

ORGANISMO MUNDIAL DE CURSILLOS DE CRISTIANDAD



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EDITORIAL

Africa: A Missionary Dream Beginning to Bear Fruit

Dear Cursillistas,

The Cursillo Movement Expansion Project on the African continent is already beginning to bear its first fruits. In 2026, this missionary dream finally began to become a reality.

After establishing contact with our African brothers and sisters, we held an in-person meeting from March 14 to 22 with representatives from South Africa, Benin, Ghana, Lesotho, Togo, and Uganda. The meeting took place in Cape Town, one of South Africa's three capital cities and the seat of its National Parliament.

This meeting represented a decisive step in the effort to reactivate and strengthen the MCC structure in Africa, whose continental coordination had remained interrupted for many years.

With joy and gratitude to God, we have already begun to reap the first fruits of this mission. Following our meeting, the Archdiocese of Durban, South Africa, held its first Cursillo of this new phase. New Cursillos are also scheduled in the Diocese of Atakpamé and the Archdiocese of Lomé, the capital of Togo in West Africa.

These developments renew our hope and confirm that, when we walk together in faith, friendship, and prayer, God opens new paths for evangelization.

We invite all Cursillistas throughout the world to remain united in this mission, offering their prayers and palancas so that the MCC may continue to grow, become stronger, and bring the message of Christ to other countries and communities across the African continent.

May the Holy Spirit accompany every new step along this journey and cause the joy of the Gospel and the charism of Cursillo to flourish throughout Africa.

De Colores! Viva la Vida!

Adair J. Batista

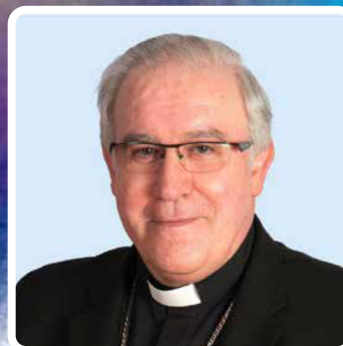
OMCC Vice-President





WORDS FROM THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Challenges as the New School Year Begins



We're starting a new academic year. The month of September brings us back to the regular rhythm of our parish and diocesan communities, as well as that of our Cursillos in Christianity Movement. The Ultreyas, Group Meetings, Leadership Schools, and Secretariats are back; so are the gatherings, projects, and apostolic tasks. Each new academic year is a call from God, an opportunity to renew our response and ask ourselves what the Lord wants from us at this specific moment in history. And the times we are living in are not easy. Our world continues to be wounded by wars and conflicts that seem to become entrenched, by violence and terrorism, by forced migration, hunger, and poverty. Added to this are natural disasters that leave death and destruction in their wake, and so many personal situations of suffering that never find a place in the media. This landscape could lead us to discouragement, to thinking that our strength is too limited, and that there is little we can do. However, this is precisely where the response of faith begins, because our hope does not rest in our own strength, but in Jesus Christ. Saint Paul experienced this powerfully: "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:10).

Pope Leo XIV, during his apostolic journey to Spain last June, has left us a true evangelization program for this new year. Already on the flight to Madrid, he simply explained the meaning of an apostolic visit: to meet with the faithful, to celebrate the faith, and to "proclaim the message of Jesus Christ"—a message addressed not only to believers but to all of society. Here we find something deeply connected to the charism of Cursillos: Christ must be at the center. We do not proclaim an ideology, an ethic, or a set of values. We proclaim a Person. We proclaim that Jesus Christ lives, loves every person, has given his life for us, and opens up a new horizon for our existence.

In Madrid, the Holy Father emphasized that many men and women of our time, though seemingly distant from God, carry within them a deep thirst "for meaning, truth, belonging, and hope." And in response to that thirst, the Church must offer the treasure she has received: Jesus Christ (Meeting with the Bishops of Spain, Madrid, June 8, 2026). This is precisely the realm of the initial proclamation. There are many people who may have received the sacraments, who retain some Christian connection, or who occasionally participate in certain celebrations, but who

need to encounter Christ— personally. He also invited us to accept that today "one can return to the faith or come to know it for the first time as an adult," and for that reason, we must be prepared "to welcome new beginnings not as an exception, but as the rule of the mission" (Meeting with the Diocesan Community of Madrid, June 8, 2026). For us, Cursillistas, these words have a special resonance. Cursillos was founded precisely to foster a personal encounter with Christ and then to help that encounter transform our communities.

How, then, do we begin this new course? First of all, with confidence. I like to return to the scene at the Sea of Galilee. Peter and his companions have worked all night and caught nothing. They are tired. The sensible thing would be to pull in their nets and leave. But Jesus says, "Put out into deep water and let down your nets for a catch" (Lk 5:4). Peter does not fully understand, but he trusts: "At your word, I will let down the nets" (Lk 5:5). We, too, may experience weariness. Surely our Ultreyas could be more numerous, our Schools more vibrant, our groups more persevering. Perhaps we find that evangelizing is more difficult today. But the answer cannot be nostalgia or pessimism. It is time to cast our nets once more, trusting in the Lord's word.

