

MESSAGE FROM OUR NATIONAL PRESIDENT, TREVOR KING

We're in LOCKDOWN!

But we will rise to these challenges!

As I write this in Easter Week we should have been preparing for our BACC AGM in early May and I should have had just 3 weeks left as your National President, ready to hand over to my successor Beth Roberts. But life has taken the strangest of turns and we are all locked in a kind of parallel universe with normal life on hold indefinitely.

Following the guidance from the UK Government and in accordance with the lockdown restrictions we are now under, we have had to postpone the AGM along with all other Cursillo events up to the summer. This year's CLW weekends have been cancelled (and next year's hastily rearranged so as to minimize financial losses) and a dozen or so Cursillo weekends all over the country have been postponed.



But all this is as nothing compared to the disruption to personal lives, the loneliness of those in lockdown on their own, the separation from loved ones, and the fear and grief of those directly affected by the virus and its consequences. Many others have written far more eloquently than I could about the current situation, not least our National Spiritual Director Stephen. His very thought-provoking letter to us all (that you have hopefully already received) is reprinted in this newsletter on p 21.

I just hope and pray that you and your loved ones are safe and well and that if you are vulnerable and isolated you are getting the help and support you need. I know that many Cursillistas are rising to the challenge and are providing wonderful support to their churches and communities. Many are key workers still and others who have recently retired have responded to the call to return to the NHS and other key roles.

As Stephen said, “In a way this situation opens a door for us to put our faith into practice in ways we might not have previously considered or thought appropriate. We will all be surrounded by those who need us to be the hands and feet of Christ right now. Remember the promise? ‘Christ is counting on you...’”

We are hoping and praying that life will be back to normal by September so that the **London National Ultreya on Saturday 5th** can go ahead as planned. I am staying in post until then and it is intended that **this year’s AGM will take place on the evening of Friday 4th September** at St Paul’s Church Hall, Marylebone. (The address is 5 Rossmore Rd, Marylebone, London NW1 6NJ.) Beth will be commissioned as the new President during the Saturday afternoon Eucharist in Southwark Cathedral by one of the Bishops who will be present.

So that everyone is able to book their accommodation in London and arrange their travel in good time we intend to make a decision as to whether the National Ultreya is going ahead or not at the end of May. However, we would encourage you to register your intention to attend the event: the details are on page 7, booking form on page 22.

We are also advertising our biennial Conference at Swanwick, Derbyshire which this year is from Friday 13th to Sunday 15th November (see page 14). We’re not taking bookings for it yet due to the current situation but as soon as we can we’ll let everyone know via the usual email channels.

I do hope that you find the articles in this edition of BACC Pages helpful, entertaining or informative and I look forward to seeing many of you in London in September. My thanks to everyone who has contributed.

Cursillo is all about supporting and encouraging each other as fellow Christians, as brothers and sisters in Christ, in all circumstances but even more in times like these. I know that, if you are able to, you are rising to the challenge.

ULTREYA!

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National Spiritual Director

Rev Stephen Bowring

*suggests taking a creative
approach to staffing issues*



One of the issues most frequently raised with me concerns persuading people to take on diocesan roles. Not finding willing volunteers for secretariat positions can be a real inconvenience, but when we are struggling to find diocesan Lay and Spiritual Directors the situation is crucial.

The first thing to take note of is that it's not just *your* Cursillo that has problems. We all know and appreciate the wisdom of identifying a successor well in advance and asking them to shadow the post-holder for a year before taking it on themselves for a maximum of three years, BUT – things don't always go to plan. There can be a number of perfectly legitimate reasons why people have to drop out, or we can “*seek and not find.*” What do we do?

Share the load

I think one significant problem we make for ourselves arises out of the best of intentions: each Lay and Spiritual Director receives a “package” of duties and responsibilities from their predecessor, and during their turn of office often adds new things to it in their enthusiasm without losing anything from before. The job gets bigger and more demanding at every change. We all want to do the best we can for Cursillo, but somebody has to grasp the nettle and say “Why do I have to do this?” and identify the basic elements of what is needed to be effective, and then interpret that in their own way. If the job is still too onerous, then maybe it's time to look at sharing the load. Why not have joint Lay Directors or Spiritual Directors? This model has worked well (for both roles) already in some places. Every situation is unique, but we may be able to share useful experience.

Spiritual Directors

It seems that potential Spiritual Directors are often put off by an expectation that they personally will be on staff for every weekend. As a former Spiritual Director (first for Leicester, and then twice for Ely) I always tried to have two other priests serve on the weekend, one experienced, the other learning the ropes. I just popped up for the commissioning service at the beginning, and the closing service at the end – emphasising the extent and linkage of the 4th Day community. All very well, I hear you say, if you've got plenty of Cursillo priests to draw on, which sort of brings me to another point, about co-operation.

