



Servant of God

**Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló**

Founder of

Cursillos in Christianity

1917 – 2008

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[Welcome](#)

[What is Cursillo](#)

[My Resource Center](#)

[Cursillo Literature](#)

[National Newsletter](#)

[Palanca Requests](#)

[Donate to Cursillo](#)

[Forms & Memo](#)

[Links & Contacts](#)

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## ESSENCE AND PURPOSE, SHORT ESSAY<sup>1</sup>

### ESSENCE:

The nature of a thing.

### PURPOSE:

Things are explained and understood when their purpose is expressed.

The ESSENCE of the Cursillos is the ESSENCE of the Christian:

- The nucleus,
- The central,
- The core,
- The basics,

We call this: WHAT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO BEING CHRISTIAN.

What is Fundamental to being Christian?

Christianity is not a doctrine to be known but a reality that must be lived. To embody what it means to be Christian in daily life, Christianity must be lived in connection with life itself, flowing from what life is, and internalizing the realities that lead to the summit of what it means to be Christian. What is fundamental to Christianity is not just trying to understand and assimilate the Gospel as an easy option for virtue but to strive with honesty to always exercise the virtue of opting for Christ and for man.

God in Christ loves us. God loves me.

To be a Christian, more than anything, is to feel loved by God and to live in astonishment of that love. Allowing oneself to be loved by God is what is most genuinely Christian.

The internal attitude that this reality generates, when it is truly believed and lived to its fullness, ferments and infects. But to grasp it, to experience it, to find the God who is love - as He is - it is necessary to present ourselves to Him as we are.

God loves me. It is the truest truth and the greatest good.

It is the only value that values everything... and never loses its value because it gives value to everything that is of real value in a currency that never changes.

It is the most vivid, most real, and dynamic reality.

It is the connection, direction, and rhythm of the most effective, most personal, and fullest reality in life.

When this reality is grasped, understood, lived, and shared by a person, it becomes resoundingly clear with the strength to provoke a vitality that energizes everything.

It impels people, events, and things, toward their most radical originality, toward their most abundant fullness, and toward their most dynamic creativity.

This lets us see everything from God's perspective, and therefore in an optimistic, cheerful, and confident way.

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<sup>1</sup> The Thinking of Eduardo Bonnín I, Foundation Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló, 2018

It is seeing ordinary things in a new way.

The Cursillo focuses on what is Christian from this reality.

The part of the solution a person can offer must begin with oneself, starting from within, and starting right now.

To those who have ears to hear it is asked to have: a consistent attitude, with possibility, immediacy, and concreteness, that can be: achieved right now, by oneself, and... more than anything, what you are trying to achieve is to know how to adopt a positive attitude toward life.

The message, the spirit of Cursillo, should not be just a reality that was realized in history, but rather it should become an axis that we give to our personal history and therefore to all of History.

It is not a change in the system; it is a change of system.

It is about discovering another vision, undoubtedly deeper and more authentic.

With utmost respect, it is something similar to what the Lord says in the Gospel: "It has been said that..., but I tell you...."

For in order to understand it, in order to grasp it, one has to move from the concept of the "commandment" to love God to the Good and perennial News that God loves us.

It should also be noted that since we were children, we have been told that we must believe, love, and hope in God almost always without having first communicated to us the Great News that God in Christ believes in us, loves us, and is even waiting with hope that we respond to Him.

Since we were little, we have been told that if we do something wrong, God is watching us, and the idea we have had is that of a police God who is spying on us, but the reality is very different. The Lord, more than watching us, He looks at us, and looks at us with interest, with enthusiasm, with love, as a father looks at his son or as a grandfather looks at his grandchildren. There exists between Him and man a privileged and all-embracing relationship.

When these realities are understood and developed and lived in the life of each person with enthusiasm, tenacity, and heart, they become an orbit and channel of the highest level of personal fulfillment and satisfy the inescapable necessity that everyone has for successful social interaction.

He who has lived the experience of a Cursillo, and has understood it, usually does not fail to take advantage of the precise and concrete means that are given to him – the Group Reunion and Ultreya – which when practiced as required by their purpose, and for what they have and contain of spirit and truth, serve not only to preserve the spirit and the encouragement they have discovered, rediscovered, and experienced in the three days of the Cursillo, but to energize it, activate it, and expand upon it from their "being" and their "being a person in action" in the concrete circumstances where God has placed him. This is something obviously more difficult than wanting to simply play roles of "committed Christians" who are almost always "committing Christians", obstinate

salesmen of prayers, meetings, and pious works – who since they are not energized by faith, conviction, enthusiasm, and the pressure to evangelize which every Christian must have and express in order to be Christian – they lose sight of the target that was once proposed to them and soon find themselves experiencing what someone correctly called "the weariness of the good."

