

CURSILLO NEWSLETTER OF THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE



THE EVANGELIZER



June 2016

New Website: www.BellevilleCursillo.org

FROM THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR FR. GARY GUMMERSHEIMER

When this is read we will be past the season of Confirmation and Graduation, a time of new beginnings.

Confirmation challenges us to "go forth and proclaim the Gospel," to use well the gifts of the Spirit to make a difference in our Church and world.

Graduation challenges us to observe and learn from the past, look to the future while we work in the present, beginning a new chapter in our lives.

Neither of these events should be seen as an ending, rather beginning a new phase of being who God has called us to be.

Way back when I was a junior in high school, I served as a junior marshal for the class ahead of me for their graduation. The theme that they chose for the event was: "When you are through learning; you are through." For some reason that has stuck with me all these years and I have used it often in the classroom when I taught and in speaking to students on various occasions. Think about what it challenges us to do. It calls us to realize that we have much to learn, to study; as we will never know all that there is to know about the world, our profession, how to deal with people or how to be in relationship with our God.

If we study the Scriptures, the Lives of the Saints, we will glean from each the realization that our relationship with God and the Church is a living thing, a reality that ebbs and flows, it is not nor should it be stagnant. It is only in our commitment to prayer and study that we will grow and deepen our relationship with God and our fellow travelers on the pilgrimage to the Kingdom.

The biggest task that comes to all of us who have been Baptized and Confirmed is to strengthen our relationship with Christ, to share it with others; to live the call of the Cursillo weekend, "make a friend, be a friend and bring that friend to Christ."

May you have a peace-filled and glorious summer!

With prayers and blessings,

De Colores, Fr. Gary



FROM THE LAY DIRECTOR NICK LANG

Dear Cursillistas,

The news from your Secretariat from the recent past is that we are attempting to reorganize this management arm of Cursillo, looking toward the future and what our “younger” members will need to keep them growing toward a closer walk with our Beloved Lord Jesus for years to come. The primary goal is to be of one mind and heart serving our foundational charism which is “The Lord our God is Lord alone and we shall love the Lord Our God with all our hearts and all our soul and that we shall love our neighbors as we love ourselves.”.

The Belleville Cursillo, for many reasons, has grown to have two central areas of concentration, the Metro East and the Western vicariates. We need to reestablish Cursillo to be strong in all five of the vicariates of the diocese. To this end, we need parish representatives from all the parishes throughout the dioceses, someone or a group, willing to do the working of placing news articles in their parish bulletins and postings on the parish bulletin boards. **If you are willing, please call me at 213-6391 or e-mail me at nplang415@gmail.com.**

Our website is doing very well averaging 30,000 hits per month with 500+ detailed reviews. Also, our new Facebook Group (Belleville Cursillo) now has more than 90 individuals signed up.

I invite any of you to give me your ideas on how we can better advertise and more efficiently make ourselves known within the body of Christ in Southern Illinois.

De Colores,

Nick Lang



PRECURSILLO MARGIE REAKA**PREPARE BY PRAYING**

As we begin to prepare for the 2017 Cursillo weekends, our first step is prayer -- prayers for our 4th Day, prayers for Secretariat and School of Leaders, and prayers for sponsors to be given words of encouragement to evangelize and bring others into a deep relationship with Christ by starting their Cursillo journey.

In St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians he writes about the need for constant prayer and evangelization. *"Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion as the Spirit leads. For this reason keep alert and never give up; pray always for God's people. And pray also for me, that God will give me a message when I am ready to speak, so that I may speak boldly and make known the gospel's secret. For the sake of this gospel I am an ambassador, though now I am in prison. Pray that I may be bold in speaking about the gospel as I should."* Eph 6:18-20.

On December 14, 1963 Pope Paul IV signed a pontifical decree declaring St. Paul the Patron Saint of Cursillo. Please take a few minutes each day and pray to St. Paul asking for his intercession for the continued success of the Cursillo movement, especially during Precursillo as sponsors discuss the Cursillo movement with potential candidates, and, as the teams for the weekends are selected.

The 2017 weekend dates are: Women's #39 – March 9 – 12; Men's #36 – March 16 - 19. The Candidate Application and Sponsor Information Form will be available in mid-June at www.bellevillecursillo.org or by contacting Margie Reaka, Precursillo Chairperson (e-mail – margiereaka@gmail.com; cell – 618-581-7355). The applications will be included in the next issue of *The Evangelizer*.

Do not be afraid. Go on speaking, and do not be silent. Acts 18:9

May your summer be filled with prayer and evangelization and God's peace, love, and joy.



