

# Cursillo News for July-August 2008

## Calendar of Events

June 29, 2008	<b>Grand Ultreya</b> (2:00pm=Mass; Ultreya; 5:00pm=supper; St. Ann Parish, Doniphan)
July 12, 2008	<b>Secretariat Meeting</b> , 9:30 am; Blessed John XXIII, Lincoln (9:00am Mass)
July 31 – Aug 3, 2008	<b>National Encounter</b> , at Catholic University of America, Washington, DC
August 8, 2008	<b>Secretariat Meeting</b> , 7:30 pm (7:00 pm Mass), St. James Parish in Cortland
August 9-10, 2008	<b>Cursillo Leaders Workshop I - St. James Parish, Cortland</b> (in place of the regular SOL); see the back side of the mailing cover for details.
Sept 6, 2008	<b>Secretariat Meeting</b> , 9:30 am; location to be determined (9:00am Mass)
Sept 26-28, 2008	<b>Region VI Fall Encounter – Omaha, NE</b> hosting.
Oct 4, 2008	<b>Secretariat Meeting</b> , 9:30 am; location to be determined (9:00am Mass)
Nov 14-15, 2008	<b>School of Leaders</b> (quarterly reunion)-7:30pm Fri-3pm Sat, (Location TBA)
Nov 15, 2008	<b>Secretariat Meeting</b> (after SOL)
Dec 6, 2008	<b>Secretariat Meeting</b> , 9:30 am; location to be determined (9:00am Mass)
Jan. 2-3, 2009	<b>Practice Weekend</b> , Location TBA (possibly Lincoln or David City)
Jan 3, 2009	<b>Secretariat Meeting</b> , after Practice Weekend; location TBA (see above)
Jan 8-11, 2009	<b>Men’s Three Day Weekend</b> , Location TBA (possibly Lincoln or David City)
Jan 15-18, 2009	<b>Women’s Three Day Weekend</b> , Location TBA (see above)

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### From the Secretariat ...

#### • Ultreya Center News:

- ◆ The **Beatrice/Crete/Hebron/Lincoln Ultreya Center** will replace its regular June Ultreya with the **Grand Ultreya** in Doniphan on **June 29<sup>th</sup>** (see blue insert). The **July** Ultreya will be **July 27** at Sacred Heart in Crete and the August Ultreya will be **August 24** at Blessed John XXIII Diocesan Center in Lincoln; both will be held at the regular 5:00 p.m. time.
- ◆ The **Wahoo Ultreya Center** has decided to continue holding its Ultreya on the second Sunday of each month from 7:00pm – 8:30pm in the Church basement of St. Wenceslaus Church in Wahoo.
- ◆ **Other Ultreya Centers** will meet as scheduled (see the cover of the Newsletter).

#### • Planning Ahead -- Upcoming Cursillo activities include

Included on the next page is the tentative/proposed schedule of Cursillo activities for the rest of 2008 in the Lincoln Diocese. The schedule includes activities from now through January 2009, with dates for upcoming Secretariat meetings, quarterly SOLs, Three Day Cursillo Weekends, and Regional and National Encounters, etc. The schedule is intended to provide you with as much advance notice as possible to allow you to plan to participate in Cursillo to the fullest extent possible. We also ask that you provide feedback to the Secretariat, as needed, so that this schedule might be adjusted if there are conflicts with other activities. To the extent possible, changes can then be communicated in a timely manner to allow all who would like to participate the opportunity to do so.

#### • Special Events

- June 29, 2008 – Grand Ultreya / Evangelization Walk at St. Ann, Doniphan (1:30 pm arrival, 2:00pm Mass, Ultreya; 5:00pm potluck supper)
- July 31-Aug 3, 2008 – National Encounter, Catholic University, Washington DC
- Aug 9-10, 2008 – Cursillo Leaders Workshop–1 (CLW-1), St. James Parish, Cortland
- Sep 26-28, 2008 – Fall Regional Encounter -- **Omaha, NE** hosting.
- Apr 24-26, 2009 – Spring Regional Encounter (dates tentative)
- June 28, 2009 – Grand Ultreya / Evangelization Walk (location/time TBA)

#### • SOL

- Aug 9-10, 2008 (3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter) – at St. James Parish, Cortland [in place of the regular SOL, the Diocese is hosting a Cursillo Leaders Workshop 1 (CLW-1). See the back side of the mailing cover for details.
- Nov 14-15, 2008 (details TBA)

