

## CURSILLO NEWSLETTER OF THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

**THE EVANGELIZER****September - November 2025**Website: [www.BellevilleCursillo.org](http://www.BellevilleCursillo.org)**FROM THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR** DEACON WAYNE WEILER

Dear Fourth Day,

In just a few short days we will enter into the season of Advent. Time moves quickly as the Church calendar keeps us focused on the seasons and days that bring life and meaning to our faith journey. Advent is such a season. This special time in the Church reminds us more closely that we are in the in-between times of what has already occurred, and what we still wait for. In these four weeks we prayerfully recall the gracious and wonderful gift from God, The Incarnation of His Holy Word - the gift of himself to us in Jesus our Lord and Savior. At the same time, we wait and prepare ourselves for His great promise of eternal life when Jesus comes to us in His full glory. All of this leads us to the great day of Christmas, which we rightfully celebrate with great joy – Emmanuel, God with Us.

Advent calls us to a more prayerful time, a more fervent sense of giving, and a mindfulness that, for some, this may not be a joyous time, as many struggle with the necessities of daily life. This should be a sad reminder that some may feel added pressure and sadness during the holidays as they are unable to provide for their families as they would like.

Advent is not unlike the season of Lent, when almsgiving is a focus of our spiritual life and outreach - Advent calls us to do the same. Pope Leo, in his recent and first letter to the faithful, reminds us of the importance of almsgiving where he teaches us, "*For our part, we need to give alms as a way of reaching out and touching the suffering flesh of the poor.*" (Dilexi Te #119)

Most surely, we will all be pulled in many different ways during this busy holiday season with gift sharing, parties, and gatherings. As worthy and necessary as these are, the temptation is ever present to lose sight of what it is that we celebrate. Jesus himself reminds us "it shall not be so among you" (Mark 10:42), further helping us to know that a life of faith is often counter-cultural.

The coming of Jesus among us changed the world and is still changing us. Advent is yet another season in the life of the Church to embrace the opportunity to grow closer to Him. With each act of piety, study, and action, we open ourselves to the grace that enables and changes our hearts to be more like His.

May you all have a spiritually rich and fulfilling Advent season and a most joyful Christmas.

De Colores,

Deacon Wayne



**FROM THE DIOCESAN CURSILLO COORDINATOR MARGIE REAKA**

As a Diocesan Cursillo Coordinator, I am required to attend Regional Encounters. The Belleville Diocese is in Region IV which extends across Southern Illinois, through some of Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, and Ohio. In total, 15 dioceses make up Region IV. The Diocesan Cursillo Coordinators from the 15 dioceses meet each spring and fall, along with the Regional Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Alex Waraksa, and the regional team. We typically listen to four rollos and, just like the Weekends, follow up with discussions at our tables.

This past September the meeting was held in the Archdiocese of Louisville, Kentucky, and the theme was “Sponsoring a Candidate.” That has inspired me to remind our Fourth Day about what it is to be a sponsor.

Being a sponsor is more than completing an application and driving your candidate to the Cursillo Weekend. It is prayers and support before the Weekend, during the Weekend, and after the Weekend, and making your candidate feel comfortable and a part of the Fourth Day. It is a privilege to be a sponsor, and well worth all you put into it.

There are three phases of Sponsoring a Candidate: the Precursillo Phase, the Cursillo Phase, and the Postcursillo Phase. Each phase is based on friendship. As Fr. Alex, our spiritual advisor, shared – we are all apprentice Christians, always learning. Friendship gives us the opportunity to learn from others.

In the Precursillo Phase....

- Take time to get to know your candidate, that is – Make a Friend, Be a Friend, Bring A Friend to Christ.
- Build your friendship on a strong foundation (not on a soft surface like sand) during the Precursillo Phase so it will flourish in the Cursillo and Postcursillo Phases.
- Answer any questions your candidate has about the Weekend or the Cursillo movement, with the exception of Palanca, the Saturday Evening Fiesta, and Mañanitas.
- Fully explain Group Reunion and Ultreya to your candidate. Have a Group Reunion they can join or contact someone from Secretariat or the team to help you find them a Group Reunion.
- Complete the application with your candidate and mail both the application and Sponsor Commitment Form to the Precursillo Chairperson along with the deposit.
- You will receive a confirmation letter by email, check with your candidate that they also received their confirmation letter.
- You will receive a phone call from a team member two to three weeks prior to the Weekend – please be open with information about your candidate that will help the team during the Cursillo Weekend.
- OFFER PALANCA.

In the Cursillo Phase....

- You are strongly encouraged to write a Palanca letter to your candidate (indicate “Sponsor Letter” on the outside of the envelope) and give it to a team member prior to the Weekend.
- Take your candidate to the Cathedral parking lot where they will meet all the other candidates and some of the team members. Team members will drive them to the King’s House at Our Lady of the Snows. This is the start of friendships with other candidates and the team and is a great opportunity to give your Palanca letter to a team member.

