



Forward

Cursillo in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego

Volume XII

December 2007

Our Mission: To Christianize Environments and Develop Lay Leadership

From the Chair

A few days ago, I was talking to someone I know, who lives in an area evacuated in the fires last month, and he mentioned that his priorities were suddenly focused on what mattered to him. I asked what he took with him, and he said he took the books he knew he would need in order to live his life. I have a list pinned to the inside of my closet door, having had forest fires come close to my family cabin: the cats come first, with all their paraphernalia; and yet I talked to a friend who was evacuated and he left the cats behind. His house and the cats were there when he and his wife got home, though many on their block were not so fortunate. How we decide what we need in an emergency tells us what we think really matters at that time, but it is best to have a plan so that you can move fast and not have to stop to think when you are under pressure.

It is the same when we deal with God and our spiritual lives. If we have a plan that we follow to keep our faith lives on track, we will be able to rely on that routine and the peacefulness it brings when things do get stressful. Sometimes I get so caught up in the busyness of life that it's hard to take time to just sit in a chair and pray, or read a meditation. I want to read something for Advent, so I have pulled out a book of daily scripture and a reading, and there is always the reliable Forward Day by Day (find the day's reading at forwardmovement.org/todaysreading.cfm).

It is all too easy to get distracted from what Advent is all about as we try to fulfill our holiday season obligations of shopping, getting together with friends and, in my case, panicking about those last minute required gifts. This year, I hope to be more peaceful by spending some time with God. And I am seriously thinking of giving the hard-to-shop-for niece and nephew some rabbits for a family in Nepal through the Heifer Project (heifer.org). I hope you will all find a way to find some time with God and his Son Jesus, the Light of the World, this Advent and Christmas.

At the December Grand Ultreya at the Cathedral, we elected Bill Blakeslee, Linda Lyons, Judy Anderson and Fr. Jim Kellert to the Secretariat. Diane Blaisdell, Jeanne Salvadori, Fr. Brent Cary are going off the Secretariat, and I will miss them, for they have served the Cursillo community well and I have had the privilege of getting to know them and admire them as friends. Thanks for all that you have done.

Peace of the Lord, Jane Schuler

THE 2007 SECRETARIAT

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The Spring Cursillo Weekend

It might seem a little early to be thinking of the spring weekend (April 17-21). Let me tell you a little bit about it. I am really thrilled that Barbara Peralta will be the Rectora.

This will be a fully co-ed weekend with one Rollo Room. The men will have their own tables in a separate space in the room. The kitchen teams will be co-ed. Some Rollos will be given by men and some by women.

The Secretariat voted on this some time ago. The situation is complicated by the fire at Camp Stevens, and as things stand now, there are 48 available beds (Blum Lodge). Therefore the teams and candidates will likely be limited to approximately 24 of each. Barbara seems perfectly at ease with the situation. If you want to work on the team, be aware that we are looking at a very small team to fill.

We would greatly appreciate getting the paperwork early. If you won't have the paperwork but know you have some candidates, please let a Secretariat member know! We have to have 24 promised candidates by the middle of January or we will cancel the weekend rather than lose our reservation money. Camp Stevens is still figuring out their options, but even if they come up with some portable housing, there will not be the room there once was. Please think of who you want to send to this weekend, which promises to be very special in many ways, not the least being its small group quality. I, for one, am very excited about it! De Colores! Jane Schuler

You will find applications for team and candidates at sd cursillo.org.



CHRISTMAS PARTY AND POTLUCK

Sponsored by the Episcopal Cursillo Community of the San Diego Diocese
Saturday, Dec. 8, 2007, 6-9 PM
Good Samaritan Episcopal Church
4321 Eastgate Mall, San Diego

*Bring musical instruments, your favorite potluck dish, songbooks and your voices to sing hymns and Christmas carols.
Childcare will be provided*

Christmas gifts will be collected for the needy adults in Episcopal Community Services' Transitional Homeless Program. Please bring unwrapped toiletries, gift cards to Target, Wal-Mart, etc. (in small denominations of \$5 and \$10) Bus tokens, socks and underwear would also be suitable.

