



FORWARD

*Welcome, Newly
Elected Secretariat
Members for 2024*

Miguel Cosio
Rev. Roberto Maldonado
Rhonda Muir
Ruben Rodriguez

*Thank You, Retiring
Secretariat Members*

Kit Chevalier
Nancy Calvert

From our Cursillo President

Jill Mora

This message to the San Diego Episcopal Cursillo community is my last message in my role as Secretariat President 2023. It has been an honor and privilege to serve God and our Cursillo community in this position. At our Secretariat retreat in January 2024 our President-elect, Ginny Rodriguez assumes responsibility as President.

Here, I wish to share some reflections on our ministry and our accomplishments and challenges this past year. To begin my year of service, I led the Secretariat in praying in a new Cursillo rooster, who we affectionately named Señor Gallo.

Sr. Gallo has served us well as a symbol of Cursillo at our Secretariat meetings and other important events. It has been great fun reminding each other of the origin of the rooster as a representative of our ministry from the song De Colores... "Canta el gallo..." The rooster's song expresses the beauty of a new morning and the splendor of God's creation that we celebrate as Cursillistas with our commitment to spreading the light and love of our Lord Jesus Christ in the world. For me, Sr. Gallo also serves as a reminder of Cursillo's history in Spain as a "short course" in Christianity for the pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela, The Way of St. James the Apostle, to worship and honor God with their spiritual sacrifice. We Cursillistas also walk the Camino de Compostela in service to God by witnessing to how Christianity has transformed our lives.*(continued on p. 11)*



God's Type of Love

We must understand two key words in the Bible if we are to understand the meaning of Biblical love. The word **hesed** in the Old Testament is the key word for God's love towards us. In the Old Testament the word **hesed** means God's patient, loving kindness. It also means God's steadfast love. The Jewish people were continually disobeying God doing sinful and stupid acts. They were like a small child rebelling against a parent. God is the patient, loving, and kind parent in the midst of all this disobedience.

The second word that we must understand is **agape**, a Greek word, which means unconditional love, expecting nothing in return. **Agape** is when a gift is freely given to someone without expectations. The rabbis, when translating the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek, shortly before the time of Jesus, chose the word **agape** in lieu of the word **hesed**. Both **hesed** and **agape** tell us of God's love towards us, but are also the kind of love we should have towards God and towards other people. Jesus is the ultimate

revelation of **hesed** and **agape**. As our mediator, our advocate, and our savior, He is both the model and the means of **hesed** and **agape**.

We should note that the Greek language has many words for love.

These are:

- **eros** – “romantic love;
- **philia** – “affectionate love;”
- **storge** – “familiar love;”
- **pragma** – “enduring love;”
- **philautia** – “self-love / self-compassion;”
- **ludas** – “playful love;” and
- **agape** – “unconditional Love.”

When **agapan** is used in the New Testament, it is used exclusively as a religious word. It is a God-like love. It refers to God's love flowing to us, or through us towards others. It is by God's grace that we enter into the **agapan** love. It goes beyond the types of love that come naturally to us. In the church we offer ourselves to Jesus and learn how to do acts of **agapan** love.

Your friend in Christ,
Father George



“You have to work a weekend to get the full experience.” I heard this a lot on the last day of ‘My’ weekend and it ended up being true for me.



#135 was my ‘working weekend’ and “Semper Gumby” was the mantra that brought joy to my heart, laughter to my soul, and always a smile to my face. Sometime during the experiences of 3 team meetings, one Newbie training, many emails, many phone calls, and so many prayers I finally got the message that I was in good hands--relax, Debbie. So, I started to search for what I could be grateful for rather than what I could be worried about.

I got to:

- make palanca for the Candidates and Team. Deciding what to make and praying as I made each one opened my heart to hope and dream for those attending. I even made one for me.
- come full circle in greeting and holding people’s luggage on that first evening. *(continued on p. 4)*

- get good at reading schedules, asking for help, and I was even able to answer questions for others. Semper Gumby was a joyful lifestyle for this weekend and I learned to laugh a lot when I heard people reminding others that we were on “God’s Time” as I also seemed to need that reminder.
- pray with others, over others, and on my own.
- be comforted when I felt stupid or unprepared.
- comfort others at their times of need.
- experience being exhausted and energized at the very same time.



