

Cursillo THE ARK

Toledo Diocesan Cursillo Mission Statement: Cursillo is a Catholic Lay Movement embraced by the Diocese of Toledo to bring hearts closer to Jesus Christ in order to transform society and be of service to the whole church. It is our mission to form small Christian Communities to deepen Spirituality in ourselves and in others.

September 2020

Application Forms are on the Website: www.cursillo419.org

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Upcoming Cursillo Weekends

Weekends are postponed until Spring 2021

Please share how Christ is working in your life.

Email Nancy Cook at nancy750@bex.net

To My Sisters and Brothers: De Colores!

We seek the Lord in this hectic time -- trying to stay well in the pandemic and avoid passing virus to anyone else. Not being able to meet personally as is a precious gift of Cursillo, so we are learning how to communicate virtually with things like Zoom on top of the extremely useful cell phones we've had for decades! Maybe we're discovering more about divinity and afterlife in heaven: how God sees things all the time. I'm wondering how we will advance as a human race and especially as Catholic Christians! Not sure how long I'm going to be on earth, but I'm aware of the fact that we're so much more connected to the rest of humanity and have the chance to influence so many others than when I was a kid. It absolutely amazes me to use Google and get an answer to my question instantly for something that would take me hours, days, or weeks or more all by myself! And how fast a virus can spread now that we can fly. Sure, beats the horse and buggy days doesn't it???

And currently we're experiencing something we've had for centuries but seems more challenging now than usual, and that's our politics in an election year. There are several values at stake that address our faith and provide opportunities for teaching wisdom, right and wrong, far-reaching choices, values, and behavior. I really treasure our democracy as government. It causes us humans to grow through dialogue, discussion, cooperation, truth searching and friendship: standing up strong for what is right and strong against what is wrong. Then the value of forgiveness and reconciliation pretty regularly!!!! Punishment is a tool but must be used wisely -- and that's where our gift of faith can be so important. How do we figure this all out: pro-life, racism, detention, medical choices, etc.,etc.

That's where Cursillo comes in: learning, growing (individually and together), getting the Good News of the Gospel out to as many as we can, assisting and supporting one another (friends and enemies!) in doing this, turning the other cheek when necessary, respecting law enforcement well, and prison ministry. The lists go on. I'm seeking to congratulate and strongly encourage our efforts (especially as we learn to use Zoom!) and want to get together as much as possible -- wisely.

De Colores,
Fr. Skip

From the desk of Fr. Jim,

My beloved sisters and brothers in Christ, who are in the Church of Christ Jesus, which is in Toledo, for those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus through the Cursillo Movement and who are called to be saints; and for those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to God, always for you because of the grace of God which has been given to you in Christ Jesus... (adapted from 1st Corinthians.)

In spite of the Covid thing we begin September, the **ninth month** of the year in the modern-day Gregorian **calendar** and its predecessor, the Julian **calendar**. The **month** kept its original **name** from the Roman **calendar** where it **was** the seventh **month**. September means "seven" in Latin. The Romans began their calendar with March that is how September becomes the 'seventh' month.

For many families, September also means the end of summer and the beginning of the school year. Many schools are trying to reopen with students present while still maintaining on-line learning from home or some hybrid model.

Perhaps this is a good time then to look at our own STUDY, the second leg of our Cursillo methodology.

These days offer us both time and a plethora of possibilities to study our faith. The St Augustine Institute's FORUM has so much available for us. Bishop Barron's WORD on FIRE also offers courses on-line. Matter of fact, there is so much available to us, one hardly knows where to begin.

So, as the school year begins develop a plan or curriculum for yourself. Some courses are eight of ten sessions. If you do one a week, that takes care of two months. Maybe pick a Book of the Bible to read and study. Many Bibles have an introduction to the particular Book at the beginning. Perhaps the life of a saint. There are a number of them during the month of September: St Gregory the Great (3rd); the Nativity of Mary (8th) and Her Holy Name (12th); Peter Claver (9th); the Exultation of the Holy Cross (14th) and Our Lady of Sorrows (15th); Corneilius and Cyprian (16th); Robert Bellarmine (17th); St Januarius (19th) Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist (21st); Padre Pio (23rd); Cosmos and Damian (26th); St Wenceslaus and St Lawrence Ruiz and Companions (28th); Michael, Gabriel and Raphael -the Archangels(29th). An impressive list to learn about.

