

April 2005

To: National Mailing Recipients
Fm: National Cursillo[®] Center
Re: March National Mailing

We are pleased and blessed to share this letter with you from Most Reverend Sam G. Jacobs, Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux. We continue to encourage all lay directors to ask their Bishops if they have a Cursillo experience they would like to share in our National Mailing:

January 28, 2005



Most Rev. Sam G. Jacobs
Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux

Dear People of God,

Over the years God has raised up new spiritual movements in the Church to evangelize and deepen the life of his people. One of these is the Cursillo Movement.

I made the Cursillo weekend when I was a young priest in November of 1969 in Prairie Ronde, LA, under the direction of Fr. Fidelis. I went with a group of men from our parish, St. Joseph, Rayne, LA.

Having already had a number of profound spiritual experiences, the weekend was a continuation of the realization of God's love for me and his plan in my life. For the men from the parish it was a life-changing, grace-filled weekend. It was a joy to watch their transformation and new experience of God's love for them.

We are blessed to have Cursillo Movement here in our diocese. I am grateful to the dedicated teams of men and women who work the Cursillo weekends and the follow-up gatherings.

As the Bishop of this great diocese, I encourage all to consider the possibility of making a Cursillo weekend and to grow in awareness of God's plan for each of you as well as his tremendous love.

With personal good wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours in the Lord,
+ Sam G. Jacobs

Most Reverend Sam G. Jacobs
Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux

(Printed with permission from Bishop Sam G. Jacobs)

FRIEND JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

We are grateful to our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II for his unswerving devotion to the Eucharist when he dedicated this liturgical year of our Catholic Church as the Year of the Eucharist. Our Holy Father officially opened the Eucharistic Year with a Holy Mass at the Vatican on October 17th, 2004, and on the same day he sent his greeting via satellite to the closing session of the International Eucharistic Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico. The Eucharistic Year will close on October 29th, 2005.

In his special Apostolic Letter titled “Mane Nobiscum Domine”, meaning “*Stay with Us, Lord,*” for this Eucharistic Year, the Pope urged the local churches to promote respectful liturgies, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and a better understanding of Christ’s “real presence” in the Eucharist. He also called for more intense public witness of the faith to make the Eucharist as the center of the Christian experience with a transforming power that carries beyond Sunday Holy Mass and into daily life. Our Holy Father encouraged local communities to adopt concrete expressions of solidarity and charity for the poor during the Eucharistic Year. He said the authenticity of Eucharistic celebrations will be demonstrated largely by the love shown to others and by the care given to the needy. He urged Catholics not to be afraid to speak of God, but to publicly witness the faith and the presence of God during the Eucharistic Year. The pope has just reminded us as Cursillistas to “*make possible the living and sharing of what is fundamental for being a Christian*” (FI #75), bringing Jesus to those we live and work with through our own living witnesses to God on a daily basis.

With constant encouragement from my friends in my weekly Group Reunion, I have made efforts to pay more regular visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Most of the time, I am simply present, in silence, before the Blessed Sacrament, either in the tabernacle or exposed on the altar, and I feel peaceful, joyful, energized and elated after each visit. In a short article, entitled “Prayer as Friendship” printed in “Living with Christ,” Vol. 6, No 3, March 2005, a monthly publication by NOVALIS, Fr. James Martin, S.J., advised us to think of prayer as a personal relationship with God, and thus our spiritual life can be deepened significantly. He challenged us to think about what makes a good relationship with a close friend. He added, “*To begin with, you need to be willing both to talk and to listen. (Especially to listen.) You also need to let the relationship change and grow over time. You need to trust that even if the relationship is going through some rocky patches, you can still remain good friends. And you need to be willing to put in the time needed to keep the friendship alive. Looking at your prayer in this way can be helpful and clarifying.*” Father Martin also cautioned us to avoid the situations when one of the friends makes no time for the other or keeps asking for things, and when we are simply polite with our friend, avoiding difficult or painful topics, because we will soon find the friendship growing distant and, eventually, stale. Fr. Martin also said some people sometimes find their prayer with God is uneventful, which he found quite similar to a long road trip with a friend. They don’t have to talk all the time when they are in a car. They can be happy just being with the person in silence – like two companionable friends. Fr. Martin advised us to take Jesus at His word “*I have called you friends*” (John 15:15), and to think about prayer in terms of friendship since it has always been a useful insight.

