National Cursillo® Movement

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FRIENDSHIP, CURSILLO, AND THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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36th National Cursillo Encounter
Friday, July 24, 2026 | Wheaton, Illinois

Note: Prepared from YouTube auto-transcription versions

VIDEO LINK

Friendship: A Word the Holy Spirit Placed on My Heart

I know you heard that the topic I wanted to talk to you about was unity, which is a very important topic.

But you know how the Holy Spirit moves. Not just being here with you, but even before I came, I was thinking about one word that is so important in Cursillo, and that is friendship.

Friendship.

That word kept coming to my mind.

So I would like to talk about that topic. Is that okay?

I lived my Cursillo in 2003. I was ordained a priest in 2002, so one year after I was ordained a priest, I lived my Cursillo.

And as you all know, we have this beautiful song that represents Cursillistas around the world: De Colores.

I was so impressed when I went to an English Cursillo and everyone was singing De Colores. And when I went to a Vietnamese gathering, they were all singing De Colores. I was really impressed.

As you know, in De Colores we have some animals—the rooster, the cow, the sheep—and they make noises, right?

So this is another story about after the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have the rooster. We have a cow. We have a sheep. And we also have a turkey in the mix.

All these animals were so happy, and they were singing their praises to God.

The rooster was singing. That is the way they do it in Mexico. I know here in the United States it is a little different, right? What is it? And what about in Vietnam?

We are all different!

But the rooster was so happy because Christ had risen.

Then we have the cow. How does the cow sound? Is it the same in Vietnam? The same here in the United States?

Then we have the sheep. I guess they have the same language, right?

And then we have the turkey in the mix. In Spanish it is guajolote. Do you have turkeys in Vietnam? Korea? The Philippines?

Here we have many of them. And I am sorry, but they are killed on Thanksgiving, and we have a lot of turkey!

The turkey was speaking Spanish and saying, “Gordo, gordo, gordo”—which means “fat, fat, fat.”

So Christ has risen! Very good.

The Beauty and Power of Friendship

Good day, my friends.

I am very happy and honored to be with you today.

Whenever I have the opportunity to be with the Cursillo Movement, I am filled with gratitude because I encounter something that is becoming increasingly rare in our world today: people who understand the beauty and the power of friendship.

I want to begin with a memory.

My grandmother was a very small woman. She was petite and slender. But physically small does not mean spiritually small.

She possessed a strength that came from a deep faith.

She was born around the year 1910 in the mountains of central Mexico. She lived through very difficult times. She knew poverty. She knew hunger. She knew what it meant to struggle for the necessities of life.

She lived through the Cristero War, a painful period of persecution and suffering for many Catholics in Mexico.

Life tested her faith, but life never destroyed her faith.

She never allowed suffering to take away her joy.

She never allowed hardships to make her lose hope.

Instead, she became a woman who carried the peace of Christ wherever she went.

She knew how to be present.

She knew how to listen.

She knew how to love.

She knew how to be a friend.

My grandmother taught me many things. She taught me my prayers. She taught me the catechism. She taught me the stories of Sacred Scripture. She answered my many questions about God.

But before she ever taught me about the faith, she taught me something even more important.

She taught me friendship.

She spent time with me. She listened to me. She encouraged me. She believed in me.

She made me feel loved.

And through her love, I began to understand the love of God.

Looking back today, I realize that before my grandmother taught me about Jesus, she showed me Jesus.

Before she explained the Gospel, she lived the Gospel.

Before she spoke about God's love, she gave me a small experience of God's love.

And that is how evangelization often happens.

People do not first encounter Christ because someone wins an argument with them.

They do not first encounter Christ because someone gives them a perfect explanation.

Many times, people encounter Christ because someone loves them enough to walk with them.

My grandmother became my friend, and through her friendship she brought me to Christ.

This is why the motto of the Cursillo Movement has always touched my heart:

Make a friend.

Be a friend.

Bring your friend to Christ.

Those words are simple, but they contain a profound spirituality.

