

Fully Alive



CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CURSILLOS, NATIONAL SECRETARIAT
ENGLISH LANGUAGE



Some of the Organizing Team
Entertaining the Participants at the Fiesta Night
At the 2025 CCCC Annual Conference, held in London, ON.
(Singing lessons are in the Budget)

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OFFICERS' CORNER

Carlos Muñoz, CCCC Outgoing Chair

A few years ago, I was invited to join the OG for the first time. I was afraid that I would not be able to serve and give my best, but as we say, the Lord does not call the qualified, he qualifies the called. With God's grace and by being myself with my uniqueness, I realized that my fears were leaving me. I am aware that, having Spanish as my mother tongue, I could contribute to the translation and interpretation of the founding documents written by Eduardo Bonnín, founder of the Cursillo Movement. I admit, like many, that it is not easy to read Eduardo's writings in Spanish, so I can imagine how difficult it is to translate from Spanish to English, especially when it is done with his habitual wordplay.



I found a group of friends in the OG who welcomed me. A group of Cursillistas in love with the Lord through the Cursillo Movement as much as I have been since I lived my Cursillo Weekend in 1988. Over the years, we have had many successes in the projects we have undertaken. Sometimes it has not been easy to agree, but we invoke always the Holy Spirit in

our meetings, and even our disagreements come to align with the good of Christ, having modified and improved upon what we initially planned.

I reach the end of my term grateful to God for all the graces received, for all the love and friendship shared with these friends whom I now consider more than friends. I thank all the Canadian Cursillistas for all the

support and opportunities offered to serve Christ in this wonderful movement. Everyone knows my limitations as a person but also recognize my qualities. Despite this personal situation, Christ continues counting on me until the end of my days when he calls me. My term as Chairperson of

the National Cursillo Movement has ended, but my commitment to Cursillos has NOT. I am now handing over this service to my friend Allan Forsberg. I am sure he will do an excellent job as the new Chairperson of the CCCC. I will be asking God for Allan and the OG to continue with this precious pearl that the Lord has placed in our hands as good stewards.

Allan Forsberg, CCCC Incoming Chair

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Allan Forsberg, and I am honoured to introduce myself as the new Chairperson of the CCCC Officers' Group. It is with great

appreciation for the work of the CCCC as a lay movement within the Church, and a deep sense of responsibility that I step into this role.

I have served as the representative for the Westen region in the Officers' Group for 4 years, and have learned much about the movement, the Charism, the Method and Mentality of Cursillo of which I knew so little.

I am committed to leading our group towards continued faithfulness to the vision of Eduardo Bonnín, the founder of our movement. I believe in the power of collaboration, innovation, and dedication, and I am eager to work alongside each of you to achieve our shared goals. At the same time, I realize that some things need to change, in our ever-changing world. Communication in the digital age, and a renewed commitment to solidarity in an age of division, will be ever present as challenges and opportunities.



In the year ahead, I look forward to hearing from our different regions through your representatives to better understand your perspectives, ideas, and aspirations for your movement and the Canadian Movement, as a whole. I invite you all to consider joining with Cursillistas from across the country at our next National Conference in PEI next July. Together, we will build on our strengths and explore new opportunities to advance our mission of spreading the gospel of Christ in our own environments.

I am excited about the journey ahead and confident that, together, we will do small things with great love.

De Colores!



CURSILLO PRAYER LINE

Let us help one another lighten our burdens and what better way than to join regularly in prayer for one another. The Cursillo prayer line has been established especially for this and we want to encourage the greatest number of people to benefit from it. When we have occasions to pray in gratitude for the many blessings, we gladly share this and multiply our joy. We want to also care for one another through all occasions of life, to erase worry, lighten the burden, be a presence in hardship, to share with God's people who are in need. As a community, united, we want to look ahead in faith, and unwavering trust that God is indeed by our side in every battle, and we are strengthened by the faith and confidence of all his people.

Become a member of the prayer line by contacting Yvonne, cursilloprayerline@gmail.com

CCCC National Conference

July 3 - 6, 2025

King's University College

London, Ontario

Attending the recent conference was a truly enriching and exciting experience. As I reflect on the sessions, interactions, and overall atmosphere, I am struck by the remarkable blend of friendship, knowledge-sharing, networking opportunities, and inspiration that characterized the event.

The Officers relied heavily on Marg Weber, who had functioned as the conference co-ordinator on site. She did a commendable job in ensuring the registration, venue layout, signage, and accessibility were managed with few difficulties. The welcoming ambiance was evident from the time I arrived; the venue was perfect for the event. The chapel was beautiful, and the rollo room was particularly suitable, ample natural light, comfortable seating, and a well-equipped presentation space. It all contributed to a positive environment. The cafeteria set-up worked very well, and the meals were delicious and nutritious. Refreshment breaks were thoughtfully scheduled, allowing participants to recharge and network organically.

The rollistas set an inspiring tone for the conference. Each rollo was delivered with authenticity and conviction, weaving together personal stories, professional insights, and calls to action. The theme for the Conference was: "Why Cursillo, a

Response to the Modern World." The rollos were taken from the 5th Conversations of Cala Figuera conference that was held in Mallorca in October of 2024. The rollos functioned as conversation starters that helped us go deeper in understanding the charism given by the Holy Spirit to Eduardo Bonnín in the 1940s. In our discussions we helped each other begin to understand how to live out this charism in our movements in the 21st century. It is not an easy task we have taken on, but it is one that I believe brings us closer to Christ.

The Liturgies and Meditations were also inspiring. We were blessed to have two priests who engage in their local movements, and Deacon Reino Pitkanen who is the assistant Spiritual Advisor of our national movement. The two Prayer Oases were relaxing and allowed time for one to sit in the loving gaze of the Lord.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the conference was the opportunity to connect with peers, mentors, and thought leaders from diverse backgrounds. I was struck by the genuine collegiality and deep friendship displayed by attendees. Whether in line for coffee or sitting together during at dinner or breaks people were eager to share their experiences and insights. These conversations often extended beyond the

conference topics, fostering a sense of community that will hopefully last well after the conference ended. I made several new connections that I am confident will lead to future collaborations and friendships.

While the conference, as a whole, was highly successful and meaningful both personally and from the responses on the feedback forms, the group is aware of ways that may work better in future conferences. Planning for next year is already underway and ways to streamline processes and procedures are front and centre.

On a personal level, the conference rekindled my passion for the Cursillo movement and gave me a sense of hope for the future. Perhaps more importantly, the connections I made have already led to stimulating post-conference discussions and potential collaborations. I left the conference feeling invigorated, challenged, and grateful for the opportunity to be part of such a vibrant lay movement. The event reaffirmed my commitment to seek out new ways to contribute meaningfully to the movement.

In conclusion, the conference was a resounding success—an event that fostered growth, connection, and inspiration. I commend the organizers, speakers, and fellow participants for their dedication and engagement. I look forward to returning next year and witnessing how the conference continues to evolve in response to the needs and aspirations of our movement.

Allan Forsberg, Chair of CCCC

This is the third CCCC conference I have been to, but the first that wasn't a Cursillo of Cursillos, so the format was different. The campus at King's College in London was perfect for the weekend. It had a gorgeous chapel and comfy rollo room. The

Cursillistas who attended were all in! Participation was great and the sense of friendship profound. The music was incredible, and everyone sang to the Lord. Father Vince was the spiritual director for the weekend, and he was enthusiastic and a true Cursillista. Father Francis came from PEI after making his Cursillo last year and was excited about the movement and how it could grow in Canada. He is from Nigeria so this whole movement was new to him. We shared lots of stories and laughs during the weekend. I would encourage people to go next year in PEI.

Liz Richard, Atlantic Officer to CCCC

In a way, the CCCC 2025 conference in London, Ontario was the completion of a circle in my Cursillo growth. My first conference was in London in 2012, and I have attended all of them since then. Each year I have met more wonderful Cursillistas and learned more about the Charism and about its founder, Eduardo. This year was no different. Since it was the first conference since COVID, we were not sure how many would attend or how it would go. As always, the Holy Spirit was in charge, and a smaller than usual attendance made it more intimate with the opportunity to build more friendships. Sharing residence pods was also great for getting to know our "flat mates" better.

The topics were taken from the V Conversations of Cala Figuera which was held in Mallorca in October 2024. Eight Canadians attended the Conversations, and this was an attempt to share what we learned there. Some attendees might be surprised that the topics are not "how to" Cursillo but are more to understand the Charism and "who" is in our environment. The table discussions and sharing always give us different points of view on the subjects. This helps me to better understand this

movement and Eduardo's vision. As usual, I have come home with a renewed vision and a great urgency to encourage more Cursillistas to attend next year.

Margaret Popek Watchorn, Western Officer to CCCC

We had the Holy Spirit in our presence from start to finish at the London conference! It was such a joy to attend and see old friends, as well as make many new, wonderful friends. This was the best Canadian conference I have attended to date! Fiesta night was a blast with most of the Cursillistas participating! The London Cursillo Movement attendees who were present ROCK with the Holy Spirit. Bonnie Hood, as the MC of Fiesta Night, was truly amazing! Marg Weber, as the MC of the weekend, kept us moving and on track.

