



# Forward

## Cursillo in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego

Volume XIII

August 2008

Our Mission: To Christianize Environments and Develop Lay Leadership

### From the Chair

When I ask people if they'd like to attend a Cursillo weekend, they often get a funny look on their face and begin to act like they want to run away. It's probably how I used to look when I was asked if I had taken Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, during that time in my life when I wasn't attending church.

I find it particularly surprising because when I was asked to go to Cursillo, I asked what it was and my sponsor told me the dates and that I'd have fun, and I said, "Okay." I had to drive myself to the Forest Service Campground, I had to pay my own way, and a stranger called and gave me a wrapped package to deliver to her husband (you guessed it: palanca). I went to Cursillo in Mississippi, and I know I was meant to be there at that weekend, listening to those talks, because it changed my life forever. It was rustic, the Rollo Room was crowded, and the team had to move the piano from the Rollo Room to the room we used as a Chapel, across a rough road, every time we had a service. We were in that camp because the Episcopal camp in Mississippi, Gray Center, had been destroyed by a tornado a few months earlier. Such a dedicated group of people made up that team! I was inspired by them and by the women and men at my table.

I spent 6 months processing all the information and asking questions, mostly about what the Holy Spirit did in people's lives. In fact, it's probably people like me during that period of time after my weekend who scare people about Cursillo, but it is also people like me whose lives are spiritually transformed by the Cursillo experience. I was brought up Episcopalian, but I wasn't brought up knowing much about prayer, about God acting in my life, or knowing that there were so many in people who dedicate so much time to making things happen in the life of the Parish. I know my weekend was no more special than your weekend was to you, and that is one of the wonderful things about the Cursillo method - Episcopalians all through the country, in fact the world - get the same information, ideally, out of the weekends. Not everyone has the same reaction, and yes, I have heard "bad" talks, but even those talks contain the same basic information as the "good" talks. We have all been given a gift, and I hope to pass that gift on to one of the people I have on my personal list to talk to about the fall weekend (if I can get them to sit down and listen!)

I hope at least one of them will go! Asking people to attend Cursillo is a lot like telling people about God, but it is worth it when you see their faces during the weekend or at the

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Clausura and know that they have learned a little more about the Holy Trinity and their place in the life of their church, and more about how to be children of God. Please consider taking that big chance and invite another Episcopalian to attend a Cursillo weekend. Someone asked you, and as the song says, "Pass My Love Around."

I was really happy one day when one of the Bishops writing for the Lambeth blog (available at edsd.org) mentioned that a high point of his day was opening a large envelope and finding Palanca from the Cursillistas in his Diocese. Our Secretariat wrote Palanca for our Bishop Jim, and also for the Bishops of Utah and Nevada (who don't have active Cursillo communities).

Please sign up to work the fall weekend. There should be three large sleeping yurts (with bathrooms) available for part of the team by then- it will be a little different each weekend for a while as Camp Stevens rebuilds from the fires last fall.

Peace of the Lord, Jane Schuler

## The June Servant Community Meeting

### Here's what happened

On June 14, 2008

The Servant Community met at Good Sam's amid good coffee, good donuts and muffins, good fellowship, and good music provided by Diane Blaisdell. After opening prayer and introductions, the Theme Speaker, Stew Dadmun, gave the most amazing in-depth Rollo on True Apostolic Action - What it is, and what it is not. This is, in part, what I heard:

Apostolic Action is making friends with other persons to make them friends of Christ. It's sharing, for a moment, the Christ in us with others, to help them discover the Christ in them. It's a natural, non-contrived response with those in our environments we come in contact with on a personal basis. It's usually not huge things or major encounters. It's real, it's natural, and it's spontaneous. It's doing what Jesus would have us do to love our neighbors, in a way that demonstrates our love of Christ, with a gentle invitation for them to join us in that love.

