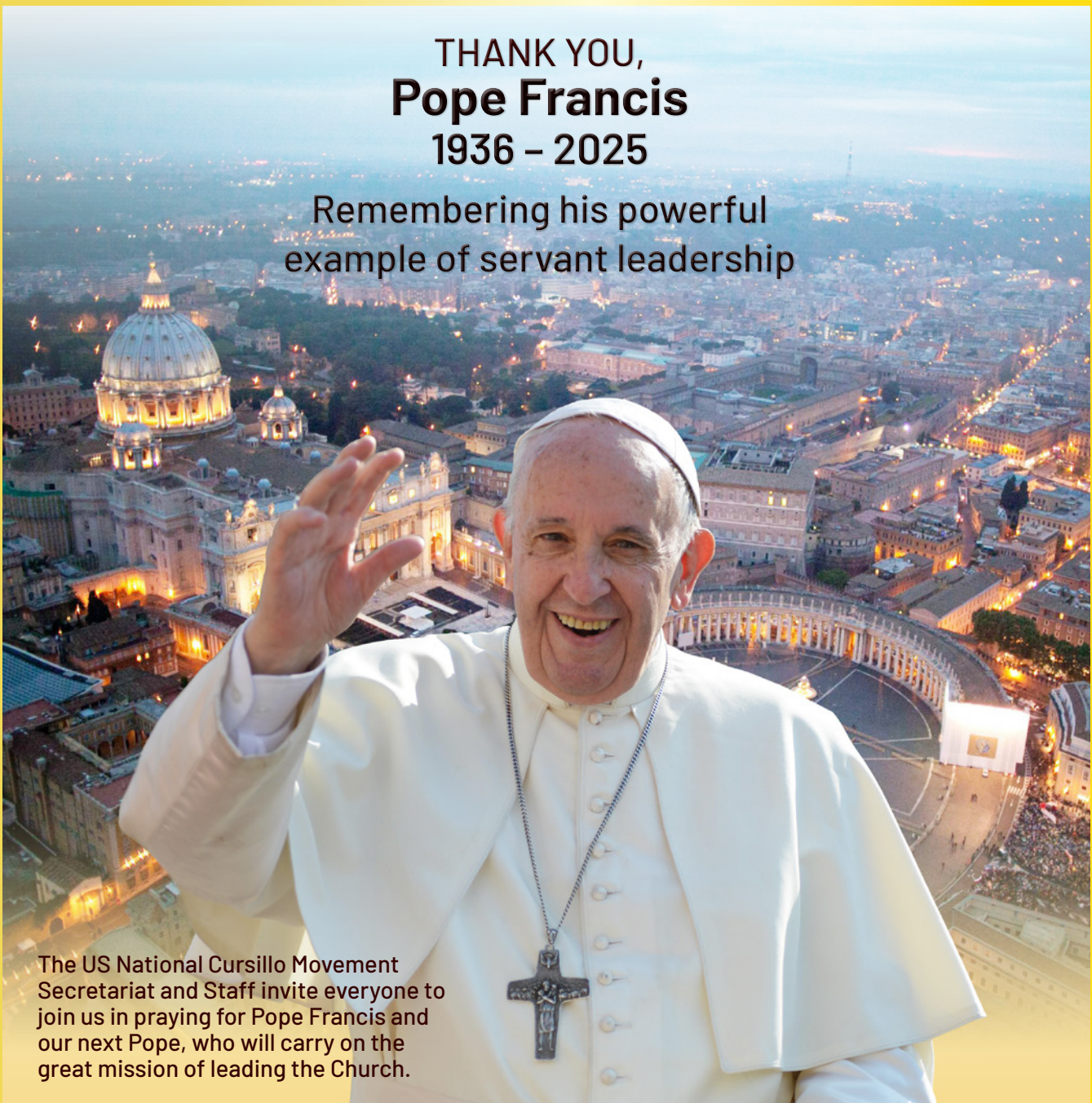


CURSILLOS
in CHRISTIANITY
National Newsletter

April 2025

THANK YOU,
Pope Francis
1936 – 2025

Remembering his powerful
example of servant leadership

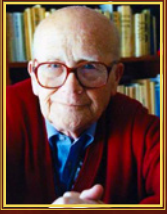


The US National Cursillo Movement
Secretariat and Staff invite everyone to
join us in praying for Pope Francis and
our next Pope, who will carry on the
great mission of leading the Church.



