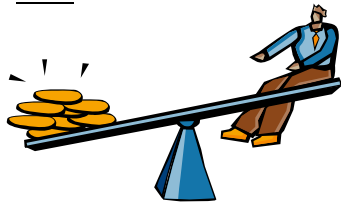


Cursillo News for Jan-Feb 2008

Calendar of Events

January 11-12, 2008	School of Leaders (quarterly reunion)-7:30pm Fri-3pm Sat, (St. Ann Parish, Doniphan)
January 12, 2008	Secretariat Meeting , following School of Leaders (see above)
February 8-9, 2008	Practice Weekend , St. John the Baptist, Minden (Secretariat meeting to follow)
February 9, 2008	Secretariat Meeting , St. John the Baptist, Minden (following Practice Weekend)
February 14-17, 2008	Men's Weekend , St. John the Baptist, Minden
February 17, 2008	Men's Closing , 5:00pm (4pm Mass) St. John the Baptist, Minden
February 21-24, 2008	Women's Weekend , St. John the Baptist, Minden
February 24, 2008	Women's Closing , 5:00pm (4pm Mass) St. John the Baptist, Minden
March 15??, 2008	Secretariat Meeting , 9:30am; before Postcursillo Reunion. Location TBA
March 15??, 2008	Postcursillo Reunion , 1:00pm following Secretariat meeting; Location TBA
April 25-27, 2008	Region VI Spring Encounter – Belle Prairie, MN (St. Cloud Diocese)
May and June, 2008	Secretariat Meetings Dates and locations TBA
July 31 – Aug 3, 2008	National Encounter, at Catholic University of America, Washington, DC

Palanca is so very important (see the article about Palanca on p.8 of this Newsletter) ... it is the backbone of the Cursillo Movement and essential for the spiritual success of each Three Day Weekend. Your spending time with our Lord before the Blessed Sacrament is the best means of helping the candidates encounter Him. Please make sure your Ultreya Center is covering the assigned hours, or contact a neighboring Ultreya Center for assistance ... He's counting on YOU!!!



Lift them up in prayer ...

PRAYER/ADORATION HOURS (by Ultreya Center) for the February 2008 Minden Weekends

Thursday, 7:00pm - Friday, 1:00am	David City/Shelby/Wahoo
Friday, 1:00am - 7:00am	Beatrice/Crete/Hebron
Friday, 7:00am - 1:00pm	Lincoln
Friday, 1:00pm - 7:00pm	Southwestern Nebraska (McCook/Imperial/Grant)
Friday, 7:00pm - Saturday 1:00am	Nebraska City/Plattsmouth
Saturday, 1:00am - 7:00am	David City/Shelby/Wahoo
Saturday, 7:00am - 1:00pm	Beatrice/Crete/Hebron
Saturday, 1:00pm - 7:00pm	Southwestern Nebraska (McCook/Imperial/Grant)
Saturday, 7:00pm - Sunday 1:00am	Lincoln
Sunday, 1:00am - Sunday, 7:00am	Nebraska City/Plattsmouth
Sunday, 7:00am - 5:00pm	Hastings/Holdrege/Minden

From the Secretariat ...

• **New Secretariat Members** ... At the December Secretariat meeting, the following cursillistas were elected:

- ◆ Secretary – Monica Buster
- ◆ **Precursillo Chair – Roddy Spangler**
- ◆ **Three Day Chair – John Springer**

During 2007, Monica completed the final year of a three-year term for the former Secretary, who was unable to complete her term, and John was selected to complete Mark Pribyl's third year as Three Day Chair. Thus, they were both eligible to be considered for the current three-year terms.

• **Precursillo**

Application Forms – Remember that Cursillo applications/informational flyers are now available online. In registering candidates for the upcoming Weekends, you may get the most recent application forms from the website by printing off the Application Forms and Informational Flyers, and then requesting that a Sponsor Form be emailed directly to you (since the sponsor fills out this form and gets the pastor's signature). The current web address is:

www.gpc.com.net/stpatrickschurch/cursillolincoln

Precursillo Thoughts (Kathy Rowell, Precursillo Chairperson)

What to Do with Gifts

A new year begins. I look around and find it hard to imagine a life of poverty. Here in the Midwest, our circumstances, lifestyles, and freedoms are very different from those of so many others around the world. Poverty in a financial sense does not directly affect me. However, there are other kinds of poverty, and my thoughts turn to spiritual poverty. I am so lucky to have been born in the United States **AND** to be a member of the Catholic Church. But luck had nothing to do with it. It was God's plan. Instead of thanking my "lucky stars," I should be thanking God for the gifts He has given me.

