

Piety—Study—Action

THE TRIPOD

*Newsletter of the Seattle Archdiocese Cursillo Movement***March 2005**

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From The Lay Director

By Pete Jancola

Snowflakes. There are so many of them! I was standing on a snow-covered logging road in January watching millions of snowflakes falling silently all around me. Focusing on a single flake, I watched as it landed on the road and disappeared. It had no apparent impact. Yet, hours later as I was returning along the same route, I noticed my tracks nearly covered, and an obvious addition of an inch or two of new snow. The great number of snowflakes certainly made a difference!

All this made me think that a single leaf in my yard (Sherry's yard, actually) would have little impact on my health, whereas trees full of leaves provide enough oxygen to lift my spirits and enhance the value of my breathing! And I think any of us could share our homes with a single termite for many years, but a community of termites would make a noticeable impact in just a few months. I could go on.

It seems to me that one characteristic of nature, the way God created things, is that noticeable change comes from the cumulative effect of very large numbers of creatures. How does this apply to humans? I think this is an open-ended question, but let me offer one train of thought.

Cursillo tells us to be agents of change and to be an influence (impact) in our environments. Our Catholic

tradition honors hundreds of saints who have made a difference. And so I am led to think that I need to make an impact by myself alone. But the ratio of saints to the total number of Catholics that ever lived is very small. It seems to me that the person making a difference is the exception, and the rest of us "normal" persons are only on the way, with God's help, to becoming exceptional. What do we do along the way? Well, I think that we still make an impact because of the large numbers of us who are trying. And, like nature, this may be the way an impact is normally made.

So, what groups of people do we identify with? Is it obvious? All I can say, my brother and sister Cursillistas, is STAY CONNECTED! See you at Ultreya!

God is with us

Bridge Building--Revealing

By Phil Auth

Recently, at a family gathering we held a bridge-building contest just for fun. As I watched the bridges fail one by one as increasing loads were placed upon them, I noticed the Cursillo mentality in action. Piety, Study, and Action can and do apply to all of life, not just to religious matters. Let me explain. The bridges were tested by placing a bucket on each and filling the bucket with water until the bridge collapsed.

Each person, in the bridge-building contest, was given raw materials to work with: poster board, sticks, and hot-melt glue. Each of us is given gifts in the natural order to build our personal bridge from earth to heaven. But we were also given supernatural gifts to work with: a creative mind, intuition, and most importantly, friends/helpers to guide us on our way. And implanted within each, by God, an ideal, a goal, and a vision for life.

It was interesting to watch these groups in action over a period of two-plus hours. One group dissolved and quit due to internal bickering. (Ever heard of a group reunion doing that?) Others succumbed to the will of a

leader, becoming drones, doing the leader's bidding. Some groups come together not as real friends but as acquaintances or group out of a sense of obligation.

Other groups truly tried to work together, but without any real sense of what it takes to build a bridge. They would incorporate each member's ideas but with no understanding of how forces interact or work together within a structure. Groups sometimes meet as friends but with no explicit understanding of the goal of Cursillo.

As I watched each bridge stressed to its breaking point, I watched each group's "judgment day". One group used sticks and massive amounts of glue but no poster board. You could say they were strong in their piety but lacked study. Their bridge "smooshed" into a ball of sticks and glue. Four other groups used all the materials but built according to a preconceived plan. In other words, they had an ideal and they let it control their efforts. But it was not a living and viable ideal. It wasn't flexible, dynamic. As bridges were loaded they revealed their flaws and collapsed.

One bridge was different. It was unconventional. At each stage of construction the builders tested the structure to discover where it was weak: piety, study or action. When failure was imminent they made adjustments. They never had a preconceived design in mind.

How many of us have already figured out what God thinks? Because that is what we think?

This final bridge was tested as we watched. As the bucket reached the halfway mark the contest was already won, yet more water was added. There were no cracks, creaks or telltale twists. The bucket filled to the overflowing and the bridge never wavered.

From the above experience I gained some insights:

1. Flexibility in your ideal can be helpful.
2. Maintaining a true and dynamic balance among piety, study and action is terribly important.
3. Achieving true and real friendships within a group reunion is not easy. When it happens though, it works splendidly.

New Cursillo Leaders Needed

For the past three years the membership of our Schools of Leaders—with the exception of the Vietnamese School, which has grown considerably—has remained very stable. The good news is that

people are not leaving. The bad news is that there have been only two new members.

Most members are staying beyond their "minimum of two years" commitment (Official Policies document), no doubt because they are discerning a call from the Lord to do so. But it is entirely possible, even likely, that some will be called to other "vinyards", as evidenced by the many past members in our community. Besides, we're always in need of fresh ideas as the nature of God's Kingdom keeps unfolding in our western Washington environment.

Please, seriously consider whether the Lord may be calling you to leadership in Cursillo. This will not be just another activity for you, but rather a priority commitment, a new way of life perhaps. The rewards are not only out of this world, but a deeper relationship with God right now—a blessing for you and your family and friends.

Have any questions; ask any Secretariat member—they all attend a School of Leaders.

New Location for April Women's Cursillo Weekend

Due to a scheduling error on the part of Camp Don Bosco staff, we have been asked to move the Women's Weekend to Camp Hamilton. After attempts to decline the move, we looked at Hamilton and found it to be undesirable (vault toilets, long walks between buildings). We were able, on such short notice, to reserve the Camp Richmond barracks at Fort Flagler State Park. Everything is in one large building (kitchen, dining room, rollo room, chapel, dorms, palanca work space, restrooms), with spacious grounds, great views, and adequate parking. A few inconveniences that can be worked around were deemed acceptable by the team. The date, Apr.14-17, is unchanged. The Men's Weekend, Apr.21-24, is still at Camp Don Bosco.

Directions to Camp Richmond:

From the Hood Canal Floating Bridge (State Route 104) drive 5 miles west to State Route 19, with signs to Port Townsend and Fort Flagler. Turn right and drive about 9 miles to the first stop sign. Turn right (Chimacum Rd) and drive about 1½ miles to the next stop sign (Port Hadlock). Turn right (Oak Bay Rd & State Route 116) and follow SR116 (it turns left in ¾ mile) to its end (about 8 miles) in Fort Flagler State Park. Once in the Park, continue straight at the stop sign, pass

the Park offices, to the end of the road in a large parking area. Turn right and drive to the last barracks building on the right.

4. Finally, the deer ought to thank the wolf for making her swift.

Web site

Check our website at www.seattlecursillo.org and register for an electronic version of the TRIPOD instead of a printed one. This would save us mailing and printing expenses.

Feedback

Your Feedback, Please:

What kind of information and articles would you like to read? We want your ideas on how we can make the TRIPOD more interesting and useful. Also, would you consider writing an article for the TRIPOD? Have you read a book lately that you would like to recommend? Do you have a witness story you'd like to share? Have you had a close moment that was especially inspiring? Do you know of some coming events that other Cursillistas might be interested in? Please take the time to send us your comments and recommendations.

Send comments to:

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Cursillo = Short Course—Long Commitment