Learning to Listen

"Listening with the ear of the heart," Pope Francis, 2022 World Communications Day



Servant of God

Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló

Founder of
Cursillos in Christianity
1917 – 2008

April 2025

Welcome

What is Cursillo

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The revision and approval of the 2022 OMCC Statutes, along with Pope Francis' Call to Synodality, have given the NACG a sense of hope. It has opened the door to accepting the vital reality that finding unity in our diversity requires everyone to listen to one another respectfully. This concept is both novel and perhaps unique, marking it a first in Cursillo, particularly within the OMCC and NACG.

In his great wisdom and humility, Pope Francis has called us to walk in synodality—a word illuminating our path and encouraging us to respond to the call. Synodality encompasses the collaborative process of listening and discerning what the Holy Spirit communicates to us as God's people and as His Church. It signifies a journey together, enabling both laity and clergy, to fulfill our mission: to be the face of Jesus in the world.

The new structure of the OMCC is now achieving outcomes that were previously unattainable before the revision of the Statutes. Each International Group (IG) now has a representative on the OMCC who possesses a voice and a vote equal to those of all other members. With our NACG representative, this change has made the OMCC feel more accessible, allowing the voices of the NACG to be heard. The perception of the OMCC as another layer of hierarchy is rapidly diminishing. This is synodality in action!

Similarly, the NACG Executive Committee, under its Coordinating Country, Canada, now reflects the diverse cultures within the IG. It gathers officers from each country to ensure that all cultures—Canada, the Caribbean Islands, and the US—are represented. The NACG has also established a "Think Tank of Friends," which promotes openness to diverse opinions and leverages the extensive experience of many Cursillistas throughout the IG who have been on this journey for years. This is synodality in action!

As a group, we blessed our representative as she prepared to participate in the first OMCC meeting held in Mallorca, the birthplace of the Cursillo movement. Members of the OMCC arrived from various parts of the world, bringing diverse perspectives, but united as one under the warm welcome of the Mallorca Secretariat. During their visit to the burial sites of Eduardo Bonnín and Father Gaya, who played pivotal roles in establishing the Cursillo movement, any differences among them in Cursillo became less significant. They engaged in respectful listening, allowing their shared commitment to the Charism to take center stage. This is synodality in action!

As we move forward together, in synodality, may we continue to listen to our Cursillo brothers and sisters more intently, so that we may truly become the people of God!

De Colores

Sheelagh Winston, Canada

WELCOMING NEW STAFF

We are delighted to announce our new part-time staff member, assisting the office manager/administrator, at the National Cursillo Center - Hector Estrada Guerrero from Jarrell, Texas.

Hector is attending New Hampshire University and is studying for a Bachelor's degree in finance. He enjoys working at the National Cursillo Center because of its welcoming atmosphere and dedicated to learning about and serving all of our communities. Hector is proficient in both Spanish and English and welcomes your calls at the Center.

National Cursillo Center
P.O. Box 799
Jarrell, Texas 76537
512-746-2020
512-746-2030 (Fax)

In Gratitude of Service

With gratitude in our hearts and trusting in God's loving providence, we share with you that Nadia Lopez, who generously served as the National Cursillo Service Administrator (NCSA) of the Cursillo Movement in the United States since 2019, has concluded her service as of December 31, 2024. We thank God for her dedication, faithful commitment and the love with which she accompanied the Movement, leaving a significant footprint in service to our Cursillo communities throughout the country.