I loved the idea of having breakfast in our pods, as it kept the cost of the conference down, and we got to know our pod mates very well. The rollos, which were based on the rollos I heard at the 5th Conversations at Cala Figura, were well presented. I appreciate that we can grow within our Movement. These rollos keep us on track as Cursillistas and help us to navigate our world. I loved that we had so much corridor time to get to know one another. One thing I liked that really helped us meet new friends was that we'd switch the people at the tables after each rollo. What a difference it is to share and discover what other people think about the roll-out that was just presented. I hope we can continue to do this. Thank you to the London Cursillo Movement and the CCCC for a job well done and very well received!

Linda Pitkanen, CCCC Supply Officer/NACG Vice President

The one word about the recent Conference is "JOY" what else can I say, it was AWESOME!

I hope I can clarify that it was my 5th or so Canadian Conference that I have attended, and because of its size or ATTENDEES it was the greatest interactive gathering I have ever experienced, there were opportunities to not only explore the rollos we had just experienced together, but we also delved into different understandings of our movement allowing the Spirit to grow OUR understanding of each other's views.

Our challenge going forward as a movement will be to replicate this awesome experience with larger groups, because imagine how much more each of us could have grown had others been there.... hope to see you next year in PEI
De Colores

Jose Salvador, Central Officer

Reflections on an Intimate Gathering

The 2025 Conference in London, Ontario, had a welcoming atmosphere that made it very easy for people to talk to each other. Instead of getting lost in a sea of faces, attendees were able to have real conversations. The rotation of participants after every rollo helped a lot and was precisely what made everything work so well. People from all walks of life and backgrounds were able to share their opinions and be truly heard. You could feel the energy in the room; everyone was connecting, and that turned the entire event into a bustling hub of ideas and collaboration.

The presentations were well understood despite working with unedited translations. The speakers were clear, confident, and knew how to keep the audience engaged. It was clear that their messages had resonated,

as the conversations during corridor work were filled with lively conversations and the group discussions were full of thoughtful comments. It didn't feel like a rigid conference, but rather a natural flow from presentation to open discussion.

The way the event was organized made it easy for everyone to participate and be part of the conversation. In the end, it was clear that smaller conferences can have a big impact when it comes to bringing people together and fostering meaningful exchange. We should try to maintain the same mechanics even if the number of participants is larger.

Carlos Munoz, past CCCC Chair and NSOL (National School of Leaders) Rector.

The journey for me, from going to "check out the accommodations" in December (since I have been to many conferences) to being conference coordinator (due to unforeseen circumstances) was somewhat daunting at first, however allowing the Holy Spirit to be in the driver's seat, the process became a labour of Love, following my motto of "Flexible Rigidity!"

Kings College and the staff and security, the 42 participants, the 2 priests in attendance,

Father Vince and Father Francis, the London hosts and the cooperation and participation of everyone, was beyond my expectations. We were graced with beautiful liturgies and meditations, and it was a time of learning and friendship building after years of hiatus due to the pandemic. Now it is time for rebuilding our movements with the tools given through the rollos, discussions and sharing. We have been blessed with much love, friendships and fond memories of the 2025 CCCC London conference.

Margaret Weber, Hamilton Diocese.

This year's conference was a resounding success. Even though the team was green, all came together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There was a lot of opportunity to meet and great conversations ensued.

The rollos and meditations went over well. Fiesta night was a blast with a large number of participants. Accommodations and food were good. Chapel was intimate and Spirit filled.

Deacon Reino Pitkanen, Assistant Spiritual Advisor to CCCC.



witness

Daily we touch Him

My name is Debbie Heard. I made my Cursillo in 2019 in Deemerton, ON, and I sat at St Anne's table.

I gave this as the Ultreya rollo, July 12/25. This is my first experience of the Canadian National Conference.

From the very outset, the Cursillo conference weekend was beautiful. I have been to many conferences before, but none like this. I had no idea what to expect and was looking forward to a great experience.

The conference was held at Kings College, a Catholic University, in London Ontario. The drive there was calm and relaxing, passing farm after farm with crops coming up, creating a gorgeous variety of greens and golds, as well as horses and cows grazing contentedly.

While registering, I was greeted with hugs from one I knew and warmly welcomed by everyone else as soon as I introduced myself. We checked into our dorm accommodations where we shared an apartment style floor with 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a kitchen with nothing in it and a living room. It was perfectly comfortable, and I ended up sharing a room with a gal from PEI that I met on our Croatia pilgrimage 2 yrs ago.

The bare kitchen was remedied the next day with breakfast food and a coffee maker a Cursillista bought for us to use for the two mornings and then to donate to another charity! We dropped our bags in the dorm and headed back to Kings College and the

Student lounge where most of the conference took place. It was exciting for me to be at Kings as that was the school I attended in my first year of university after high school.

I walked in and was immediately wrapped in a hug by a man I didn't know who said, "Welcome! I'm Fr Vincent, and I'm so glad you came!" I was not expecting that kind of welcome from a stranger or a priest, but as I soon learned, our spiritual advisor and everyone else, was in full Cursillo form, with warmth, friendship, and love of God - a given. I instantly felt at home and found it comfortable to introduce myself to people as we mingled. There was ample time for getting acquainted which was greatly appreciated and readily made use of by everyone. Everyone was happy to be there. I was there to get re-charged and so were a few others including a priest at my table. It was like that the whole weekend, only better, as I got to know almost every one of the 42 Cursillistas through group table discussions, walks and over meals. The conference theme was "Why Cursillo?" and was set up like a Cursillo weekend including rollos and lots of discussion. Briefly, the rollos discussed 5 topics.

1. "**HUMANITY**" - how our culture has changed and how distractions are meant to prevent bonds and prevent us from contemplating if what was said was truth. Perfection is displayed and expected mass judging on rumours. Cursillo is a charismatic movement. We love people where they are at.

2. **“CONSCIOUSNESS”** – the rollo described the difference between consciousness and awareness. Consciousness is a broad range of experiences, including being able to think - the greatest gift, and become captain of your own ship. Self-centered attitudes have distorted reality. Awareness is the ability to recognize reality around me, and to be in the present moment. Awareness is most important in prayer.

3. **“WORD”** rollo described the importance of words. They can build up or tear down. We influence others with our words. Divine Word purifies our words. If I repeat God’s words, they become my path.

4. **“TRUTH”** rollo talked about the difficulty in discerning truth today with fake news and AI. One truth is God loves us. Jesus is the truth – an essential attribute of God. God is unconditional love. He builds up, not tear down.

Rollos were often difficult to understand but as we discussed it around our table, amazingly, some understanding of it emerged, and we each developed our own thoughts about the issue - getting to know ourselves better, and each other. There was respect for different opinions as we shared our thoughts, and people were encouraged to share their table’s ideas with the group, so that ideas came from all of us, not just the speaker, which is the Cursillo way. We all learned more about the topic because of this. It was very interesting to watch this develop in a different environment from here. The beauty and wisdom of the Cursillo movement became clearer to me.

There was lots of music with 2 guitarists and singers leading the most beautiful songs. The little chapel was loud with song, and a university administrator working down the hall remarked how great we sounded. We

had beautiful Cursillo style Masses every day, confession, meditation, more songs, beautifully written and read reflections to get us to think about our relationship with God, how much God loves us, and the beautiful gift of the Eucharist. It was so well done and enabled me to develop a closer relationship with Christ through all these practices.

Cursillo is about exploring our faith and scripture, everyone at their own level, with many different walks of life and experiences to enrich us. Some things will be over my head, and will work for someone else, while other things will enlighten me, bringing something for everyone.

One big take away for me was Father Vincent’s detailed description of the beautiful and awesome gift that Christ gave us in the Eucharist. I know I can get used to a good thing and sometimes underestimate the importance of it. Father Vincent excitedly had us imagine our God, making himself available in the Eucharist - body and blood, soul and divinity, as a gift to us from heaven. Why? Because he loves us and wants to give us graces and strength to withstand the great evil that is increasing in the world. We are fortunate to have the Eucharist so available in our church and I realized it is a gift I should seek as often as possible! Father talked about the dark times we are going through right now and how we are being bombarded with so much evil in the world, trying to turn us away from God and His sacraments and His church - all which strengthen us to withstand that evil. Father Vincent was on fire with the benefits of Cursillo which helps us discern the truth from the way the world encourages us to think - with its lack of moral boundaries and tearing down cultural rules.

Rather than get depressed or anxious, all we need to do is keep it simple - pray often, meditate, and listen to God’s responses. We

should strive to pay attention to the many gifts He gives us every day, and we will have no trouble listing closest moments to Christ! To safeguard us against the world's slippery evil ideas, he encouraged us to not watch much television, where we are bombarded with confusing, immoral actions, ideas and speech. To stay calm and happy, he encouraged us to pray, get exercise, meditate and read good books, and spend time with faithful people. This helps protect us from the untruths presented in the media.

