



# National Cursillo Movement

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## Follow Up in the Postcursillo

National Cursillo Encounter, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

Presented by Cef Aguilon, July 2024

Good morning, everyone. Thank you for your presence at this National Encounter. Please join me in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

### Introduction

The most effective method in Cursillo comprises three closely interconnected phases: Precursillo, Cursillo, and Postcursillo. The beauty of this method lies in its recurring nature. The Precursillo leads to the Cursillo, the Cursillo leads to the Postcursillo, and in turn, the Postcursillo leads back to the Precursillo, creating a continuous harmony of love and friendship.

We accompany our friends in the Precursillo when they are “seeking” something, which later they discover to be someone: Christ. We accompany our friends in the Cursillo when they are “encountering” self, Christ, and others through conversion. We accompany our friends in the Postcursillo when they are “following” Christ. The Cursillo leaders do not seek followers; we want people to follow Christ. (Witness) This talk will focus on “Follow Up in the Postcursillo.” To follow up is to accompany. This information is found in the Structure of Ideas book.

But first, I would like to share a quote by our founder written in the Structure of Ideas book. It is typical for the Cursillista, who has recently lived the experience of the triple encounter, to have a similar experience to what happened to the blind man Jesus cured. For the blind man, the trees looked like men, and the men looked like trees in the sense that all was good. All that is Christian seems valid for him. What usually happens in the first stage of the Postcursillo is that the Cursillista is contacted by other Cursillistas or people from the parish who are working in some parish ministry or program who want the Cursillista to pour out his generosity in their affairs, their apostolate, their ministry. You and I understand that this is not the purpose of the Cursillo Movement. It is crucial to accompany our friend in the Postcursillo.

### Pope Francis on Accompaniment

What does it mean to follow up with a friend in the Postcursillo? It is essential to stay connected with our friends after the Cursillo. We must continue to pray, support, encourage, and walk with our friends, particularly during the Postcursillo. We should not assume that our support will no longer be needed after the Cursillo. This is when our friends need us the most. It is crucial to have souls encounter God, but it is even more important to motivate them to follow Him.

Pope Francis proposes a culture of encounter and accompaniment, “standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be.” With “patient expectation and apostolic endurance,” the art of accompaniment “teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Ex 3:5)” and to show a preference for the poor, despised, and overlooked. While we may feel that we are not equipped for such a mission, the Holy Father reminds us that “whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we realize that he is already there, waiting

for us with open arms.” The joy of the Gospel is for all people. May each of us strive to renew and deepen our relationship with God and strive “to meet every challenge as a leaven of Gospel witness. (Pope Francis, *Living the Joy of the Gospel*).

If there is one among you who doesn't feel equipped for the mission, this quote from St. Philip Neri is for you:

“Cast yourself into the arms of God and be very sure that if He wants anything of you, He will fit you for the work and give you strength.”

The crucial role of accompaniment can be challenging. Here are some quotes from Pope Francis’ Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christ is Alive*, that apply to accompaniment.

- “We should always respect our friend’s freedom, yet they must also be accompanied.” We must continue approaching our friends with the language of love, not preaching.
- We should continue the "closeness" that originated through friendship.
- “Friendship is one of life’s gifts and a grace from God. The Lord refines us through our friends and leads us to maturity.”
- If you remember, Jesus walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. He accompanied his Apostles during critical times and events.
- “When we journey together, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future.”

“The “art of accompaniment” is to walk with our friends.” In Cursillo, we walk with our friends in the Precursillo, Cursillo, and Postcursillo. We are on a journey, but we’re not there yet. We don’t know what lies ahead. In Cursillo, to accompany means to walk alongside our friend. We walk at his pace, not ours.

Concerns in the process of accompaniment:

- Paternalism is the protective father figure who wants to control and make decisions for others. This limits the person's freedom and responsibilities.
- Abandonment is the opposite of paternalism. Some Cursillistas do not persevere in the Postcursillo because they were abandoned after the Cursillo, not only by the person who sponsored them but also by the leaders who served on their Cursillo.
- After the Cursillo, we must be careful not to assign new commitments to our friends, such as asking them to join our favorite apostolate or parish ministry, read a particular book, or pray a specific prayer or novena because that’s what we do. We must respect their dignity and their freedom. Each person has the freedom to develop their prayer life and spirituality.

We must practice the “art of listening” to people’s underlying questions about their Cursillo experience. Is there something that needs to be clarified for better understanding?

Our founder proposes we briefly explain the rollos to the Cursillistas, who are beginning their Postcursillo. He and Francisco Forteza explain the concept of the lay rollos on page 19 of the Manifesto. You can also find this information in the *Thinking of Eduardo Bonnín* book.