*For questions, contact Judy Anderson, 619-286-1208
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or Diane Blaisdell, 858--153-1996
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From the Rectora

***"The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want..." Psalm 23***

As Rectora for the 2008 Spring Cursillo, my first initial task was to choose a meaningful theme for the weekend. Without hesitation "Psalm 23" came to mind. However, knowing the overwhelming popularity of the Psalm, I thought perhaps another less familiar passage would work as well. I searched through different versions of the bible. I scoured the scriptures and reflected on a number of verses. In the end, after what seemed like weeks of wandering in the wilderness, the Lord lead me back to my first choice. "Psalm 23" gives glory and honor to God. By Him we are lead, in Him we are renewed, and through Him we are blessed.

Recent fires at Camp Stevens have caused extensive damage to the facilities and surrounding area. Despite the many necessary adjustments, preparation for the April 17-20 weekend continues to move forward. Available housing for team, as well as for candidates, are now limited. What remains unaltered, is the purpose of the Lord's weekend. The Lord has guests coming to Cursillo, and the 123-124 team has the privilege of being their host. Regardless of the request for a reduction in the number of team members, there are still several team positions available. Although this team may be fewer in number, with God's help and your prayers, we can still change the world for Christ. I look forward to working with all those who feel called to serve. Ultreya!

Peace and Blessings,

Barbara Peralta, Rectora
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Congratulations to Linda Lyons, Judy Anderson and Bill Blakeslee for their nomination to the Secretariat. They will each serve until 2010. Rev. Jim Kellett has been selected to fill the vacant Assistant Spiritual Director position.

Look for the next Forward in early February.
Articles, calendar events and other materials are due
(preferably in Word format)

no later than January 25. Send to:

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Christ in the Workplace

A Witness by Sandia Tuttle

During my Cursillo, as during yours, one of the rollos was on taking Christ into the work place. The speaker told about a parents' prayer group at her children's school that met every morning to pray for the needs of the school. I appreciated those prayers for that school and hoped that some parent might be praying for some of the 14,000 students at my Grossmont College campus. Was Christ calling me to organize a faculty group to pray for our campus? Getting faculty together is not easy. We are all on different schedules.

However, I could take Christ into the classroom a bit differently. I hope I am a good Christian witness (you know Episcopalian evangelism). Since Cursillo, I am not afraid to ask students who come to me with problems, "May I pray for you?" The response has overwhelming been "Would you please!" The students are more than happy to share the continuing progress in the solution of the problem as well. And like as not, the student's progress in school is more positive because I have showed an interest in him/her.

Over the years, many wonderful little "Milagros" have happened; this summer, the mother (in her 50s) of one of my students had a massive heart attack, but lived through it. However, the student needed to spend much of her time nursing her mother back to health; the student was falling behind in class. I asked if I could pray for her mother. The student was grateful. The mother continued to do poorly. I spoke with the student about death and the dying process and allowing the mother to die. I gave the student an Incomplete in the six week course for medical reasons. I continued to keep in touch by email. When the mother did pass away after another heart attack, the student and her siblings thanked me for helping them through dying process. They said that the mother was also grateful not only for my prayers but for my helping her children to allow her to pass on graciously and bringing her adult children back to Christ.

But Christ has not only worked through me to my students. One of my colleagues, an Indian Hindu, had a terrible problem with holding a grudge. Over the past several years, I have been teaching her about the forgiveness that Christ offers and how important forgiveness is for her health, both mentally and physically. Her mother was gravely ill in India; again, I offered prayers which were gratefully accepted, but I also encouraged her to take time off in the middle of the semester (Easter week) to go and visit her mother. She went. She returned again to spend the summer with her parents. The miracle of the story is that she and her siblings are once again on speaking terms, her mother continues in good health, her parents celebrated their 50th anniversary last year, and my colleague has now accepted Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior.

