

## June Cursillo Report

**Summary of the SOL**—At the June Remote SOL Teleconference and the Combined SOL held in Cullman, the technique talk focused on the topic of the Secretariat, specifically, its purpose “of simplifying, facilitating and making possible the living out of what is fundamental to being Christian and guarding the purity of the Movement.” The slides from the June SoL can be found at ([www.cursillo.org/birmingham](http://www.cursillo.org/birmingham))

In addition, the SoL included:

- Doctrinal talk given by Fr. Patrick Egan, pastor of Sacred Heart parish, Cullman.
- The **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Cursillo Summer Social will be held on Saturday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, from 10:30am-3:30pm at Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Hanceville.** This event is for all Cursillistas, their families and any person(s) interested in learning more about Cursillo. Attendees may bring their own food or drink, or request a box lunch of either ham or tuna sandwich from Seven Winds Kitchen for \$11 by RSVPing **by Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup>**. The flyer with RSVP information and the day’s schedule is attached, or can be found at ([www.cursillo.org/birmingham](http://www.cursillo.org/birmingham)).
- The next Men’s 3 Day Cursillo weekend will be held on September 5-8, 2013 at Sacred Heart, Benedictine Sisters, Cullman. Applications for men and women are being continuously accepted.
- The next **Satellite SOLs will be held on Saturday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am in the Huntsville and Birmingham areas.** Locations will be determined and posted on the website and distributed to Ultreya facilitators by the end of June. Topic of the next SoL Technique talk will be “Cursillo Charism.” Primary reference will be the “Study of the Charism” document found on the World Body of Cursillos in Christianity website at <http://www.orgmcc.org/en/charism>.
- The next Remote SOL will be held on **August 1, 2013 at 7pm.** (There will be no Remote SOL in July due to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday) The Dial-in # is: (641) 715-3300. At the prompting, the access code is 1098398#. FYI—the call-in number and access code remains the same each month.

**Cursillo Methodology**—The Secretariat--“The Secretariat has as their primary objective the inescapable duty of preserving, developing, actualizing and invigorating the mentality, the purpose, and the basic core of methodology that defines and characterizes the Cursillo Movement as a Movement of the Church.” (“*Structure of the Cursillo Movement*”, National Cursillo Center Mailing, December 2007).

#### **Cursillo Procedures**—

To nurture the Cursillo community throughout the diocese, each member of the Secretariat is striving to authentically live out the Movement in their daily lives to the best of their abilities, while also building upon and strengthening the Movement within their respective areas of responsibility.

Although the Secretariat has the LEAD for nurturing the Movement in the diocese, members of the Secretariat are not the only ones responsible for this mission, OR for doing the work associated with it. Rather, members of the SOL, Ultreyas, groups and individual Cursillistas should be actively doing the work of the Movement in their daily lives in their “moveable square meter,” but when possible, should also offer their time and talents to assist in the work of the Movement throughout the diocese (i.e. Palanca subcommittee, Communications subcommittee, etc.).

#### **Questions/Concerns**—

On Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, a group of Cursillistas who had questions and concerns regarding a variety of issues within the movement in the diocese emailed a list of 14 questions to the Secretariat that they wished to have answered/discussed. After the SOL, those Cursillistas, and any others who wished to, remained after the meeting to have a discussion with members of the Secretariat on those issues. Pasted below is a listing of those questions, the initial answers (*in italics*) were provided by the Lay Director in order to begin discussion, and then the following typed paragraph(s) contain a synopsis and explanation of the discussion of the 14 different questions. The questions/initial answers and discussion summaries are pasted below so all members of the Cursillo Movement within the Diocese of Birmingham are informed of the questions and discussion.

If any Cursillista wishes to discuss these questions/issues further, or has additional questions/concerns, they are most welcome to contact any member of the Secretariat to have them addressed, or to request that a meeting with the entire Secretariat be arranged that will be as convenient as possible for all parties involved.

The current and previous Monthly Reports can be found on the Cursillo website on the Ultreyas page: [www.cursillo.org/birmingham/ultreyas](http://www.cursillo.org/birmingham/ultreyas)

1. Should the secretariat be transparent or "behind closed doors"? How would you classify this secretariat?

Initial answer: *The Secretariat is transparent and should be. The Secretariat meetings are run according to National/Regional guidelines. Whenever a Cursillista has requested to address the Secretariat, they have always been welcome and treated respectfully.*

*Reference: Leaders Manual pages 67 - 69*

Subsequent discussion revealed that the perception of many in the Movement is that the Secretariat is inaccessible since the when/where of the Secretariat meetings are not "published." This will be rectified by including the scheduled Secretariat meeting location/day/time on the Birmingham Cursillo website and included as part of the Monthly Report sent out to the Ultreya Facilitators.