Another important point was, our Cursillo relationships are real friendships and encourage us to stay the course with Christ. Ultreya and grouping are so beneficial in building these friendships. We are strongly encouraged to group. That is what builds trust and friendship. If you don't have a group, I encourage you to join or start one. It truly is a blessing in my life. The 5th and final Rollo titled:

5. **"THE JOB AHEAD"**, was the easiest to comprehend. Cursillo teaches us to use our gifts and talents, given by the Holy Spirit, to make this a better world. We don't need to change it, just live it, and naturally share what we learned in our Cursillo.

Was there friendship? What did I love about Cursillo? Let it inspire me and share with others.

Mother Mary said we are the hands and feet of Christ, to do his work. Our Charism is to spread the good news to the world. GPS - God's pathway saves. When we share our successes and failures, many seeds get planted.

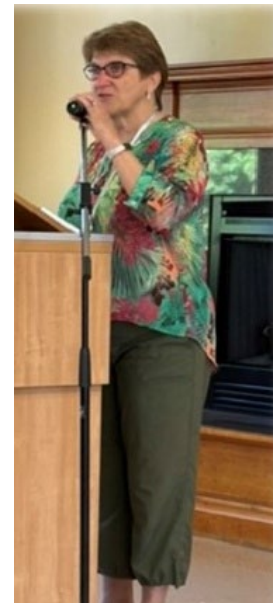
We are the salt of the earth. We may not see it, but others do. We each contribute to the banquet of life with the Holy Spirit guiding us. Our hope is not to change things, but to allow the Holy Spirit to change me. Allow prayer and study to guide me. Be the loving persons we are here. Start becoming the person you want to be. This inspires Cursillistas to be witnesses of Christ. I am asked to use every talent God has given me to bring others to Christ. God's work is in the Gospel. We don't know people - don't judge. Be open to be a friend. Be a friend first. Then invite the person to a Cursillo. Cursillo gives us the courage to do the work.

De Colores



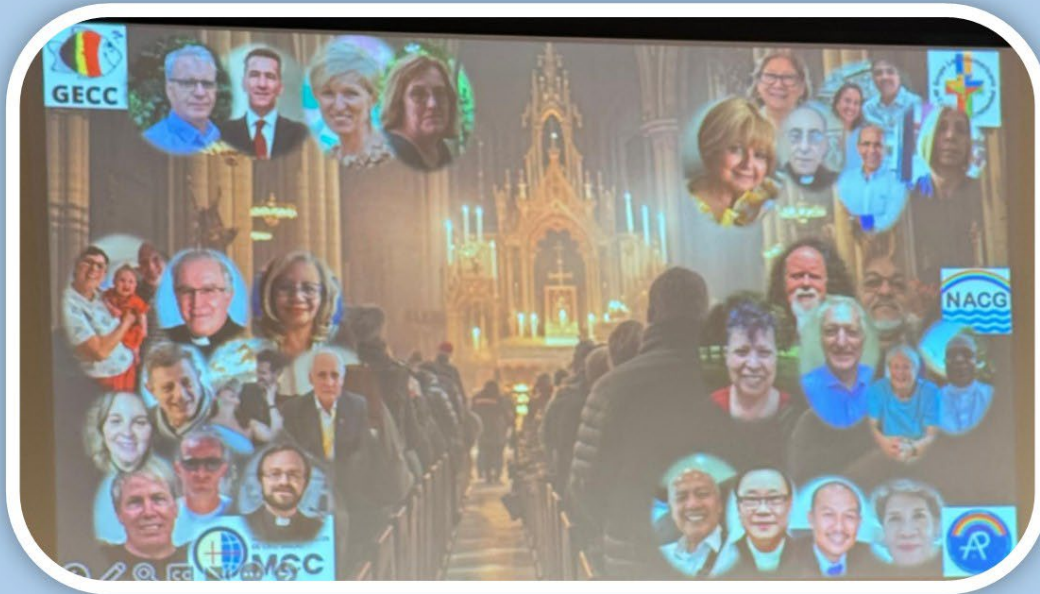
Mass with Father Francis Sohe Pastoral Administrator of St. Mary's (Souris), St. Charles Borromeo (St. Charles), St Margaret of Scotland (St. Margaret's) + St. Colomba (Fairfield), PEI and Father Vince Gulickers, Lake Huron Catholic Family of Parishes, Ontario and Deacon Reino Pitkanen





Marg Weber
Conference Coordinator

Pilgrimage to Rome



The OMCC and International Groups
Asia Pacific, North America Caribbean, Latin America Group, The European Group





Summary Report from NACG June 1-4, 2025 in Rome, Italy

Some of your Officers, Linda and Deacon Reino Pitkanen, Carlos Munoz, and Resource Person Sheelagh Winston are members of the executive committee of the North America/Caribbean International Cursillo Group. As such, they were invited to participate in a meeting in Rome of the Ecclesial Movements of the Church. This meeting was to celebrate the Jubilee Year with all the Lay Movements in the world. The meetings consisted of a celebration of the Pentecost Vigil Mass, with Pope Leo, at the Vatican. We also were blessed to enter St Paul's Outside the Walls through the Jubilee door.

This momentous occasion was combined with a World Ultreya with Cursillistas from around the world, and a meeting with the Executive Groups of the World Body of Cursillo and the four International Groups. The following report is a summary of the work that was undertaken and proposals for future endeavours by the Cursillo Movements of the world. We include this in Fully Alive in an endeavour to share with you the awesome fact that Cursillo does indeed live on all five continents.

Strengthening Unity of Worldwide Cursillo Movement

The meeting of OMCC and IG leaders held in Rome, Italy, brought together representatives from various countries to foster dialogue, strengthen unity, build friendships and set a foundation for the future in the Cursillo movement. Morning prayers, reflections, Mass and group reunions provided inspiration, spiritual strength and just the right atmosphere for friendship and room for the Holy Spirit utilizing Conversation in the Spirit process for each of the five working sessions.

General Approach to the Meeting

This historic meeting, the first of its kind with the new structure reflected in the Statutes, was an extraordinary opportunity to make real participation, the connection and the unity of the movement worldwide through its international groups. It called for a great responsibility for the participants to come in the best disposition, with openness to others and the Holy Spirit, willing to honestly and sincerely seek the best for the Cursillo Movement.

The four essential keys for the meeting were to focus on the **unity** of the entire Cursillista family of the world. The participation in the life of the **Church**, in communion with other realities of the faithful, the call to the **hope** of the Jubilee and the attention to the **Holy Spirit** proper to Pentecost.

Meeting Dimensions

- A space for friendship, communion, and unity, where everyone, on a personal level, can live an experience of encounter.
- Time to share experiences, concerns and perceptions, to learn about realities and

circumstances of the movement around the world, to listen and learn from each other.

- Time to work, to reflect, to discern, and to look for future paths that we can follow together.
- An opportunity to pray and celebrate Mass together, and to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit who calls us, sustains us, and guides us.

Working Sessions

- 1.** Report by International Groups and OMCC report (baselines and projects)
 - a. NACG IG report (see attachment)
- 2.** Unity and Identity of Cursillo Movement
 - a. What does Unity in Diversity mean? How can we move forward on this path of unity in diversity?
 - b. How to clarify what is the Identity of the CM, its essential core? How can this identity be brought to life in CM at all levels?
- 3.** Ecclesiality and Synodality in the Cursillo Movement
 - a. How to foster a sense of Church in the CM
 - b. How does Synodality consist in the CM
 - c. What is the role of laity and priest in the CM in this context?
- 4.** The Cursillo Movement in today's world
 - a. What is the role of CM Service Structure today?
 - b. What should CM leaders look like in the reality of the 21st century?
 - c. The method of Cursillo today: Precursillo-Cursillo-Postcursillo
 - d. How to face the challenge of young people in the CM?



5. Conclusions by IG's

NACG Summary:

The OMCC, in accordance with its Statutes, held a three-day face-to-face meeting with its IG counterparts to discuss matters of importance to the Cursillo Movement worldwide.

This experience provided the NACG with opportunities for grace, camaraderie, and friendship.

Preparation:

Two years ago, Canada, as the Coordinating Country, began a journey towards unity and synodality. To develop an international approach for its Executive Committee, Canada assembled representatives from each of its National Secretariats. To further strengthen unity, the NACG representative on the OMCC established a Think Tank of Friends, fulfilling its statutory responsibilities of broader NACG inclusion. This group comprises leaders from across the

NACG, representing diverse ideas and experiences. With the introduction of new statutes and structure, the NACG feels hopeful in their way forward with a focus toward the future.

Process:

The EC has been preparing for this meeting for months, cultivating an attitude of openness that has enabled them to build genuine and authentic friendships. The NACG extends its deepest gratitude to all of you for your invaluable contributions.

The detailed information provided was instrumental in preparing us for the meeting, ensuring that we were actively engaged and involved in a collaborative, open, and respectful listening and dialogue guided by the Holy Spirit.

