

**October 2003**

**To: National Mailing Recipients**

**Fm: National Cursillo Center**

**Re: October National Mailing**

**The National Secretariat will meet on November 14-16, 2003 in Dallas, Texas, for its annual scheduled Fall Meeting. A portion of their meeting will be devoted to addressing the efforts that have been made in the selection process of the next National Executive Director. Let's pray for this important chapter of the National Cursillo Movement and for the National Secretariat, the Executive Committee, the National Staff and the entire Cursillo Movement. Please contact your Diocesan Secretariat Lay Director for an application package if you are interested in serving our Movement as National Executive Director. Applications must reach the National Office in Dallas, TX, by November 10, 2003.**

### **Affiliation Fees**

**The National Cursillo Center would like to remind all Diocesan Lay Directors per language group to make sure that their 2003 affiliation fee has been paid. The 2004 affiliation fee \$400.00 is due to the National Cursillo Center by January 31, 2004.**

### **National Mailings**

**The National Mailings are posted on our website at [www.cursillo.org](http://www.cursillo.org). We encourage all Regional Coordinators and Lay Directors to inform Cursillistas of the website in order for them to obtain our Mailings.**

### **Acting Interim National Executive Director**

**Effective October 15, 2003, Mr. Jorge Barcelo, National Spanish-speaking Coordinator, is appointed as Acting Interim National Executive Director of the National Cursillo Center in Dallas, Texas, until a new Executive Director is selected by the National Secretariat. He will be responsible for monitoring and conducting the operations of the National Cursillo Center. His duties include the managing of the financial aspects of the Movement, supervision and organization of office staff and office procedures, coordination of the work of the national coordinators, management of the national publications and other duties as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee**

**(by Jo Tholenaar, Chair of the National Executive Committee).**

## **BEATIFICATION OF MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA, OCTOBER 19, 2003: A SILENT DEFENDER OF THE DIGNITY OF THE POOR**

Countless numbers of people have been transformed by Mother Teresa's apostolic actions, bringing "*Love for Jesus in prayer, love for Jesus in your brothers and sisters, love for Jesus in the poorest of the poor.*"

Born in Skopje, now in Macedonia, on August 26, 1910, the youngest of the children born to Nikola and Drane Bojaxhiu, she was baptized Gonxha (Agnes) Bojaxhiu, received her First Communion at the age of five and a half, confirmed in November 1916. In September 1928, Gonxha joined the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as the Sisters of Our lady of Loreto, in Ireland. There she received the name Sister Mary Teresa after St. Therese of Lisieux. In December, she left for India, arriving in Calcutta on January 6, 1929. After her First Profession of Vows in May 1931, Sister Teresa was assigned to the Loreto Entally Community in Calcutta and taught at St. Mary's School for girls. On May 24, 1937, Sister Teresa made her Final Profession of Vows, becoming, as she said, the "*spouse of Jesus for all eternity*". From that time on she was called Mother Teresa.

In 1944, she became the principal of that school. In 1946, she established the Missionaries of Charity, dedicated to the service of the poorest of the poor. On August 17, 1948, she dressed for the first time in a white, blue-bordered sari and passed through the gates of her beloved Loreto convent to enter the world of the poor. She started each day in communion with Jesus in the Eucharist and then went out, rosary in her hand, to find and serve Him in "*the unwanted, the unloved, the uncared for.*" After some months, she was joined, one by one, by her former students. On Oct. 7, 1950 the new congregation of the Missionaries of Charity was officially established in the Archdiocese of Calcutta. In the early 1960's, Mother Teresa began to send her Sisters to other parts of India, then to Venezuela, Rome, Tanzania, and to every continent, even in many Communist countries, starting in 1980 and continuing through the 1990's.

