

Fully Alive



THE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CURSILLOS

Cursillo needs leaders who think – the Resource Centre has material that will give you something to think about..



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OFFICERS' CORNER

CENTRAL REGION ENCOUNTER

October 30/31st 2010, leaders from across the region were blessed to come together for the Central Region Encounter, at St. Mark's Church, Kitchener Ontario in the Diocese of Hamilton. There has not been a gathering in the central region for several years so this is a "New Beginning" for us.

The theme for the Encounter was "Deepening Our Understanding of the Cursillo Movement". 56 Cursillistas from the movements of Essex, London, Hamilton, Toronto and Ottawa attended.

The event began Saturday evening with registrations followed by opening prayers and welcome. The initial presentation was on "The Charism" followed by a response, table discussion and open sharing.

Out of town guests were billeted with local Cursillistas and many new friendships were made through this process alone. We reconvened at 8am on Sunday with a wonderful breakfast together enjoying some "corridor time". Following breakfast, there were 2 more presentations, the first was an "Overview of the 10 Topics of Cala Figura" and the second was on "The Person and Friendship". Great dialogue and shared learning followed. The final discussion was on "The Job Ahead - Where do we go from here?"

Evaluation forms were handed out and the overall comments were very positive. The consensus was unanimous, that the encounter should be a yearly event to pass on the information from the annual National Conferences to the regional level. Bringing leaders together in this way has proven to be both educational and enlightening. One movement has volunteered and hopes to host the event in the Fall of 2011.

Father Frank Reitzel, Spiritual Advisor for the Hamilton Movement celebrated mass. This was

followed by lunch and participants were on their way home by 4 o'clock. It was a packed 24 hours but much had been accomplished. God once again graced us with His love through the experience of this encounter. It was a great opportunity for a unity of understanding as we explored in greater depth, the beauty of what Cursillo has to offer through shared learning, love and friendship.

I feel very blessed to be a part of this "new beginning" in the central region.

Marg Weber
CCCC Officer, Central Region

WITH ONE VOICE

Over the years, many diocesan movements in Canada have developed brochures to explain the basics of Cursillo and how it could benefit those searching for Christ. In most places, it has largely been the only form of 'advertising' done to interest people about our wonderful movement. The result, however, has been a variety of differing messages and focuses presented, sometimes with erroneous, inaccurate or outdated information!

In an effort to remedy this, the national officers group recently decided to develop a 'standard' brochure for Canadian cursillistas which could soon be available from the Resource Centre or possibly from the website where it could be downloaded and printed. In this way, every movement could easily have a useful tool, written 'in one voice', for those hearing about Cursillo for the first time, and reflecting the authentic message of the charism which we are trying to disseminate.

As soon as the brochure is ready we will send a copy to all secretariats and it will be posted on the CCCC website: www.cursillo-canada.org

Bernie Reilander,
CCCC Officer Central Region

Let us wake the Western Region from its sleep!

The Cursillo began in the west in 1973 emanating from the United States and by the early '80s, Cursillo movements existed in most dioceses in Western Canada. This Cursillo Movement was based on the model adopted by the US with its Leader's manual, Rollos, the **Fundamental Ideas** and documents by Eduardo Bonnín, Bishop Hervas and others. Some local movements made further adaptations such as the Agape.

By 1983 the Atlantic had begun the process of forming themselves into a region and in 1984 the leaders of the movements of Canada felt the need to be connected as a national movement; a draft constitution was circulated to all the secretariats in the country. Shortly thereafter The Canadian Conference of Catholic Cursillos was born.

Likewise, in the western most provinces there was a need to connect as not all local movements were able to send delegates to national conferences. In 1984, the Western Catholic Cursillo Conference was formed and became a viable resource to the Cursillo movement in the west at the time.

The WCC held conferences, workshops and retreats at least annually, at Silver Star Ski Resort in Vernon BC. We were blessed with Cursillistas and Cursillo leaders from the dioceses and Archdiocese of Victoria, Vancouver, Nelson, Prince George, Grouard-McClennan, Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon.

The WCC was inactive for a time and was then restarted in 1998. The last conference was in 2003.

As the CCCC moves towards implementing the Foundational Charism of the founder, Eduardo Bonnín, many in the west have had difficulty accepting what the Catholic Church has declared authentic and a gift of the Holy Spirit. The Atlantic Cursillo Council, which is comprised of the Cursillo movements from the Atlantic provinces and Newfoundland and Labrador, accepted this model in 2003. Many movements in Ontario have been on the journey for several years and with Quebec recently

joined the newly formed Central Region Cursillo Conference.

In the West, The Diocese of Nelson is committed to the Foundational Charism, has a School of Leaders and has conducted weekends based on the Mallorcan model, following in the footsteps of the movement in the Archdiocese of Vancouver which began several years ago.

One of the most significant moments of awareness for me occurred at one of the retreats at Silver Star Ski Resort. Father Gaston Rioux, the Spiritual Director of the CCCC at the time, was the retreat master. The entire retreat was based on the Gospel of Luke 24, 13-35; the walk to Emmaus. The disciples met a stranger on the road and were relating the events of the past few days; that Jesus their Messiah, the one to redeem Israel, was handed over to the high priests and crucified. As they walked along, Jesus explained the scripture to them. It was later that the disciples recognized him.

The reflection on this passage; is that the disciples had a dream of redemption, but perhaps it was theirs and not God's. It is the same with us. Is what Cursillo should be, our dream, or God's in the Holy Spirit?

The Church has declared that Cursillo is a gift of the Holy Spirit given to Eduardo Bonnín.

It is time to awaken the Western Conference. As can be seen from the success in the Atlantic, where all the movements are in various stages of bringing their movements back to the origins, the opportunity to identify with other Cursillo movements in our region is invaluable.

As a first step, I encourage as many as possible to attend the National Conference in Chilliwack. See <http://www.cursillo-canada.org> for dates and the brief announcement in this issue of Fully Alive.

I will be contacting the dioceses of the west to see who is out there. It is our wish to have a Western Conference meeting in late October to connect and share the Foundational Charism. Please contact me at jgschlos@shaw.ca.

John Schlosser, CCCC Officer Western Region

ESSAY

JESUS LOOKS FOR US! The Person and Friendship

Marg Weber

The following is one of the rollos given at the 2010 Conference,

The topic of my Rollo is: *Jesus Looks for Us! (The Person and Friendship)*

As I reflect on this statement, I have to ask myself: Who am I? What does God see in me?

My immediate answer would be that I am a retired medical secretary, a wife, a mother of 3 grown children, grandmother of 5, and the newest granddaughter was born one week ago today in Montreal.

That's who I tell you I am, but who am I really in God's eyes?

I grew up on a farm in a small rural community near Walkerton, the place that has the best water in the country following the e-coli water crisis 10 years ago.

I was the youngest of 8 children and my father died after a 7 year battle with leukaemia

I was 6 at the time of his death. My childhood is full of memories of poverty, loneliness and abuse of all kinds, memories that still haunt me to this day. However, I was very fortunate to be able to attend a Catholic High School because our parish church community paid for my tuition. Since we lived on a farm there were transportation costs to attend the Catholic High school. So I had to live with a family in town and I worked as their nanny. I was, however, not able to pursue any education beyond high school because of the financial burden on my family.

After high school, at the age of 15, I went to the big city of Kitchener, got a job, a place to live, met Doug and 5 years later we got married. That sounds like a pretty good success story.

Right? Well not exactly!

The struggles I endured in my childhood made it difficult for me to really come to know and understand who I was as a person. Looking back now I've come to realize that I had spent the first part of my life not knowing who I really was. I was a mechanical Catholic who went through the motions and rituals of living out my faith. I know now that I was "faraway". My spirituality consisted of what I was told to believe without understanding it fully. Something was definitely missing. I realize now that there was a huge void in my life.

I believe now that God had a plan for me. He called me at probably the lowest and most vulnerable time of my life, when I was overwhelmed with family problems, illnesses, and our aging parents. I didn't know or understand that Jesus could be such an intimate part of my life as a friend. I knew God as my spiritual father, but not having a close relationship with my own father, the father image was someone-out-there!!! Not in here, under my skin.

I believe this is when God put people in my path, which in turn led me to Cursillo.

JESUS LOOKS FOR US! He calls us by name one person at a time.

Believe it or not, I used to be quite shy and quiet. Through my weekend experience of Cursillo, my many new friends and my Spiritual Advisor, who had become a very special friend, I came to realize that despite my insecurities, lack of higher education, riches or popularity, that I was a child of God and that He loved me like there was no one else on this earth. Through all of these wonderful people, a whole new world had opened up.

In my encounter with self, I had to go deep into my inner thoughts and feelings. I learned a lot about myself. It was painful! By the grace of God, I was able to accept myself as the person God created me to be and for the first time I honestly believed that I could receive love and give love in return.

The people God placed in my path, my new friends, became an important part of my

spiritual journey. I felt loved! I felt valued! and I felt rich!! I came to see myself as God does, with all my warts and flaws, accepting myself for who I was. I had to allow the past to be the past and look forward to the future, for it could be different, but only if I wanted it to be. I was set on the right road in the company of friends.

I came from a family where love was not expressed, it was taken for granted. Not to fault anyone, but at least in my family that's just the way it was 60 years ago. The only time I can remember my mother kissing me was on my wedding day, and that was only on the cheek.

I felt as if I had worn blinders all my life, and had just been going through the motions. When the blinders came off, by the grace of God, I realized the difference. I am created as a person, a special person, a priceless gem. There is no one else like me. Even though we are all part of the animal kingdom, we are set apart because we have the ability to reason, to think and to choose. I can think for myself and when I have my true friends walking the journey with me I need not feel alone or be afraid anymore. I became more confident and learned to love myself for who I was and I now felt like I had friends, friends that were different, real friends that truly cared and wanted the best for me and I could be the same for them in return.