Among the many gifts the Holy Spirit sent my way, my most treasured is Jennifer’s witness. We were roommates for this working weekend and her greeting to me was “You’re that angel I saw on my weekend!” She saw me as I swirled around in the light snow that one morning. She told me how I sparkled (glitter everywhere) under the light shining down on me—God’s love. You see I had already started to doubt and downplay that glorious gift, but Jennifer reminded me it really did happen! There are times I still doubt the wonderous things that I witness but I will never ever again doubt that day, that experience, or that much love being gently showered on me.

Serving is the second half of the Cursillo experience. I was prepared to serve that weekend and see what happens behind the scenes. I was not prepared for the gifts bestowed on me once again from our Lord through this community.

Debbie Kistler #134

Editor’s note: You can read about Debbie’s First Cursillo Weekend in the April 2023 issue, page 5.

Grand Ultreya at St. Andrew's

Ruben Rodriguez, 4th Day Chair



The Ultreya at noon on Saturday, November 18, 2023, began with grace and a delicious Potluck for about two dozen Cursillistas who were appropriately hungry and appreciative. The fellowship was lively; friends, both old and new, were happy to see each other and share the meal and conversation.

The feast was followed with music led by Bart Newsom and the Cursillo Musical Saints. "Hallelujah—Your Love is Amazing" brought everyone together in praise to the Lord. "Blessed Be Your Name," "Jesus, Name Above All Names," and "In Christ Alone" spiritually prepared the crowd for the Group Reunion. Six groups met for about half an hour in various locales in and about the Parish Hall to share their testimonies about piety, study and action.

Then the business of electing new members for the Secretariat ensued. By raucous acclamation the following were elected: 3 lay members—Miguel Cosio, from St. Philip's; Ruben Rodriguez, from Good Shepherd; and Rhonda Muir, from All Soul's; and one clergy member—Roberto Maldonado, from St. Matthew's. Appreciation and congratulations were expressed by the relieved crowd.

If you would like to host an Ultreya at your parish contact Ruben by email or send a message through sd cursillo.org - [Contacts](#)

The Rectors for Cursillo Weekend #150, Darryl and Barbara Peralta, gave Witness and Echo Talks, respectively, based on the Theme of this Ultreya and of the upcoming Cursillo Weekend: "Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10. Darryl sought to speak about "know that I am God."

He noted that one of the purposes of Cursillo is to help Cursillistas to develop and deepen their relationship with God. To really know God one needs to interact in some way with Him. This involves two-way communication. Darryl shared seven such incidences in his life. Here are a few.

Our plans might not be God's plans--While getting dressed to serve as an acolyte one Sunday, he couldn't find the carefully selected cross he had brought from home for the occasion, so reluctantly wore the regular acolyte cross. When he returned to the sacristy after the service, there was his "coordinated cross" hanging on the doorknob in plain sight. God is the one in control. Not Darryl.

The Creator is greater than the creature--Sitting in his back yard one day, he watched a hummingbird deftly dancing in the air, flitting about in the amazing way *(continued on p. 6)*

hummingbirds do. Just then a jet liner from Lindbergh Field flew overhead. Man understands and can make planes fly, but can't make them fly like a hummingbird.

God can do the things we can't--Darryl smoked for over 40 years and tried to quit twice without success. One day at work he felt what he thought was heart burn. When he mentioned this while getting coffee, a medic there told him to get himself immediately to the ER. He was having a heart attack. He spent 10 days in the hospital after surgery, and hasn't had even an urge to smoke since.

God can show his love through others--Darryl and his family, grandchildren included, went to see the Polar Bears at the San Diego Zoo. As they made their way up the very steep hill on the way back, he tried not to show how hard the climb was for him, owing to his lung and heart issues. He lagged behind, but became aware of a presence behind him. He turned back to find two of his grandchildren there making sure Grandpa made it up the hill safely.

Barbara started her talk with the admission that when she climbed the hill after seeing the polar bears, two of her grandchildren had to push her up the hill. Barbara's talk focused on the "Be Still" part of the verse. She shared about a time when they were transferred by the Navy to South Carolina. She was Ombudsman for Darryl's ship to the wives of the enlisted crew. When she would receive a disheartening message like, "Ship delayed 6 more weeks," this was an opportunity to "Be Still" and wait, and encourage the other wives to do the same.

Barbara shared when she and Darryl went to the Cursillo Retreat, "Back To The Mountain" she was surprised when asked, "Ready to give your Rollo?" Initially, anxiety set in, but she again was reminded to "Be Still". She secluded herself, missed some meals, but finished the rollo at the last minute.