Second, we begin in communion. No one evangelizes alone. The Second Vatican Council teaches that "the pilgrim Church is missionary by nature" (Ad gentes, 2). We are sent as the Church. That is why we need to take special care of friendship, Group Meetings, Ultreyas, Schools, communion with our pastors, and unity within the Movement. Pope Leo XIV has reminded us once again that the Church's strength does not come from the greatness of her resources, but from the holiness of her children, from communion, and from the humble fidelity of those who allow themselves to be led by the Spirit (cf. Meeting with the Bishops of Spain, June 8, 2026).

And finally, we begin with missionary joy. We cannot keep to ourselves what we have received. A Christian who has truly encountered Christ ultimately feels the need to share it. As St. Paul said: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Cor 9:16). An exciting journey lies ahead of us—not because the difficulties will disappear, but because Christ will continue to walk with us. We will need to pray more, nurture our interior life more carefully, offer personal accompaniment, go out to meet those who have drifted away, strengthen our Schools and Ultreyas, promote the Cursillos, and live our fourth day with authenticity. Above all, we will have to return again and again to what is essential: knowing Christ, loving him, following him, and proclaiming him.

We begin the year guided by Mary, precisely on the feast of her Nativity. She teaches us to trust, to listen, and to set out on our journey. Let us place our projects and our apostolates in her hands. It is time to rise up. It is time to return to our communities. It is time to seek out those who are far away. It is time for the first proclamation, for friendship, for witness, and for mission. The Lord tells us once again: "Cast your nets." Let us do so, trusting in his word.

¡De Colores!

José Ángel Saiz Meneses
Archbishop of Seville and
Spiritual Advisor to the OMCC





NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT



In recent times, the concept of FORMATION has changed significantly. Perhaps initially at the University—my own workplace—but also across all sectors of society. There is a greater emphasis on acquiring skills rather than accumulating knowledge, and there is an enormous diversity of formative resources and methodologies available, driven by new information and communication technologies and, more recently, by artificial intelligence—the ubiquitous AI. Human formation, in general, is understood through approaches, nuances, and possibilities that are much broader than before.

This, of course, also holds true in the realm of Christian formation. The basic concept remains, of course: formation is a continuous process of maturation that, as St. John Paul II noted in **Christifideles Laici**, leads to a deeper union with Christ and a greater capacity to live out one's vocation in the midst of the world. But in this process, greater emphasis is placed on the mystagogical, experiential, and lived dimension (*Evangelii gaudium* 166), and there are many more possibilities, resources, and tools available.



The same could be said of our Movement, in our concrete reality today. We are called to bear more fruit; we are called to live and foster more life—in our groups, in our Ultreyas, in our communities. And we NEED to be formed for this. Formation is an essential dimension of our journey—as Christians, as Cursillistas, and as leaders of the MCC. We know this; we repeat it to ourselves; we have internalized it—at least in

theory. But perhaps, in light of this rethinking of the concept of formation, we need to reconsider it a bit...



First, to rekindle a greater “sense of urgency” regarding formation and a clearer desire to continue growing. As we’ve always said, borrowing the words of the philosopher Seneca, not to know more, but to be better. To live more fully, to bear more fruit, to maintain that dynamic so characteristic of us—the “go further” (*Ultreya!*)...

And second, to reassess the formative resources at our disposal. Today we have many new resources and possibilities, especially thanks to the Internet: websites, online learning platforms, document repositories... Through social media, we’re bombarded with an enormous amount of tweets, Reels, podcasts, and videos... And now, with the support of AI—which holds enormous potential but also requires a great deal of discernment and critical thinking... All of this can add up; it can all be useful. But it can lead us into a dangerous dynamic: receiving a lot of information in a very short time; quickly jumping from one piece of content to another without pausing long enough on any of them; getting used to brief messages, catchy phrases, outlines, and simple infographics...

And our Christian formation requires, precisely, time, attention, and depth. It involves a personal effort and work of reflection, internalization, and assimilation. It demands something that our digital culture tends to undermine: personal reading—calm, patient, unhurried, and reflective. Today, READING has perhaps greater formative value than ever before, because it provides us with something that other media do not offer. Perhaps one of the challenges of our time—and within our Movement—is precisely to rediscover the ability to read. Setting aside regular time for a good book, a Church document, a work on spirituality, or Scripture itself... This is what will allow us to develop critical thinking, expand our capacity for discernment, and form our own convictions. To live and to make life possible—for that is what it's all about.

Alvaro Martínez Moreno
President of OMCC
Diocese of Córdoba (Spain)



ON THE WAY TO THE WORLD MEETING

Seville 2027



Dear Lord,

With hearts overflowing with gratitude, we thank You for the priceless gift of Cursillo. Through its beautiful method and the friendships born along the journey, You have drawn us into a deeper, more intimate relationship with You. In Your loving presence, we have discovered a friendship that enriches every part of our lives and anchors our hearts in Your grace.

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the companionship of our brothers and sisters, You have invited us to be instruments of Your love. Time and again, You have allowed us to accompany others on their path toward You. Each soul touched by Your grace becomes a new song of joy within our hearts, and for this privilege we give You endless thanks.

