

Evangelization in Cursillo - Laypersons With the Message

To set the tone, I'd like to start with a short Bible reading from 1 Peter 2:9-10:

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

Good morning everyone. For those of you that don't know me, my name is Jennifer Segers and I made my Cursillo in Vancouver in July 1988 and I sat at St. Margaret's Table.

In this talk we're going to look at 3 points:

1. The history of our movement as a laypersons pilgrimage to spiritual maturity,
2. The importance of the role that Cursillo has played in developing Canadian laypersons, and
3. The blessings which Cursillo has brought to both the message bearers and message receivers, who have often been accessible only to laypersons.

When I was first asked to do this rollo, I thought, hey, that sounds pretty easy! Then reality set in.....what do I know about this topic? Although I made my Cursillo several years ago, it's only in the past 5 or so years that I've been actively involved, and only really in the past couple of years that I've had contact with Cursillo outside of my own diocese. What **was** I thinking? Since then, I've come to realize that this was simply another opportunity to say 'yes' to God.

First, let's take a look at the history of Cursillo as a Layperson's Pilgrimage to Spiritual maturity:

I'd like to direct your attention to the origins of our movement. It originated in Mallorca, Spain in the 1940's out the original preparations being made by the Catholic Action group as they put on *Advanced Courses for Pilgrims* in preparation for a great pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James at Compostela.

The following is taken from an address given by our founder, Eduardo Bonnin, to the 5th World Encounter in Seoul, Korea in 1997:

Cursillo is a gift from the Holy Spirit to His Church. Through a group of lay-men, from the beginning of the Movement in Mallorca in 1944, the Cursillo has been accomplishing the process whereby many, many people have been able to rediscover themselves, God in Christ, and their brothers and sisters.

In order to get a better understanding of our Charism it is necessary to state precisely the human circumstances of its birth. It was to a specific Group of young lay-men, ordinary people, in a particular place and time, who after much prayer, study, and deep reflection came up with the structure of the Movement "Cursillos in Christianity" and set it in motion. Although there is no doubt that it is a gift from God, the Cursillos had their beginnings and what we could call a human gestation.

The beginning of the beginning, what we could call the first stage, consisted of a perceived and experienced restlessness caused by the understandable confusion in the aftermath of almost two consecutive wars, the Spanish Civil War and the second World War. People were praying at that time, for many people were seriously concerned, and they asked themselves; "What is going to happen?"

But one (Eduardo Bonnin) first, and then many others thought, "can something be done in addition to praying?"

And so (they started) by getting together, praying, thinking, thinking and researching, praying and praying again, it happened that an address given by Pope Pius XI to parish priests and Easter preachers in Rome on 6th Feb. 1940 attracted the attention of first, that one (Eduardo Bonnin) and later others. This talk made a tremendous impact on us. Among other things the Pope was telling us, to be very observant and to assess the situation by making a clear and detailed topographical picture, street by street, to recognize that there existed on one hand faithful people, mainly the dedicated members, potential

members of Catholic Action. On the other hand, groups of people who had moved away from Christian life. "These are also sheep that belong to the parish, stray sheep. You are guardians responsible for these sheep, and I would even say, mainly for these". (Pope Pius XI, Easter, Rome, 1940)

The reading of this address given by the HOLY FATHER motivated us to carry out a thorough and deep study of the scenario and atmosphere in a more serious and systematic way and to put it on paper in a very concrete way. The outcome was a text which already at that time, 1940, we named *STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT*. We tried to determine the way to reach that ENVIRONMENT, how to make that Environment into a Christian one.

....I could not help being concerned with what would happen after the great Pilgrimage and together with some others, we would ask ourselves, "after Santiago, What?"

From Spain, Cursillo spread to Waco, Texas in 1957. The first Cursillo in English was held in San Angelo, Texas in 1961. From there it spread throughout the US, and it came to Canada in the early 1960's. Cursillo can now be found all over the world. This is where we've come from, let's move on to where we're going.

