



The Escarpment
Newsletter of the Wollongong Cursillo Movement

Issue No. 3

August, 2019

Hello to all Wollongong Cursillistas, welcome to Issue No. 3 of the Escarpment for 2019.

Pentecost: The Birthday of the Church

Holy Spirit, you came like bright flames of fire to settle on Christ's fear-chilled disciples, where they sat in the darkness of indecision. Set our hearts alight, we pray, and fire us up with the power of God's love, so that we may see your vision, and warm the heart of this cold world.

"Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us"

Fr. John Armstrong

National Spiritual Advisor

FRIENDSHIP

Make a friend, Be a friend, Bring your friend to Christ.

This is what we proclaim in Cursillo. Friendship cannot be underestimated we are not meant to be alone, we need others to travel along the journey of life with us. We all have friends in many places. One place where I have found friendship is at an aged care facility called "Heiden Park" I volunteer in their café on Wednesday mornings. There is a small group of residents who come each week to enjoy a coffee and a chat. The coffee run starts about 10am and by 11 it is quieter so I can sit with them and jump up when a customer arrives. I help one lady with her crocheting and we chat and laugh, sometimes we are joined by another couple of residents and a volunteer. They are never in a hurry to leave and usually stay till lunch at 12pm. I then clean up and go home. It's a time I really look forward to each week.

A few weeks ago "Friendship Day" was celebrated at Heiden Park. Residents and staff including volunteers were asked to write on a paper heart something about "Friendship".

I wrote: Friendship is a small gathering of residents at the café chatting and laughing over a cuppa.

Other responses were:

Friendship is a priceless gift given by God.

You are so caring to me and so many others(name given)

One of the most beautiful qualities of true friendship is to understand and be understood

Value your friendships. Be there for your friends. One of my friends son died tragically a few months ago there is nothing I can do to help her but I can be beside her as her friend.

So go and ring or email a friend you haven't been in contact with for a while.

Denise



Friendship

WITNESS TALKS

Good Afternoon friends

Today I'm going to talk to you about my recent experiences talking to God in prayer, how He answered me, and some of the many times I've felt particularly close to Him.

Last July Kevin and I decided to plan a holiday in New Zealand, we wanted to start in the South Island and slowly make our way up to Auckland to spend a few days with Kevin's cousin. Since our last visit there six years ago, Dean has been diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease and he is now receiving renal dialysis at home,

Then the terror attack took place in Christchurch on a Friday and we were due to fly in on the following Wednesday. We decided to go, we certainly prayed for the victims and their families, and we prayed that everything would be ok for us.

We were in the centre of Christchurch city where masses of flowers and tributes were placed in honour of the victims, hundreds of sorrowful people were gathered along the footpath to pay their respects, we joined in and truly felt the presence of God in a very sad and difficult time for Christchurch. The following day we joined in the National 2-minute silence. We were in a café at the top of the mountain overlooking Christchurch, it was truly a moment close to God, to feel the solidarity with our Kiwi neighbours.

The next day we arranged to meet a friend. Tina has been through some very difficult times, her little 3 year old granddaughter died from a brain cancer several years ago, and now Tina is confined to a wheel chair after losing a leg to diabetes, she is the most lovely lady, close to God herself and she trusts in his mercy. She welcomed us into her home as close friends she gladly gave us her time. Definitely a moment close to God!

One day we booked a six-hour return train trip up through a mountain gorge I chose to travel out on the open-air platform. just to be out there in the countryside was exhilarating, the wind in my hair, the smells of the pine trees, the animals grazing on the hillsides, the dirt, even the smell of the diesel engines, and the darkness inside the many tunnels though the steep mountains, just incredible I am very grateful for that experience as I felt very close to God that day.

We made our way to a place called Bluff. we were in a large six-berth campervan. The road up was very steep and very narrow. My prayers were spoken aloud! Let Kevin get us up safely, and we did. Driving back down that road I uttered more prayers. God is gracious.

We caught the inter-island ferry across to the North Island. I decided to make the journey outside on the deck. As the ship navigated through the narrow passage I was

filled with awe looking at the landscape drifting past. I was even treated to the sight of a double rainbow.

