

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

June 2026

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THE STRUCTURE OF THE 1949 ULTREYA MEETING

The structure of the Ultreya meeting breaks with all traditional models of “pious” gatherings: As attendees arrive at the agreed-upon place and time, they spontaneously form small groups of three to six people, which are deliberately kept different from one another each week, with the aim of bringing together some who already know each other and others who are meeting for the first time. They proceed, “after invoking the Holy Spirit” by any one of them, to share the achievements, difficulties, and projects that each has experienced in their lay life over the past week, using the same format of sharing as in their stable group reunions, though undoubtedly in a less in-depth and detailed manner, over a total time of half an hour.

Afterward, everyone is called to the main hall, where a layperson assumes the role of “rector”—as in the Cursillo—and first calls on the week’s “speaker” to publicly describe their life for about 15 or 20 minutes, and then on four or five attendees to offer their feedback or comments on the “talk,” in contributions that usually do not exceed two minutes per person.

For such an open and vital approach to be accepted by the institutional Church, Bonnín and his group had to agree that a priest would be given a significant amount of time at the end to ‘focus’ the theological and doctrinal aspects of what had been discussed there, although Eduardo never hesitated to say (at least in private) that, in his opinion, it would be appropriate for the reverend, if present, to participate as just one more among those who were commenting on or responding to the talk.

After the “rector” of the Ultreya shares news about the Movement that he believes is of general interest, and if—as is usually the case—there is a nearby chapel, a group “visit” is made there before the Tabernacle, led by the rector or another lay person, during which the speaker communicates aloud to the Lord what he considers most essential from what was heard and conveys the prayer requests for specific intentions that the attendees have asked of him.

The first Ultreya was held on the ground floor of the large house on Danús Street in Palma de Mallorca, where the editorial office of the newspaper “Baleares” was later located, but its iconic venue in Palma for many years was the crypt of the parish church—then under construction—of San Alonso Rodríguez, which had, I believe, a unique aura of a catacomb under construction.

Francisco Forteza

IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHARISM by Sergio Montano, Archdiocese of Philadelphia

From the spiritual and theological perspective of the Cursillo Movement in Christianity, it is understood that God chose Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló as founder because the Holy Spirit placed in him a unique charism based on unconditional love, friendship, and the appreciation of the real person, making him the ideal instrument to revolutionize lay evangelization in the twentieth century.

Eduardo Bonnín was chosen by God as the instrument and founder of the Cursillos of Christianity because of his unique charism: a deep concern for the ordinary person and his ability to transmit faith through closeness, friendship, and joy, focusing more on the experience of God's love than on doctrine alone.

Eduardo Bonnín did not see himself as an extraordinary leader, but simply as an apprentice Christian. While the ecclesial organizations of the time focused only on devout Catholics, Bonnín felt the urgency to reach those who were living with their backs turned to the Church.

God gave him a special way of seeing after he read a speech by Pius XII about the lost sheep. This awakened in him the mission to structure a method designed specifically so that nonbelievers or those indifferent to faith could experience God's love in a direct and simple way.

During his military service in Mallorca, he lived closely with young men from every social class, many of them marginalized, vulgar, or unbelieving. Far from judging them, Bonnín discovered that in the normality of everyday life and through genuine coexistence, a deep thirst for authenticity was born. This experience was the providential laboratory that God used for him to design the essence of the Cursillo.

For Eduardo, faith was not imposed through moral rigidity or perfectionism but proposed through sincere affection. God chose him because of his natural ability to be a true friend. He understood that God's grace does not make noise but acts irresistibly through joyful witness and absolute respect for each person's freedom.

The reasons why the movement considers that he was called by the Holy Spirit include:

Focus on the individual: Unlike other methods of the time, Bonnín was convinced that the Christian proclamation should help a person first encounter himself, then God and others, affirming the dignity of each person just as he or she is.

Friendship as a method: His genius lay in understanding that evangelization is not imposed, but spread through closeness and friendship, making the fundamental Christian message an attractive lived experience.

The kerygmatic method: He developed the structure of the Cursillo, with its three stages: Precursillo, Cursillo, and Postcursillo—to identify natural leaders and offer them an intense experience of grace that would transform their everyday environments.

God did not choose a priest or a bishop to begin this mentality, but rather a man from everyday life.

This allowed the movement to be born with a deep closeness to the everyday realities of work, family, and ordinary environments. Bonnín demonstrated that any layperson can and should be a transforming apostle in his or her own surroundings.

God chose him because he knew how to empty himself of the desire for prominence so that Christ could grow in him, allowing the Holy Spirit to inspire a kerygmatic method that continues today to transform the lives of millions of people around the world.