I have always loved the opening phrase in the front of our Pilgrim's Guide: "To be on a Pilgrimage is to journey through Christ to the Father under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, with the help of Mary and all of the saints as you bring your brothers and sisters along with you." To me, this simple statement sums up the essence of the Cursillo movement. I like to think of it as our mission statement in Cursillo.

We're now going to look at that mission statement section by section:

To be on a Pilgrimage. Every time I think of the word 'pilgrimage', the picture I have in my mind is of a group of people journeying together to a common destination. My dictionary defines a pilgrimage as: *a long journey, especially one made to a shrine or sacred place. OR Man's life as a journey through the world.* As mentioned earlier, our movement was born out of the preparations that were made by a group of young men in Mallorca, Spain back in the 1940's, initially to prepare themselves spiritually for a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. James at Compostela. They had a goal and formulated a plan to carry it out. This was their Ideal.

In order to set out on **our** pilgrimage, we must have a destination or a goal. St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians in chapter 3, verses 14-15 tells us, "I press on toward the goal for the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us, then, who are mature, be of the same mind."

This leads us to the next section of our mission statement, **to journey through Christ to the Father under the guidance of the Holy Spirit**. Throughout our pilgrimage in Cursillo, our Fourth Day, we are constantly challenged and reminded, through the commitments we have made on our service sheets, to examine our lives in the areas of our **Piety**, **Study**, and our **Action**. The journey through Christ to the Father is where we develop our **Piety**, which, as we are told on the Cursillo weekend is the direction of one's whole life to God. A scripture reading that I think says this best is found in Romans 8:14-17: "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we **are** children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ - if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him." Wow, that's quite a promise isn't it? It's also a little daunting. How can **I** be worthy of that? How can I even **hope** to understand the depths of it?

This brings us to the next section where we read **with the help of Mary and all of the saints**. On our journey we need the prayers of the whole communion of saints to help us reach our destination. We also need a roadmap to get there. This is where our **Study** comes in. On the weekend we are challenged to study the events of our daily lives. To seek the hand of God in the everyday. In our **Study** we also read, meditate on, and discuss good books and most importantly the scriptures. There are several Bible verses that declare the importance of the Word of God. Here are just a few: In Psalm 119:105 we read "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." and in Deuteronomy 8:3 "one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." and finally, in Hebrews 4:12,

*"Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joint from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." A lot of food for thought, isn't it? No wonder we say on the weekend, **don't just read good books, read the best!***

Jesus doesn't stop there, though. In Mark 16:15 we read: *"And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation."* The gauntlet has been thrown down, we **are** expected to pick it up.

The final section of our mission statement reads, **as you bring your brothers and sisters along with you**. This, my friends is our call to **Action**. In the Action rollo on our weekend, we introduce the concept of **make a friend, be a friend, and bring our friend to Christ**. In order to be truly apostolic, the attitude behind our actions must have the following qualities: It must be **FOR** Christ, **WITH** Christ, **IN** Christ, and **LIKE** Christ. In all our actions we must ask ourselves the following question: who gets the glory? If it is Christ, then we are truly doing his work and the fruit of our actions will mirror that of the disciples as recorded in Mark 16:20 *"And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it."*

As Christians and Cursillistas, we are called to deepen our relationship with Christ, and in so doing, allow His love to flow through us to those around us. We are called to live out Jesus' commandment to *"love one another as I have loved you."*

The Cursillo movement is based on friendship. We must be friends **with Christ**, friends **with our brothers and sisters**, and it is crucial that we be friends **with ourselves**. Our founder, Eduardo Bonnin has this to say on friendship:

*"To be a person is to wish to be oneself, and to be oneself is to know that life has a finality, a sense, a reason to be, and only Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life is the total answer to this truth. And wherever mankind progresses, if he does not progress in the same direction as Christ, who is the Way, the light of Truth and the dynamism of his Life, then mankind will not evolve, because to progress it is necessary that men have the "Why", a reason; that is credible, possible, true, human, fraternal, attractive, fascinating, enlightening...capable of making sense of the fact of existence, **living...not for something, but for SOMEBODY**, because whatever we do, He has loved us first.*