Christmas Day is over and now we find ourselves thinking about the many gifts we have received. What will we do with them? There are some we will put on display and others we will use every day. Still others will be put on a shelf and possibly forgotten. Some will find their way to the "returns" counter, and some may even be "regifted".

One special gift we received from God (maybe not this year) was the Cursillo Weekend. What ever happened to that gift? Did you just say, "Thank You, God," and put it on a shelf where it eventually made its way to the back, behind all the other "stuff" you have accumulated?

Or did you take that gift, give it life, and help it to grow through a weekly Group Reunion? Have you participated in a monthly Ultreya and met with others who have received the same gift? It could be that this gift needs a little care and polish to keep its glow. School of Leaders provides the tools to keep the gift as exciting as it was when it was brand new.

“Regifting” is one more option. Per Wikipedia, “*Regifting is the act of taking a gift that has been received and giving it to somebody else, sometimes in the guise of a new gift.*” Although you cannot give your family and friends **your** Weekend experience, you can give them the opportunity to live a Weekend themselves. Don’t your friends and family deserve a gift that can bring peace and joy to them for years to come? “Regift”. Package up the joy and enthusiasm you experienced on your Weekend and offer it to another. Someone is waiting to be invited.

The next Men’s Weekend is February 14-17, 2008, and the Women’s Weekend is February 21-24, 2008, at St. John the Baptist Church in Minden. There is no better time to offer the gift of a Weekend to someone you know.

- **Three Day Weekend ...**

Upcoming Cursillo Weekends are scheduled for:

- ♦ **Winter 2008**

- **Men’s** – February 14 - 17, 2008 (St. John the Baptist, Minden, NE); Rector: Mark Pribyl.
- **Women’s** – February 21 - 24, 2008 (St. John the Baptist, Minden, NE); Rectora: Annette Wemhoff.
- *Please pray for the teams as they go through the formation process.*
- *It’s NOT too early to be inviting and preparing candidates!!*

- ♦ **Fall 2008** (Location to be determined)

- **Men’s** – August 21- 24, 2008
- **Women’s** – August 28- 31, 2008
- *These Weekends were planned in an attempt to work around Fall farming schedules.*

- **Postcursillo ...**

- ♦ **The Lincoln Ultreya Center** is joining the Beatrice/Crete/Hebron Ultreya Center. Beginning in January 2008, the Lincoln Ultreya Center will become part of the location rotation in the Beatrice/Crete/Hebron Center (the 4th Sunday at 5 p.m. will continue). The January Ultreya will be held in Crete, as scheduled, and the *next* Ultreya will be held in Lincoln (location to be announced). The 4th Sunday of February is the Closing of the Women’s Weekend in Minden, so the reunion of the groups (the Ultreya) will be the Closing in Minden to welcome the new Fourth Dayers ... a Grand Ultreya!! The March Ultreya will then be held in Lincoln, but because of Easter falling on the 4th Sunday in March, the date may need to be adjusted this one time.
- ♦ **Continue to offer Palanca EACH WEEK** for Three Day Weekends going on in our Diocese and throughout the world, knowing that Palanca is the lever of apostles. Our Diocese decided that we would assist at Mass each Friday and offer Holy Communion for that intention, and, in addition, pray an extra decade of the Rosary on Sundays.

- ♦ **Spring Region VI Encounter ...** The Spring Encounter is scheduled for April 25-27, 2008, at **Belle Prairie, MN** (St. Cloud Diocese). It is always a blessing to spend time with pilgrims who come from other areas, and we learn from one another. Mark your calendars and plan to be one of the pilgrims journeying to Belle Prairie.

From Annette Wemhoff (Postcursillo Chairperson)

Cursillo provides the structure to link people together and bring Christ to us and others. Group Reunion and Ultreya are parts of that structure to link people together in Christian communities. Group Reunion is a way to walk closer as an individual with Christ and keep our eyes focused on Him through the sharing done in the small group. The Ultreya, on the other hand, is when members of various group reunions come together to form a larger community ... a community gathered together to share about God working in their lives, and praising Him for it ... sounds like heaven. Ultreya provides for the growth of the community (as opposed to the individual), and is always trying to draw both new and veteran cursillistas into a living community. Experience a part of heaven on earth by attending an Ultreya! Cursillo gives us two wonderful gifts to walk closer with God ... let’s use them both!