We also wish to inform you that Carmen Taisacan, Office Manager (2024) and Liliana Garcia, Office Support (2013) have completed their service at the National Cursillo Center in Jarrell, Texas as of year's end. Both performed their duties with dedication and joy, being a testimony of support for our entire Cursillista community. We are deeply grateful for their valuable contribution and ask the Lord to continue to guide their steps in their pursuits that lie ahead.

The National Cursillo Movement remains steadfast in its commitment to support our diocesan movements, confident that the Lord continues to guide our mission.

Our sincere appreciation to Patrick Anderson and his wife, Dominga, who have come out of retirement to manage the Jarrell office temporarily until new staff members are secured. Patrick's dedication to managing our resource center since 2013, was exemplary and in sincere Cursillo Friendship, as anyone who had the pleasure of interaction with him surely knows.

The National Secretariat expresses its deep gratitude to Nadia, Carmen and Liliana for their service. We wish them abundant blessings in every stage the Lord invites them to follow.

We ask you to accompany us with your prayers in this time of transition, trusting in the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit. May we continue to walk with joy and hope in our Fourth Day, sustained by God's grace and sincere friendship as a Christian community of the Cursillo Movement

De Colores!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The National Encounter Registration is **NOW OPEN** - 1st page of website at natl-cursillo.org.
- Posting for the position of National Cursillo Center Administrator is on the website at natl-cursillo.org.
- Any questions on the World Ultreya registration to be held in Rome June 6-8 should be addressed to nationalcursillo2025@gmail.com.

What and who is National?

The perception of "National" around the country is that National refers to the Language Coordinators and Staff, so we wish to clarify our current service structure. The National Secretariat is a service structure recognized by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to be a way of communion, friendship, participation and guidance for the Cursillo Movements. We are unique in the United States due to our vast geographical area and the numerous language groups, dioceses, and cultures.

Let's begin at the diocesan level, where volunteers comprise the *Diocesan Secretariat*, formed from members of the *School of Leaders* who possess the appropriate attitudes, skills, and knowledge. The School of Leaders members are the leaders of the Cursillo Movement, from whom active members may be considered for service to a region.

The National Secretariat consists of volunteers from 12 regions across the United States, known as *Regional Coordinators*. Visit natl-cursillo.org, click on Links & Contacts, and scroll down to The National Cursillo Regional Map to see the makeup of each region by state. Each language group with at least three active dioceses in their region selects a Regional Coordinator to serve a three-year term. The Regional Coordinator joins the National Secretariat.

Four Regional Coordinators serve as members of the National Coordinating Group for two years. The four positions are the *Coordinator*, *Vice-Coordinator*, *Secretary* and *Member At Large*. In November each year, the Vice Coordinator transitions to the Coordinator position, and the Secretary becomes the Member-At-Large. A new Vice-Coordinator and Secretary are elected from the eligible members of the National Secretariat at the fall meeting. The addition of a Treasurer position is being considered. That person will be a voting member of the National Coordinating Group. The long-standing Finance Committee is a group of professional volunteers led by a Finance Chairperson, currently a Regional Coordinator.

These members are appointed by their language groups from the *Regional Service Team*. The Regional Service Teams are comprised of volunteers who do not currently serve on their respective Diocesan Secretariats or in any other capacity within the Cursillo Movement. The Regional Secretariats comprise the Diocesan Coordinators and the Service Team members from that region.

The Service Team is a group of three to five volunteers that work together in any given Region to support and assist the Diocesan Secretariats in accomplishing their goals by scheduling, organizing, and conducting activities as CDCs (Cursillo de Cursillos), Encounters, or Workshops for the formation and ongoing leadership development and fostering contact, cooperation and appreciation of the various Diocesan Secretariats.