In recent example, Darryl and Barbara were unexpectedly asked to be rectors of Cursillo #150. This was yet another chance to be still, commit everything to prayer, and listen to God.

Barbara's last example was about having waited 7 years for a family member to make contact with her. It began when she served as the trustee of a deceased brother's estate. Once she had finished the administration and distribution of the estate, her younger brother did not speak to her or communicate in any way after that. It worried Barbara that she did not know the reason why. Finally, after 7 years he responded. Her lesson from that experience was: be patient, be still, and know that God is with you always. *(continued on p. 10)*

From the Palanca Coordinator

Kit Chevalier



2023 is winding down and all the Cursillo Weekends that I know of are complete. I'm sure more will be posted in the next months for 2024.

In the meantime, please continue your prayers for our own weekend in February. Start your Palanca now. We don't have all the names of the team or candidates, but its not too early to get it ready.

Have a joyous Christmas and a blessed 2024.

Kit Chevalier
Palanca Chair



Database Updates!

Have you moved? Changed your phone number?
Have a new email address?
--We want to hear from you.

Has someone in our community passed away? Left
the area? Moved into the area but went to Cursillo
elsewhere, or in a different expression?
--We want to hear from you.

The only way we know of changes, is if someone tells us. It is SIMPLE! Just go to sdcursillo.org. At the bottom of the home page is a short form to fill out with your message. Don't forget to include your parish. That's it.

Thank you for keeping us up to date.

Merry Christmas, Kit



A Look Back and a Look Ahead

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

New Leadership of the Servant Community--As the year winds down and the new year begins, we all are first thankful to God for all the blessings of the year. This year began with a new president, as I passed the baton to Jill Mora from the Parish of the Good Shepherd in Bonita. I also began a different position on the Secretariat as your Servant Community Convener. Larry Salvadori did an outstanding job in this position, and I only prayed I could fill his shoes as well as he served the Cursillo Community. The mission has always been the same. Bringing people to Christ through grouping and keeping the commitment of Ultreya to "Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ".

Emphasis on Cursillo at the Parish Level--The Parish Representatives have been out and about in the Diocese bringing the good news of Cursillo to those communities that do not have representatives. This is an ongoing project that will continue throughout the coming year. We always need Cursillistas willing to visit other parishes, including Lutheran parishes that are not aware of our Cursillo ministry. We have many parishes in the Diocese without a representative. We need Cursillistas who would like to visit these parishes to expand our ministry to those who need it. Please see me and I will direct you towards those parishes. This is a Servant Community Project. Let's make it happen.

Remembering a Cursillo Friend--We also celebrated the life of Elery Gross from Yuma Arizona, a truly beloved brother in Christ. Thank you to those that have shared their best memories of him since his passing. He is truly missed.

Continuing to Hold Local and Grand Ultreyas--We also celebrated Ultreyas and Grand Ultreyas where we elected new Secretariat members. Congratulations and welcome aboard to the new members. May your experience as a leader in this capacity be fulfilling as you serve Christ and the Community. It's never too late to serve on the Governing body of a Christian movement that is bigger than us. It's not too much to ask to serve on God's team. Please thank Ginny Rodriguez for her role as president for the next year. Come see me or any of the Secretariat members to serve your community in this way.

We also went "BACK TO THE MOUNTAIN"-- Held October 27th-29th, this retreat gave us a little preview of what our new venue at Whispering Winds will be like for February's Cursillo #150. Fr. George lead the weekend topic of *(continued on p. 9)*

loving your neighbor as yourself. It was very interesting to delve into the bible on this topic as we all need that awesome power of LOVE from above. To the point of the love of Christ's death on the cross. as well as an inward look at all types of LOVE. Thank you, Fr. George, for your leadership that weekend.



Diocesan Convention--I also had the opportunity to attend the Convention at the Cathedral downtown. The Cursillo Community had a booth in the Great Hall, where a video of Whispering Winds, the venue for the next Weekend, played and prayers were offered for those who asked. Brochures and bookmarks were handed out and a few parishes were interested in

bringing the good news of Cursillo where our ministry can expand. Bishop Susan stopped by and was delighted to see our ministry display and thanked us for being there. Rachel Ambasing was one of the new leaders to begin her ministry in Ocean Beach! That was very exciting to watch! Congratulations to Rachel on her new start! Rachel has a story to tell and is bringing people to Christ in that community. We are extremely proud of our Cursillistas who continue their service in Christ.