Lord, You know how wonderfully Cursillo renews our enthusiasm and keeps the flame of faith burning brightly. Among its greatest blessings are the gatherings that unite Cursillistas from every corner of the world. Though we come from different nations, languages, and cultures, we discover that love, friendship, and faith speak a common language. United in Christ, we become one family. With great excitement and hope, we now look toward the World Encounter in Seville in April 2027. Even now, You are preparing hearts for this sacred occasion. We trust that the Holy Spirit is already calling those whom You desire to be there, and that each person invited carries a unique purpose within Your divine plan.

Grant us the generosity to answer that call with courage and joy. Help us to come not as spectators, but as willing servants, eager to follow the example of Jesus. Remind us that we do not journey merely for ourselves, but for the transformation of our environments and for those "far-away" souls whom You long to embrace. When doubts arise, and we feel unprepared or

inadequate, whisper once again the truth that has always sustained Your people: with You beside us, all things are possible. Truly, You and I together are an overwhelming majority.

Lord, may this World Encounter be far more than an event. May it become a sacred encounter with You. Walk among us, dwell within us, and unite us ever more deeply in prayer, friendship, and



mission. From our earliest preparations to the gathering itself, and long after we return home, may Your blessings continue to flow abundantly.

May the bonds we strengthen, the prayers we share, and the inspirations we receive bear lasting fruit for the mission of Cursillo and for the renewal of the world around us. May our lives reflect the vision so often encouraged for our Movement by

Pope Francis: a Church that goes forth, bearing fruit through faith, friendship, and joyful witness.

And may everything we do, every step we take, and every grace we receive become a hymn of thanksgiving, giving glory to You before all people.
Amen.

Alfred Bongsi

Representative of the Asia-Pacific International Group





PHOTO GALLERY





NORTH AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN GROUP NACG

Best wishes to Barbados and other Caribbean Islands as they endeavor to revive and rebuild their movements throughout the Dioceses in the Caribbean.

Reviving Cursillo Movements

To revive and reorganize the Cursillo Movement in Barbados a team of Cursillistas from the NACG and Grenada traveled to the Island and conducted a Cursillo de Cursillo leadership workshop from May 22-25, 2026.

There were thirteen participants at the workshop: ten from Barbados; two from St Vincent and the Grenadines and one from St Lucia

The rector was NACG president Steve Krause, assisted by Caribbean Coordinator Sherma Charles., Fr Andrew Barnard served as Spiritual Advisor.

Other team members Were Cecilia St Louis Donald, Jean Mitchell and Margaret Joseph from Grenada, Muriel Brideau from Canada and Terri DiBacco from US.

The Rector followed the schedule of activities for the three-day CDC leader development workshop beginning with a team Mass with chief Celebrant Fr Andrew Barnard (Spiritual Advisor). Team members prepared for nine months building a Christian community and passionately delivered Rollos followed by table discussion and questions. There were vibrant and lively singing and culture sharing activities in the evenings that helped with a climate of joyful friendship and fun, characteristic of the Cursillo Movement.

The leaders from the islands were open and hungry for the truth and able to have meaningful and fruitful discussions about the content. The Holy Spirit was present at the entire CdC weekend which was Pentecost. The hospitality of Barbados Cursillistas, the facility, the open hearts and minds of participants and team created the right atmosphere of learning and sharing to enable revival of the Cursillo movements.

Looking at the way forward, the team engaged the participants in brainstorming to develop action steps to revive the Cursillo Movement in the respective dioceses. The team also gave some advice and shared best practices on the way forward. The next phase of revival will focus on St. Vincent and the Grenadines followed by Trinidad and Tobago. Thanks to the NACG Executive and OMCC for their assistance and collaborative effort.

Bishop Neil Scantlebury (a Cursillista) graced the team and participants with his presence throughout the weekend activities. He celebrated Mass with the group, made brief remarks endorsing his support for the reviving the Cursillo Movement in Barbados.





LATINOAMERICAN GROUP GLCC

Leaders, don't wait any longer! Respond enthusiastically to the Lord's call Pope Leo XIV

These words from the Holy Father inspire us to renew ourselves, to rekindle the thoughts and attitudes we had during that first encounter we had with our Lord.

Thus, with that hope of moving forward together, three regional meetings have been planned and will be held, God willing. The first will take place in Cuenca, Ecuador, from September 10 to 13; the second in San Salvador, El Salvador, from October 8 to 12; and the third in Paraguay from November 26 to 29. United in prayer and open to fellowship, discernment, and learning, a program was designed with the following objectives:

- To share each country's progress toward the 2025–2026 goals.
- Group reflection on the current situation of the MCC in the region
- Follow-up on the agreements from the 18th Latin American Meeting held in the Dominican Republic in 2025
- Analyze essential topics for the MCC related to the method and Fundamental Ideas 3
- Meditation on the Word of God.

In this way, we not only fulfill the provisions of the Statutes but also remain united in the joy and relevance of our realities.