#### • Three Day Weekends

- Jan. 2-3, 2009 – Practice Weekend , Location to be announced
- Jan 8-11, 2009 – Men’s, Location to be announced
- Jan 15-18, 2009 – Women’s, Location to be announced
- Feb. ??, 2009 – Postcursillo Reunion (details TBA)

#### • Secretariat Meetings

- May 3, 2008 – 9:30am Secretariat Meeting (Blessed John XXIII Diocesan Center); 9:00am Mass.
- June 14, 2008 – 9:30am Secretariat Meeting (Blessed John XXIII Diocesan Center); 9:00am Mass.
- July 12, 2008 – 9:30am Secretariat Meeting (Blessed John XXIII Diocesan Center); 9:00am Mass.
- Aug 8, 2008 – 7:30 pm Secretariat Meeting; 7:00 pm Mass (St. James Parish, Cortland)
- Sept 6, 2008 9:30 am; location to be determined (9:00am Mass)
- Oct 4, 2008 9:30 am; location to be determined (9:00am Mass)
- Nov 15, 2008 TBA (after SOL)
- Dec 6, 2008 9:30 am; location to be determined (9:00am Mass)
- Jan 3, 2009 at Location to be announced (following Practice Weekend)

#### • School of Leaders (SOL)

The third quarter SOL will be **August 9-10, 2008**, at **St. James Parish in Cortland, NE**. This quarter’s SOL will be a Cursillo Leaders’ Workshop - 1 (CLW-1) put on by the Region VI Service Team (details included in this Newsletter on back side of mailing cover).

#### • Precursillo/Three Day Weekend

The January 2009 Weekends will be here before you know it ... once the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season begins, thoughts of inviting to Cursillo will no longer be uppermost in your minds. So, be inviting NOW ... One of the charges given all of us on our Cursillo Weekend was to “make a friend, be a friend, and bring that friend to Christ”, and inviting your friend to a Cursillo Weekend might be a great way of carrying out that charge. Would your friend profit from Cursillo? Continue to offer Palanca, that God might give you eyes to see and ears to hear how He wants you to evangelize your environments ... NOW is the time to be studying environments in search of persons who

can help Christianize them ... NOW is the time to be talking to the “agents of change” about Cursillo ... *He’s counting on you!!!*

Dates for the next Weekends are:

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|---------------------|--|
| January 8-11, 2009  | Men’s, Location TBA (possibly Lincoln or David City)<br>[Coordinator: John Springer]   |
| January 15-18, 2009 | Women’s, Location TBA (possibly Lincoln or David City)<br>[Coordinator: Monica Buster] |

Remember that the application/registration fee was changed from \$15.00 to \$20.00 to cover the increased cost of Weekend materials. As always, if a candidate and sponsor are financially unable to pay the fee, the candidate should still be encouraged to come to the Weekend. Again, the most recent application forms are available from the website (the online forms have been updated to request the new application fee mentioned above). The Application Form and Informational Flyer may be printed off directly, and the Sponsor Form must be requested by email and will be sent (via email) directly to you. The Sponsor Form is treated differently because the sponsor fills out this form separately and then gets the pastor’s signature.

- **Postcursillo ...**

- ◆ **The Annual Grand Ultreya is Almost Here – Sunday, June 29<sup>th</sup> ...** Our annual Grand Ultreya will be held on Sunday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, at St. Ann Parish in Doniphan with arrival at 1:30 p.m. Doniphan was chosen because of its central location. Details of the day are included on the blue insert included in this Newsletter, with Mass at 2:00 p.m. (which fulfills the Sunday obligation), followed by an Ultreya (a grand Ultreya!), and potluck dinner/picnic at 5:00 p.m. This is an event for the **entire family!**
- ◆ **Postcursillo Thoughts ... Giving a “witness” ...**

The witness given at an Ultreya should be given by a layperson, and should last approximately 10 minutes (15 at most). It should reveal what attempts the speaker is making to bring about the Christian transformation of one of the environments in which that person finds him/herself. The witness should awaken a desire among all of the participants to renew their own efforts at evangelizing their environments.

The witness should not be purely an instructional session; in other words, it should encourage by personal example, rather than by theory. What the witness says should always be said in love. The purpose of the witness is for the speaker to share about his/her growth in living union with Christ in order to encourage the rest of the group to go and do likewise.

There are various types of witness that can be given at an Ultreya. It is good to vary the types of witness in order to provide cursillistas with new ideas/strategies that might be useful to try in their own environments (there’s no sense in re-inventing the wheel). The speaker should offer concrete examples of how to live what is fundamental for being a Christian in family, neighborhood, workplace, and/or with friends.