You know, it's satisfying and fulfilling to do good deeds, to get busy at Church, and to do good works. Many report these activities as Action during Group Reunions. While these actions are wonderful and may bring others closer to Christ, it's not Apostolic Action.

After a moment of reflection, those present were asked to consider sharing a true apostolic action experience including: the most recent, the best, and the worst.

What happened next was truly inspiring. Person after person gave a witness talk on a personal Apostolic Action taken, each lasting 5-10 minutes, was from the heart, and

was a real and natural response to an encounter in one of their environments. The talks were given spontaneously, with no notes or preparation. We were hearing, without any pre-planning, a series of witness talks that met the classic definition of "The Ultreya Witness Talk". As a matter of fact, any grouping Cursillista, living the Fourth Day, should be able to give a witness talk at an Ultreya at a moments' notice, without preparation or notes. What a beautiful experience!

After a short break, we reassembled in Open Forum to have a free exchange of Apostolic Actions that can be taken at: home/family, work, parish, recreation, and other environments. More on this later.

All in all, this was one of the best Servant Community Meetings I've ever participated in! See you at the next meeting on September 13, 2008 at Good Sam's at 9:00 AM.

Larry Salvadori  
Servant Community Servant



## From the Rector

*In order to be a leader for God, you must  
first be a servant. from Matthew 20:26*

Greeting to all Cursillistas!

We are off and running. Our Core Team is complete and our first Core Team Meeting is scheduled for August the 9<sup>th</sup>. Here is a list of people who are on the core team:

Laurie Oakland – Experienced Rectora  
Bryan Chan – Assistant Rector  
Diane Blaisdale – Assistant Rectora  
Fr. John Sieber – Head Spiritual Director  
Pat Parsons – Head Musician  
Rochelle Thompson – Head Cook  
Susan Miller – Assistant Kitchen Cook  
Craig Noble – Assistant Camp Cook

Please consider working the weekend as we still have a lot of vacant positions. Also, prayerfully consider who from your church might be ready to participate in a Cursillo weekend. We need candidates to make this weekend happen.

The team meetings are:

Sept. 6 - St. Albans - 8:30 to 3:00  
Sept. 13 – First-time Cocineros, Table Leaders, Rollistas -  
Good Sam's – 9:00-Noon  
Sept. 27 - St. Albans - 8:30 to 3:00  
Oct. 11 - St. Albans - 8:30 to 3:00  
October 16-19 – Cursillo #125 - Camp Stevens

Frank Orta, Rector Cursillo #125

## WITNESS TALK GIVEN AT ULTREYA - TIM LYONS

As you probably know I don't write my talks. I think through what I have to say and then just give it. When Ted asked me to furnish a written copy that placed a double whammy on me. I not only have to write it but I have to do so after I have given it. Here we go to the best of my recollection.

God Is Good...All the Time. (I started this statement with the anticipation that the All the Time response would not happen, Actually there were a couple.)

Ok that's a better response than I expected but it still shows that you collectively need some "incarceration theology"

I've listened to decades of sermons, gone to countless church meetings, seminars, classes etc., but I have learned more about theology, spirituality, God's love and the Word in prison. The expression "God is Good...All the Time" is a classic example.

Men of God in the prison use it as a greeting. One person seeing another says "God is Good" and the other or others responds with "all the Time". It's a simple message, the constancy of God's love and goodness. It infers the contrast that man is not so steadfast.

Fr. Larry will back this up scripturally while I merely point out examples in everyday life.

I've worked about a dozen Cursillos and twice as many Kairos weekends. That means I've listened to over 400 rollos. Almost all had a witness of some type. From all of this sharing I've learned that many of us have had problems with finance, work, family, health or all of the above. Many of us have had doubts. Many of us have sinned.

Personally, I have never fallen into sin. I have walked, ran, climbed or even crawled through crushed glass to get to sin. It's never been an accident. It's been a decision.

There have been times fueled by either weariness, apathy or some personal problem I have allowed omission to rule.