*The most important thing to understand is that our friendship with Jesus must be visible in our friendship with others. It is this kind of friendship that has the creative power necessary to transform the world as Christian men and women acting as leaven in their environments. This is, without doubt, possible, **IF** we make the decision to begin with ourselves."*

A friendship with someone else is probably what brought most of us to Cursillo, and the friendships we developed, both on the weekend and after it, are probably what have kept most of us active within the movement. The Cursillo movement obviously didn't invent friendship, but the full understanding of the richness of Cursillo can only be accomplished in such a climate of deep friendship.

As Eduardo says, we must begin with **ourselves**. In order to have any positive effect on anyone else, we must be our own friend, we must **like** ourselves. How could we not? At the beginning of this rollo, I read to you from 1 Peter an affirmation that we are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people.' This idea is also reinforced in 2 Corinthians 6:18 where God says to us *"I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters."* Wow, how much He must love us, to give us the gift of those tender, passionate words. I envision myself here as a small child, sitting in my Daddy's lap, snuggling up to him as he speaks these words to me. Then, if that isn't enough, in Hebrews 2:11-12, I read how my big brother, Jesus, testifies on my behalf: *"For the one who sanctifies, and those who are sanctified, all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters. In the midst of the congregation I will praise you."*

As Christians, we are called to a personal relationship with Jesus. Quite simply, to be his friends. Here are just a few of the ways in which we get to know Him and become His friends.

One way is through spending time with Him in prayer. This is as simple as having a conversation with Him. I read of one woman who really struggled with this concept. Someone suggested to her that she should try and envision sitting down and having a conversation with Jesus over coffee. It worked really well for her. After a while she made a couple of observations to her friend; she shared that Jesus was a very good listener, but she also noticed that he didn't drink much coffee!

We also get to know Jesus at Mass, just like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, who recognized Him in the breaking of the bread. Also, Jesus promises us that *'wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'*

Another way we get to know Jesus is by studying and meditating on His Word. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17 it says: *"All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work."* In studying and meditating on scripture, we come to know our saviour, Jesus, who loved us so much that he gave his life that we might live with him eternally. Jesus is our ultimate friend and friendship with Him is something to be treasured.

I would like to share a quote with you from J. I. Packer taken from his book, ***Knowing God***, that gives me enormous hope:

"When the New Testament tells us that Jesus is risen, one of the things it means is that the victim of Calvary is now, so to speak, loose and at large, so that any man, anywhere, can enjoy the same kind of relationship with him as the disciples had in the days of his flesh."

Pretty awesome thought, isn't it?

Lastly, in Cursillo, we are called to be friends to our brothers and sisters. Sometimes this can be the most challenging area. God expects us to be friends with those who sometimes annoy us the most, and over whom we have absolutely no control. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 25:40: *"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."* In Cursillo we are called not only to bring our close friends to Christ, but we are called to reach out to the Far Away, those who, for what ever reason, have either distanced themselves from God and often from their fellow man, or, sometimes they have never even heard of the Gospel message.

Now we'll look at the importance of the role Cursillo has played in developing Canadian laypersons:

As I shared with you earlier, I haven't had a lot of experience with Cursillo outside of my own diocesan community. However, I had the great privilege of working our latest women's Cursillo just 2 weeks ago. During the course of the weekend I was standing with one of our candidates and looking at all the palanca we had received from around the world. There was palanca from our brothers and sisters from other Cursillo communities as well as from many other 3-day weekend movements - Via De Cristo, Kairos, Walk to Emmaus, and Tres Dias. I was explaining to her that all these other movements were based on the Cursillo movement and that, though they may express themselves in slightly different ways, the message was the same. From my cruising around the internet I know that they all follow basically the same framework as we do in terms of the structure of the weekend talks, the main difference being in how some of the content is expressed in each particular group's denominational traditions. It was then I realized that our experiences in Vancouver mirror those of Edmonton, Toronto, or St. John's. Yes, each community does have it's own way of doing things on the weekend...that much I've found out from talking to other people at conferences such as this, however the message itself is the same everywhere. Therefore, I'm sure the outcome is also the same everywhere in Canada. Since I know my own journey best, I decided to share some of it with you.

