**28th NATIONAL CURSILLO ENCOUNTER – AUGUST 16-19, 2018**

**Dear Friends,**

**I am pleased to share with you the recent Cursillo National Encounter at Seattle University from August 16-19, 2018. Ginny and I travelled to Seattle, along with our spiritual advisor, Deacon Tom Masaryk, and our Region 1 coordinator, Cindy Bruno. We were blessed to gather for 3 days of worship, learning, and evangelization. Sounds like the Cursillo tripod of piety, study, and action, doesn’t it? Well, it truly was an encounter with self, with Jesus Christ, and with over 700 Cursillistas from all over the United States.**

**Our Cursillo community was blessed to have 3 bishops, 22 priests, and 20 deacons lead us in prayer, worship, and the Mass. On Thursday night, Deacon Tom assisted Bishop Eusebio Elizondo on the altar; a proud moment indeed! Deacon Tom also processed into Friday’s Mass with the large cross, celebrated by Bishop Daniel Mueggenborg. The Saturday afternoon Vigil Mass, celebrated by Bishop Carlos Sevilla, was a joyful celebration of the Eucharist, enhanced by the many voices and instruments from the makeshift Cursillo choir. A multi-language rosary was prayed on Saturday afternoon, and a powerful and reverent Holy Hour invited intense worship on Friday evening. The various liturgies set the tone that the focus of our Cursillo movement is first on worshiping God and encountering the person of Jesus Christ.**

**Our Cursillo study started with the first rollo on Friday by Hugo Valverde, entitled “Unity in Diversity.” The rollo challenged us to respect and honor the people that are different from us. Our varied gifts and talents complement each other, and add to the many beautiful colors of the Cursillo. Hugo also challenged us to think of those times that we may be responsible for division. Do I truly respect and accept those people that I encounter that differ from me? Or, do I dismiss them or reject them out of fear or sinful behavior? This rollo became the theme of this National Encounter, so important was the message of unity, diversity, tolerance, and acceptance.**

**Father David Smith presented the rollo entitled “The Theology, Psychology, and Pedagogy of Cursillo.” Father Smith’s message was that the unique charism of Cursillo is needed in our world “now, more than ever!” Father David listed the many societal ills that cause isolation and loneliness. What is the remedy? It is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and a loving community of Cursillo that make friends in the name of Jesus. As Father David stated, “Jesus is the light at the end of the tunnel in our relationships. The world is changed by relationships, one friendship at a time.”**

**Our National Cursillo Service Administrator, Hoang Tran, presented the rollo “Cursillo In Action.” Hoang spoke of “our willingness to do things in Cursillo out of love, humility, and friendship.” Mr. Tran compared the National Encounter to something like “love symphony #28.” We were challenged to discern God’s will in our lives, and particularly in regard to our varied roles in the Cursillo. Hoang reminded us of the importance of the $3/year campaign that helps to reduce the costs of the National Encounter as well as Cursillo materials and publications.**

**The first English speaking workshop session was entitled “School of Leaders & Secretariat: Unity of Purpose and Understanding”, proclaimed by Region 6 Coordinator John Ciliberti. The rollo invited us to discover the charism of Cursillo by going back to our founder, Eduardo Bonnin. The Holy Spirit gave Eduardo the unique charism of Cursillo for the church. John challenged us to answer whether we “consume or choke the charism of Cursillo” by placing our “rules” above the charism. The secretariat was defined as the “service unit” that protects the charism and “seeks a unity of message and freedom of Cursillistas.” As Bonnin said, we “come to be someone”, not just “do things.” Therefore, Cursillo is something “we live.”**

**Mr. Ciliberti defined the School of Leaders as “a school of listening, a school of thought.” He spoke of honoring the person and their freedom by not forcing anyone to attend School of Leaders. The person is the focus of our concern; he or she is not a “mere individual.” John stated that friendship is the best way to relate to God and to other people; it is understood by love. He also stressed that the secretariat and the School of Leaders complement each other by serving the Cursillo community in friendship.**

**The second English speaking workshop was “Succession Planning”, presented by Cecilia Hamilton, Region 4 English speaking coordinator. Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing new leaders to replace veteran Cursillo leaders when they leave, retire, or die (!). We are to identify those persons with willingness to serve and the potential to serve well. We should identify the “gaps” by comparing the person’s skills to the roles that are needed to be filled. We must develop the person’s knowledge of Cursillo through group reunion, ultreya, School of Leaders, and workshops such as Cursillo de Cursillos, regional or national encounters. Our challenge is to engage the person in leadership, with humility, service, responsibility, and accountability. We must improve the person’s commitment in the future by becoming “emotionally impelled.” While we challenge the person with commitment, loyalty, and responsibility, it is communicated through love in friendship. Jesus had a great succession plan: “Go and make disciples of all the nations.” John Harwood stated to “allow God to lead you so that you can lead others.”**

**A significant part of the National Encounter was meeting other Cursillistas from all over the United States. There were greetings of “DeColores!” in hallways, elevators, at meals in the café, and in liturgies and ultreya. The encounter culminated in a Grand Fiesta that celebrated the cultural diversity of the Cursillo. Like any Cursillo gathering, it was a lived experience that is different for each person. That being said, the next National Encounter will be held in July 18- 21, 2019 at the University of Scranton, PA. The good news is that Scranton, PA is about a 2 hour car ride from Fairfield County. Our hope is to have many more Cursillistas join us in Scranton next year to experience the joy of the Cursillo National Encounter.**

**DeColores!**

**Pat Gorman**

**Lay Director**