There is a great disparity between our active dioceses when it comes to potential weekend staff, both lay and ordained. With the communication technology at our disposal these days, and with the Local Area

Representatives we have in place, we can easily lift our eyes beyond diocesan borders and “put out a call” for staff from outside our own diocese. The cross-fertilisation this encourages can be a very helpful and healthy too.

Music gophers

I know that one particular role that can be difficult to fill on a weekend is that of Music Gopher. Musicians who can take on the duties of Music Gopher on a weekend are few and far between generally speaking. I am not aware of any diocese or area that has a surfeit of musicians waiting and anxious for the opportunity to serve in this way. One possibility might be that we raise a list or set of lists that could be available across borders, so to speak. Churches are facing this problem everywhere, and one solution in regular practice is the use of musical accompaniment CDs such as those produced by Kevin Mayhew (“No organist?: no problem.” series) Is it worth looking at the provision of a set of music resources including these on a national or area basis to spread the financial load for individual dioceses?

Comments welcome!

If you are interested in pursuing any of these ideas, or have suggestions or comments that might help others, please do speak to your Area Rep or any member of the Standing Committee, or contact me at: nsd@anglicancursillo.co.uk



Cursillo is a movement of the Church providing a method by which Christians are empowered to grow through prayer, study and action and enabled to share God’s love with everyone.

ACTION TALK BY SANDY HARRIS

Being there for others is what it's all about



It was after years of denial, then years of exploring and searching, that at age 19, I was confirmed. From that moment my faith was solid, important to me - but it was Cursillo that really 'woke me up' as a Christian; made me realise faith is not a private thing but must be shared; needs to be supported by regular prayer and learning; and then expressed in service and action.

I'd attended Ultreyas and Gatherings for a long while before being able to make my Cursillo and that didn't detract from the weekend experience at all. Eventually I was able to live in that amazing Christian community for those 3 days that changed me – this chrysalis became a butterfly!

It was wonderful to be away from the normal pressures of everyday life; it was totally alien to have time to think of just myself! It was pretty emotional to 'dump' all the baggage I was carrying. My Cursillo weekend re-made me and I was ready to begin my 4th day.

I was on cloud 9 and yes, people do need help to come down from the mountain-top after a weekend. But I was very grateful to my sponsor and reunion group. I came home having experienced God's love in a way I'd never known before. I was so brimming over with the joy of having a deepened faith, that it just spilled out of me! I felt incredibly fortunate and wanted everyone to have what I'd been given, and those feelings have never left me. That's what my 4th day is all about.

I worry that Lay action talks, although undoubtedly inspiring, can be off-putting when folk seem to be doing such a lot of amazing things - but big opportunities don't necessarily come to us all. As I look back over my many 4th day years, I know it's the loyal Cursillo foot-soldiers, just getting on with what we do, who are the main bedrock.

Cursillo gave me a faith-filled family with whom to share my ups and downs; people to encourage me and whom I'll never forget. That's why an important part of my 4th day is to try to 'be there' for others, especially new Cursillistas. It's certainly not easy when we're all so busy is it? And it *is* a good rule to state, "Service to parish should come before Cursillo." There is so much to do at church, but trying to get to Cursillo, phoning folk, reminding other drivers and filling my car, is for me an important 4th day commitment, although of course I sometimes fail.

Cursillo is that safe place where we can learn and share things that other people would think odd. A dear Cursillista once told me of an evening when, sitting on his settee at home with his Cursillista wife he, "Just knew he had to get up and drive across town to knock on the door of someone he didn't know." He discovered he truly was needed there at that time!

Maybe that's why, when rushing home late from shopping one Saturday, I finally responded to an odd feeling inside. "Turn left and go to see that person you once, a couple of years ago, gave a lift home. "What

nonsense!" I thought! "It's time to get the family's lunch. That's what I should be doing!" Now this isn't any credit to me at all for I tried so hard to just hurry home. I tried hard to resist, but then gave in. I found Noreen, who I'd no idea had health issues, with her oxygen cylinder virtually empty and her husband in the kitchen, head on the draining board, bent over in tears, fearing the weekend ahead and not knowing how to cope with anything anymore.

I was able to make phone calls, get emergency social services quickly on board and things were then set up for better care in the future. I suppose after a quiet time at the start of the day, when we've said, "Use me God if you will," we never know what He'll do!

Cursillo is one of the few places where one can share an event like that without being thought a nutcase. So Cursillo taught me to listen and offer myself and then be braver in responding. That's what I try to do; small actions are just as important as bigger ones.

What am I doing nowadays with my 4th day? Like you, just taking my turn on all the usual rotas keeps me busy, and where would our churches be without people to do that? Some other opportunities that have come to me are:

- Sorting the 'Welcomers' to encourage a culture where someone who has greeted a stranger one week, looks out for them again when they're not on duty, thus helping new folk to feel they're becoming fully part of our church family. People are great at that now. I'm trying to include more children on the welcome team too, so that they can spend time in the porch with different adults, can learn from helping and feel they also are valued workers.