Our own **School of Leaders** on Saturday, the 19th of September from 9 am till noon. It is a ZOOM meeting on-line so there is no limit to the number of participants. Come join us again for the first time. One of our studies is the Book *His Way* by David Knight. It's an oldy but goodie and will good for all of us to (re) - read. His book is about knowing Jesus Christ: a complete but simple plan for making the person of Jesus Christ a living reality in your life, in your family, in the world you live and work in. "if laypersons ever began to bear witness to Christ in everything they do, regardless of the risk, then the Kingdom will really be at hand." Fr Knight.

I leave you with a little prayer from the Christophers.

Dear God, help me to focus on the good in others; to find the positive qualities in my neighbor, my family, my community, my church and even in myself.

Help me to focus more on the good in life and in Your power than on what seems wrong in our world.

Help me to trust that as I focus on the good, I can more easily connect to Your hope and joy, and be inspired with solutions to change things for the better,

God, help me to focus on the good that I might be a greater channel of Your light and peace in our world.

Amen.

What are some of the qualities of your life for which you are grateful? I thank God for.....

"God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)

May you all be blessed and BE a blessing to all you meet.

Fr Jim

Lay Director (Each month one of our Lay Director's will write an article)

Hello, fellow Christians on the journey!

John Lyons wrote of his experience of the Cursillo Encounter held virtually on July 24-25, I would like to share some of my insights and observations as well.

I appreciated that, since it was a Cursillo gathering, we all had lived a Cursillo weekend: there were understandings that we all had. There were goals we all strive to attain. However, there is always much to learn, as we all know. No one on this earth has "arrived": there are always opportunities for new or enhanced comprehension of what our Lord is calling us to do and be.

Father Mark Seiker, National Cursillo Spiritual Advisor, gave the Spiritual Keynote address at the beginning of the Encounter. There is so much wisdom from those who have gone before us in faith. It is important to read what the saints have written. Father Mark mentioned several saints.

The thoughts from the writings of St. Ambrose really struck me:

"Let your door stand open to receive Him, offer Him a welcome in your mind. Throw wide the gate of your heart."

And from St. Augustine encouraging us to fill our "containers" with what is good, releasing what is not good to make room for more of Jesus:

"Suppose you are going to fill some holder or container, and you know you will be given a large amount. Then you set about stretching your sack or wineskin or whatever it is. Why? Because you know the quantity you will have to put in it and your eyes tell you there is not enough room. By stretching it, therefore, you increase the capacity of the sack, and this is how God deals with us. Simply by making us wait he increases our desire, which in turn enlarges the capacity of the soul, making it able to receive what is to be given to us."

And from Thomas à Kempis' Imitation of Christ (which I admit that I have never read, but that is going to change):

"The man who lives without Jesus is the poorest of the poor."

I was able to participate in a breakout session with other attendees from our own Region V as well as from other regions. In our discussion, I heard of a book by Daniel Mueggenborg called "Come Follow Me: Discipleship Reflections on the Sunday Gospel Readings". There is a book for each liturgical year.

Based on the enthusiastic recommendation from a lay director from another region, I bought the book for our current year, Year A. The first week I had it, the reflections provided me with new insights into the Gospel for the Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time. This is when Jesus walked on the water, and Peter's attempt to do the same. 3 things I learned from this book were:

1. Jesus forced the disciples to go without Him to the other side. I had never noticed that. The explanation goes further. In the midst of their aloneness, the reading tells us that the disciples are literally tortured by the sea and winds (similar to the situation that the early Church faced). That they are in a boat is symbolic since the boat was an early symbol of the Church. Even now, the central portion of a traditional church is called the "nave", a Latin word that means boat.
2. It is at the darkest part of the night when the struggle is most difficult for the disciples, the darkest hour of the entire night. It is then that Jesus comes to them. He is with them just as was promised.
3. The reflection goes on to say that "Sometimes, the trials we face teach us a lot about ourselves and God. Sometimes we only discover our potential when we have to utilize every resource for our survival."

