

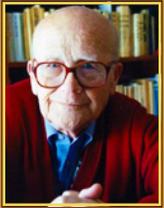


CURSILLOS

in CHRISTIANITY
National Newsletter

Signs of HOPE

An Interview with Eduardo Bonnín conducted by Bishop Paul Josef Cordes, Part 4



Servant of God

Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló

Founder of
Cursillos in Christianity
1917 – 2008

December 2023

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In early 1997, Eduardo Bonnín received a visit from Bishop Paul Josef Cordes of the Vatican (Cardinal and President Emeritus of the Pontifical Council “Cor Unum”). Bishop Cordes was called to interview seven founders from prominent ecclesial Movements in preparation for the First World Congress of Ecclesial Movements, which would be held in 1998 in Rome.

13. Bishop Cordes: Normally, we believe that the Good News only addresses itself to the specialists. To whom is your Charism destined? Why do the laity and the consecrated live the Charism together?

Eduardo Bonnín: Since the beginning, the Cursillo Movement proposes that the Good News be addressed to all people of the world without distinction. The Charism of Cursillo is for all, but we also say that if these persons that we qualify as locomotives [engines], in Cursillo terminology, come first, it would be much easier for the other railcars to follow.

Wherever and whenever the Charism of the Cursillo has manifested itself, the priests and the laity understood it. There is always a beneficial encounter for both, and the most urgent and pressing preoccupation for all who are called to follow the Cursillo method will succeed in knowing the grace of God and living it. This will encourage sincere friendship and will help to eliminate prejudices and misunderstandings. What makes Cursillo different or most unique is that diverse people participate and follow it when only the essentials, the fundamental points, of Christianity are explained.

The Cursillos are always concrete and always aimed at the uniqueness, personality, and personal creativity of each person. It means that when man becomes aware of good and evil, he can reach by discovering and exercising his freedom; he discovers that he is not alone and has the Spirit of God with him. It defines and explains the need for self-esteem and that money destroys. He learns to discern what has value compared to what is unchangeable, beginning always from the value of the Gospel. It ensures that the message reaches the most people who will learn the Good News that God loves them and that the Good News is communicated most effectively through friendship. He realizes that the triple encounter in the Cursillo, with self, Christ, and the others, is becoming friends with self, Christ, and others. This, together with loyalty to God’s grace, offers a Christian criterion that facilitates a more accurate orientation, the necessary light, and the constant courage to solve any problem according to God’s light. Then, little by little, we understand that Christ has come to bring us true happiness, making the way simple and giving us the necessary means. We experience, with Christ living in us by grace, that we can go through difficult circumstances and feel good. We are called to make God’s tenderness present in this world.

14. Bishop Cordes: How do you see your relationship with God?

Eduardo Bonnín: My relationship with God is evident in my cordial relationship and sincere and profound friendship with marginalized persons, mostly prisoners, drug addicts, and alcoholics. It never occurred to me to teach them anything. Rather, I try to profit from them by what I can learn from them. Many of them are experts on the virtue of hope. Others have been able to forgive things that we cannot even imagine, others hope despite their hopelessness, and many, despite the wounds of their hearts, prefer the possibility of giving joy to others, trying to alleviate their bitter life in some small way.

I believe that this contact, which I build up with tact, without paternalism, in a brotherly and friendly closeness, has brought me nearer to God, in prayer, in the sacraments, in a living relationship with Him, in His Church.

15. Bishop Cordes: How do you meet God in your journey?

Eduardo Bonnín: Today, yesterday, and forever, I see, or better, I experience, the relationship with God through the gift He has given me of being able to live in His grace. I try to be conscious of it and cultivate this gift through prayer and regular reception of the sacraments.

I have always been astonished, and I have a hard time understanding the need to find motivations relevant to our times and even to the place where we live to stimulate in persons the love of Christ.

I believe, in all sincerity, that if we would put the supreme motivation in the forefront (the reality of the love that God has for every person and all that would happen in this regard if one deepened it, studied it, found, and explicitly used the means to achieve it) one would obtain much more from each one. Every Christian, instead of encouraging the so-called “religious” aspect around them, would achieve more if they could succeed in affirming in a Christian way the hearts and minds of many.