Additionally, the Secretariat stressed that ANY member can be contacted via phone or email (contact information is on the Secretariat page of the website which is under the "School of Leaders" tab) regarding any concern that any Cursillista may have, and/or contact a Secretariat member in order to arrange a time to meet personally with a member or the entire Secretariat if necessary.

2. Why are minutes of secretariat meetings no longer posted on the web site? (with exclusions for personal matters as they were done before)

Initial answer: *Will discuss. Reference: Leaders Manual page 74*

Subsequent discussion revealed that there was no particular reason why the minutes of the Secretariat meeting were no longer posted on the website. Once minutes have been approved by the Secretariat (previous month is approved at the beginning of the next month's meeting), the approved minutes will be posted on the website on the Secretariat page.

3. Is the secretariat reaching out to minorities, parents of small children, and those with aging parents to participate in the movement and work weekends?

Initial answer: *The Secretariat reaches out to the person. Every person is created by God and should be treated equally. I believe Secretariat members put a lot of effort into this whether it be through personal contact, or prayer or both.*

*Friendship groups and Ultreyas should help their fellow Cursillistas where possible.*

Discussion of this question pointed out that the responsibility to address this issue does not lie with the Secretariat, but rather with the members of the School of Leaders. For example, if a particular initiative is desired by members of the Movement, the initiative should be introduced for discussion at the School of Leaders. If during subsequent discussion (that could occur over several months) a particular plan/procedure/etc. is then agreed upon to be implemented, then the appropriate member of the Secretariat (in this case, the Cursillo Chair), then is given responsibility for overseeing its implementation, with the assistance of the members of the School of Leaders.

4. Did Paul Semmens do exactly what he told Serge he couldn't do - requiring that all team members meet attendance requirements at school of leaders?

Initial answer: No.

Discussion on this issue revealed that there was (and is still) significant miscommunication concerning team membership requirements. In particular, confusion as to whether ALL team members must be fully SOL qualified, and also how many meetings constitutes in being fully SOL qualified.

The current requirements are that all core team members (Rector, Angel, Liturgist, Palanca chief and Set-Up Chief) and all table leaders need to be fully SOL qualified. Any other members (Cantor, Set-up members, and Palanca members) do NOT have to fully SOL qualified, but they DO need to at least be living the movement through regular grouping and attendance at Ultreya. The number of meetings to be fully SOL qualified is 6 or more meetings in a calendar year.

To reduce confusion and clarify team membership requirements, a revised letter concerning team membership requirements will be composed and posted on the website.

5. What criteria did the secretariat use to qualify team members for Paul Semmens and Vicki Wilkins (the most recent rectors)?

Initial answer: *Lists were compiled of fully qualified members of the SOL for the core team. Not necessary for set-up and palanca, besides the chiefs.*

*Reference: Leaders Manual page 45. Last paragraph*

The criteria used for qualifying team members was described in the answer to #4. In addition, the procedures for team selection were described. These procedures are that a list of all fully qualified SOL members is compiled by the SOL Chair and

provided to the Cursillo Chair for dissemination to the Rector/Rectora for use in compiling a core team and selecting table leaders.

In addition, Ultreya attendance lists are provided to the Rector/Rectora by the Postcursillo Chair via the Cursillo Chair to aid the Rector/Rectora in selecting the remaining members of the team.

Throughout this process, the Rector/Rectora is coordinating with the Cursillo Chair, who subsequently communicates with the Secretariat, regarding team selection, and the ultimate approval of all team members.

6. Did the secretariat rule that Penny and Tim Vaughn could not serve together on the Secretariat because they are married, and then allow Paul and Christina Semmens to serve together on the secretariat?

*Initial answer: No, not this Secretariat. I have no knowledge of this request coming to the Secretariat when Tim was serving as Secretary on the Secretariat. Paul and Christina: This was discussed by the Secretariat and it was agreed that although we had no experience of husband and wife serving at the same time, there are no guidelines from National or Regional discouraging it.*

*We would give it a try.*

*Both Paul and Christina have special talents, and are an example of how to strive to live a life of piety, study and action in their daily.*

*I can see where having a married couple on the Secretariat can cause problems, I would not recommend it for everyone.*

Subsequent discussion on this point revealed that Tim and Penny Vaughn had been informed (circa 2005) by a previous Spiritual Advisor to the Movement that this was not permissible. What reference was used for this decision is unknown. Since there are no current guidelines at the local, regional or national level concerning this issue, Paul and Christina Semmens will continue to serve in their respective capacities on the Secretariat. However, it was expressed by some present that this might need to be an issue that should be addressed at a future SOL.