Getting the Rambling Group off the ground. I'm not physically up to walking with them but I finally persuaded someone to take responsibility for organising it. I just promote it with publicity. Rambling enables our church folk to literally walk alongside people who think a church is something they'd avoid. I look out for opportunities to nudge the walkers to take a new rambler to Men's Breakfast. Three male, non-church ramblers now regularly attend that 'outreach meal with discussion' and thanks to encouragement from another Cursillista they even came with us on a parish weekend away. (It was great to overhear one of them trying to persuade another to join us in one of our worship sessions!)

With regard to actually attending Cursillo meetings, surely we can't let ourselves become like those sadly half-hearted Christians who say they "have a faith but don't need to go to church." Good people yes, likely leading exemplary lives, but they are missing out.

We Cursillistas need to keep in touch with our Cursillo base. In Christian community we can be refuelled, powered up, get a regular spiritual MOT in a way that's different from, and extra to, all that we're glad our churches give us. Then we can operate more efficiently. It is hard to find the time when our parish work is so important - and I know only too well that as we get older, we do seem to get more tired don't we?!

But I definitely believe that attending Cursillo whenever we can is part of looking after our own spiritual well-being - and anyway, how can we bring a possible newcomer if there's hardly anyone present to introduce them to! There can never be a right time to say, 'We've done our bit and now pass the baton to new people.' Everyone is always needed.

I'm passionate about Cursillo because it made me passionate about my faith - and amongst all the busyness, it helps keep me that way. I want other people to be able to gain what I'm so grateful Cursillo has given me. ULTREYA!

Sandy is BACC Rep, Blackburn Cursillo

Cursillo GB National Ultreya 2020

hosted jointly by
the Dioceses of Southwark and London
Saturday 5th September



- 10.00** **Walk of Witness from the steps of St Paul's Cathedral over the Millennium Bridge to Southwark Cathedral.**
- 11.00** **Ultreya in Southwark Cathedral**
- 2.00** **Eucharist and commissioning of new BACC President**

London is split into two dioceses: south of the river is Southwark, overseen by Bishop Christopher Chessun; north of the river is London, overseen by Bishop Sarah Mullally. The London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace is situated in Southwark diocese while London Diocese is home to St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

The National Ultreya will begin with a Walk of Witness from the steps of St Paul's, down to the river Thames and across the Millennium Bridge towards Tate Modern, then along the South Bank passing Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and the Golden Hind en-route to Southwark Cathedral.

It's going to be a fabulous day and the Walk of Witness will be a sight to behold. Refreshments will be available at both cathedrals. Bring your own lunch or buy food from all parts of the world at London Borough Market just a few yards from Southwark Cathedral.

No formal evening entertainment is planned but, if enough folk express an interest, an early evening boat trip along the Thames and a guided tour of the Globe Theatre may be arranged. Equally no accommodation has been arranged but there is, of course, a wide range of options in and around London.

As always, the National Ultreya is free to attend but you need to register so that we know how many are coming. Please go to Southwark Cursillo's website to register.

<https://www.southwarkcursillo.org/register-ultreya-gb-2020>

[booking form on Page 22](#)



That “other-sort-of-weekend-thing”

By Rev Stephen Bowring, National Spiritual Director.

When Cursillo in Scotland was hit by the *Beast from the East* in 2018 they had to postpone a planned Cursillo weekend at very short notice. The venue they use could only offer a shorter slot as an alternative later that year, and so the staff succeeded in compressing a full Cursillo programme into the time available. The result was a great success and has ultimately led to BACC trialling this new format again in Scotland and also in Southwell and Notts and Chelmsford dioceses.

You may have noticed that I have carefully avoided referring to this 'new format' as a “two-day weekend.” This is the expression that has been used widely, but it really isn't helpful for a number of reasons:

Firstly, the new format begins on one evening (usually Friday) and takes up the next two days. That, dear friends, to most people is *not* a “two-day” weekend, it's three! We've battled long enough with explaining that “Cursillo uses the Hebrew day which begins at sunset, so Thursday evening to Sunday afternoon is only three days. Strange how many people want us to drop all the Spanish words we use in Cursillo (which are no more than labels) but don't give a second thought to hanging onto a Middle Eastern timekeeping system that confuses everybody! Try telling folks at Friday dinnertime that “we are now beginning our second day...” and look at the reaction. Joking aside, a Cursillo is meant to challenge us *spiritually* not *chronologically*, and this 'day' business is at best a distraction from our real purpose.

Secondly, those of us who are steeped in the traditional format of three theoretical days mapped into four actual days are using the expression “two-day weekend” to differentiate from what we know. I had the honour of staffing on the second Scotland weekend in the new format, and inadvertently dropped the expression “two-day weekend” which was met by blank stares – not just from the new pilgrims but also those staff who had been participants on the first weekend. After all, they were there from Friday to Sunday weren't they?