- Participate in Mañanitas on Sunday morning (serenading new Cursillistas) at the King's House at Our Lady of the Snows. Meet by 7:15 a.m., it just lasts 30 minutes and is an amazing show of the Fourth Day friendship to the new Cursillistas.
- Attend closing at the King's House at Our Lady of the Snows which begins at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday evening.
- Take your new Cursillista home and enjoy discussing how they enjoyed their Weekend.
- OFFER PALANCA.

In the Postcursillo Phase...

- Keep in close contact with your new Cursillista for at least 12 months, encouraging them to become involved in the Fourth Day. Living in the Fourth Day may feel overwhelming to new Cursillistas, so it is important that the sponsor walks with them. We want to help our friends to follow Christ, not be followers of Cursillo.
- Help your candidate find a Group Reunion (the primary method to living our Fourth Day).
- Attend the Ultreya/Reunion with your candidate (typically held 4 to 6 weeks after the Weekend).
- Encourage your candidate to attend monthly Ultreyas and School of Leaders, a great way to meet new friends, become more involved, and learn the Cursillo charism.
- Continue to OFFER PALANCA.

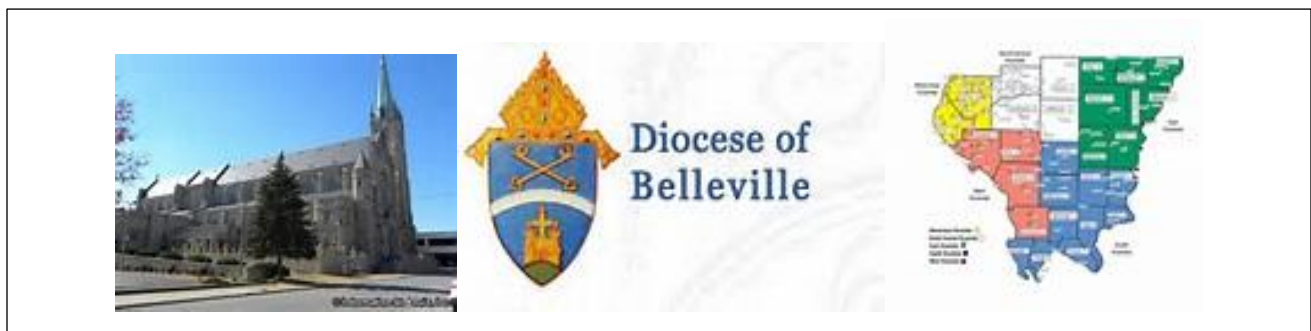
So being a sponsor has its responsibilities, but the benefits are amazing. Not only are you and your new Cursillista friends, but there is also a special bond being friends in Christ.

I hope you consider sponsoring a friend for the 2026 Weekends. Applications are available at [Bellevillecursillo.org](http://Bellevillecursillo.org).

Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and a Joyous New Year!

Peace, love, and joy,

Margie Reaka  
Belleville Diocesan Cursillo Coordinator



**PRECURSILLO DEBBIE BLUME**

Make a Friend, Be a Friend, Bring a Friend to Christ!

Our Weekends for 2026 are all set. The Women's Weekend will be August 6-9, 2026, and the Men's Weekend will be August 20-23, 2026. Both Weekends will be held at King's House at Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville. The cost of the Weekend will be \$400. That amount includes everything for the Weekend! Three nights stay at King's House, all meals, snacks, and drinks.

We need you to pray about who you know that would benefit from making a Weekend. Without your friendship and willingness to be a sponsor our Weekends will not be possible.

The applications can be found online at [bellevillecursillo.org](http://bellevillecursillo.org). I have both Sponsor booklets and "What Is It" booklets available for the candidates. Feel free to contact me anytime and I will get them to you.

God bless and De Colores!

Debbie Blume  
Precursillo



**POSTCURSILLO KAREN DAVIDSON**

Dear Friends,

All I can say is "WOW"! The Grand Ultreya that was held on Saturday, October 18, was amazing! The threat of rain and thunderstorms did not keep a large group from attending. Most of us managed to arrive before the rain began, but as soon as the event started, the storm really hit.

Thanks to Debbie Blume for helping make the event come together at the Parish Center at Corpus Christi Church in Shiloh. It was the perfect location, and I know she had to jump through a few hoops to make this happen.

Deacan Wayne gave a wonderful presentation on “Pilgrims on a Journey, Jubilee Year of Hope.” He told us that our Christian life is a journey and we are all on this journey together. Each of us is to offer a sign of friendship in a joyful and cheerful manner and to evangelize, bringing others to Christ.

