANSFORMERS

If you connect a flashlight bulb to a high voltage power line, the bulb will blow. The quality of energy applied is right, but the volume is wrong. A transformer is needed to bring it down.

If you connect a telephone line directly to a computer, nothing happens: the languages are different. One language is modulating the signals in wave amplitudes (analog language,) and the other in a series of signals unevenly spaced, (digital language.) A modem is needed to MODulate - DEModulate the signals between telephone and computer.

When a Pure Spirit wants to communicate with a human being, who is spirit and matter, it needs an interpreter knowing both languages. That is the role of Jesus, man-god, who translates the feelings, the dispositions, the spirit of God towards humans into a language that human senses can relate to. Jesus is the 'transformer,' the 'modem,' the 'sacrament' that allows humans to experience God's love.

Before Jesus disappeared from our sight, He sent His followers to take over the role of sacrament He had played for 30 years. This is what being a Christian really means, a person through whom God's love is made concrete: to make God's smile visible on our lips.

Sacraments are not rites or ceremonies, although they usually express themselves through rites and ceremonies. A Sacrament is a person who understands the mentality of the Father, which is unconditional acceptance of His children, and expresses it in a way that humans and easily understand: smiles, loving encounters and gestures that speak to human hearts. Jesus is the original Sacrament. After thirty years, Jesus became invisible, but He chose people who would carry on being transformers, modems, and sacraments of the same Love for future generations. Those people are called Christians.

Christians are humans who have accepted the call of Jesus to make the Father's love tangible and felt by others. Christians, like Jesus, are transformers, modems, and sacraments for others. Their primary mission is to "feed" others with the conviction of their value, dignity and importance in the Father's eyes.

The closest association of two human beings is marriage that makes one flesh out of two people. The primary duty of spouses is therefore to become sacraments of God's love to one another and to their children.

The Father's motivation for choosing that system seems to have been that He made us capable of understanding the meaning of parental love, and of willing to communicate it to others. Doing it is the only way we can come to feel it ourselves, because it is only in giving that we receive. Therein lies the beauty and effectiveness of married life. A woman and a man accepting to love and feed one another, experiencing the sweetness of love in their courtship and honeymoon, and so discovering the beauty, dignity and value of the other against the unavoidable frictions of daily life. Those frictions can then be seen as challenges to overcome, not only as obstacles to a happy life. There is more happiness and genuine personal fulfilment

in contemplating the growth of the loved one knowing that our love is the source and spring of that The Kingdom of God is the family life God wants to have with all His children. We learn it in the bosom of our human family, extend it to those around us, and will fully enjoy it in eternity. "May all my followers be one," said Jesus just before He disappeared from sight.

Fr. Conrad Marcoux, M.Af.



**Q. Why is it that the Cursillo Movement in the Archdiocese of Toronto has little or no mention in your newsletter?**

Wilf Dias,  
Toronto Cursillo Movement

All Cursillo Movements are encouraged to submit articles giving information on the activities of their Movement. We hear from some Movements on a regular basis, they provide a short summary of current activities when they order Cursillo supplies from CCCC or email the Centre for information, and many send us their newsletters. There are a few Movements from whom we hear little and as a result we have no news to include in the newsletter.

**Q. How about rewriting the Leaders School Manual. We are using "How to Program a School of Leaders" and trying to work in the Mallorca method.**

The booklet that you mention, "How to Program a School of Leaders", is a publication that has come to us from the US and has been the only text available for those Movements who try to plan a 'program' for their Schools of Leaders.

Since our ongoing contact with Mallorca and the Foundational Charism, we have discovered that the School is more effective if it doesn't follow a 'program' in the normal sense of the word due to the fact that a 'program' has a beginning and an end, in

the manner of a course, and thus an end that signifies something that is finished. The School, according to the mentality, is rather something that is ongoing and perpetual. There is no 'right' way to conduct a School of Leaders; it must be structured in such a way that it meets the needs of the local Movement as a whole and the Cursillistas as individuals.