Thirdly, and following on from that, there is inevitably a sense that somehow a “two-day” weekend is 'reduced' or otherwise 'inferior,' and not really *proper* for a three-day movement. At a recent BACC Standing Committee we struggled to find another name that *didn't* imply a watering-down or weakening: “condensed,” “compressed,” “shortened,” - all of these and several more were rejected. In the end we decoded we just call **either** form “a Cursillo,” which is of course Spanish for “short course” anyway.

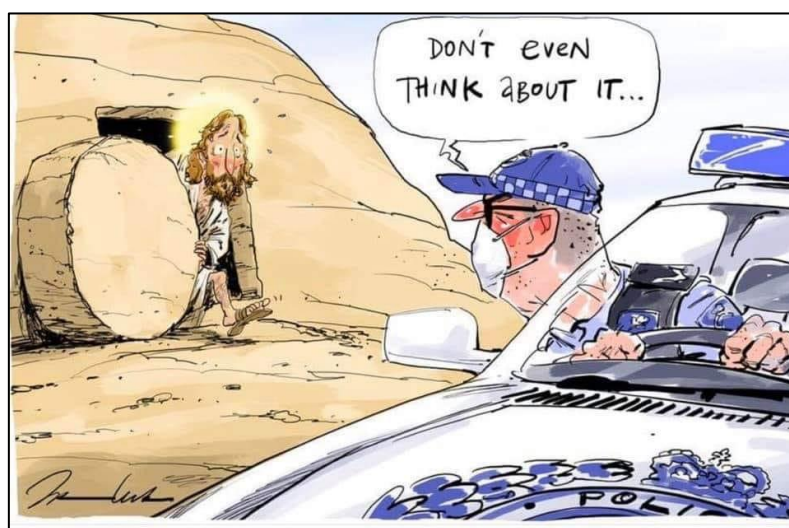
There will be many Cursillistas, particularly those who made their Cursillo before more recent radical reforms and who have not been on a recent CLW, who will be thinking “*how can you possibly fit the already packed Cursillo programme into less time – it's frenetic enough as it is?*”

Well, two over-arching principles have guided new developments in our Cursillo thinking in recent years: “Fourth-day first,” and “What's *essential* in an *authentic* Cursillo weekend?” The weekend itself is important but is not the whole Cursillo experience; we encourage prospective Cursillistas to attend Ultreyas and Group Reunions *before* embarking on a weekend, and we want people to be well-prepared and informed beforehand. To say to people “*Oh, it's just wonderful, but I can't tell you anything about it because that would spoil it*” is **NOT** acceptable. It is God who supplies the “surprises,” not us.

A Cursillo is an **experience** – you can explain every detail of the programme to someone and they will still be astonished when it happens. All of which feeds into a radical approach to authenticity that has led in many dioceses to pruning out so much that was unnecessary or even unhelpful to the underlying message and purpose of the Cursillo. Some of these good things have been moved into Fourth Day activities where appropriate. Those who have prayerfully and diligently put together a Cursillo programme in the new format have reported that the time constraints have actually refined and focussed the delivery in a very positive way. All this needs addressing and we are still working on sharing best practice, but these are exciting times.

Recent feedback to the BACC Standing Committee showed many dioceses are keen to start using the alternative format. There are practical and financial advantages in booking venues, but this shouldn't be our driving factor. We are working on a revision of weekend talk guidelines which will take into account the differing lengths of time that may be allotted to the talks. We are also processing feedback from our pilot schemes to see how we could best support dioceses with materials and advice. One point which needs careful consideration is how we run the two formats alongside each other. We are open to ideas and will keep you informed as we develop the options. As I said, these are exciting times!

Note from Trevor King, National President: *The BACC Standing Committee authorised the trial of the ‘new format’ weekends in 2018/19 and there was a full discussion of the pros and cons at the full BACC meeting last November. Diocesan Secretariats have been asked to discuss the issue fully so that a final decision whether to formally authorise the alternative format can be made at this year's AGM.*





EXTREME RETIREMENT!

A CLERGYMAN'S WITNESS TALK!

Rev Tony Price, SD Oxford Cursillo

Psalm 71.18 (BCP): Forsake me not, O God, when I am old and grey-headed: until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to all them that are yet for to come.

But just how can we do that when we face the challenges and opportunities of retirement?

I retired 3½ years ago after 37 years of parish ministry, the last 25 of those in Marston and Elsfield. Clergy retirement is something I like to think of as **Extreme Retirement**: it involves giving up job, home, church and community, and moving away from friends. (Think of the number of clergy who just can't cope with that, and either drop dead within months, or make a nuisance of themselves to the vicar of whatever parish they move to.)

I knew that wherever we moved to, we probably wouldn't find a church where they did things properly. I hadn't been fully prepared for just how *much* they wouldn't do things properly. It turns out that retirement for clergy (perhaps for every retiring person?) can be a bumpy spiritual journey. So the questions I'm considering are:

- How can we negotiate this spiritual journey of retirement?
- What is God's call to the retired?
- (Specifically) What is God calling me to be/do?