- **School of Leaders (SOL) ...** Please consider becoming part of SOL. Cursillistas from across the Diocese gather to continue to deepen their understanding of their faith and of the Cursillo Movement. ***ALL ARE INVITED ... those new to the Movement, those who have been living the Method, and those who would like to get back to living it!*** In working and studying and praying together, we discover ways of doing that to which our Lord calls each of us (not only in Cursillo, but more importantly, in our everyday lives) ... and there is great joy in being together and working as a community toward the goal of Christianizing our world.

The next SOL will be **Jan. 11-12, 2008**, at **St. Ann Parish in Doniphan, NE** (registration form included in Newsletter). As usual, SOL begins on Friday evening with a retreat phase (Mass, meditation, Confessions, and food/fellowship, but not dinner); and continues into Saturday (we are usually finished by about 3:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoon). You can come whatever part you are able – Friday or Saturday or both. You will come away with a deeper love for God and better know His love for you ... **ALL** are invited to participate.

The Law of the Gift

In the book, **The Nativity Story: Contemplating Mary’s Journeys of Faith** (edited by Rose Pacatte, FSP; 2006), the author of one of the chapters comments that: “*Pope John Paul II used to speak of ‘the law of the gift’ – which is the idea that we somehow find fulfillment by giving ourselves away. He was simply saying in a new way what Jesus taught long ago: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’ (Acts 20:35).*”

Let’s consider for a minute this “more blessed to give than to receive” ... according to ‘the law of the gift,’ we should be consistently giving of ourselves in order to be fulfilled. And to what should we give ourselves? To that which He calls us!! Cursillo tells us that we should be giving ourselves to the persons (His sons and daughters) in our individual environments ... and it isn’t all that hard if we use the tools given us in Cursillo (Group Reunion and Ultreya) to help us. *(In addition, we should be giving the gift of a Cursillo Weekend by inviting others to live a Weekend in order to help them discover God’s plan for their lives and a means of regularly ... weekly ... reviewing progress in piety/holiness, study/formation, and action/evangelization.)*

Cursillistas sometimes say they'd like to be more involved in Cursillo, but they can't commit to its being their **only** apostolate. That's **NOT** what Cursillo asks ... Cursillo asks the leaders of the Movement to make it their **primary** apostolate (not their **only** apostolate). In fact, it would be wrong to make Cursillo your **only** apostolate ... after all, Cursillo is about making a friend, being a friend, and bringing your friend to Christ in ALL of the environments in which He placed you. So, if you're treating Cursillo as your **only** apostolate (or environment), then you're living the Cursillo Method in a misunderstood manner. As a Cursillo leader, Cursillo may be your **primary** environment, but it is not your **only** environment. Cursillo simply asks that you give whatever spare time you have to the work of Cursillo, in order to help extend God's Kingdom in any or all of its three phases – the Precursillo (preparing and inviting candidates), the Three Days (helping in some aspect with the Weekends), and the Postcursillo (living Group Reunion and Ultreya yourself, and encouraging other cursillistas to do the same).

This aspect (primary v. only) of Cursillo is often misunderstood. SOL is a great place to clear up this misunderstanding and begin to better understand what Cursillo really is. Come as often as you can ... the community is wonderful, and the prayer and formation that take place at SOL sends the participants back to their environments renewed and ready to be about the work of making friends, being friends, and bringing friends to Christ. Archbishop Fulton Sheen used to say that it's not so much that people disagree with the teachings of the Catholic Church ... it's just that they disagree with what they (mistakenly) believe are the Church's teachings. Likewise, if you've never been to a SOL, come and see what it is about. Those who participate never come away empty ... it is by God's grace that He blessed you on the Weekend ... and it is His grace that carries us in SOL. SOL is just another means that Cursillo provides to share our lives as Christians with one another, and a way to help both self and others work more effectively as apostles within our own environments. Please come ... live **the law of the gift** ... fulfill your life by giving others the gift of Cursillo by keeping it alive and vital.

From the Spiritual Advisor ...

