



# CURSILLOS

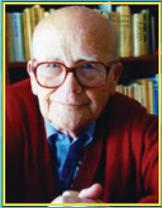
## in CHRISTIANITY

### National Newsletter

EDUARDO BONNÍN AGUILÓ

## 100 YEARS

### BIOGRAPHY AND MENTALITY - PART 7



Servant of God  
**Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló**  
Founder of  
Cursillos in Christianity  
1917 – 2008

June 2021

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National Cursillo Center  
P.O. Box 799  
Jarrell, Texas 76537  
512-746-2020  
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### THE GROUP REUNION

The great increase of Cursillistas in 1949 led Eduardo to reflect deeply so that this influx of large numbers of Cursillistas would not impede the sedimentation of the groups of friendships that Eduardo considered as early as 1944 as a most essential element of the Postcursillo. From this reflection emerged through common sense and immediately, the methodological design of the "**Group Reunion**" that simply intends to follow up on the Cursillo. It is often called "perennial Cursillo" that enables the continuous triple encounter with self, with Christ, and with others.

Eduardo never stopped feeling tension from when he proposed to incorporate the Group Reunion as a method of Cursillos and as a fundamental piece of the Postcursillo. Some opposition, of course, came from Fr. Juan Capó, who "did not see in good light" that a group of lay people met without the presence of a priest, and was afraid that this method would lead to deprive the prominence of the priest and the role of Spiritual Direction.

It was in that same year of 1949, in December, during the Annual Assembly, that a presentation on "Groups" was included. Eduardo presented it, and it was a result of that presentation as well as the insistence of some close friends that helped Fr. Juan Capó change his mind. Consequently, the weekly Group Reunion and the Group Reunion at the Ultreya became essential elements of the PostCursillo and an integral part of the Cursillo method.

An interesting fact is that years later, it was Fr. Juan Capó himself who compiled and published a book about the Group Reunion, entitled, *Group Reunion, Theory of its Practice*, using many of Eduardo's writings and arguments.

Eduardo Bonnín lived in Group Reunions. Throughout his life he was active in several weekly Group Reunions - one of the most well-known lasted more than 45 years - while maintaining, at the same time, spontaneous group reunions at the Ultreya. Despite his many tasks, Eduardo always maintained his weekly presence at the Ultreyas and in his Group Reunions. He only missed due to illness, something beyond his control or one of his numerous trips.

The Group Reunion outline that Eduardo designed is still used today with abundant fruits, where fidelity is maintained to the foundational origins of this divine work which are the Cursillos in Christianity.

### THE ULTREYA

When explaining the Ultreya, we start by saying that Ultreya is an ancient word used by the pilgrims of Santiago de Compostela when they met to greet and cheer each other along the way.

Onward! Almost there! Straight Ahead! Ultreya! Onward, when we share our lives in FRIENDSHIP.

The rise of the Cursillos and the enthusiasm and friendship that they lived could not be left alone in the intimate and personal dimension. The Cursillistas met spontaneously to share "everyone with everybody" the wonders that the Lord was doing in them.

Eduardo has always been very sensitive to these manifestations of friendship and certainly imagined giving shape to these encounters to maintain the "sacred fire". For Eduardo, life does not need methods to be channeled, it is already channeled, it is only necessary to avoid setting up barriers and to take advantage of the power of the normality that is spontaneously revealed.

*(continue on page 2)*

(100 Years...) From this emerges the design of the Ultreya that begins with contact of “all with all”, groups of six people maximum are formed to make Group Reunion using the same outline of the personal Group Reunion. The next act is a “living rollo”, followed by “echoes” and closing with giving thanks to the Lord.

And so, Eduardo thus shaped the social dimension of the perennial Cursillo. The Ultreya is “a circumstance that enables the best of each person to reach as many as possible.” (Eduardo Bonnín, An Apprentice Christian, p. 55).

“The Ultreya is the key piece to insure that in the Cursillo Movement everything is the truth because the Cursillo Movement is a process of belief struggling against a process of disbelief.” (Eduardo Bonnín, An Apprentice Christian, p. 108)

The Ultreya is the Reunion of the Group Reunions.