7. Was there a motion made, seconded and carried for dismissing Patrick as rector?

*Initial answer: On the Secretariat we try not to vote, instead we strive to build a consensus. Voting is discouraged and only used when absolutely necessary.*

*Reference: The Cursillo Movement. "Study of the Charism" page 132. Written by Juan Ruiz, President of the OMCC at the time the book was put together.*

Discussion here centered on what "consensus" means--for consensus is NOT a strict majority (i.e. 4 members for, 3 members against). Rather, consensus is the

process through which all members of the Secretariat freely share their thoughts and concerns regarding an issue within the context of a small friendship group. Additionally, guidance is sought through prayer, reflection and referral to guidelines at the local (By-Laws), national (Leader's Manual and other published Cursillo materials) and international (OMCC documents) levels. Consensus results when all members agree that enough prayer, reflection, discussion and discernment has occurred on a particular issue and that a particular way has emerged for how to proceed. If at this point, there are still member(s) who are still uncertain with the path being proposed, they either ask for further prayer, discussion and discernment, or they agree to move forward and will be loyal to the decision of the entire group, because the individual trusts the group as a whole and Spirit's movement amongst its members.

During this discussion, it became apparent that there is a definite misunderstanding and misperception as to how the Secretariat discusses, deliberates and exercises its responsibilities as the Secretariat is not like a city council that simply takes votes and abides by Robert's Rules of Order. Rather, the Secretariat is designed to be a small friendship group inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit as its members are entrusted with the leadership of the Movement for a predetermined amount of time.

8. Was there a motion made, seconded and carried for replacing Patrick as rector?

Initial answer: *Answer to #7 would apply here too.*

9. Patrick never received a rector's binder - Why not?

Initial answer: *It was not necessary. Patrick was asked to wait until a Men's Weekend was possible. Up until the time Patrick was disinvited to serve as rector there were not enough candidates to be able to make a decision on the Men's Weekend.*

*Reference: Leaders Manual page 47 and page 96*

Discussion centered around how it is that a weekend is confirmed (confirmation that a weekend will occur happens once enough candidate applications are on file—the current number is either 16 men's applications or 16 women's applications). Once a weekend has been confirmed, and the dates are finalized, THEN team selection begins. Until team selection begins, the Rector/Rectora is not in need of a binder as the binder only contains information regarding team formation and conduct of the 3 Day Weekend—information not necessary until a weekend is confirmed.

10. Is there currently a Spiritual Advisor on the Secretariat? If so, who is it, when was he/she appointed and by whom, how many secretariat meetings has he attended, and why wasn't it announced?

Initial answer: *Yes, Father Patrick Egan O.S.B. and Rev Daniel Laurita, Deacon. As Lay Director, I meet with each of them regularly.*

*Tim Vaughn who is in the Deaconate Program has made Cursillo his apostolate, and will be one of the Secretariat Spiritual Advisors once he is ordained at the end of the year.*

*The Spiritual Advisors are appointed by the Bishop. This will occur when the Bishop signs the updated Bylaws.*

*Reference: Leaders Manual page 72 "B"*

During discussion, clarification was made that Tim Vaughn has NOT been officially assigned by Bishop Baker yet (this cannot occur until after his diaconate ordination), therefore, there is a possibility that Tim will not be assigned to serve as a Spiritual Advisor for the Cursillo Movement in the Diocese of Birmingham.

11. Do the call-in SOL meetings "count" in regard to qualification to work a team? Do they "count" if the attendee lives less than one hour from the SOL location for that month?

Yes, call-in meetings "count" towards SOL qualification to work on a team. However, since the SOL is a community, a member must still physically attend at least 4 SOLs during the calendar year (1 per quarter and at any physical location—Birmingham area, Huntsville area or Cullman). Therefore, logic dictates that a person needs to attend 6 or more SOLs to be fully qualified to work on a 3 day Weekend as a core team member or table leader, one would need to call in to at least 2 remote SOLs to fulfill this requirement.