They describe the way Jesus himself evangelized.

Jesus did not begin by building an institution. He began by forming relationships.

He called people by name.

He walked with them.

He shared meals with them.

He listened to their stories.

He entered their lives.

And through friendship, he transformed hearts.

The Poverty of Friendship

That is why I believe friendship is one of the greatest needs of our time.

Our world has many things. We have incredible technology. We have more information than any generation in history. We can communicate instantly with people anywhere in the world.

And yet many people today are lonely.

We are connected more than ever before, but many people feel more isolated than ever before.

We bishops in the United States are very concerned about mental health in our country—the suffering of so many men and women, especially young men diagnosed with depression and anxiety.

Many times, they are isolated.

Perhaps one of the greatest forms of poverty in our world today is not material poverty.

It is the poverty of friendship—the poverty of authentic relationships.

One of my responsibilities as an auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of San Diego is serving as a vicar for clergy.

During the week, much of my time is spent in my office. I read and respond to emails. I meet with priests. I review pastoral situations. I prepare talks and homilies. I participate in many meetings, both in person and through Zoom.

It is important work that needs my attention.

But I must confess to you: I always look forward to the weekends because the weekends allow me to leave the office and enter what Pope Francis often called the field hospital of the Church.

On weekends, I have the privilege of being with God's people.

I celebrate the Holy Eucharist.

I visit parishes.

I meet families.

I listen to people carrying heavy burdens.

And you know what?

People have difficult lives.

I encounter people who are suffering. I meet people searching for hope.

And again and again, I discover something:

People do not only need answers.

They need someone who will walk with them.

They need a friend.

They need someone who will listen.

They need someone who will say, “You are not alone.”

And that is friendship.

This is why I am grateful to be with you today.

The Cursillo Movement has understood for decades what many people are rediscovering today:

The Christian faith is not simply communicated through information. It is communicated through relationships.

The Gospel is not only preached.

The Gospel is shared through friendships.

“A Faithful Friend Is a Sturdy Shelter”

When I think about my grandmother and the gift of friendship, I think of the beautiful words found in the Book of Sirach:

“A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter. Whoever finds one finds a treasure. A faithful friend is beyond price. A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy.”

I love this passage because Scripture gives friendship a dignity that our modern culture sometimes forgets.

Notice what Sirach does not say.

It does not say friendship is convenient.

It does not say friendship is simply something enjoyable when life is easy.

It says that a faithful friend is a treasure, a shelter, a remedy.

A remedy is something that brings healing.

Perhaps one of the greatest wounds of our society today is not only poverty or material need, but poverty of relationships.

Many people are surrounded by others but feel alone.

I have even talked to couples—couples who feel alone.

Many people have thousands of contacts in their phones but very few people they can truly trust.

Many people can communicate instantly with the world, but they long for one person who will simply sit with them, have a coffee, have a meal, listen to them, and walk with them.

That is the gift of friendship.

A true friend becomes a place of shelter.

A true friend becomes a source of healing.

A true friend becomes a reminder that we are not alone.

When I hear those words from Sirach, I think of my grandmother.

She was my shelter.

She was my treasure.

She was God's remedy in my life.

“I Have Called You Friends”

But Scripture takes us even deeper.

Jesus revealed God through friendship.

In the Gospel of John, during the Last Supper, Jesus says to his disciples:

“I no longer call you servants. I have called you friends.”

Imagine those words.

The Creator of the universe, the Son of God, the Savior of humanity, looks at ordinary men and women and says:

“I call you friends.”

Why?

God does not want a distant relationship with us.

God does not want us to know him only as a set of rules or ideas.

God desires communion.

He desires intimacy.

He desires friendship.

Look at the way Jesus lived his ministry.

He walked with his disciples.

He shared meals with them.

He listened to their questions.

He entered their homes.

He celebrated their joys and their sorrows.

He cried with them.

He washed their feet.

And finally, he gave his life for them.