Recently, I read a passage from St. Francis de Sales' book, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, which can be applied to each of our lives as cursillistas as we live our Fourth Day. During our Three Day Weekend, we were told to "Bloom where you are planted", and the following words of St. Francis de Sales encourage us to do just that:

"If a young man desires earnestly to be provided with some job before time, to what purpose will this desire serve him? To what purpose does a married woman desire to be a religious? If I desire to buy the property of my neighbor before he is willing to sell it, am I not wasting my time in this desire? Being sick, if I desire to preach or say Mass, visit the sick and do the work of those who are in good health, are not these desires impractical since during this time, it is not possible for me to realize them? Moreover, these worthless desires occupy the place of others which I ought to have: to be very patient, very resigned, very mortified, very obedient and very gentle in my sufferings. This is what God wants me to practice at such time. Generally we desire like expectant mothers for fresh cherries in autumn and for fresh grapes in winter.

I do not approve in any way that a person bound to some duty or occupation distracts himself by desiring a different kind of life than that which is befitting to his duty, or even practices inconsistent with his present state. Indeed, this dissipates the heart and weakens it in carrying out necessary exercises. If I desire the solitude of the Carthusians, I waste my time. This desire takes the place of

the one that I must have to accomplish well in my present charge. Likewise, I would not even wish that we desire better talent and better judgment, because these desires are silly. They take the place of that desire which we should have to improve our own talent such as it is. We are not to desire the means of serving God which we do not have. Instead we are to use faithfully those which we have..."

Do not desire crosses except insofar as you have borne those which were offered to you. It is an error to desire martyrdom without having enough courage to bear an insult. The enemy often arouses in us ardent desires for things that are absent and may never come on our way. It is to turn away our minds from present objects from which, however small they may be, we could draw great profit. In imagination we fight monsters in Africa. But in fact, due to lack of attention, we allow ourselves to be killed by little serpents on our way. Do not desire temptations, for it will be rashness. Rather, engage your heart in awaiting them courageously and in defending yourself from them when they come ...

When your spirit is purified, feeling itself freed from evil dispositions, it has enormous hunger for spiritual things. In a state of starvation, it desires a thousand kinds of spiritual exercises and practices of mortification, of penance, of humility, of charity, of prayer. It is a good sign, dear Philothea, thus to have a keen appetite, but see whether you can digest well all that you wish to eat. Choose then, from among so many desires ... what can be practiced and accomplished now. Turn these into good account. Once you do this, God will send you other desires which you will realize in their own time. Thus you will not waste your time in useless desires ... Put into effect those which are ripe and in season."

So, as we celebrate the last days of the Christmas Season, then enter into Ordinary Time, and eventually begin the forty days of the Season of Lent, I encourage you to reflect on where God has planted you ... where He has placed you. What is your state in life? How does He want you to bring the Gospel message to your family, your parish, your work place, your neighborhood? Many times people desire to do "big" things for the Lord, when most of the time, the Lord wants us just to be faithful to the duties that He has called us to. When we faithfully do what He has called us to do, then He can bring about just what He wants and the message of the Gospel will be spread through the world. May each of us desire what He desires and do what He wills. Remember Christ is counting on you.

De Colores!!Fr. Mark Seiker

From the Lay Director ...

The Vocation of Lay People

[Quotes from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (CCC)]

(CCC 898) "By reason of their special vocation it belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will..."

(CCC 900) "Since, like all the faithful, lay Christians are entrusted by God with the apostolate by virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation, they have the right and duty, individually or grouped in associations, to work so that the divine message of salvation may be known and accepted by all men throughout the earth."

Priest

(CCC 901) "Hence the laity, dedicated as they are to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvelously called and prepared so that even richer fruits of the Spirit may be produced in them. For all their works, prayers, and apostolic undertakings, family and married life, daily work,

relaxation of mind and body, if they are accomplished in the Spirit – indeed even the hardships of life if patiently born – all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ ... (Lumen Gentium, #34)''

Prophet

(CCC 905) *“Lay people also fulfill their prophetic mission by evangelization, ‘that is, the proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life (Lumen Gentium, #35, §1). For lay people, ‘this evangelization... acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world (Lumen Gentium, #35, §2).’”*

King

(CCC 909) *“Moreover, by uniting their forces let the laity so remedy the institutions and conditions of the world when the latter are an inducement to sin, that these may be conformed to the norms of justice, favoring rather than hindering the practice of virtue. By so doing they will impregnate culture and human works with a moral value (Lumen Gentium, #36, §3).’”*

As a priest, I am anointed by the Holy Spirit and marvelously called. As a prophet, I am to proclaim Christ by my words and testimony of life. And as a king, I need to favor rather than hinder the practice of virtue, so as to impregnate culture and human works with a moral value. These teachings from the Catechism are for me and you ... for all who are baptized and confirmed in the Catholic Church.

