



Forward

Cursillo in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego

Volume IX

December 2004

Our Mission: To Christianize Environments and Develop Lay Leadership

THE 2004 SECRETARIAT

FROM THE CHAIR

Hi All,

This is the last article I will be writing as the Chair of Secretariat. Probably before you actually read this article, the reign reins will officially be handed over to Darryl Peralta. He, like me last year, was able to spend a year in the role of Chair-Elect and become better prepared for his task to come. I pray that you are as patient and loving of him as you have been with me.

This past month, I had the pleasure of representing the Diocese of San Diego at the Episcopal National Cursillo Seminar. As it was the same event that we hosted last year, it was fun to see how another diocese handled the task. It was also nice to catch up with the other Cursillistas and compare notes with them. It didn't take long to realize that the downturn in numbers that we have seen here is common across the movement. Regardless of local, the same mantra of aging membership and decreasing numbers was repeated. There were a couple of notable exceptions to this, but they were typically movements that had died and been resurrected only recently. With the help of some grouping brothers, this got me to thinking. Are we really fulfilling our mission to create leaders within the church to Christianize environments? Or have we become merely a vehicle for a renewal movement based on the icons and behaviors of the 60's and 70's?

Sitting here right now, I can easily argue both cases. There is the opportunity to speak publicly within a very safe environment. I still remember listening to a very good talk at a

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4th Day once. Toward the end, I heard the speaker's husband say that he didn't know that his wife could talk like that. If it came as a surprise to him, it's not a stretch to believe that she also was surprised that the Lord could give her the words she needed.

There is also the chance to develop administrative skills in either secretariat or as part of the core team on a weekend. In both cases, you are supported by a loving community so that the chance of failure is small and the potential to grow beyond your comfort zone is great.

On the other side of the coin, we are still very much mired in the renewal movements of the 70's. The bright colors and tambourines are right out of the 60's and hold only historical relevance to anyone under the age of 50. The tempo of the weekend is much better suited to somebody who grew up listening to hour-long radio programs than one who grew up watching six-minute spots on MTV. Even the music, despite the best efforts of the songbook committee, tends to be older than I.

I will officially end my term as Chair with a challenge. Will we, as a community, insist on maintaining the status quo and by so doing force this Cursillo movement into the cycle of death and rebirth seen around the country? Or will we choose another path?

In Christ's Love,
Patrick McBride
Ex-Chair, Cursillo Secretariat

Look for the next Forward in mid-February
with team meeting details.

Articles, calendar events and other materials are due
no later than January 31st

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To Live for the True End or a False End

To be alive is to be on a journey towards an end. Life has a destination and to be a living person is to be moving towards a destination. But the question is, what is the destination of life? What is the final end of your life? This is an important question because what we believe to be our destination will largely determine the road we take to get there. If we believe that the person who dies with the most toys wins, if we believe that this is the end of life, then we will go down the road of materialism- acquiring as many material things as possible. Ends are important, they affect life today.

The problem with some ends is that they are false ends that turn out to be roads to nowhere. To go down one of these roads is to wind up with a life lived for nothing of value, to go on a journey to achieve nothing. False ends not only sabotage real future achievements but they also lead to an unfulfilling life in the present. A false end will result in false interpretations of the present, robbing us of a real and true life.

The importance of knowing and living for the true end of life can not be overstated. I believe that God has given his Church the season of Advent as a time to reflect on the true end of our life.

The themes of last things permeate Advent, the themes of the second coming of Christ, judgment, hell and heaven. These themes help us see our true end, which is to see the face of God in the face of Jesus. Advent is the season when we prepare to meet Jesus at the end of our lives. And as we prepare to see Jesus in His second coming, miraculously we are able to correctly interpret and prepare for Jesus' first coming at Christmas. We are only able to understand the beginning of this journey in Bethlehem in light of its true end.

Please take the time to reflect and pray on the end themes of Advent and think about what should be your spiritual journey, what road should you take to your true end. Jesus will help you and guide you until you see him face to face.

Your friend in Christ,
Father George

A WITNESS

My wife and I recently moved from San Jacinto to Romoland. We're now living in the shadow of a large hill that blocks quite a bit of our radio reception. We get two stations quite clearly, the others are pretty iffy. One of the stations is KFROG, in Colton, which plays Country & Western. The other station is an affiliate of KFROG, in Murrieta or Temecula, so it plays the same music. Since this is mostly what we listen to now, I've been noticing an increase in the number of Gospel songs being written and released. And they're not just playing them on Sunday; I'm hearing them during the peak traffic hours, when listeners are stuck in their cars looking at tail-lamps through their windshields.

One song that stands out in my mind, and affects me very strongly, is called "A Father's Love." It's in three parts. In the first part, the artist sings about himself as a small boy. He gets into trouble, and waits for his father to get home – he's prepared for the worst. When his father arrives, he picks up the boy and sits him on his knee, and proceeds to tell him the secret of a father's love.