Our late Vietnamese Francis Xavier Cardinal Thuan Nguyen has testified that the Holy Eucharist had helped strengthen his faith in God and his loyalty to our Catholic Church throughout his more than 13 years of extreme sufferings in Communist prisons in Vietnam. He shared his story, “When they arrested me, I had to go without taking anything with me. The following day I was permitted to write home for my necessities like clothing, toothpaste, etc. I began my letter with this request ‘Please send me some herbal solution for my intestinal disorders’. My people would immediately understand what I meant by that. The next day, the prison warden brought me a small bottle with a label “medicine for intestinal disorders” on it, and a small moisture-free box containing tiny crumbs of hosts. He asked me, “You have intestinal disorders, don’t you?” “Yes,” I answered. ‘This medicine sent in from outside is for you!’ He continued.” (“Francis Xavier Cardinal Thuan Van Nguyen: By His Own Accounts” in Vietnamese, compiled by Rev. Msgr. Tran Van Kha, Co So Hy Vong Publishers, California). The cardinal said he had never been so delighted as he was at that moment! From that day on, he poured three drops of wine and one drop of water into his palm, and he celebrated the Holy Mass in prison every day.

I have learned a valuable lesson from Cardinal Francis Thuan Nguyen – that tragic events in my life may strengthen my faith and bring me closer to God. And in the February 2005 Catholic World Report, Anto Akkara wrote, “Hundreds died when the tsunami struck the grounds of the Marian shrine of Vailankanni in India. But the basilica itself was untouched, and the faith of the Catholic community was strengthened.” Fr. Martin’s simple advice on considering prayer as a personal relationship with God has helped me build up a close relationship with my friend Jesus and has encouraged me to make frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament with joy, eagerness and enthusiasm.

Steve Mueller, the editor of the earlier mentioned booklet “Living with Christ, said, “Our Lenten journey leads to the cross, but our consolation is that we never walk alone. Not only does Jesus accompany us, but so do our friends.”

Joachim Thong T. Le

WORKSHOP ABOUT THE ROLLO IDEAL – National Encounter – Seattle, WA

As you may know, during the past National Encounter held in Seattle, WA in July 2004, we shared with you individual workshops about the fifteen rollos of Cursillo. For your benefit, especially those who were not able to attend, we would like to share with you the Workshop given about Ideal.

Note: This Workshop is prepared for Cursillo leaders, therefore, some of the examples shared here mention about the life in Grace and even about the Group Reunion. As we all know, in the rollo Ideal, there is no mention of Grace, Christianity and even the Church. In this mailing we would like to insist the same purpose as at the National Encounter, it is presumed to be for leaders of the Cursillo Movement.

IDEAL

By Sonja Lopatynskyj – Philadelphia, PA

We are going to speak about the rollo IDEAL. As you know it is the first rollo of the Cursillo ... it follows the Invocation to the Holy Spirit and the distribution of decurias done by the rector (a) after a brief break after breakfast. In your imagination, you that have served in a Cursillo will see how are the faces of the new cursillistas.

In “Structure of Ideas” (Vertebrate) the author tells us: This first rollo is of utmost importance. It is highly important that the rollista capture the audience by a clear, pleasant and interesting presentation. Through it the cursillistas will gauge all the rest, and the degree of interest awakened at the outset will determine the interest with which he/she will follow the presentation of the remaining rollos (S. I., pg. 47).

Atmosphere

The participants will be in an atmosphere somewhat tense at the beginning of the rollo “IDEAL”. They have been placed in a group with people they do not know; many will be worrying about what the others will think of them. Many have heard stories of what they will do in the Cursillo and now "that" is beginning. This atmosphere will continue to the time of the discussion, where the members of the group will have the opportunity to begin to know each other and relax a little.

The participants, though nervous, are eager to begin. The retreat is behind them, a period of meditation and of reflection. Some might have not felt anything, but the majority, depending on their personalities, will be nervous. For some, according to their personalities, the spirit of the retreat would have softened their nervousness the night before.

“The atmosphere is charged with anticipation. The rollo of ‘Ideal’ should slide in, reach into their hidden sense of what is right, and then get them thinking of where they truly are in their lives and in their relationship with God.” (3DM, pg. 51). The majority have been longing for a change in their life.

What is going through their minds?

The group “order” has not yet been established. They might have many questions at this very moment: “Who will speak on what?” “Who will be quiet?” “Am I going to be accepted...?” “I don’t know how to write.” “I can’t talk religion.” “I’ll show them what theology is.” etc. It will be the end of the day before they will start feeling at home, so the rollo on the ideal should not dazzle, but should point steadily the way. If the rollo is clearly and carefully presented with examples and illustrations, the groundwork will be established for the remainder of the Cursillo.