We visited the magnificent and very extensive Hamilton Gardens. We were still there after the entrance gates closed but they let you stay inside till sunset. We eventually made our way back to the now almost empty carpark where our van was on the far side. Kevin noticed a car parked right beside our van and two men standing very close to our side door and instantly felt suspicious. He suggested we walk towards another car but keep an eye on our van. A few urgent prayers here. I still had my camera in my hands so I snapped a photo from a distance. Then the men saw us looking their way so they quickly got in their car and drove away. But they had to drive past where I was still standing, I bravely held my camera straight at them and I took another photo. Now Kevin had already reached our van and found his suspicions were realized, lucky they had not yet opened our van. Once again God is Good and he definitely answered our prayers that day.

So we made our way to our cousin's home in Auckland. Once I actually saw Dean's dialysis machine set up in the spare bedroom I was overcome with sadness for him, but he is handling this very well, eight hours a day, four days a week. He lives alone and does it all himself. But he is very close to God and trusts in his providence. Since the last time we were there Dean has converted from Catholicism to become a Jehovah's Witness. He tells us he has never been happier. We had long discussions on faith, we don't share the same Christian beliefs any more. I called on the Holy Spirit many times over those few days to put the right words into my mouth during our discussions. I can only hope and pray I shared some light. I know God is merciful and patient. His ways and His time are not our own.

Everyday God speaks to me in a thousand different ways, it's not always the big and the beautiful, it's the little ways too, like the other day my 3year old grandson held my crucifix necklace, he tipped Jesus over and said Nanny, Jesus is learning how to swim. Or a phone call from an old friend just to say hello, and the news that another friend is now cancer free. And that my young friends who struggled for many years to have a child, now have healthy twin babies. God works in mysterious ways and I pray that my eyes and heart are always open to Him and his little and big surprises.

De Colores

An extract from a witness given by Margaret French May 2019

My story starts when I was four and half years old when on May 11, 1959, a picture of me was splashed over the front page of the local newspaper in Parramatta with the caption "Miracle Recovery."

I was run over by a car on Victoria road Parramatta, in a coma for four days and not expected to survive. I had the Marist brothers as well as the nuns from Parramatta sisters of mercy school, praying for me, also holy water from Lourdes placed on my

head each day and was confirmed while at the hospital and named after St Joseph the patron saint of families and the dying.

My accident impacted on so many family members in different ways with different consequences it seems we are all connected together in ways we could never think of.

The holy water from Lourdes that was placed on my head came from a very special aunt who had just come back from a pilgrimage in 1958. Throughout my entire life she had a most profound impact on my life and my faith. She taught me so much by example, how to pray, lead a good Christian life and to accept and treat people with respect no matter who they are, she even showed how to accept death and die a dignified death with Christ.

I underwent two further neuro head operations, one at the age of 8 and another at 14 years old. Due to the accident I suffered a fractured skull where my skull was partly crushed and removed. A metal plate was inserted to protect the brain and the missing skull pieces but this was unsuccessful due to my head changing and growing as I developed. So the plate had to be removed and for the next 12 years I had to avoid any type of physical activity for fear of causing further trauma to the head. My parents had a special cap made with a metal plate attached to it (this was made by my uncle, a clever tradesman). A plate was inserted in into my head in 1968 and for 48 years it has protected me.

I must admit that the accident was my fault, being the curious cantankerous, adventurers person I sometimes can be I had no right following my brother down the road and being told several times to turn around and go back home, but I continued along behind him with his objections.

I feel very guilty about the shock and horror my brother must have experienced, seeing my lifeless and bloody body in the middle of the road, he was only 8 years old at the time. For all my growing up years my brother and I never really got on very well, at any opportunity he would do what he could to upset and criticise me.

I had parents who loved me no matter what my circumstances and accepted whatever lay ahead for me. As time passed my older sister told me she would have nightmares where she would image me physically handicapped and would wake up in the middle of the night very upset.