To try to ensure that the enthusiasm of the Cursillo does not get stranded in the boring sandbanks of the pious for a period of time, losing or squandering human talents, the Postcursillo aims above all else that each person tries to be himself, discovering himself and leading the way through the path of his life, while thanking God for his talents and knowing how to offer his limitations which are always on the cutting edge of the crucifying circumstances that each person has to endure.

The internalization through the conscious grace that he lives, wants to live, or is pained not to live, deepens through personal reflection and lively, friendly, regular contact with his brothers, and brings him to perceive the normal living and near Christ (whom every Christian is called to make transparent in their life) within his own person, which makes him more of a person.

Within normal life, when someone can experience in themselves or in those who live near them, that Christ lives, that He is alive, that He can enliven everything, and that with HIM by a person's side – life is beautiful, people are important, and life is worth living – they also learn to see Christ in other people, whether or not they are Christians.

Through living and sharing with their brothers the truths they came to know in Cursillo and applied in their life, it is understood that what is Christian is the leaven of the Gospel that when placed and brought alive in the interior of a person, it shapes and builds one's conviction, and as it reaches the most personal areas of each human, it awakens them to be able to make decisions more conscientiously.

It pains us that the world is the way it is, and we would like it to be as Christ wants. Our task - we know it well - is not in savoring and enjoying what has been discovered but in making it possible for many more. We also know that convinced and determined people are the only ones who can convince and decide and even excite others.

We cannot forget that the Cursillo Movement was not thought of for the best comfort of those who call themselves "good" and who may think they are, but to see that those who call themselves "bad" and who almost never are as much as people believe: the uninformed, the inadequately informed and the misinformed, can be reached in a simple, concrete, and attractive way with the Great News that God, in Christ, is alive and loves you.

*Eduardo Bonnin*

# Christ, Person, Friendship: The Voice of Eduardo Bonnin in Six Flashes

Source: OMCC

**The deepest part of each person is the capacity to be loved and to love.**



Eduardo viewed anthropology from the perspective of the human heart, not from morality or institutional structure. His most radical intuition was

that human beings are made for relationships, for acceptance and response. The Cursillos in Christianity Movement was born precisely from this vision: not to impose burdens, but to awaken in each person what was already there, like a dormant seed. That is why the Cursillo does not begin by talking about rules, but about dignity; it does not begin with obligations, but with possibilities. In Eduardo's view, evangelizing was always about awakening the capacity to love that God has placed in each person.

**Christianity is not learned: it is lived, and by living it, it is contagious.**

Eduardo had the firm conviction that the Christian message is, before doctrine, experience. It is not a matter of transmitting ideas—although ideas are important—but of sharing a life touched by Grace. That is why the central message of the Cursillo is not a discourse, but an encounter: that of the pilgrim with a living, normal, and close Christ. A leader may know a lot, but if he does not convey joy, confidence, and sincerity, his testimony is empty. What is contagious is life, not theory. The CCM works when leaders live in such a way that faith becomes credible, kind, and desirable.

**God does not call us to be perfect, but to aspire to holiness.**

Eduardo deeply distrusted perfectionism and rigid religiosity. The perfect Christian does not exist; what exists is the real person, with their concrete history, who lets God enter into them. This vision avoids moralism and opens the way to the truth of the Gospel: God loves us as we are, and from there transforms us. Authenticity is the door to Grace. When the CCM is faithful to its charism, it does not produce uniform Christians, but free people who can live their faith without masks or molds, because they have discovered that God loves them unconditionally.

**Grace makes no noise, but it changes everything.**

Eduardo understood God's action: gentle, silent, but irresistible. Grace does not burst in like terrifying thunder, but like a clarifying light; it does not enter as a command, but as an invitation. That is why, in the Cursillo, what is important is not spectacle or emotion, but the inner space where the person discovers that they are loved. Many Cursillistas told

Eduardo that “nothing extraordinary had happened” ... and yet everything had changed. That is the work of Grace: to make all things new without making a sound.

