

NEWSLETTER

Filipino Cursillo Movement of San Diego, CA | Volume XLV, Issue 15 | May 2026

¡De Colores!

Celebrating 48 Years of Faith, Friendship & Fellowship

The Filipino Cursillo Movement – San Diego

48th Anniversary Celebration • April 25, 2026 • San Diego, CA



Our Cursillo family gathered at Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcála — California's very first mission, and now the proud setting of our 48th anniversary Mass.

On Saturday, April 25, 2026, the Filipino Cursillo Movement of San Diego marked a milestone that not many movements get to celebrate — forty-eight beautiful, grace-filled years of bringing Christ closer to our community. The day began the way every great Cursillo day should: with Mass at the historic Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcála, the “Mother of the Missions” herself. Cursillistas came from every corner of the county, dressed in their Saturday best, rosaries in hand, and joy practically beaming through the basilica’s ancient adobe walls. If smiles produced light, the Mission would have needed sunglasses.

After the final blessing, our caravan made its merry way to Admiral Baker Park for the part of the day many of us — let’s be honest — had been quietly counting down to: the picnic. Gazebo #1 was decked out, the grill was fired up, and the Cursillo banner waved proudly in the breeze. Within minutes, the gazebo transformed into a happy, noisy, wonderful little village. There were hugs, more hugs, and just

when you thought the hugs were done — another hug. This is what forty-eight years of community looks like.

— Faces of Our Cursillo Family —





Brothers and sisters in Christ — reuniting, reminiscing, and reminding each other why we keep coming back year after year.

And then, the moment of reverent silence. The Lechon arrived. For our non-Filipino friends reading this: lechon is a whole roasted pig, golden and crispy, and at any Filipino gathering it commands the kind of attention usually reserved for celebrities and tax refunds. Phones came out. Photos were taken. Someone whispered “salamat po”. The skin crackled in approval. Paired with rice, pancit, lumpia, and an absolutely sinful spread of homemade desserts, the food alone was worth driving across the county for. (Cholesterol, like sin, was forgiven for the day.)



The guest of honor: a magnificent lechon, prepared with love and devoured with prayerful gratitude.

With bellies full, it was time for the Picnic Games — and dear friends, watching distinguished aunties and uncles transform into fiercely competitive athletes is a spiritual experience all its own. There were paper-plate challenges that turned the gazebo into a flurry of laughter, team games where the cheering was louder than any halftime show, and a few moments where the official scorekeeping became, shall we say, ‘creatively interpreted.’ The Holy Spirit was present, but so was a healthy dose of friendly trash-talk. Everyone walked away a winner — even those whose plates may or may not have flown off the table.



Game time! The competition was fierce, the laughter was louder, and the bragging rights are good until next April.

As the afternoon wound down and we packed up coolers, leftovers, and well-loved children, there was that familiar bittersweet feeling — the kind that says, “see you soon” rather than “goodbye.” Forty-eight years ago, a small group of faithful Filipinos planted a seed in San Diego, and look at what God has grown. To every Cursillista who showed up, cooked, set up, cleaned up, prayed, sang, played, and loved on one another — thank you. To those who couldn’t make it, we missed you, and we saved you a story (and possibly some lechon skin). Here’s to year forty-nine, to our golden 50th right around the corner, and to a movement that just keeps getting stronger. ¡De Colores!

— *The Filipino Cursillo Movement, San Diego*



Feeding the Homeless

Sharing Christ’s Love on the Streets of Downtown San Diego

A Monthly Outreach Ministry • Last Thursday of Every Month

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish • 4080 Hawk St, San Diego, CA



Volunteers gather before heading out into the streets of downtown San Diego — hands ready to serve, hearts open to the work of Christ.

On the last Thursday of every month, a quiet but powerful ministry takes place at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish in downtown San Diego. A dedicated group of volunteers — Cursillistas, parishioners, and friends — gathers in the parish kitchen to prepare three hundred warm spaghetti meals for our brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness. What begins as the simple act of cooking quickly becomes something much greater: an evening of prayer, fellowship, and service in the name of Jesus Christ, who reminded us that whatever we do for the least of these, we do for Him.

Beyond the hot meals, the team carefully assembles bundles of essentials to bring along on the walk through downtown. Dozens of warm blankets, bags of clothing for both men and women, fresh oranges, bottled water, and tissue paper are packed into vehicles and arms. Each item is chosen with care — not just to meet a physical need, but to communicate dignity, respect, and the message that someone sees you, someone remembers you, and someone is praying for you. It is a labor of love, performed in silence by many hands working as one.