The regional Spring and Fall Encounters, Workshops, CDCs hosted by various dioceses in a region are supported by the Regional Coordinators and their Service Teams for each language group. For example, Region 2 has an English and Spanish Regional Coordinator who work together to organize the gatherings.

The *National English and Spanish Language Coordinators* are full-time employees with a salary. The *Vietnamese Language Coordinator* is a part-time position. The National Language Coordinators report directly to the Coordinating Group of the National Secretariat under the guidance of the National

Secretariat. The Coordinator (Chairperson) of the Coordinating Group-Personnel Committee is the National Language Coordinator's primary contact person. The Coordinator will coordinate and provide guidance as necessary to the National Language Coordinators after seeking consultation with the other Coordinating Group members. The Language Coordinators have a voice but no vote. They are trusted advisors and live the Cursillo charism but do not have a vote in any decisions of the National Secretariat. They are, however, tasked with promoting the Cursillo Movement and assisting the Regional Coordinators with the work in the dioceses and regions.

The balance of the National Secretariat is made up of volunteer bishops, priests, deacons, or vowed religious. Currently, there is a *National Episcopal Advisor (bishop)*, *National Spiritual Advisor (priest)*, and *Assistant National Spiritual Advisor (deacon)*. They also have a voice but no vote.

The Service Administrator was tasked with the financial stability and promotion of the National Cursillo Movement. The Administrator works with the National Secretariat, National Cursillo Coordinating Group, and National Language Coordinators to oversee and support the accounting, daily operations, and National Cursillo Center office staff. Their primary responsibilities are the four service centers: 1) Resource Center/Bookstore, 2) National Encounter/Meetings, 3) Donations Center, and 4) Website/Technology. We currently have active committees comprising Regional Coordinators from each language group for the National Encounter, Bookstore, and Website. We are working towards the profile and creation of an active Donations Center to guide and assist the Administrator.

The *National Cursillo Center Manager (NCCA)* is tasked with the day-to-day operation of the bookstore/resource center, including inventory control and processing, payroll to include benefit administration, maintenance of the Jarrell office building, contracting and payment of operational services, adhering to the fiscal year budget approved by the National Secretariat, coding all income and expense for the Finance Committee to prepare monthly profit and loss and balance sheets. The new National Cursillo Center Administrator position will take on the Center Manager role and associated responsibilities.

The *National Cursillo Center Assistant* is tasked with assisting with bookstore order processing, but also with assisting and supporting the Center Manager/Administrator.

We are members of the North American Caribbean Group (NACG), an international group comprising of Canada, the United States, and the Caribbean Islands. An executive committee leads this group and represents the National Secretariats.

Due to the Cursillo Movement being a worldwide organization, we have the OMCC, the coordinating body of the Cursillo Movement, which is responsible for exchanging information, initiatives, and reflections. It comprises an executive committee of five members from various countries and a representative from the four international groups.

The service structures are an essential part of the Cursillo Movement since they shape it and make it happen. The movement's life depends largely on its vitality. Maintaining constant attention to prayer, reflection, friendship, and community discernment is necessary so that the schools and secretariats are what they have been called to be: a service group. 

Fall Regional Encounter

Region 5: United States Cursillo Movement

by CARMEN ENSEÑAT PUIGDORFILA, Diocese of Mallorca
Oct. 4-5, 2024 - Lemont, Illinois

Mentality of the Postcursillo

I was asked to give a talk on the post-Cursillo "*rodaje*!" After learning about what you all do in your dioceses, I noticed that it differs somewhat from our practices here in Mallorca. This led me to find it much more interesting to focus not on the "how" of what we do but on the mentality from which we operate. Each diocese has its own circumstances, but in my view, the mentality and purpose behind our actions should be the same.

The mentality of the post-Cursillo should be the same as that of the pre-Cursillo and the Cursillo itself, as they are all part of the same method. Apart from a few nuances, there shouldn't be much difference. I would even argue that it should align with the life of any Christian.