Eleanor Roosevelt once said ...and I quote. "Friendship with oneself is all important, because without it, one cannot be friends with anyone else in the world"

Once I had put on the heart and mind of Christ, the more I came to know myself, the more of a loveable person I became; the more I was able to see others likewise, open, caring and compassionate. I had more courage and I wanted to bring others along on the journey with me, sharing in the joy that I received. Heck, I even learned to hug and was instrumental in passing this on to my family and extended family as well!

Jesus had become my friend. He calls all of us to be his friends. I am sure you have all heard the story of the woman caught in adultery many times. How did Jesus treat her? He spoke to her in friendship and listened to her with compassion and respected her as a person when everyone else wanted to stone her. He recognized her sincerity and without judgment,

he reached out to her. I can identify with this woman.

I believe Jesus, through the people He put in my path, reached out to me, wanted something different for me, became my friend, loved me for who I was and brought me to a Cursillo weekend. I did not know before I went that my life could be different but yet the same. I had emptied myself and was ready to be filled with something more valuable. I was treated with dignity and respect and I was filled love and joy.

As I said before, I was very quiet and shy. I hardly spoke a word at my table group that weekend and I am ashamed to say that I claimed to be a Catholic but I didn't know where Mathew, Mark, Luke or John was in the Bible. I didn't even believe that Jesus was truly present in the Eucharist. I was definitely faraway!

By the Grace of God my spiritual advisor, who became a special friend, saw something in me that weekend. I discovered talents and abilities I didn't know I had, that have allowed me to be an instrument of service of His love.

Each and every one of us is unique. I do not have the same talents or abilities as any one of you in this room. God creates us in His image and likeness, but sadly, we don't always see this in ourselves or in others. If we did we would respect each and every person we meet in our daily lives, despite their faults and frailties and would not be so ready to judge and criticize or manipulate.

We need to be who we really are, without wearing blinders or masks, being open, honest and true to ourselves, being authentic and real. If we truly believe this, the image of God will shine through.

Eduardo says, "As we strive to reach the faraway, people see we are authentic and real, with no masks, seeing comfort and compassion, then He may want to become "a person" he may want to become "a person....fully alive"!! A person fully alive is capable of loving and being loved and through love will feel fulfilled and happy and can leave all the guilt complexes and insecurities behind.

This was me.... this is truly how I felt. Over

time, I saw compassionate and loving people who were now my friends and I wanted what they had. I saw Christ in them. I was on a new journey. I felt "Fully Alive".

A person fully alive is a person who knows himself and wants happiness for himself and all those he encounters. A person can reach that happiness when he is able to treat those around him as "persons" who are valuable for who they are and not for what they have or what they know or what they "seem to be" with all the frills and facades and masks. A person fully alive is a person who *can* love and *be* loved. This is why in Cursillo, it is vital that we come to understand the importance of the Person and why it is included in these Ten Topics of the conversations. We need to be who we really are, with no masks, that we are loved by God for who we are.

Unfortunately society today puts more emphasis on the initials that are behind a name or what kind of car you drive or house you live in, than in practical experience and common sense.

Love in ordinary life is essentially friendship. A person, who faces life from a perspective of friendship, is a person who is so in tune with his own "person-ness" that he wants to rub off on everyone he meets, those in his ordinary life, his family, his workplace and all those he comes in contact with. Jesus comes to us through friendships

Life is a pilgrimage. It is a journey home to the Father through Jesus Christ, with the help of Mary and all the saints bringing our brothers and sisters along with us. .

The dictionary defines friendship as "affection", a feeling that exists between people, without self interest, flowing from self esteem, appreciation and sympathy.

In order to feel affection for someone else, we must first feel affection for ourselves as we are. We need to be our own BEST friend first. We can never hope to live in friendship with others until we have learned to befriend and like ourselves.

With Jesus as friend and guide, we come to know and accept ourselves intimately and lovingly. As our loving and compassionate

friend, He brings us to acknowledge our frailties and our failings but He shows us who we are in God's eyes. He shows us our giftedness and our strengths, the beauty of who we are. He knows and loves us from the inside out. It is only when we have accepted and like ourselves for who we are that we can reach out to others.

From the First Conversations of Cala Figuera in 1994, Eduardo Bonnin says that when we talk of friendship, we think of the people we like and people who like us.

We can always be better and can achieve our maximum potential by having companions on our journey. True friends will walk the journey with us no matter what the circumstances, pain, burdens or joys. Going through pain together helps each of us to grow. Helping to carry the burden of another is sharing the load. Sharing in the joy will only multiply the joy.

There is a big difference between being an acquaintance and being a friend. An acquaintance is someone whose name you know and whom you see every now and then. You probably have something in common and you feel comfortable together. It's a person that you might invite to your home and share time and space with but you don't necessarily share your life with.

On the other hand, a friend is someone you love. Not that you are "in love" with them, but you care about them and you think about them a lot. Friends are the people you feel safe around because you know they care about you too. They call just to see how you are doing, because a friend doesn't need an excuse and you know that if you have a problem, they are there to listen to you.

Friends are the people who won't laugh at you or hurt you but will laugh with you and will want to share in your pain.

Friends are the people you can cry with. They stick with you and stand by you through thick and thin. They ask for your hand but they touch your heart. Friendship is to trust someone enough to let them get into your heart, your mind and your soul, to open your life in confidence. To say "welcome in, I trust you enough to tell you who I really am." It's not

thinking much but loving much without expectations.

I quote Eduardo Bonnin who says "A friend is someone with whom you can think out loud with"

True friendship takes time to grow strong and it needs nurturing to get from the skin into the heart. We like what we see and we want a share in it. If friendship between two people has the common bond of Christ, then the joy in being friends increases and a deeper level of friendship occurs because the friendship is secured in Jesus. Friends are like an insurance policy which helps one to persevere.

Cursillo is based on friendship, "Make a friend, be a friend, bring that friend to Christ." Friendship is essential to all phases of Cursillo.

The idea of friendship that Eduardo and his friends had, is the friendship that takes Jesus as its model. Jesus gave us the perfect example of what it is to be a true friend. He said in John 15 "I do not call you servants, but friends; there is no greater gift than this, to lay down one's life for a friend".

We often talk about the "How" and the "Why" in taking our movement back to basics. When we understand the "Why" then the "How" becomes much less important. The "Why" respects the dignity and worth of every human being and this is what we in our movement are concerned with. Each and every person is created, formed and fashioned in the image of God and is infinitely loved, infinitely valuable and capable of loving in return. We can't give what we don't have. We can't be what we are not. We can't speak about what we are not living. In life, we don't need to be preaching on the street corners, but we do need to become the Good News, we need to be living the Gospel in whichever environment we find ourselves. We may be the only bible some people ever read. Having friends sharing this journey is invaluable.

The Gospel tells us to be salt for the earth. Think about what salt does for food. Would you say that its purpose is to add flavor when there is not sufficient taste? What happens if we lose our flavor? How can we be restored? It couldn't be simpler.... Let God restore and renew us so we

can bring others along on the journey.

As Christians, we evangelize by adding the seasoning of Christ's love to other people's lives through our friendship. People come into our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime.

We must be aware of trying too hard at making a friendship. When food is over salted it doesn't taste good. No matter how good our intentions might be, if we come on too strong we do more harm than good.

People are much more likely to turn to Jesus if they first experience his love through us in friendship. They need to discover that He loves them just the way they are, that He is gentle but sincere. If we are alive with the love of Christ in us, we are called to season others' lives with this love. To flavor the lives of others with His love, we have to let His light shine through us. The warm glow of Jesus should be what others see when they look at us. Not that we are better, but that we have something special to share through friendship. This is what we are called to be as friends, to know and love ourselves as the person God made so we can love others.

I recognized this after my Cursillo, and my life was changed. I now had friends to help me. My special friends of my Group reunion are there to support me.

Prior to Cursillo, my spirituality consisted of going through the motions. I went to mass and received the sacraments because that's what I was expected to do. Cursillo changed me from a "human DOING" to a "human BEING" - fully alive.

Jesus came looking for me 25 years ago. I was a "cracked pot" and I needed some fixing. Friends placed in my path knew that it was not the outside of the pot that mattered. What mattered was what was inside, I was ready, through the grace of God, to open up and receive what He had in store for me.

Since my Cursillo I've learned that friendship is more of an attitude. It's how I act and react with people put in my path. It is possible to be very close friends with people whom I hardly ever see. Friendship doesn't mean doing everything together. It's being Christian and being

compassionate and loving just as Christ cared for those he met every day. I have friends that I see once or twice a year but when we do get together it's like there has been no time lapse. I have friends in my group reunion that I see every 2 weeks. I also see some of them at our weekly Ultreya. I have friends that we spend 2 months in Florida with and don't see some of them for the rest of the year. I have friends from my church community, from my different volunteer positions with the City or the Theatre. I have friends from the homeless community, whom I serve at the winter 'Out of the Cold' program. Then I have friends that I share time with by going out for lunch or shopping. Doug and I have a couple friends that we play cards with. With each set of friends there is a different level of intimacy, sharing and companionship but with each friend put in my path, I am called to treat them with dignity, respect and most of all LOVE.

So who am I?

Jesus says, "I have called you by name, it is I

who called you first."

I am a child of God, loved unconditionally, striving each and every day to serve God using the gifts and talents He gave me, by the best means "Friendship with myself, with Christ and with others!" It is my true friends who know me from the inside out, who keep me grounded and in prayer. A true friend will not remember what you did to or for them but how you made them feel. This is how Jesus treated His friends.