### **The Adjustment of Cursillo into Their Daily Life, their Reality.**

This refers to a readjustment to the measure of the intentionality of the Cursillo rollos to determine if he understood each rollo, if he understands them now, or did not understand them.

- a. To show the individual his “ability” (aptitude).
- b. To Christianize his reality internally and externally.
- c. To place him in a situation of sanctifying power.

### **The sequence of the Lay Rollos:**

#### **1. The following two rollos help show the person’s “ability.”**

In the Ideal rollo, the Cursillista heard he could be more and be better.

The Layperson, Christian in the World rollo, said he could be better from where he is.

#### **2. The following four rollos help the person Christianize his reality internally.**

- In the Piety rollo, the person discovered his heart through spontaneity.
- In the Study rollo, he learned to apply his intelligence with conviction.
- In the Action rollo, he learned to decisively put his will in motion.
- In the Leaders’ rollo, he achieves total self-surrender.

#### **The following three rollos help the person Christianize his reality externally.**

- The Study the Environment rollo taught him to accept that his reality is made up of other people.
- Whom he can help through living the Christianity in Action rollo.
- The Cursillista Beyond the Cursillo rollo shows him to help others through personal witness.

#### **3. The last rollo helps place the person in a situation of sanctifying power.**

The Total Security (Group Reunion and Ultreya) rollo encourages him to do everything in friendship.

### **Summary of the Lay rollos**

The Cursillista can be more and better. He can do so from where he is when he discovers his heart through spontaneity and applies his intelligence with conviction, exercising his will with decisiveness and self-surrender. And if the Cursillista accepts that his reality is made up of people he can help, he can do so through personal witness and accomplish everything in friendship. (Manifesto, p.19)

### **The Postcursillo – The Group Reunion is essential so as not to fail to be (Christian).**

The purpose of the Group Reunion is to make possible for each one what is necessary for all: the normal, lasting, and joyful living together of our lives as Christians. In the Cursillo, a person becomes holy. In the Postcursillo, we place him in a stable, free, dynamic, and sanctifying position. The Cursillista should strive to advance his holiness through his piety, study, action, and Group Reunion.

The Group Reunion is the second part of the Cursillos in Christianity. In it, the Cursillo becomes lasting, and Christianity becomes constant. Everything that is lived as a Christian should be lived

together. The Group Reunion is only a means for living together the Christianity that each one lives or wants to live.

The most profound form of living together is friendship. Therefore, the Group Reunion is friendship raised to the Transcendental sphere: friendship converted into permanent actual Grace.

We must bear in mind that Group Reunions are not held, so there may be people to attend the Cursillos, but the Cursillos are held so that there may be people to make a Group Reunion. And that the Cursillo is the best means we know of for putting the soul at the necessary level to make a Group Reunion.

The purpose of the groups is to make it possible for each member to do what is necessary for all: the normal, lasting, and joyful living together of our lives as Christians. We aim to bring each Christian into a position of sanctifying power to serve him as a driving force and measure of his Christian being.

The Group Reunions are the channel and source of countless apostolic experiences, an ever-living fertile source of restlessness and initiative, and a road to creating and developing personalities centered in Christ.

The Group Reunion encourages and increases each member's enthusiasm, dedication, and spirit of charity and assures perseverance. The groups function as natural units of friendship, without supervisors or hierarchy, because they seek to be the guaranteed channel by which each one may live together with his brother, whatever he lives or wants to live.

### **The Apprenticeship Period – Evaluating your friend's situation.**

We should not demand too much “doing” from the Cursillistas in the apprenticeship period. During the Cursillo, a restlessness capable of resolving problems has been driven home to the Cursillistas. This restlessness must always be kept alive, vibrant, and active. In the first days after the Cursillo, the luster of the Truth, recently discovered, sends all Cursillistas toward the path of holiness with renewed courage.

Through God's grace, it is up to him to pilot his soul to stay on course. The joyful and conscious contribution of his *enthusiasm*, *dedication*, and *spirit of charity* in every circumstance will continue to mark out the vocation that belongs to him.

He must contribute his *Enthusiasm*:

- By accepting his circumstances joyfully because these are the means that God gives him to become holy.
- By looking with new eyes at the same things he has always looked at.
- By seeking greater possibilities.

He must contribute his *Dedication*:

- By not letting success or failure get out of control.
- By sharing his new life with his brothers and sisters in Christ.
- By asking for and assuming greater responsibilities.

He must contribute his *Spirit of Charity*:

- In his environments, even though they may be unfriendly at times.
- By assuming responsibility for what others may not see clearly.
- By loving God and neighbor.

