

NEWSLETTER

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The 47th Cursillo Anniversary

*Good Samaritans
that want to make
a differences*

The 47th Cursillo Anniversary was a truly special day that felt like a heartfelt reunion of family and friends bound by faith. The celebration began with an intimate hour-long Mass at St. Charles Church, where the congregation gathered in quiet reflection and prayer. The reverent atmosphere set the perfect tone, reminding everyone why we come together not just to celebrate, but to renew our spiritual commitment and support one another on this journey.

After Mass, the excitement bubbled over as people from different churches and backgrounds mingled, hugged, and caught up. It was inspiring to see so many familiar faces alongside new ones, all united by the Cursillo spirit. The diversity of attendees—from young families to seasoned Cursillistas—made the gathering feel like a true community, a living mosaic of faith and fellowship.

Continue talk about the 47th Cursillo Anniversary

The organizers had thoughtfully planned the day to balance moments of reflection with plenty of fun. It wasn't just about looking back on 47 years of Cursillo; it was about celebrating the present and the connections that keep this movement alive. The energy was contagious, and you could feel the genuine joy in the air as people shared stories, laughter, and smiles.

One of the highlights was the lively games scattered throughout the picnic area. I loved watching the women do the hot potato game, adults and kids doing the easter egg hunt, and trivia contests. The friendly competition brought out everyone's playful side, and the cheers and laughter made it clear that winning prizes was secondary to simply enjoying each other's company. The prizes, from \$25 gift cards to gift baskets, were a thoughtful touch that added to the festive spirit.

Food, as always, was a central part of the celebration-and it did not disappoint. The smell of barbecue wafted through the air, drawing people toward the grill where volunteers were busy flipping hotdogs and hamburgers. The skilletes, filled with savory combinations of bbq meats and skilletes, offered a comforting, home-cooked feel. Sitting down to eat together, I noticed how food became a bridge, sparking conversations.

As the day wound down, there was a tangible sense of gratitude and fulfillment. The 47th Cursillo Anniversary wasn't just a party-it was a heartfelt celebration of faith, friendship, and the enduring bonds that hold this group together.

Lets hear from the Operation Healing Fields



Let me tell you about something incredible that happened on April 27th, 2025, for Día del Niño in Tijuana.

Continue talk from the Operation Healing Fields

You know how special Día del Niño is in Mexico-it's a day all about celebrating children with games, music, and a lot of joy. Well, this year, Operation Healing Fields got to be part of something truly memorable.

The story all started on April 26th at 2pm, just the day before the event. JQ got a phone call from a church in Tijuana. The nuns were reaching out, almost desperately, asking if we could help them with soccer balls and volleyballs for their Día del Niño celebration. The catch? They needed 50 soccer balls and 10 volleyballs by the next morning!

Honestly, our first thought was, "This is so last-minute, there's no way we can pull this off." We knew that with such short notice, we'd have to buy everything at full price, missing out on the discounts we usually get when we have more time to plan.

We started picturing ourselves driving all over town, going from store to store-maybe ten different shops-just to find enough balls. The whole thing seemed overwhelming, and I'll admit, we even considered giving up. It just felt impossible.

But then we stopped and prayed. We asked God to guide us, to make a way if this was really something He wanted us to do for the kids. I can't tell you how much we needed that moment of faith.

That's when Sister Denise decided to check out a Big 5 Sporting Goods store. She walked in and, to her amazement, found an entire wall stocked with soccer balls of every size, from 3 to 5. It was perfect, since the kids at the church would be all different ages.

And here's where it gets even better: every single ball was already marked down by 35%. When the manager heard about our mission, he offered us an extra 10% off because we were buying so many. We ended up getting all 50 soccer balls and 10 volleyballs-everything we needed-in one stop, and at a price that was way better than we expected.

We couldn't believe it. What seemed impossible just hours before had turned into a clear answer to prayer. God provided, and He did it in a way that left us all in awe.

On April 27th, when JQ delivered the balls to the church, the children's faces lit up with joy. Their laughter and excitement made every bit of stress and uncertainty worth it. It was a powerful reminder that when we step out in faith, even when things seem impossible, God truly does the rest.