Brian Trentmen delivered the witness talk, and it's a moment we'll never forget. As he spoke about “Trust in the Lord,” the theme of the event, he pointed upward toward Heaven - and at that very instant, a tremendous clap of thunder echoed through the room! Everyone was amazed by the timing. During his talk, Brian emphasized the significance of the Eucharist and encouraged us to support the church by serving at Mass. Thank you, Brian, for sharing such an inspiring and memorable message.

Julie Weber did a wonderful job in leading us in song and playing her guitar. She has a beautiful voice as well as a beautiful smile. Thanks Julie!

I also had some hard-working angels to help me put up signs, decorate tables, and get the food and drinks organized. A BIG THANK YOU to Garry Range, Anna Feurer, Rebecca Miller, and Mary Jo Hettner for all of your help. This event would not have been possible without your assistance.

I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to all Fourth Day participants who contributed their favorite dish and to everyone who assisted with the cleanup. I'm always impressed by how everyone just pitches in to get the room cleaned up after the event. You all are the BEST!

Our next Grand Ultreya will be held sometime in March or April 2026. More details will be sent out through Flocknotes at a later date.

May you feel the love of Jesus in your hearts as we begin the Advent Season. Have a wonderful Christmas, and I hope to see you at the next School of Leaders or at one of the Ultreyas that are held at different locations in our area.

Love, joy, and peace,

Karen Davidson  
Postcursillo



**SCHOOL OF LEADERS ANNA FEURER**

Dear Fourth Day Cursillistas,

School of Leaders is now meeting in person and online (Zoom) at Corpus Christi Parish Center on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

We are reading a Cursillo book from the National website, "*Whom Shall I Send? Discerning the Will of God.*" Each month we are reflecting/discussing a chapter of the book. The book is an easy read including some bible verses from the Gospels.

The first chapter was on "Ideals and Expectations." The message was on forgiveness and setting high standards/ideals as Christians and in the Cursillo Movement.

Jesus asks us all to "Follow Him." Following Jesus may mean something different to each of us. If we lower our standards, our values decline. Aim for the best!

As Christian Leaders we must be authentic in our ideals, following Jesus to receive our reward - Eternal Life.

As a Cursillo Leader we must also be authentic, having the same high ideals of following Jesus in our commitments, our "Yes," our accountability. We are all called to "Apostolic Action."

Please consider joining us at the next School of Leaders as we continue with Chapter 2 – Prayer as "Communion" with God.

If you need a book, please email me at [annafeurer56@gmail.com](mailto:annafeurer56@gmail.com) or call me at 618-779-1388.

De Colores,

Anna Feurer  
School of Leaders Chairperson



<p><b><u>LOOKING FOR A FRIENDSHIP GROUP REUNION?</u></b></p>
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### **Belleville Area Friendship Group Reunions**

**Men & Women's Friendship Group** / Meets each Wednesday evening at 7:30 PM via Zoom except during week of Ultreya: Contact Kent Jeanneret, (618) 531-8855; jeannerk@charter.net

**Women's Friendship Group** / Meets 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday at 8:30-10:00 AM in the Parish Center at St John's - Smithton: Contact Julie Weber, (618)-444-2894; weber-julie@sbcglobal.net or Linda Bagsby, (618)-960-1023; lbagsby@gmail.com

**Men's Friendship Group** / Meets each Tuesday evening at 6:30 PM at member's house: Contact Garry Range, (618)-401-9677; g.range@charter.net

**Women's Friendship Group** / Meets at the "Sisterless House" (old convent) at St. Joseph's Parish in Freeburg at 7:00 PM, Tuesday evenings: Contact Bernadette Charlton, 402-578-5198; charltonba23@gmail.com

**Men's Friendship Group** / Meets at Frank Lill's house, 905 Meadow Brook Drive, Freeburg at 1:00 PM Thursday afternoons: Contact John Charlton, 703-868-6419; charltonje23@gmail.com

### **DuQuoin Area Friendship Group Reunions**

**Men's Friendship Group / Tree of Life** / Meets at Haeffner Hall Du Quoin at 8:00 AM on the last Saturday of the month: Contact David Martin (618) 318-3183

**Men's Friendship Group / Halom** / Meets at Haeffner Hall Du Quoin at 8:00 AM on the last Saturday of the month: Contact Deacon Tony Kellerman (618) 318-0094

**Women's Friendship Group / JOY (Jesus, Others, You)** / Meets at Sacred Heart School Du Quoin at 6:00 PM on the 2nd Tuesday of the month: Contact Kathy Krisfaluzny (618) 318-0128

**Women's Friendship Group / Mother Theresa** / Meets at Haeffner Hall Du Quoin at 12:15 PM on the 3rd Tuesday of the month: Contact Kay Baker (618) 571-0515

**Women's Friendship Group / Saint Elizabeth Anne Seton** / Meets monthly at 1:00 PM at member's homes: Contact Marie Schimanski (815) 978-9419 for date and place

### **Mount Vernon Area Friendship Group Reunions**

**Women's Friendship Group**: Meets at St. Mary Immaculate Conception Church, 1500 N. Main St, Mount Vernon at 4:30 PM, Mondays: Contact Susan Cunningham, 618-214-4604

**NOTE:** Additional Friendship Group's points of contact will be posted in future Evangelizers as information is received. Please send your Friendship Group's points of contacts' information, including meeting day of week and type of group (men or women or both) to Kent Jeanneret; [jeannerk@charter.net](mailto:jeannerk@charter.net).