On the other hand, if the rollo is garbled, theatrical or theoretically inclined, then the participants will turn off the speaker, and it will be difficult to awaken their interest later on. Their nervousness must be relaxed. The presentation should be warm and carry with it an invitation to listen.

In this rollo is referred too the three kingdoms of the Nature. Not to give a lesson of science, but to show that we are the superior being to everything that was created, the fruit of an IDEAL (God's Ideal, although it is not mentioned). The book of Genesis, in the story of the Creation, teaches us that man is the summit of all created.

We also have an Ideal(s)... each one to give "life": i.e. to my small garden, I fertilize it, water it, and change the pots in place so that they are benefited of the sun, and then I wait... I wait to see "my flowers." My Ideal is to have a beautiful garden and some rich tomatoes!

From the beginning of the Cursillo, the candidate is prepared the need of perseverance in this new adventure that has just to begin. They will see that there are difficulties but with God all is possible.

Let me share this Witness with you:

At the beginning of my conversion, I did myself a mental plan and I thought with it to achieve, to reach my Ideal. After several years, I realized that with God things are not like the human goals... here we give "one step ahead and two backward." We need to be tested like the gold in the fire is purified. Frustrated by my "lack of progress", I told a group of friends; they also had a similar experience. In-group, we consulted with our Spiritual Director. This was his answer: "this continues to the end of our life."

Nowadays my Ideal continues to be: to live in grace and to grow that grace in me, to help so that others also achieve their Ideal.

Cursillo, a Triple Encounter:

In the National mailing part II of August, 2003: "...we must work in helping each person to have a triple encounter. First, we need the opportunity to permit each person to have an encounter with themselves (this is obtained during the first day of Cursillo). Second, we need to provide the opportunity to permit each person to have an encounter with God (this is obtained during the second day of Cursillo). Finally, we need to provide the opportunity to permit each person to have an encounter with the others (this is obtained during the third day of Cursillo) focusing on the Group Reunion and Ultreya as an important key to this encounter with the others." (NM, pg. 6)

Specific Objective of the rollo Ideal:

It is necessary, through this rollo, to instill or to awake in the cursillistas the need for having an ideal (their own) - main mast of every life - and the conviction that whoever does not have one, whoever he or she may be, it is not a person. (S.I. pg. 47)

The first day provides to the cursillistas with a reason for their lives, it tries to situate them face to face with themselves. (3DM, pg. 20)

The whole rollo moves around a non-religious atmosphere, therefore its objective is to interest and to enter through the human thing to arrive at the Divine thing. The following rollos of this first day are supposed to present the idea to live the Christian Ideal: that is to say, the life in grace. The message of the first day is: "know yourself". If you do not know yourself, this rollo is going to explain and help you to describe your Ideal or ideals at this moment of your life.

“The Cursillo Movement is directed in the first place, to bring conversion in the person.” (E. Bonnín.)

Before we expose the Christian ideal to the new cursillista, one must make them see their own ideal as person. We all have at least an ideal in our life that we want to see carried out. The majority of the people have various ideals that they dream of and endeavor to obtain. Therefore it is very important that a rollista with experience be assigned to give this first rollo. Someone that will present, with its personal examples, how he or she lives and thrives to obtain their Ideal(s).

“Our ideals should be reachable, that is to say that they can be obtained. If these are aimed higher than reachable, then we would become discouraged and we would abandon the IDEAL.” (E. Bonnín.)

It should be a shot into the air that would make our head raise and look toward higher goals.

Testimony:

When I was young, my ideal was to study, to know the world. To travel, to listen to music, to paint, etc. Since my Cursillo, my ideal is a great deal higher and more inspiring than the ones I had before... (It is, to live in Grace and to try to improve myself).

15th NATIONAL ENCOUNTER

This year's National Encounter is being held at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, July 28-31, 2005. The college is approximately 45 minutes from the Kansas City International Airport (MCI). The registration cost is \$255.00 if you register by May 20th. The registration includes: transportation to and from the Kansas City Airport (MCI), three nights lodging and three meals a day, beginning with dinner Thursday evening and ending with breakfast Sunday morning. The encounter is open to all Cursillistas. A registration form is included with this mailing.