“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them”

Have you ever had a moment where you thought something couldn't possibly work out, and then it did in a way you never expected?

I'd love to hear your story.

MATTHEW 18-20

Lets hear from Sis Mary Ann Sy de Guzman for Lay Witness Journey of Faith, Hope and Forgiveness

My name is Sis Mary Ann Sy de Guzman from the Parish of St John of the Cross, Lemon Grove. I lived my Cursillo June 8-11-2017 at Quinta de Guadalupe, class # 115, decuria of St Bernadette.

I'm the eldest of 4 children, the only girl, of a mixed marriage, my dad being Chinese and my mom Filipino. So I grew up in two diverse cultures. So my childhood experience was greatly influenced by these two cultures: Chinese and Filipino, from food, education (I attended Chinese school) and particularly religion: Buddhism and Catholicism. These two religions are truly steeped in their customs and traditions. But most of my life I was introduced to going to the Catholic church. I was baptized and confirmed in Manila when I was young. Happy to be wed here in St John of the Cross in Lemon Grove.

Journey of Faith

Hebrew 11:1 Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence* of things not seen. Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. I remember when I was single I prayed and asked God to marry someone with the same faith that I have. I've been introduced to many Chinese guys by my paternal uncle and I felt that my life is doomed if I marry a Chinese buddhist. God has granted my wish and I married a Filipino Catholic guy and have been blessed with 2 beautiful daughters.

The bonus in this marriage is the strong faith of my mother in law who became my first mentor in faith. Although we never talked about religion or share scripture verses, her strong catholic faith is evident by the way she lived her life. I would see her praying the rosary every afternoon with a lighted candle in front of a wooden cross and with a picture of Mother Mary and with a big bible. She had a nice altar beside her bed. She requested only one thing from us: that we attend Sunday mass regularly as a family with her. So we would go to mass at St Mary's Church in National City with her and my children. Seeing her "actions" or religious rituals made a deep impact in my life. I even mentioned to her that I want to inherit her being a prayerful person. My catholic faith started by observation: watching and learning from her.

Journey of Hope

There are two major storms in my life that if I did not have hope, I would not have survived these challenges.

Feb 27, 2013 – My mother in law died due to old age and health complications. Then I lost my job which meant losing our dream house in Spring Valley. Because of financial difficulties, my family was forced to move in with my "Ate" (older sister title) although technically, she is my aunt because she was my mom's youngest sister. She is renting this big house and she's a caregiver. She was also taking care of my mom who was a dialysis patient and my father who has dementia, in particular Alzheimer's disease.

Continue from Sis Mary Ann Sy de Guzman

At this time, I was also diagnosed with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). PTSD does not only happen to veterans or military people but can happen to anyone who had experienced traumatic events, or series of events or circumstances. To me, these series of events or circumstances are in the form of psychological invalidation. Validation is the acceptance of a person's thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Invalidation, is just the opposite — when a person's thoughts, feelings, emotions, and behaviors are rejected, judged, or ignored. Psychological invalidation. is one of the most lethal forms of emotional abuse. Invalidation can affect anyone at any age and can be upsetting and painful. Emotional invalidation led to my feelings of worthlessness and self-isolation which impacted my day-to-day life — work, home, and my relationships. It killed my confidence, creativity and individuality. Although it is not physical abuse, it is worse than that. It wounded my heart and scarred my mind.

And sad to say, my “ate” and my father contributed to my condition. And living with them just made it worse.

In 2016, I was introduced to a prayer group called “Apostles of the Holy Spirit” where I learned the proper way of praying the rosary, Angelus, Divine Mercy and meditation. Then Sis Lorna Alagar invited me to attend a Cursillo weekend in 2017.

What did attending the Cursillo do to me? Cursillo is a gift from God. The movement has a big impact in my life. The Cursillo truly “moved” me to deepen my relationship with Jesus and educated me. I not only heard the message from God clearly with explanation but I also learned how to apply the message in my daily life. Knowing the truth, declaring, proclaiming and practicing it simply gave me peace of mind.