Jesus shows us that the deepest expression of friendship is love that gives itself away.

That is why Jesus says:

“No one has greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.”

The Cross is the greatest act of friendship the world has ever known.

Jesus does not save us from a distance.

He enters into our suffering.

He walks beside us.

He carries our burdens.

He gives his life for us.

What Is a True Friend?

Even before Christianity, human beings recognized the importance of friendship.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote about friendship as a relationship in which two people seek the good of one another.

Seeking the good of the other.

That is already a beautiful insight.

A true friend is not someone who simply asks:

“What can I receive from this relationship?”

Because, let's be honest, sometimes when we have a friend, we are looking for that: What can I receive?

A true friend asks:

“How can I help this person become the best version of themselves?”

Christianity takes this even farther.

A Christian friend does not simply want another person to be successful.

A Christian friend desires another person's holiness.

A Christian friend wants another person to discover the love of God.

A Christian friend helps another person become the person God created them to be.

My dear friends, never underestimate the power of one true friend.

One friend can change the direction of someone's life.

One friend can give someone the courage to continue.

One friend can help someone discover gifts they never recognized in themselves.

One friend can prevent another person from giving up.

A Friend Who Prevented a Tragedy

I have a story.

When I was a pastor in Yakima, Washington, I met a beautiful family: a mom, a dad, and their children.

I knew the children when they were little, and then they grew up.

The girl, Anna, was already about twenty-four and she had a girlfriend—I'm sorry, a boyfriend!

I was just trying to see if you were sleeping!

We became friends. I knew the family. They invited me for meals.

The father later told me what happened one day.

Anna brought her boyfriend to the house, and the boyfriend was kind of different. The father did not like him at all.

They began talking and, of course, the egos got involved.

At the end of the conversation, the father told Anna:

“I am not going to give you permission. You choose him or us.”

Anna did not know what to do.

She looked at him, looked at her father, went to her room and got her clothes.

The father said, “You're going to leave without clothes?”

Well—not without clothes! You know what I mean!

Without her things.

She said okay, and she left.

Imagine the anger the father felt.

He was furious. He was upset. He was filled with anger in his heart.

He called one of his friends and said:

“I know you have a gun. I need it.”

The friend was a Cursillista, and the father was also a Cursillista.

The friend said, “Okay, come to my house.”

When he arrived, the friend told him:

“Let's go to church. Let's go pray.”

They went to pray together before the Blessed Sacrament.

After their prayer, his friend asked:

“How do you feel?”

He answered:

“I feel more at peace. Thank you.”

Then he went home.

He did not do anything.

Do you see how friendship can do so much good for another person?

The Genius of Cursillo

This is why I believe the Cursillo Movement has a profound message for our time, because Cursillo has always understood that evangelization begins with friendship.

The method is not first a program.

The method is not first a strategy.

The method is not first an activity.

The method is a person.

A person encountering another person.

A person listening to another person.

A person walking with another person and introducing that person to Jesus Christ.

That is the genius of Cursillo.

You do not begin by asking:

“How can we convince someone?”

You begin by asking:

“How can I love someone?”

“How can I accompany this person?”

“How can I become a friend?”

Perhaps that is why Jesus chose twelve apostles.

He could have chosen an army.

He could have created a political movement.

He could have built a powerful organization.

Instead, he chose twelve friends.

He formed a community.

He shared his life with them.

He transformed them.

And through that small community of friends, the Gospel spread throughout the world.

The early Christians did not change the Roman Empire because they had better technology.

They did not change the world because they had more influence.

They changed the world because people saw something different in them.

They saw a community that loved.

They saw people who cared for one another.

They saw people who welcomed strangers.

They saw people who forgave enemies.

They saw people who lived differently.

“See how they love one another.”

Their friendship became their witness.

Can they say that about us?

Can they say that?

What Is Happening to Our Friendships?

My dear friends, I believe we are living in another important moment in history.

Our world is changing rapidly.

Technology is advancing every day.

Artificial intelligence is becoming part of our daily lives.