The Group Reunions at “The Ultreya cannot have the same intensity as a Group Reunion but this collective gathering is necessary because if people live only the Group Reunion, the group itself can become self-centered with a great danger of even finding themselves to be such good people that they run the risk of entering into group narcissism.” (Eduardo Bonnín, An Apprentice Christian, pp. 107-108)

The goal “is to make the best of each person reach the most possible, to give more and more Christian form to our life.”

“The Ultreya is the festivity of the community that celebrates the reality of different people in common union, who live their Christian experience, everyone with everybody. This is where through the Group Reunions at the Ultreya, the contact occurs among the brothers and sisters who live and strive to live what is fundamental to Christianity in their life. It is the place where you live what is said in the Cursillo.”

It is a place where the truths said in the Cursillo are shown ‘in practice’.



he way Eduardo met Pope Benedict XVI was an audience arranged by the Holy Spirit! It so happened that since Eduardo had met Pope Paul VI and several times Pope John Paul II, he had a great desire to meet Pope Benedict XVI. At that time, I was serving as President of the

OMCC Executive Committee and was also a friend of Eduardo's, our mutual friends asked me to please arrange an audience with Pope Benedict XVI, because it would bring him great joy.

Faced with such a request, I felt completely incompetent to get such an audience with the Pope, since I had no idea how I could get him such an audience.

However, just knowing that our friend Eduardo wanted it so much, led me to intensify my prayers for the Holy Spirit to enlighten me and help me to find a way to get such an audience. And so much for my intervention!

Sometime later, Professor Guzmán Carriquiry, undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, invited me to give a Rollo during the Annual meeting of the Council at the Vatican. Which I gladly accepted, since I was representing the Cursillo Movement. Here comes the first intervention of the Holy Spirit. When Professor Guzmán invited me to give that Rollo, it occurred to me to ask him if the Founder Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló could accompany me and share the Rollo with me, and he thought it was an excellent idea. But I had to add that Eduardo was already old and that he would be traveling from Mallorca to Rome, and I from the United States to Rome, and that someone had to accompany him. And well, in the end he said there was no problem. So the invitation to Juan Ruiz had been extended to Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló and Arsenio Pacheco who would accompany him from Mallorca to Rome. An invitation to one person, became an invitation to three people, with flight and accommodation covered. All this time, there was no mention that we would be with the Pope at any time.

## EDUARDO BONNÍN AGUILÓ'S ENCOUNTER WITH POPE BENEDICT XVI

by Juan Ruiz

When I shared this with Eduardo, he was obviously overjoyed, because we were going to have the opportunity to speak about the Cursillo Movement at the Vatican, before the Pontifical Council for the Laity. And I told him that I would have two minutes for the introduction of the topic, and that he would follow me with thirteen minutes, without passing a single second, and that I would finish with the questions and answers. With this plan he got to work immediately. But there was another obstacle, he was sick and his doctor would not give him permission to travel. This Doctor, being a cursillista and also a great friend of Eduardo, was totally convinced, by him and Arsenio, to give him the necessary medicines and to allow him to travel, and that Arsenio and I, would take care of him. Another intervention of

the Holy Spirit, because it was very difficult to let him travel in his condition.

But well, we traveled to Rome and met at the place where the

conferences would be held and where we would be staying. The conference room in that place was in the middle of a labyrinth and we always had a hard time finding it. Also, since Eduardo walked very slowly, we were always late for the conferences. But seeing Eduardo's condition, no one said anything to us.

So, when it was our turn to give our rollo, everything went exactly as planned and Eduardo did not go over a second of the allotted time, being that when Eduardo talked, no one could stop him. But during his thirteen minutes of the rollo, the Holy Spirit came out of every pore of his body. So much so, that the bishops and cardinals present commented that when Eduardo began to speak, he took 50 years off.

And here is the most interesting thing: at the end of the conferences, we were told that the closing of this annual meeting of the Pontifical Council for the Laity would be the next morning with Pope Benedict XVI. We were completely unaware of this. However, it was how the Holy Spirit had intervened so that I could present Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló, as Founder of the Cursillos of Christianity Movement, to Pope Benedict XVI. And thus, the great desire of our friend Eduardo was fulfilled.

