



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC CURSILLO MOVEMENT

President's Letter – September 2025

Dear Cursillo Friends,

Plans are well underway to celebrate the 60th anniversary of English speaking Cursillo in Australia at the **National Encounter - "Pilgrims of Hope"**. The Encounter will be hosted by Wollongong Cursillo at Carmel House, Varroville, NSW from 19- 21 September.

We request your prayer support and Palanca for this important celebration and letters may be sent for this Encounter to Margaret French at wollongongcursillo@gmail.com.

We are delighted that over 60 cursillistas have registered to attend the Encounter and the venue is at capacity. I wish to congratulate and thank all cursillistas who have worked hard and played a part in preparing for the Encounter, to ensure its success as an event that all participants will gain from and will enjoy the Friendship which is so much a part of our Cursillo Movement.

The Annual General Meeting for the National Secretariat will be held on the Friday afternoon to receive reports from Executive members and there will be a discussion of important points arising from the Diocesan delegates' reports, allowing us to see what the current issues are in our Movement and how we can work in the future for renewal and promotion.

On the final day of the Encounter an election will be conducted for a new Executive. Your nominations for these positions are welcome: President, Vice President, Secretary, International Representative, Palanca Secretary, Treasurer. The positions of bookshop manager and webmaster/archivist are appointed. Fr John Armstrong has generously served the Movement for a considerable time and is now considering whether it is time for him to step down. If you would like to nominate another Cursillo priest as National Spiritual Advisor, please let me know. I am happy to receive nominations for all positions before the Encounter begins. Current Executive members are happy to assist newly appointed members with their duties for a period of time after the election.

A fundraising raffle is being conducted in association with the Encounter. Diocesan delegates have been asked to sell tickets in their area before the Encounter and to bring folded ticket stubs and collected money to the Encounter, as well as a prize of a \$50 gift voucher for each diocese. Ticket stubs need to include the purchaser's name, phone number and initials of their diocese.

Bookshop manager, Dianne Garland, will have a display of Cursillo literature at the Encounter and encourages every diocesan secretariat to take advantage of purchasing

and collecting books and items needed for activities next year, and to learn about your Movement, without having to pay postage.

After the Encounter, the Guidelines for the Talks will be available to diocesan secretariats on request if they wish. They might like to use them to conduct Fourth Day events such as a Spirituality Day or retreat in their local area. In this way the benefits of the Encounter can be extended to cursillistas who were unable to travel to the Encounter.

Asia Pacific Encounter – 10-14 November 2025

In this President's letter, I also wish to promote the APG Encounter which will be held in the Philippines. Our current International Representative, Anne Moloney has information and registration forms and can be contacted at annemmoloney@gmail.com. I encourage anyone to participate in this international Encounter and to experience Cursillo with an international group of Cursillistas.

World Ultreya, OMCC Meeting and Jubilee in Rome - June 2025

Australia was represented by our OMCC member and APG Representative, Alfred Bonggi as well as by Jeannette Rairibi and her husband Aporoso from Sydney Spanish Cursillo. From their reports it was wonderful to be in the Eternal City at this exciting time. Alfred had the honour of meeting Pope Leo personally and was able to give him a gift of a packet of Timtams from Australia, which is said to be a favourite of his!

Australian Bishops' Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry (BCELM) Gathering with Ecclesial Movements and New Communities – August 2025

Dianne Garland and I attended a gathering of five bishops and 25 Lay Movement representatives in Sydney last month, focusing on Charisms. Dianne had the opportunity to give a prepared talk about the support Wollongong Diocese Cursillo is provided with by their Bishop Brian Mascord, who will also be the main celebrant at the Opening Mass of our Cursillo Encounter.

In conclusion, I am very happy that all is prepared for our celebration of the 60th anniversary of Cursillo at our National Encounter. We recall that the very first Cursillo weekend was held in Armidale NSW in July 1965, initiated by an American academic, Chuck Heller, who was appointed to the University of New England. He invited some American cursillista friends to come over and form a team with some Spanish speaking cursillistas living in Sydney. From that first weekend in 1965, the Movement spread rapidly and was eventually introduced to 18 Australian Dioceses over the next 25 years.

It has been a wonderful result that so many Australians have come to a deeper knowledge of the love of God through Cursillo over the last sixty years. We need to continue to work hard to ensure that this legacy continues, by reaching out into our environments and being the Good News in today's world.

De Colores

Peter

Peter McMahon – National President