Even people like Elon Musk have said that AI will exceed human intelligence within a few years—that there may be very little AI cannot eventually do better than human beings.

But we all know that AI cannot love as human beings do.

Therefore, let us ask ourselves one question:

What is happening to our friendships?

Before we worry about artificial intelligence replacing humans and replacing our interactions, we must recognize that many human beings are already struggling to truly interact with one another.

Before we speak about artificial intelligence, I believe we need to recognize something that has already been happening around us.

The challenge of our time is not only that machines are becoming more intelligent.

The challenge is that human beings are sometimes becoming less connected.

We have developed incredible ways to communicate, but we are slowly losing the art of conversation.

We have more ways to reach people than any generation before us.

And yet many people feel more alone than ever.

Imagine Waking Up After Nineteen Years

Allow me to invite you to imagine something.

This comes from something I read in Jonathan Haidt's The Anxious Generation.

Imagine that you fell into a deep sleep in June 2007, the day before the first iPhone was introduced.

Imagine that you woke up nineteen years later and stepped outside.

At first, everything seems normal.

The streets are familiar.

Cars are still driving.

People are still walking.

Families are still gathering.

But then you begin to notice something strange.

People are behaving differently.

You enter a train station. Everyone is looking down at a small rectangular glass device.

You walk into an elevator. There is silence. Everyone is staring at a screen.

You stand in line at a store. No one is speaking. Everyone is somewhere else.

You go to a restaurant and see a family sitting together at a table, but they are not talking to each other.

Each person is absorbed in their own digital world.

You walk through a park and see parents with their children, but many eyes are not looking at their children.

They are looking at their phones.

Even small children are becoming fascinated by these glowing rectangles.

Then you notice something else.

People appear to be talking to themselves!

They're not crazy.

Only later do you discover that they are speaking through a small device placed in their ears.

If you had been asleep for nineteen years, you might ask:

“What's going on?”

“What happened to us?”

Technology Is Not the Enemy

I want to be clear.

The problem is not the phone. I am using a phone right now.

The problem is not technology. I am using technology right now.

Technology is a gift.

In fact, some of you are able to hear me in Spanish because of technology. Some of you are able to hear me in Vietnamese.

Technology has helped humanity in extraordinary ways.

It has allowed families separated by oceans to see one another.

It has helped doctors save lives.

It has helped students learn.

It has allowed the Gospel to reach places that were once impossible to reach.

The Church is not afraid of technology.

The Church has always welcomed authentic human progress.

The question is not simply:

“Is technology good or bad?”

The deeper question is:

“Does this technology help us become more human?”

The Encounters We Are Missing

As a bishop, I travel frequently.

One of the places where I observe society is in airports.

Airports are fascinating places because they bring together thousands of people from every walk of life and from around the world.

Sometimes I wonder:

How many beautiful encounters have I missed?

How many stories have I never heard?

How many friendships never began because I was so distracted by my phone, answering emails, that I failed to notice the person sitting next to me?

Recently I experienced something personally that made me reflect more deeply.

I was visiting my family in Washington State.

My sisters were there.
My nieces and nephews were there.
We were all together in the living room.
It was a beautiful moment.
We had made an effort to be together. I invited them to come and share a meal.
But at one point, I looked around the room.
Everyone—even my mom—had a phone in their hand.
Everyone, including me.
No one was really talking.
No one was asking questions.
No one was sharing stories.
We were physically together but emotionally somewhere else.
I remember thinking:
“What is going on?”
“What is happening to us?”
I even got my phone and threw it away.
My nieces and nephews looked at me:
“What's going on, Uncle? Are you okay?”
Here we were: people who love one another, gathered in the same room.
And yet our attention was captured by people who were not even present.
That moment stayed with me because it reminded me of something important.
The greatest danger of technology is not that it will make us less productive.
The greatest danger is that it can slowly make us less present.
And this does not only happen to young people.
It happens to all of us.
Human beings need presence.
A child needs a parent who looks into their eyes.
A spouse needs a spouse who listens.
A person who is suffering needs someone who will sit beside them.
A grieving person does not need an algorithm.
They need a friend.
Someone who will say:
“I'm here. You don't have to carry your cross alone.”