Thank you Holy Spirit!



he matter was as personal, and as spontaneous.

In the year 2003, on my way to visit my relatives in Valencia, Spain... There, in the middle of the Atlantic, I decided that Valencia was so close to Mallorca that, by climbing a palm tree I could see the island... Why not go to the cradle of cursillos, and meet the founder?

Since we landed in Madrid, I tried to contact people who could perhaps tell me how to find him; but I did not succeed. I had no idea how to do it; but I did not give up on the idea... Mallorca is small, and Eduardo is so famous... It should not be so difficult.

I simply flew to "Palma de Mallorca" on the first flight in the morning, found a place to sleep and went out to look for Eduardo. I started to ask whoever I met on my way, but without any success. I could not believe that, in its cradle, no one had any idea what Cursillo was, nor who Eduardo Bonín was.

## Searching for the Personage, Finding the Person

I decided, "no problem, I'll look for Cala Figuera". My second surprise of the trip was that I found 2 places with the same name on the map I got. Fortunately, I remembered the name "Santanyí," and started asking how to get there. I ended up boarding a bus for the trip of about 60 km (about almost 38 miles). Along the way I looked at beautiful landscapes, buildings that looked like relics from medieval times and even windmills (which reminded me of the stories of "Don Quixote of La Mancha"). In my mind I carried the image of the photos I had seen of the Chalet where the first Cursillo was held in 1944. When I arrived, it was again walking and walking, asking and asking; but there was no sign of Eduardo, of Cursillos, nor cursillistas. It seemed to me that the attempt had failed! There was nothing left to do but a walk around Palma, a good dinner, a glass of wine, and back to Valencia.

Feeling tired from all the walking and wandering around, I decided to take a cab back to Palma. The driver engaged me in conversation. Knowing the reason for my trip, he told me that he had heard about Cursillos. He stopped at a corner and told me to wait a few minutes. He went into a store and when he came out, he was bringing me information. He told me that the cursillistas meet in Palma; but he didn't know where and that, if I wanted, we could stop by the villa where the first Cursillo was held, in Cala Figuera. Honestly, my heart skipped a beat. He took me to see the villa. We pulled up in front and there it was, just as I had seen it in pictures. That was a matter of a few minutes, and we were on our way to Palma. "At least I've seen the villa in person," I said to myself, "That's a win!".

But my ambition did not end there. Already in Palma, I thought that perhaps in some church there would be more possibilities of finding someone who knew something about Cursillo. Near where I got out of the cab, I saw a Catholic school and I approached to ask. The lady who was at the entrance told me that she did not know; but that there was a priest there who was a Cursillista, and she called him on the phone. When she hung up, she told me that the priest said he was on his way.

The priest was a man of some age and had incredible energy. We walked down several streets, he kept searching in his memory, saying: "I remember... Oh Wait! Let's go this way." Several times it seemed to me that he had already decided where to go, and then he would change his mind and change course. Finally, we entered a pharmacy. There they helped us... The pharmacist picked up the phone and made several calls. He called someone and wrote on a piece of paper, then called another one and wrote down again. They spoke in Majorcan, so I could only guess what they were saying. It seems it was that someone gave him someone else's number, who gave him someone else's number. Finally, he got Eduardo's number. After another minute on the phone he told me that Eduardo would see me that afternoon.

That afternoon the "momentazo" (the huge moment) happened! Finally, there he was, in front of me, in the flesh, the founder of the Cursillos in Christianity... Whom the Holy Spirit inspired to bring the Good News to as many as possible, through Friendship.

I did not go with any plans nor expectations about Eduardo. I was just excited about the idea of meeting the founder. In a way, I was looking at the opportunity to meet the personage. My idea was just to meet him, and maybe ask him questions about Cursillo. It was not lost on me that, being the founder, he would be a man with many occupations, and little time to waste.

I could not explain why; but I felt relaxed, comfortable from the first moment. I was struck by his simplicity, his normality! He treated me as if we had known each other forever. He apologized for making me wait. I replied that I was rather grateful to him for dedicating his time to me, in such an untimely manner. "That's nothing," he replied. His joy, the ease with which he told anecdotes and the certainty with which he answered my questions, made me feel that it was not a burden for him to dedicate his time to me. He even seemed to enjoy the get-together.