My Cursillo cross that I wear is a reminder that Christ is counting on me. Jesus called me. I learned to love myself for who I am. He changed me from who I was to who I am today, a better wife, mother and grandmother, friend or volunteer. I am a person *fully alive* in Christ through friendship with myself, with Jesus and with all those with whom I come in contact or who cross my path each day.

De Colores

CONFERENCE 2011

A LIGHT FOR THE NATIONS

KEEPING THE FLAME BURNING - UNDERSTANDING THE WHY OF
THE ULTREYA AND GROUP REUNION

Hosted by the Cursillistas of the Vancouver Cursillo Movement

in
Chilliwack BC

June 23rd – 26th, 2011

Registrations will be available shortly

**Abbotsford is the closest airport. Please book your flights into
Abbotsford if at all possible.**

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

ATLANTIC

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

CAPE BRETON EAST-RICHMOND

I made my Cursillo at Madonna retreat house in April of 2001 where I sat at the table of St. Therese of Lisieux. I have completed my first year of Lay Directorship in the Cape Breton and Richmond Co. area, a positive experience may I add !

- ◆ CENTRAL
Montreal English,
Spanish, Hungarian,
Korean
London, Kent
County/Chatham,
Peterborough, Toronto,
Hamilton, Timmins,
Ottawa, Thunder Bay,
Essex, Latin American

Positions that make up the secretariat : Lay Director, Spiritual Directors, Secretary, Treasurer, Supplies coordinator, Food palanca coordinator, Precursillo and Postcursillo coordinators, Richmond and Eskasoni reps, 4th day coordinator. We meet every month with the exception of December, July and August. We are 16 Cursillistas that make up the secretariat with 6 members terminating their terms at the end of June. The role of the secretariat is to deal with any challenges/issues that may come up during the year. Also we celebrate our successes as well as strive to bring our movement as per original Charism as given to our founder Edwardo Bonnin, by the Holy Spirit.

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

It's hard to judge the per cent of Cursillistas who are active in the following areas: Ultreya, Group Reunion, school of leaders, and serve on weekend teams. I feel our movement is alive and well and we are blessed by many many Cursillistas that are dedicated to the movement.

School of leaders

School of leaders was put in place by our past Lay Director, Blair Murray. This was his goal to have this area up & running in Cape Breton. It's been a few years now for our movement with meeting twice a year for a full afternoon. It is mostly attended by team members along with members of the secretariat. We can have anywhere from 50-70 Cursillistas. We have our 4th day coordinator that along with the LD & appointed Rectors work and organize the school of leaders. It is our prayer & hope that in the Fall of 2010, we will have monthly school of leaders in our area. What we have done in school of leaders so far is Rollos of the three Encounters along with a rollo of Who is the ideal candidate, Stewardship and lastly on Sponsorship.

Group Reunion

We have Group Reunions that consists only male, only female, combination of both and even married couples. They meet weekly where they share their Piety, Study and Action. Some recite the Holy Rosary with lots of love and support felt by all involved. Some groups also serve the community with special projects at different times of the year. We also have our Group Reunions take turns to host at our monthly Ultreyas.

building bridges from coast to coast



Ultreya

Our monthly Ultreya which takes place every last Thursday of the month, with the exception of December, July and August consists of celebrating mass, witness talks, music, announcement by the Lay Director. We also have our 4th day coordinator shares comments or important information on School of leaders & group reunion. The Ultreya is then followed by a light lunch & socializing is enjoyed by all. It is mostly well attended all year round.

Cursillo weekends

We presently have two men's weekends and four women's weekends a year. They take place at the Villa Madonna retreat house in Bras Dor, Cape Breton. Size of our teams vary from 30-32 Cursillistas. We follow the Rainbow book as our outline for our Rollos. Number of candidates per weekend again varies from 18-30 per weekend.

Other

We are proud to share that we celebrate 33 years of Cursillo in Cape Breton

We continue to communicate with our Cursillo family through our website at :

<http://www.cbcurcillo.com>

May Ultreya we had the pleasure of sharing our evening with our newly appointed Bishop, Fr. Brian Dunn. He came to the Antigonish Diocese back in January of this year. We had a beautiful evening of experiencing the Holy Spirit at work. We had a skit delivered by our Challengers, witness talks, beautiful choir of over 20 Cursillistas who lead us in song. We are blessed with lots of great talent within our movement.

We ended the evening with a lunch & socialization enjoyed by all. We had approximately 250 Cursillistas & Challengers that came to show our Bishop the love & dedication we have for our Cursillo movement. A most memorable evening !

Claudia AuCoin
Lay Director

ST. JOHN'S ARCHDIOCESE NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

My name is Terri Bailey and I made my Cursillo in April, 1990 and sat at the table of St. Agnes. My three year term as lay director is finished at the end of this month and I would like to take this opportunity to thank God and My Cursillo Family for all the support I received not only during my term of office but since I did my Cursillo. We cannot do it alone.

Secretariat:

Our Secretariat is comprised of Post Cursillo (Gerard Horan),
Secretary (Betty Smith),
Pre-Cursillo (Isabel Croke),
Treasurer (Tom Mills),
Assistant Lay Director (Florence Harvey),
Cursillo Rep. (Frances Woolridge)
Spiritual Director (Fr. Leo English).
Our ACCC
Representative is Tom Hickey.

Our previous Spiritual Directors Fr. Kevin McKenna has been posted in Ontario and Fr. Charlie Goakery has retired in London, Ontario. We thank them very much for their dedication to Cursillo and wish them God's Blessing.

Goals:

- To bring back fellow Cursillistas who have been absent from our Ultreya.
- We look forward to having a men's and women's Cursillo weekend in St. John's

and on the Burin Peninsula (The Burin Peninsula is about a 4 hour drive from St. John's)

Secretariat Activities:

- Our secretariat meets once a month and will meet after the Ultreya if needed.
- As of June 30, 2010 we will have to replace three of our outgoing members whose terms are up.
- Preparing to host the ACCC in 2011

Successes:

- We held an Advent and Lenten day of reflection where we had four speakers
- We had a Christmas dinner and dance that was well attended and of course we had special guest appearance by our local Mummies who danced in with Santa.

Cursillo Weekends:

- The last weekend we had was a women's weekend on the Burin Peninsula in Oct. 2007. We had put a team in place in 2009 ; however, there were not enough candidates. This year, in April, 2010, we were blessed with enough candidates to put on a women's weekend. We had ten (10) candidates along with thirteen (13) team members including our spiritual Director, Fr. Leo English.

Fourth Day (Post-Cursillo)

- In St. John's we have a weekly Ultreya (20-30 people in attendance) and on the Burin Peninsula we have Ultreya once a month with (20-30 people in attendance).
- We have a Grand Ultreya for St. John's and Burin in June of each year and this year The Burin Cursillistas hosted on June 12, 2010. It was well attended and well prepared. It was great to get together at least once a year for this Grand Ultreya.
- We have a phone tree in place to let fellow Cursillistas know of any prayer requests and advise them of upcoming events within the Movement.

- We have a Fifth Day Celebration every November to remember those Cursillistas who have passed away.

Communications:

- We continue to have a quarterly newsletter that is e-mailed to 30 Cursillistas and of course we have 30 distributed to the Burin Peninsula and other copies are available at our Ultreya. Should anyone wish to have a copy of our newsletter please email icroke@nf.sympatico.ca.

We have a Special Events committee who look after any extra events ie: Christmas Dinner and Dance, Fund Raising, etc.

We also have a birthday celebration the last Saturday in every month to celebrate fellow Cursillistas birthdays that occur during that month. This has been well received by our Cursillistas and usually most Ultreya people stay for the celebration.

The Year Ahead:

As my term of office as Lay Director comes to a close I would like to advise that Florence Harvey has graciously accepted the Lord's calling and will begin the role of Lay Director at the end of this month. I wish Florence all the best as she begins her term and I will continue to support Cursillo in any way that I can.

Background Information:

- Cursillo has been active in this diocese for 28 Yrs.

Terri Bailey
Lay Director

CENTRAL

OTTAWA ARCHDIOCESE ONTARIO

During this past year, beginning July 2009, the Ottawa Cursillo Movement prepared four teams and held four more Cursillo weekends—two women's and two men's—resulting in another 86 new cursillistas joining the community.

The weekly Central Ultreya has continued with regular ultreyas, occasionally featuring special 'send-offs' for the Cursillo teams and 'welcome-backs' for the new cursillistas. Also held at some ultreyas were Challenge events focused on the youth of our community. Several 'reunion' ultreyas hosted by members of recent Cursillo teams were held to encourage attendance at ultreya and group reunion activity among new cursillistas. Four other monthly parish/regional ultreyas across the Ottawa area have also continued this year. A festive (Advent/Christmas) Grand Ultreya was held at Holy Cross Parish in early December. 'Palanca parties' were held in support of the Cursillo weekends and the annual summer event, the 17th Annual Cursillo Pot Luck Picnic, was held at Waupoos Farm in south Ottawa in mid-August.

With the help of a team from the CCCC, (Sheelagh Winston, Diane and Dennis Coates), a School of Leaders workshop was held in late November to demonstrate more accurately the purpose and structure of the School. Regular monthly meetings began in February of 2010 using the new format, the final session being in May before the summer break. The School has continued to grow in numbers and in its ability to provide an effective forum for the community to vet issues of concern to them. More importantly, the School appears to be becoming accepted again as a regular part of the Cursillo landscape in Ottawa after a long absence.