What do retired people commonly find themselves doing? The list may include gardening, playing golf, or bowls, watching TV, perpetual holidays (squandering the children's inheritance) and much more. These are great, but are they the most worthwhile, profitable, godly ways to use the freedoms of old age? Quite often retirement may also include many other, less 'selfish' activities that we might not have imagined or chosen for ourselves. Such as:

- Caring. For grandchildren, even parents, nowadays, or perhaps an increasingly frail spouse.
- Health - an increasing (pre-)occupation. We've already spent more hours in hospital waiting rooms than in the whole of our previous life.
- Volunteering, in charity shops etc.
- Keeping the Church going. It was my dream, as a working vicar, that the active recently retired would take on all those roles on the PCC and its committees. It was distressing when they cried off because e.g. they 'had to' look after grandchildren every day. When we say we 'have to' do something in retirement, I think it's important to remember and be honest that we probably have a choice about what we 'have to' do. – There's always a need for discernment about how God really calls us to use our time.

We may draw some guidance from the ideas of the spiritual life-journey or life-stages in Indian, Hindu thought. The 4 *ashramas* or stages of life are:

1. Student – when the young person trains for life through childhood and education.
2. Householder – when the adult works to provide for their own home, family and children.
3. Hermit in retreat – when the children are grown up, and the mature adult can devote themselves to prayer and spiritual exercises.
4. Wandering recluse – the final phase, when they leave earthly possessions behind and live as a holy beggar. (I'm not sure how many actually get to this stage – perhaps it's more of an ideal or aspiration?)

My early thoughts about what I would be called to do in retirement included an idea that I would be able to engage in serious 'End of Life' work: devoting more time to prayer, spiritual reading, reflection, contemplation, so as to prepare to meet my God (though not any time too soon, I hoped).

But also to share my wisdom (?) and remaining gifts with others, even help other retirees, because although there's increasing awareness of the importance of spirituality in old age, I'm not sure how much is being done other than churches running hymn singing in care homes. And even though the churches are not at all short of members in their 70s and upwards, I'm not sure they really give much thought or teaching for spirituality specifically for the older members of the body of Christ. Why is this, I wonder?

Of course, I didn't want to give up the opportunities for occasional preaching and priestly ministry, even if they do arise largely from the services the vicar doesn't want to do himself. (That's OK by me, I really *enjoy* the 8am BCP service.)

And I was happy to agree to be Spiritual Director for Oxford Cursillo. I hoped to be able to devote time and energy to this... BUT! Much of my first year in office was taken up with my own poor health following (successful) prostate surgery, but then the rare, unusual, and elusive complications which followed from that, and which are still requiring ongoing procedures. Yet this is still an important part of my plan about what I want to be doing.

So that's a kind of summary and reflection on my 'apostolic action' in retirement. I'm sure a lot of those thoughts are not peculiar to clergy retirement, but common to all of us. I want to end it with three encouragements:

1. Let's see retirement as a wonderful opportunity to make progress in our spiritual journey or pilgrimage. We've not arrived yet! The best is yet to come! I once heard it said of someone: "Lifelong learning is her idea of a good time"; and that has been my ambition ever since.
2. The importance of continuing discernment. What is God calling me/you to be and do? It might well have changed since we first retired. Use prayer and spiritual direction, to seek this.
3. (And because this is a critical time in many ways for Cursillo, in Oxford Diocese and nationally) Could you consider giving a part of your time and energy to serving the Cursillo movement? On the Secretariat, in the Servant Community, or in other ways. If you would like to learn more about some of the exciting opportunities (!) for service that exist, please get in touch with any member of your diocesan Secretariat. When they recover from their astonishment and pick themselves up off the floor, they will welcome your interest with open arms.

Ultreya!

Why not try.... meditating?

Suggests Poppy Weston, BACC Rep St David's Diocese

For all those who go to church most Sundays, the sudden and complete shutdown of the churches in response to the Coronavirus pandemic must have come as a shock – for some, an enormous shock. And the clergy, like everyone else, are working on imaginative ways that they offer support within these constraints.



So what can we do at home on our own to feel we are still part of a worshipping community? Well, one possibility, perhaps surprising and initially unfamiliar, is to try Christian Meditation. Far from being a strange, 'foreign' custom, a simple form of meditation has been part of the Christian tradition right back to the early centuries, and even to Jesus himself. It just got rather lost in more recent times. For the last 50 years or so, the tradition has been revived, and there is now a World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) – ecumenical, and with a strong presence in the UK.

WCCM recommends a short time of meditation – about 20 minutes – twice a day. The short version of 'How to meditate' is in the box below. But if you have internet access, it's best to go the website: either www.wccm.org or (for the UK) www.christianmeditation.org.uk. There is masses of help, resources and information on these websites.

As they all say, meditating is 'simple, but not easy'. But, with practice and perseverance it will bring rewards, and perhaps a new dimension to your spiritual life. It's for everyone – young (including children!), old, new Christians and (really!) old hands, and those whose links to 'church' are at best tenuous. And, for all of us stuck at home, you become part of a very real, though invisible, worldwide Christian community.