That night I had an additional gift. There was Ultreya in Mallorca, like every Monday. Eduardo assumed I would be there, and I definitely wouldn't miss it!

When I arrived at the place indicated, there were already several group meetings in progress. As soon as I arrived someone approached me, welcomed me and invited me to join their group meeting. Soon after, Eduardo arrived. Just like the others, he arrived, exchanged greetings with great normality. During the Ultreya he sat at a point more or less in the middle, and remained, listening very attentively. At no time did he say anything, nor was he mentioned by those at the front. He was simply one of us!

Everything was so normal that it took me some time to realize what had happened. I arrived unannounced, without any prior arrangement. I will never know if he had cancelled any plans; but the founder of the Cursillos in Christianity had, impromptus, dedicated his time to me with generosity and normality. The one who shared his time with me was Eduardo, the person.

I went in search for the personage, but I found the person.

Omar Palacios

The day I met Eduardo for the first time we were on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica at the close of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Ultreya July 29, 2000. My husband, Juan, and I had lived the Cursillo in the fall of the previous year and took the spots of a couple who weren't able to go on this pilgrimage so we found ourselves at this Ultreya "by going through the back door" of God's "Surprise!"

Honestly, I wasn't that interested in St Peter's Basilica back then or anything to do with religious sites. Before Cursillo I was skeptical that they had anything important to do with a real life of faith. But I was very enthusiastic about the World Ultreya when we heard it announced at the School of Leaders. It seemed amazing that Cursillo could gather people from the whole world.

So there we were at the World Ultreya with 350 cursillistas from Southern California and they all wanted to start back to the bus early. Not me! Juan and I agreed we would enjoy every minute and not leave until the very end. So, when the Ultreya ended all the others were gone and we couldn't remember how to get back to the bus. We looked around and saw Juan and Conchita Ruiz up on the stage so we went knowing they could lead us back.

I didn't know much about Cursillo at the time but we were enjoying a class on the book "Conversations of Cala Figuera". And I was drawn to those discussions most of all the one on Friendship. That one had really penetrated my heart in the same way the Cursillo had. And I knew that a person by the name of Eduardo Bonnin had written the one on Friendship. Many leaders mentioned him often, repeating things he said that really helped me to grow more and more in love with Christ.

So we were there on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica and Conchita said to me, "Come, meet Eduardo". I went and told him, "Nice to meet you. I really like what you write". He responded, "It is only the Gospel". With that we were cautioned by his sisters to take care not to apply pressure on his arms while I took a picture with him and we simply moved on. But I kept thinking about his response for a long time. It seemed to me of utmost importance.

Since then my study intensified. In the fall of 2000 I was asked to help translate the biography of Eduardo, "Aprendiz de Cristiano". I jumped at the invitation and so it was that I spent almost every night at the computer translating about a chapter a month for the next 13 months. And for me it was time I spent getting to know Eduardo for myself and being inspired to live my life more and more as a daughter of the Church.

My husband, Juan, and I were called to serve in the PreCursillo in 2005. By then I realized some people thought learning from Eduardo was very controversial and it was causing confusion. The remedy for this seemed to me quite simple--"go to Mallorca and see for yourself". I wanted to go to the Ultreya and see how Eduardo interacted with his friends. On the invitation of Mari Carmen and Arsenio, my husband, my children Albert, Luis and Antonio and I went to stay at their home in Palma for an amazing week.

And for the second time God surprised me through the thoughtfulness of others. I met Eduardo a second time January 7, 2005 because Mari Carmen and Arsenio arranged

for us to go to his office. It was there that he met my children and we visited him for an hour or so.

Then in 2006 I served as secretary of the World Cursillo (OMCC) and was invited to attend the Encounter of Movements in Rome followed by another trip to Mallorca and another opportunity to know Eduardo and his friends more.