I know I'm talking to the choir here but by show of hands, how many of you volunteer for something? How many have felt at times that the collective activity wasn't managed very well? How many have felt overworked, under appreciated or poorly utilized? Have you ever gotten tired of the whining or the gossip? How many have allowed any or all of this to cause you to back away from your commitment?

All of that is man being man. Meanwhile God is Good...All the Time. We just don't keep up. That's not how we are wired. That's why we need a savior.

There are some things we can do to improve our performance. We can tune into God through prayer, study and Christian fellowship. Sometimes we might need a break or rest. I was so beaten up by walking the path of Job for a couple years a while back that I just had to slow down, pull back and try to restore my life. Strangely enough I was aided in making my way back by working a Kairos Outside weekend. Some combination of the intense presence of the Holy Spirit, the continual waves of prayer and the glowing sacrifice of loving volunteers places you back where you belong, bathed in the constant love of God.

God is Good...All the Time.

Tim Lyons

## Ultreyas!

**Saturday, August 9**  
**St. Andrew's La Mesa**  
**4816 Glen St.**

**Ultreya at 11:30 AM**  
**Potluck at 1:00 PM**

**Grouping, Witness, Echo, and Gospel response.**  
**Bring a dish to share, your musical instruments,**  
**song books, fellow Cursillistas and others!**

**Child Care will be provided if you let**  
**Ted Parsons know ahead of time.**  
**tparsons@sdcoe.k12.ca.us**

**Saturday, September 6**

**6:00 P.M. Potluck**

**7:00 P.M. Ultreya**

**Trinity, Escondido**

**Dick Mette is the contact person**

*NOTE: The following is part one of a series of articles submitted by Ted Parsons, taken primarily from the NEC library. They will be published in the Forward as space permits.*

### Overview of Spiritual Direction

The purpose of the Cursillo Movement is to convert Christians to a deeper relationship with God and to help them understand their individual callings to be Christian servant leaders. To accomplish that purpose Cursillo has a strategy and a method. The method of Cursillo is basically one of perseverance. The method is used in the post-Cursillo (Fourth Day) phase and is a means for lay and clergy apostles to meet, share, and plan their apostolic work together in small groups (group reunion) and larger groups (ultreyas) where Cursillistas meet to give life and impetus to a community endeavor. (Spiritual Advisor's Workbook, National Episcopal Cursillo, 1991).

Part of the Fourth Day is to use a rule of life to continue to deepen one's spiritual life. One part of that rule of life is spiritual direction. Spiritual direction is a developing concern within the Church generally and in the Cursillo in particular.... Spiritual direction serves to ...guide the growing Christian into a deeper relationship with his or her Lord (pp 6,10 The Fourth Day First, NEC 1987)

### The Three Day Cursillo Weekend

Discussion of Spiritual Direction is part of the outline of four weekend talks: Obstacles to a Life of Grace, The Christian Life, Group Reunion, and Ultreya. Yet, no elaboration is possible on the weekend because of time constraints. Therefore, people may leave the weekend with a vague impression that everyone is supposed to be under spiritual direction. Or we may not have remembered hearing anything at all about it!

### What is Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual direction is holy listening, guiding, and suggesting, from a person who is mature in his or her spiritual journey. Spiritual direction is not commanding, psychological counseling, confession, or psychotherapy. Some definitions state that spiritual direction is not direction at all. The Holy Spirit provides the direction through a spiritual director. Therefore, other terms are used to emphasize the Holy Spirit directing us. Spiritual friend, soul friend, spiritual guide, and spiritual companion are some of the other terms used. Another way of differentiating the terms is that a spiritual director has formal training in the process, such as through a university or through lengthy study receiving a certificate or degree upon completion.