The speaker should present a lived experience – as in all Cursillo rollos, a truth is presented first, and then followed by personal examples from the life of the speaker. A

recent example from the speaker’s life should be given to demonstrate the validity of the “truth” in a concrete way. Preparation of the witness should begin with prayer, Palanca, and discernment regarding what to share; the result will be a natural, sincere, and personal witness that expresses how God is working in the speaker’s life. Scripture might be helpful in tying the speaker’s experiences to the truth being presented.

The witness should be a personal sharing of one’s:

- ◆ Growing union with Christ
- ◆ Growing knowledge of Christ, and/or
- ◆ Bringing others to know Christ, or the changing of circumstances so that Christ is better known, loved and served.

The speaker should keep the witness short, simple, and enthusiastic. The witness should generally not be: (1) simply an attempt to portray an emotional high (in other words, it shouldn’t be all about feelings); (2) a tale of an extraordinary event (people can better relate to God working in the ordinary circumstances of life); (3) irrelevant to life (keep it down to earth); (4) propaganda for his/her own favorite cause or organization; or (5) an outpouring of personal troubles that ends in a call for help.

As we grow closer to God, we better reflect Him (and we should all be growing closer with each passing day); others can then grow from what we share. A person cannot share what he/she does not have, so it is important that those who give the witness do so because of the testimony of their lives, and not because it is their turn, or because there wasn’t anyone else to witness.

There are two types of witness (depending on the speaker and the life experiences of that speaker), and it is good to have both types in Ultreyas throughout the year. One type of witness is generally given by newer cursillistas, and usually focuses on where the speaker is now, how he/she got there, and the joy/sorrow experienced along the way. A second type of witness centers not so much on the life of the cursillista before the Cursillo and how it helped, but rather on the speaker’s attempt in putting into practice and living what he/she experienced on his/her Cursillo. This type of witness is generally given by a person who is striving to put into practice the three elements of the tripod: holiness (piety), formation (study), and evangelization (action). The speaker’s witness will likely focus on attempts the speaker has made to change one or more of the environments in which God has placed him/her (i.e., friends, relatives, neighbors, etc.). Sometimes sharing about how an apostolic attempt was not successful can be as helpful as sharing about an attempt that succeeded ... there can be growth from both.

Following the witness, at least one cursillista (the respondent) should give a 2 or 3 minute comment about his/her views of what the speaker shared. The purpose of the response (sometimes referred to as the “echo”) is not to criticize what the witness shared, or to try to explain it in a different way, or even to give another witness, but rather, the purpose is to “echo” (i.e., to communicate briefly and precisely how another might live the message/truth of what was shared). The respondent should avoid giving an additional witness, and should instead, focus his/her comments on what the speaker shared. It would be good for the respondent to reflect on how the speaker’s words will help him/her in better living the Fourth Day.

## **From the Spiritual Advisor ...**

Pope Benedict XVI designated the year from June 29, 2008 – June 29, 2009 as the “Year of St. Paul”, and he encourages us to read the letters of St. Paul and strive to imitate him as he imitated Christ. This year of St. Paul would be a good time to plan to do some study by reading the letters of St. Paul and also reading the Acts of the Apostles. In fact, it would probably be best to start by reading the Acts of the Apostles first or at the same time as you read the letters.

Sometimes when people think about reading the Bible, it might seem like a huge task, or something that is not possible to do because of a busy schedule or because of any number of other excuses. However, if you look at the task and break it into smaller parts, then you will find that it is easier to accomplish. Since there are 13 letters in the New Testament that are traditionally said to be written by St. Paul, you could plan to read one letter each month [and one month also read the letter to Philemon (which is only 3 very short chapters)]. I would suggest that you also read the Acts of the Apostles over the course of the year.

Scriptures scholars have different theories about when St. Paul wrote each of the letters, and it is not as important to get into a debate about the exact year when each letter was written or which letter was written before or after another letter, but rather to read the letters as the Word of God. Each of the letters is God’s Word that St. Paul was inspired to write to each of the communities and to the whole Church. Each of the letters, as a part of the whole Bible, interpreted by the Magisterium of the Church, and in conjunction with the Sacred Tradition of the Church, gives us much food for our spiritual growth.

One possible order of studying the Letters of St. Paul is given below. There is an outline of St. Paul’s Missionary Journeys (as they are described in the Acts of the Apostles) and also an outline of the principal divisions of the Acts of the Apostles (as given in the New American Bible).