Recently, as many of you know, Camp Stevens was enveloped in the Angel Fire. Well, I was there and was evacuated. My husband Dennis had designed Bishops Lodge and remodeled St. Mary's and Lax/Saddler that burned. I was one of the first campers at Camp Stevens in 1952 and had gone every year until 1967 when we moved back East; it was my second home. The fire personally devastated me. I could not teach class the following Monday. This semester, I teach one face-to-face class and four sections online. I simply posted that I could not teach that day because of the fire with an accompanying newspaper article. Many of my students comforted me that day. But one said that she and her family had been to Camp Stevens and was a Cursillista--thank you Kathleen Stark! Christ in the workplace works both ways!!

Matthew 25 says, "then you have done it unto me"...

Well, I have had no trouble feeding the hungry or ...but the most that I have done for the prisoners is to have made cookies for Kairos when I hear about a weekend coming up. Until prison really hit home to me! A fine, upstanding Christian citizen, I had three friends in prison! One was eventually exonerated; the other two had made mistakes; guess what, we all make mistakes for which we could be imprisoned! But how does this thread follow Christ to the workplace? Well, one of my friends knew that I was a college teacher who taught online. For those of you who do not know, online is the contemporary version of correspondence classes. My friend, a college science prof himself, was working with the educational program in Correction and Rehabilitation Facility at Norco. They could get college classes in many subjects for their students but not Freshman English nor a lab science. He was finally given permission to teach the lab science class; geology seemed the safest for the inmates (no explosions in chemistry or dissections in biology). He asked me if I could adapt my online class to a correspondence one since the prisons do not have Internet access. I said that I could.

So Jesus found a way for me to visit the prisons. I now have students in three prisons. Because I went out of my way to offer English in the prison for two and a half years now, some of those students have earned their AA degrees. Three of those graduates have gone back into society. The statistics are overwhelming: 83% of those involved in education do NOT to return to prison; on the other hand, those who choose not to better themselves through education--80% do return. So I have taken Christ into that workplace--or rather Christ has taken me into that workplace! And those men freely speak of their beliefs and conversions!

One of my students wrote a wonderful compare/contrast essay of the difference that Kairos at Donovan made in his life. I gave copies of that essay to some of you involved in that ministry to share with each other.

Bloom where you are planted as the old saying goes. Do not be afraid to pray for your co-workers, and be blessed when your co-workers pray for you. Do not be afraid to take Christ into your workplace and reap the benefits of the harvest.



San Diego Cursillo Communities Catholic - Episcopal - Methodist - Kairos - Anglican

Ecumenical Grand Ultreya
Saturday February 16, 2008
2:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church
Maloney Center, 2766 Navajo Road
El Cajon - right off the 125 exit to Navajo Road.

Catered lasagna, salad, and bread dinner at 5:00 PM,
at the end of the Ultreya. Free will donation.

Did you miss the one in 2006?
Powerful! Spirit-filled! Important!
The participants pledged to repeat this
landmark community gathering. Come and see! Be filled with
the Holy Spirit ---and food. Our brothers and sisters in Christ
will gather at Our Lady of Grace Roman Catholic Church in El
Cajon to worship with friends through music and words.

Bring music books. Bring children! We have child care.
Who is coming? The Roman Catholic community, Spanish and
English speaking Episcopal and Anglican Cursillistas, Walk to
Emmaus members, Kairos and Kairos Outside members. Of
course we shall have witness talks and grouping. See you
there!

For more information and questions contact:



Ted Parsons, 4th Day Co-Chair
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DECEMBER

- 6 Secretariat Meeting, Good Samaritan, 5:45 PM
- 8 Cursillo Christmas Party, Good Samaritan, PM
- 25 *"And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace..."*

JANUARY

- 5 Servant Community, Good Samaritan, 9:00 AM
Secretariat Meeting, Good Samaritan, 12:30 PM
- 25 Deadline for February Forward articles

FEBRUARY

- 2 Secretariat Retreat
- 8-9 San Diego Episcopal Diocesan Convention, St. Margaret's Palm Desert
- 16 Interdenominational Grand Ultraya, Our Lady of Grace Church, 5:00 PM