Sit down. Sit still with your back straight. Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert. Then interiorly, silently begin to recite a single word – a prayer word or mantra. We recommend the ancient Christian prayer-word "Maranatha". Say it as four equal syllables. Breathe normally and give your full attention to the word as you say it, silently, gently, faithfully and - above all - simply.

The essence of meditation is simplicity. Stay with the same word during the whole meditation and in each meditation day to day. Don't visualise but listen to the word, as you say it. Let go of all thoughts (even good thoughts), images and other words. Don't fight your distractions: let them go by saying your word faithfully, gently and attentively and returning to it as soon as you realise you have stopped saying or it or when your attention wanders.

Meditate twice a day, morning and evening, for between 20 and 30 minutes. It may take a time to develop this discipline and the support of a tradition and community is always helpful.

To find out more, go to www.wccm.org and www.christianmeditation.org.uk



Why not try ...keeping a spiritual journal?

Suggests Barbara Essam, secretary of Oxford Cursillo

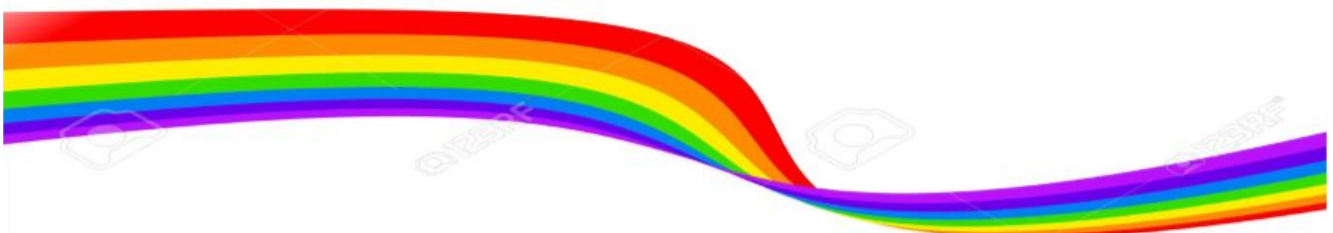
If you are a Cursillista who is in regular spiritual direction you are probably familiar with the use of a spiritual journal, but others may not have come across it as a possible tool for your spiritual journey and prayer life.

I have been meeting with a spiritual director for about a year and she encouraged me to start journaling from early on in our sessions. I have found it a very helpful way of documenting my reactions to events in my daily life, my thoughts and feelings, doubts and questions, for my own reflection and prayer, or sometimes as a resource for later discussion. It has helped me too in being aware of God's presence in my life, being more attentive and making time to look back, process and move on. I also use it to note down helpful or inspiring passages from books or bible verses I have read, and I sometimes include postcards of artworks I have enjoyed or photos, maybe articles or special service sheets.

I like writing so it has not been difficult for me, but there is no reason why a journal shouldn't be made up of drawings, paintings, photos or craftwork; whichever means of expression you prefer or find helpful. A journal isn't just about noting the good things that happen to you; it is a great way of privately venting frustration, anger, hurt, or disappointment for instance, or any other emotion you want to express. It also doesn't have to be a carefully written and correctly spelled special notebook; some people journal using their phone or laptop. It is your journal, personal to you and for your eyes only. It is not necessarily a diary that has to be kept on a daily basis; you can add to it as and when you want, but preferably by setting aside time on a regular basis.

David Lawrence has summed it up very well: "A spiritual journal is an ordinary, honest record of what is going on in your life, how you feel about it and your awareness of where God is in it all.....It is a record, which aids reflection and thus becomes a means of responding to God's call to deepening discipleship". This quotation is taken from his article, Keeping a Spiritual Journal: www.methodist.org.uk/media/5027/dd-explore-devotion-keeping-a-spiritual-journal-0313.pdf

If you're not already journaling, why not give it a try!





The British Anglican **CURSILLO**[®] Council

ANGLICAN CURSILLO NATIONAL CONFERENCE # 8

WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?

Where were we, where are we, and where are we going?

Friday 13th to Sunday 15th November 2020

The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Alfreton, Derbyshire. DE55 1AU



We look forward to sharing time with you at our biennial conference. The BACC biennial Cursillo Conference aims to inspire and encourage through teaching, workshops, worship and prayer.

The theme of the weekend will be ‘Who do we think we are?’ and it will be led by our National Spiritual Director Rev’d Stephen Bowring and Beth Roberts who will, by then, be our President.

There will be entertainment (yet to be finalised) on the Saturday evening.

Whilst it is primarily for Diocesan Lay Directors, Spiritual Directors & BACC Reps and all Standing Committee members (the Council members who will have priority booking) other Cursillistas will be very welcome to come if there is space.

The Hayes, in Swanwick, Derbyshire, has been a Christian Conference Centre since 1911. Set in beautiful Derbyshire countryside with easy road, rail and air links, the Centre is comfortable and well equipped. You can get directions via the Hayes web page. www.cct.org.uk

The full cost is £185 per person.