What does that Baptism and Confirmation call us to? We all need to do something ... but what?? Let God take the lead and all you have to do is follow. God never gives us more than we can handle. So, by that promise, we can ask God with confidence in prayer what He wants of us, and then joyfully accept the challenge. According to Fr. Simon Tugwell, O.P. (November 2007, Magnificat, p. 250), one ancient definition says “Prayer ... is keeping company with God.” We love God and want to do His will, so we spend time with Him in prayer – loving, honoring, and adoring ... and asking Him what He wants of us ... not my will, but Your will be done, Lord ...

Yes, we need to pray, but there comes a time to move beyond prayer into action ... putting into action those things that God puts on our heart to do in our homes, in our communities, in our parishes, in **all of our environments!** Yes, there’s lots to do, but He isn’t asking you or me individually to do it all ... and it would be wrong to try ... after all, it is important and necessary to maintain balance to accomplish the work of God.

When the trials of life seem overwhelming, I like to reflect on the teachings of the Church to help me persevere. It moves me beyond myself to the bigger picture of what God wants to accomplish through me. Reflecting on God’s promises and offering it all up to Him builds me up, enabling me to continue on.

Cursillo is a great apostolate and has helped me tremendously in my faith and in my family. There is much more work to do, but unfortunately, there are very few workers. One way of being a priest, prophet, and king is to help with the work of Cursillo in our Diocese. Come to a School of Leaders and see what it is all about. Offer suggestions, support, and encouragement. Let’s ask Christ to help us do that which He asks ... I do ... He’s counting on us!!

De Colores!! Mark Pribyl

What is Palanca?

“It must be understood that letters are not Palanca. Letters are merely the means of communicating the Palanca currently being done. Keeping this in mind, we must realize that Palanca can be done for a particular purpose, without having to write a letter about it. For instance, Palanca can be done by the efforts of Cursillistas who are trying to utilize the Cursillo method. We all need a Palanca of this type, but it would be impractical to write letters to thousands of Cursillistas.

“Sacrifice is part and parcel of the Christian life. If the Movement quit emphasizing the importance of sacrifice, it would not be Christ-centered. The Church helps us to maintain our spirituality, by offering us seasons such as Lent and Advent. The best way to maintain this spirituality is to live the spirit of Palanca each day.

“Palanca offerings should not be limited to the three days. The selection of candidates, the study of environments, the growth of Group Reunions, Ultreyas and especially the work of Secretariats and the School of Leaders depend mostly on authentic and generous Palanca offered by all, particularly the leaders. Each one should offer something; each one should offer themselves. St. Paul reminds us in Romans 12:1, ‘Offer yourselves as a living and holy sacrifice which is pleasing unto Him.’ This should be our real offering [the law of the gift!].

“In the ‘Obstacles to Grace’ rollo, we are reminded that the means of mortification are varied: to obey the Gospel; to fulfill the duties of one’s state in life; to accept adversities as though coming from the hand of God; and to develop self-control. These are some of the means of personal sacrifice. To love expecting nothing in return; to be patient where there is impatience in misunderstandings; these are ‘simple ways’ of Palanca.

... *“The three days are supernaturally backed by the persons and communities which pray and make sacrifices for their brothers and sisters, so as to impart truth and grace to them. The spiritual presence of these communities should be communicated to the Cursillistas, but **without drama** [emphasized in Leaders’ Manual]. On the contrary, it should be made apparent that it is normal for Christians to pray and sacrifice for others. Though they don’t know them personally, these Christians know from their own experience the effect of their attitude on the conversion process. Such communities are a witness to the possibility and transcendence of being Christian in any part of the world, and to the fact that God continues making Himself present in the world through groups of persons who live the Gospel and give themselves for the Christianization of the world. Palanca shows the ecclesial community as a community mindful of the salvation of the group making the Weekend; a community that feels committed to this group. They are a reflection of Christ, the Savior in the community.’ (Bishop Juan Hervas – 1968).*

“The emphasis should be on the Palanca in general, with the outside community offering prayer and sacrifice for the community that is living the Cursillo experience. Personal Palanca letters should be limited to an immediate family member, a relative or sponsor.

[From Chapter 12 of the 2006 Leaders’ Manual, pp. 148-150]