

## **POSTCURSILLO**

*Source: National Cursillo Center Mailing – June 2007*

Everything that is done in terms of the Cursillo purpose and methodology has the Postcursillo as its final objective. The Precursillo and the Cursillo are only preliminary steps toward the Postcursillo. Like everything else in life, it involves a process.

- Precursillo – the person seeks Christ
- 3-Day Cursillo – the person encounters Christ
- Postcursillo – the person follows Christ; the perennial living of what is fundamental for being Christian.

### **Purpose of the Cursillo Movement**

Cursillo pursues a two-fold purpose; an immediate one and an ultimate one:

#### *Immediate Purpose:*

To provide a foundation so they may live what is fundamental for being Christian – love of God and love of neighbor, experienced through three essential encounters, the encounter with oneself, the encounter with Christ and the encounter with others.

#### *Ultimate Purpose:*

To vertebrae Christianity in society, with those who live what is fundamental for being Christian, the love of God and neighbor, to live their daily lives while strengthening the three encounters.

### **Purpose of the Postcursillo**

In general, the immediate purpose of Cursillo will be achieved by means of the Precursillo and of the Cursillo weekend. The ultimate purpose departs from this immediate one, and it's intended to be fulfilled in the Postcursillo phase.

The basic purpose of the Postcursillo is to renew, accelerate and continue the conversion of each individual, and as a consequence provide a continuous transformation of the environments for which those individuals are responsible, especially their families, neighborhoods, places of work, associations and other secular situations. Since these are only transformed from within, we must orientate the new Cursillistas toward their own appropriate environments. It is not necessary to find a new apostolate or environment for people when they leave the Weekend.

It is not the purpose of the Postcursillo to make the Cursillo Movement an organization or an association of those who have made the Cursillo Weekend. Neither is it the function of the Postcursillo to furnish workers for all sorts of church or human projects, no matter how good they may be. The primary objective of the Postcursillo is to provide the means for each person to persevere to strive to live a Christian life, being like the leaven in the yeast within their own unique place where God planted them; in their own environments.

It is also not the purpose of the Postcursillo to have people attend Friendship Group Reunions and Ultreyas in order to prove they are Cursillistas. Nor is it the purpose of the Postcursillo to gather people so that they might examine themselves to see whether they have carried out certain practices or commitments. The purpose of the Postcursillo is to help Cursillistas recognize their lay vocation of being Church; their secularism, in a natural manner. Furthermore, Cursillistas should live their lay vocation in the structures of the world in which they live.

### **Means of Perseverance in the Postcursillo**

From the very beginning, the Cursillo Movement has taken responsibility for providing a community for those who have lived the Cursillo. It is within this community where they will be accompanied, supported, and motivated to grow and share their Christian life together. There are two basic means of growth and perseverance in the Christian life in the Postcursillo: the Group Reunion, for the individual, and the Ultreya, for the community. Although both are community structures, one is primarily for the good of the individual, the other for the good of the community. Since one cannot be realized without the other, both are essential in terms of the method. Both are important for the realization of the direction of our whole life in the light of the Gospel and the opportunity to share the life with other apostles. An isolated Christian is a paralyzed Christian. So, too, is a group if it is not tied to other groups.

The Postcursillo, through Friendship Group Reunion and Ultreya, offers a spiritual community of persons who have the same desire to have an attitude of progressive conversion, and to live according to that attitude. Christians evangelize for the mere fact that they are Christian. This is the only plan that God has for us. It is not a matter of "doing" Christian things, or of doing an apostolate here and there when we have time, or when we do not have anything else to do. The Christian's life is an "apostolate" and thus all his/her actions should be apostolic.

### **The School of Leaders is to Vertebrae the Ultreya**

“The School is to the Ultreya what the team Leaders are to the Cursillo Weekend.”  
If the School is effective, then through its members the Ultreyas will be effective. There can not be authentic Groups, Ultreyas and Schools without leaders who fully understand the Movement's purpose and method, and who are committed to it as their Christian vocation.

### **The leaders/the team Leaders**

If the sustaining of apostles is our task as a movement, then it stands to reason that more effort by the leaders and those responsible for the movement should go into the Postcursillo than into any other phase of the movement, including the three days.