In addition, a formation program continued to address topics of general interest and to foster personal and community growth through meaningful content for leaders.

A “Cursillo” was held in Ceja, Colombia, with the participation of the GLCC team: Guillermo Mejía, Elisa Boo, Gustavo Quiñónez F., and Juan Rafael Reyes. In coordination with the National Secretariat of the MCC in Colombia, led by its president, Martha Cecilia Álvarez, this wonderful gathering took place.

We connected via Zoom for the monthly talk: “The Skills and Attitudes of a Leader,”

presented by Ana Pompeya Castellanos Trigo, president of the National Secretariat of Bolivia, which provided clear insights into attitude and aptitude as essential qualities for every leader.

The president of the National Secretariat of Honduras, Juan Emilio Aguirre Vides, delivered the talk “The Commitment of the MCC Leader,” which was vital for all members of the School to renew their personal commitment to the Lord.

The talk presented by Yolanda Ruiz, secretary of the GLCC, reflected on the “Natural and Supernatural Qualities of a Leader”—7 natural and 4 supernatural qualities that must be cultivated daily.

The topic presented by our speaker Raúl González Hurtado, a leader of the MCC in Córdoba, Spain, was “One Gospel for a Changing World.” He began by saying: “There are moments in history when it seems that everything is changing at once. I believe that we are living through one of them. Artificial intelligence, social media, the crisis of the family, loneliness, secularization, and profound cultural changes seem to be transforming the world at a dizzying speed.”

In this way, and with the participation of leaders from the 18 Latin American countries, we connected and spent time together from a distance yet with a sense of closeness and fellowship.

May all who join the world of colors be blessed.





GECC

EUROPEAN GROUP GECC

Executive Committee Meeting of the European Cursillo Movement in Gazzada Schianno

From July 9 to 12, 2026, the Executive Committee of the European Cursillo Movement (GECC) held its meeting in Gazzada Schianno, Italy.

Preparations for this encounter took nearly a year. At the venue near Milan, 35 representatives from 10 countries (Croatia, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and Ukraine) finally gathered to discern together the path of our Movement amidst the challenges of the 21st century. As our theme, we chose John 13:35: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Since Europe is rich not only in temperament and history, but also in linguistic diversity, discussions were conducted in our official languages: English and Spanish. To ensure that translation did not take away precious time from personal sharing, we made every effort to prepare most materials in both languages ahead of time.

Conversation in the Spirit



In the small groups, we followed the synodal method of "Conversation in the Spirit." At its heart, after reading the introduction, the group deepens its thoughts in prayer, asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Following each contribution, reflections are again born in the silence of prayer. After further sharing, the group prepares a collective summary, which we then shared during the plenary sessions. Seeking friendship and unity gave

immense strength to us all. We experienced how answers born in prayer radiate acceptance and love. Our joint work now continues by compiling these detailed summaries into a final document.

Following the reports from the countries and the GECC Secretariat, we discussed three main topics using the synodal method:

1. The Role of the GECC – Unity in Diversity
2. Challenges of the MCC in the 21st Century – Responses
3. The Future of Cursillo (Youth)

We shared the conclusions of our group work in plenary sessions, which formed the foundation of our final document.

Daily Holy Masses provided spiritual nourishment: we celebrated together in Italian on Thursday, English on Friday, Portuguese on Saturday, and Hungarian on Sunday. The homelies offered valuable guidance for our role within the Church and our committed Christian lives. On Saturday evening, we prayed for our communities during an Adoration led in Croatian.

International Horizons and Personal Bonds

We were honored by the presence of Álvaro Martínez, President of the World Organization of Cursillos in Christianity (OMCC). Together with our Executive Committee, he reviewed the reality of Cursillo across European countries, as well as our future plans to bring this spirituality to additional nations.

Alongside the official program, there were plenty of opportunities for personal conversations. For Saturday evening's agape, each participant brought a Cursillo cross from home as a gift. Paired up with one another, we exchanged these crosses while sharing why Cursillo service and community hold such an essential place in our lives.

As we said our goodbyes, many expressed how wonderful the experience was and how deeply our bonds of friendship and communion had been strengthened. We look forward with joy, enthusiasm, and hope to our next encounter in Seville in 2027!

Judit Várdai,
President of the GECC





CURSILLISTAS AROUND THE WORLD

Cursillo: An Encounter That Transformed Our Lives and Our Marriage

Our story with the Cursillo Movement is, above all, a story of encounter, faith, and transformation. Looking back, we can testify that Cursillo has profoundly shaped our personal lives, our marriage, and our commitment to serving the Church.

Robert attended the **first Cursillo in Benin**, December 4–7, 2003, sponsored by Yves Méthot of the MCFC*. This experience was a true turning point. He discovered a more personal, fraternal, and committed way of living his faith in daily life, as well as a desire to share this experience and contribute to the development of the Movement in Togo.



A few years later, Patience attended the **first Cursillo in Togo, January 13–17, 2005**. She participated as a candidate, sponsored by Robert. For her, it was a profound encounter with Christ and with a community called to live out its faith in daily life.