### **Letters of St. Paul**

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians; 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians; Galatians; Romans; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians / Philemon; 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy; Titus; 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy.

### **Paul’s Missionary Journeys** (described in Acts of the Apostles)

Acts 1 – 12	Information on the early Church
Acts 13 – 14	Paul’s First Missionary Journey
Acts 15 – 18:23	Paul’s Second Missionary Journey
Acts 18:23 – 22:21	Paul’s Third Missionary Journey
Acts 22 – 26	Paul in Jerusalem
Acts 27 – 28	Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey (to Rome, and to his death)

### **Principal divisions of Acts of the Apostles** (from the New American Bible)

Acts 1:1 – 2:13	The Preparation for the Christian Mission
Acts 2:14 – 8:3	The Mission in Jerusalem
Acts 8:4 – 9:43	The Mission in Judea and Samaria
Acts 10:1 – 15:35	The Inauguration of the Gentile Mission
Acts 15:36 – 28:31	The Mission of Paul to the Ends of the Earth

If you have access to the internet, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has the New American Bible available on line at: <http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible>. There is an “introduction” to each book of the Bible, as well as the actual text. The “on line” Bible has links to the references given in the Scripture passages; when you click on the link, you can read what is being referenced and then return to the passage to continue reading. This is a really nice feature.

While websites are nice, it might be good to read parts of Scripture from an actual printed Bible and physically turn to the passages that are referenced. In that way, you learn more about how the books are arranged in the Bible ... we could all use more practice in reading the Bible. What is most important is to reflect on the Word of God as we read it.

So, make a plan to take advantage of the opportunities for spiritual growth during this year of St. Paul. Spend time with God’s Word. In learning more about St. Paul ... his life and his writings ... may we better imitate St. Paul as he imitated Christ. May we better proclaim Christ ... because He is counting on us!

*De Colores!! .....Fr. Mark Seiker*

## **From the Lay Director ... What must I do to enter into Eternal Life?**

This is the question the rich man in scripture asked Jesus. If you remember, he followed God’s commandments and did many good things. Yet, in spite of that, he felt that there had to be more or something else.

How much of God’s work is enough, and when can we stop? The answer, of course, is “when God says” ... right?

Well, I think so, but many times we look back on our lives and evaluate what we have done. We, then, at some point, take it upon ourselves to determine whether or not we need to do more or let someone else do it instead. It seems kind of funny, though, that out of all the saints that I have read about, none that I can think of have ever quit. It never mattered how old or young, if healthy or sick, praised or persecuted ...each one lived out his/her witness of Christ to the very end. Jesus came to proclaim the truth and He did this up until His last breath. Shouldn’t we?

While it is true we must balance our lives in what we do, God calls each one of us to a special task. It is in answering that call that we will, by the Grace of God of course, enter into God’s glory.

So, how does one recognize what that task is that God has in store for each of us? Well, it has been my experience that all you need to do is look at where you are right now ... because that’s where you’ll discover it. Do you think that your vocation, family, friends, and job are just a coincidence? No ... God’s plan for you is there. The people, places, and happenings in our lives are all part of God’s plan. So, how do we react when things don’t go the way we had planned? God’s plan is perfect ... all we have to do is say YES! I believe that if we accept the task we are given and offer it back to God in whatever way possible, then God will bless our lives with a great sense of peace.

So, don’t give up ... instead, offer it up. Don’t move away ... instead, march forward. Don’t lash out ... learn to love instead. For it is in giving that we receive and it is in fighting the good fight to the end that we will achieve true happiness and eternal life.

The Cursillo strategy of Piety (Holiness), Study (Formation), and Action (Evangelization) helps me to recognize my place in God’s plan. My small group and Ultreya (the two pillars of the Cursillo Method) encourage me to persevere in the strategy. And my efforts in this apostolate have blessed me, my family, and my friends immensely.

Are you grouping and going to Ultreya? Would you like to? When was the last time you made a friend, were a friend, and/or brought your friend to Christ? Are you experiencing metanoia in your spiritual life? Do you remember the promises you made on your commitment sheet? Are you fulfilling those promises?

God said: “You have not chosen me; I have chosen you. Go and bear fruit that will last” (John 15:16). Cursillo presented us with the tools to accomplish all that God desires. Mary courageously said yes at a very young age ... we would do well to follow her example.

*De Colores one and all!!*

*Mark Pribyl*