In addition, Mother Teresa founded The Missionaries of Charity Brothers in 1963, the Contemplative Branch of the Sisters in 1976, the Contemplative Brothers in 1979, and in 1984 the Missionaries of Charity Fathers. Her inspiration was not limited to those with religious vocations. She formed the Co-Workers of Mother Teresa and the Sick and Suffering Co-Workers, people of many faiths and nationalities with whom she shared her spirit of prayer, simplicity, sacrifice and her apostolate of humble works of love. This spirit later inspired the Lay Missionaries of Charity. In 1981, Mother Teresa also began the Corpus Christi Movement for Priests as a "*little way of holiness*" for those desire to share in her charism and spirit. She received the Indian Padmashri Award in 1962, and notably the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, for the "*glory of God and in the name of the poor.*"

By 1997, Mother Teresa's Sisters numbered nearly 4,000 members and were established in 610 foundations in 123 countries of the world. In March 1997 she blessed her newly elected successor as Superior General of the Missionaries of Charity and then made one more trip abroad. After meeting Pope John Paul II for the last time, she returned to Calcutta and spent her final weeks receiving visitors and instructing her Sisters. On September 5 Mother Teresa's earthly life came to an end. She was given the honor of a state funeral by

the Government of India and her body was buried in the Mother House of the Missionaries of Charity. Her tomb became quickly a place of pilgrimage and prayer for people of all faiths, rich and poor alike.

Less than two years of her death, in view of Mother Teresa's widespread reputation of holiness and the favors being reported, Pope John Paul II permitted the opening of her Cause of Canonization. The miraculous cure of a woman with a large ovarian cyst cleared the way for her beatification. The inexplicable cure, testified to by twelve doctors, is attributed to prayers for Mother Teresa's intercession. On December 20, 2002, Our Holy Father approved the decrees of her heroic virtues and miracles. The beatification ceremony is celebrated on October 19, 2003 in conjunction with Pope John Paul II's twenty-fifth anniversary. (Credited Sources: Holy See's Internet Information Services and Liguorian Magazine, Oct. 2003).

**LET'S PRAYERFULLY CELEBRATE OUR HOLY FATHER'S SILVER ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PONTIFICATE, OCTOBER 16, 1978 – 2003: A LIVING WITNESS OF HOPE AND PEACE**

The whole world celebrates Pope John Paul II's Silver Jubilee of his Pontificate of Hope throughout the Month of October, but culminating with the Beatification of Mother Teresa of Calcutta on Oct. 19, and the Special Consistory of the College of Cardinals on Oct. 21 & 22 when he elevates 31 new Cardinals. It's impossible to highlight all the important accomplishments of our Holy Father in our National Newsletter; however, it's valuable to reflect on a few inspiring thoughts shared by Mr. George Weigel, the papal biographer, with Zenit News Agency. Mr. Weigel says he hopes history will remember John Paul II as the great Christian witness of our time. Everything else the Pope did to change the world and revitalize the Church flows from that fact. Mr. Weigel says what Karol Wojtyla learned from the history of Poland and from Poland's witness under Nazi and Communist tyranny was that the Gospel is still the most potent proposal in history, in its capacity to transform individual lives and its capacity to change society. Asked if John Paul II had helped to save Vatican II after the turmoil of the 1960's and 1970's, Mr. Weigel said Vatican II was a council that didn't provide interpretative "keys" to understanding its teaching, unlike other councils, which, for example, wrote creeds, legislated new laws, condemned heresies – all of which provided "keys" to understanding the council in question. Vatican II didn't do any of that. So it has been the task of this Pontificate to provide those "keys": through the Pope's own magisterium, and through his completion of the work of several synods of bishops. According to Weigel, the key tasks of the next Pontificates will be to continue the compelling proclamation of the Gospel, in the image of John Paul II; to allow the Church the opportunity to "digest" the rich magisterium of this great Pontificate; to think very carefully about the challenge of Islamism and develop the capacity to distinguish between genuine Islam and radicalized, politicized Islamic forces; to devise new ways of relating the moral witness of the papacy to the diplomacy of the Holy See. Finally, the Pope has constantly proposed Our Lady as the pattern of all Christian discipleship, that's been his most important Marian theme. John Paul also insists that all true Marian piety is Christ-centered and Trinitarian. As at the wedding feast at Cana, Mary always points beyond herself to her son – "*Do whatever he tells you*", and because her

son is both son of Mary and Son of God, by pointing us to him she points us into the heart of the Trinity itself.

The Pontificate of John Paul II will be remembered for many things: the most traveled pope in history to communicate the Gospel message to the world with conviction and courage: traveling approximately a million miles, visiting over 130 countries with 100 foreign trips; issuing 13 encyclicals; canonizing 476 saints, beatifying over 1,300 individuals; naming more than 200 cardinals; the assassination attempt on his life; the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe; his appeal to the youth of the world; and his stunning intellect. Three popes with longer Pontificates than John Paul's II: Pope Leo XIII (25 years 5 months), Pope Pius IX (31 years 7 months, and St. Peter (estimated 34-37 years).