Cursillo #150--This brings me to our yearly function in Cursillo #150! If you have; not heard the news of the upcoming weekend, now is the time to identify and; sponsor candidates for the weekend and / or become a team member for #150.; If you have not served a weekend in a while, a few things have changed and much has stayed the same. *(continued on p. 10)*

Fr. Peter Sickels was happy to give the Scriptural Response. He started by thanking everyone for showing up to be in the company of God's people. He noted that we are all blessed that the Peraltas will lead us in Cursillo #150. He read the entirety of Psalm 46. He noted that this psalm is meant for the tumultuous times such as we all are experiencing right now. The message of the psalm is to have hope, be still, wait upon the Lord, and know that the Lord is God. He is in control. Amen.

Ruben Rodriguez

The mission is always the same but how we go about our business may vary. The weekend is being held in Julian, at the Catholic Conference Center at Whispering Winds. It is a camp designed with Cursillo principles in mind.

Say YES to Serving and Sponsoring--Our weekend is being led by the dynamic duo Barbara and Darryl Peralta from the Parish of the Good Shepherd in Bonita. The dates are February 22-25, 2024. First Team Meeting is Dec 2, 2023 at St Philip's in Lemon Grove from 9-1 pm. If you are choosing to serve, the commitment begins by saying YES. Serving is important and requires lots of preparation time for team building. Say YES to attending ALL team meetings! Vital instructions on our new location will be given then. If you can't attend a weekend, perhaps say YES to being a sponsor. A sponsor's responsibilities start before the weekend, and don't end until your new Cursillista has the opportunity to join a group, attend an Ultreya, and even work a weekend. It's a big job...and that's why we need you! **WE NEED CANDIDATES!** If there are no candidates...what are we preparing for? Begin praying now for the Holy Spirit to be calling those who should attend.

(Cont. from front page)

Paying it forward is what we do to keep the ministry growing. Bringing people to Christ is the mission. It's that simple. Now that we only have one weekend a year, our drive to sponsor can be more focused, like a stewardship campaign that comes around once a year. Our Diocese is spread out far and wide; from San Ysidro to Idyllwild, from Oceanside all the way to Yuma, with deserts, valleys, mountains and beaches in between. Let's spread the word and find those folks who want more of Christ in their lives. **LET'S SUPPORT OUR NEXT CURSILLO, #150!**

DE COLORES!

Sunny Landry



On April 27-30, 2023 we proclaimed the truth of the Christian faith at Cursillo #149 under the leadership of Rectora Rosaura (Rosie) Medina at the Pine Valley Bible Conference Center. The Cursillo Method of witnessing out of our lived experience and apostolic action brought 12 new Cursillistas into the fold, who now are living the Fourth Day within parishes and communities.

This Weekend was very special in many ways, but I was personally inspired by the way our Team was able to provide a bilingual, bicultural weekend. The Cursillo community generously donated new upgraded simultaneous translation equipment that enabled us to conduct the Weekend in both English and Spanish. This fulfillment of the Lord's calling to us to reach out to the nations included bilingual table leaders and of course, our beloved bilingual clergy, Fr. Carlos García, Fr. Roberto Maldonado, and Mother Lilia Mendoza. The Secretariat is gratified to affirm the Rt. Rev. Dr. Bishop Susan Brown Snook's focus on Service by serving the Hispanic community as fellow pilgrims on our journey of deepening faith and apostolic action through our Cursillo Ministry.

As it turns out, Cursillo #149 was our last Weekend conducted at the Pine Valley Bible Conference Center. This is due to a change in the Camp's business model that resulted in their not being able to accommodate the scheduling of our Weekends. However, the Secretariat immediately convened a search committee that researched the available options for a new facility. In July, we confirmed that our Cursillo #150 will be held at Whispering Winds Catholic Conference Center on February 22-25, 2024 under the leadership of Rector/Rectora Darryl and Barbara Peralta.

We have already "broken in" Whispering Winds Camp with a Back to the Mountain Retreat on October 27-29 lead by Fr. George Calvert and Ruben Rodriguez. The BTTM was about Love in the Bible, where we enjoyed not only the deep and uplifting conversations but beauty of nature at the WW Camp. I was inspired in a prayer session below pine trees where a pair of squirrels were jumping from branch to branch above me. Their frolicking gave me the expression "a leap of faith" a whole new meaning. These were moments when I felt very close to God. We feel very warming welcomed at Whispering Winds Camp as our new venue for our upcoming Weekends.