Way forward:

The EC will hold a meeting to debrief two of its members who were unable to participate and share their experiences with its National Secretariats. Also, the NACG representative on the OMCC will organize a Think Tank Meeting of Friends to debrief the NACG leaders, old and new, and facilitate the sharing of views by the EC with the NACG as a whole

DeColores!

Next Steps

The information gathered from the meetings will be pulled together for review and next steps determined to continue the unity and worldwide collaboration. Executive comments

I have been to many international meetings but have to say, the reunion in Rome was very different. I found that the new (to me) concept of changing the makeup of the groups after each session allowed us to develop friendships and relationships with almost everyone present as opposed to remaining in the same group for the entire meeting. The leading questions had the effect of keeping the conversations on topic which made the proceedings far more productive and effective. The NACG members also benefitted from the preparation prior to travelling to Rome and the debriefing sessions that we held each evening.

A conscious effort to listen before talking, I was amazed at the friendly greeting we got. It was like we were friends forever. The working sessions went smoothly, and everyone's opinions were expressed and heard in an open-accepting environment with equal voice and equal respect.

I had hope in my heart this OMCC would bridge gaps and become unified. Agreement that we can work together even though we have different ways. To focus on similar not differences. This has unified us. Our preparation really made a difference. The working sessions worked well and nice to have translators in each group to understand each other. So thankful for the opportunity to be there.

The movement will be what its leaders are. Loving people, friends, and characteristics from the charism we will make the Cursillo message alive. There is hope. This international was different in many positive ways and we made a team moving forward.

For a long time speaking about hope and seeing it all come together was a blessing. The addition of group reunion each day to share and open up and questions to have a bigger dialogue and listen to people witness their experiences was a blessing to me.

The working sessions were on different topics and with different people and as each day progressed, along with time together at meals and breaks to visit and get to know each other a spirit of fraternity and friendship developed. I could feel it growing and I believe everyone else felt it as well, it was a blessing to be a part of this historic meeting and week guided by the Holy Spirit in Rome.

The NACG Pilgrimage: It was very organized, and we began before we travelled to Rome with a Novena prayer. It enabled me to go with an open mind and to make friends with 45 others.

Friendships were rich and language not a barrier. I want to make one new friend each day. The guides were very good. Companions on a journey, look out for each other. Four Holy doors were the highlight.

While on the Pilgrimage I was at St. Peter's square I've seen on TV but to be there in person, not from a distance but right here, so amazing and such a blessing. Another highlight was the tour of the Vatican and tomb of St. Peter and Pope Francis. Encourage my friends to go on a Pilgrimage and experience these things.

Explanation of Anagrams.

OMCC Organismo Cursillos de Cristiandad. Translation – World Body of the Cursillo Movement

NACG – North America/ Caribbean Cursillo Group. The International Group comprised of Canada, the USA and the Sovereign states of the Caribbean islands

APG – Asia Pacific Group – comprised of Australia, Korea, Philippines, Vietnam, Vietnam in Diaspora, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, U s Military Korea, Japan.

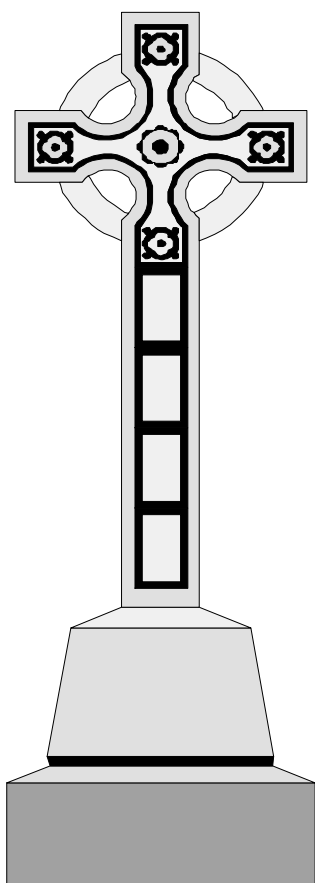
GECC – Grupo Europeo de Cursillos de Cristiandad – European Group of Cursillos in Christianity. Comprised of the European countries with outreach to Africa.

GLCC – Grupo Latino Americano de Cursillos de Cristiandad – Latin American Group of Cursillos in Christianity. Comprised of all the countries in South and Central America, including the Spanish speaking Caribbean countries except Cuba.



Part of the Rome activities was an opportunity to enter through the Jubilee Doors. Once inside the Basilica representatives of the different International Groups entertained with song and music NACG contributed by singing "Let There Be Peace on Earth." Deacon Reino and a new Cursillista from the Caribbean gave a joint presentation of a reflection.

Following the Ultreya, Holy Mass was celebrated at which Linda and Carlos represented NACG by reading two of the intercessory prayers, Linda in English and Carlos in French.



MATTERS SPIRITUAL

The Presence of the Holy Spirit

By Father Jorge Farfán, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dear Friends, as we share with you this meditation on the presence of the Holy Spirit, not only in the life of the church or in our movement, but rather focused on our personal lives, so that it may help us to refresh not only our memory, clarify certain ideas or concepts that help us become aware of the importance of our role as individuals and leaders committed to the power of the Gospel in the service of the CHURCH in this Church movement, where we have a mission to accompany the souls that God entrusts to us on their fourth day on the path of Truth, Life, and Holiness.

There is an invitation that is:

Enlightened by the action of the Holy Spirit to always help us seek God's will so that this beloved Church movement continues to respond to the signs of the times.

Just as one of the motivations for this meeting is to walk in unity, to think and seek together those things that allow us to grow.

WE NEED:

The life and strength of God given to us in the Holy Spirit to renew our mission and drive it forward. WHEN WE THINK ABOUT PREPARING TO LIVE THE CELEBRATION OF PENTECOST, we could say that Jesus' mission on earth ends and ours begins, encouraged, driven, and sustained by his own Spirit. We receive his same mission, the one the Father has entrusted to his Son.

By letting ourselves be inspired by the Spirit, Jesus repeats to us this morning.

"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn 20:21).

We are filled with gratitude for such a gift, and we hope that the fire that burned in Jesus' heart will not be extinguished but will ignite in us the fire that he dreamed of and desired.

Those little flames that have appeared on the heads of the apostles, and in our souls, we want them to spread across the five continents where our movement is present. We must return from this encounter filled with enthusiasm because we are cooperators in GOD's project to fill the world with the warmth that CHRIST came to give us.

We are not alone in this mission; we have unsurpassed help. Jesus promised us that he would not leave us orphaned, and he has kept his promise (Jn 14:18).

"The Spirit of God, wherever he enters, drives out fear; he makes us know and feel that we are in the hands of an omnipotent love: whatever happens, his infinite love does not abandon us.

This is demonstrated by the testimony of the martyrs, the courage of the confessors of the faith, the fearless zeal of the missionaries, the frankness of the preachers, the example of all the saints, some of whom were even teenagers and children.

We have experienced the presence of the Spirit in the life of our beloved Eduardo, who knew how to interpret God's will and respond with a project that would enable many women and men to know themselves, to know Christ, and to discover the beauty of friendship, mercy, and love for every person.

This is demonstrated by the very existence of the Church, which, despite the limitations and faults of men, continues to cross the ocean of history, driven by the breath of God and animated by his purifying fire.

We may sometimes feel that sense of abandonment, but we don't want it to paralyze us. We know that it is part of the weeds that evil tries to sow among the good wheat of love to which we are called.

Feeling and perceiving it does not mean agreeing with it, but rather it can be precisely the stimulus to reconsider, with the help of the Holy Spirit, that we are beloved children.

THE FIRST time we took our first steps alone, perhaps from our father's arms to our mother's, we didn't know how it would end, nor had we ever done it before. Having them close by, in front and behind us, was enough. When we received their embrace as a reward for our feat, we realized that taking risks was wonderful.

We can ask the Spirit to inflame our will so that, in a similar way, we may vibrate with the divine desires to sow peace and joy in our surroundings and in the world.

Prayer is the privileged place to listen to his voice and heed it by launching ourselves into that divine journey. Prayer "is a gift we receive freely; it is dialogue with him in the Holy Spirit, who prays in us and allows us to address God as Father, Papa, Abba (cf. Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6): and this is not just a 'figure of speech, but reality; we are truly children of God. "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God" (Rom 8:14).

Sometimes we may be tempted, perhaps unconsciously, to live as if God were distancing himself from us because of our sins or betrayals. However, he surprises us time and time again with his response to our fragility.

The Risen Jesus, when he first appeared to his disciples, said: "Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you forgive are forgiven" (Jn 22-23). Jesus did not condemn them, even though they had abandoned and denied him during his Passion but gave them the Spirit of forgiveness. The Spirit is the first gift of the Risen One and is given first and foremost to forgive sins. This is the beginning of the Church, this is the glue that holds us together,

the cement that binds the bricks of the house: forgiveness. Because forgiveness is the gift par excellence, it is the greatest love, the one that keeps us together despite what prevents collapse, that reinforces and strengthens. It frees the heart and allows it to start again: forgiveness gives hope; without forgiveness, the Church cannot be built.