Recalling Eduardo's words, "The purpose of the Cursillo is life...", we also affirm in the Preliminary Rollo that the three days of the Cursillo can serve as a blueprint for life.

Thus, the Postcursillo should be like a source to which everyone can go again and again, to share, to help, to be helped, and then to be able to transmit in their own environment the joy of living a full life in Christ.

Christ, Person and Friendship are the pillars on which the movement is based, and if we add to this the Gospel and common sense, probably that is enough to have sufficient criteria.

In "The Structure of the Ideas," it states: "Giving more importance to the Cursillo than to the post-Cursillo would be to prefer the solemn over the decisive, the extraordinary over the authentic. It is very important to ensure that souls encounter God, but it is much more important to motivate them to follow Him. The cursillista must always strive to grow more and better in their individual holiness (piety, study, and action) and in their group relationships (Group Reunion-GR²)."

For me, what motivates them to follow is the heart of the entire post-Cursillo experience.

Eduardo said that the Cursillo aims to awaken a hunger for God, not to tell people how to satisfy it.

We would distinguish two ways of doing post-Cursillo, which are the same but different. On one hand, we have the individual post-Cursillo, understood as the experience a cursillista engages in, whether or not they are a leader of their Cursillo, either alone, on their own, or with their group reunion.

1 Rodaje: When talking about **post-Cursillo "rodaje"**, it refers to the **period of adaptation and integration** after living a Cursillo, where new Cursillistas begin to live what they experienced in their daily lives. It's a time of transition from the intense experience of the three days to living out the message that God in the Person of Christ loves us!

2 GR: abbreviation for Group Reunion

On the other hand, we have the post-Cursillo that the entire Ultreya, the whole Cursillo Movement, engages in collectively.

For all of them, we should take into account:

1. RESPECT FOR FREEDOM

We should respect the freedom of others; it is essential to always keep this in mind, especially in the individual post-Cursillo and in the follow-up that the Cursillo team provides.

It's about "Being for...", never "chasing after..."

As far as I know... Christ did not insist twice, nor did he ever chase anyone to follow Him.

In that individual post-cursillo, we see great successes of people who help, accompany, and care for others.

We also see great failures of people who have felt overwhelmed, harassed, and annoyed (I'm sure many of us know of cases, and it's a shame, because we always do it with the best of intentions).

In this adventure, I believe that as long as we always remember to respect the freedom of others, see our brothers as children of God, respect them as they respect us, and have faith and trust in both God and our brothers, we will have much to gain.

We must also have the humility to recognize when we are wrong and the courage to stand firm when necessary. After all, are we not merely fellow travelers rather than professionals or teachers of Cursillos?

We can accompany those who wish to continue their journey of faith—helping to initiate a group reunion, making visits, listening—while also respecting the choice of those who decide to step away.

Sometimes, we see it as a failure when a Cursillista does not attend Ultreyas or participate in a Group Reunion, when in reality, their path—their charism—may lead them to another movement, their parish, or even to live their faith at home. Forcing them to develop it within Cursillos would not allow them to shine in their own way but would instead make them a dim reflection of what we envision.

2. FRIENDSHIP

We must strive to be true friends, not merely pretending or offering affection we do not genuinely feel—because eventually, insincerity will be exposed. Likewise, making grand promises we cannot keep serves no one. Avoiding or not fueling excitement in the moment can help prevent false expectations.

I believe that after three days of Cursillo, we become **friends in Christ**—a friendship is sown. Whether it takes root and grows, only time will tell. Getting carried away by enthusiasm can often lead to disappointment.

Similarly, asking a Cursillo leader to follow up with someone with whom they have not formed any connection, with whom a friendship has not naturally begun, may not be the best approach. The way we **see** the new Cursillista shapes the kind of relationship we establish with them.