YEAR OF MERCY – DECEMBER 8, 2015, THROUGH NOVEMBER 20, 2016

"It will be a holy year of mercy!" – Pope Francis

POSTCURSILLO TONY AND SHARON GUGLIOTTA

Fourth Day Community –

Hello again, everyone! We had a fantastic Cursillo Reunion on April 9th! The Guild Center was a full house! It was very good to see each and every one of you who came to share a meal, fellowship, and listen to Brian Trentman's incredible witness talk. Thank you, Brian. A brief summary of Brian's talk on AGAPE love can be found elsewhere in this edition of the Evangelizer. Thanks again to Steve Schaefer for his help, and to those of you that came early and stayed after to help us get the Guild Center ready beforehand and cleaned up and organized afterward.

We are in full swing planning the next event, the Day of Recollection! Save the date! It will be held on Sunday, July 10, 2016 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Murphysboro, IL. We will be sending out details about the day and a map. You may want to consider carpooling with other Cursillistas from your area to Murphysboro that day. However, there is plenty of parking there. Please share information with Cursillistas who do not receive electronic mail.

We want you to know that each one of you continues to be in our daily prayers. Be assured also of our prayers for your family members, neighbors, and each prayer intention whatever they may be. Tony and I are grateful for each and every one of you. Let us recall from our weekends that God is counting on us to evangelize our homes and work environments; wherever we are. We are living, breathing examples of God's love to others. No matter the season, let us share our God of Love with those we come in contact. Find a way to make a difference. Be open to His work at work in you. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you make a friend, be a friend, and bring that friend to Christ! Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Grouping is a perfect way to stay in touch with Jesus through friendship with others and sharing how Jesus works in our lives. We've received some messages from those of you looking for a group. Hopefully, you've found a group, but if not, please contact us directly at guggang@charter.net or by calling 618-239-9480. Also, if someone is not grouping or attending Ultreya and wants to be, please don't hesitate to contact either of us (Tony or Sharon) at the previously given email address or phone number. We would be glad to help you find a group or Ultreya near you, and be of assistance in your Fourth Day journey. Peace be with you all.

DeColores!

Tony and Sharon Gugliotta
Postcursillo Chairs



SCHOOL OF LEADERS TERRY KOSTEL**Faith is Believing Without Seeing**

John 20:24-29 addresses the call to believe without seeing, but Thomas wasn't willing. The importance of this event lies in the fact that it presents the relation between seeing and believing. More specifically, it shows the significance of believing after, or because of, having seen the risen Christ, and believing without having seen him.

The example of doubting Thomas provides both instruction and encouragement. After being told by the other disciples of Jesus' resurrection and personal visit, Thomas "doubted" and wanted physical proof of the risen Lord in order to believe this good news. The testimony Thomas received from the other 10 disciples about Jesus' return should have been enough, but still he doubted - even after spending three years being intimately acquainted with Jesus, witnessing all His miracles and hearing His prophecies about His coming death and resurrection.

The event occurred eight days after the appearance of Jesus to the other disciples. After greeting them with the traditional, "Peace be with you," without any delay Jesus turns to Thomas and addresses him; knowing his human frailty resulted in weakened faith, He accommodated Thomas by inviting him to proceed with the demanded test.

The doubt Thomas experienced is not unlike our own when we face challenges in our life. Although Thomas did in fact doubt the Lord's resurrection appearance, once he saw the risen Christ, he proclaimed in faith, "My Lord and my God" (Jn. 20:28). Jesus commended him for his faith, although that faith was based on sight. "Because you have seen me, you have believed."

The encouraging part for all of us today is when Jesus also says, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed (Jn. 20:29)," thus enabling us to believe that which we do not see with our eyes. This same thought is echoed by Peter, who said of Christ, "Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls." (1 Peter 1:8-9).

Although we have the Spirit within us, we can still experience doubt. True saving faith always perseveres to the end just as Thomas's did, and just as Peter's did after he had a monumental moment of weakness by denying the Lord he loved and believed in.

So how do we keep from doubting as Thomas did? We must go to God in prayer when experiencing doubt. Sanctification is the process of growing in Him, which includes times of doubt and times of great faith. Like the man who brought his demon-possessed child to Jesus but was unsure whether Jesus could help him, we go to God because we believe in Him and ask Him for more and greater faith to overcome our doubts, saying, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:17-27).