As Secretariat President, I have been touched and moved by the depth of the commitment of my fellow Secretariat members to the work that we do to *(continued on p. 12)*

“Cursillos in Christianity” was formed in San Diego over 40 years ago. The original bank accounts were opened in 1981, and no longer comply with current banking laws. They have been closed. EDSD will handle our funds through their account, as they do with other diocesan ministries. Our treasurer will continue to handle the books as before.

Starting immediately, please make any checks to Cursillo payable to:

EDSD or Episcopal Diocese of San Diego
and note Cursillo in the memo.

Checks should still be mailed to Judy Brown, our current treasurer, or to the designated address on a particular application. To make a donation electronically, contact Judy directly for instructions.

Thank you all for your support of the Cursillo Ministry.

cont. from pg. 11

From our Cursillo President, cont.

lead the Episcopal Cursillo Ministry. The Secretariat members generously give their time, talent, and treasure to uphold and advance our ministry. The members carry out different roles and responsibilities to attend to all aspects of the the Cursillo movement, method, and ministry. Secretariat members are engaged in visitations to parishes throughout the Diocese to share information about Cursillo and to encourage engagement in speaking our message through Parish Representatives and Ultreyas. We are especially grateful to our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. George Calvert, whose visionary leadership and spiritual guidance are essential to the success of the Secretariat’s endeavors to serve Christ and to be faithful witnesses of God’s love.

I pass the gavel of the Secretariat to Ginny Rodriguez at our December 2023 Secretariat meeting. I affirm that it has been a wonderful experience for me as a Christian. I remember when Fr. George called to ask me if I would be willing to serve as President-elect two years ago. I had only one question: “Do I have to campaign for the office?” He laughed and of course, told me that no campaigning would be necessary, so I accepted. I am so grateful to God and to the Cursillo community for this opportunity to serve.

Jill Mora–Secretariat President 2023

Cursillo Secretariat Contacts

Contact a Secretariat member by email - visit sdcursillo.org - [Contacts](#)

Officers

		Term
Jill Mora	President -2023	2024
Ginny Rodriguez	President Elect - 2024	2023
Judy Brown	Treasurer, Facilities	
Rhonda Muir	Secretary, Parish Rep Network	

Lay

Nancy Calvert	3-Day Weekends	2023
Kit Chevalier	Database, Palanca	2023
Miguel Cosio *	Community Partners	2023
Bob Halleck	4th Day, Parish Rep Network	2025
Debbie Kistler	Pre-Cursillo, Sponsorship	2024
Susan Miller	Communications, Website	2025
Tim Storey	Music Coordinator, Sponsorship	2025
Jeanna Timan	Assoc. Webmaster, Lutheran Partners	2024

Clergy

Rev. George Calvert	Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, Communications	Appt'd
Rev. Carlos Garcia	ECMC Representative, Community Partners	Appt'd
Rev. Canon Nancy Holland	Asst. Spiritual Advisor, 4th Day	2025
Rev. Roberto Maldonado *	Asst. Spiritual Advisor, Pre-Cursillo	2023
Rev. Peter Sickels	Asst. Spiritual Advisor, 3-Day Weekends	2024

*Served a short term and eligible for a full consecutive term

Servant Community

Susan Miller	Forward Editor
Rob Constantine	Photographer
Mike Jewett	Hospitality Coordinator, 3-Day Weekend
Sunny Landry	Servant Community Convener, Parish Rep Network
Chris McKellar	KAIROS Liaison
Craig Noble	ECM Liaison, Grouping Central
Ruben Rodriguez	Ultreya Coordinator

Cursillo Calendar

For the most current information - visit sdcursillo.org - Calendar

12/02/23 #150 Team Meeting #1 St. Phillips 9:00 AM 1:00 PM

12/03/23 Group by Zoom 4:00 PM 5:15 PM

12/07/23 Secretariat Meeting St. Alban's 6:30 PM 8:30 PM

01/07/24 Group by Zoom 4:00 PM 5:15 PM

01/13/24 Secretariat Retreat 9:00 AM 3:00 PM

01/15/24 Forward Deadline All Day

01/20/24 #150 Team Meeting #2 St. Alban's 9:00 AM 12:00 PM

Other Important Dates:

01/22/24 Deadline for Cursillo Candidate Applications

02/22/24 Cursillo #150 Begins

02/25/24 Cursillo #150 Open Clausura at Whispering Winds, Julian



De Colores!

MAKE A FRIEND, BE A FRIEND,....



...BRING A FRIEND TO CHRIST

Dec. 2023 FORWARD