*“Every generation of America needs to know that freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought”* (John Paul II, at Mass at Orioles Park, Baltimore, MD, October 8th, 1995). (Credited Sources: Zenit News Agency & Liguorian Magazine, Oct. 2003)

### **SIMPLY A SHIFT OF FOCUS!**

Soon after the August 2003 National Mailing was mailed out, the National Staff received many e-mails, telephone calls and letters from Cursillistas throughout the United States and other countries, including Canada, Spain, and Australia. Mostly all of the messages (approximately 98%) were positive, praising Tom Sarg for his integrity, humility and courage. The messages expressed their joy and support to the Cursillo Movement in the USA for its switch of focus, at the advice of Eduardo Bonnin, its founder, still living in Mallorca, Spain. They agree this will help cursillistas to achieve their goals of HOLINESS, FORMATION and EVANGELIZATION more efficiently. There is no change of any sort in the Cursillo Movement at the present time. It is simply a shift of focus. The shift is on the PERSON since *“the principal agent of the Cursillo Movement is always a person”* (FI #178) so the progressively converted person will in turn transform his/her ENVIRONMENTS (FI # 460). The shift is on the MEANS: PIETY, STUDY and ACTION instead of the GOALS: HOLINESS, FORMATION and EVANGELIZATION, and also on BEING Christian more than DOING Christian things. We would like to share some of the responses we received:

Ms. Jennifer Segers, a cursillista from Canada wrote, *“I was just reading the National Mailing you sent out. ... Wow! I'm really excited for your Movement and I applaud you for your courage in bringing this forward to your membership. I'm sure you're probably catching a lot of flak from some quarters and cheers from others. This is an exciting journey the American Movement is embarking on and the rewards will surely be worth the effort.”*

A Cursillo leader in Australia, Mr. Ted Mohr, praised Tom, *“A great document! Please keep me updated with your following topics. I'm looking forward to them. We are just back from New Zealand where we held the First Mens' and Ladies' Cursillos.... the quality and the enthusiasm to make Cursillo grow in New Zealand is really great. Hopefully it will be off to a more authentic start than us. However, we still have a lot of the members who were on team*

*from here (Australia) who haven't yet accepted Eduardo's simple advice. They are hung up on the literature issued by well meaning people."*

**Fr. J. Edward Vogler, a priest from Region IV wrote, "I have read your message in the National Newsletter and I want to encourage you to continue to lead our Movement in the direction you have discovered through your conversations with Eduardo Bonnin. I hope my encouragement might be given a little special consideration since you know that I have been around for a long time and I love Cursillo. I attended the two-week workshop for spiritual advisors in Dallas (1972) with Fr. Juan Capo. Up until the National Encounter in Florida (1999), I attended every National Encounter except the first one in South Bend (1971). I also attended the national meetings for lay coordinators and spiritual advisors before and after you took over."**

**Only one letter was received from a diocesan secretariat stating their dissatisfaction with the August 2003 mailing. One of their concerns was about Eduardo being the sole founder of the Movement. To address this we quote from yet another email received from Fr. Modesto, from Region XI, "I imagine that there will be those who will be angry or upset with you, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat ... But, if Cursillo teaches us anything is to have the courage of our convictions and to live them to their fullest consequence. Please know that many of us stand with you on this! I also wanted to share with you that for me the first 'Conversations' were 'the turning point' everything 'came together' for the first time, though I had been a Cursillista for nearly 20 years and a priest for 10! Suddenly, everything became so much clearer and simple. In the many blessed opportunities that I have had over the years since then to speak, exchange ideas and share with Eduardo Bonnin, I came to your same conclusion: Eduardo is the instrument that the Lord chose to give Cursillo as a gift to His Church. I realized that only Eduardo's unparalleled humility and love prevented him from saying so or taking credit for something he understands is ultimately not his but a gift of the Spirit. For, what can we claim as ours that we have not received from the Lord?"**

**Regarding the differences in the use of terminology and methodology, or in the interpretation of some Cursillo literature, we are convinced that the solution lies where it always has -- in the joyful acceptance of God's message of salvation and the message of Cursillos, in fidelity to Church teaching and to our own personal vocations, in the practice of personal piety, and in special devotion to the Eucharist. Let's keep reminding one another, "The truth will set you free." We are committed to say what is true, not what people want to hear.**