## PRAYER REQUESTS BY EMAIL

To request prayers that will be distributed via email to all Belleville Diocesan Cursillistas, please send to the following email address:

**[Prayersrequested@bellevillecursillo.org](mailto:Prayersrequested@bellevillecursillo.org)**

**NOTE:** [Prayersrequested@bellevillecursillo.org](mailto:Prayersrequested@bellevillecursillo.org) is read late each day. All prayer requests from this email address are gathered into one email and sent via Cursilloroster <cursilloroster-bounces@bellevillecursillo.org>. We are allowed one mass distribution email per day. (Note that any prayer requests sent to any other address may be missed or not sent in a timely fashion.)



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

Check out the Cursillo Diocese of Belleville Website: [www.BellevilleCursillo.org](http://www.BellevilleCursillo.org)

### Secretariat Meetings

Watch the Website calendar for meeting dates which begin at 7 p.m. on the last Tuesday of May, July, September, November, January, and March.

### School of Leaders

The School of Leaders is on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. held at Corpus Christi Parish Center or via Zoom (watch for announcement in emails). Contact Anna Feurer (618) 779-1388.

### Ultreyas

**Belleville / O'Fallon Area:** Monthly on the third Tuesday following 5:30 p.m. Mass at St. Teresa rectory basement in Belleville

**St. Agatha, New Athens/St. Joseph, Freeburg/St. John the Baptist, Smithton:** Monthly on the last Monday at 7 p.m. Watch for Flocknote emails for venue.

**Sacred Heart Church Du Quoin** Contact Kelly Paxton 618-927-5415 or Marie Schimanski 815-978-9419

### Friendship Groupings

Belleville Cursillo creates a list of all the Friendship Groupings in our diocese to make available to Cursillistas and the sponsors of new Cursillistas. If you are part of a Friendship Group, please send to Kent Jeanneret at [jeannerk@charter.net](mailto:jeannerk@charter.net) the following information: name of Friendship Group, meeting times, contact information, and location.

### SECRETARIAT MEMBERS

Deacon Wayne Weiler, Spiritual Director  
(618) 277-3824; [wlweiler@gmail.com](mailto:wlweiler@gmail.com)

Margie Reaka, Diocesan Cursillo Coordinator  
(618) 581-7355; [margiereaka@gmail.com](mailto:margiereaka@gmail.com)

Anna Feurer, School of Leaders / Prayer Requests  
(618) 779-1388; [annafeurer56@gmail.com](mailto:annafeurer56@gmail.com)

Debbie Blume, Precursillo  
(618) 806-6951; [deblu@sbcglobal.net](mailto:deblu@sbcglobal.net)

Francisco "Fez" Flores, Cursillo  
(843) 553-7077; [faflores1@hotmail.com](mailto:faflores1@hotmail.com)

Karen Davidson, Postcursillo  
(618) 670-8383; [krau16@yahoo.com](mailto:krau16@yahoo.com)

Christie Reyling, Secretary  
(618)-580-4471; [tcreyling@yahoo.com](mailto:tcreyling@yahoo.com)

Nancy Myerscough, Treasurer  
(618) 830-6322; [mrmrsm64@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mrmrsm64@sbcglobal.net)

### SECRETARIAT AD HOC COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Gail Kostel, Publicity  
(618) 234-8010; [tgk1030@yahoo.com](mailto:tgk1030@yahoo.com)

Karen Davidson, Palanca  
(618) 670-8383; [krau16@yahoo.com](mailto:krau16@yahoo.com)

Kent Jeanneret, Evangelizer Newsletter / Cursillo Roster  
(618) 531-8855; [jeannerk@charter.net](mailto:jeannerk@charter.net)

Garry Range, Website  
(618) 401-9677; [g.range@charter.net](mailto:g.range@charter.net)

Amy Mannino, Prayer Requests  
(618) 979-5067; [amy.mannino@att.net](mailto:amy.mannino@att.net)

Mike Fietsam, Prayer Requests  
(618) 910-4633; [mfietsam@gmail.com](mailto:mfietsam@gmail.com)

Pat Butler, Prayer Requests  
62864; (618)-204-0167; [patbutler007@gmail.com](mailto:patbutler007@gmail.com)