The Crisis Is Relational

This is why the crisis of our time is not simply technological.

It is relational.

Many people today are experiencing what some writers describe as a crisis of loneliness.

Jonathan Haidt's book The Anxious Generation reflects on how smartphones and social media have changed the way many people—especially young people—experience relationships, community, and daily life.

His concern is not simply about devices.

His concern is what happens when digital experiences begin to replace real human experiences.

When virtual connections replace personal encounters.

When scrolling replaces conversations.

When online approval replaces authentic belonging.

My brothers and sisters, we were not created simply to exchange information.

We were created for communion.

From the beginning of creation, God said:

“It is not good for man to be alone.”

That statement remains true today.

Human beings need relationships.

We need community.

We need friendships.

We need love.

Because deep within every human heart there is a desire to be known and loved.

And that desire comes from God.

What Artificial Intelligence Cannot Do

This is why artificial intelligence raises such important questions.

Artificial intelligence can do many remarkable things.

It can process information.

It can analyze data.

It can produce answers.

It can imitate conversations.

But the human person is more than information.

The human person is more than efficiency.

The human person is more than productivity.

The human person has a soul.

The human person is created in the image and likeness of God.

And what makes us more human is not simply what we know.

It is our capacity to love.

As artificial intelligence continues to develop, how do we make sure technology serves humanity rather than diminishes humanity?

How do we make sure progress does not come at the cost of human dignity?

How do we make sure that in becoming more technologically advanced, we do not become less human?

This is where the Church has an important voice.

The Human Person Must Remain at the Center

When a pope chooses a name, he is often pointing toward a spiritual and pastoral vision.

By choosing the name Leo, Pope Leo XIV connects himself with Pope Leo XIII, one of the great social teachers of the Church.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Pope Leo XIII faced a world experiencing another revolution.

It was not a digital revolution.

It was the Industrial Revolution.

Factories were transforming society.

Machines were changing the way people worked.

New economic systems were developing.

Many workers suffered because human dignity was often forgotten.

People were treated as instruments of production rather than as sons and daughters of God.

Workers faced long hours, unsafe conditions, and poverty.

The world was changing rapidly, and the Church needed to say something.

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII wrote one of the most important documents in Catholic social teaching, Rerum Novarum.

He reminded society of a fundamental truth:

The human person must always remain at the center.

The economy exists for the human person.

Work exists for the human person.

Technology exists for the human person.

Human beings do not exist to serve machines.

Machines exist to serve human beings.

Pope Leo XIII defended the dignity of workers, the importance of just wages, workers' rights, and the responsibilities of employers.

His message was clear:

No economic or technological progress is truly progress if it diminishes human dignity.

Today we find ourselves facing another great transformation.

The question is no longer only:

“What will machines do?”

The question is:

“What will machines do to us?”

Artificial intelligence has tremendous potential.

It can improve medicine.

It can assist education.

It can help organizations serve people more effectively.

It can help us solve problems that once seemed impossible.

But even great advancements require wisdom because every technology carries a moral question:

Does this help the human person flourish?

The Church is not afraid of artificial intelligence.

The Church does not believe technology is the enemy.

Technology can be a beautiful expression of human creativity.

After all, our ability to create and innovate reflects something of the Creator himself.

But technology must always remain a servant, not a master.

Artificial intelligence should help humanity.

It should not replace humanity.

It should support human relationships.

It should not eliminate them.

It should strengthen human dignity.

It should not weaken it.

Using AI Wisely

Recently, in the Diocese of San Diego, I asked leaders from several diocesan offices an important question:

“How are we currently using artificial intelligence in our ministry and in the pastoral center?”

I wanted to understand not only the technology itself, but how it was already affecting the life of the Church.