Through the Cursillo, I learned what it means to be part of the bigger picture through the community. My faith is no longer between me and God but that I am part of the body of Christ, the Church, I gained a lot of brothers and sisters who gave me the confidence that I am loved by God no matter who I am. Joy came back in my life. I volunteered to served as a refectorian twice even though I do not know how to cook. I was sous chef with my 3 fairy refectorian godmothers: Sis Precy, Sis Novy and Sis Lot. At least I know how to cook rice, chopped fruits and vegetables and willing to wake up early and sleep late.

My faith started growing because I learned through the Cursillo that I have to persevere through my piety, study and action. For my piety, I say my prayers regularly, pray the rosary on my way to work and do my meditations in the morning using the daily gospel readings. My study is done by listening to the homilies of different priests like Fr Navarra, Fr Muro, Fr Emilio, Fr Manny. I listened to you tube podcast such as Fr Ambo, now Cardinal Ambo David, and Fr Jerry Orbos and also to EWTN. For my action, Sis Jennie Maschmeier encouraged me to be a lector and I was commissioned by Fr Peter Navarra in 2017. I teamed with Sis Lilia and Sis Remy before the pandemic. Attending Ultreyas and the Leaders Program helped me grow in my faith. There's too many brothers and sisters to mention who influenced me and shaped me for who I am now. I also found out from Sis Jennie that my mother in law was also a cursillista from the Philippines. Sis Jennie used to bring communion to her.

Continue from Sis Mary Ann Sy de Guzman

Journey of forgiveness

Then In Sept 2019, my PTSD was triggered and I had a breakdown. Something happened and I became very sick physically and my anxiety and depression worsened. My body would shake just by hearing my “Ate’s” voice that I have to place ear plugs to avoid it. I can not go inside the house if my husband and daughter are not there to accompany me in. I did not have any choice but to leave my parents behind and moved out. Three months later my father passed on followed by my mom’s death 5 months later.

Through all these difficult times, I never stopped praying. This is what the Cursillo had taught me. There is one verse that is very close to my heart: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. (Matthew 22:37). It is the love of God that kept me going.

My parents died in 2019 and they were cremated with the plan of bringing their remains back to the Philippines for proper burial.. Then pandemic happened the following year and it was not until 2023 that this plan would materialize. Now, I have to face my “ate” who I consider my enemy now. How can I forgive someone who made life miserable not only for me but for my whole family. My husband and my children were also affected by her treatment of me.

If I truly love God with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my mind, then I should also love my enemy as commanded by Jesus. (Matt 5:44). I want to but I don’t know how. I constantly remember what had happened between us. I can not forget. How can I forgive? And that was the problem. I kept on reliving in my mind all the things that happened between us, even writing everything in my journal. As if I can hear God telling me that I never forgot because I never stop writing all my “Ate’s” faults and the bad things she did and said to me.

Transformation

I went down on my knees, prayed and asked for healing and forgiveness for me. I found a small piece of paper with the word “metanoia” written on it tucked in my journal. It was a talk given by Fr Peter in 2016 about conversion and transformation, of acknowledging and listing all of my defects and my sinfulness. As I reflected more about it, I became aware of my own shortcomings and weaknesses. I acknowledged each one and accepted my own humanness. I resented my “Ate” because my parents treated her as their daughter more than me. They believed and trusted her more than me. Growing up, my mom would buy her new clothes while I get her hand me downs. This deep seated resentment caused me to hate her. And the situation did not improve in our adult lives.

So the time came when we all headed to the airport including my “Ate”. My heart was beating so fast and yet I had the courage to speak and poured out my heart to her. She listened and so reconciliation had started. God paved the way for forgiveness and peace to happen. And I am grateful.

Continue from Sis Mary Ann Sy de Guzman

Forgiving is a process for me. It took a while for healing to take place, I needed lots of prayers, and reflections and by God's grace, I keep on bumping on the word "humility" many, many times, through homilies and you tube podcasts. It took me a while to swallow my pride and embrace humility in all my "ugly circumstances".