The day Eduardo died February 6, 2008 I was in Rome. My friends Gail Terrana, Maria Teresa Punyed and I had been invited to attend a conference, Mulieres Dignitati, as representatives of the Cursillo Movement. As we checked in to the hotel one night I received a call from Flavio, a Roman cursillista, informing me Eduardo had died. The pain was very deep. And after the initial shock, my mind raced to find out where I was when he passed because Flavio had mentioned the hour. We had just returned from St. Peter's Basilica. It was Ash Wednesday and I estimated I must have been right outside the Basilica on the very steps on which I met Eduardo for the very first time. For me it was as if Eduardo had come to say farewell to me on his way to heaven.

I'm amazed by how much my perspective has changed. Now I realize just how much God uses everything to connect His people to Him and His Church. Now those steps of St. Peter's Basilica tell me the story of how much Eduardo has done to bring me and so many thousands into the Church by simply living and proclaiming the Gospel. It is just the Gospel!

Written with love for Christ, Eduardo and all my friends this Ascension Thursday May 13, 2021,



Maribel Gómez, an apprentice of  
the Apprentice Christian

## The Gift of Friendship & My Surprise

FROM EDUARDO BONNÍN AGUILÓ

My name is Concepción (Conchita, Conchis) Ruíz and I lived my Cursillo in October 1977 in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Shortly after this life-changing event, my husband Juan Ruíz and I met Eduardo Bonnin Aguiló at the School of Leaders of this same Archdiocese. From that meeting, we established a relationship of friendship of more than 40 years of life and still remains from heaven.

I would love to tell you how beautiful was this relationship with this great friend who loved to read, and every morning to drink water with lots of ice and always asked me if I believed that in heaven they would have this.

Eduardo was a child at heart, but not in age, and always noticed all the details of the places he visited. He loved ducks and had a large collection, my husband always told him: "Eduardo I think you should separate them because I think they are multiplying".



Whenever he came to California, he wanted to stay at our house and we would accompany him to both Northern and Southern California, and although he spoke English, he preferred that we translate what he said in Spanish (not easy) because when he gave an answer he would do it so fast that sometimes we could only translate the concept, an example: once he was invited in San José California to visit the Vietnamese community, it was a unique experience because they received him with the song “De Colores” in Spanish, but those who were there did not speak English, so if they asked a question it was in Vietnamese, the translator did it in English and we translated it to Spanish, and then it was from Spanish, to English and then to Vietnamese, great odyssey.

But back to the original subject. He noticed that I had a collection of elephants and during a visit at home, he and Jesús Valls, who accompanied him, asked my husband to take them to a store where we had gone before, but that he would wait in the car

(it was an order), so they got out and returned with a big bag and when they arrived home, he brought a black elephant and named him Fermín. And since then, whenever we talked to him on the phone, he always asked us if he was well cared for and well fed.

On a trip my husband made to Mallorca, knowing that my birthday was in May, he sent me another cute little elephant whom he did not name, he just said it was a small gift with which he wanted me to always remember him.

I think of him every day with that beautiful smile and simplicity with which he always treated everyone and I still think that he is by our side. I continue to take care of Fermín and the little elephant that he so lovingly sent me so that I would always remember him.

De Colores all the way to heaven,



Conchita Ruiz

## An Encounter With Eduardo Bonnin, Principal Founder of The Cursillo Movement In Mallorca, Spain

In September 1994, The Filipino Cursillo Community-Diocese of Oakland was blessed to have an encounter with Eduardo Bonnin, on two separate occasions.

The 1<sup>st</sup> occasion was on Sept.10, 1994. Eduardo Bonnin was the guest speaker at the School of Leaders’ workshop. At this workshop, the various leaders from different secretariats, (Filipino Secretariat was represented), met, talked, and asked questions to Eduardo Bonnin.

In his talk, Bonnin spoke of the simple concepts involved in the Cursillo... “simple but not easy.” He summoned the audience to welcome the opportunity to convey the ‘best message ever’ --- that of “constancy, fidelity and conviction” in our faith.

The Cursillo he said, “is an encounter with self, Christ and neighbor.” He spoke about the human limitations and human abilities and the proper balance in the awareness or recognition of both. He talked about love, openness versus individualism and that how “together, we can do much better.”

He spoke of how he got started in his local Catholic Action Group where in his small group, he has been attending a group reunion since 1942. He said that in the Post Cursillo, an attitude of dynamism needs to be preserved, maintained, and expanded. Consistent with his genuine humility, he said that group reunions get distracted with superficialities when a recitation of accomplishments replaces the sharing of life’s intimacies and life’s faith stories.

