

Welcome to our
2011 CURSILLISTAS

Please keep these new Cursillistas in your prayers. Also, please pray for the team members who touched their faith lives in the name of Christ.

Lisa Arconti

St. Mary, Bethel, Women's 68th

Roger Bellamy

St. Mary, Bethel, Men's 64th

Cynthia Conti

St. Elizabeth Seton, Ridgefield, Women's 68th

Luanne Eminger

St. John Vianney, West Haven, Women's 68th

Steve Fugazy

St. Mary, Bethel, Men's 64th

Carole Harris

St. Marguerite, Brookfield, Women's 68th

Brian Kelley

St. Mary, Bethel, Men's 64th

Steve Mitchell

St. Mary, Bethel, Men's 64th

Roxana Miranda

St. James, Stratford, Women's 68th

Sean Payne

St. Mary, Bethel, Men's 64th

Edward Perez

St. James, Stratford, Men's 64th

Marinet Perez

St. James, Stratford, Women's 68th

Bill Presti

St. Mary, Bethel, Men's 64th

Maritza Santiago

St. Augustine, Bridgeport, Women's 68th

Carol Terry

St. Rose of Lima, Newtown, Women's 68th

YEAR-END THOUGHTS

from the Spiritual Advisor

By Fr. Ed McAuley

This has been a historic year for our movement. On the weekend of March 3-6 nearly sixty leaders of our community participated in a *Cursillo de Cursillos* at Saint Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield to learn more about our movement. It was just the sixth such weekend of its kind in the United States. Our National Executive Director, Victor Lugo, and National English Coordinator, Cef Aguilon, headed a team which included National and Regional Secretariat members. All members of our diocesan Secretariat attended, along with over 50 other Cursillo leaders, including many who are active in our School of Leaders.

The talks were enlightening, and table discussions and question and answer sessions lively. The focus, as always, was on Christ. The team was especially impressed with the deep bonds of *Christian friendship* which were evident throughout the three days, and the energy and enthusiasm exhibited by all.

Cursillo de Cursillos was a good reminder that our movement is not about "the weekend" but our *Fourth Day*. It was a good reminder that when we prayerfully discern a call to sponsor a friend in Christ for a weekend that we're responsible to guide the new Cursillista in the first steps of their

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Year End Thoughts....

Fourth Day. This includes helping the new Cursillista find a friendship group. This may mean inviting the new Cursillista to join your friendship group. It may initially mean grouping with the new Cursillista at a different day and time than when your group gathers, even if it means some sacrifice or inconvenience on your part. It also means insuring that the new Cursillista whom you've sponsored regularly attends a monthly *Ultreya*. Group Reunion and *Ultreya* are our movement's chief *perseverance* tools, and are at the heart of our *Fourth Day*. Being a sponsor doesn't end once your candidate "makes the weekend!"

Cursillo de Cursillos also stressed the importance of attending and participating in the *School of Leaders*. With the encouragement of the CDC team, our 2011-2012 *School of Leaders* is returning to our movement's roots, and the writings of our late founder, Eduardo Bonnin, in studying the *charism* of our movement. Carving time out of your busy schedule to be at School of Leaders the second Saturday of the month through June will be well worth your time and sacrifice.

National English Coordinator, Cef Aguillon, offers these words of encouragement: "Let us continue the joyful proclamation of the best news that God in Christ loves us to as many people possible in our every day environments!"

We do that best not by re-living our "weekend," but by *living* our Fourth Day!

A note from the LAY DIRECTOR

By Ray Bourdeau

"God bestows more consideration on the purity of the intention with which our actions are performed than on the actions themselves."

-- St Augustine

In studying the charism of our Cursillo Movement, we are reminded that to **be** is more important than to **do**. To **be** Christ to someone is more important than doing Christians things for that someone. Why I do them is more important than how I do them. In the reality of life we ask ourselves, am I **being** Christian? It is not what I am saying, it is not what I am doing, it is what I am **being**. I share this snippet as one of the many golden nuggets being rediscovered in our Study of the Charism of the Cursillo Movement taking place in our School of Leaders. And with this, I extend my greetings to all and thank you for helping our Cursillo Movement continue to grow and develop.

As mentioned above, our School of Leaders is studying the charism of the Cursillo Movement using the teachings from our founder, Eduardo Bonnin, as the basis for the study. The group meets the second Saturday of the month at Marian Heights in Monroe (see calendar, page 6). This is a great opportunity for all in our community to grow in knowledge of Cursillo and help guide our Movement as our founder intended. Our Communications and Palanca programs continue to reach out to the ever increasing community through e-mail notices, updated information on our website and the Prayer Line. I invite you to visit our website; it is chockfull of information on our Movement.