Funny feelings, the love unexplainable inside my heart, the joy and peace after forgiving my "ate" and myself. St Paul reminds us that love is patient, love is kind..... it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury. (1 Cor 13:4-5). That's what was happening to me. I kept on brooding or thinking what was done to me. Once I let go of it, healing occurred

When I had a car accident a year ago, my "Ate" called me afterwards. I saw it as caring on her part. Now we are on speaking terms. She even invited me to join her on a Baltic cruise which I did last October. I stopped writing in my journal about my complaints in life but instead write only what is fruitful and what God is sending me through the Holy Spirit. GPS now means God is my Provider and Savior or Go in Peace and Serve the Lord.

I realize that my emotions react faster than my mind and that I'm leaving an opening for the devil to work on me when I overthink or over react. I also know that my spirit gets weaker when I am away from my faith. St Paul reminds me (1 Thes 5:17) to pray without ceasing. God wants me to choose the right path by praying to him at all times even in my sleep. Now I understand what Mother Teresa says love them anyway even though they have done you wrong.

I'll end my talk with the poem of St Mother Teresa entitled: Do It Anyway

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self centered; forgive them anyway.
 If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; be kind anyway.
 If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; succeed anyway.
 If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; be honest and frank anyway.
 What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; build anyway.
 If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.
 Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;
 It was never between you and them anyway.

De Colores!

Lets hear from Sis Loreta Sigarlaki - A tribute to Sis Chit Trapse



Sis Chit Pangilinan Trapse was one of the pillars of the Filipino Cursillo Movement of San Diego. She was a pioneer as she was in the first Cursillo class held for women in May of 1978. Her love for the movement had brought out the best of her God given abilities in her and she found her niche in the service of God. And this is what drove Sis Chit to dedicate her life and energy to the movement. She found her Ideal- loving God and living a life worthy of eternal salvation. She embraced all she had learned with such conviction that she used her talents and abilities to further its cause. She was a charismatic leader who recognized the gifts given her by the Holy Spirit: wisdom, administration, leadership, hospitality and teaching just to name a few, to help build the Christian community not only in her parish but on the diocesan level as well.

Ever since I had known her, she had always been active in the movement, in different leadership capacities, except the times when she was sick, undergoing treatment and doing therapy. She chaired the School of Leaders at one time and was instrumental in creating the sub committees to make it efficient. She served as a lay director from 1990-1992 and came back to serve for two terms in 2016 as assistant Lay director while she was in remission from her cancer.

Continue talk from Sis Loreta Sigarlaki

During this time she chaired a successful fund raising endeavor and the well attended 45th Cursillo anniversary in 2023. She had been a rollista, Rectora and vice-rectora. Even when she was not holding a leadership position, she was always there serving the movement in different supporting roles such as a facilitator for working relationships and as a trainer and adviser. Always a favorite rollista, she was a dynamic speaker and spoke in a clear and articulate manner.

I remember what Fr Dennis Macalintal (+RIP), a long time supporter and previous Spiritual Director of the movement had told me about Sis Chit: that she had read all the Cursillo materials available at that time making her very knowledgeable and well equipped to lead the movement. This was in the early nineties when there was not much Cursillo published materials nor resources available on line. This was typical of Sis Chit who was always striving for excellence.

We all looked up to her for her integrity, wisdom, clarity of thought, and faith. She is remembered for all her contributions and service in the growth of the movement as well as the courage, steadfastness and resiliency she had exhibited during her time of illness.

We will always remember you Sis Chit for your love, friendship, hospitality and the way you lived your life faithfully for Christ. You have embodied in your life especially when you embraced your cross through your medical challenges what a true follower of Christ ought to be. Our consolation, based on our Christian hope are the words expressed by Jesus : Well done, my good and faithful servant. Come, share your Master's joy.'

Rest in peace in the loving arms of your Master and Savior! We love you and will miss you!

On behalf of the Filipino Cursillo Movement, our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to Bro Jess, the Trapse family and Pangilinan family.