I am filled with deep emotion as I enter that state of reflection in which I asked myself:

How has God, through the Cursillo Movement of Christianity and its charism, built up my life? The charism of the Cursillo Movement in Christianity has worked in me a profound, serene, and providential transformation, decisively shaping the course of my daily life.

In the light of its three fundamental pillars: piety, study, and action. I have learned to turn my heart toward what is truly essential, allowing my thoughts, decisions, and works to be directed, with ever greater firmness, toward the love of God, the coherence of the Gospel, and service to my brothers and sisters.

This charism illuminates my path, sustains my hope, and gives new and full meaning to my journey. During trials and joys, it reminds me at every moment that I am a beloved child of God, called by Him to live with faithfulness, self-giving, and an ardent spirit of mission in the midst of the world.

What I live today through the Cursillo Movement and its charism, I recognize with humble wonder and deep gratitude as a true miracle of the Lord's grace. The Cursillo is His work; it is He who comes to meet me, who sustains me in weakness, who strengthens my steps, and who, in the silence of my heart, repeats to me with tenderness and power: Do not be afraid; I am always with you. Therefore, from the depths of my soul, I make the words of Saint Paul my own, and I proclaim them as an expression of my own experience: I give thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ, because He has strengthened me and considered me trustworthy, calling me to His service.

My Fourth Day

A Lesson of Compassion and Service

by *Therese Phạm Phương Hằng*, Diocese of Lansing, MI

Dear Fathers, Deacons, and my Cursillistas brothers and sisters,

My name is Therese Phạm Phương Hằng. I lived my Cursillo in 2003.

Today, I would like to share a little bit with you about my Fourth Day.

I am a catechist at St. Andrew Dũng Lạc Church in Lansing, Michigan. I'm teaching and prepare students for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each year, after Easter Sunday, our class starts preparing for Confirmation. This year, two of my students will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday, May 3, at St. Mary Cathedral in the Diocese of Lansing, with Bishop Earl Boyea presiding. I kindly ask for your prayers for these two students.

Dear Fathers, Deacons, Brothers and Sisters,

One of the requirements of the Confirmation program is that the students complete service hours. These activities help them practice the spirit of service as mature Catholics.

This year, our class was assigned to prepare the Easter candles before Mass, and afterward, the students would look for and scrape off the wax drippings left on the pews and the church floor after the Easter liturgy.

When the students arrived at church to do this work, I could see their hesitation as they noticed how many pews they would have to check and clean. I guided them by dividing the church into sections so that each student would know their responsibility. As for me, I worked in the sanctuary, checking and scraping wax from the tiled floor. There were many small drops of wax, and I used a tool to remove them. However, I was surprised to find that even after the wax was removed, faint stains still remained on the tiles.

I tried to erase them, but without much success. I felt frustrated, having put in so much effort yet unable to completely remove those faint marks. I even wanted to give up because my efforts did not seem to bring results.

At that moment, I thought of the Lord present in the tabernacle, and I reflected on my own failure. I prayed, asking God to help me remove those faint wax stains, just as I ask Him to wipe away my sins—sins whose consequences may still remain deeply imprinted in the

hearts of others. I also thought about my recurring sins caused by weakness, pride, and sometimes uncontrolled frustration. I asked God to grant me a remedy for healing—both for myself and for those whom I have hurt.

I went to find a brush and soap and continued working on those stubborn stains. When I finished, I went to check on the students to see if there were similar marks on the pews or floor that needed cleaning. I shared with them that these wax stains are like the sins we commit, and that they need to be cleansed through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Perhaps my sharing and enthusiasm inspired them, because our class completed the work in two hours instead of the expected three. When I asked if they wanted to leave or continue by picking up trash, both students eagerly chose to stay, even though they had already completed their required service hours. I was happy, thinking that perhaps this was a moment of “leavening” in my environment that day.

I thank God for giving me and my students this time of service together, helping us grow closer to one another and, most importantly, closer to Him. I thank God for helping me recognize my sins and their consequences—like the faint wax stains on the church floor that remain even after being scraped away, leaving marks in the hearts of my brothers and sisters. I ask God to help me persevere in reconciliation, to forgive and to let go, just as I tried to remove those stains, so that I may always have peace in my soul. Lord, I long for YOUR LOVE.

I would like to read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, because it is a remedy for my soul, and I pray that my Fourth Day will always be filled with this remedy:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

May the Divine Teacher come to us, embrace us in His loving arms whenever we fall in weakness, so that His love may spread within our souls and become the strength we carry into our Fourth Day.

De Colores!



