

## **The Strategy of the Movement**

The definition to the word strategy, if you look it up on the web, is a plan to successfully execute a project or a business. It is how we value, put into order, and make best of the resources, elements and conditions to achieve a purpose or goal.

For example, a party is usually put on to celebrate something. I'm sure all of us have planned a party once in our life time or at least helped out in some way. First, you have to pick a date. Next, you have to pick a place and time. Then, a list of those to invite. Then more planning takes place, such as what to serve, and how to entertain the guest.

In relation to Cursillo, before a Cursillo weekend can take place there are a series of events that must occur beforehand, like choosing a date and a place to hold the weekend, choosing the rector and rectora. Then the teams are chosen, and then even more planning takes place, like the food, the setup of the facilities and much more.

If we are dedicated to take so much time to carefully plan for a party, how much more care should we devote to planning the work of Christ in the Church? The importance of planning the work of Christ should be far greater than all other works.

With that in mind we can say that the final stage of the strategy of the Cursillo Movement is to fulfill the purpose of the movement.

As stated before, at previous SOL meetings, the purpose of the Cursillo Movement is to (Vertebrae Christianity) or to provide a backbone for Christianity in our society, which makes it possible for people to live what is fundamental for being a Christian, and to live it together. It helps people discover and fulfill their personal vocations, and it promotes the creation of core groups of Christians who leaven their environments with the Gospel. In other words they share the love of God and the love of neighbor, in their daily living, and they naturally use this influence in all other environments. \*Poster\*

The Cursillo Movement, as an agent of the Church's mission, seeks the best use of its own method in order to assure effectiveness and remain faithful to its own mentality, by means of adapting, evaluating, putting in order and making optimal use of its resources to obtain its purpose. This is what is understood as the strategy, or the overall planning of the work of the Cursillo Movement.

It is not about forming groups, or selecting environments, they already exist. For example, our family groups, our work group, our neighborhood group. These are our everyday environments that we know well.

Nor is it about doing apostolic work. It's not about "doing", as it is about "being" an apostle; living as an apostle does. "We should not only work to save souls, but also to build Christianity." This is what we mean when we talk about "Studying the Environments".

We are to bring a Christian influence into our natural world by applying our will, our prayer, our mind and our heart. We need to study the makeup of our environments. Then, introduce Christ into those environments. We do this by beginning with "ourselves" then reaching out to "others", thereby influencing our environments. Let's take a closer look at this; \*Poster\*

Beginning with ourselves; we must want to move our *will* to the highest degree in order to move from an "I can" attitude to an "I will" attitude. All our apostolic actions should have at their core, *prayer*. And it is necessary to use our God given *mind* and apply our intelligence in our evangelization efforts just as we do for everything else. And finally our *heart* must be open to be all things and to all people in order to win them for Christ.

Next, we *approach others* - the relationships with those who accompany us in life: our family, neighbors, and friends. First, we must win the person's heart, second their mind, third their will and lastly, introduce them to prayer. If we do not reach and influence the *heart* first, not much will happen. From the heart, then it moves to the *mind*. This is not as difficult as it may seem because as Christians, we have the seed of Grace that was planted in us at our Baptism. We must win the person's *will* in order to bring our companions along with us. And lastly, Grace from the Father will lead the person to *prayer*.

*Finally, our environment* – the relationships with those who surround us with their own situations in a certain time and place. The Cursillistas' response to Christ will be a *natural* reaching out to that person to introduce them to Christ through a personal witness of *living* what is fundamental for being Christian.

Now, there are many different forms of structuring order in a Christian way: For example;

- Changing the structures;
- Creating new Christian structures;
- Saving souls by transforming the individual person;
- Vertebrating (provide a backbone to) a previously structured society in order to restructure it into a Christian one.

The Cursillo Movement opted for the last one, to Vertebrae Christianity, In order to quickly and effectively transform the environments into Christian ones. The Movement looks for the progressive conversion and the constant Christian living of those people who have a natural influence over their groups (immediate and ultimate purpose). These are people whose opinions “influence” and whose attitudes “move”. In Christianity witnesses are shared, it is necessary to bring these people together to express their witness of the communion of saints, through the one-on-one sharing (the Group Reunion), and through the larger scale of sharing in the community (the Ultreya).

Our goal of achieving a Christian backbone to society is ultimately achieved by each individual person renewed in spirit, acting as a living witness in such environments. In order for this to happen, we as leaders should know very well five important parts;

- Our environments and those who are leaders in them. (candidates)
- The selection of the team of leaders, to prepare and lead a Cursillo; (Rector/a)
- The creation of an adequate Cursillo climate, with a 4<sup>th</sup> day vision; (Teams)
- The reinsertion of the converted persons into the environments from which they came; accompanying them in their continuous and progressive conversion to Christ, so they may be like the leavening in the yeast; (sponsors)
- Linking these committed Christians into small groups (group reunion), and these small groups coming together (Ultreya), supporting and encouraging each other, and growing together in friendship and in grace.