We should look at them as we would any friend—without paternalism, without trying to **guide** them, but simply accompanying them where **they** want to go. This approach may bring them closer to God and encourage them to take ownership of their journey, rather than making them feel pressured to attend Mass with us or join a Group Reunion every week—though that's wonderful if they choose to do so.

But sometimes, it seems as though we gather only to **"get them"** to stay, and no one likes that. The key is simple: **BE TRUE**.

3. THE POST-CURSILLO IS FOR THE PERSON

This may seem obvious, but I want to emphasize that the post-Cursillo is for the **individual person**, not for the Cursillo movement as a whole. Each person has their own unique experience, and by recognizing this, we respect their freedom and cultivate **genuine friendships** rather than imposing expectations.

4. THE CLIMATE OF THE ULTREYA

The Ultreya is where the **post-Cursillo should shine**—it is the place where we can continually welcome others and expand our community.

In Mallorca, every Monday of the year at 8:30 pm, without prior notice, we all know that—rain or shine—we will find a group of Cursillistas sharing their faith in the Ultreya.

At Ultreya, **everyone**, absolutely everyone, **including the newest members**, should take part in the joy of welcoming others **from the very beginning**. In doing so, we help **create and sustain** an environment where the Cursillo spirit continues—where faith, friendship, and joy flourish, making it a place where anyone would want to come and stay.

If such a climate does not exist, no matter how much a leader personally invests in one or two new cursillistas, we will lose one of Cursillo's best tools for perseverance.

How do we create or maintain that climate? How do we get people to want to come?

This is something we should all respond to together. My friend Isabel Cabrera says that if we stop going to the Ultreya, there may be someone who was hoping to find us and will not find the person they were looking for. There's also the one who would improve if I improved.

Another phrase I've heard often—though I'm not sure if it's from Eduardo—might give us some clues: "to transparently reflect the tenderness of God within ourselves... *if we have this in our minds and hearts, something will happen to those we encounter.*"

5. NOT TO MAGNIFY THE GROUP REUNION IN THE POSTCURSILLO

Just as we don't share what happens in the Cursillo before someone attends, perhaps we should also be mindful of not creating overly enthusiastic expectations about the Group Reunion.

Beyond the widely accepted understanding that a Group Reunion should never be imposed, set up, or forced in the post-Cursillo, it's essential to recognize that it must arise from God and the hearts of those involved. (Of course, offering help, support, or suggestions is a different matter.)

Constantly magnifying the "transcendental" importance of the Group Reunion for new Cursillistas can sometimes be counterproductive. They may expect something extraordinary, and when they don't experience fireworks, they might become discouraged and give up.

We all know that finding the right Group Reunion is not easy. Even I have experienced multiple attempts that did not meet my expectations. If we put too much pressure on new Cursillistas, they may withdraw. In fact, many who live a Cursillo never find a Group Reunion.

So, if we present it as "indispensable", we risk discouraging those who don't find one quickly. They may feel frustrated for not achieving what others seem to enjoy, believe they cannot continue in the movement, and ultimately drift away.

Therefore, let's not forget that what we must present as transcendental and essential is Christ. If we want the post-Cursillo to be effective for more people than it currently is, we can tell and show newcomers that in the Ultreya, they can find and share the best of themselves and discover what they seek.

On the other hand, it's important to note that the Group Reunion becomes a part of one's life; it is not a place for us to engage in post-Cursillo and pre-Cursillo discussions among ourselves.

WHAT ARE PEOPLE IN SEARCH OF?

People have always sought—and will continue to seek—the same thing: to be happy. They search for themselves, for others, and for God, often without even realizing it.

However, times are constantly changing, creating the illusion that what is fundamental also changes. But that's not the case—only the nuances change.

I believe that if we simply treat others as we would have liked to be treated, we surely wouldn't go wrong.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta said: *"Every act of love, done with all your heart, will always bring people closer to God."*

In my early days in Cursillos, I remember not feeling very integrated. I struggled to talk to people because I didn't know what to say; I felt a bit out of place. But there were people who caught my attention—ordinary individuals, living normal lives: married, single, young, middle-aged, older, and even very elderly... and they seemed **happy**.