How true that last point is for us now. I think that I was initially looking at the pandemic restrictions as a necessary, but quite temporary, change in my life and routine. I was motivated to do some organizing (much still needs to be done!), and just accepting this time for what it seemed: a brief blip on the landscape of my life.

As the pandemic continues to limit our activities and interactions, it has been harder for me to get motivated. (Grasping the process of knitting is not going well.) The underlying uncertainty of how life will look in the future, when some sense of "normalcy" (whatever that is) will return, what I'm "supposed" to be learning during this time, all weigh on me. Fortunately, I know that GOD is in control. Everything is His. I am His. All I have and do is His. HE knows how this will all work out. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

De Colores!

Kathy Otermat

Your Brother and Sister in Christ,

John Lyons
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Pre-Cursillo

“Who do you say that I am?” Jesus asked this question of the apostles and continues to ask it of us today. Who is Jesus to you?

A couple of weeks ago, we heard Jesus ask the apostles just this question in the Gospel, “Who do the people say that the Son of Man is?” They replied with several ideas: John the Baptist; Elijah; Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Then Jesus asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” This is when Peter replies, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” What an amazing statement! It has made me think of who Jesus is to me. There could be so many answers, but for me, it comes down to Jesus is the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity. He is here if I need him, he is present in everything I do, but I have to let Him be there with me and for me. Since this pandemic started, it has given me more time to consider my faith, and who Jesus is to me.

What is it that we hope for our Cursillo candidates? Why do we invite them to live a Cursillo weekend? It is to know Jesus better, and to have that personal relationship with him.

How do you answer Jesus’ question, “Who do you say that I am?”

If you have any candidate applications to send in, please be sure to do so. We do not have the Spring dates firmed up yet, but hopefully in the near future.

Have a great September!

MaryAnn Hohman
Pre-Cursillo Chairperson
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Make a Friend – Be A Friend – Bring a Friend to Christ

From the Cursillo Chair....

Dear Cursillo Family,

These last 5 months have presented many trials and heartbreaks. The other day my co-worker and I were discussing a very upsetting recent news item and I said, “How much lower can things go?”. She responded, “I don’t even want to think about it.” We are eager to do the things we love with the people we most adore. When preparation began for the Spring 2020 Ladies Team – which was originally actually the Fall 2019 Ladies Team – which then became the Fall 2020 Ladies Team – which then quickly transitioned to the Spring 2021 Ladies Team --- I looked forward to being on the team, but moaned inwardly (and outwardly to some people) I didn’t want to have to attend all those team meetings. At this moment there is nothing I long to do more than to attend a team meeting and be hugged to death by my “sisters”!

Like most of you, we have seen God's hand in many things; and accepted this time He has given us to slow down, be still, and look to His Infinite goodness. There have been some incredibly challenging things put in all our paths, but a lot of goodness has been placed there as well. We keep working to weed through it all and nurture only the good things popping up. We are also looking for people who are nurturing the idea of **working a team** in the near future. Or far future. Or whatever future is in our future! However that works out, **it might be the time you have been waiting for to work on a team. Let us know!** We are ready and waiting for you and your application!

We'd like to finish with a little food for thought; an excerpt from the book "Arise from Darkness" by Fr. Benedict Groeschel. He was a Franciscan friar who frequently appeared on EWTN. The excerpt was written by author, Andrew Armstrong. In my reflection I thought of how perhaps I am too embroiled in all the negativity that is constantly swirling around me at this time. In truth I should be striving to be more aware of the goodness of Jesus and the beauty of His cross. If THAT becomes my focus, the evil I perceive to be swirling around me might go to its' proper place. Away from our world.

"The Parable of the Cross"

"All the people who had ever lived were assembled before the THRONE of God. They were a sullen lot. They all had complaints and they began to murmur amongst themselves. Who does God think He is, anyway?

One of the groups was composed of Jews who had suffered persecution. Some had died in gas chambers and concentrations camps—and they grumbled; how could God know of the suffering they had been through? Another group was slaves – black men and women with brands on their brows, great hosts of them, who had suffered indignities at the hands of those who called themselves "God's people". What could God know about their plight? There were long lines of refugees driven from their lands – homeless people who had nowhere to lay their heads. And there were poor people, who had never on this earth been able to make ends meet. There were sick ones and sufferers of all kinds, hundreds of groups, each with a complaint against God. What could He know about what human beings were forced to endure?