But the most beautiful thing is that the Cursillo didn't remain merely a personal experience: it became a true school for our married life.

Through the Cursillo, we discovered the **great value of Christian marriage**. We came to understand that marriage is not simply living as a couple, but a vocation, a path to holiness, and a grace. We learned to live our marriage with greater patience, dialogue, forgiveness, and, above all, with Christ at the center.

While still very young, we made a decision that surprised some people around us: **on August 14, 2008, we celebrated our wedding**. Several of our friends, who were afraid to get married young in the Church, saw in our decision a testimony that it was possible to build a Christian family by trusting in God.

Looking back, we realize that the Cursillo helped us embrace the graces of our vocation. It also taught us to sit down together at the same table, talk openly about our difficulties, listen to one another, and seek solutions together. Our small-group meetings have become special moments of life review, in which we reflect on our journey, encourage one another, and renew our commitment to always move forward in our actions and in our daily lives. Our Ultreya gatherings have helped us remain joyful Christians, sharing our faith, our hope, and our fraternal friendship.



Since then, we have been deeply committed to the Cursillo Movement, with the desire to contribute to its growth in Togo and throughout Africa. For us, this commitment is a way of giving back to the Lord a little of all that we have received.

Today, our dream is simple yet grand: **to help more people discover, through the Cursillo, the beauty of an encounter with Christ and the richness of the Church's sacraments**. We believe that the Cursillo can help couples, families, and

young people rediscover that the Christian faith is a source of joy, hope, and transformation.

Our story reminds us of something essential: **God can begin a great work in a person's life through a simple invitation**. Robert attended his first Cursillo in Benin, sponsored by Yves Méthot of the MCFC. Later, Patience was sponsored by Robert to attend the first Cursillo in Togo. That simple invitation became part of the story through which God helped build our marriage.

Today we want to continue bearing witness and inviting others to experience this encounter.

Our desire is to see Cursillo grow in Togo and throughout Africa, so that more people can discover the beauty of the sacraments and the joy of a Christ-centered life.

Cursillo taught us how to live our faith; our marriage teaches us how to share it every day. Together, we want to continue proclaiming that Christ is alive and that He truly transforms our lives.

Ultreya!

Patience y Robert KPOTOR
Togo (África Occidental)





BACKGROUND ISSUES



Personal Accompaniment: The Fourth Day Needs People, Not Just Activities

Today, we live in a world marked by constant change, new social realities, technological advances, and the growing presence of social media, as well as by a profound need for human and spiritual accompaniment. It is especially important to remember that the fruits of a Cursillo do not depend solely on the experience lived during the three days, but above all on the Cursillista's perseverance during the fourth day. It is at this stage that the encounter with Christ becomes a way of life, conversion is strengthened, and the commitment is made to bring the Gospel into daily life—especially within the family, at work, in society, and in the various settings where we live and spend our time.

To foster this perseverance, the Poscursillo period cannot be reduced solely to the planning and carrying out of activities; rather, it requires, above all, close, fraternal, and ongoing personal accompaniment. We must not equate the Poscursillo period exclusively with Ultreya, group meetings, retreats, gatherings, and formation opportunities. Although these activities are necessary and constitute essential elements of the Movement's method, they cannot replace personal accompaniment. Otherwise, there is a risk that the Cursillista will participate in numerous activities without ever experiencing that there is someone close to them who listens, guides, encourages, and shares their journey of faith with them.

Hence, personal accompaniment must begin with the Precursillo and continue throughout the entire process of maturing in the faith. Anyone who invites a person to experience the Cursillo should not limit their responsibility to the moment of the invitation but should also commit to accompanying that person afterward, facilitating their integration into a Group Meeting and encouraging them to become actively involved in the life of the Movement.

Personal accompaniment is rooted in Jesus, who not only proclaimed the Gospel but also walked with his disciples, listened to them, formed them, guided them, and encouraged them through his own witness. This attitude is especially reflected in the Road to Emmaus, where he approaches two discouraged disciples, listens to their concerns, helps them understand the Scriptures, and remains with them until their hope is renewed (Lk 24:13–35).

After the weekend experience, the new Cursillista often feels an initial enthusiasm that needs to be properly guided, strengthened, and channeled. At this stage, it is especially important to have someone who will listen to their concerns, encourage them in the face of difficulties, and help them find concrete ways to live out their faith and bear Christian witness in the settings where they live their daily lives.

Personal accompaniment is a service of friendship based on respect, trust, and freedom. It does not seek to control or direct the life of the brother or sister, but rather to help them recognize God's presence and action on their own journey (Francis, 2013, No. 169). In this sense, the Movement's charism has always prioritized friendship as a path to evangelization (IF3, No. 47), for, as Bonnín (2009) points out, "friendship makes it possible for Christ to reach people's hearts in a natural, sincere, and lasting way."

However, some Cursillistas drift away from the Movement not necessarily because they have lost their faith, but due to a lack of close accompaniment after the Cursillo. This reality invites us to strengthen a community that welcomes, gets to know, and personally accompanies each brother, beyond mere activities and structures.