— Hands and Hearts in Service —



From the parish kitchen to the streets — carrying meals, blankets, and the love of Christ to those who need it most.

We were especially blessed this month to be joined by Deacon Kevin Helfers of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish, who came not only to help prepare the food but also to walk the streets of downtown alongside our team. Deacon Kevin's presence brought a profound spiritual depth to the evening. As we encountered our neighbors living on the sidewalks, in tents, and against the cold walls of buildings, he knelt beside them, looked them in the eyes, and offered prayer after prayer — for healing, for hope, for safety, and for the gentle assurance that they are deeply loved by God. Many of those we met wept softly, others smiled, and some simply held his hand. It was a holy thing to witness.



Deacon Kevin Helfers in prayer with our neighbors on the streets of downtown San Diego — a quiet ministry of presence, compassion, and grace.

The diverse team that gathered this evening — united by compassion and a shared faith — was a beautiful reminder that the Body of Christ is at its strongest when it serves together. There were no titles in that parish kitchen, and no titles on the streets that night. There were only brothers and sisters, hands chopping vegetables, hands folding blankets, hands extended in friendship to strangers who, for a few sacred minutes, were strangers no longer. Those experiencing homelessness received not only food and warmth, but also dignity, eye contact, conversation, and the unmistakable assurance that someone cares.

This monthly outreach is a powerful witness to what ordinary people can accomplish when they choose to show up and serve. Every blanket given, every meal shared, every prayer offered is a small act of love that reflects the heart of the Gospel. We are deeply grateful to Deacon Kevin Helfers, to St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish, and to every volunteer who gives their evening on the last Thursday of each month

to this beautiful ministry. If you feel called to join us — whether by cooking, donating supplies, walking with us, or simply praying for the work — you are warmly welcomed. To learn more about St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish and how to get involved, please visit vincentcatholic.org. May God continue to bless this ministry, the volunteers who serve, and especially the brothers and sisters we are privileged to walk alongside.

— *The Filipino Cursillo Movement, San Diego*

Learn more: vincentcatholic.org



Awesome Grace

A Personal Testimony of God's Merciful Love

By Bro. Kevin Kramer

Before I share about a special grace I unexpectedly received on March 28, 2025, around noon, I would like to provide some context for what I think prepared the soil of my heart to receive a seed of God's grace. There is a book I have been studying for over 10 years that was written down under obedience to the Catholic Church. On August 27, 1926, Jesus revealed to the servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta, Little Daughter of the Divine Will, the title He wished to give to the book He was having her write under obedience to her confessor. The title He gave to the book is "The Kingdom of My Divine Will in the midst of creatures. Book of Heaven. The call of the creature to the order, the place, and the purpose for which he was created by God." On April 26, 1921, Jesus spoke to Luisa about the war of love He will wage against creatures to bring about the kingdom of His Divine Will on earth, so that the prayer the Church has prayed for 2,000 years, namely "Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," will be fulfilled. I have experienced personally in my own life what Jesus refers to in this passage of Luisa's book: "their tiredness in evil, their disenchantments, the disillusiones, the losses suffered, will dispose them to receive my war. My war will be a war of love." This war of Jesus will be waged with "weapons of love, giving them gifts, graces, and peace."

On March 28, 2025, I received a great gift, a great grace, and a great increase in peace. It was a slow day at work, and I had some downtime, so I picked up my copy of *The Way of Divine Love* by Sister Josefa Menendez. I had read part of the passage before, but I was totally unprepared for the encounter I had with Jesus and His personal love for me when I read the following passage, which is an appeal of the Sacred Heart of Jesus meant for the whole world.

On June 11, 1923, Jesus gave Sr. Josefa the following message for the world:

"I am Love! My Heart can no longer contain its devouring flames. I love souls so dearly that I have sacrificed my life for them.

"It is this love that keeps Me a prisoner in the tabernacle. For nearly twenty centuries I have dwelt there, night and day, veiled under the species of Bread and concealed in the small white Host, bearing through love, neglect, solitude, contempt, blasphemies, outrages, sacrileges..."

"For love of souls, I instituted the Sacrament of Penance, that I might forgive them, not once or twice, but as often as they need to recover grace. There I wait for them, longing to wash away their sins, not in water, but in My Blood.