In Fully Alive we strive to provide documents that can be used as resource material for the local Schools of Leaders. Other documents are available on the CCCC website at [www.cursillo-canada.org](http://www.cursillo-canada.org). Several

Movements in Canada are studying and reflecting on the weekend Rollo outlines from Mallorca, thus providing excellent team preparation. Others are using the new booklet compiled after the 2003 annual Conference entitled Christianity in Action, Living the Fourth Day. This booklet was the direct result of the many requests for copies of the presentations from the Conference. The booklet is available from the CCCC Resource Centre in Montreal.

In essence, the School of Leaders is designed to cause Leaders to think, to pose questions rather than to answer them for there can be no right answers. It is not a School in the sense of there being teachers and pupils, but rather in the context of a School where each one is a disciple of the same Founder and his original thinking. i.e. A School of Thought. Although we will learn together it will be from the shared experience of all, not the expert opinion of a few. We should all leave with hearts filled with fire and heads filled with ideas. Friendship and respect, are the key elements for success.

Page 3 of this issue has an article briefly describing how the Mallorcan School of Leaders operates and which might be of interest. and page 6 has an account of the growth being experienced in the Halifax School of Leaders.

The whole message, mentality, and method of the Cursillo is to be found in the message of the weekend Rollos and this fact sometimes seems to become obscured. In the words of Eduardo Bonnin, if one has understood the Rollo, Study of the Environment, one has understood the Cursillo.

In essence, the School of Leaders is a place where Cursillistas, both veteran and new, can come together to reflect, dialogue, and share what is essential to a proper understanding of the Movement. The beautiful reality is that in deepening our understanding of Cursillo and how we might live it serves to deepen our understanding of the Gospel and how its Truth can be lived out in our lives.

# IN CONVERSATION With EDUARDO BONNIN

**Q.** Can you describe the role of the Secretariat and what its function really is?

Even at the birth of the "Cursillo Movement" it was already anticipated that its growth and development would demand the creation of commissions or bodies in order to safeguard their essence: the Secretariats.

Oddly enough, in our first publications we were already warning that these bodies should not act as governing bodies. Today we would add that neither is it desirable for them to be 'democratic parliaments; where the essence or substance of the Cursillo might be exposed to the risks of a poll or vote.

It is a pity that in practice, the Secretariats, instead of fulfilling their role, have many times become the source of meaningless impositions, either through a lack of understanding of their aims or because of the personal ambitions of their members. In fact, the Secretariats have seldom been a path to communion, coordination or service. This is apparently because their members have been more interested in what they would like the Cursillo Movement to be, according to their own positions, rather than delving deeply into what they really are, and what they may become, providing that everybody respects what somebody has, very fittingly named, "the Foundational Charism".

The Foundational Charism does not change but evolves and develops from the roots of its own identity, not from subsequent additions to it. This evolution comes about when the wish to share God's Grace within an atmosphere of friendship (the Group Reunion) is properly applied to each specific, personal, or collective circumstance, and when we endeavour to make it possible for everyone to achieve their best and for it to be shared by as many as possible. (The Ultreya)

The life of every Christian and their personal conversion, undergoes continual change as they realize that every person, every event, everything, is a vehicle of new and different possibilities for the Gospel.

Today we would reaffirm that the "Cursillos in Christianity" are:

THE BEST NEWS: God loves us through Christ. And this news is communicated to us by the best possible means, which is FRIENDSHIP. It is addressed to the best part of everyone, their very person, their capacity for conviction, for decisiveness and for constancy.

And what must be stressed today, now, and from now on, is, in order to remain aware of the issues in today's world, is the need to make it possible for each person to experience.

A REUNION WITH THEMSELVES, which is absolutely necessary if one is going to be able to find God and discover the brothers [and sisters].

We should set as our prime target, though not the only one, the 'Far-Away', those who are far away because they have been ill-informed or not informed at all.