**Eduardo Bonnin, the Movement's founder living in Spain, wrote to Tom, "I've read the writing that you had sent to the communities of Cursillo to explain the reason for a necessity to switch back to the foundational ideas. This has made me delighted and it is certainly evident that a better understanding of the message of Cursillos will contribute to a greater effectiveness. With all the truth and in using the liberty of God's children, I told you that I am grateful that you have kindly defended my poor person, which I know well I do not deserve. However, I do not ignore the truth I have always defended and I will defend it until my death. This truth is really worth defending."**

The Cursillo leaders in the National Secretariat have always encouraged the Movement's diocesan leaders to promote simplicity, to maintain the authenticity in our Movement and to eliminate the non-essential elements in the operation of the Movement, and in particular, in the administration of the 3-Day Cursillo Weekends. The National Secretariat approved a National Policy and a Pastoral Plan in 1999 and 2000 to help the diocesan leaders successfully implement the national guidelines. In the past, as Tom said, we emphasized the goals, especially in our Tripod, because we wanted to stay in line with our Catholic Church in Her efforts to promote the New Way of Evangelization in the secular world. Now, at the advice of our founder, Eduardo Bonnin, we shifted our focus from the ENVIRONMENT to the PERSON, from the GOALS to the MEANS in our Cursillo Tripod like these:

**PIETY → HOLINESS,  
STUDY → FORMATION, and  
ACTION → EVANGELIZATION**

We will focus on the means without playing down our goals. When we say "actions" we imply "apostolic actions". From now on, we will state both the means and the goals in our literature whenever we refer to the Cursillo Tripod, as graphically illustrated above. We do not eliminate anything or anyone. We will simply pay more attention to the means while keeping our eyes on the goals. Mr. Bonnin said we would reach our goals more quickly if we emphasize the means and carry it out correctly.

All changes, though minor, seem very difficult. At the present time, we, the Catholics in the USA, are implementing a few changes in the liturgy in the celebration of the Eucharist: for instance, the congregation rises at the beginning of the celebrant's offertory prayer, remains standing after the 'Our Father' (not holding hands during this prayer) until the individual reception of the Host at Communion, respectfully bows to the Holy Host before receiving it, etc... These changes are only for enhancing our spiritual lives and strengthening our intimate relationship with God. Likewise, the changes in our Cursillo Movement (back to its basics and its simplicity) aim at assisting the cursillistas to effectively live the message of Cursillos in their Fourth Day. Reactions to the changes are not unusual, both positive and negative. Some clergy and laity may not agree with the changes and freely voice their discontent openly, but let us all continue to pray for unity in our Movement that our hearts will be open to the Holy Spirit.

Let's give thanks to God for the gift of Eduardo Bonnin, whose influence and inspiration continue to be felt far beyond the little Island of Mallorca. Let's pray that he lives at least a hundred years!

This is the time for apostolic actions to effect evangelization. We are committed to move on, following the foundational charisma of our Cursillo Movement, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We sincerely appreciate all the responses to our August 2003 National Mailing.

Let us pray, *"Almighty Father, strong is your justice and great is your mercy. Protect us in the burdens and challenges in life. Shield our minds from the distortion of pride and enfold*

*our desire with the beauty of truth. Help us to become more aware of your loving design so that we may more willingly give our lives in service to all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.” (Oct. 10 Daily Mass Opening Prayer).*

### **2003 NATIONAL EVANGELIZATION WALK**

**We apologize to Region 6 and the Diocese of Jefferson City – English-speaking Cursillo Movement who made a donation of \$1,000.00. Our mistake was placing Jefferson City – English language in Region 5 in our September 2003 National Mailing. Please e-mail to [joachimle@juno.com](mailto:joachimle@juno.com) your estimated number of T-Shirts you will need for your 2004 Evangelization Walk, by the end of November 2003. Brochures and T-Shirts will be made available in January 2004. We hope this plan will help the Diocesan Cursillo leaders make arrangements for their Walk as part of their Pastoral Plan to suit their local schedule and weather conditions.**

**Your Servants in Christ,**

**Jorge Barceló – National Spanish-speaking Coordinator  
Joachim Le – National Vietnamese-speaking Coordinator  
Victor Lugo – National English-speaking Coordinator**