When I made my Cursillo almost 13 years ago, I was, at best, a marginal Catholic. I come from a Protestant background and had become a Catholic for convenience sake...that guy I was marrying back in 1975 insisted on it as part of the deal. Since I had drifted away from my own church, I figured, why not? We went over to the local parish priest and arranged for him to give me instructions - this **was**, after all, the pre-RCIA era - and since my fiancé hadn't been attending church for a while, it was suggested that he

come along as well. So we would go over to Father's house every Saturday for about an hour and he and my fiancé would have these interesting discussions and I would go and make tea. After about 6 weeks of this, my Baptism and First Communion were set for about 2 weeks before the wedding so that we could have the full Nuptial Mass. The wedding was lovely, everyone had a wonderful time and now I was Catholic. I had absolutely no idea what that meant! Do you know how I went about making my first reconciliation? I went to the public library and took out a couple of books on it. I read and reread those books. Finally one Saturday I got up the courage to go over to our local parish church at the appointed time, and was faced with my first major problem...there was no organized line up for Confessions! How was one supposed to know when it was their turn to go into that little dark room? This wasn't covered in the books I'd read! Well, I did manage to make it through, but it was certainly wasn't an experience I was wanting to rush right out and repeat. As a matter of fact, it would be close to 10 years before I would try that again.

Over the years I drifted in and out of the Catholic Church. I tried other Christian denominations - Baptist, United, and even Pentecostal, or as my kids called it, the 'Singing Jesus church', but I never really felt I belonged anywhere. By the time I made my Cursillo, I was back in the Catholic Church. Cursillo awakened a desire in me to at least get to know this Catholic faith I belonged to. Shortly after making my weekend I got involved with RCIA in my parish as a sponsor...well, almost. The first night of RCIA everyone was sharing about goals that they had for themselves, I shared that one of my goals was to get Confirmed, as I never had been. The lady in charge of the RCIA program pulled me aside later and said..."we need to talk". Apparently you couldn't sponsor someone if you hadn't been confirmed. So, I ended up being a candidate instead and was confirmed at the Easter Vigil the next spring. This time I felt that I had chosen Catholicism for myself. For a number of reasons, I didn't stay actively involved in Cursillo for very long after my weekend, but I always knew it was there if I was interested. After all, since my Confirmation sponsor had been part of my table team when I made my weekend, I knew who to call.

Even though I didn't stay active in the movement, Cursillo was definitely a catalyst for both my husband and I to become more involved within our parish. Nothing too taxing, we were co-facilitators of a small Christian Community, which is similar to a Group Reunion, and I was a hall monitor for our parish religious education program. That meant I 'guarded' the bathrooms and made sure none of the kids lingered in the hallways.

When I came back to Cursillo about 5 years ago, I was no longer involved with anything at my parish and was looking to belong somewhere. I came to the Ultreyas for a while and then, oh my goodness, they asked me to give a witness talk. I had no idea what to say, and was not very comfortable talking in front of people. Those who know me well, know that I am very shy, even still. I somehow managed to muddle through that first witness talk. While I was giving it, I wasn't sure if I should either pass out or throw up, either one seemed like a viable option, but I didn't. Then I was asked to work in the kitchen on a Cursillo weekend. I was so excited! They put me to work setting tables and colouring placemats. Now this was something I could handle! I had a lot of fun and started to learn more about friendship and community.

During the past few years I have had the awesome privilege of working as part of the front team for several of our weekends and last year I was given the grace-filled responsibility to be Rectora for our October weekend. In service to our local Secretariat, I have facilitated Ultreyas and I've also had the wonderful opportunity to be our rep to the WCCC. Never in my wildest dreams would I have ever thought that any of this would be something I would even desire to do, let alone actually do it.