The Ottawa Movement continues to publish the *Fourth Day* newsletter quarterly and make improvements to the email news and prayer line service. Currently more work is being done to our web-site to expand information access.

In June, approximately half of the secretariat positions concluded their two-year terms (to maintain continuity). For 2010-11, Rosemary Burke will take over the role of lay leader. The final community event of the year is the June 2nd (summer) Grand Ultreya held at Blessed Sacrament Church in south central Ottawa.

Some secretariat members are attending CCCC 2010 in Antigonish, NS. It is hoped that information shared at the conference will assist the Ottawa Cursillo Movement's School of Leaders for the coming year.

*B. Reilander for Kevin Burke, Lay Director,
Ottawa Cursillo Movement*

TORONTO ARCHDIOCESE ONTARIO

I am pleased to report that the Archdiocese of Toronto Cursillo movement has continued to operate in 2009/2010.

We held our day of reflection on commitment as a prime apostolate on September 12, 2009 and our 'Commitment Ceremony' on September 14, 2009. On that evening, 31 Cursillistas committed to the Cursillo as their primary apostolate for a period of one year. We were pleased to have the presence of the Most Rev. Pearce Lacey at our celebration.

During the past year, we have had 7 fall 2009 and 12 spring 2010 sessions of our School of Leaders, which we hold on Monday nights at Consolata Missionaries.

We held Cursillo weekends on the following dates, men's Fall weekend November 18-21, 2009 and women's Fall weekend December 3-6, 2009.

In pre-cursillo we have implemented an extensive 'Pulpit Presentation Strategy' to reach out to the far away in the pews of the parishes. It encompasses a three year plan. Training for presenters is scheduled for June 2010. A copy of the strategy is attached as a pdf file. (*This file is available from CCCC*)

In post cursillo we have expanded from three to four Ultreyas. One meets weekly, and the other

three meet once a month in different parts of the archdiocese.

The music ministry holds practices twice a month and serves the movement by providing music for Cursillo functions and they go out and represent Cursillo to the far away in the community.

In communications, our newsletter is now published six times per year. The web site is updated regularly.

We are much indebted to the support of our beloved Spiritual director, Father Terry McKenna.

Respectfully yours in Christ,

Cathy Ferren
Lay Director, Archdiocese of Toronto Cursillo

HAMILTON ONTARIO

Summary Report for the Past Twelve Months (June 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010)

The following is an updated summary of the status of Cursillo in the Diocese of Hamilton.

Goals:

Strategic Focus:

- We continue to simplify the weekend itself and strengthen the 4th day segment of Cursillo.
- We continue to teach through the School of Leaders.

Secretariat Activities:

- In June 2010 we will again meet with Bishop Gerard Bergie, the Auxiliary Bishop in our Diocese, and a Cursillista.
- As of May 31, 2010 we have replaced one member on the secretariat.

Successes:

Pre-Cursillo:

- Along with sending general Palanca, the weekends are supported by a Prayer Wheel, where people are praying

around the clock from the beginning to the end of our Cursillo weekends.

- We have set up a Cursillo parish representative in many parishes in the diocese so there is a direct Cursillo contact at these churches and in this way interested parties can speak to someone in their own parish about Cursillo.

Cursillo Weekends:

- We held one weekend in the past year (Women's 71st).
- Currently we have two teams in formation for the upcoming weekends in the fall of 2010.
- We definitely see that people have returned to the Church after making a Cursillo weekend.

School of Leaders:

- A School of Leaders session was held in Dec. 2009, Feb. 2010 and Apr. 2010.
- The topics included group reunion and Christianity in Action.
- We are also looking at breaking school of leaders into three regions because of the size of our diocese and the travelling distance.

Fourth Day (Post-Cursillo)

- There are eleven active Ultreyas in Hamilton Diocese.
- There has been one Diocesan General Ultreya in the past year.
- A Cursillo Prayer Service is held at the funeral home for our Cursillista friends who have gone into their 5th Day.
- There is an on-going e-mail/phone prayer network with some Ultreyas.

Conferences:

- Our diocese hosted the Cursillo of Cursillos held at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo. This replaced the yearly CCCC conference. It was very informative and successful with approximately 120 in attendance. We wish to thank the CCCC and Cursillistas in our diocese for all the help you gave to make this a huge success.

Communications:

- We continue to have a monthly communiqué/newsletter that is e-mailed to about 200 Cursillistas in our Diocese. Another 20 have this mailed to them. This allows everyone to be in the loop of information on a monthly basis.
- Our website www.4thday.ca continues to be updated.

Background Information:

- Cursillo has been active in our Diocese for 41 years.

Respectfully submitted for the Secretariat
Kim Jones
Lay Director

**PETERBOROUGH
ONTARIO**

Once again it is time to look over the previous year of the Movement of Cursillo in the Peterborough Diocese. There were changes in our Secretariat as Nancy Bath due to health reasons had to retire from serving. She is truly missed. She has been replaced by Steve Clancy a fairly new Cursillista but very enthusiastic.

It was heart warming to note that we were well represented at the Cursillo of Cursillo's last year which was very enriching. Not only spiritually but socially as it is time to renew acquaintances and compare notes successes and failures. The Secretariat found it necessary to cancel both the men's and the women's weekends due to lack of candidates. Although we were prepared teams in place etc. we could not go forward as we lacked the funds to do so with so few people to attend. However the Lord always has a plan. We hosted, for the diocese, a Sunday afternoon talk given by Father Tom Lynch, "How to be positive in a negative world." It was well attended and it was absolutely wonderful as it spoke on many facets of our Church, its problems and solutions in the works. We have it on tape and now are just praying that it is clear enough to put on CD's. The donations from this event have put us in a much better situation financially.

As a group we went on a prayer crusade to renew a faltering local Ultreya. It was no time

when our prayers were answered and Lindsay is up and running once again. It just happens that Father Tom Lynch is the pastor in the parish and a Cursillista and is determined to bring many of his flock into the fold. Praise the Lord! One of the members of our Secretariat is going to speak at the Masses on Father's Day in support of Cursillo and Father Tom. In light of the success in Lindsay we plan on targeting another local Ultreya in September.

We conducted two School of Leaders one of which was well attended. But from them we garnered input from the attendees to improve matters in our movement.

We are just in the middle of publishing our yearly newsletter. This keeps all the Cursillistas of the Peterborough Diocese up to date. This year we hope to cut costs by sending as many out via email as possible. I'll let you know next year how we fair.

We are all set up for two weekends in the fall right after we take a short break this summer. I am unable to attend the conference this year but my prayers will be with you.

DeColores!
Pamela Moore

WESTERN**NELSON (KELOWNA)
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

The Diocese of Nelson Cursillo Movement is going through a metamorphosis. The Cursillo method we use has been in use since 1975 that was brought in to us from the United States.

Our focus has been to study the Charism of the founders through the documents published by the CCCC. We have a School of leaders with a membership of 25. We meet monthly and have been doing so since 2008. The Secretariat's goal is that we will not have Cursillo weekends until there are sufficient Cursillistas that know and understand the Charism of the founders.

- Our School of leaders meet on the 3rd Saturday of the month

- We have Ultreya in Kelowna on the 1st Thursday of the month and in Summerland on the 2nd Thursday of the month.
- The Secretariat meets on the 1st Thursday each month.

We have re-scheduled our spring Cursillos to the fall. The women's Cursillo is on September 19th September and the men's on November 4th.

We rescheduled our week end on account that we concentrated our efforts studying the Charism of the Founders, the talk outlines and spent a minimal amount of time in pre-Cursillo. The time was well spent as we developed team formation. The women's team is ready and have presented their talks within the team. At leaders school we are currently studying the weekend day by day, complete with meditations and the talks. The men's team has some work to do.

We only have enough space for 16 to 18 candidates on a week end so our teams will be 5 plus a Spiritual Director. The Rollistas will be giving more than one talk.

Our biggest challenge will be: mobilize the 400 Cursillistas we have on our Diocesan list into a praying and supportive community. We publish a monthly news letter called **Going Forth** where we have a witness story, news items, Leaders School discussions and articles about the Charism of the Founders. We have prepared a paper on what palanca really is; that will be in a future issue prior to the fall Cursillos

Our current plan of action is:

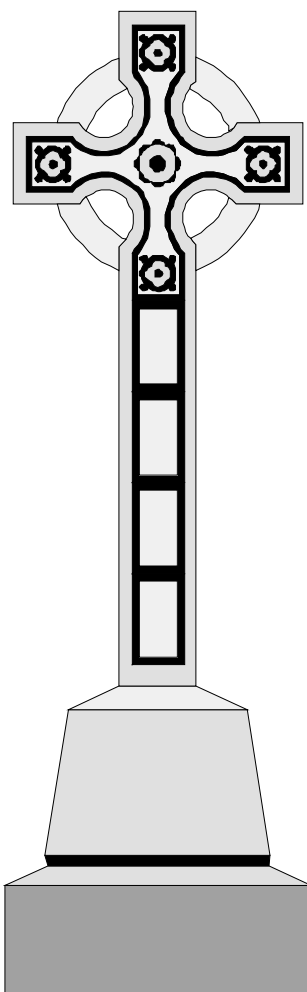
- Set up a Diocesan website
- Sponsor coffee after specific Masses in our area to gather Cursillistas and speak about Cursillo
- Write a letter to all pastors describing what Cursillo is in light of the foundational Charism.

We are excited about the direction we are going and each School of Leaders session has new revelations.

De Colores
Les Symes, Lay Director

Our mailing address and phone number have changed.