Therefore, in light of the Gospel and the experience of the MCC, true personal accompaniment must be made present in concrete ways through phone calls, visits, and fraternal conversations that express solidarity, especially in the face of the difficulties each brother or sister may encounter. It can also be expressed in the simple moments of life: congratulating someone on an achievement, offering comfort in the face of grief, praying together, or sending a message of encouragement can all become meaningful expressions of brotherhood and instruments of God's grace.

This accompaniment also includes prayer, discernment, and spiritual guidance, fostering growth in faith, integration into the Group Meeting, the Ultreya, and church life, as well as the commitment to be a Christian leaven in the communities where we live.

Ultimately, the fourth day is strengthened not only by activities, but by people who, driven by the love of Christ, accompany their brothers and sisters with closeness and dedication. Rather than filling schedules, we need testimonies that, through friendship and service, help transform lives.

Rafael Collado Cruz
President of the NS of the D.R.

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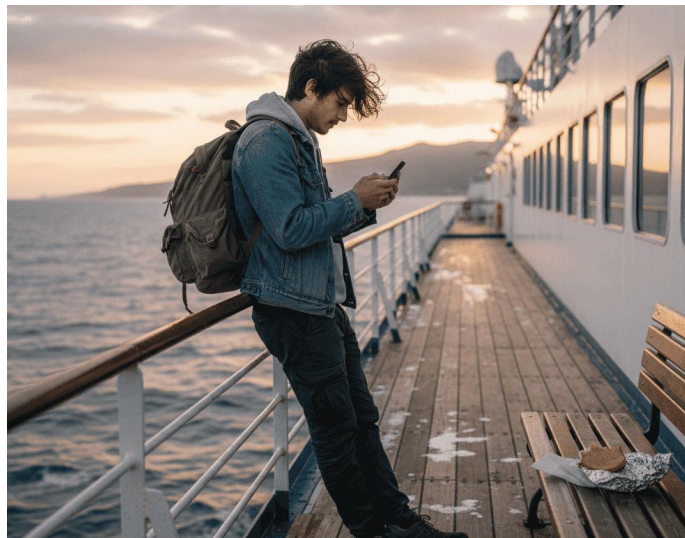


THE NEW ENVIRONMENTS OF THE 21ST CENTURY



We witness a world that is speeding up. News spreads quickly, messages travel rapidly, and technology is developing at great speed. This technological development has significantly changed the way we live, communicate, work, and build relationships with each other and it has undoubtedly changed people themselves.

Human beings have always been shaped by the environments in which they live and by the people around them—whether in a big city, small town, a village, a school, a family, or a workplace. During earlier stages of development, youth were most often shaped by society, whose influence could even surpass that of their parents and their upbringing. Every environment leaves at least a small mark on the way we think, communicate, and build relationships.



Recently, a new dimension has been added to this. Digital space. It is a virtual world without borders—a world in which we can be whatever we want and create whatever image we desire. It is a mask behind which we can hide.

“Virtual” means that something has no physical form: it does not exist in physical reality but has instead been created technologically or in the imagination. In other words, it is an illusion — a space that is everywhere and nowhere. We can be physically present in one place while our thoughts and communication are simultaneously miles away, connected to the internet.

Although the digital world brings many advantages, it also carries numerous known and unknown dangers. One danger is that we can no longer be completely present in spirit in one

place; instead, we are constantly living in a bubble. Our everyday lives seem to unfold simultaneously across several dimensions that almost overlap, as though our reality were in constant collision with the virtual world.

A particular challenge concerns our attention. By this, I mean that this part especially applies to us young people. I often catch myself using my phone while eating at the table or while walking around the apartment and doing something else. Digital environments compete for our attention. We become slaves to trivial obligations. For example, feeling that we must watch one particular video, even though it is objectively of no special benefit to us.

Notifications, short videos, and endless scrolling create a habit of constantly moving from one piece of information to another. In such an environment, silence becomes almost a myth, while the ability simply to be present without a screen and constant stimulation becomes a special skill.



We are not focused on what truly matters. For example, we are unable to follow a Mass attentively. What is more concerning is how frequently mobile phones ring during Holy Mass. Why is it so difficult to check whether the sound has been turned off before entering the church? Nevertheless, it seems to me that young people are generally responsible when it comes to silencing their phones before entering the church.

Let us return to the subject of attention. We think about a hundred other things and about how to overcome our obstacles through our own strength. We search for the perfect idea and solution to a problem instead of listening to what God wants to tell us and how He can help us face life’s challenges.

Technology is useful because it enables us today to watch a live stream of Mass, listen to a homily, read the Holy Scriptures, or spread the Good News to people in different parts of the world via the internet. This can be a valuable aid in seeking God and building community.

Still, faith cannot be transferred entirely into the digital space. Christianity is a faith of the Incarnation. This means that God did not reveal Himself only through laws or prophets; He became a real human being of flesh and blood in the person of Jesus Christ.

A screen can transmit words, images, and sound, but it cannot completely replace the person sitting beside us, a face-to-face conversation, warmth, shared prayer, or the experience of belonging to a concrete community.