A year and a half ago I also changed parishes, as I was feeling very disconnected from my own parish. I think it was probably that little kickstart I needed to get going again. In my new parish I have become a lector, and this past January was asked to take over one of the religious education classes, as there was a teacher that needed to step down. Now I'll have to admit that I didn't really become a religious ed teacher by choice, I just happened to be standing in the 'wrong place at the wrong time' or the 'right place at the right time' depending on how you look at it. I don't know, maybe it's because I don't have that much experience with nuns. I mean, how DO you say no to them? Well, now I can hardly wait for classes to start up again in the fall! I'm actually looking forward to working with the kids again.

Now I realize that some of what I have just been talking about could be considered as 'doing

Christian things'. However, I would assure you that that is not the case here. My personal relationship with Christ has grown and developed greatly. I have gone from being a marginal, kind of part-time Catholic, to a person who is very much in love with the Lord and has a great desire to serve Him. My spiritual life has grown and matured, and the activities I'm involved in are a natural expression of my desire to serve the Lord.

In a 12-step program that I'm involved with, one thing that is really stressed is that service is the key to recovery. In talking of recovery, they also say that you can't keep 'it' unless you give 'it' away. This same premise holds true for our spiritual maturity as well. As humans, we are social beings, we need each other. In order to mature spiritually we need to share our spirituality, our Christian walk, with our brothers and sisters along the way. I remember a catch phrase I heard on one weekend that says it well, *'an isolated Christian is a paralyzed Christian.'*

There is a song that I like to use as 'my song' to start my rollos on Cursillo weekends that embodies this principle. Strangely enough, it's called 'Service':

We are made for service to care for each other
We are made to love each sister and brother
With love that will last through sorrow and pain
A love that will never die with strain.

That first verse gives us our marching orders. So simple and yet so profound - love one another. The second verse carries on:

God sent His son to show us the way
One who shared His love every minute of the day
One who gave His life that we might live
And His Spirit to help us through the years.

This second verse is our roadmap. Christ himself is the Way. He tells us to love one another as He has loved us. In the last verse we sing:

Life can be so lonely when nobody cares
Life can be so empty when nobody shares
But if we give ourselves both time and again
The happiness of Christ will live within.

The last verse gives our destination, the quest of our pilgrimage...the happiness of Christ living within us.

Like myself, and for many Catholics throughout Canada, Cursillo has been the catalyst needed to become an effective layperson in the Lord's vineyard. Cursillo challenges us to stretch beyond our comfort zones, to reach out to those in our everyday environments, **making** friends with them, **being** their friend, and eventually **bringing them to Christ**.

Traditionally, we as Catholic laypersons, have viewed evangelization as being the role of the priests and religious. The perception was that we, as the laity, were expected to attend Mass on Sundays, say our prayers, receive the sacraments, and bring up our children as Catholics - you know, send them off to the good sisters for instructions. There didn't seem to be an expectation that we would have a living and vital relationship with God that would compel us to share it with others. Spirituality was a private thing, just between me and God. I remember one of my friends in the Pentecostal church once saying that he was tempted sometimes to return to his Catholic roots because it was so much easier, there were no expectations there to labour in the Lord's vineyard, to produce good fruit.

Both the second Vatican council and several encyclicals have affirmed the role of the laity in the evangelization of the world. In the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity from the Second Vatican Council we read: *"The Laity derive the right and the **duty** with respect to the apostolate, from their union with Christ as their head. Incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through baptism and strengthened by the*

*power of the Holy Spirit through confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the **Lord Himself.**"* Jesus affirms this in John 15:14, "You are my friends if you do what I command you." He commands us in Mark 16:15 "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation."