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MATTERS SPIRITUAL

AN ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST

Bernie Reilander

Given as a meditation at the 2010 Conference

I invite you now, on this second morning of the weekend, to an Encounter with Christ; to look again at what we know about Jesus and perhaps glimpse again at what we have yet to fully grasp, as we continue to discover – Who is Jesus Christ?

(Prayer:) Jesus, with your loving heart, you felt affection and compassion for all people; inspire me to feel the same. I do not have your power to heal and restore, but your spirit lives within me. Smile through my face, speak through my voice, use me to help the sick and suffering, the discouraged and lonely. I want to be more like you and to carry on your work. Amen.

It is the Gospels that tell us the sort of man Jesus was and it is the Gospels that tell us what the Risen Christ is for us today.

The opening verses of John's Gospel remind us that Jesus was both God and man. *'IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD. HE WAS IN THE BEGINNING WITH GOD. ALL THINGS CAME INTO BEING THROUGH HIM, AND WITHOUT HIM NOT ONE THING CAME INTO BEING. WHAT HAS COME INTO BEING IN HIM WAS LIFE, AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE. THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE DARKNESS DID NOT OVERCOME IT ... AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND LIVED AMONG US, AND WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY.'*

Who is Jesus Christ? He is God's only begotten son, yet He came from the throne of His Father to the womb of a woman. He became Son of Man that we might become sons and daughters of God.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and was born of a virgin. He lived in poverty, and was unknown outside of Nazareth. He had neither wealth nor influence. He laid aside His purple robe for a peasant's gown. He was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor. He slept in another's stable; He rode another's donkey; he was buried in another's grave.

Who is Jesus Christ? History has never known anyone like Him. As an infant, He startled a king. As a boy, He astonished the theologians with His knowledge and wisdom, for His knowledge was directly from God. As a man, He ruled the elements and quieted the raging sea. He healed without medicine and fed thousands with a few fish and barley loaves. Even demons obeyed Him and He gave back life to those who were dead.

Yet He suffered and sustained in body and soul, the anger of God

against the sin of the whole human race. He was despised and rejected, and, though He was innocent, He was condemned by a civil judge and sentenced to death on a cross.

Who is Jesus Christ? By His suffering and death, He paid completely for the sins of all who believe in Him. He set us free from the certain judgment and eternal condemnation of God that was to fall on all of us.

Some have given their lives for others, and great men have come and gone, yet Jesus Christ lives on. Herod could not kill Him. Satan could not stop Him. Death could not destroy Him. The grave could not hold him. Having perfectly satisfied God's perfect justice, He conquered death and rose on the third day as He said He would.

Who is Jesus Christ? In last Sunday's gospel, Jesus Himself put it this way: 'But who do you say I am?' Simon Peter replied: 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

When this question is personalized, it becomes the most important question we will ever be asked. Who is Jesus Christ to YOU? What is my relationship to Him? Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." We are told that if we have Jesus in our life, we know that we will have eternal life.

Jesus is the only way for us to live an abundant life here on earth, or to receive eternal life in fellowship with God.

We know from the second part of the Nicene Creed that Jesus is, was and always will be God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He was made flesh – a human being in every way but sin – so that as a man he could save mankind by His death and resurrection.

As a human being he became someone with whom we could more easily identify, someone with whom we could more easily have a relationship – the visible presence of the invisible God.

Jesus Himself knew who He was. In John's Gospel we hear Jesus say: "I and the Father are one" and "know that the Father is in me and I in the Father". If we are close to Jesus, then we are

close to God! If we are in a relationship with Jesus, then we are in a relationship with the Father!

Jesus lived 2000 years ago but we know Him today. Jesus is called Emmanuel – God is with us – and because He is fully human, He is one of us with all our human emotions and infirmities. He was angry in the temple, disappointed with Philip's lack of vision, gentle with the little children, firm with Pilate's interrogation, distressed in the garden of Gethsemane, and compassionate, loving and empathetic with Lazarus, Zacchaeus, and the Samaritan woman at the well.

As "one of us", we are encouraged to be more like Him in ways within our power and potential as fellow human beings. We can imitate Him because He is a human being. In this regard, His role as a leader is evident. Christ's example as a leader of men is worthy to be imitated. As brothers and sisters of Jesus, we are called to be like Him – an extraordinary person who says and does extraordinary things. He, who had all powers, all greatness and goodness, was so humble, so simple, so discreet. He baffled us by the way He exercised His authority. On the night before He died, he showed His Apostles how to be leaders by washing their feet; a new form of authority coupled with humility, self-sacrifice and service. Such a way of living is not easy yet this is what He taught us. How do we wash the feet of others? How do we live with humility, self-sacrifice and service? It helps to remember that everyone is created and loved by God!

If each one of us meets Jesus deeply, then by our compassion, by the life flowing from us, both to and from the Father, we will communicate to others the love and peace of Christ's Spirit. Whenever we are together, as we are on this weekend, the important thing is to let Jesus penetrate, transform and renew us. Jesus said that He wants to prune us and to the degree that He prunes us, we shall bear much fruit. We have to discover that we all need much pruning. It isn't always fun and frequently we resist or even try to hide from the pruner but we spend time at conferences such as this so that He may come to purify us, enlighten us, and give us His peace and love.

Our relationship with Jesus is found in prayer – honest and trusting dialogue—which informs our minds and hearts to his will for us in every aspect of what we say and do. And we meet Jesus in the Eucharist, in the scriptures and in one another – our friends in Christ.

And how do I grow in this relationship? Jesus said: “A pearl of great price was hidden in a field, and someone who knew this went and sold everything he had and bought the field.” It is never too late for us to find the treasure because we are called to point out to many others where this treasure lies. We are in a world where there is little or no security and not many guidelines—only Jesus and ourselves, the brothers and sisters He has given us to walk with on our pilgrimage back to the Father. To “walk in the Spirit” takes time and effort. We can grow daily in Jesus with the help of a little structure and discipline.

When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, He didn’t call them to a way of life and certainly not to a way of life full of security. He called them essentially to a personal relationship with Him – above all, a relationship of love. To grow in this love and to remain faithful in times of

darkness as well as in times of light is what we must continually be open to as we pray, as we worship, as we study God’s word, as we live out our lives with a dignity and a conviction based on what Jesus would do in every situation; and let our actions reflect that conviction.

The first and most basic point to remember is that Jesus loves us. He knows our faults and our weaknesses. He knows the difficulties that we have inherited from our past. Jesus is loving but He is also demanding because He knows that the future of His Church – us – depends on our openness in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit should come into the details of our lives, and we then look to these details so that we can begin to change. Jesus will show us His way. In our prayer we say to Jesus, “What do you want?” and we trust deeply that He will show us. He will send His Spirit. This is His promise!

When I recognize how much Jesus loves me and that He calls me tenderly by name, then I am able to love you, my brother, you, my sister, as He loves you; tenderly calling forth Jesus in you. Each and every day, let us always set out to call forth Jesus in one another.



Questions have arisen on a number of occasions concerning what can legitimately be included in the program of an Ultreya. It is difficult for the CCCC to respond to particular situations or instances because it is not our role or function. The local School of Leaders and the Secretariat are the proper places to direct such instances or concerns. However, it is the CCCC’s function to share with all Canadian Cursillistas what it has learned through its study. Such questions provide us with a chance to share what we have learned about the role and the function of the Ultreya in the Cursillo method and movement.

The Ultreya is the social aspect of the Cursillo. It is the reunion of the group reunions and its atmosphere is the same at that which we experienced on our own three-day Cursillo.

The Ultreya was not a part of the original Cursillo thinking. In the first five years there was only one Cursillo a year and it was simple to keep connected to all the new Cursillistas. It was when the number of Cursillos exploded to almost one a month in Mallorca that it became impossible for the leaders to keep connected to all those who had made a Cursillo weekend. It was then that Eduardo and the other leaders devised the idea of regular meeting where all the groups could come. The need was for people who were living a common reality to share their Christian experience with everyone else., hence, the advent of the Ultreya.

In Bonnín’s words, “the Ultreya is the celebration of meeting together. [It is] the joy of knowing that we are united, and the joy of

feeling close to one another to be able to spread the joy of our Faith. Like everything else in the Cursillo, the Ultreya has the minimum structure needed to fulfil its purpose. The Ultreya is carried out in three stages:

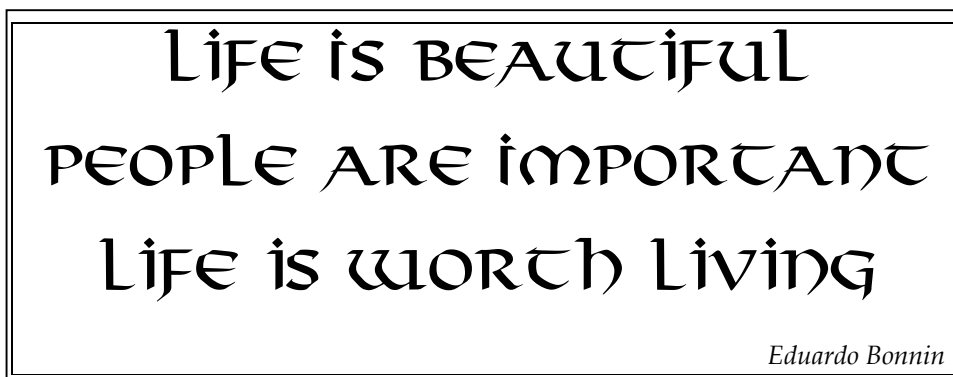
- o The first stage is the interpersonal meeting or Group Reunion at the Ultreya;
- o The second stage is the collective meeting; and
- o The third stage is prayer—meeting Christ during the Visit to the Blessed Sacrament or failing that, in some other appropriate prayerful format.