From each group a leader was chosen and a commission appointed to draw up the case against the Almighty Himself. Instead of God judging them, they begin Judging Him. And the verdict was that God should be sentenced to live on earth as a human being with no safeguards to protect His Divinity. And there was a bill of particulars.

Let Him be born a Jew. Let Him be born poor. Let even the legitimacy of His birth be suspect. Give Him hard work to do and poverty that He might know the pinch. Let Him be rejected by His people. Give Him for friends only those who are held in contempt. Let Him be betrayed by one of His friends. Let Him be indicted on false charges, tried before a prejudiced jury, convicted by a cowardly judge. Let Him be abandoned by His friends and see what it is to be terribly alone. Let Him be tortured and then let Him die at the hands of His enemies.

As each group announced its' sentence on God, roars of approval went up from the THRONE. When the last had finished, the raucous noise had become almost deafening ... and then everyone turned toward the THRONE. And suddenly heaven was filled with shocked penitent silence. For where there had been a THRONE, now could only be seen a CROSS."

Love and Prayers
The Huffmans

School of Leaders...

Our next School of Leaders meeting will be at 9:00 AM Sept. 19, 2020, via Zoom. Invitations will be sent out Thurs. Sept. 17, 2020. If you plan to attend, please send your request to karenbonen@yahoo.com by Wed. Sept. 16, 2020.

We will have Scripture reading and reflection presented by John Welch.

Fr. Ed (Skip) Littelmann will have the Spiritual Advisor's presentation, Introduction and Chapter 1 of His Way, by David Knight. (This is the new Spiritual Advisor's book that we will be using beginning this month). John Bonen will be giving the Lay Presentation, Introduction to Study of the Charism. (This is also the new Lay presentation book we will be using beginning this month).

At this time, we still have no new Rector for School of Leaders. Do you want to become more involved in our movement? Do you love to share Christ with others? Consider stepping up to assume the position of Rector of School of Leaders. If you would like more information, please let us know. We would be happy to share our experience with you. You can email us at karenbonen@yahoo.com.

The tongue is a flame of fire. It exists among our members as a world of malice, defiling the whole body and setting the entire course of our lives on fire. James 3:6

On October 8, 1871, two great fires occurred in the Midwest. The Great Chicago Fire killed 250 people and left one-quarter of Chicago homeless. The other one, the Great Peshtigo Fire in the forests of Northern Michigan and Wisconsin affected 1.5 million acres and killed approximately fifteen hundred people. Fire can be devastating and fast moving and can unleash terrible power. So, when the writer James compares the tongue to a fire, it makes perfect sense. We have all seen it happen way too often. What seemed to start out as a friendly conversation becomes a major disagreement with hurtful, damaging words and lingering consequences. How often have we seen a simple disagreement smolder ever so slightly and then combust and ignite the situation into an incredible inferno of anger? Our words reflect what is in our hearts.

"As (a man) thinketh in his heart, so is he". Jesus says something similar: "Whatever is in your heart determines what you say".

Be slow to speak, especially when you are angry, or your emotions are racing. It only takes a few inflammatory words to destroy a relationship forever. Put out the fire of angry words before saying them. If someone is angry and screams at you, maintain your cool. Do your best to douse the situation with your silence.

May the fire of the Holy Spirit burn in each of you.

God Bless

John & Karen Bonen, Rectors

Team (Carol & George Miller, Joan Alge, Sharon DeCant)

The next book selection for School of Leaders will be "His Way" by David Knight. Please order your book from Amazon or through the Cursillo National Website: www.natl-cursillo.org

Fourth Day

Hello and De Colores,

As you are all aware, the Diocese of Toledo Cursillo Movement decided this past March 2020, to move the Cursillo Retreats to Our Lady of Consolation (OLC), in Carey, OH. The movement has used several facilities throughout the years of it being in the Toledo Diocese, from what we understand, including OLC in Carey, OH. Interestingly enough, with hearing of the move back to OLC Carey, OH, we've heard some fellow Cursillistas say "we're going home", with excitement in their voices. John and I must agree, for us OLC is home!