At the time of my accident my grandmother(my dad's mother) was babysitting us as mum had had her fifth child and was still in hospital suffering postnatal depression. So not good for my grandmother and not good for mum as well. As my older brother and I didn't get on very well I started to develop a real dislike for his name, to a point I really couldn't stand to even say it. But God had plans for me, God had decided that I would learn to love my brother's name, and for forty years I have a lovely wife and her name is TERRI and guess what my brother's name was, yes TERRY.

So this brings me to where I am today. I often think, if my parents and others hadn't prayed so much for me at the time of my accident I would have been in heaven a long

time ago? Over the years there have been so many God moments and life experiences that would not have occurred if God was not in control.

I believe and understand that all human life is precious no matter what the situation and life is a gift from God. I conclude with a quote from Cardinal Newman.....

He may hide my future from me still... He knows what He is about. ?

De Colores

An extract from a witness talk given by Steve Pearson July 2019

ULTREYA

ROSTER 2019

E	DAT	VENUE	HOST GROUP
	17 th August	OLHC Rosemeadow	Camden/ Campbelltown Men Lester
	21 st September	St. Anthony's Tahmoor	Camden Ladies Dianne
	19 th October	Sts. Peter and Paul Kiama	
	16 th November	OLHC Rosemeadow	Secretariat Pot Luck Dinner

Address for Ultreya

August and November: Our Lady Help of Christians, 80 Demetrius Road ROSEMEADOW

September: St. Anthony's, 20 Stratford Rd. TAHMOOR

October: Sts Peter & Paul, Manning Street Kiama

REUNION GROUPS



Dapto/Southern Men's group – Steve, Carlos, Brian, Matthew and Andy. Paul (not in photo)

Carlos completed his first Cursillo in Peru. After moving to Australia with his wife and family they settled in Kiama. Fr. Chris reconnected him with Cursillo where he is an enthusiastic member.

bellambi WEEKEND

DATE: 28th and 29th September

TIME: 9.30am Saturday till 5pm Sunday

MASS: Corrimal Saturday 6pm

COST: \$85 plus dinner cost at club for Weekend stay including breakfast and lunch

\$50 for one day including lunch

NEED TO BRING - sheets, pillow case and towel

The weekend will centre on talks entitled “**Call to Holiness**”. It will also be a time of friendship and fellowship. You can come for a day or stay for the weekend.

DAPTO POT LUCK LUNCH



This event was held in June. It was a great afternoon for those of us who attended. We were able to gather around one table and keep warm with the efficient out door heaters and the wonderful company. Even though our numbers were small we enjoyed a variety of savoury and of course sweet foods. We had quite a few raffle prizes. We decided on a one prize per person policy so it was great that many of us won a prize. It is always a pleasure to gather socially with our Cursillo friends.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Our next School Of Leaders will be held on Saturday 17th of August 12pm before the Ultreya at O.L.H.C. Rosemeadow.

S.O.L. is for all Cursillistas, so bring your lunch and come along and join in the conversation. We will be studying "Gaudete Et Exsultate (Rejoice and Exult)". We will also be planning our future events.

The National secretariat meeting will be held at Randwick on the Friday 30th August till Sunday the 1st September. Elections will be held and Role descriptions are available if anyone is interested please speak to Dianne. Sunday will be a day of reflection. The theme is "**The way, The truth and the life**".

NOVEMBER POT LUCK DINNER will be held after the Ultreya on the 16th November at OLHC Rosemeadow. Further details will be in Ken's newsletters.

DONATIONS needed for silent auction and raffle to be held at Pot Luck any new item welcome, two packs I wish to make up are a children's one and a babies one so any help with those would be appreciated. Bring items to any Ultreya.

There will be one more issue of the Escarpment this year in November. If you wish to have something placed in the next issue of the Escarpment please contact me. I would particularly like to feature extracts from Ultreya witnesses and Reunion groups. Thank you to Margaret and Steve for their input in this Escarpment. My contact details are - denisedamore0@gmail.com or phone: 0438254139

De Colores

Denise D'Amore and Helpers