I saw people like **Pedro Riera, Janet, Jaime Galmés, and María Medina**. They were all much older, yet they had an energy and a sparkle in their eyes—a **joy and enthusiasm for life and for the things of the Lord** that amazed me.

I wanted to have that joy, that spark I saw in the eyes of those four and many others—a passion for doing things despite their age, for enjoying life... probably because, at that moment, I wasn't feeling it myself.

I remember **Jaime**, one of Eduardo's group reunion of friends. This man had the gift of spreading the love of God, helping others see that living with faith—relying on God and the Lord Jesus—made a difference. He made it clear that it was possible to be happier and a better person by walking hand in hand with a living, normal, and close Christ. They made me want a bit of that—**that joy and passion for life**.

That was what sparked in me the desire to attend Ultreya. All of them made me want to keep coming to Ultreya because I saw something I didn't have, and felt it was vital for me... and that made me think that if this Cursillo thing worked for them, why wouldn't it work for me?

I started to be more present in Cursillo activities, volunteering for everything—not because I thought my help was necessary, but because it allowed me to share more time with those I saw living life the way I wanted to live it. Eventually, I realized that sharing time and faith with them made me a better person and, above all, a better Christian!

I don't believe that the intention of all those people living this way was to keep my hopes alive for anything... but they infected me with their enthusiasm... and they could do so because they had it and maintained it for themselves.

We know that Cursillo is not a centripetal force trying to pull us into Cursillo and keep us there; on the contrary, it is a centrifugal force that sends us back to our own square meter. In Cursillo, what we provide is a license to drive oneself; it's for people to go into the world, into their world, proclaiming the good news that God loves them in Christ and that He loves you too.

That's why I don't see participation in Cursillo activities as the ultimate goal. However, for the movement to continue, we need people who have understood it this way and decide to maintain their enthusiasm and faith in this movement to help others encounter God and, in turn, spread the joy of being Christian.

You can lead a horse to water, but if the horse isn't thirsty, it won't drink. Sometimes we want to keep people in Cursillo who don't have a thirst for God, and while they may have discovered the value of friendship, found good people, or even encountered themselves during the Cursillo, if a personal encounter with God doesn't occur, or if they don't want to maintain it in Cursillo and prefer to go elsewhere... we can only respect that.

Do I believe there's something we can do to make them thirsty and encourage them to drink? Of course! In my view, it's about doing nothing more and nothing less than what we ourselves saw in those people who were role models for each of us. We must be ourselves and reflect what we say we believe.

What we all contribute is what we will find—both for ourselves and for the new cursillistas. And it may be that we are the reason some do not want to stay.

Christ is the protagonist, but we are His visible face... we are His voice. Are we worthy of Him?

I believe that if we focus on being true Christians ourselves—preparing ourselves, living lives full of piety, study, and action... being joyful friends—that is the path for others to see and say what one Cursillista friend once said to another after witnessing her transformation. Upon seeing her leave the Cursillo and noticing the change in her, she said, "I don't know what you've done, but I want the same thing you have!"

And she knew what that meant, so she signed up for the next Cursillo. Fifteen years later, she is still happy, having encountered the Lord, herself, and her brothers and sisters in the Cursillo, discovering **THAT GOD LOVES HER**.

DE COLORES!

Definition:

"Rodaje" interpretation/meaning:

"rodaje" (filming or how a car runs) can be understood as the process or journey into the "Fourth Day" after the Cursillo weekend experience. It can also imply the idea of a process or a series of events unfolding, similar to the way a film is developed and edited. In the context of Cursillo, this concept is metaphorically applied to the ongoing journey of spiritual growth and engagement following the initial Cursillo experience. Has to do with the *Individual Treatment*.