He also said that the Cursillo was never intended to be “rigid.” Let people “come together naturally in common friendship.”

Bonnin gave weight on the importance of Group Reunion and the Ultreya...the ‘pillars’ of the leaders’ school. He realized that the “ONWARD” concept is accomplished by going further and deeper, meeting others, expressing interest in one another and by a continuing and ongoing concrete apostolate.

In answer to Fr Leo’s question as to “what is the greatest challenge to the Cursillo in the years to come,” he replied, “Good people!” and in response to Fr. Fernando’s question about what “legacy” he might leave to the people beyond his mortal life, he

said, I couldn’t ask for anything more than this: only for the people to know that “God loves them.”

The 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion was on the following day, September 11th, where Eduardo Bonnin graced the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Cursillo “Three Decades of Community” in the Diocese of Oakland.

The Filipino Cursillo Community was particularly blessed to be included in the preparation for this great milestone. It was indeed a momentous event because the man who started it all, was in our midst; shook hands with, sat with us, ate with us, talked with us, sang with us, and prayed with us.

Those who were in the celebration could attest that Eduardo Bonnin was a prime example in humility and modesty. In those two days, never did he claim credit for the movement that has spanned the five continents of the world. Eduardo in his mid-70 was full of fire and energy when he spoke. Himself as a layman, he serves as the ultimate example of what we, lay people could do in the evangelization of our “environments.”

He spoke about the early beginnings of the movement in the late 1940s. In true Cursillo fashion, he gave testimonies to his experiences in the movement. He received two long-standing ovations before and after his talk. He reiterated what he said at the Leaders’ workshop that “the Cursillo weekend is an encounter with self, Christ and neighbor...”

It was quite an experience to hear him talk, to be with the person who has made a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people all over the world.



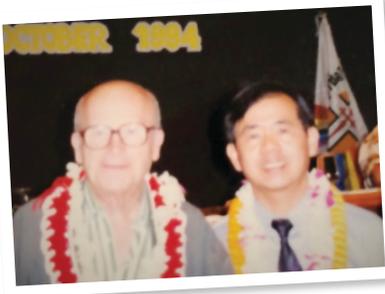
Source: *MARIPOSA, Filipino Cursillo Newsletter-Diocese of Oakland, September 1994 issue*  
Editor: Carmen Revecho  
Asst Editor: Raul Roberto



## “My Papa” Eduardo Bonnín

The majority of Cursillistas in the United States of America, I believe, must surely have had at least one occasion to see, to hear, to meet, and to hug the beloved Founder of our Cursillo Movement, Señor (Sr.) Eduardo Bonnín from Mallorca, Spain. Whenever I greeted him with the term of endearment, “Mi Papa!”, he just smiled.

I do not remember the exact date when I first met Sr. Eduardo Bonnín because he had come to many National Cursillo Encounters in the United States. On various occasions, his image suddenly appeared in my mind as I started writing this article. Then fond memories of his loud voice projecting at many talks, yet his soft tone accompanied by stern, but admirable looks during conversations were joyously tinkling in my ears as I typed.



I was fortunate enough to have been able to attend two Cursillo World Encounters, one in Rome, Italy and one in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and quite a few Asia-Pacific Cursillo Encounters, either in Bangkok (Thailand), Manila (the Philippines), Taipei (Taiwan), Seoul (South Korea), as well as Hawaii

and Guam (Pacific Islands). “Mi Papa” Bonnín participated in most of these international, regional or national Encounters, and evidently, he was always present at all Cursillo Conversaciones de Cala Figuera, or at special events taking place in Mallorca, his native land and the birthplace of our Cursillos in Christianity. I was also blessed to have participated with him in some Cursillo seminars there.