"How often in the course of the ages have I, in one way or another, made known My love for men: I have shown them how ardently I desire their salvation. I have revealed My Heart to them. This devotion has been as light cast over the whole earth, and today it is a powerful means of gaining souls, and so of extending My kingdom.

"Now I want something more, for if I long for love in response to My own, this is not the only return I desire from souls: I want them all to have confidence in My mercy, to expect all from My clemency, and never to doubt My readiness to forgive.

"I am God, but a God of love! I am a Father, but a Father full of compassion and never harsh. My Heart is infinitely holy but also infinitely wise, and knowing human frailty and infirmity stoops to poor sinners with infinite mercy.

"I love those who after a first fall come to Me for pardon...I love them still more when they beg pardon for their second sin, and should this happen again, I do not say a million times but a million million times, I still love them and pardon them, and I will wash in My Blood their last as fully as their first sin.

"Never shall I weary of repentant sinners, nor cease from hoping for their return, and the greater their distress, the greater My welcome. Does not a father love a sick child with greater affection? Are not his care and solicitude greater? So is the tenderness and compassion of My Heart more abundant for sinners than for the just.

"This is what I wish all to know. I will teach sinners that the mercy of My Heart is inexhaustible. Let the callous and indifferent know that My Heart is a fire which will enkindle them, because I love them. To devout and saintly souls I would be the Way, that making great strides in perfection, they may reach eternal beatitude. Lastly, of consecrated souls, priests, and religious, My elect and chosen ones, I ask, once more, all their love and that they should not doubt Mine, but above all that they should trust Me and never doubt My mercy. It is so easy to trust completely in My Heart!"

I was moved to tears and felt a profound sense of peace and confidence in God as I read this passage. I felt a wave of peace flow over me and was temporarily relieved from some severe anxiety, which seemed to melt away. I gained a great deal of trust that God does love me, individually, in spite of all my flaws, defects, sins, and failings. My confidence in Jesus as my Savior increased greatly. As I continued to read more of the appeal of the Sacred Heart of Jesus given through Sr. Josefa Menendez, I was given a grace of gaining insight into what God wants me to do "when I grow up." I had to go out to my car to wipe away my tears, and on my lunch break I was so happy I spent about thirty minutes loudly singing hymns in the parking lot.

A final passage I read also brought healing in terms of my attitude toward my employers. On June 17, 1923, Jesus told Josefa:

"I am your God and your Father, your Creator and your Savior. You are My creatures, My sons, bought at the price of My life and My Heart's Blood, which I shed to free you from slavery and the tyranny of sin.

"You have souls great and immortal, destined for happiness, wills capable of all good, hearts made both to give and receive affection..."

“The thirst for contentment and love can never be appeased by earthly and fleeting gains, which will always leave you hungry and unsatisfied. Perpetual conflict, sadness, anxiety, and affliction will still be your portion.

“If you are poor and have to earn a living by work, the miseries of life will embitter you; you will be hostile to your employers, and may even wish them ill, that like yourselves they may experience the hard grind of daily toil.

“Fatigue, disgust, even despair will weigh heavily on your spirits, for the way is rough and in the end comes death!...

“O! how great are these calamities when viewed from a human standpoint. But I come to show you life under a different aspect.

“All you who are deprived of the world’s goods and obliged to labor for your daily bread under a master, reflect that you are not slaves, but created for the freedom of eternity...

“All you whose craving for affection is unsatisfied, remember that you were made to love that which is eternal, not that which passes with time.

“You who love your homes and labor to support your families and provide them with comforts and happiness, do not forget that though death will one day sever every tie, this is only for a time...

“You who serve a master, and owe him respect, love, care for his interests, hard work and fidelity, forget not that he is your master only for the short time of a lifetime. How soon this will pass away and give place to an eternity, where you will no longer be workers but reign as kings forever and ever.

“You souls, created by a loving Father who bears you a limitless and eternal affection, will find one day in the bliss of heaven prepared for you a final answer to all your aspirations.

“There, every labor will be rewarded...

“There, you will find your family for whom you worked so hard on earth.

“There, you will live eternally, for earth is but a passing shadow; Heaven will never pass away.

“There, you will be united to your God and Father...

“O! if you but knew how great is the beatitude that awaits you...”

For about three days straight after this experience, it seemed that every experience I had was a divine appointment arranged by God. It was exciting to surrender to His love and admire what He was doing in my life. I am so grateful for this great grace I received, and I will forever be thankful to God for the unexpected, blessed encounter with His merciful love.

¡De Colores!

— Bro. Kevin Kramer

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