The Holy Spirit wants to fill us with strength so that we can enjoy the mission entrusted to us.

How harmful it can be not to have the solid foundations of this divine grace: "The attack on faith tears down the spiritual edifice. Temptation against hope is disconcerting. But that evil thought that God does not love me and that I do not love him is what destroys and, even physiologically, leaves the heart empty."

Fortunately, the solution is within everyone's reach: "On this day, we learn what to do when we need real change."

Who among us does not need it? Especially when we are down, when we are tired from the weight of life, when our weaknesses oppress us, when moving forward is difficult and loving seems impossible. Then we need a powerful "restorative": it is God's strength; it is He who, as we profess in the "Creed," "gives life."

How good it will be for us to take this restorative of life every day. To say, when we wake up: "Come, Holy Spirit, come into my heart, come into my day."

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux recounted the day of her Confirmation: What joy I felt in my soul! Like the apostles, I joyfully awaited the visit of the Holy Spirit... Finally, the happy moment arrived. I did not feel any impetuous wind when the Holy Spirit descended, but rather that gentle breeze whose whisper Elijah heard on Mount Horeb. We too want to listen attentively so that the Comforter may

tell us of the wonders to which we are called and for which we have been created.

"I will not leave you orphaned." On this feast of Pentecost, these words of Jesus also make us think of Mary's maternal presence in the Upper Room. The Mother of Jesus is in the midst of the community of disciples gathered in prayer: she is the living memory of her Son and the living invocation of the Holy Spirit. She is the Mother of the Church. We entrust to her intercession in a special way all Christians, families, and communities, who at this moment have a greater need

for the strength of the Spirit, the Paraclete, the Advocate and Comforter, the Spirit of truth, freedom, and peace."



Father Jorge Farfán

Witness

Daily we touch Him

The following Witness is from Deacon Reino Pitkanen, Assistant Spiritual Advisor to CCCC.

A Life Changing Event Leading to Unexpected Gifts

June 15th 2024, I was ordained as a permanent deacon in the Thunder Bay Diocese. I had no idea how much my life would change.

In September of 2024, my wife Linda and I went on a pilgrimage following the footsteps of St. Paul in the Mediterranean. Once our fellow pilgrims found out I was a Deacon, things changed. I was no longer Reino, a fellow pilgrim, but Deacon Reino who could serve at Mass daily with Father Darius the Priest on our pilgrimage. I served Mass at St Paul's outside the wall and at Mary Lateran in Rome. I served in Assisi, Ravenna, San Marino in Italy, as well as on board ship during the cruise portion of the pilgrimage. The most memorable event was when I was asked to lead a Service in Ephesus at the cathedral by the home where Mary (the mother of Jesus) lived out her days. Father Darius was ill and could not accompany us, so it was up to me.

Prior to this I had concelebrated one Communion service with Deacon Frank Beck and then later that day stumbled through my first solo under Deacon Frank's guidance.

I was very nervous as we approached the cathedral, but I prayed to Jesus and the Holy Spirit to carry me through, and I was as calm

as could be. I delivered what the other pilgrims said was a very good message in my homily. Now we all know it was not my words but the Holy Spirit speaking through me just as we are promised in the gospel, "we are not to worry about what to say the words will be provided".

Move ahead nine months and I was surprised and honoured to be asked by the Executive of the North American Caribbean Cursillo Group (NACG) to attend three and a half days of meetings of the world body of Cursillo (OMCC) just outside Rome. The meetings were just prior to the World Ultreya for Cursillo, and we were told we would also be attending the Pentecost Mass at the Vatican. I later found out that Deacons and Priests were able to apply to be with Pope Leo during the Mass. I applied right away and was getting concerned when, after a week, I did not hear back, so I did some research and found out they only started informing successful applicants no more than ten days before the Mass.

I was asked to co-present a speech at the Cursillo World Ultreya on behalf of the NACG Group at St Paul's Outside the Walls. There were over three thousand in attendance and once again, I asked, and the Holy Spirit took over and I was completely calm even when we were having problems with the microphone and had to adjust it on the fly.

I finally, to my great joy, received my ticket to be with Pope Leo for the Pentecost Mass. Our Cursillo group attended the Pentecost Vigil on the Saturday, and it took well over

an hour in line to get into the Vatican. There were seventy thousand attending.

On Sunday morning, our bus did not leave the villa, where our meetings were being held, until 7:30, and it was a forty-five-to-fifty-minute drive to the Vatican.

I was very concerned that we would not make it for the 9:00 AM entry time for priests and deacons. There were two priests with me, Father Andrew (from Grenada) and Father Paul (from Vietnam) and we rushed as quickly as possible from the bus to where the line to enter the Vatican started. It was already longer than the previous day so I could not see how we could make it on time, so I said a quick prayer for help.

God always takes care of us and when we asked people to allow us to move up through the line and the crowd saw our collars, they parted like the Red Sea with big smiles on their faces allowing us to cover the distance of that very long line in about ten minutes.

After going through security and showing our id and entrance tickets a couple of times, we entered a very long hallway on the right-hand side of the Vatican courtyard. Inside were hundreds of priests and a handful of deacons vesting for the Mass. We were not given any instruction on what we might be doing, if anything, so we simply waited to see what would happen next. During our wait I had the opportunity to meet and speak with deacons and priests from around the world.

Now I do not know if you have ever watched or attended Mass at the Vatican but if you are facing the building the visiting clergy always sit to the left of the altar. I was fully convinced, that being a lowly deacon, I would be seated in the row farthest away from Pope Leo.

The Vatican organizers got our attention and had us line up to go to our seats. They called for the first two hundred priests to come forward as they would be serving communion to the crowd. This was no more than one third of the priests present. Then they asked all other properly vested clergy to come forward. As the group passed the organizers, they separated the deacons from the priests and had us wait for all priests to go first. This was what I had expected to happen so all priests could be seated before deacons.

Much to my surprise the deacons were led into a seating area behind the altar. I was in the front row. I could not believe how blessed I was. We got to watch Pope Leo come out of St. Peter's and proceed to the altar. The service carried on and I, still in a state of unbelief, was thoroughly enjoying my view of the mass proceedings.

Then things became surreal, something I would never have imagined, it was like being in a dream. All the deacons were brought inside St Peter's, and each was given a chalice and a ciborium and then asked to line up behind one of St. Peter's doors behind the altar.

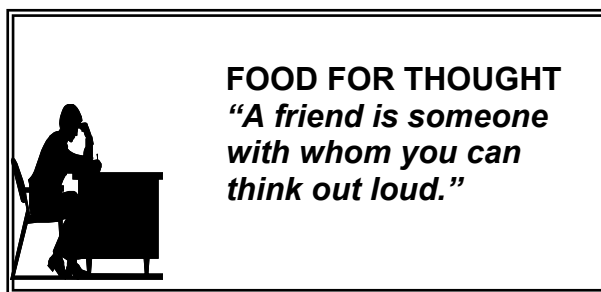
We were then led out to stand in two locations behind St Peter's altar consisting of two lines at each location. We were not more than twenty feet from Pope Leo, and I was at the front corner of my group closest to him.

When it came time to distribute communion we were led to the left side of the altar, where Pope Leo was, to where the priests were sitting. I was facing the altar where Pope Leo was sitting. On my left side I was at the front of all the priests and on my right were the one hundred thousand attending the Mass and on cue we gave the priests communion. I even got to serve Father Andrew who is the

spiritual advisor to our NACG Cursillo group.

I am still amazed that this happened. Why God chooses some of us for these special blessings I don't know. What I do know is that by simply saying "Yes, I will serve you Lord" I have been blessed far beyond

anything I could have imagined. I will never forget serving at all the places on our pilgrimage and most importantly leading a service at Ephesus. The highlight has been the Pentecost Mass with Pope Leo one week before my first-year anniversary as permanent deacon.



What is Fully Alive?

CCCC has been communicating with the Cursillistas of Canada via printed documents ever since they first became the Canadian Conference of Catholic Cursillos in 1983. Our initial communication was simply called the "Bulletin", and it consisted of the minutes of the Officer's meetings and nothing else. Later it evolved into something that we hoped would be a link between the Cursillo Movements across Canada. Everything was done on typewriters and Gestetner machines. One of the most urgent needs of CCCC at that time was a computer! Not a computer for CCCC as such, but an officer who had a computer.

In 1992 we met Eduardo Bonnin and on our visits to Mallorca and his office, he gave us copious documents, all containing his writing on the Foundational Charism, and the mentality and method that was born

from it. When we were not in Mallorca, he faxed typed documents to us, all of which had to be retyped and often translated.

Eduardo had an often used saying, "The Cursillo needs leaders who think." There were few books available in English so we continued to rely on Eduardo, but we always pondered, "How can we give the Canadian Cursillistas an answer to Eduardo's prompting?" Our response was that we needed to give them SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT!

In 1997, CCCC decided to transform our quarterly "Bulletin" into something that would provide an answer to the dilemma. By 1997, some of us did have computers and it became easier to convert Eduardo's work into a usable format which could be shared with Cursillistas who were interested in the Charism and what it means in Cursillo.