The Regional Service Team, a subset of National Cursillo, continues to serve the New York and New England region. They have conducted two Regional Encounters this year which have been well attended by our Diocese. It is important to note that the location of the Regional Encounters has moved to St Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield which is less than hour away for most to travel. All are invited to attend the Encounters. The Spring Encounter is scheduled for April 27-29, 2012. The Regional Service Team is very supportive of our Cursillo efforts in the Diocese of Bridgeport. We are blessed to have two members from our community, Kathy Renzulli and Cindy Bruno, serve on this Regional Team. We thank Kathy and Cindy for their time and dedication to our Movement.

We have been blessed to have sponsors bring us candidates

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Lay Director note ...

to hold 2 Cursillo weekends this year. While we had scheduled 4 weekends for the year and had to postpone 2 of them, it is a call to each of us to persevere in being Christ in our environments which is simply any where we are. With our perseverance in our environments, our 180 degree radius around us, we can then reach out to those who are ready for the encounter with self, God and others and invite them to experience the Three Day Weekend. Please send your completed candidate and sponsor applications to Mary Beth Rauser, Pre Cursillo Chairperson, as soon as possible. The Palanca for the weekend continues to be the lever of prayer and sacrifice that allows the Holy Spirit to infuse the weekend experience. Your contribution of meals and other food items nourish the candidates and the team which allows them to focus on the message of the weekend. The Closings of the Three Day weekend have been well attended, very spirited, and supportive of our new Cursillistas.

Our Ultreyas continue to grow in spirit and participation. We are blessed to have three Ultreyas per month in our Diocese. The Ultreya in Ridgefield meets at St. Mary's Parish on the fourth Wednesday of each month. The Ultreya in Bridgeport continues to meet at the Catholic Center on the first Tuesday of the month and the Ultreya in Bethel meets at St. Mary's Parish on the third Thursday of each month. (See calendar on page 6.)

For the months of December and June, we celebrate a Central Ultreya with the entire Diocesan community at Our Lady of Fatima in Wilton on the first Tuesday of the month. Each Ultreya is blessed to have a Spiritual wrap-up integrated with the evening's witness talk. The Ultreya is time for all the small friendship groups to come together and encourage each other in our evangelizing efforts. It is also an opportunity for those not in a small friendship group to participate in grouping three times per month. Ultreya is an essential method to help us persevere in being Christ to others, to move onward in our ongoing conversion!

All of the good things happening in our Movement are a result of much prayer and sacrifice. We need to continue to pray for our Cursillo Movement.

Many thanks go to the Secretariat and Committee members, past and present, for their endless effort. It is important to note that we are in the process of our annual update of our Pastoral Plan which is used to help guide our community in moving forward with the mission of Cursillo. Each one of us has been given the gift of Cursillo and it is our responsibility to fulfill its mission which is to journey together and evangelize our environments for Christ.

Cursillo Leadership **MEMBERS OF OUR SECRETARIAT**

Lay Director
Ray Bourdeau

Spiritual Director
Fr. Ed McAuley

Secretary/Communications
Dolores Pace
(dodofloss@earthlink.net)

Pre Cursillo (applications)
Mary Beth Rauser

Three Day (weekend)
Gina Donnarummo

Fourth Day (Ultreyas)
Jim Bruno

School of Leaders
Maureen Ciardello

Regional Representative
Kathy Renzulli

Please make a note...

NEXT WOMEN'S WEEKEND

April 12-15, 2012

Please prayerfully consider who you'd like to invite then talk to potential candidates today. This allows us to plan the weekends appropriately and the palanca can begin!

PRAYER LINE REQUESTS

Please send to Barbara Findley at
btpalanca@yahoo.com

From our Pre-Cursillo Chairperson:

BEING THE BEST SPONSOR YOU CAN BE

By Mary Beth Rauser

First of all, let me begin by thanking all of you who sponsored candidates over the past year. The entire community thanks you in your efforts to “make a friend, be a friend, and bring that friend to Christ.” Together with the sponsors, we continue to offer palanca and assistance to our new Cursillistas.

You may have noticed some additions to our guidelines in sponsoring over the past year. These enhancements, so to speak, are not meant to deter you in your sponsoring efforts, but to emphasize the importance of sponsoring and the necessity of guiding your candidates in their Fourth Day. Remember, the goal of our Movement is not to fill the three-day weekends for the sake of filling them and holding them. We need to be sure that our candidates are supported and have good examples of living their 4th Day when they come off the weekend. Cursillo is not just the three-day weekend, it is a Movement...to be lived continually after the 3 days are over. We all need that to be successful.