Therefore, the question of the new environments of the 21st century is not merely about dividing technology’s influence into good and bad. The more important question is how we will live with these environments. Technology becomes what we make of it and how we choose to use it.



Perhaps this is why one of the greatest challenges of our time is learning once again to distinguish between being connected and being close. We can be connected to the world at every moment, but closeness still requires time, attention, patience, and genuine presence.

It is important to understand that technology is a tool, not the master of our time, relationships, and attention. We will find time for God—but only after we have replied to a message, listened to a new song, or watched a video. And this is where the danger of losing ourselves begins: the danger of becoming a pale copy, far removed from what God intended us to be.

A person's originality and authenticity gradually fade, apparently because of the pressure and fear that anything outside newly established social norms or trends is undesirable. The seemingly simple question, "Who am I?" reveals a great deal, but above all, it reveals the nature of our relationship with our Creator.

A person who neglects God's law is like a sheep disobedient to its shepherd. When we are ready to listen, we can act then. The first step is always to clear the cobwebs from our hearts. This means changing the bad habits that distance us from God and repairing our relationships with others so that we may live in peace with everyone.

Development brings many positive things, but greed, which often creeps into every positive endeavor, frequently exacts a price. When we think of technology and development, artificial intelligence is often one of the first things that comes to mind.

Every tool and every form of development can be useful and bring many positive aspects. However, through human greed, the fruits of someone's work can be endangered—and the same is true of artificial intelligence. It is a tool of the present and the future, offering great possibilities for helping humanity.

We will briefly note only that artificial intelligence can help efficiently solve complex and repetitive tasks, such as summarizing a long document, designing images or even creating the lyrics and melody of a song. On the other hand, positive capabilities can also be used to manipulate content.

In the desire for progress, superiority, and social status, people sometimes seem willing to sacrifice all other values in order to seize the illusory riches that the world tells them are necessary for happiness—and that are supposedly reserved only for the privileged.

We also come to our Pope Leo XVI, who addresses this issue in his first encyclical. Magnifica Humanitas speaks precisely about how technology and algorithms must not be concentrated in the hands of a small number of corporations, as this would deepen the gap between rich and poor nations.

Artificial-intelligence systems must not be used to create "social ratings" or to implement a "culture of rejection," in which automation would eliminate the dignity of human work and family life.

Finally, I remembered a priest who often quotes a sentence once spoken by a young boy: "In an honest conversation with a friend, I felt that God was speaking to me."

The beauty, therefore, lies in encounter—and we can encounter God wherever we come with open hearts.

Joško Martinec
MCC Croacia





APOSTLES OF THE MOVEMENT

Fr. Joseph María Cascales
Apostle of Friendship



Love can be reduced to a mere abstract expression if it lacks friendship as a base and germ. *All the beauty of love, all the power of love, all the culmination of love, all the happiness of love is fulfilled in friendship.* This was the motto of the Claretian Father Joseph Garcia Cascales, who introduced Cursillos in Christianity to Vienna, Austria with the first course at Pentecost of 1960.

What began with a project of new style in the 60ties, thanks to the talent of Fr. Joseph, his open and understanding attitude, became something “totally different”, unknown then in the catholic Church of Austria. Cursillos spread from Vienna to whole Central Europe and were a vivid image of a Church near to people.

It was a Spanish friend who convinced Fr. Joseph to take part of the 9th Cursillo in Burgos, Spain in 1959.

Friendship – to him a basic attitude for his whole life – was founded on the spiritual experience he had at the beginning of his Novitiate in Germany, which allowed him to feel the presence of God as Love, an experience which influenced the rest of his life.

Friendship as a supreme principle of our relations with God and the neighbour was engraved in his soul since his childhood. His father was murdered due to his testimony for Christian faith. Little 8 years old Pepe, his brother and sister wanted to take revenge on the neighbours whose father had been an accomplice of the crime. Their mother made them swear they would go on being friends of the neighbour’s children.

“Father Joseph”, as everybody called him in German speaking countries, became a charismatic, radiant force, who not only preached friendship, but practised it every day, even in difficult situations. He knew how to advise persons, who after his death would give the testimony that he



had offered them an invaluable and unforgettable spiritual support.

Instead of getting angry, he consoled a young motorcyclist, who had caused a damage on his car. When he learned that he was suffering from an incurable illness, Fr. Joseph said: “The first thing I did was to make friends with my doctor”. He taught his disciples always to pray, not only for his friends but

he was a model of praying “even for his enemies”.

His bounds of friendship endured despite of geographic distances as well as ups and downs of life. One of his best friends since their childhood was Dom Pedro Casaldaliga, Bishop of Sao Felix do Araguaia, Brasil, whom he called “St. Francis of Assisi of the XX and XXI Century”.

Fr. Joseph knew how to make Mass a joyful experience of community including with his friendliness everyone who wanted to come. But he did not limit to joyful songs and homilies full of humour and expressive gesticulations but founded it on theological bases which could open new perspectives for a vivid and encouraging faith. He was an author of many books and wrote texts which reflect his theology of love and joy, as his Credo does: I believe in Love. God, our Father, you are Love...