The most wonderful and impactful event in my life as a Cursillista happened approximately 15 years ago. I was lucky to have accompanied the US National Cursillo Executive Director, Mr. Tom Sarg and my two colleagues, National English and Spanish Coordinators, Victor Lugo and Jorge Barceló, on a weeklong trip to Mallorca, Spain for a very informative and friendly consultation with “Mi Papa” Bonnín in his own private library. We met with him in the morning for five consecutive days and spent the rest of our stay in Mallorca collaborating with other Cursillo leaders and many Cursillistas, regardless of our language barrier. We had an interesting opportunity to observe one Ultreya there for practical learning. That rare opportunity of truth-finding and learning about the Cursillo Mentality with its Founder is a dearly treasured memory in my life as a Cursillista. I retired as the National Vietnamese Coordinator of the US Cursillo Movement at age 75, right after the National Cursillo Encounter in 2016.

The Cursillo Tripod: **Piety, Study and Action**, according to Sr. Eduardo Bonnín was essential to the life of an active Cursillista. He frequently emphasized that “**Action**” happens automatically as the natural outcome of **Piety** and **Study**, but not vice versa. The Cursillo Literature affirms the three basic guidelines of Sr. Eduardo Bonnín’s Mentality: The Love

of God, Friendship and the Person, especially the far-away. The Biography of Sr. Eduardo Bonnín on the US National Cursillo website declares “the text and outlines of the Study of the Environments, which Eduardo presented in public for the first time at the Diocesan Seminary of Mallorca in 1943, was one of the most serious concerns of Sr. Eduardo Bonnín”. It was truly important because all Cursillistas spend their lives in environments that may influence them favorably, or damage them miserably. That’s why the Cursillo Mentality encourages all Cursillistas to strive to live their “Piety and Study” fruitfully in order to be able to transform people within their environments.

I attended Cursillo Weekend in 1982, the 79<sup>th</sup> one in the Diocese of Orange, in Southern California. It was the first Cursillo Weekend in the Vietnamese language in the Diocese and the second one in the United States. The first Weekend in Vietnamese was held in Lafayette, Louisiana in 1981. The Cursillo leaders serving those two Cursillo Weekends had lived out their Cursillo Mentality in Vietnam before they came to the United States as political refugees after the Fall of South Vietnam into the Communist regime on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1975. The Rector, Mr. Truong Thành Khán, a Vietnamese refugee living in France, was invited to be the rector of the Cursillo Weekend in the Orange Diocese.

Our Cursillo Group Reunion constantly meditates on the words of Jesus to his disciples before His glorious ascension to heaven: “*Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.*” Saint James has also inspired us with his exhortations “*Be doers of the word and not hearers only! What good is it if someone says he has faith but does not have works?*” Sr. Bonnín was right when he asserted the truth in the Cursillo Tripod: Action is the automatic result of Piety and Study.

Fortunately, I had a good opportunity to return to Mallorca sometime after “Mi Papa” Bonnín’s death, and to ardently pray at his tomb in the Capuchin church. I have often meditated on his motto inscribed on his tombstone, “An Apprentice Christian,” and I often try to figure out who I am myself!

Joachim Thông Tĩnh Lê

Let us pray together with fervent enthusiasm: “*O God, the dispenser of all graces and charisms. You granted your servant Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló the privilege of dedicating his whole life with humility and generosity to the work of the Cursillos in Christianity Movement, as he traveled the Five continents proclaiming that God in Christ loves us. Grant us through his intercession the favor that we now implore Thee:*

“*Bless us, citizens of the United States of America; grant peace and prosperity to our Nation; illuminate those who govern us so that they may commit themselves to the common good, in respect for Your holy Law.* (quoted Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganó, former Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, 2011 - 2016.)

“*Also, grant us the grace of his beatification for Your greater glory and the good of your Church that shines throughout the lives of its saints. We beg this of You in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Amen ([www.febe-usa.org](http://www.febe-usa.org)).

## Remembering Meetings With

### EDUARDO BONNÍN AGUILÓ



My name is Omelio Fernandez, I lived Cursillo in the Archdiocese of Newark, NJ in February 1976 and since 1984 I live in the Diocese of Palm Beach, FL.

I was blessed to meet Eduardo for the first time in a Cursillo de Cursillos in 1981 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

There, I discovered a very simple man that, no matter how long he spoke, we were all hungry to listen to him. In his sharing we felt that he really lived what he preached, that love, and friendship came out of his pores. That experience made me see the need to look for and discover something more in people, the importance of friendship and the need for the Group Reunion and Ultreya.