When the Cursillo founders thought about building the Body of Christ in the different environments, they saw that it was necessary to build something that would correspond to the human vertebrae. It would be necessary to have something like “the spine” or vertebrae in each location to make the environment firm. This backbone would consist of Christian leaders who could lead others to Christ, and give them guidance. They envisioned the leaders as those who could provide life and strengthen Christianity. Moreover, in order to carry out this vertebration, these leaders needed to be linked with other leaders. By linking up with other leaders, they form a strong structure that transmits the light of Christ to all.

In order to understand this we need to look at four basic concepts;

\*Poster\*

1<sup>st</sup> The importance of environment- people are strongly influenced by their environments which they help form. Those we live and work with form our attitudes, values and behavior patterns. What we are is determined in a large way by those with whom we associate with.

2<sup>nd</sup> Christ as the foundation- Living in and with Christ has to be the foundation for all of life. If life is to be a truly human or Christian, the foundation must be a life united with God in Christ. A true apostle will feel obligated to work for the fullness of Christian Life, so that ultimately Christianity will transform every aspect of his/her life.

3<sup>rd</sup> Working with the vertebrae (backbone)- If the people who are the natural strongholds of their own environment can find Christ, and center their lives in Christ, together they will become “Christianity in Action” in their environment. If these people are dedicated apostles, they can effectively redirect all their environments.

4<sup>th</sup> Continuous support for apostles- In order for Christians to be able to transform their environments it is necessary to have contact with other Christians to uphold the meaning of the church through community living, such as our Group Reunion and Ultreya. It is not enough to just change a person. Each Christian needs the continuous support, guidance and training that come from contact with others who have the same ideal.

The work of Vertebrating Christianity entails two fundamental tasks:

To find and to mold the necessary parts, the people. And to put these people in the right place and link them among themselves so that they may work efficiently.

We do this by subdividing these two tasks into 5 essential steps;       \*Poster\*

**Palanca**- “Today, perhaps now more than ever before, it is absolutely essential to remember that without God we are nothing, we are worth nothing, we can do nothing. We must, before anything else, reaffirm the importance of Palanca. Whenever we speak of working for conversion, the first and most basic step underlying all other human efforts- we must count on the help of grace from God, which comes from the all-powerful strength of prayer that is humble, confident, and unending.

Palanca our prayer, sacrifice, and works of mercy, is the most important characteristic of the Cursillo Strategy. Dependence on this has to be real, sincere and permanent, individual and communal, to guarantee the effectiveness of any other steps we take. The truth is founded on the promise of Christ; “Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you shall find, knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Mt 7:7)

**To Find**- to find key persons in our environments who can do the task of providing a backbone to Christianity.

**To Vitalize**- to energize, by living a Cursillo weekend and to fueling the desire of the three basic encounters; with oneself, with Christ and with others.

**To Place-** requires us to help put the individual in their correct place, where after the experience of their Cursillo weekend, they will be a witness to others. This is the meaning of the Service Sheet or the Green Card.

**To Link Them-** requires a close link with others, a link that is born from the very essence of the Cursillo, the contact with our brothers and sisters by means of the Group Reunions and the Ultreyas.

These five steps are all part of the entire process for vertebrating Christianity. These are the things the Cursillo founders saw as necessary to accomplish in order to have real Christian leaders who could have an effect in the world in which they live.

Have you been studying your environments? Are you following the strategy? Are you the backbone of Christianity in your environments?

**How do we as a movement put these things into action?** The movement itself is set up in such a way in which the Strategy is centered on three phases:

- The PreCursillo Phase, which focuses on the study of environments and the selection of candidates.
- The Cursillo Phase, which nurtures the progressive and authentic conversion of the Cursillo Weekends.
- The Post Cursillo Phase, which reinserts those who experienced the Cursillo back into their natural environments. And helps them with the task of leavening, and linking them with other committed Christians.

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As we all know, the members of Secretariat and the School of Leaders are jointly responsible for planning and coordinating the movement's activities. It takes time, effort, and many other hands, other than just those of secretariat to keep the movements activities ongoing. In the following SOL meetings here at Maple Park and McHenry, we will be going into more detail about the three phases. And so I ask all of you, to take the time from now until then to pray and ask yourself, Is there a phase in which God is calling me to participate in? In what way am I being called to share my time and talents in the Cursillo Movement, outside of the three day weekend?

Remember- Christ is counting on you to keep the Cursillo strategy ongoing.

De Colores!

Questions?

# Palanca

Importance of  
Environments

To find

**PRE-  
CURSILLO**  
(Study)

Christ as the  
Foundation

To Vitalize

**CURSILLO**  
(Piety)

Working with the  
Vertebrae

To Place

**POST-  
CURSILLO**  
(Action)

Continuous support for  
Apostles

To Link