



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC CURSILLO MOVEMENT

Dear Friends in Christ,

Wishing you and your families all the joy of Christmas as we approach this special Feast Day in the liturgical calendar. We give thanks for the blessings of 2024, for the leaders who have given their time and commitment, and for the friendships we have all made and continue to value so much in our Cursillo community.

Prayer

As a follow up to the National Secretariat in Sydney last September, I recently phoned Diocesan Presidents and/or Delegates for a very worthwhile consultation on how things are going in their areas. It was good to know that prayer for the Movement is being encouraged, as we cannot achieve our aims of renewing Cursillo in Australia without prayer. I would ask that all cursillistas continue to pray during 2025, not only for weekends, but also for the evangelisation of our environments through Cursillo.

On 9 December, the National Executive held a Meeting via Zoom and several important matters were discussed. I would like to summarise some of this discussion for your information here.

Australian National Website (www.cursillo.asn.au)

Our National Cursillo website is a very important instrument to promote our Movement and I am grateful to our Website Coordinator, Pablo Rossi of Perth, who has done a lot of work to improve it. This is an ongoing task and each Diocesan Secretariat has been asked to nominate a Website representative, who will be responsible for sending information to Pablo for uploading on the national site. Most Secretariats have sent in names of people who are willing to take on these duties and I thank them sincerely for doing so. It is necessary to note that for privacy reasons, personal email addresses and phone numbers should be deleted from such documents as newsletters or application forms, before being sent to Pablo. In addition, any images from the web may be subject to copyright and so should not be used. A full list of responsibilities for the representatives will be finalised shortly.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is another important issue and all National Secretariats need to follow the protocols of their own particular Diocese. I have heard that this is generally happening and we need to formulate a statement to this effect for our National Website.

Worldwide Cursillo

Our Asia Pacific representative on the OMCC world body, Alfred Bongi continues to do wonderful work in his role and communicates to us all that is happening on the world scene. A new system of affiliation fees has been put in place to fund the activities of the OMCC. The APG Executive will also need to prepare a budget to fund its activities, including attendance of its Executive at an OMCC Meeting and the World Ultreya in Rome in June 2025, as well as an APG Encounter in the Philippines in November 2025. In October, our International Representative, Anne Moloney attended the V Conversations of Cala Figuera in Mallorca, the birthplace of Cursillo, and reported that it was very worthwhile.

Anniversary Celebrations

The year 2025 will be a year of celebrations, as it has been designated by the Church as the Year of Hope. Wollongong Diocese will reach the 25 years milestone in June and plans are underway to contact and invite past cursillistas to an anniversary Mass and meal and to share stories. Our Australian English-speaking Movement will celebrate its 60th Anniversary at the upcoming National Encounter at Carmel House, Varroville just south of Sydney in the Wollongong Diocese from 19 to 21 September 2025.

National Encounter 2025

Plans are still underway for this event and more information will be available in the New Year. Please mark the dates in your new diaries for 2025, as the venue is already booked. The focus of the Encounter will be on the Promotion and Renewal of the Cursillo Movement in Australia.

In the discussion at the recent Executive Meeting, it was felt that it would be good to go back to our foundations to refresh the memory and understanding of Cursillo, for all cursillistas both old and new. Perhaps what the Holy Spirit is asking us to do is to light the fire of Cursillo within our hearts once again, so that we will feel inspired and enthusiastic to continue to carry the flame out into our environments. We may need to be reminded that Cursillo is more than the process of running weekends, but also involves taking God's love into every sphere of life. If we go back to the purpose of Cursillo as established by our founder, Eduardo Bonnin, we will rediscover the reasons why we were first so attracted to being a part of this Movement and can impart this enthusiasm to others.

Due to past Covid restrictions, we have not been able to hold an Encounter for some years. The Encounter next year will be a great opportunity to come together to renew ourselves and to help newer cursillistas to go deeper and to understand more about the charism and purpose of the Movement, not just the weekend they attended. I sincerely ask you to encourage those in your area to attend, particularly those who show future leadership potential. Please start 'walking' with them now! We will keep you updated about the program and registration details as next year progresses, but please start talking about the Encounter every time you meet with cursillistas and promote it in your local newsletters.

Fr John's Message

I would like to thank everyone for the efforts they have made on behalf of Cursillo this year and in particular our Spiritual Advisor, Fr John Armstrong who has been such a great support to the National Secretariat over many years, with his wise counsel and spirituality. I include his Christmas greetings here now:

As we draw to the end of the year, and we prepare for Christmas, thank you for your continued support and prayers for me as the Spiritual Advisor for the Cursillo Movement. We have joined together in the pilgrimage of faith that will be highlighted by the Year of Hope in 2025. We are called to consider how we meet others who walk with us on that journey. Especially as we prepare for the 2025 National Encounter, we are called to ponder how we can witness our faith in daily life. Often it may be returning to the initial wisdom that gathered people to pray, study their environment and act in a way that is faithful to Christ. What is it that people are longing to hear and what will sustain them along the way? May our intention for this year bear fruit that will sustain others to encounter each other in their square metre. Have a Happy and Holy Christmas.

De Colores,

Fr. John

Once again, I wish you all a peaceful and blessed Christmas. Each of us has had our challenges this year and knowing God is with us is a great blessing, as is the prayer support we give each other. May you see the 'Star' shining in the ordinary of every day in the coming year.

De Colores,

Peter