(This covers accommodation and all meals from Friday evening dinner to Sunday lunch)

Saturday Day Visitor £35.00.

(Includes lunch and afternoon tea. Spaces are limited so please reserve early).

Given the current Covid-19 pandemic and the uncertainty around future events we are not taking bookings yet. As soon as we can be sure that the Conference can definitely go ahead we will circulate all dioceses and start doing so.

BUT PLEASE PUT THE DATES IN YOUR DIARY NOW!

The Reverend Pauline Lucas

Spiritual Director Chichester Cursillo 2016 -2019 passed away suddenly on Good Friday

A TRIBUTE AND A POEM

On Holy Saturday 2020 time stopped, momentarily, with that phone call from Stephen, sobbing, to tell me that his beloved Pauline had died, so suddenly, the day before. One moment they had shared time in the sunshine in the vicarage garden, the next he found her on the kitchen floor.

Words? What words could convey the feelings of that moment? I hope I spoke something of comfort, but what? Too many question marks; too many questions. Everything seems shut down, but we will try to find some words, that may begin to express something of who Pauline was and is for us, and the love of Christ that she so generously shared among us. We will try

Pauline seems to have been there forever, just there. Never dominant, just there. Her endless enthusiasm, that throaty laugh, oh, and the cigarette!

And with Pauline came Stephen. It was together that I first noticed them, camping in some field or other, on another diocesan youth adventure. Stephen's music was/is always inspiring, but then Pauline enthusing, laughing, sleeves rolled up, in the thick of it, whether a discussion group, field game, or washing up.

We go our separate ways, and along the way, through our area bishop, my wife and I are introduced to Cursillo. Nothing happening in the Chichester diocese, so we have to go back to our roots, in Exeter, to make our Cursillo, in 1999. Driving the long drive back home, we are both inspired and agree we want to get involved.

Same bishop sets up a steering committee, we are both involved. My wife finds herself treasurer. The Spiritual director moves on, Bishop looks around for a priest who has made his Cursillo. From a minority of one, I become SD! Oh yes, the Spirit moves in mysterious ways.



In Memoriam By Victoria Bruce

*For a second you were flying
like you always wanted to
Now you'll fly forever
In skies of azure blue
We'll see your smile in every ray
Of sunshine after rain
And hear the echo of your
laughter
Over all the pain
The world's a little quieter now
The colours have lost their hue
The birds are singing softly
And our hearts are missing you
Each time we see a little cloud
Or a rainbow soaring high
We'll think of you and gently
Wipe a tear from our eye.*

Then the same bishop moves me to the parish of Pagham. After a while who turned up, but Pauline and Stephen, living in the area. My heart skipped a beat: Youth camp in a parish! Cursillo in a parish! How lucky am I, how lucky are we!

Parish life continues, the Spirit moves, people respond, numbers go up, exhausting, yet wonderful. And there she is, Pauline enthusing, laughing, sleeves rolled up, in the thick of it. Life continues, apace.



Then, in quieter moments, discussions take place, thoughts are expressed, hopes are raised, Pauline feels strangely called, to priesthood. Several of us think “strangely”? Not really. When the Spirit prompts, wonderful things happen.

Cursillo didn’t take off in the parish right away, but when it did, Pauline and Stephen became involved enthusing, laughing, sleeves rolled up, in the thick of it. And what wonderful contributions they both made in their very individualistic ways. We shared many weekends, wonderful times when we were so privileged to experience the Spirit at work in so many lives.

In fact later, when as a committee, we felt it right to introduce two Spiritual Directors in the Chichester diocese, Pauline and I shared that role. What a joy. But the Spirit had already continued to work in and through Pauline. She responded to the Spirit’s call, was ordained Deacon and then Priest. She served her title at Seaford (where Cursillo was duly planted) and then in 2017 was appointed Parish Priest at Kirdford. Once again, Cursillo was introduced, along with many other things that showed so much promise in that lovely parish community.

In fact Holy Saturday was the third anniversary of her licensing at Kirdford. I had remembered that in our morning prayer; such a brief time before receiving that devastating news. The feeling is still so numbing, and will continue for some time, until we can truly celebrate Pauline’s life. In the meantime, we try to hold Stephen and their children and grandchildren in our prayers. Pauline was a wonderful person.

What you saw was what you got, and you got an awful lot of her Christian faith, never dogmatically, but shining out of her. She was fun to be with, yet serious in her intentions. Friendly, outgoing, down to earth. With Pauline, you were loved into the Kingdom, that’s where you wanted to be, because it was such a good place to be, for her, so why not for you.

It’s just surreal, her not being around. But of course, she will always be around; everything that she was, will still be, except her physical presence. We have a hard act to follow, yet when we think of her, she’ll be there enthusing, laughing, sleeves rolled up, in the thick of it. Pauline, dear friend, sister, fellow-traveller, rest in peace, and rise in glory. Thank you for so many things.