The following is excerpted from the first "Fully Alive" issue in 1997.

We are determined to use the "Bulletin" to its full potential to aid in communicating with you all and it makes it necessary for some elements to be regular features in its list of contents. We feel that

it should not just be a chatty newsletter, filled with the doings and beings of all the movements, but that it should also be a resource for use in Leaders' Schools and workshops. The National Secretariat has a good deal of documentation gleaned from meetings with Eduardo, texts produced by leaders within the movement, and it is the Officers' wish that as many Cursillistas as possible can read and study all that is available. To be a united movement from coast to coast it is vital that, as in a diocesan movement, there is unity of spirit, understanding and focus.

We will try to include in each issue of the new Fully Alive a Leaders' School section in such a manner that it can be easily extracted from the rest of the document and filed for further use. It is also important that we touch each other through its pages and to this end, each issue will include a witness talk. News of all the activities from the Regions helps to build bridges by all the means available to us. Regular contributions

from the Lay Officers and the Spiritual Advisors' team will also be a feature. Another feature, beginning with this issue, will be a question-and-answer column. Ideally, it would be great if we could sit down with you all, very frequently, to talk and share, but our reality prevents this. A poor second best, is to offer you the opportunity to comment, share your views and voice opinions. It is important that you have the opportunity to own the movement that is yours. You are welcome to comment on any aspect of the 'bulletin'.

*We live in a vast and diverse country and Cursillo crosses all the boundaries and gives us a common focus, a common goal and a common means of deepening, sharing, and giving witness to our faith. Let us use every means available to build bridges heart to heart as our method prescribes so that we earn our new name by becoming, "**FULLY ALIVE**".*



Q. While attending the recent conference, I found there was, in my opinion, too much free time. Could you explain the rationale for this?

A. When we first received the Cursillo from Mallorca, via the United States, the Cursillo three days had a timeline which

appeared to have empty space. Not knowing the reason for this, the first leaders made the decision to fill the time between rollos or other scheduled activity, with music or jokes. "We have 15 minutes before the next activity on the schedule, let's sing some songs." This led to the mentality that a Cursillo needed to have a music ministry, which filled the time with songs of many genres. In some places it turned into a group of musicians with instruments, amplifiers and the rest. In some places the music became so important that Cursillos were not scheduled if a music group was not available. We were somewhat mystified when we learned from Eduardo and the Mallorca leaders, that music on their

Cursillos was not a major requirement. If someone had a guitar and could lead a song it was sufficient.

It wasn't until we received the Cursillo schedule, the "Step-by-Step" written by Eduardo, that we began to seriously study the "Why" of the Three-Day Cursillo and began to understand its mentality the light began to dawn. We were also introduced to a term that we were unfamiliar with; CORRIDOR WORK'. This means, the 'WORK' done in the unscheduled times.

The method of Cursillo manifests itself in friendship, making friends with everybody present at the weekend, not just those at your table. The goal of the team leaders at the Cursillo is to have spoken at least for a few minutes, to every new Cursillista present. In this CORRIDOR WORK, the leaders especially, sound out where people are at, do they have questions, do they need to speak to the spiritual advisor? Given the opportunity, the new Cursillistas will also enter into CORRIDOR WORK as they share what they are hearing with other new Cursillistas, or simply sharing who they are with each other. This Corridor Work is essential.

During the weekend, many of the new Cursillistas—including some who have distanced themselves from the Church and others with misconceptions or even anti-clerical views—arrive without understanding what it means to live in Grace, especially about the sacrament of Reconciliation. However, they also bring with them a desire to talk about their concerns, clarify doubts, and share fears with someone who will listen to them as a friend, without judgment or condemnation.

That is why it is so important for Cursillo team members to carry out what is known as "corridor work." Leaders should approach

them naturally, establishing a genuine friendship that provides space for open and reciprocal dialogue, where they can share the reality of their lives.

Talking to a friend about what is inside them gives them a psychological and spiritual freedom that transforms them. Thus, during the weekend or even afterwards on the 4th Day, many will feel—from their inner freedom—the desire to live the sacrament of Pardon, knowing that they will be listened to with respect and without being judged.

The three Encounters of the weekend have a specific purpose, to enable each person to experience themselves and God and to begin to know that there are others, who will support them on their journey, the Ultreya, and another kind of 'other', those in their environments who need to hear what they have learned. Ultimately, each new Cursillista feels they have been listened to and have had questions answered and have been assured that they will be supported in their 4th Day by those who have supported them at the Cursillo.

At a national Conference, we follow the same mentality as that practiced in the Cursillo itself. CORRIDOR WORK is vitally important to the success of the conference. The goal is not to overwhelm people with facts with no time to reflect or internalize what is being shared or simply to relax with others on this particular journey. And always at a conference, we attempt to mirror how the Cursillo itself should be run.

We had many comments about the wonderful music at this conference and wonderful it was. But it did not encroach on the time when the work of the conference was being continued. Music is one more way to reach the hearts of people and will always be a valued part of the method of Cursillo.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

- ◆ ATLANTIC,
Antigonish (Tri County,
Cape Breton East,)
 - Halifax, Charlottetown,
 - Halifax/Yarmouth

ATLANTIC REGION

PEI/Charlottetown Report

- ◆ QUEBEC,

After a year as Assistant Lay Director, I took over the role of Lay Director for the movement here at our Annual General Meeting on June 1, 2025.

- ◆ ONTARIO,
London Area,
Essex/Windsor, Kent
County/Chatham)
 - Peterborough, Toronto,
 - Hamilton, Ottawa,
 - Kingston, Thunder Bay,
 - Korean.

We are setting up the committees to work on hosting the 2026 National Cursillo Convention. Enthusiasm for participation seems high. We're looking forward to an exciting experience.

We completed a women's and a men's weekend in April and have welcomed 18 new Cursillistas. A well-attended Island wide Ultreya was held a couple of weeks later.

- ◆ WESTERN,
Vancouver, Edmonton,
Grouard-McLennan,
Northern Native Cursillo.

Fr. Francis Sohe, our Spiritual Advisor, and I will be travelling to London ON to attend the 2025 National Convention. A few other Island Cursillistas also plan to attend. We hope to see you all there.

De Colores!
Steve Wonnacott

Cape Breton East Report

We've just completed the 145th Women's Cursillo weekend with great success. I am happy to report we have 14 new women Cursillistas.

We are struggling to keep the men's weekends going with candidates, but the women's are increasing with candidates. Hopefully, the ladies will sponsor their spouses for the Men's Cursillo.

We will be holding our last Ultreya before the summer break this week. Hope you have an enjoyable and safe summer.

De Colores,
Arlene Edwards

building bridges from coast to coast



Yarmouth and Area Report

Ultreyas continue monthly with about 20 people attending. Ten K of C (with some Cursillistas) attended in June as part of the Jubilee Year Pilgrimage. The Valley Cursillo movement held a 50th Anniversary Celebration in early June and 11 Cursillistas from Yarmouth and area attended. There were 130 people at the celebration.

Halifax Cursillo

As you may already know, our Halifax Cursillo Movement has not been active since Covid and we had a "farewell" gathering a few months ago to allow interested Cursillistas to give thanks for the gifts they received from Cursillo. We had a little group who organized this i.e. Gary McVeigh, Barbara McVeigh, Barb Blackburn, Patricia (Trish) Bonvie and myself. Only 46 people of all our community came but we were pleased with the gathering that allowed people to get up and speak. I was pleased that two men who were on the team of the 1st Halifax Cursillo attended the get together; and they were so happy to be able to tell us some of the history of Cursillo in the Halifax area.

We had some funds left from our bank account and we asked the community what they would like us to do with this and most suggested we donate the money to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society which I did yesterday. Our little group felt that we

should remember all the help we received from the National and we kept \$50.00 to donate; it's not much and is just a token of our thanks. You may use this small donation as you wish.

De Colores
Patricia Norman

Antigonish Cursillo Movement

We do not have much Cursillo activity here in Antigonish. We used to be Tri County, but Guysborough always were on their own. There was a problem with New Glasgow, and they haven't been part of Tri County for several years. Those making the weekend Cursillo from Antigonish usually go to Cape Breton.

We have not had any new Cursillistas for a while, but we have a large group that meets here every week from September to June.

It would be nice to have more activities and all the messages do get passed on to the group. Maybe some might go to the PEI convention.

We wish you well in all your activities.
Marie

CENTRAL REGION

**Hispanic Cursillo Movement of
Canada
Ontario & Quebec**

Coordinating National President Information

- Name: Jennifer Vilo
 - Term: 2nd year of a 2-year term Secretariat National Coordinator team
- Positions Held as:
Escuela: Manuel Vilo,
Secretariado: Mauricio Munguía, Vocal: Tirza Calix,
Asesor: Claudia Peñalva
- Meeting Frequency: 4–5 times per year (primarily online) Diocesan Secretariat (5 actives in Canada)
- Structure: Diocesan Secretariat
- Are meetings open to all Cursillistas? Yes
- Are weekend teams selected from the School of Leaders? No
 Normally we simply do Escuelas and talleres 1 a year*

Cursillo Community

The Hispanic Cursillo Secretariat of Canada is composed of five Catholic parishes (Ultreyas) located in Ontario and Quebec. Currently, one priest and between sixteen and thirty Secretariat members are active in the movement.