Final Thoughts: “Faith is permitting ourselves to be seized by the things we do not see.” **Martin Luther**

“To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible.”
Thomas Aquinas



PRAYER REQUESTS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers! What's involved? We need people who will accept prayer requests via email and then on the same day or the next day distribute the prayer request to all our cursillistas via email. Since group email is involved, some technical expertise on sending group emails is needed – or – someone with technical ability who is willing to learn.

If you are willing to accept this critically needed prayer service, please email Christine Leja at lejachristine@yahoo.com.

If you are unable to volunteer, please pray for volunteers to come forward!

May the Holy Spirit inspire the volunteers we need to come forward!

Secretariat Meetings

July 27th, September 28th, and December 28th at 7 pm at St. Joseph Parish, Freeburg, IL

School of Leaders

School of Leaders continues each month on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at St. Joseph's in Freeburg. Contact Terry Kostel (618) 234-8010.

Ultreyas

Belleville Area: Monthly on the second Friday at 7:30 pm in the Undercroft at St. Peter Cathedral. (Entrance on W. Garfield St.) Contact Bob McCormack (618) 277-3709

New Athens Area: Monthly on the fourth Sunday at 10:15 am at St. Agatha's Parish Center in New Athens. This is immediately after the 9 am Mass. Contact Joe or Ann Haubrich (618) 475-2006

Murphysboro: Every other month on the last Sunday of the month at St. Andrew's school cafeteria. This is immediately after the 10:30 am mass (approximately 11:30 am). Contact Joan Sherwood (618) 529-4351.

Make a friend. Be a friend. Bring that friend to Christ!

Excerpts from the April Reunion Witness Talk

Welcome to the Sea of Tiberias. Your Sponsor saw something in you and acted upon it. I am going to discuss **AGAPE** to use in becoming a Sponsor to a Cursillo weekend-AGAPE-unconditional love-Again and we'll come back to that; Give; Accept; Prayer; and Encourage. We need to Give-totally. People can tell if you aren't truly sincere; if you are just going through the motions. Your giving needs to be genuine and authentic. Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ. It also means that you can't just volunteer to be involved in everything-sometimes you have to say no if saying yes would mean that you would not be able to do your best.

Accept means accepting the will of God; be open to the will of God-don't force it. There are three men I have asked to attend a Cursillo weekend for over ten years. Each year they go to an annual three day retreat at the White House and they have a running joke about how long it will last until they fall back into old patterns. Cursillo is not just a three day retreat-it arms you with tools to make it through life. Problems do not go away, but you learn how to deal with them. One of the men has confided that he knows he would have to make changes if he goes on a Cursillo weekend and while that might seem funny-at least he recognizes on some level that he should change-which is good. We also have to accept people where they are. Our world would be a much better place if we all treated each other with respect and recognized dignity in each and every person. Our oldest daughter-and I don't know where she gets it from-ALWAYS writes Thank You notes. We should all consider thanking those people in our lives and who we come into contact with-even if they are "just doing their job". We all appreciate a kind word, a pat on the back.

Prayer-and we could also use Palanca-is vital. We need to pray-a dialogue with our God of Love-talking-and also listening. Talk to God about your friend before you talk to your friend about God. Daily prayer helps sustain us.

Encourage-be supportive. Sponsors have a responsibility to prepare and assist in living the Cursillo life. Cursillo is life; life is Cursillo. I don't know whether Pope Francis attended a three day weekend, but I know he is a Cursillista-he lives it and it is attractive. When my sponsor, my wife Mary attended the three day weekend she was different. She was not judgmental; she didn't tell me "you need to stop doing that and you need to start doing this", but she was changed. She was changed in a way that was attractive and I wanted some of that.

Again-back to the beginning-we need to keep repeating-and sometimes they will be in a different order-but persevere-keep doing it over and over again. Your sponsor saw something in you. Msgr. Stephen Rossetti wrote a reflection on the Sunday Gospel Reading (John 21:1-19) in the publication "Living With Christ" which included the following. "Peter cannot truly be a pastor and a shepherd like Jesus unless he loves like Jesus. He must love Jesus, and therefore he must love the people whom he will serve. Love is the foundation of good parenting. Love is the foundation of a true shepherd. Love is God's greatest gift to us. We work hard each day and give much, but do we love the people around us,

and do we show it? This is our greatest gift.” We are all at the Sea of Tiberias-where Jesus asked Peter if Peter loved Him-and then gave Peter some direction-if we love Jesus, we should be feeding and tending others and following Him.



Check out the Cursillo Diocese of Belleville website: www.BellevilleCursillo.org

Let us know your thoughts! You can email your comments to Webmaster@BellevilleCursillo.org or add a comment on the moderated website.

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