I also had the joy of seeing, hearing and sharing with Eduardo in several National Encounters in the United States, in his visits to Miami and in three more Cursillos de Cursillos, one in Orlando from April 6-9, 1989, another in our Diocese of Palm Beach, from April 5-7, 1991, and the last one in Miami, from June 20-23, 1996.

The Cursillistas of our Diocese coordinated the details of Eduardo's visit, we prepared a large sign that read "Welcome Eduardo Bonnín" and we went to Miami Airport to await his arrival. We remember seeing that little old man, bald, with big glasses, carrying a small suitcase, walking through the corridors of the airport, looking from one side to the other with a smile on his lips. My wife was the first one to see him and told everyone "that's him" full of joy during the encounter and feeling the magnetism reflected by his presence.

When Eduardo saw us, he immediately began to identify us by name "Omelio, Alicia, Elpidio, ...". It was a moment of deep emotion in which Eduardo identified by name people he had only seen once in his life. His greeting, his joy, his smile, his sharing with everyone was a true encounter with Christ.

After the reception, we returned to the Diocese of Palm Beach very happy, knowing that Eduardo Bonnín would be staying at our house in the city of Jupiter, Florida. I remember his humorous comment when we arrived at our home "how wonderful, we have arrived in Jupiter, soon we will have Cursillo on the moon".

Having Eduardo in our home was something that we will never forget. We felt the excitement and joy of Eduardo's presence and had the opportunity to "squeeze him" (as he used to say), listening to the wonders of his wisdom in many moments of friendly sharing.

In our house lived my father-in-law, an 87-year-old Galician, our 4-year-old son, my wife and me. In the next few days, we were able to see Eduardo sharing with friendship and joy with both my father-in-law and my son. I remember Eduardo talking with my father-in-law about the war in Spain, the experiences lived, the morale, the family, they talked like old friends. But he would also spend time with our 4-year-old son, teaching him magic tricks and together they would laugh in an atmosphere of true family happiness.

Sharing with Eduardo took on a magical aspect, when after each meal we would talk for a long time. In these moments of sharing, we would ask him numerous questions, and listen to his experiences and teachings. We will never forget those wonderful moments with Eduardo, our hearts beat with emotion and joy, we were in the presence of a wonderful person and we breathed an air of holiness. We really felt the presence of Christ in his humility, his genuineness, his joy, his love, his wisdom, and above all, his friendship.

Eduardo had the gift of someone that when you saw him and spoke to him for the first time, you felt that he was family, that he was an old friend. We felt that way with Eduardo in our home as if it were a foretaste of the wonders of heaven.

Eduardo, although he was who he was, never reflected airs of grandeur or pride, for all that God accomplished through him. His humility, simplicity and naturalness were qualities that impacted us deeply.

We remember with nostalgia the time we shared with Eduardo in April 1991. Eduardo's words remained in our minds and in our hearts, but above all, we always felt what true friendship is with Eduardo.



May 13, 2021

Omelio Fernandez



*My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.  
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood  
remains in me and I in him. (JOHN 6:55-56)*

### Prayer for Unity to Discern and Accept the Will of God

**1 Cor 1:10-13** <sup>10</sup>I urge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose. <sup>11</sup>For it has been reported to me about you, my brothers, by Chloe's people, that there are rivalries among you. <sup>12</sup>I mean that each of you is saying, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Kephass," or "I belong to Christ." <sup>13</sup>Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

**Let us pray:** Merciful and Ever-loving Father, I am beginning a new day. As I begin, I ask for a cheerful heart. Help me to reflect the joy of You to everyone I meet. Help me to say the right words at the right time, to be silent when I should, not to be offended, and not to hurt the feelings of others. Help me experience Your love in the hearts of those I shall meet today.

In my love for the gift of the Cursillo Movement may I radiate Your love to all those You invite me to encounter. Send Your Spirit to guide and direct the Cursillo Movement as a way to bring Your love to a world that much needs Your transformative love. Let me not be closed to the needs of others. Give me patience and help me find the right measure in my work within the Cursillo Movement. Let my work, express Your concern for all men and women. In all things let Your Will be done. Amen

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- Spanish: Deacon Andy
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