What happens in each of these stages must contribute to accomplishing the Ultreya's purpose which is as a meeting place where everyone is welcome to share what they live and to be inspired by the sharing of others. It is a place where we can pray together. It is a place where everyone is valued and respected simply because they are persons made in the image and likeness of God. It is a place to experience once again the weekend's joy of living the Christian ideal in the company of others who are on the same journey. There can be no other purpose or reason. If there is, then we are not being honest with them or true to the method and movement. The consequence of this will be to shift the focus

of the Cursillo from the person to something else. When that happens we are no longer living the Cursillo which the Charism called forth and to which the founder and those who assisted him gave shape and structure through the method and the movement.

The Ultreya is not a place to be persuaded or encouraged to join this or to do that, regardless of how wonderful and worthwhile and valuable the 'this' or the 'that' may be. If I invite someone into my home out of friendship and a genuine desire to share and deepen that friendship, I would do all that I can to ensure their comfort and safety, and their joy and continued friendship would be my sole reward. If I use this occasion to try to solicit something from my friend, then I have abused his/her friendship by leading him/her to think they were invited because of friendship when it was really my ulterior motive that prompted the invitation.

This is in a very brief and simple way the 'why' of the Ultreya. We gather together in friendship and love to share, to be reminded, to be inspired, to begin again. Ultreya is a homecoming where when we go there we are always ensured of a loving response. It's a place that reconnects us to what is really important which is self, God, and others.



WITNESS

daily we touch him

WITNESS FROM JUAN BERNAT BERNAT MALLORCA ULTREYA

One of the sources of joy in my life, and the place where I get the most fulfillment, is in my visits to the sick, either in their homes, or in the hospital. There was a very young man in the hospital who was very, very sick, dying of Aids. I had a tremendous fear of the disease, even though I knew that I couldn't catch it just by being with a person suffering from it, or even by touching them. It wasn't just a fear of catching the disease, I was afraid of everything that it represented with almost a revulsion inside me. Each time I went to the hospital I found some way to avoid seeing the young man, leaving my visit with him until the last, making sure that the visiting hours were over before I had time to go to his room.

In my heart, I knew what I was doing, and yet the fear was so strong inside me that I couldn't overcome it, couldn't go where I knew I was being called. One night, during my prayer and as I was examining my day, I realized that I was not being a true friend of Christ. As he went to the lepers and to all those who were the outcasts of society I knew that He would have gone to the young man. How could I call myself a friend of Jesus and yet refuse to do what He would have done, because that is what I am called to as a Christian and as a Cursillista? I promised myself, and Christ, that I would go and visit him no matter what it would cost me, I would do it no matter what. The next day I went to the hospital and asked to go to his room, telling the staff that I wanted to visit him. To my great distress, they told me that he had died three days earlier. I was filled with a deep shame and that night as I prayed I wept, I was so overwhelmed with the hurt and sadness that I felt, it was as if my heart was crushed. I knew because of my fear and my refusal to go to the young man, that he had died alone and afraid.

My anguish came from knowing that I had refused to go to someone whom Christ had asked me to be with.

In my work I am also asked to go to visit prisoners, most of them very young, still in their 20's and most of them also dying of Aids. For many months after the death of the young man, I went to these young men and gradually as they offered me their hands and I touched them, my fear was overcome. It wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be, for I found that as I put my will to work it became easier, and besides, I felt compelled to do it because of the death of the first young man.

One day, I was called to visit a young man of 22 who was very close to death. He not only had Aids, but he also had T.B, which I knew was very contagious. I could see him through the glass door, struggling for breath in spite of the oxygen mask. The guards told me that I could not go into the room because the only protection for me would be to wear a mask and there wasn't one available, they said there was nothing I could do and that I should just leave, which I started to do. But, as I was leaving, I thought to myself, "why are you leaving, is it because you fear the T.B, is it because he is so sick and you fear the contagion?" I could not forget the other young man whom I had allowed to die without my help. I decided that I was going to go in anyway, and with the guard's help, I wrapped my mouth and nose with bandages and went into his room.

Because of the oxygen mask it was difficult to understand him and I felt really anxious, wanting to know what he was trying to say to me. I recognized him as one of the prisoners with Aids that I had visited but I had not known

that he also had T.B. It was so difficult for him to breathe that I wanted to stay with him. Quite suddenly, I could hear him saying very clearly that he was very lonely and very afraid. He held on to my hand and didn't want me to leave him saying that he had nothing in the world, only a few pesetas, no family, no friends and no home. He said, "the only thing that I have that is mine is Aids." He pointed to the TV and said that he would like to watch it for a little while, but he had no money to pay for it. I paid the small amount that was necessary so that he could watch the TV for a few hours. After a while I left him and he seemed contented and peaceful. As I said goodbye to him I knew that I would probably never see him again and I knew that if I had not gone in to see him, no-one would have helped him: he died that night. I know that many will say that it would have been better if I had called the priest, or at least spoken to the young man about God. But I knew that what I was called to in this instance was just to be his friend, to give him something that would ease the loneliness of his last hours on this earth. I think that he knew in his last moments he was not alone. I don't think that I am only called to talk about Christ, sometimes I am just called to be Him.

For me it was such a privilege to be able to make amends for the way in which I had failed before and I realize that when we are asked to do something like this and we don't do it because of fear, it is very serious. When there is no-one else there to help, and Christ calls us to act on His behalf, we must respond. The terrible sadness of these men who are so young, is that not only are they terribly sick, they are also not free. For me the sadness is compounded because I know so many of them die alone and afraid without anyone to help them. Many of them try to kill themselves and I saw one young man with rope burns around his neck from his attempt to hang himself. I see Christ in them so clearly and I know it is just like Christ with the lepers.

After being with these young men all I can do is give thanks to God for the life that is mine, I am so well and healthy, I can be outside under the sun and enjoying creation, I cannot ask God for anything more, I have everything, it is almost as if God has given me too much. I know that in life, if something is not according to the Gospel, it is worth nothing at all and I also know, that

when I give just 10% to God, he doesn't repay me 100%, it is 1,000%, 10,000%.

This witness was shared at the Ultreya in Mallorca and one of the Mallorcan leaders told us about it and how moved he had been when he heard it. He said it wasn't so much what Juan had done but how he had grown from the experience and how convicted he had been by his failure, and yet, how grateful he had been to have the opportunity to learn and to grow. Juan shared his story with us later and listening to him was very, very moving.

We have run this piece in Fully Alive before but because it is the epitome of an authentic witness, showing so clearly just why we share in this manner at an Ultreya, or indeed anywhere, we felt justified in repeating it here.

In his sharing, Juan triggered a response in me, and for me also, it wasn't so much what he did for the young man, but what he learned from it and through his sharing I learned so much about how I am called to live. It isn't enough to excuse ourselves, which I have often done, saying I can't do that, it is just too hard. I learned that as a Christian and a Cursillista, like him, I must put my will into action, trusting that Christ will give me the necessary Grace to do what He is asking me to do, no matter how hard it might at first seem to be.

This is the whole point of the Ultreya, where each may learn from the other, that we can be better while not being the best. Juan's witness is also an example of how we are called to live our Christianity in the everyday it is a perfect example of how we live the Study of the Environment rollo.

- Will: We must have the determination, and make up our minds to be Christian, not just do Christian things if we are going to be a positive influence.
- Prayer: To be effective Christians, we need to base everything on prayer. Our strength and conviction will come from this. We go forward each day to our environments and to each encounter, hand in hand with Christ.
- Mind: We need to be resourceful – just as we are in our jobs or in business, and in our everyday lives – God gave us our minds to use in collaboration with Him.
- Heart: We are called to always grow in our love for Jesus, ourselves and others – showing respect, charity and

gentleness even to the roughest of diamonds, the marginalized, the ones who can be hard to love, those who are now distant from God.

As we know from the rollo, this is the opposite to how we approach others. First we reach out to them and touch their hearts, then their minds; through this they move into prayer and

finally they are able to use their will to begin to reach out to others.

Juan gave the young man all that he asked for in his last few hours on earth, not what he himself thought that he should have. The young man could only know of God's love for him, through the love of someone like Juan, he needed to know he was loved, not to be told about it.

Sheelagh Winston

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CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION: WHAT DO WE MEAN?

This is a rollo given by Diane Coates of the Toronto Cursillo Movement at the \school of Leaders workshop facilitated by CCCC and held in Ottawa.

Throughout most of my years in Cursillo, the title of this rollo from the U.S. *Three Day Manual* was "Christian Community in Action". The message was to form small groups within each of our environments in order to more effectively evangelize them. The focus was on the environment.

Eduardo Bonnin stated in his 1981 Manifesto on *Cursillos in Christianity*, that: "If the Movement is given the space to live its basic and minimum structure of Group Reunion, Ultreya and School, it can bring the Good News of the Gospel to all the hidden places of human existence: personal, family and social."

In 1992 he wrote: "When we speak of 'EVANGELIZATION' in the context of the Cursillo, we do not only mean it in the sense of simply ... **passing on** ... or **spreading** the Gospel Good News...**but rather** ... to succeed in ...**making the person 'BECOME' the GOOD NEWS** ...that joyful good news that Christ is alive in and amongst his people today ... just as surely as He was 2000 years ago.

"This in essence was the vision and mission of the Cursillo from the beginning of making the person faraway from God BECOME the GOOD NEWS.