I have always entertained the idea of using those responsible for animating Christian communities. I believe that if these energies were used to bring each person to find and come to a knowledge of self, thereby discovering their qualities, the way would be simpler, and people would learn to be thankful for these qualities. This way, they would be able to accept them and even acknowledge their limitations with optimism.

I believe it is the right direction to take so that each person obtains, according to his or her personal response to the supreme truth, that God loves us in Christ, a Christian criterion so that he or she can discern in the light of the Gospel, anything that he might encounter in daily life.

When we love, we have certainty; we know we love; when we are being loved, it is a matter of believing. The one who loves has doubts about everything, whether they are loved in return, but the one who feels loved doubts nothing. Along this line, when one experiences things in this way because faith in being loved by God in Christ is the motive, the orientation, and the goal of life, one perceives that being a Christian is not only knowing that one day one will render accounts but is to live in the awareness that one is alive, which prompts one to give thanks to God.

When one has this attitude toward life, one realizes that life is beautiful, people are important, and life is worth living.

16. Bishop Cordes: Therefore, it is indispensable to be grounded on the Gospel.

Eduardo Bonnín: For me, the Gospel is always the right orientation, an illuminating light, and a constant encouragement at all the crossroads of my life. My goal has always been to pray the “Our Father” daily and in truth.

17. Bishop Cordes: What is the meaning of “to evangelize” today?

Eduardo Bonnín: In my view, this means the same thing in the past and the future. The Gospel does not change; it is up to us to change. The Gospel is always new and renews us. It is the means to live it that is changing. I see that the difficulty at present comes from the fact that man prefers what is immediate more than what is true, and this happens because the world is organized to prevent people from thinking or having time to think, to dominate them and manipulate them, and to propose anything to them, except to act as a person.

To evangelize a person is not only to speak about the Gospel, but it is necessary to place them in circumstances that will permit them to grasp Christ’s message, and amid the complications of their life, they discover, under the light of faith, that the Gospel gives them the right orientation to use their freedom and be happier, a light by which to find the precise balance that gives them interior peace and constant encouragement to interpret the events of life, good and bad. ✝



NACG ANNOUNCEMENTS

2024 Cursillo 34th National Encounter

100 Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549

July 25–28, 2024

More information to follow.



Patrick Anderson, the National Cursillo Center Office Manager announced his retirement. Please continue to offer palanca as we are currently interviewing to fill the National Cursillo Center Office Manager position.

On behalf of the National Cursillo we would like to thank our outgoing National Secretariat members who have completed their term as regional coordinators and welcome our incoming National Secretariat members..

Outgoing

Region 1: **John Wentworth** (English)

Region 2: **Milagro Pérez** (Spanish)

Region 4: **Bernadette Charleston** (English)

Region 5: **Yen Duong** (Vietnamese)

Region 7: **Yvonne Beyers** (English)

Region 7: **Toan Tran** (Vietnamese)

Region 11: **José Jesús Chumacero** (Spanish)

Incoming

Region 1: **Joseph Fitzgerald** (English)

Region 1: **Christina Vu** (Vietnamese)

Region 2: **Rene Trujillo** (Spanish)

Region 5: **Tho Nguyen** (Vietnamese)

Region 7: **Mary Paulienlli** (English)

We extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to our outgoing National Secretariat Coordinating Committee Chair Mr. Toan Tran and Coordinating Committee Member at Large Mrs. Bernadete Charlton; and welcome our New Coordinating Committee Chair Mrs. Carmen Golias and Vice Chair Terri DiBacco May the Holy Spirit continue to guide them in service.

Advent Greetings

The National Secretariat, National Staff, the National Cursillo Center personnel and the Cursillo National Newsletter team wish you a Blessed Advent; may your home and heart be filled with Hope, Faith, Joy and Peace! Merry Christmas, and a New Year filled with God's Love and Friendship!