THE SECRETARIATS, both the OMCC<sup>1</sup> and the National ones, exist in order to:

SIMPLIFY  
FACILITATE      The living of everything that  
MAKES POSSIBLE      Fundamental Christianity

And

To be guardians of the purity of the Method (Msgr. Hervas)

They are in charge of introducing the Essence, the mentality, the aim, of Cursillos to the Hierarchy and to God's people and for spreading it throughout the world using the appropriate means.

In order to ensure efficiency and practicality it is helpful to publish:

<sup>1</sup> Organismo Mundial de Cursillo de Cristiandad, or world organization.

A list of all National and Diocesan Secretariats, with their addresses, area code, telephone and fax number, office hours etc.

A list of the venues, days and times where Ultreyas are to be held.

In their publications they should delve deep into the roots of the Movement and outline its achievements.

Unity is discovered through the efficacy of the method and its target.. Diversity produces a multiplicity of "How-tos"

What matters is to fine-tune the most practical possible method so that we can get to the core of what is aimed at.

There should be unity in the message, not because of its imposition on others, but because we are all after the same goal. This will be possible if between us we are able to get rid of those strange eccentricities that have been making the Foundational Charism less and less clear.

**Q. Can you give us your views on the practice in some dioceses to formulate a Pastoral Plan as part of the method of Cursillo.**

Some dioceses normally have what is called a Pastoral Plan. This plan is usually prepared, taking into account the various movements or organizations in the Diocese, each one contributing its own charism to the whole pastoral objective.

It is a pity that many dioceses are not aware of what is essential and characteristic of the Cursillo Movement which is: to bring the church closer to the world, and the world closer to the church. The Cursillo therefore, is not properly used.

The experience has been that we have noted the spirit of generosity that fills the Cursillistas at the end of the weekend.

In effect, those who have gone through the Cursillo generally have a desire to serve the church. This fact is known to the ecclesiastical authorities. This does not presuppose that although this service is gladly offered to the church that the Cursillo has to be exclusively assigned to such activities.

We are also happy to note that the Cursillo Movement has resulted in many vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, the Eucharistic ministry and more. This

again does not mean this is the objective of the Cursillo.

For all those we have to thank God profusely. Let us not, however, forget the primary objective of the Cursillo, the goal we want to achieve if we want to realize the real objective, the 'why' and the 'what' for which they were conceived and structured.

The Cursillo wants to accomplish, and we are pleased that it does accomplish this, what it is meant to attain: the Evangelical message. It is good for everybody and it is always new because it renews us. It reaches the greatest number and above all reaches, normal, everyday people. They who have not moment of rest, as they have to work to live and to survive. They, who have no other form of entertainment but to hurriedly read the newspaper, listen to the radio and to wind up asleep in front of the TV. without any of these activities resolving the vital problems of life.

In an unusual situation, if he reflects, he may feel God, but an abstract, distant God, and perhaps because of the Cursillo, it could happen that in the three days of his Cursillo he can meet the real Christ.

It is the man or woman who knows and recognizes God through Christ, a Christ who is alive, present, and human. Man then discovers that without going out of himself, it is possible to have Christ's friendship and nearness.

As the panorama becomes clearer, this same man has discovered the light from the One who is the Light, and through His Grace, he becomes more conscious of the Gospel. Through the Gospel he realizes his potential as a kind of runway on which the presence, spirit, and truth of Christ can land.

It is to this man that we have to go, and continue to search for, because if we do not, it is probably he may not come at all, as we would never expect to meet him along the path of our everyday lives.

To pick out these people from anonymity, and help them to discover by themselves that they are persons is the objective and goal of the Cursillo.

They have always been the reason for our restlessness since the Cursillo began.

*E. Bonnin*

*The above topics have been covered in previous issues of Fully Alive but we believe they are so significant in the proper understanding of the 'Why' of Cursillo that we thought they were worth repeating. Editor*

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