The immediate objective of the leaders in the Postcursillo is to motivate and help the new

Cursillistas find a group of Cursillista friends with whom they can meet to share their 4th day. Unfortunately, many leaders who served in a Cursillo team don't see this as somewhat essential, or not even as part of their commitment; to them, once the Cursillo weekend ends, their responsibilities toward the new Cursillistas ended as well. The same thing goes for the rest of the leaders of the School. In other occasions, perhaps, instead of being leaders we have been an obstacle. The new Cursillista, who is still up high in the small piece of heaven after his/her Cursillo, is tumbled down by one of the "so called" leaders who says to him/her: "there is no need to exaggerate..., it is all over; now you need to come down to reality..." the new Cursillista realizes that Cursillo was just a pretension; a deceit.

Jesus, after having stayed in Zacchaeus' house, did not kill Zacchaeus' enthusiasm, but did encourage him even more: "*Today, salvation has come to this house...*" (Luke 18:9). We should be leaders in the three phases of the Method helping so that others maintain Christ in their heart.

### **The Christian Fermentation of the Environments**

The Cursillo Movement, having the mentality of the Church, has always stressed individual responsibility as a key factor in the process of leavening. While we can strive for community and evangelization, it will always be the individuals the ones who will carry it out, especially those that motivate and are leaders of others.

The Church will always be the leaven in the world; that is her mission and the reason for the sacramental presence there. We, as laity, have a share and a responsibility in that mission and presence.

*"At this moment the lay faithful, in virtue of their participation in the prophetic mission of Christ, are completely part of this work of the Church. Their responsibility, in particular, is to testify how the Christian faith constitutes the only fully valid response to the problems and hopes that life poses to every person and society. This will be possible if the lay faithful will know how to overcome in themselves the separation of the Gospel from life, to again take up in their daily activities in family, work and society, an integrated approach to life that is fully brought about by the inspiration and strength of the Gospel". (ChL, 34)*

*"Evangelization is for no one an individual and isolated act; it is one that is deeply ecclesial". (EN, 60)*

*"Above all the Good News must be proclaimed by means of the testimony. Take a Christian or a handful of Christians who, in the midst of their own community, show their capacity for understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other people, their solidarity with the effort of all for whatever is noble and good. Let us suppose that, in addition, they radiate in an altogether simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values, and their hope in something that is not seen and that one would not dare to imagine. Through this wordless witness, these Christians*

*stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live: Why are they like this? Why do they live in this way? What or who is it that inspires them? Why are they in our mind? Such a witness is already of a silent proclamation of the good news and a very powerful and effective one. Here we have an initial act of evangelization".* (EN, 21)

Evangelization is a process which leads to leavening, but as such it cannot be limited to personal contact between persons, but must take in the larger dimensions of life and the situations and environments wherein such persons live and work.

Referring to the needs of humanity, the founders could say with clarity: *"in order to be effective, every apostolic solution must take into consideration the human life which needs to be baptized anew.... therefore, we need not only a partial and individualistic solution, but a transformation of environments that embraces everyone and everything. The whole world must be restored from its foundation. It must be transformed from being savage into being human into being divine".* (The How and the Why)

The Cursillo is a movement which is working toward the building up of the Church in the world, by means of the presence of evangelizing Christian laity in their own environments. The Movement is founded on a basic Christian principle that the holiness of life overflows from the holy person and the Christian community into the persons and situations it touches. The basic thrust of the Movement then is toward establishing such groups of laity anxious to be holy and apostolic so that this process may begin and in the manner of yeast leavening dough, Evangelization may take place.

While we have, as a Movement, greatly assisted in the work of individual conversions, comparably the result of those conversions has not been seen in the same degree in terms of the leavening of social structures. Partly responsible has been the type of testimony being given by those in the movement to the newly converted. If it remains at the level of personal conversion without the testimony of the efficaciousness of Christian community, then something is lacking. *"The person who has been evangelized goes on to evangelize others. Here lies the test of truth, the touchstone evangelization: it is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word and give himself to the Kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn".* (On Evangelization in the Modern World #24)

The countless millions of persons who can testify to the effectiveness of their Cursillo experience justify the Movement's existence as a force for transformation. But more is needed. As mentioned before, the conversion must be progressive, and it must be a progressive process if it is to be a leavening force.

We need to remind ourselves that while the perseverance method of the Cursillo, this is the Group Reunion and the Ultreyas, are essential to the Cursillo, they are not ends in themselves. They must serve as a means for cursillistas to be holy and to be evangelizers in the world. The Group Reunion and the Ultreyas are the formation and perseverance process for the cursillistas to use as they leaven their environments.