

## **STRUCTURE OF IDEAS (Part 2)**

*Source: National Cursillo Center Mailing – June 2004*

The first part of this article was included in our April 2004 National Mailing. Since our National Encounter is focusing on the book, “Structure of Ideas”, we continue to highlight the book in this article. The April Mailing focused on the Mentality of Cursillo. This second part focuses on the purpose of Cursillo. The book originally written in Spanish was later translated in English. Some parts of this article are quotes to keep to the original author’s intentions.

### **The Cursillo is for the Postcursillo**

- The Cursillos are not simply an instrument of Christian renewal.
- Cursillos are done for the postcursillo and not vice versa.
- It is geared to a vital Catholicism in a live and personal friendship with Christ.
- What is important is the capacity of the candidate to ferment the social mass.
- The first task is to seek and coach Christians capable of vertebrate Christianity in their communities and environments. (*Note: vertebrate = being the backbone; structure*)
- The second task is that each one of the chosen knows how to work efficiently in their own world and in their environments.

### **To build and to Vertebrate (*Structure*) Christianity**

- The Cursillos are not only "to save souls", but to put the springs (*source*) of human life to the service of the divine.
- Instill in the individual a concept of Christ and of His Church, as point of departure towards the transformation of the worldly environments.
- To situate the individual in the precise place in his own world or environment, in a common effort to transform the environments.
- More than the three days of Cursillo, what is important is what results from them – its practical realization in the postcursillo.
- The eagerness for the methodology induces us to forget the fundamental thing, which is the mentality of the Movement: The dynamic vision of a militant Catholicism, alive, fermenting and operating in the Church.
- Deep Knowledge of today’s man, learned in the same life, in the mass in which the evangelical ferment must enliven.
- Those farthest away can become the most dynamic apostles.
- Tense efforts to find a concrete technique of execution that will keep in mind the problems and demands of each individual.

### **The Person - the Laity - Ferment of its world**

- The need to insert Christ in a pagan world, into its structures, but a world composed of Christian individuals.

- Before we can balance the world, we must balance the man. (*the person*).
- The Cursillo looks at the individual (*person*) not as a goal, but as the point of departure. (*place to begin.*)
- It is not a means to resolve problems; it is not to seek the solution of the individual, but that the individual can “be” the solution, and incite him to be ferment and worker of the Church.
- The Cursillo is to dilate in the postcursillo the community spirit which is lived in the three days. It is to “discover the apostle” not to “order an apostolate”.
- The Movement looks at the man with a vision of totality seeking integral solutions. It confronts the man with his problems and his personal history and Christ is presented as the only and total solution.
- Without the knowledge of the concrete (*whole*) man, it would be difficult to achieve the dialogue which would lead to his salvation. This is a living knowledge of his troubles and problems not taken from manuals or statistics, but learned from life.
- The soul must confront its problem and confront the solution with Christ.
- The laity must be ferment in the mass (*midst*) of his world. The Movement cannot reach directly all the mass (*people*), but it can arrive at the majority through those who are vertebrae.

The laity does present the Church by means of the fulfillment of its temporary commitment.

- The selection of the fields for the apostles is the personal responsibility of the individual. His life, his life testimony are already an apostolate.
- The laity discovers his rights and his obligation in baptism. He is destined to make the Church present in the world in which he lives.
- The Cursillos are not associations.
- The group reunion is the exclusive concern of the laity.
- The postcursillo is essentially community. It is in the community that one looks for and finds the strength of ones perseverance and the most efficient way to spread the apostolic action.
- The Ultreya and the Closing - instruments for the insertion of the laity in the world; an opening to the community. It is not based on the parish, but on the environment.

### **Fidelity to its Essence**

- The Cursillos are to be done as they are, not as each one considers best.
- The excessive valorization of the method leaving the mentality to the side is the root of many misunderstandings.
- The cursillista acts like an individual, not as a group, in the midst of the associations.
- Norm: do the things, before theorizing upon them.
- The technique should be that which better facilitates living together with humans.

- The Cursillos were not born to sensitize a group of consciences, but to make them responsible.
- The fundamental apostolic responsibility of the laity is to carry Christ to its world by the testimony of his own life.
- The Cursillo supposes a study of the community and of those that can most influence its climate and orientation; the election of these vertebrae persons. Their return to their own environments and their action as ferment to the large majority that are unable to attend a cursillo.

### **Essence and Purpose: What They Are and What They Intend**

They are a method to enable the baptized with the knowledge, conviction, experience and co experience of what is fundamental to being a Christian; that engenders an apostolic movement tending to vertebrate (*structure*) Christianity in society.

- A. Method in general: way and order to arrange and to employ certain means perfectly known, to reach with greater probability, promptness and perfection a proposed end.
- B. Movement in general: nuclei denser each time, of men that: Have incarnated some principles. Framed in a methodology. Or they were prompted by a spirit, to pursue a determined ideal.

Development of the definition.

1. Method of Cursillos: procedure to give to the baptized knowledge, conviction, experience and co experience of what is fundamental to being a Christian.

The fundamental Christian truth and life:

Truth: God the Father present in Christ, who is prolonged through his Spirit in the Church by Grace.

Life: Love God (He loved us first). God's love for our neighbor. Love to the world because God loves it. (God so loved the world that He gave His Son).

If the fundamental lacks, then Christianity does not exist: It is that which makes us be Christians, that which obligates all Christians, that which we should live if we want to be Christians.

2. The Cursillo Movement pursues the Christian vertebration of society. To vertebrate Christianity in our society is to stir up groups of Christians, that upon living the fundamental, in an authentic way, continuously and progressively, impregnate with criteria and Christian spirit the environments and structures which are immersed in the exercise of their own vocation.

*For this we need two conditions:*

- A. That they live the Christian fundamental where God planted them, in order that the ferment is inside the mass. This does not mean that we are going to leave the road of normality, or infiltrate in other environments, leaving those where the Lord has placed us.
- B. That we live the fundamental Christianity not by ourselves, but in community, forming groups that will provide a more authentic, continuous and progressive Christianity.

To conclude with this article, it would be important to stress again the next and last purpose of the Cursillos in Christianity Movement, with Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation – *Evangelii Nuntiandi* on the significance of evangelization. This letter describes the significance of the interior change in man in order “to evangelize”. *“For the Church, evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new: ‘Now I am making the whole of creation new.’ But there is no new humanity if there are not first of all new persons renewed by Baptism and by lives lived according to the Gospel. The purpose of evangelization is therefore precisely this interior change, and if it had to be expressed in one sentence the best way of stating it would be to say that the Church evangelizes when she seeks to convert, solely through the Divine power of the message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieu which are theirs.”* (Pope Paul IV, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, paragraph #18)

De Colores - Jorge Barceló

(References: Vertebation of Ideas - Eduardo Bonnín, Bernardo Vadell and Francisco Forteza; Mentality of the Cursillos in Christianity - Msgr. Jaime Capó; Editions Aguas Buenas - Msgr. Jaime Capó; History and Memory of Cursillos - F. Forteza; Cursillos of Cursillos - National Secretariat of Cursillos).

This concludes our two-part series on the Structure of Ideas.