I hope that my sharing will show that Cursillo achieves what Eduardo speaks of... through the

method and mentality of the 4th Day which is based on

- friendship, conviction and normality,
- that it is all about our *being something ... and not simply about our doing some things.*

Before I made my Cursillo in 1976 I was the epitome of an isolated, paralyzed Christian, indeed, a "faraway." I believed in God but that was about it. I had gone to church most of my life but mostly because I felt I had to. I knew of Christ only as an historical figure who had died for our sins 2000 years ago, but had no relevance to my life. Dennis and I had stopped going to Church for a few years but then we had decided to start going back again in 1975, for the sake of our two young daughters.

At that time my life seemed meaningless and hopeless. In our young own family and most of our extended families there was only struggling, conflict, stress and misery. I had no idea what a difference it would make to have Christ in my life. I only went on Cursillo because Dennis had gone six weeks prior.

The Cursillo Weekend was a struggle for me - I didn't understand what all this was about or what all this had to do with my life. Although I felt drained and confused, I did leave the Weekend with a sense of hope that my life could be different, meaningful. I thought and felt that if I followed through with what was offered on the Weekend, maybe my life could change like the team members who shared how their lives had changed. I truly wanted what they had and to be like them.

Even though it was it was a difficult choice for me since I was so introverted and felt isolated, I decided to follow through and attend Ultreya and to form a group reunion with two other women from the weekend.

THE GROUP

This group only lasted a few months. Then a couple of years later I was invited by a veteran Cursillista and a new Cursillista to join them. This was a wonderful group but unfortunately it lasted only three-four years.

Finally, twelve years ago, after twenty-one years in Cursillo, Christ blessed me with a true group reunion with Lucy, Miriam and Irene. Three years ago Irene was taken to be with God. Shortly after, Lena joined our group.

The Cursillista After the Cursillo rollo states that life can be a perennial Cursillo. How can this be....It's because the powerful dynamic that brings about conversion on the Cursillo Weekend ... **the dynamic of**

- encounter with *self* ...
- encounter with *Christ* ...
- encounter with *others* ...

is the very same dynamic that occurs in the group reunion ... sustaining us in our progressive conversion for the rest of our lives.

This is *Christianity in Action* ... as it is so wonderfully called in the Foundational Charism Cursillo. In the Rollo of that title, *Christianity in Action* is defined as:

- a group of Grace filled Christians
- who journey together
- in a climate
- that makes it possible for each one to *live* the Gospel
- and *spread* the Gospel in the world.

So, let me make it perfectly clear that "**Christianity in Action**" is what is happening within the group, not what we do outside of the group.

Since I was so private and introverted the *first thing* about being in the group was that *I had to learn what and how to share. It doesn't come naturally.*

Each of us in the group had to learn *what* to share and *how* to share our lives in Grace with the others so that our sharing became a *source of Grace* to each other. This kind of sharing is not

- simply telling information, like the number of masses attended, how many rosaries said, telling the content of a book read or how much I enjoyed it, or talking about daily events.
- or teaching, preaching, discussing, debating.
- or trying to solve someone's problem.

This is of no value from a "*passing on Grace*" point of view.

True sharing, however, is giving something of myself - something personal. I am letting you into my life ... by exposing to you *my* thoughts ... *my* feelings ... *my* experiences ... *my* history ...my growth and setbacks... my successes and disappointments in my attempts to lead others to Christ ... what I'm learning in a book, article or movie about myself and others, God or the Church, etc., that is helping me in my growth as a person and a Christian.

In each group reunion we share honestly exactly where we are at in our spiritual journey.

I had to learn to identify and share what actually brought me closer to Christ each week ... and what it was that I had thought, felt, or experienced. I gradually became aware and conscious of his presence in my daily life. What is it in a particular Mass, rosary, prayer time, book or event that touched me, changed me, or helped me grow as a person and as a Christian? These are the graces we want to share with each other.

Each in the group had to learn to speak in the *first person* ... and avoid generalizations ... through the use of, "**we, us, they, or you,**" which depersonalizes the sharing...eg. "It's hard for you/ us to stay focused during the rosary"; this implies that everyone there at the time has this difficulty, but when I say "I find it hard to stay focused during the rosary", I'm keeping this sharing as a personal experience.

When each of us kept the sharing *totally personal* ... each of us discovered how rich the sharing became ... and **what it meant that we were sources of Grace to each other.** Just think about how essential sharing is in Cursillo

- We share throughout the weekends in Rollos and table groups
- We share in our group reunions and Ultreyas
- We share in every team meeting, secretariat meeting, at workshops and encounters, and ...
- We also share with others in our environments.

The next important skill I had to learn was to “listen” to listen with my ears, heart and mind. I used to listen only with my mind, always thinking what to say in response, find a solution to a problem shared; I felt I had to comment on everything that was said. I had to learn to just be quiet, present and just listen.

I’m aware that there are many who just don’t “get” what the group is all about ... that some even feel it is something they are obliged to do in order to belong. This is so disheartening to me, because ... *I know ... in my head ... and in my heart ... from long experience ...* that it is the authentic Group that makes possible everything Eduardo sought to achieve. *I know* how *essential* the group has become to each of us in my group ... in terms of maintaining our lives in Grace at a high level ... and its central place in each of us *becoming the Good News* Eduardo spoke of.

The members of my group have come to really know each other, love each other, and we truly have become special friends (unique from any other friends we have) who are all committed to our journey together to our Father through Jesus. We have become friends in Christ because of the existence and nature of our group. In the group, Christ is in us and among us. “Where two or three gather in my name, there I am among them.” (Mt. 18:19) In the group the Holy Spirit is active among us, revealing Christ in and through each other.

Each of us could have decided to try to live this life in Grace alone, as many do ... but we are so much more effective because of our sharing. When we see Christ act so uniquely in each of our lives ... as He continuously does, when we see that He has done something, He becomes *visible* to us. We encounter Him ... and the faith of each of us is strengthened. Something special continuously happens in our Group. “*God loves me*” is experienced by each member and is shared within the Group, and the result is that all grow in their love for God.

Because of this it is only natural that each of us wants others to come to know God ... to come into relationship with Christ ... to know the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. I want others to know that God is *real* ... is *knowable* in the most *intimate sense* ... and that they too

can know *personally* the love of God for them and for those they love.

So there is a natural link between what is being lived within the group ... to what is desired for all outside the group. Indeed, the sharing of each of our lives in Grace edifies each of us, helping us to overcome complacency or discouragement, helps us to persevere even when all seems impossible.

My father and father-in law were alcoholics, my mother was an atheist, my sister was in broken marriage; all were totally separated from God, but over many years and a whole lot of prayers and reaching out, each one eventually accepted Christ. My grandson, born with severe defects, was saved again and again from death through the first year of his life. We stormed heaven’s door with our prayers and we rejoice together that he is now a very healthy teenager.

As I shared each of these situations ... and many others ... with my group week after week, year after year ... with all my desires, frustrations and struggles, my hopes, successes and joy as the births of my 3 other grandsons, ... I encountered myself. Just like on the Cursillo Weekend, in the group I keep encountering myself and I am inspired to change or deal with a weakness or fault, or step out of the boat when I felt weak or afraid. My group members never pointed these things out to me; I discovered them myself through my own as well as their sharing. I discovered new things about myself, about how I had to change ... or had to know more. How had I had to talk less and listen more, be more patient, learn how to pray, pray more, how to reach out to the lost souls in my environments. I’ve learned to be a true friend, through respect, acceptance and giving people the freedom to be themselves and not what I expected them to be.

I also recognized how Christ was using me as his instrument to lead others to Himself and I have discovered what Christ is calling me to and how He wants me to serve Him, His Church and others. As my group members shared very difficult and painful situations in their lives ... I saw in them such faith, courage and perseverance in never giving up, trusting Christ, relying on Him ... which inspired me ... and helped me to see my life in the right perspective

and to persevere. We have shared all these things within the framework of the format of Piety, Study and Apostolic Action, so that we can remain focused on keeping our Christian Life balanced.

Lucy, Miriam and I deeply shared in Irene's spiritual journey as she battled cancer at the age of thirty-nine. Sometimes she shared her fears and anguish at the prospect of disfiguring and painful surgery, and especially about leaving her two teenage daughters and even her anger at God when she realized the cancer had fatally returned. Other times she shared her gratitude for small improvements, her trust in Christ's presence and care. Ultimately, she shared her peace and acceptance of God's will. Even though she had a large Catholic family, she could only share these things with our group and it was on whom she relied on for spiritual support. Many lives were touched and some converted through her incredible faith, her love of Christ and her witness, especially since she had been a total faraway before her Cursillo.

We are companions on the journey, and Lucy, Miriam and I have been so deeply blessed by and through Christ in this journey with Irene. We always pray for each other, and this prayer support can always be counted on. Our common goal is to become saints, as I believe Irene is now, and to lead all those in our environments to God. In all of these things I see how present Christ is ... how compassionate he is ... and how he shows his love for each person so individually when given a chance. I am encouraged to persevere, to go beyond myself. It is this kind of sharing that inspires and motivates me.

In our sharing, grace is multiplied.

All of life is part of the life in Grace ... and becomes part of what we share through the process of the Group. All these things show what a perpetual fountain of Grace a group is ... and is meant to be. Ordinary people have a means by which to live their faith naturally and fully for the rest of their lives ... faith that produces for the Lord fruit that lasts.

Barry Guihan's image of the cucumber in the brine captures exactly what the Group is, what the Christianity in Action is. It is the image of

how a cucumber becomes a pickle through time through the process of being in the brine.

Remember, Eduardo is thinking primarily of the faraway. And so it is with us. The presence of Christ and flow of grace through our sharing in the group is the brine that does what it is intended to through time to make us BECOME the Gospel.