**The fundamentals of Christianity, lived out in everyday life, are capable of transforming any environment.**

Eduardo never imagined the CCM as an elite movement, nor as an experience reserved for those already within the Church. His dream was that each person, in their own environment—family, work, friendships, leisure—would live the essence of the Gospel naturally, without labels or artificial discourse. What is fundamental is not external practices, but a life that breathes Christ. When this happens, environments change not through pressure, but through witness; not through strategy, but through an incarnate and daily Christian presence. This is where the evangelization of environments begins. Environments are not evangelized if the person is not evangelized.

**The Cursillo is not about doing things, but about the person being themselves in Christ.**



Eduardo wanted to prevent the CCM from becoming a mere machine for activities. The goal is not to fill agendas or manufacture militants, but to bring each person back to

their center, to help them discover who they are before God and what their deepest truth is. When a person “is,” things “happen”: action arises spontaneously from the encounter with Christ, not from external pressure. This is the heart of the postcursillo: accompanying the person in their process of being—not doing—so that their life acquires unity, joy, and mission.

Images taken from the Eduardo Bonnin Foundation.

<https://fundacioneduardobonnin.org/>

<https://omcc-cursillos.org/christ-person-friendship-the-voice-of-eduardo-bonnin-in-six-flashes/>

## Greetings, fellow Cursillo members!

I am Roberto Saravia, and by the grace of God, I serve the US Cursillo community as coordinator for the National Cursillo Coordinating Group and the National Secretariat.

Let me briefly remind you how our National Secretariat is structured. Our movement is divided into 12 regions, most of which have representation in three languages: English, Vietnamese, and Spanish. Each region, in its respective language, elects a coordinator, who then becomes a member of the National Secretariat. A group of four Regional Coordinators is elected from within the National Secretariat to form the National Cursillo Coordinating Group. Their responsibilities include overseeing the finances of the Cursillo Movement, coordinating communication across all regions, and providing necessary support to each affiliated diocese, whether through workshops, CDC, or literature to clarify questions or address concerns. We have the spiritual support of Bishop Felipe Pulido as our National Cursillo Episcopal Advisor; Fr. Edgardo Jara (Fr. Lalo) as our National Cursillo Spiritual Advisor; and Deacon Michael Martini as the National Cursillo Assistant Spiritual Advisor.

We also have a National Language Coordinator for English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. They advise their Cursillo communities through each Regional Coordinator.

The Spiritual Advisors and Language Coordinators provide advice or suggestions on how best to serve our community. It is important to note that they offer suggestions but do not have a vote, and the responsibility for the decisions made rests with each of the Regional Coordinators. Hence, the importance of carefully selecting our representatives.

Our church faces challenges, and so does our movement. Over the years, there have been minor misunderstandings that, if not addressed promptly and appropriately, have grown to the point of creating division and indifference. Fostering division and indifference is not Christian!

In the Gospel of Matthew, we are told: **“You are the salt of the earth.”** Words that remain relevant and that come to us not as a suggestion or a question. Words that are a command and that remind us to walk with Jesus to imitate him and continue his saving mission.

Brothers and sisters, together we will keep our colors alive, let our differences not be a cause for division, but rather a reflection of a diversity that, united by a common goal, seeks only to spread the good news in the best possible language: sincere friendship!

The Cursillo Movement as God’s instrument to restore our lives remains useful and necessary. It is up to each Cursillista to clear every space created by anti-Cursillo and anti-Christian actions that have occurred, and perhaps, without realizing it, we have been a part of them.

Together, let us look at the present with spirits warmed by love and gratitude to God, knowing that the present will be the future for those who come after us.

Grateful for the privilege of serving you,

*Roberto Saravia*





The first step to the 36th Cursillo National Encounter is Palanca. We call on all Cursillistas to offer prayer and sacrifice for the apostolic success of the gathering of friends to further our conversion and strengthen the unity of our National Cursillo Movement.

The second step is Registration. It will open soon.

We will gather **Thursday, July 23rd to Sunday, July 26th at Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL**, in the suburbs of Chicago only 35-minutes on average from Chicago O'Hare Airport. A limited number of beds are on hold so **REGISTER EARLY** to ensure you have a spot! This year several payment plans are available.

Option to pay in full during registration period.

- The Full Encounter Fee \$550 or Commuter Fee \$400 Full Payment for Registration made until June 15th
- \$50 additional fee for payment plans
- After June 15th \$50 additional fee
- Add-ons for single room, additional day

Space is based on availability at time of registration. Cancellation prior to June 15th will incur \$50 processing fee. Cancellation after June 15th will be at full fee.

Cursillo has a contractual deadline to meet, hence, the absolute last day to register is **Wednesday, July 1st**.