In March 2019, John and I found out, quite accidentally that the Pilgrim House on the grounds of OLC was going to discontinue all retreats as of the end of June 2019. I still remember the disbelief, disappointment and defeat I felt upon hearing this from one of the Friars. I had made my TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) there in the 80's and worked several TEC's over the years. John and I were working TEC together now, my family and friends had been involved in TEC for many years and this is only one of the many retreats held at OLC. This Holy place... where so many had, had their first encounter with Christ, and many after, was important to so many!

This was the beginning of a new journey John and I knew we were called to take! We felt a calling from God and all we could say was yes! Through our prayer and discernment, the prayer of a few close family and friends, and some pretty amazing signs from God and His amazing Spirit we took a leap of faith and went to the Diocese with our idea and plan to keep the Pilgrim House/ Retreat House open. Thankfully and by God's grace the Diocese and the Parish of OLC welcomed our plan (lol we all know who's plan it really was!) and have embraced our calling to serve.

While breaking bread with some wonderful close friends, who had been praying us through the whole process, we talked about some names for our new adventure. After, John and I came up with the name "Spirit Fed". His Spirit feeds us all, in the Eucharist but also in other ways; music, food, scripture, breaking bread together, prayer, ministry.... we all need and yearn to be fed by Christ. And this is the ministry of Spirit Fed Services, LLC.

We, John and I, are so thankful and humbled to serve, not only the Cursillo Movement, but all who yearn for and want to grow closer to Christ! Our Lady of Consolation, The Retreat Center and Spirit Fed Services, are so very excited to have Cursillo as a guest in our home!

Please pray for us in our new ministry as we continue to pray for all of our Cursillo family and the Movement! Looking forward to welcoming you all soon!

In Christ,
The Reinhart's
Spiritfedservices@gmail.com

Facilities

I would like to give a tremendous THANK YOU to two of the most generous and giving people I know. I know many generous and giving people, but this couple came to the aid of two older desperate people, Therese and Me.

On Thursday, August 27th the move from the Pines to Carey came about. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH STUFF WE HAVE???? We have a full-size Chrysler van and an Equinox crammed to the roofs, that's how much! And when we arrived at Carey, we were met by a robust gentleman who did most of the unloading. The angels sent to us by God were Kathy and Mike Huffman in Fremont and John Reinhart patiently waiting for us at our new/old home for the Cursillo weekends.

We can never thank them enough for their much-needed help. Next, I want to inventory all the items to make the future teams to know what is on hand for their use.

DeColores

Mike and Therese Cherry

Prayervine:

Fr. Gene Homrich - rest in peace, Joanne - bedsores, Donna - cancer, friend - leukemia, daughter - blood infection, Mike K. - back surgery, Angela - dislocated shoulder, Mike & Joanie Wise- Mike's cancer, Bill - fever, 2 negative Covid tests, for St. Michael Parish in Findlay, all priests - all their needs, school admins & parents making decisions.

Please send your prayer requests to Jane Distel at

prayersaregoingup@gmail.com.

Palanca Requests...

Hello Cursillistas,

Praying everyone is staying well and working on your palanca for the Cursillos trying to take place in our world. Your palanca can be as simple as a daily prayer to the rosary to fasting to whatever sacrifice you wish to offer. In Colossians 1: 9-14, Paul explains why and how and what to pray for one another. What a comforting thought that our brothers and sisters in Christ do the same for us.

DeColores Jan Stainbrook

Upcoming Cursillos registered for September 2020

9/17/2020	9/20/2020	Mens Cursillo (English)	New York, NY
9/23/2020	9/26/2020	Men's 9 (Italian)	acqui terme, Italy
10/30/2020	11/1/2020	Women's 88 (Portuguese)	Valença, Brasil
10/29/2020	11/1/2020	Women's Cursillo (English)	New York, NY

Ultreya

IN KEEPING WITH TOLEDO DIOCESE Reopening Policies- ALL ULTREYA'S ARE CANCELLED THIS MONTH

'What a shame it would be if someone came looking for Christ and only found us! But what a blessing if they came looking for us and found Christ!!'

NATIONAL CURSILLO INFORMATION:

www.natl-cursillo.org Read about Cursillo news, palanca requests from around the world, or read the national newsletter.

CURSILLO WEBSITE: www.cursillo419.org

Go here to view news of upcoming events, read the current month's Ark or download forms.



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