Cursillo arrived in Canada around the same time as these so-called 'new' ideas of Vatican II were being proclaimed. What perfect timing! The Church was challenging Canadian laypersons to take an active role in the evangelization of our society and here was Cursillo ready to equip us with the tools we needed. For so many of us, Cursillo brought us to the place of having that personal relationship with Jesus Christ that our Evangelical brothers and sisters talked about with such passion. A relationship so vital and exciting that we are compelled to share it with others, giving praise to our God who has done such marvellous things for us. Our response should be the same as that of Jesus' disciples in Luke 19:37-40: "As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the **stones** would shout out."

As Canadian laypersons it is our **duty**, as commanded by Christ himself, to **proclaim** the good news to our brothers and sisters and the greatness of the one who is the author and creator of everything around us. We can no longer sit on the sidelines and leave it up to the organized 'Church' to do. As we hear in the Laity talk on the Cursillo weekends, I am the Church, you are the Church, together we are the Church, and as the Church we **must** heed the call to evangelization.

Lastly, we take a look at the blessings which Cursillo has brought to both the message bearers and message receivers:

As Christians, we are called to bring the Good News to our brothers and sisters everywhere. I had one of those 'ahhh, now I get it' type of thoughts as I was writing this rollo...we too, need to have the Good News brought to us, especially when **we** are passing through rough waters.

On our recent Ladies weekend I received a piece of palanca from a friend. I was having quite a struggle at the time. As a matter of fact, I actually felt like packing up my stuff and going home. On the front of the card was the picture of Christ we use in Cursillo. Superimposed on the picture were the words: "I never said it would be easy, I just said it would be worth it." WOW! It was like one of those lightning bolts that hit you in the head. I meditated on that little phrase the rest of that day and set the picture up next to my bed. Every time I would start to wonder what I was doing there, I would remember the picture and imagine Christ reminding me that it **was** worth it.

In Colossians 1: 9-12 we read:

"For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light."

God has equipped each of us with the talents and the grace that we need to carry his message to others, all He asks is that we listen to Him and remain open to His leading.

So many of us who have presented a rollo on a Cursillo weekend, or given a Witness talk at Ultreya, or sometimes even just by our sharing in a Group Reunion, have often been amazed at how God has used our willingness to share our experiences, no matter whether they be ones of pain, sadness, joy, or gratitude, to touch someone else's heart. The awesomeness of God's ability to work through our brokenness, our feelings of inadequacy, and our imperfections, makes me realize just what a mighty God we serve.

In Ephesians 4:11-13 we are promised: "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."

As the bearers of Christ's message to our brothers and sisters, we receive that peace that passes all understanding. We are privileged to enjoy the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Most importantly we are promised in Galatians 6:8-10: *"if you sow to the Spirit you will reap **eternal life** from the Spirit. So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those of the family of faith."*

Do you realize what a powerful message it is that we have been entrusted to bring to others? Jesus tells us in John 10:10 that *"I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* And, in John 1:12 we read: *"But to all who received him, who **believed in his name**, he gave power to become **children of God.**"* Wow! We come as heralds of the gift of eternal life to our brothers and sisters along the way. When we share with them the good news of Jesus Christ, they too become heirs with Christ, they too share in the fruits of the Spirit, and they too receive that peace that passes all understanding. Lives are changed, relationships are healed, and the kingdom of God is advanced!

To wrap up this talk....

I'd like to read an excerpt from a familiar passage to you. It's taken from Luke's account of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We're joining the disciples just after they have finished telling Jesus their tale of woe and expressing their discouragement: *"Then Jesus said to them, "Oh how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem."*

The verse in this passage that always catches me is "were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" As we have so often heard, the disciples in this passage were headed the wrong way, away from Jerusalem, away from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that was soon to come. Jesus appeared to these disciples and through His walking with them and sharing with them, He caused them to do an about face and head back to Jerusalem, the Holy City, by sharing the good news with them.

In conclusion, I see our Fourth Day journey in Cursillo as a challenge to walk along that road to Emmaus with our brothers and sisters, to **be** Christ to them, causing **their** hearts to burn within them so that they too experience **metanoia** and turn back to Jerusalem, the Holy City.

What about you?

Are you up to the journey?

Ultreya!