If his Enthusiasm is not centered on Christ:

- He will want to be like so and so.
- He will believe he is an exception and will become discouraged.

If his Dedication is not centered on Christ:

- He will release ideas without the environment being ready to accept them.
- He will think he is something.
- He will think he is nothing.
- He will believe he is self-sufficient and does not believe in group effectiveness.

If his Spirit of Charity is not centered on Christ:

- He will believe that Cursillo is the only way.
- He will believe everyone must be a Cursillista.
- He will want to be the holy bully of God's holy Church.

### **Pilot Your Life.**

Every car has dials on the dashboard to indicate speed, fuel, rpm, etc. The one who seriously proposes to be the pilot of his soul must be able at every point to have all his resources reflected in a single dial to put them to use at any moment with a view to efficacy. Having an inventory of the practical resources on hand gives a greater consciousness of what is being done and what can be done with enthusiasm.

God places us in four distinct realities during our lives. However, some individuals may need to be informed about these realities. To gain enlightenment and be able to enlighten others, it is crucial that we acknowledge and actively live within these four realities. Our goal should be to align our will with God's will.

The first reality is the "*Area of Responsibility*," which refers to what God wants in your life so that you may be a saint. "We come to a full sense of the dignity of the lay faithful if we consider the prime and fundamental vocation that the Father assigns to each of them in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit: the vocation to holiness, that is, the perfection of charity." (Saint John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*) This area of responsibility encompasses all aspects of your life where you can exert a specific and intentional influence, such as your family, workplace, social life, leisure time, etc. However, we often get involved in apostolic action outside of our responsibility, which causes us to neglect our God-given environments.

The second reality is the "*Area of Being Centered*," which pertains to your Piety, Study, Action, and close moment to Christ, which we review using the Service Sheet. It is about keeping your heart, mind, and will in harmony with God's will. If you stop praying, studying, and surrendering your will to God, you will not be able to fulfill this area, and the first area (the area of

responsibility) will not be effective. To remain responsible and centered on Christ, it's essential to maintain a Christ-centered life by practicing your piety, study, and action.

The third reality is the "*Area of Providence*," which encompasses areas beyond your control and can only be influenced through prayer. For instance, when God allows an illness or death in the family, all you can do is pray. When your tripod (heart, mind, will) is centered on Christ, it can be easier for you to accept the situation.

The fourth reality is the "*Area of Ideas*," which refers to ideas, aspirations, and preferences projected on the infinite field of God's providence. People are driven by ideas, whether essential, important, or accidental. For instance, you may aspire to become the next Lay Director or store manager or get a degree in Theology. Whatever your ideas, aspirations, or plans may be, if these four areas of your life are not in harmony with God's will, it is possible that you may not be enlightened to discover your vocation.

These four areas can become cloudy when your life and will are not centered on Christ.

The Area of Responsibility turns into the impossible.

The Area of Being Centered turns into something that cannot be accomplished.

The Area of Providence turns into something without a solution.

The Area of Ideas turns into something that seems too far to reach.

### **In Closing**

Accompanying our friend in the Postcursillo requires a dynamic disposition driven by enthusiasm and constantly renewed by Grace.

Offer to be an accountable friend. Check in regularly to see how your friend is doing following his Cursillo experience in everyday life.

Encourage your friend to reflect on their Cursillo experience. Ask questions like: What insights did you gain during the Cursillo? How did you feel during moments close to Christ? What activities or rollos resonated with you?

Help them apply what they learned about Group Reunion, Ultreya, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, etc.

Suggest that your friend set aside regular quiet time to reflect on their service sheet, piety, study, action, and close moments to Christ.

Suggest to your friend to practice being present to self, Christ, and others (the three encounters) daily by reflecting on who I am, who Christ is, and who my brothers and sisters are.

Encourage your friend to apply the Cursillo principles to his relationships, family, work, and decisions.

Encourage your friend to connect with others who attended the same Cursillo. Community support can reinforce spiritual growth.

Encourage your friend to attend follow-up gatherings such as Group Reunion, Ultreya, or other Cursillo activities to make friends, share personal experiences, and listen to others' witnesses. Remember, the goal is to help your friend maintain the Cursillos' positive impact and ongoing conversion so he can deepen his relationship with God and neighbor through friendship.

Consistency matters more than intensity. Small, daily practices build a strong foundation for spiritual growth.

My brothers and sisters, thank you for practicing the "art of accompaniment" with your friends in the Precursillo, Cursillo, and Postcursillo. Remember to love God, be attentive to the person, and make friends for Christ.

De Colores!