Through Cursillo ... I have come to know how much God loves me. From being a stranger to God to loving God as my Father ... *this* is the true fruit in me of being part of this *Christianity in Action*. This is *Christianity in Action*. I have come to know *who I am*:

- God's beloved daughter
- heir to the kingdom
- sister of Christ, and
- temple of the Holy Spirit.

This is the GOOD NEWS! ... And it is no longer information outside me ... but is part of my very soul.

THE ULTREYA

I'd like now to talk about Ultreya. In the years that I didn't have group it was the Ultreya that sustained me. I wouldn't have persevered without it.

The kind of sharing I've been speaking of is what is found in the witness and the grouping at the Ultreya, although not in the depth of the intimacy of the permanent group. We have become friends in Christ. If there were no Ultreya ... I'd seldom get to see the other Cursillistas in our area ... or get to know them as I have over the years from their sharing. Without the Ultreya, how could the Cursillistas we sponsor get to be part of the community? How could we all join together in the journey and share with each other what the journey is like so as to build each other up?

The Ultreya is vital for this.

The Ultreya is the place where we meet all those who have been team members and candidates on our weekends ... and where we learn *from one another* how to be better ... indeed... to be the best we can be and all that God calls us to be. A new Cursillista has the possibility to meet

other Cursillistas with whom he or she could form a group. We are accepted, understood, encouraged, and forever welcomed in our desire and need to share our life with Christ.

Where else can we freely do this? It is a unique place that inspires our apostolic Christian life.

The Ultreya is a coming together of all the groups ... The members of the groups receive stimulation, balance, breadth ...and an ever-expanding vision of Piety, Study and Apostolic Action.

Both my group and my Ultreya have ... and continue to be ... essential in my spiritual growth and ability to persevere. In fact, it is the *Christianity in Action* that is present in my group, at the Ultreya, and at the School of Leaders has transformed me over time into an apostle for Christ. I am here today and able to share my journey with you because I have experienced and lived for thirty-three years a perpetual Cursillo through the dynamic of ongoing encounter with myself, encounter with Christ and encounter with others in my group, Ultreya and School.

CONCLUSION

As I said at the beginning, I wanted a different and meaningful life, not realizing that life with Christ was the answer that would be life-long. Through the mentality and method of Cursillo I didn't find what I thought I was looking for, or what I thought I needed 34 years ago, but in fact, I have found everything I was hoping for. My 4th Day has been the perennial Cursillo Eduardo intended ... *It is the pearl without price.*

Cursillo is a way of life. It is living "God loves me, God loves us" in every aspect of our lives.

I'd like to end by quoting Eduardo again, from his 1992 presentation:

"During the Cursillo itself, we attempt to crystallize this unrest and searching ... through the *three essential encounters of the person with himself, with Christ and with others* ... and with the grace of God we almost always do so.

"In spite of this success ... we should not think that this person is now a 'Christian' and that the job is done

"All we can say ... and feel ... is that the person has initiated the conversion process.

"The Postcursillo is designed to facilitate the nurturing of those three essential encounters ... so they grow and develop into *true friendship*:

- *friendship with himself*
- *with Christ, and*
- *with his brothers and sisters in Christ.*

"The key to this process of friendship building is the last encounter *friendship with others.*

"Here we mean especially the friendship with those who are intimately involved in our conversion process ... those in our Group Reunions and Ultreya."

DE COLORES!

FROM EDUARDO

The following is an excerpt from the book *My Spiritual Testament*, written by Eduardo Bonnin. It was published shortly before his death and is for all intents and purposes, his last will and testament. The book is available from the Resource Centre

HISTORICAL CLARIFICATIONS ON THE TRUE ORIGINS OF CURSILLOS, ITS IDEAS AND FOUNDING CHARISM

HOW DID THE IDEA OF THE "STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT" OCCUR TO ME?

The underlying original (seed) of the idea of Cursillos grew out of the (conflict) that took place in me, when the education I had received from the family environment that I had always lived in collided with the (environment) at the barracks when, at the age of 18, I joined the military service. This lasted 9 years, during which I was a private as everyone else and not in (subsidiary or secondary) services.

There, completely different values were lived, quite opposed to those that had been my light and guidance since my youth. This shock, continuously proven in my life at the barracks, (prompted or drove) me to the following thought: do these people feel weighed down by the Law or do they ignore the Doctrine?

For a great many reasons I came to the conclusion that, rather than feeling weighed down by the Law they had no idea of the Doctrine; no Idea of the Truth; this truth that if we believe it with faith and practice it with joy, makes us free men and women. Most of them had a wrong and fearful concept of religion.

For them religion was just a series of prohibitions placed upon them which hindered their lives and prevented them from using the freedom they could enjoy according to their own whim, especially now when they lived so far away from their family environment.

The barracks were located close to, almost in the heart of the Red light district of our City of Palma, and collective visits to brothels were

frequent. At night, on returning to the barracks, their conversations were extremely interesting, all of them almost always revolving around

their frequent incursions into that environment of vice

I never liked to raise important questions before a group of people; I always thought it was much better to speak heart to heart, from one person to another, so that a constructive dialogue could start, where the possibility of reaching an understanding and even of starting a new friendship is much higher.

I always tried and sometimes managed to get a private talk with the leader of the clique and I almost always did it in the same way, i.e. by asking:

Did you have a nice time?, The answer was always the same: yes, but I insisted: " Did you really enjoy it a lot, very much?" He responded: " Well, you know"; and when we reached the intimate, personal and confidential level, he used to say: "I cannot stop thinking about my fiancée and how upset my mother would be If they knew about these adventures of mine and besides, if I am to be honest, I will tell you that after this type of adventure there is no peace in me.

So, in the end I spent all my extensive (time) at the barracks trying to find out what people were like, and I came to the conclusion that at the bottom, at the very bottom, everybody is the same.

This spurred my desire to dig deeper into the core of Christianity and my almost (instinctive) usual urge to read focused now on the books whose authors at the time were at the crest of the wave of the Christian world: Hugo Rahner, Karl Rahner, Fr .Plus, (the husband and wife) Raïssa and Jacques Maritain, Karl Roggers, Maslow, Leon Bloy, Van de Meer of Malcheren, Rene Schwob, Gustavo Thibon, Erich Fromm, Jacques Leclerc, etc..

Then, a book entitled "H.H..Pious XII and Catholic Action," came into my hands and on page. 45, num. 59, I read a paragraph which reads literally, "It is the duty of the parish priest, with a quick and agile look at the dual aspect of his parishioners, to form a clear and carefully detailed picture, we would say topographically, street by street, of his community. i.e. on the one hand the population of the faithful and especially their elected members, which could bring out the elements to promote Catholic Action within the community, and on the other hand the groups that had moved away from the practice of Christian life. They are also sheep that belong to the parish., lost sheep, and also for these, you are responsible custodians, even for them particularly, my dearest children, and as good pastors you must not dodge any effort or work to find them and win them over again, nor must you indulge in any rest until all of them have found asylum, life and joy in the return to the fold of Christ. "(Address to the parish priests and Lenten preachers in Rome, on February 6, 1940).

That letter, which I wanted to transcribe in its entirety, had an unusual effect on me and brought me to the decision that the most important thing to start with was to have at our disposal, as the Pope advised, a "detailed study" of the situation... That conclusion led me to examine each of the constellations of individuals in the world, in my world and in the Church that I knew and frequented.

Then I also felt it necessary and appropriate to observe each of the individuals separately to find out, for example, what the young soldier was like, and I thought: "He obeys his officers because he can not do otherwise, he grumbles and murmurs behind their backs because he can not bear any more". I carried on in this way trying to get an idea of what the young student, the young worker, the young undergraduate, the young clerk, and so on, were like.

All this, as I said before, was aimed at getting an idea as accurate as possible of the real truth of the matter.

From all this, in 1943, the "Study of the Environment" was born and it was the beginning and origin of all that came afterwards.

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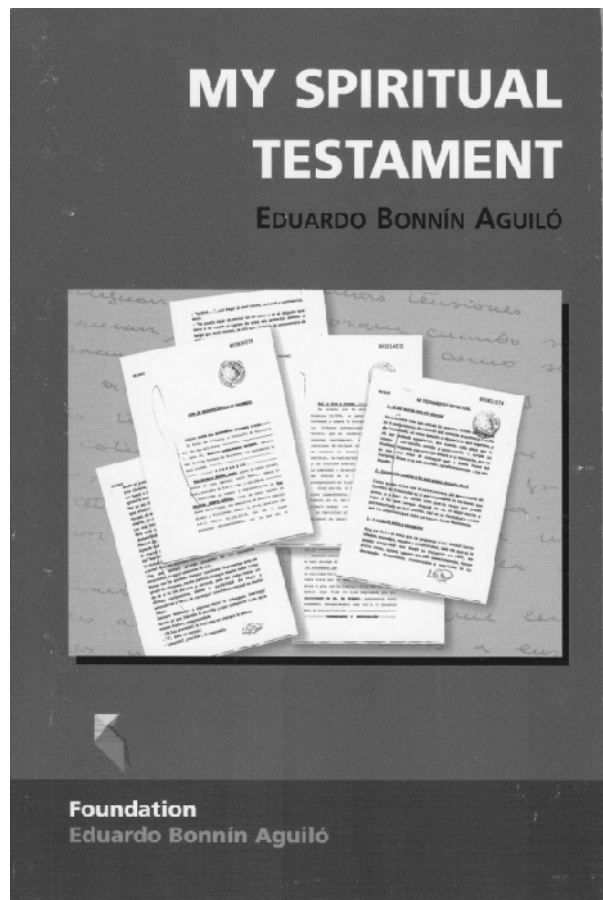
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