The theme for this year's National Encounter is, *“Be Messengers of Joy”*. The Encounter will include Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and a Spiritual Presentation on the “Year of the Eucharist”. Workshops will center on “friendship” and its relationship to Precursillo, Cursillo and Postcursillo. What does the phrase, “Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ” mean to us as Cursillistas? How is friendship key to Group Reunion, Ultreya and the School of Leaders? Registration is limited to 650 participants based on maximum lodging capacity. Room assignments will be given on a “first come, first served” basis. Make your plans now to attend this National Encounter.

In reviewing evaluations from past National Encounters, we always receive many comments on how people enjoy the blending of cultures. We decided to add time to highlight the various cultures within our National Cursillo[®] Movement. This year's Ultreya will be held on Friday evening and the Fiesta on Saturday evening. The Fiesta will include time for the performance of a song or dance from the different cultures in the National Cursillo[®] Movement. Any group or diocese interested in participating in this event must contact the National Cursillo[®] Center at 214-339-6321 by June 20th. There are

a limited number of spaces available and we hope to accommodate all the cultures involved in Cursillo in the United States.

THE NATIONAL CURSILLO WEB SITE

Did you know you can request palanca through the National Cursillo® Website? Join affiliated dioceses around the United States in sending your prayers and sacrifices for the success of their weekends and other Cursillo events. Our online e-Ultreya magazine can be found on the National Cursillo® web site. To submit your 4th Day witness, go to the National Cursillo® Website at www.natl-cursillo.org and click on “e-Ultreya Magazine”. By clicking on “submit an article” you can type your witness article and submit it to the editors. After being reviewed, your article may be posted to subsequent editions. This allows all Cursillistas, in the United States and the world, the opportunity to read your witness on what is fundamental for being a Christian. In addition, it is easy to connect to other Catholic Cursillo® web sites from our Affiliated Links page. It “pays” to be affiliated.

PALANCA INTENTIONS

We have included an additional palanca intention on Saturdays for the VI World Encounter being held this year in Brazil. The intentions are as follows:

Mondays – for all Secretariats
Tuesdays – for all School of Leaders
Wednesdays – for all Cursillistas in the United States
Thursdays – for the Cursillo Movement’s Apostolic Actions
Fridays – for all 3-Day Cursillo Weekends
Saturdays – for the VI World Encounter

Thank you for joining the National Cursillo® Movement of the United States in offering *palanca* for these intentions.

May the peace and joy of our risen savior, Jesus Christ, shine through you in everyone you meet, especially during this most Blessed Easter Season.

Your Servants in Christ,

Victor Lugo – National Executive Director
Ceferino Aguillón – National English-speaking Coordinator
Jorge Barceló – National Spanish-speaking Coordinator
Joachim Le – National Vietnamese-speaking Coordinator

Cursillo® Movement 15th National Encounter
Benedictine College at Atchison, KS
July 28 – July 31, 2005

Registration Form
Cost for the 15th National Encounter is \$255.00
(Please use a separate Registration Form for each registrant)

(PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY – THANK YOU – PLEASE FILL IN ALL THE BLANKS)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Preferred Complete Name for Name Tag: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work # _____ Fax # _____

E-mail Address: _____ Diocese: _____

Preferred Language: _____ Specify: Priest, Deacon, Religious etc. _____

Gender (Circle one): Male Female If married, is your spouse attending? Yes _____ No _____

If you desire to room with a specific individual (**spouse, friend, relative**) then that other individual's Registration Form must accompany this form. We will not be able to guarantee any particular roommate if the forms do not accompany one another. **2 persons per room.**

Roommate preference? (Circle One): Yes No If Yes, Name: _____

Special needs (dietary/handicap/walking or problems with steps/etc.): _____

Date you attended Cursillo and where: _____

Make all checks payable to: National Cursillo® Center

Credit Card payment:

Circle one: Master Card or Visa

Credit Card Number _____ **expiration date** _____

Name on credit card _____

Send form and payment to:

National Cursillo® Center
P.O. Box 210226 - Dallas, TX 75211-0226
Telephone: (214) 339-6321, Fax: (214) 339-6322, e-mail: nationalcursillo.center@verizon.net

Full payment of \$255.00 per person and form must be received by May 20, 2005

Registration cost will be \$305.00 per person from May 21, 2005 – June 17, 2005

Registration cost will be \$330.00 per person from June 18, 2005 – July 26, 2005

Registration cost will be \$355.00 per person after July 26, 2005

There is a \$40.00 non-refundable fee for all cancellations

No refunds after June 30, 2005