At the Cursillos, he underlined many times the importance of *Studies* which can bestow a deep base to life in faith. Sometimes he used his knowledge of old Greek to give a new approach to biblical quotes. So, when in James 2,13 it says: Mercy triumphs over Judgment – κατακαυχᾶται ἔλεος κρίσεως [*catacáuhatai éleos críseos*] – he let himself inspire by the sound of *catacáuhatai* and translated: “*Mercy laughs at Judgment*”.

Christine Gawlas
Austria





YOUTH DE COLORES



Hello, my name is Luis, and I took the Cursillo almost five years ago. For me, the MCC has been a place where I can grow in faith and maturity. It's true that, at first, its name didn't really catch my attention—especially given the different realities the movement faces. However, once you enter the world of Cursillo, you discover the great treasure that the Holy Spirit inspired in the founders.

The MCC has a wealth of tools that, in my view, help us stay centered and perhaps break away from the aesthetic or structure that other movements have or are known for. First and foremost, the community. And I'm not just talking about the movement's global reach. It's well known among all Cursillistas that the ultreya, group meetings, and—in general—the community help us grow. In my case, it is what sustains me the most and helps me grow. And the fact is that everything stems from the diversity of the people who make up the community: young people, families, the elderly, priests... This variety of ages brings a wide range of experiences and stories, which allows both the younger members to learn from the older ones and vice versa. The community makes reciprocity the tool through which we love one another and thus help one another.

Another aspect I find important is the "tripod." The tripod, in its three dimensions, commits me and makes me actively involved. In prayer, it gives a mature meaning to my relationship with God. In formation: a commitment to myself so that I am not swayed by emotional impulses or the fads of the world. And in action, through true friendship in Christ with others—stepping outside of myself to welcome and respond to what the world needs from me.

In closing, every reality is different, and I can speak only of my own. All are good and necessary. In the case of Cursillos, everything from its method to each member of the community is a gift to the Church today, because the variety of stories and the spirit of holiness that each member of the community radiates is what makes it clear that holiness is possible.

De Colores

Luis Sanchez
Diocese of Alcalá (Spain)



RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Letters from a Devil to His Nephew

In *Letters from a Devil to His Nephew*, C. S. Lewis presents us with an exercise that is as original as it is provocative: Screwtape, a seasoned demon, writes to his nephew Orugario, explaining how to lead a young man away from God.

What is surprising is that the great temptations are not the focus of his advice. Evil can make inroads through much smaller things: a distraction, a worry, a comfort, a vanity, a grudge... We don't even have to stop believing in God. It may be enough simply **to stop thinking about Him**.

And this idea should challenge us as well, as Cursillistas.

How often do we put off prayer until later? How often are we so busy that we can no longer find time to listen to God? How often do our worries, our rush, or even our own apostolic activities end up taking the place that Christ should occupy?

Cursillo gave us an encounter. But every true encounter needs to be nurtured. Our life of grace, our community, and our surroundings are spaces where that encounter can grow or fade away.

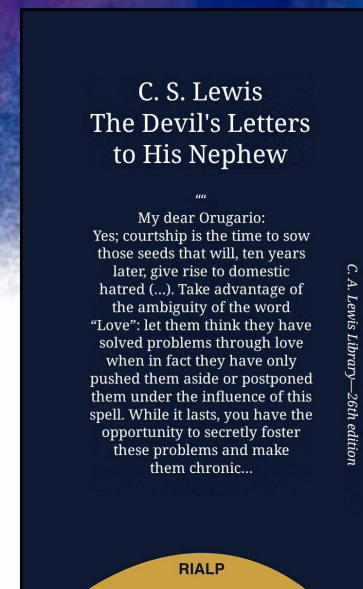
Perhaps that is why this book can serve as a brief examination of conscience:

What small things are drawing me away from Christ today?

It's not about living in fear of evil, but about staying close to Jesus. It's about returning to the essentials: **Piety, Study, and Action**. It's about nurturing our relationship with Christ and leaning on our brothers and sisters to keep moving forward.

Because perhaps temptation's greatest victory is not to make us deny God, but to make us live as if we could do without Him.

Let us be vigilant. Christ remains the center.



¡We're more connected than ever!

The Movement keeps moving forward... and now it's also making its mark in the digital world!

We invite you to stay informed and connected through our official channels:

◆ **Our website**

An updated space featuring news, a calendar of events, educational materials, and resources to help us fully experience our fourth day.

<https://omcc-cursillos.org/>

◆ **Our Social Media Accounts**

Follow us to stay up to date on testimonials, reflections, reminders of gatherings, and moments that encourage us to live out the essentials of the Christian faith in our daily lives.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/share/1C5Z1Ykddh/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/omcc_cursillos/

◆ **Our WhatsApp channel**

Get direct, straightforward, and timely information about activities, announcements, and important notices. A convenient way to make sure you don't miss a thing!

Today more than ever, we want to continue building community, sharing the joy of our faith, and walking together in our mission.



👉 ¡Follow us, share, and help us reach more people!

Because the Gospel is also shared online.