The answers were very interesting.

Some people expressed hesitation.

Some were still learning.

Others were already using AI tools in practical ways.

Some were using it to summarize documents and reports.

Some were using it to organize information.

Some were using it to improve writing and communication.

I was one of them!

In my emails, I write what I want to say and then ask AI to improve my writing.

And guess what?

It does it!

But then I review it again and again to make sure that what it says is what I actually wanted to say.

It is an important tool.

I learned English as a second language, and it does not always come naturally to me. So this technology can be very useful.

Some people were using AI to assist with research, presentations, catechetical materials, and planning.

The reality is that artificial intelligence is already becoming part of our lives and part of our ministry.

That is not necessarily something to fear.

The question is whether we use it wisely.

AI Cannot Love

One of the pioneers of artificial intelligence, Kai-Fu Lee, has made an important observation.

Artificial intelligence has extraordinary abilities.

It can process enormous amounts of information.

It can recognize patterns.

It can make decisions quickly in certain situations.

It can perform tasks with incredible efficiency.

But artificial intelligence is not human intelligence.

AI does not possess consciousness.

It does not possess self-awareness.

It does not have a conscience.

It does not have moral responsibility.
It does not have compassion.
It does not have love.
That distinction is extremely important.
Artificial intelligence may one day write a beautiful reflection.
But it has never prayed.
It can produce words about suffering.
But it has never suffered.
It can describe compassion.
But it has never loved.
It can generate an image of a person crying.
But it has never shed a tear.
It can imitate conversations.
But it cannot truly know another person's heart.
Because friendship requires something that no machine can produce.
It requires presence.
It requires sacrifice.
It requires compassion.
Artificial intelligence cannot sit beside someone whose spouse has died and simply hold their hand.
It cannot visit someone in prison and remind them that they are still loved by God.
It cannot sit with a family receiving a difficult medical diagnosis and say:
“We are here for you.”
It cannot celebrate the birth of a child.
It cannot rejoice at a wedding.
It cannot kneel beside someone and pray.
These are not simply human activities.
They are sacred human experiences.
They are moments in which we encounter the presence of God through another person.

Becoming More Fully Human

My friends, the question is not:
“How do we compete with artificial intelligence?”
The question is:
“How do we become more human?”
“How do we become more fully human?”
The more technology advances, the more important human friendship becomes.
The more artificial intelligence grows, the more important authentic intelligence becomes.
And authentic human intelligence is not only the ability to think.
It is the ability to love.
This is where I believe the Cursillo Movement has something prophetic to offer the world today.
Cursillo has always understood what technology cannot create:

a relationship, a friendship, an encounter with Christ.

The future of evangelization will not depend only on better tools.

It will depend on better relationships.

That is why the simple Cursillo model is more relevant today than ever:

Make a friend.

Be a friend.

Bring your friend to Christ.

The Answer Is More Humanity

After everything we have reflected on today, I believe we arrive at a very important question:

What is the Christian response to a world being transformed by technology and artificial intelligence?

Should we reject technology?

Should we throw away our phones?

Should we be afraid of every new development?

I do not believe that is the answer.

The answer is not less technology.

The answer is more humanity.

The answer is to rediscover what makes us truly human.

And what makes us truly human is our capacity for friendship.

Technology can connect devices.

Friends connect hearts.

Technology can transmit information.

Friendship shares life.

Technology can create networks.

Friendship creates community.

Technology can make things faster.

Friends teach us patience.

You know what patience means?

Long suffering!

Be patient, men.

Be patient with your wives.

And women, be patient with your men!

Technology can imitate conversations.

But friendships create communion.

This is where the Cursillo Movement has a unique mission in the Church today, because Cursillo has always understood that evangelization begins with a relationship.

Before someone accepts a message, they often need to experience love.

Before someone listens to our words about Christ, they need to see Christ reflected in our lives.

Before someone enters a church building, they often need someone who will first walk with them.

That is friendship.

The Cursillo method is beautiful.

Make a friend.