There was also confusion as to who could call in to, or use, a remote SOL. There was the misunderstanding that the rationale that had been given for why the Remote SOL was begun (so those who live more than 50 miles away from Birmingham or Huntsville could attend SOL), was thought to be a requirement for participation (i.e. anyone who was NOT outside those geographical boundaries wasn't allowed to call in). This is NOT the case. ANY interested Cursillista is welcome to call into and participate in the Remote SOL using the call-in number posted on the website and also included in the Monthly Report, and it will be annotated as part of an individual's SOL attendance.

12. What is the Secretariat doing to nurture our Cursillo community?

Initial answer: *Refer to Chapter 7 in the Leaders Manual page 67 to 69. The Secretariat puts a lot of effort into following the National Guidelines. We are aware of the local needs, and have made changes where necessary in deliberate and thoughtful manner, in an attempt to become an authentic Cursillo movement. We picked up from the Pastoral Plan that was put together in 2002. 15 years later in 2013, we are still trying to implement some of the same goals set in 2002.*

To nurture the community, each member of the Secretariat is striving to authentically live out the Movement in their daily lives to the best of their abilities, while also building upon and strengthening the Movement within their respective areas of responsibility.

Continued discussion on this question revealed the misperception that some of the “changes” (particularly the goal that all team members should come from the SOL) was something “new” instituted by members of this particular Secretariat, and NOT a continuation of the work that has come before. Reference was made to various efforts throughout the years that had been done to make the SOL what it should be—a place of formation, community and growth—so that the Movement in the Diocese of Birmingham would be able to enact its long standing goals and become a more authentic Movement.

Also, opportunities for Cursillistas to continue to grow in prayer, fellowship and their understanding of the Cursillo charism were mentioned. In particular, events such as the Cursillo Summer Social (June 29<sup>th</sup> this year), fall (November 16<sup>th</sup>) and Lenten (TBD) days of reflection, and also the “Cursillo de Cursillo” (a 3 day weekend for Cursillistas to deepen their understanding of the charism and methodology of the Movement) which will be held on September 25-28, 2014 at St Bernard’s Abbey in Cullman.

Finally, although the Secretariat has the LEAD for nurturing the Movement in the diocese, members of the Secretariat are not the only ones responsible for this mission, OR for doing the work associated with it. Rather, members of the SOL, Ultreyas, groups and individual Cursillistas should be actively doing the work of the Movement in their daily lives in their “moveable square meter,” but when possible, should also offer their time and talents to assist in the work of the Movement throughout the diocese (i.e. Palanca subcommittee, Communications subcommittee, etc.).

13. We understand that the goal is to bring all team members from the school of leaders. We also know that National leaves the attendance requirements up to the individual Secretariats. "More than six", with only eleven opportunities in a twelve month period is considered unreasonable by the majority of Cursillistas in our Diocese. Why has this bar been set so high? And so quickly? And without any announcement?

Initial answer: *The standard used to be five. When more SOL's were made available eg North and South on the same day and call in (Remote), the standard was raised from five to six (due to more options made available). This was announced by way of the web page and at SOL meetings.*

Discussion centered on the language "more than six" which seems to indicate that to be fully qualified SOL members, one must attend at least 7 SOLs in a calendar year. This is not the case, as 6 is the minimum standard. Therefore, it was agreed that the language "6 or more" would be a clearer way to state this requirement, and that this revised language would be incorporated into the revised Team member requirement letter.

Continued discussion revealed that many Cursillistas believe that having to attend more than 50% of meetings in a calendar year is too high for those who wish to be fully qualified members of the SOL and serve on a team. Reference was made once again to both the increased availability and closer geographical location of SOL meetings within the diocese, and that not all team members must be fully qualified (only core team and table leaders) to serve on a weekend, therefore, the requirement of 50% or more was not deemed to be onerous upon the membership.

14. How can we make the Cursillo web site more user friendly, and improve overall communication between the secretariat and the Cursillo community?.

Initial answer: *Good question. We need your input. Short answer. Cursillistas need to have the desire to participate and learn about the Cursillo movement. Ultreya reps need to distribute monthly newsletters, and at the very least each Ultreya should send a representative to the SOL.*

Discussion centered on the fact that many people have been unable to find information on the website easily, and have had to search in an attempt to retrieve information on a particular issue or topic. Continued discussion on this point emphasized that although some website changes can be made to help facilitate finding information, an individual Cursillista also has some responsibility in attempting to get information—if not from the website, then their Ultreya facilitator, or a member of the Secretariat—therefore, if one is looking for information and unable to find it, ASK the

question via a phone call or email, especially since all Secretariat members are open and available to discuss any questions or concerns that Cursillistas may have.