This is one of the reasons to educate your candidates on what Cursillo is. Tell them about grouping and Ultreya so they are well-informed. We all know the importance of grouping and attending Ultreya in carrying us in our 4th Day. There is no purpose in keeping things “secret.” How can your candidate say “yes” to Cursillo if they don’t know what they are saying “yes” to?

It is difficult to help your candidate with grouping and attending Ultreya, if you are not grouping or attending Ultreya yourself. That is why we are here to assist you in your sponsoring efforts. We know and understand that not everyone can group or attend Ultreya due to family or work commitments. That is why we will help you by getting a co-sponsor who is living his/her 4th Day to assist you in guiding your candidate.

We all have a responsibility after attending the Three-Day Weekend to bring Christ into our environments and to study the different environments in our lives to find others who in turn can bring Christ into their own environments. Let’s all work together to keep our Cursillo Movement a living, vibrant part of our Diocese! We are doing an awesome job and I know God is well pleased with all of our efforts!

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming Sponsor Workshop and look for further details. Whether you’ve sponsored 20 candidates, one candidate, or have never sponsored anyone, you will be blessed and enriched with the charism of what makes Cursillo different from any other retreat and why the sponsoring aspect of Cursillo is so vital to the Movement!

I hope to see many of you there. May God bless all of you and our Cursillo!

Save the Date!
January 21, 2012
Bridgeport Diocese
Cursillo Sponsor Workshop

*Everything you wanted to know
about sponsoring,
but were afraid to ask!*

Help Wanted: Parish Representatives

We are looking for Parish Representatives. Your duties include:

- Contact your pastor and educate him on Cursillo if he is unfamiliar
- Ask your pastor if you can place pamphlets about Cursillo in your church (pamphlets are provided)
- Be the contact person for your parish in case any one inquires about Cursillo.

Our goal is to have at least one representative in each of the parishes in our Diocese. As Cursillo grows in Fairfield County, so does our need to educate people on what Cursillo is. We have a link on the Diocesan website and there have been articles about us in the Fairfield County Catholic newspaper.

Please note that this in no way takes away from our methods of sponsoring and knowing our candidates. You would simply act as a go-between and answer any questions that someone may have. You will work with the other Cursillistas in your parish to provide the necessary support. Interested? Please contact Mary Beth Rauser at 203-925-0710 or mbrauser@hotmail.com. Thank You!

A note from **THREE DAY**

By Gina Donnarummo

"Cursillo reminds us that friendship is a unique and beautiful vehicle for evangelizing. In friendship, we are called to infect others in a natural way with the joy we experience in the encounter with the One for whom we hunger."

— Fr. David Smith, Spiritual Advisor for OMCC (World Organization for Cursillos de Cristiandad)

Cursillos in Christianity was founded in Spain in the 1940s as an evangelization method to let others know God loves them through the best tool known: friendship. In order to live in the Fourth Day and in the Cursillo Movement, one participates in the Three Day Cursillo weekend. Just like the Mass in our universal Church, Cursillo Three Day weekends are identical worldwide. Weekends are fundamental to the Creed of the Catholic Church: Jesus Christ, the Sacraments, apostleship, grace, and prayer. Through learning and living these methods, one carries them into the Fourth Day in the family, parish, and the Cursillo Movement.

All that is done in the Third Day should be done with a focus on the Fourth Day. Only when we have an active Fourth Day Movement, then can we have Three Day weekends. All aspects of the weekend--picking the date and team, writing and giving the rollos, de curia, the closing--are guided by God's hand and focus on the candidates: future living members of the Fourth Day. Cursillistas are people who leaven their environments by sharing the best news known to them that God loves them!

This method has helped countless people from all continents for 60+ years. Be leaven for your environment and attend the next Ultreya in your area and reach out to a friend to join you.

***De colores and Ultreya always,
Your Three Day Committee***

Gina Donnarummo, Chair

Cindy Bruno

Joe Kotulich

Patty Quirk

Phil Ricci

Debe Slovak

A note from **SCHOOL OF LEADERS**

By Maureen Ciardiello, Chair

Welcome to the School of Leaders “corner”! We are in the midst of the changing seasons, a time when things of nature are going through their process of being stripped down, leaving behind the bare trees standing. It is with this in mind that I turn to our current study for School of Leaders, “The Cursillo Movement Study of the Charism.” The season reminds me of how, in this study we are stripping the leaves off of our Cursillo Movement and getting to the bareness of it.