ORGANISMO
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DE CRISTIANDAD

PRAYER FOR AFRICA CURSILLO

Heavenly Father,

In Your infinite love and providence, we lift up to You the Cursillo Movement in Africa. Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon all who serve in this mission, that it may bear abundant fruit for Your Kingdom.

Lord Jesus Christ,

You called Your apostles to go forth and make disciples of all nations. Strengthen all leaders and participants of Cursillo, that through their witness, faith may be renewed, hearts converted, and communities transformed in Your love.

Through the powerful intercession of

Saint Paul the Apostle,

patron of the Cursillo Movement and missionary to the nations, grant zeal, courage, and perseverance to all who proclaim the Good News across Africa.

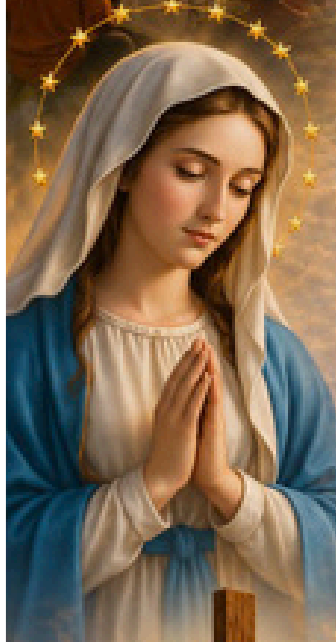
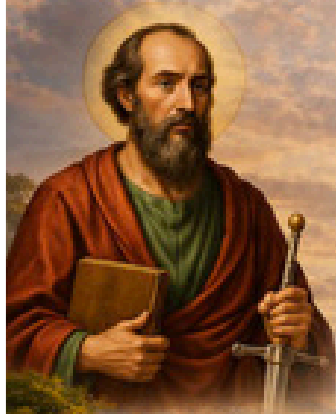
Through the humble and faithful intercession of

Saint Joseph,

guardian of the Church and protector of Your people, guide and safeguard this movement. May it grow in unity, integrity, and holiness, always rooted in the truth of the Catholic faith.

We unite this prayer with those of **Francis Napoli and Father Isaac Abanyie**, asking that their intentions be heard and fulfilled according to Your divine will.

Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us and accompany this mission with your tender care. We ask this through Christ our Lord.



CHRIST • OUR LIFE • CURSILLO • OUR MISSION • AFRICA • OUR FIELD

Beginning the Fourth Day

by **Bartolomé Arrom Gual**

Is a reflective, dialogue-based guide to living out the spiritual experience of the Cursillo beyond the three days. The book presents a series of conversations between a new Cursillista, Miguel, and a more experienced one, Jaime, to explore what it means to begin the “Fourth Day”—the rest of one’s life shaped by faith, friendship, and ongoing conversion.

At its core, the book emphasizes that the Cursillo is not an end but a starting point. While the Cursillo introduces a transformative encounter with Christ, the real challenge lies in integrating that experience into daily life. The “Fourth Day” represents this lifelong journey, in which individuals must continually grow in faith while facing unchanging realities in the world.

A central theme of the book is the importance of **community**, particularly through Group Reunion and Ultreya. Group Reunions are small, regular gatherings of friends who share their Christian lives honestly and support one another’s growth. Ultreya, which is the “reunion of group reunions,” is a larger gathering where participants encourage one another through shared experiences of living their faith. Together, these practices sustain the initial conversion sparked by the Cursillo and help prevent it from fading into a distant memory.

The conversations also highlight key principles such as freedom, authenticity, and friendship. Faith is portrayed not as a static belief but as a dynamic relationship—especially a personal friendship with Jesus Christ—that grows through effort, reflection, and shared life. The book underscores that true Christian living happens in ordinary environments—work, family, and daily interactions—and is expressed through joy, sincerity, and witness rather than formal teaching or prestige.

Finally, the text outlines the **essence, purpose, mentality, and style** of the Cursillo movement. Its purpose is to help individuals transform their lives so they can positively influence their environments. Its mentality centers on the belief that God loves each person, while its style emphasizes simplicity, enthusiasm, and genuine relationships.

In summary, the book conveys that the true fruit of the Cursillo lies not in the Cursillo itself but in the lifelong commitment to live faith through friendship, community, and everyday actions—continuing forward with perseverance and joy into the “Fourth Day.”



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 is now open.

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.**



**FIRST
YEAR
ANNIVERSARY**

Pope Leo XIV

The first American pope in history.
“Habemus Papam!” May 8, 2025

The US National Cursillo Movement Secretariat
congratulates Pope Leo XIV on his first anniversary.
Our prayers are with you and your intentions.

"Together we must try to be a missionary church, a church
that builds bridges and always dialogues, that is always open
to receiving everyone with open arms." - Pope Leo XIV