This year marks the 43rd anniversary of the Hispanic Cursillo Movement in Canada (1982).

Affiliated Ultreyas by Diocese:

- Archdiocese of Toronto: Toronto * Parish (President: Carlos Reggiardi)
- Diocese of Hamilton: The Hamilton *Catholic Church. (President: Daysi Chavez)
- Diocese of London: St. Francis- St. Martin Church (President: German Jaramillo)
- Diocesis of Montreal: Misión Santa Teresa de Ávila, Montreal (President: Paola Lara)

- Diocese of Saint-Jean-de-Longueuil: Sainte-Marguerite-Bourgeoys Parish (President: Jennifer Vilo)

Participation & Group Life

- Total Cursillistas: 150
- Active Participants: 75
- Group Reunions: 22
- Ultreyas: 12 (approximately 2–3 per diocese)
- Percentage of Cursillistas in Regular Group Reunions: 15%

Ultreyas

- Frequency: Twice a month in each parish
- Average Attendance per Parish: 15
- Hamilton Church: 15 people
- Toronto Parish: 15 people
- St. Francis- St. Martin Church Catholic Church: 12 people
- Sainte-Marguerite-Bourgeoys Parish: 10 people
- St. Teresa de Ávila Parish (Montreal): 15 people

Model Followed: Yes, the Ultreyas follow the Mallorcan model as demonstrated by the CCCC.

Essential Elements Present;

1. Opening Prayer
2. Opening Song
3. Gospel Reading with Reflection
4. Witness Rollo
5. Group Reunion
6. Sharing of Responses
7. Spiritual Guidance
8. Closing Song
9. Closing Prayer
10. Priest's Blessing

Weekends

- Frequency: Once per year; alternating annually for men and women
- Location: Fondation Papillon-Chalet des Grands Prés Pre

- Cost per Candidate: \$400
- Retreat Type: Held at official retreat centers

School of Leaders / Workshops

- Workshops by CCCC: Yes, the movement participates in CCCC workshops.
- School of Leaders Activity: School gatherings are planned annually (e.g. Belleville, Rosary Parish).

Communication with CCCC

- Awareness of CCCC Annual Conferences: Yes
- Promotion: Information is shared at each Ultreya, and participation is encouraged.
- Average Attendance: Unknown
- Subscription to "Fully Alive" Resource Document: Unknown

Special Events

- Annual Events:
- April: Lenten Retreat for Cursillistas
- May: National Escuela Gathering (Belleville, Rosary Parish)
- June: Cursillo Retreat in London
- July 1st: Cursillistas Beach Day (Oka Park, QC) • BBQ in London
- August: National XXIV Ultreya
- November: Advent Retreat
- Breakfast gathering: Held in July

Planned for 2026:

- February: Two Cursillo Weekends (for men and women)
- Continuation of all annual events above

Liaison with Diocesan Bishops

Due to the unique nature of the Hispanics parishes and their presence in

multiple dioceses, it is currently not possible to provide reports directly to individual diocesan bishops or to request participation. However, efforts to maintain communication are ongoing.

De Colores

Hamilton Cursillo Movement

Lay Director: Dan Brown 3year term
(in 3rd year)

Secretariat Positions: Spiritual Advisor, Lay Director, Palanca Coordinator, School of Leaders Coordinator, Weekend Coordinator, Ultreya Leaders, Treasurer, Secretary, Communications

The secretariat meets 6 times per year, under normal circumstances.

Area of our Hamilton Movement: We take up a very large area in our diocese. In the central region we have Hamilton, Burlington, Stoney Creek and Oakville, all of which are large cities. There are 2 Ultreyas—one in Hamilton and one in Burlington.

Our southern region is made up of mostly Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Elmira and Guelph. We have presently only one Ultreya that serves the area in Kitchener.

Our northern region takes up Hanover, Walkerton, Port Elgin, Sauble Beach, Hepworth and Owen Sound. There are 2 Ultreyas that serve the large geographic area.

Group Reunions: There are good numbers of people in group reunions in the larger Ultreyas of our Hamilton Movement. From a current population of around 30 people regularly attending the St. Anthony Daniel Ultreya in Kitchener, 75% have a group reunion. The same numbers are applicable to the St. Mary's Ultreya in Owen Sound.

In the smaller communities, there are less group reunions, with perhaps 30-40% of ultreya members having a group reunion.

School of Leaders: We had a School that met regularly in Kitchener, 4-5 times yearly. We sent the topics and rollos to Owen Sound and they would hold a SOL meeting at St. Mary's. Our SOL coordinator has changed, and we will now meet in Owen Sound, with a virtual meeting held within the main meeting, for remote Cursillistas. The SOL is open to all Cursillistas. They had their first SOL in April of this year.

Ultreyas: Anthony Daniel Ultreya in Kitchener: They meet weekly on Saturday mornings from 8 to 9am. From an average attendance in the mid 40s pre covid, they are down to 25-26 at the most coming weekly. They follow the Mallorcan model of Ultreya. St. Mary's Ultreya Owen Sound: They meet the second and fourth Saturdays of the month 8:45-10am and follow the Mallorcan Method. There is an average of 30 people coming every second Saturday.

Hanover/Walkerton Ultreya: They meet the 2nd Saturday of the month at 9am in Hanover at Holy Family Church. They meet the 4th Saturday of the month at Sacred Heart Parish in Walkerton. They have roughly 23 people attending every second week. They do not follow the Mallorcan Method of Ultreya.

Currently, there is a new start for the Croatian Ultreya at Holy Cross in Hamilton. They are just beginning after the covid situation, and we do not have their details yet.

The Ultreya in Burlington has been getting very small since covid (down to 10-15 after covid, from 30 before. They meet at St. Paul the Apostle Church on Saturdays 9-10am. They followed the Mallorcan method of Ultreya. Most of their Cursillistas do not have a group reunion.

Weekends: We have had one men's and one women's weekend per year now for many years. Around covid and since, we had to cancel 3 men's weekends and 2 women's weekends. Even now we have difficulty getting enough candidates to hold a weekend for both men and women. We had a women's weekend in Nov/25 in Deemerton (retreat centre in the north) and just finished a men's weekend on the 3rd weekend in May/25 in Kkottongnae (Korean catholic retreat center near Fergus (south)). Both were small weekends, but were very good, with most of the new Cursillistas staying involved after their weekends.

Communication with CCCC: We have Marg Weber on our secretariat, who used to be a CCCC officer. She keeps us up to date on everything the CCCC has going. We have several people going to the Conference in London this year. Fully Alive is emailed to all of our Cursillistas, after our communications director receives it.

Special Events: We usually have a grand Ultreya every year and at least one social event. Last year, we had 2 picnic socials to make up for the lost get-together time from the effects of covid. The first was held in June at the Kkottongnae centre near Fergus, then we held the second picnic at a Cursillistas farm near Owen Sound. Both were full of joy, good food, some play, music and prayer.

Contact With Bishop: Bishop Crosby, who is a Cursillista, has been a marvellous support to us. We communicate annually and try to do so in person when we are able. We hope to have a meeting this year. We usually hold the meetings in Aug or September. The Bishop is up for retirement and we don't know when he will leave. We will miss him dearly.

Ottawa Cursillo Movement

During this past year, July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, two **Cursillo Weekends** were held by the Ottawa Cursillo Movement. Following the closing, in 2021, of the retreat centre (*Maison Notre-Dame-de-la-Providence* in Orleans) where we have held our Cursillos for the past four decades, due to the COVID pandemic, we have found a new venue (*Centre de L'Amour*, in Jessops Falls, Plantagenet) and since 2023 have held five Cursillos there resulting in approximately 70 new Cursillistas joining our community. The **Central Ultreya** (using the Mallorcan model) also resumed in 2023 with a reduced schedule of two Wednesdays each month. Three other monthly parish/regional Ultreyas across the Ottawa region resumed in-person meetings during the past two years.

An all-day Cursillo Renewal Retreat (**School of Leaders**) was held in November at St. Maurice Parish with four of the Cursillo weekend rollos presented. Grand Ultreyas were held on December 4, 2024, at St. Leonard's Parish in Manotick and on June 4, 2025, at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Ottawa.

In July 2024, **Sylva Sheridan** began his term as lay director replacing **Patrick Power**. On July 1, 2025, **Angiolina Allaire** will take over the lay director position for 2025-26. A full slate of secretariat members is now in place following a hiatus during the pandemic when a much smaller group continued to meet online to deal with the period of reduced Cursillo activity. Our movement's newsletter, *The Fourth Day*, has resumed publication after several quiet years and a

new parish-focused initiative involving parish Cursillo reps is also underway to promote and support Cursillistas and sponsors.