### What is the brief history of spiritual direction?

Spiritual direction has been part of Christian tradition for centuries and was part of Biblical tradition before the Christian era. It's part of the discipling model. Men called the Desert Fathers lived in the third century A.D. Their desire for growing in holiness drew them into the desert so that they might be alone. Their model was Jesus who was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness for forty days and nights. (Matthew 4:1) As these Desert Fathers grew in holiness, others heard about them and sought them for counsel and direction. At this point, the ministry of spiritual direction began in the Church.

Look for the next Forward in early October.  
Articles, calendar events and other materials are due  
(preferably in Word format) **no later than September 26.**

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## The “E” Word!

Evangelism is defined in a dictionary as the preaching of the Christian gospel, missionary activity. Cursillistas use apostolic action as a synonym. Yet, we truly are evangelizing when we do apostolic action. Action means we actual do something, not just think about something to do. We all know that too.

However, why do so many think “evangelism” is a scary word? I think that it is because we do not fully understand the term. In fact, because all of us have a somewhat different definition, it is difficult for us to agree or to define it explicitly. The good news is that our different perceptions and definitions are okay. Let me share why I think we do not have as great a problem as we might be thinking.

Last night, our parish had a kickoff evangelism workshop that will continue for two more Tuesday nights. We had about 10 people present. Not bad, for an “E” workshop! Our leader is not from our parish and is a young adult. He is so inspirational!

The first thing we did was brainstorm about what we think of when we hear the word “evangelism”. . Here is what I remember about what our leader wrote on the board from our many responses. They are in no particular order. Maybe you can identify with some or many.

super Christian	many faceted	boldness and humility
sharing Jesus with others	bible thumping	in your face
storytelling	misunderstood word	witness among friends
off putting	fire and brimstone	being disciples
apostleship	scary	Great Commission

Christianity means we are to evangelize. Another word that was mentioned in conversation but not put on the board was “churchianity”. I think the person did not realize how profound the slip of the tongue was! Think about it. We may not be practicing Christianity but “churchianity”! To me that means we are focused inwardly about growing our church membership exclusively, and not focusing outwardly to share our faith in the world!

We also took a test the first night! The results gave us an excellent indication of our evangelism styles. We answered 36 questions from 0 (none at all) to 3 (very much) related to the styles. The styles on this particular test exercise are: confrontational, intellectual, testimonial, interpersonal, invitational, and serving. My highest was serving, followed in a tie between testimonial and interpersonal. So, I should use my strengths to share my faith about Jesus with others. So that means I do not have to be a super Christian. I do not have to be someone I am not. And I can use what I am already comfortable with as my style or styles. All these ideas are good news for me-and us! Remember that our perception of the meaning of evangelism will determine what we do and how we do it to share Jesus with others. So we need to consciously figure out what we think of when we hear “evangelism”! Then we can move forward.

Next week, we are going to learn more about how to share our faith. Maybe I shall share ideas from the next two sessions. I can't wait!

Peace and Joy,  
Ted Parsons



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### AUGUST

- 7 Secretariat, Good Samaritan, Brown Bag 6:00 PM, Meeting 6:30 PM
- 9 Ultreya, St. Andrews Encinitas, Ultreya 11:30, Potluck 1:00 PM

### SEPTEMBER

- 6 Cursillo Team Meeting, St. Alban's, 8:30-3:00
- 6 Ultreya, Trinity Escondido, Potluck 6:00 PM, Ultreya 7:00 PM
- 13 Servant Community – First time Cocinero & Rollo Room Training, 9:00-Noon
- 13 Secretariat, Good Samaritan, 12:30 PM
- 26 Deadline for Forward articles (see p. 4)
- 27 Cursillo Team Meeting, St. Alban's, 8:30-3:00

### OCTOBER

- 2 Secretariat, Good Samaritan, Brown Bag 6:00 PM, Meeting 6:30 PM
- 11 Cursillo Team Meeting, St. Alban's, 8:30-3:00
- 16-19 Coed Cursillo #125, Camp Stevens, Frank Orta Rector
- 23-26 Coed Hispanic Cursillo, Camp Stevens