Be a friend.

Bring your friend to Christ.

Think about the wisdom contained in those words.

It does not say:

Make a program.

Create a campaign.

Build strategies.

Develop better advertisements.

It says:

Make a friend.

Because Christianity has never spread primarily through techniques.

Christianity spreads through witness—when one person encounters another person whose life has been transformed by Christ.

The first Christians understood this.

They lived in a world very different from ours.

They did not have social media.

They did not have television.

They did not have websites.

They did not have artificial intelligence.

They simply had their lives.

They had their love.

They had their community.

And people noticed.

The ancient world looked at Christians and said:

“See how they love each other.”

That was their greatest witness:

their willingness to care for one another.

“You Belong”

My brothers and sisters, my friends, I believe that today the world is asking the same questions.

People may not say them directly, but deep in their hearts they are asking:

Is there still a place where I belong?

Is there someone who will listen to me?

Is there someone who will walk with me?

Is there someone who sees me not as a problem to solve, but as a person?

And the Church must answer:

Yes.

You belong.

You are loved.

You are not alone.

Christ walks with you.

And we will walk with you.

One of the greatest gifts of friendship is that friendship requires us to encounter the person in front of us.

Many of the problems in our society cannot be solved only through technology.

They require conversations of the heart.

They require listening.

They require dialogue.

They require reconciliation.

We cannot heal what we refuse to discuss.

We cannot reconcile with people we refuse to see.

We cannot love people we refuse to know.

That is why friendship is so important.

Friendship creates the space where hearts can meet.

And this is where the method of Cursillo is so important.

Through Friendship

My friends, the future of evangelization will not depend only on how advanced our technology becomes.

It will depend on how deeply we love.

It will depend on whether we are willing to accompany people.

It will depend on whether we are willing to listen.

Let me return to where I began.

I began with my grandmother praying the Rosary.

A simple woman.

A woman without technology.

A woman without influence or power.

But she changed lives.

I truly believe that because of my grandmother, in my family we are all baptized and we are Catholic.

And believe me, we are many!

And it was this petite, slender woman.

Why?

Because she knew how to love.

She knew how to listen.

She knew how to pray.

She knew how to be a friend.

She never imagined that her quiet life would help shape the future of a young boy.

She never imagined that her simple acts of love would become a lesson about evangelization.

But that is how God works.

God often changes the world through ordinary people who love in extraordinary ways.

When I think about the future, I do not place my greatest hope in artificial intelligence.

I place my hope in people like my grandmother.

I place my hope in parents who teach their children to pray.

I place my hope in grandparents who pass on the faith.

I place my hope in priests who accompany the people.

I place my hope in deacons who live their lives in service to the Church.

I place my hope in Cursillistas—in all of you who make friends, become friends, and bring your friends to Christ.

My friends, history has never been changed primarily by machines.

History has been changed by people.

By saints.

By missionaries.

By mothers and fathers.

By grandparents.

By faithful friends.

By ordinary men and women who allow Christ to work through their lives.

That is how the Gospel spread in the first century.

And I believe that is how the Gospel will spread in the twenty-first century:

THROUGH FRIENDSHIP.

So today, as we face the challenges of artificial intelligence in a rapidly changing world, let us remember our mission.

It is not complicated.

It is not impossible.

But it is profoundly powerful:

MAKE A FRIEND.

BE A FRIEND.

BRING YOUR FRIEND TO CHRIST.

Thank you for listening.

Final Words to the Cursillistas

I want to tell you that I have to leave. I'm sorry. I don't want to leave, but I have to. I have other places to be and things to do, as you know.

But please know that you are always in my prayers.

The Movement—Cursillo—and what you represent are in my prayers.

I'm just another worker in the vineyard of the Lord, as Pope Benedict XVI said.

I'm just one more.

And I love Cursillo.

I love what it represents.

I really believe that what Cursillo has to say in our world today is very important.

And we need to bring our voices out there to everyone we encounter.

God bless you. Have a good day.