WESTERN REGION

Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

Our movement continues to be strong and active, where other areas seem to be struggling. Our monthly Ultreyas have been well attended with excellent witness talks and several of us participate in the monthly National School of Leaders on zoom.

We had a very successful Women's Cursillo on Family Day Weekend with eleven enthusiastic ladies and a wonderful Spirit inspired Team.

Sadly, we did not have enough candidates to hold a Men's Weekend this year.

Two of us were honoured to attend the V Conversations of Cala Figuera in Mallorca last October and returned with a larger picture of Cursillo from interacting with Cursillistas from around the world.

The National Cursillo Conference was held in London, Ontario from July 3-6. Four of us attended this event this summer. It was wonderful to gather as Canadian Cursillistas for the first time since COVID. Now to share all that we learned with our local Cursillistas.

De Colores
Margaret Popek Watchorn

FROM MALLORCA

In 2006, Eduardo Bonnin, as Founder of the Cursillo Movement, was invited to give a presentation to the XXII Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, September 21-24. The theme was, "The Parish Rediscovered, Paths of Renewal". Eduardo was invited to a private audience with Pope Benedict XVI. Here is the text of his presentation.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CURSILLOS OF CHRISTIANITY TO THE RENEWAL OF THE PARISH

I have no other merit other than having been witness to what I myself have lived from the first hour until the present, that is to say, all of sixty years of travelling along the path of the Cursillos in Christianity Movement.

Cursillos in Christianity has, by the grace of God, the prayers of many and the firm will of a few, been making possible that men and women become aware of being persons and thus have the ability to be receptive in order to understand the good news that God in Christ loves us.

When the human being encounters the spirit of God, he believes in Him and tries to reciprocate the invitation, changes his lens, his focus, his horizon and perspective and finds meaning to life.

At the end of a Cursillo, Christ can count on Christians that can lucidly savour with joy, the grace of being baptized and of being Christians. They are new Christians, better yet renewed, because they have understood the graces of being so in spirit and in truth.

It is no surprise that we Cursillistas feel especially aided by the Council Decree regarding the apostolate of the laity, when we read, "The Laity exercise their multiple apostolates as much in the Church as in the world...Laity with true apostolic spirit complement what their brothers lack and bring back to the Church those who were perhaps marginalized."

At the same time, we understood why with all reason the Pontifical Council for the Laity warned, in accordance with the mentioned council Decree, on October 3, 1978: "The structure of the parish has proven to be too narrow and too vast in order to satisfy the needs of the pastoral (?) and the formation of the entire faithful." We accord with the Synod of Bishops of 1987 when they urged the parishes to be truly missionary, since not even the pastor is able to follow all his faithful, nor do the faithful live out their lives solely within the confines of the parish.

We are comforted and inspired by the words the Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II pronounced at the IV Italian National Ultreya of Cursillos, "Your Movement asks of you to be the yeast in the 'dough' of the world." Likewise, we are encouraged by the theme His Holiness chose for the III World Cursillo Ultreya in Rome, "Evangelizing the 'environments': a challenge for the Cursillos in Christianity." And that is because that "dough" and those "environments" were the goal and finality of Cursillo since its dawning.

This is because that "dough" and "environments", that world, especially those who are marginalized, is the place where Cursillo focuses and carries out its apostolic action.

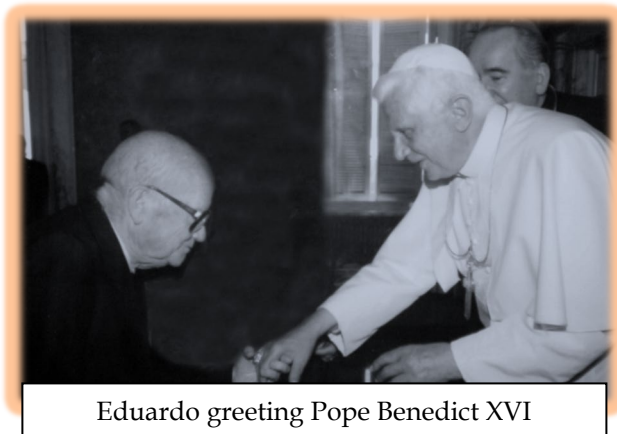
This having been said, the contribution of Cursillos to the renewal of the parish I understand first by underlining that our

Movement, since its beginning, has a clear vision of the role the laity has in the missionary action of the Church, the apostolic purpose of every baptized person, and that the person, the Gospel and the world in which we've been given to live must converge.

It is a concept that focuses above all else on the perspective of drawing close the *marginalized*, who generally are the ones who best understand the identity between their longing to be happy and the life of Christ, as soon as they begin to see it realized in other Cursillistas in whom they soon thereafter find some true friends.

This is because when the marginalized understand the Good News, the absence of previous historical-religious corsets causes a flowering of an awe-inspiring evangelical creativity in them.

With this they generate an atmosphere in



Eduardo greeting Pope Benedict XVI

which this evangelical creativity is not restrained but rather fostered.

It is this and nothing else which is the key so that the encounter of the *marginalized* will not fail. It is about a key atmosphere, which is founded on friendship, in its dual dimension of intimacy within the group and universality at the Ultreya.

In Cursillos what we have always wanted and in what we joyfully began from, in

faithfulness to our foundational ideas and charism, is the joining and alignment with the most genuine ecclesial pastoral quality, proclaiming to be a Movement that has no other spirituality than that of the Church itself. All this in coherence with Cursillo not being the fruit from an empirical search, but rather from an intuition that is believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, that has progressively transformed into a marvellous instrument whose deepest foundations emanate from the Gospel, are certified by the Council and encouraged by recent Pontiffs.

I think that Cursillo finds itself beyond the individual apostolate that Vatican II would ratify as essential in the life of a lay person with faith but does not go so far as to be a co-associated apostolate that seems to be the vocational alternative most recommended by many. I believe that Cursillos are not and should not be an organization or a community with a specific end, although it may have some of one and the other.

In my estimation Cursillos are massively and naturally a lay Movement, but without being exclusive to laity, as becomes evident to those who have lived them in a creative perspective of dialectic complementarity between laity and priests.

With respect to the recruitment of Cursillistas, especially those who have recently lived their Cursillo, by certain pastors, in order to incorporate them into various tasks or areas of specific parochial apostolates, such as catechism, social work, care for the sick and other ministries, I consider that requirements such as these in and of themselves will not constitute progress for the Cursillista in question, in being Christian, above all when such an involvement in new ecclesial service will take time from their basic Christian action within their daily lives that gives testimony to Christ in the place that God has planted

them. What is more, Cursillistas, just as all people, have the urgent need to be understood, that is, to be and to feel loved.

It is a shame when there is a lack of awareness that the automatic employment of converts, in the pastoral understood in this way, has come to deprive the genuine pastoral of the most human, most spontaneous and most in tune with our society and therefore what has most foundation in order to achieve what is integrally Christian.

The greatest novelty of Cursillo is that it directs the lay person to the apostolate that is their specific departure point and with their ordinary peculiar style, their own, the one God has given them, thrust into the joyful adventure of simplifying and facilitating the path in order to find themselves and so that from themselves they discover that the encounter with Christ and with their brothers and sisters can expand and become a friendship, in the measure that the group reunion and the Ultreya become a reality.

It is necessary to recognize that many men, women, youth and children have been able to grow, develop and mature under the umbrella of the parish and many associations, for the glory of the holy Church. And from them there are people who are living evidence of the efficient fertility of the parish. I want to re-emphasize that the type of community that the world needs today, and in so much the Church, needs to be centered on and gathered by the gift, of the most disinterested interest; to take each and every person seriously for what they are, by the fact that they are persons, not for what they have, nor for what they know or what they are able to do, not even for what

they can contribute to the Church, since all that prevents the ability to make transparent with the maximum clarity the tenderness of God, because the sense of reality coincides with the sense of the Gospel, which is love.

The pretension of those who would remove the role from the laity that the Cursillo Movement has given them is incomprehensible. It is like wanting to cut off one of the branches most full of life, the Gospel, as lived by priests and laity, has obtained in the Church, persevering and growing in Christ by means of friendship lived in a personal way in the Group Reunion and as community in the Ultreya, with which the Cursillos in Christianity Movement counts on specifically in order to be able to mature and grow.

The Group Reunion, which is friendship taken to the level of the supernatural, creates a circumstance that makes the authentic, continuous and progressive testimony of what is fundamentally Christian possible in life. The Ultreya, where the best of each person is made available to come into contact with the greatest number of people possible.

My vote of confidence:

I conclude by making mine the words of Cardinal Ratzinger, in the *Report on Faith*: *"What in the length and breadth of the universal Church rings out with notes of hope is the flowering of new Movements that no one planned nor convoked and which surge from the intrinsic vitality of faith...I think for example...in Cursillos...tensions surge at the moment of inserting them into the present form of institutions, but they are not tensions with the Church hierarchy itself. I find it marvellous that the Spirit be, once more, more powerful than our own projects. The renewal is silent, but it advances with effectiveness."*

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