In the second part, the little boy has grown up to be a man. He's married, and, showing his sense of humor, God has given him a son of his own. The little boy gets into trouble, and waits for his father to get home. When he arrives, he sits his son on his knee, and tells him the secret his father shared with him, about a father's love.

The first two parts build up to the third:

"Last night I dreamed I died and stood outside those Pearly Gates.

Suddenly, I realized there must be some mistake.

If they know half the things I did they'll never let me in.

Then, somewhere from the other side, I heard these words again:

'Let me tell you a secret about a Father's love.

A secret that my Daddy said was just between us.

You see, daddies don't just love their children every now and then:

It's a love without end, Amen.

It's a love without end, Amen."

There are two reasons that this song affects me the way it does: First, I have a daughter that gets all of her father's love. Without end, Amen. Second, that man standing outside the Pearly Gates is me. I have not led a good life, and I haven't been a good person. If they know even a tenth of what I've done, I'll never get inside.

But our Saviour, Jesus, is inside, telling us that our Daddy loves us. All we have to do is follow Jesus, and ask for forgiveness, and our Daddy will forgive us, because He loves us. Not because of who we are, or what we have, or haven't done, but in spite of it.

This is the message I try to share with people around me --- anyone that'll stand still long enough to let me tell them.

I work at a body shop, in Murrieta. About five weeks ago, the shop chartered a boat to take the employees and some guests on a deep-sea fishing trip. Do we have any fishermen here, tonight?

Okay, I'm going to back up here, a little bit.

There's a story in the Bible, about our Lord Jesus walking along the shore of a large body of water – maybe the Sea of Galilee? He looked out into the water, and he saw some men in a little boat, casting their pitiful little net over the side, trying to catch some fish. Jesus told them to throw it over the other side. They did it, and hauled in so many fish they nearly sank their boat. Then He told them to drop the net, and leave the fish behind, and to follow Him and He would teach them to be Fishers of Men.

Has anyone here decided to follow Jesus? (Everyone raised their hands.)

So, let me ask again --- Do we have any fishermen here, tonight? (Everyone held their hands up high.)

Okay, that's better.

So, we chartered this boat to take us out deep-sea fishing. We left from Seaforth Landing, over by Sea World, and went south of the Mexican border to the Coronado Islands. We hit about four different spots, with more success at some spots than at others.

I hadn't had much luck – a couple of bites – and I hadn't landed anything.

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My brother Wayne hadn't had even a bite. We finally dropped anchor at the last fishing spot of the day. I had a couple of nibbles, but nothing caught. I finally decided that this was my last chance. I grabbed a lively sardine from the bait tank, hooked him on my line, and cast him out. I put my hands together (with the fishing pole between them), and prayed. "Dear Heavenly Father, please don't embarrass me like this. I've never been skunked on a fishing trip - I've at least caught some mackerel or bonita, or something --- please put something on my line. I've got a family to feed.... (well, I do! We just aren't depending on my catch for our next meal.....) I work with these guys - let me catch something, Please?"

And I got a hit on my bait. I flipped the catch on the reel, and started reeling it in --- nothing there.

I released the catch on the reel, and let the bait swim out. I prayed again --- and got another hit. I flipped the catch, reeled in a bit, and there was nothing there. I did this 4-5 times, and was, finally, running out of line. So I decided to just reel it in and hang it up for the day.

When my bait was only about 30 yards away from the boat, I felt a strong pull on the line, and the pole bent double. I fought for about 10 minutes, and landed a 12 pound yellow tail (not the biggest catch of the day, but I was very happy). I thanked my Father as the deckhand gaffed the fish and pulled it on board.

My brother Wayne, however, had hung up his pole for the day.

Let me tell you about my brother: For those of you who don't know him, he is a social butterfly. You could lock him up in a room with only a rock for company, and he'd keep the rock entertained for three hours! He is a wealth of jokes, stories, and insight.

So, while we were moving from one fishing hole to the next, and once he'd given up fishing, he'd make his way around the boat and talk to the other guys on board - chatting away, keeping them company, and telling stories & jokes and God only knows what.

On the way home, at the end of the day, Wayne was complaining that he hadn't caught anything, again. I didn't say a word - I had my fish!

The next workday, Monday, I was sitting at my computer getting some forms ready for the morning walk, and Chris, one of the guys on the trip (he sits on just the other side of my desk) said, "You know, that friend of yours --- Wayne? --- he's really a great guy! He just came up to me on the boat and starts talking to me. You know, I didn't know about all the stuff you guys did when you were down in Peru. That was really cool!! You guys are great! And I walked past him, later, and he was talking Spanish to Bennie --- that was so cool!"

Hmm.

A day or so later, Johnnie comes up to me and says, "You know, that friend of yours - what was his name? Yeah - Wayne! He's pretty cool. He just started talking to me when we were out fishing - you guys did a lot of cool stuff down in Peru - that's really cool!"