The Vatican’s Pontifical Council of the Laity in 1998 and 2006 called upon the different movements in the church to study and know their charism. It is when we study and know our charism, we can truly LIVE the charism and we can truly serve our Holy Mother Church. The Council advised those attendants to go to your founder, know their mentality, their life, their education and the history of the movement.

And so it was with this urging that the members of the World Organization of Cursillos in Christianity (OMCC) set out from this gathering of the laity in 2006 and traveled to Spain to meet with Eduardo Bonnin, the founder of Cursillo. It is there that the conversations with Eduardo were recorded as he shared his life, love and respect for the human person. I had the privilege of speaking with Gail Terrana recently, who was the Vice President of the OMCC at that time and traveled to Spain to meet Eduardo. She described it to me as a truly holy, blessed and spirit filled time and just how humble and loving Eduardo was and how strongly the Holy Spirit was present in him.

This book is a compilation of the OMCC’s mailings, from 2008-09, detailing the conversations with the purpose of creating a hunger in our worldwide Cursillo Community for the study of the charism. It is through this hunger that we will strengthen, share and sustain our movement with all who come in contact with us.

Please join us the second Saturday of the month to continue your 4th day journey and grow in your understanding and knowledge of our Cursillo Movement! (See calendar on page 6.)

As of January 2012

ULTREYA:

Team Up to Witness and Facilitate

Make a resolution in 2012 to witness or facilitate at Ultreya. Presenting an Ultreya is a great opportunity to work with someone from your weekend, a recent teammate, or one of your group mates.

Our Ultreya coordinators and talk “workshoppers” assist both the witness speaker and the facilitator. Present at an Ultreya as part of your 2012 evangelization plans. Contact ...

Ultreya Coordinators

Bridgeport: Carol Twiggs, caroltwiggs@msn.com

Bethel: Phil & Gail Palermo,

phil@palermoplanet.com

Central: Tom Restivo, thomasrestivo@aol.com

BETHEL-AREA

*at St. Mary Parish Center, Bethel at 7:30pm,
third Thursday of the month*

Jan. 19 ~ Feb. 16 ~ Mar. 15 ~ Apr. 19

May 24 ~ Jul. 19 ~ Aug. 16 ~ Sept. 20

Oct. 18 ~ Nov. 15

BRIDGEPORT

*at the Catholic Center, Bridgeport at 7:00pm,
first Tuesday of the month*

Jan. 3 ~ Feb. 7 ~ Mar. 6 ~ Apr. 3

May 1 ~ Jul. 3 ~ Aug. 7 ~ Sept. 4

Oct. 2 ~ Nov. 6

RIDGEFIELD

*at St. Mary's Parish,
fourth Wednesday of each month*

Jan. 25 ~ Feb. 29 ~ Mar. 28 ~ Apr. 25

May 23 ~ Jul. 25 ~ Aug. 22 ~ Sept. 26

Oct. 24 ~ Nov. 28

CENTRAL

*at Our Lady of Fatima, Wilton, at 7:30pm,
first Tuesday of June and Dec.*

June 5 ~ Dec. 4

DAY OF REFLECTION 2012

Save the date! Details to come.

February 11, 2012

SCHOOL OF LEADERS

*at the Nazareth Spiritual Life Center,
1428 Monroe Turnpike (Rte. 111), Monroe*

9:30-11:30am

Jan. 14 ~ Feb. 11 ~ Mar. 10 ~ Apr. 14

May 12 ~ Jun. 9

REGIONAL ENCOUNTER

St. Thomas Seminary, Bloomfield, CT

April 27-29, 2012

The Region I Service Team is a four-member team which serves the region of New England, Long Island and lower New York. The team provides assistance in the form of support, updates/information and formation for the local dioceses. Regional and National encounters are also a great source of information, ongoing formation and fellowship with other movements. The details for the National Encounter have not been finalized, but it is typically scheduled for the last weekend in July.

The next opportunity for a Regional encounter is coming up in April at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield. The encounter begins with registration 5:00 pm on Friday, April 27 and ends 11:00 am on Sunday, April 29, 2012.

The two topics scheduled to be covered are sponsorship and pastoral planning. There is also a regional ultreya, spiritual talks and liturgy (we have a Bishop coming for one of the Masses, his homily alone would be worth the trip).

Please call Kathy Renzulli, Region I service team, for more information, 888-8615.

VISIT OUR WEBSITES!

www.natl-cursillo.org/Bridgeport

www.natl-cursillo.org