Hmmmm.

On Friday, I walked up to Bennie, one of the car detailers that speaks very little English, to ask him about one of the cars. His face lights up and he says, "Your amigo, Wayne? He's a very fine man! He talked to me for a long time about Peru - that's bueno what you guys do...."

Okay, let's check the score, here: I caught a fish, had it skinned, and it's home in the freezer. Wayne didn't catch any fish, but he landed these three men that are still talking about our missionary work. I think I lost!

I'm working on that --- but my Father forgives me, because He knows I'm still a work in progress.

So, I want to leave you with some words of wisdom tonight: "A horse can find his own way to water, but a pencil has to be lead."

Thank you, Good Night.

Russ Bogue

at the November Grand Ultreya

Don't Forget!!

Back to the Mountain

Details in the October *Forward*,
On the website: www.sdcursillo.org

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

The operating budget adopted for Year 2004 was \$45,500 – a large figure that provides for a host of activities. This amount covers the costs of the fall and spring weekends, the Hispanic weekends, Back-to-the-Mountain, Day of Deeper Understanding, and ECLW. It includes the costs of all the ways we keep in touch with each other....the printing and mailing of the *Forward*, our website, the Saint's Roster, publications, songbooks, and *Ultreyas*. It also includes our commitment to the National Episcopal Cursillo.

I am happy to report that we are *much* closer to “breaking even” than we usually are at this point in the year. This is a result of faithful contributions from all of you during the year, and the incredible generosity of some. Bless you!

As we contemplate the many opportunities and challenges of the coming year, we ask you to remember our ongoing need of your support. Your contributions are always gratefully received and carefully used in Christ's name.

Please note that once again I will be sending out statements in January for persons who have made contributions of over \$100. If you do *not* get a statement but would like to have one – regardless of the size of your contribution – please let me know by email, telephone or note.

May God's love continue to shine on you and through you during this coming year.

In His Service,
JoAn Taylor, Treasurer

Cursillos in Christianity
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(Ed.'s Note: Web readers must supply their own envelope!)

From the Rector, #113

“So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us...”
2 Corinthians 5:20

You may be aware that the last Men's Three-Day Weekend (October 21 – 24) was postponed since the low count of four new Cursillistas was insufficient to ensure a successful weekend. So instead of the Men's weekend, our Cursillo #111 team hosted a successful Cursillo community overnight with a dialog on Sponsorship as a focus. Darryl Peralta, our new Secretariat Chair, is continuing this initiative and with his team will be addressing many of the issues that resulted in the cancellation of #111.

I was pleased, honored, and excited to be chosen as Rector of Weekend #111. As Rector of #113, I am well prepared and looking forward to the Spring weekend to complete the work our team started. Our theme: “We are ambassadors for Christ” will remain as will many of our #111 team members. But, due to work and personal schedule conflicts, I expect some of our team members will need substitutes so I encourage you to search your hearts and prayerfully consider if you are being called to work this weekend. Please apply soon since I expect the team will fill quickly.

The men's Spring weekend starts Thursday April 21st. I anticipate our team meetings will be the prior three weekends in April.

Whether or not you are available to work the Spring weekend, I ask that you pray for our team as we form, and for Christ's direction as you encourage your friends to attend this weekend and prepare for your role as sponsor.

In Christ's Love,

Jim Macemon
Rector, #113

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From the Rectora, #114

Look for the Rectora's message
in the February *Forward*.

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CURSILLO WORK APPLICATION

Men's Team Women's Team
 Weekend Sunday Angel Weekend Sunday Angel
Date of Cursillo you wish to work _____ Your age group: Under 30 30-40 40-50 50-60 Over 60

NAME: _____ Occupation: _____

ADDRESS: _____ Parish: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ HOME PH: _____

WORK PH: _____ E-mail: _____

When and where did you make your Cursillo Three-Day Weekend? _____

Cursillo #	CURSILLO WORK EXPERIENCE (most recent first)	
	Location	Duties and/or Rollos given
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Please comment on any special talents or interests that you would like God to use preparing for and during the 3-Day Weekend; including musical talents, altar guild, chalice bearer, calligraphy, artistic talents, computer talents, etc:

I am currently involved in a Group Reunion: Yes, No please explain _____

Any special diet or health needs, or physical limitations?

Anything else you feel led to say:

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DECEMBER

- 11 Servant Community, 8:30 am—12 noon
Church of the Good Samaritan, followed by
the Secretariat meeting
- 19 Deposit for Back to the Mountain due,
see *October Forward*.
- 25 “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son
is given; and his name shall be called
Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God,
the Everlasting Father, the Prince of
Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

JANUARY

- ASAP Spring Weekend Work Applications
- 2 Registration Cutoff for Back to the Mountain
- 7-9 Back to the Mountain (see *October Forward*, website)

Don't Forget!! (again!!)

Servant community / secretariat

Saturday, December 11

8:30 am to ??

Church of the good Samaritan