Rev Keith Smith

The British Anglican CURSILLO® Council

CURSILLO LEADERS' WORKSHOPS 2021 - 2022



Fri 19th - Sun 21st March 2021
Shallowford House, Stone, Nr. Stafford

Fri 15th – 17th October 2021
Shepherd's Dene, Riding Mill, Northumberland

18th -20st March 2022
Wistaston Hall, Crewe

Contacts for further details:

CLW Administrator :Paul Thacker. Email: clwadmin@anglicancursillo.co.uk Tel: 01284850384

CLW Convenor: Rev. Judy Craig Peck. Email: clw@anglicancursillo.co.uk Tel: 01604743734

As good practice Diocesan Secretariats should adopt a policy of actively encouraging leading members of the Servant Community, Secretariat and prospective Lay Rectors to attend a Cursillo Leaders Workshop before taking office.

Who Should Attend a Cursillo Leaders' Workshop?

The CLW is for all who want to know more about Cursillo. All are welcome, lay or ordained. Those who have any leadership role should certainly attend before, or as soon as possible after taking office.

What is Included?

An opportunity for sharing in worship & fellowship, hearing talks on the following and discussing their content with people from other diocesan / provincial movements:

- The Purpose of Cursillo including: Cursillo and the fundamentals of Christian Living
- The Church and the place of the movement
- Forming a Movement including: The Fourth Day First, The Groups – Reunion and Ultreya,
- Spiritual Direction
- Making the Movement Work including: The Servant Community, The Pre-Cursillo, The Authentic Three Day Week-end, The Cursillo Leader
- Looking Ahead
- Taking the information and ideas back to the diocese and sharing them with the leaders there.

Who Leads a CLW?

Those who make up the leadership of the presenting team for a CLW have themselves already attended a CLW and are leaders from within the British Anglican Cursillo movement. Three people make up the team which includes a Spiritual Director.

CLWs run from 5.30pm on the Friday evening to around 2pm on Sunday. The full cost of the week-end is £200 which includes board and room. A £60 per person non-returnable deposit is required on booking. The balance is due one month before the weekend. It is recommended that private holiday insurance is obtained. Please send application forms to Paul Thacker, see poster on previous page for contact details.

Further Information

Bookings should be made no less than 2 months before the week-end and places are allocated on a first come first served basis. Last minute places are sometimes available – contact Paul Thacker to enquire. These two days are a lifting up of the ideals of the Cursillo method. A CLW can be an inspiring and spiritual experience but does not attempt to repeat the Three- Day Weekend experience.



A poem which speaks to us across the centuries

This poem was in a local parish magazine. It was written by an Irish-French Catholic writer, Kathleen O'Meara (Dublin 1839 – Paris 1888), who also wrote under the pen name of Grace Ramsay, and is to be found in her novel *Iza's Story*, set against the background of the Polish struggle against the occupation and partition of their country in various stages by Russia, Austria and Prussia from 1772 onwards. She compares the Polish-Russian situation to the Irish-British situation. I am struck at how pertinent it is in the current situation with the Corona Virus.

And people stayed home and read books and listened
and rested and exercised
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped
and listened deeper
someone meditated
someone prayed
someone danced
someone met their shadow
and people began to think differently
and people healed
and in the absence of people who lived in ignorant ways,
dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
even the earth began to heal
and when the danger ended
and people found each other
grieved for the dead people
and they made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways of life
and healed the earth completely
just as they were healed themselves.

BOOK REVIEW

A History of the Bible: the Book and Its Faiths, by John Barton

In the beginning was the Word.

But the word was handed down by an oral tradition for many centuries until it was eventually written down using an alphabet that had no vowels. Then it was subject to scribal errors.

Then there was the new Word. But it was spoken in a Semitic language (Aramaic) but written down half a century later in Greek by people that may have only heard it second hand.

And the arguments over its meaning have raged ever since.

John Barton is an Anglican priest and was until recently Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of the Holy Scripture at Oxford University. He tells the history of the Bible in three parts.

The first covers the history of the Jews, the evolution of the Old Testament, how differing oral traditions were blended into a seamless or (otherwise) whole and how it was decided what was and was not included (which depends on which church you belong to).

The second section covers the New Testament – again how it was compiled, whether all of St Paul's letters are actually by St Paul and which writings narrowly failed to make it in (The Shepherd of Hermas anyone ?)

The third section, and in some ways the most interesting, is the history of the Bible since then. It covers how the Bible has been used (and misused) by Christians and by Jews over the past two thousand years and how it continues to be so today. It also discusses who reads the Bible and why and its importance as a cultural artefact as well as a religious text.

A subject covered by this book that is often missing from accounts of the Bible is the recognition that the Old Testament is as much or more the religious book of the Jewish faith as it is the Christian, and that how it is regarded and used in Judaism can be very different to how it is in Christian churches.

This is long and detailed book, but each of the three sections can be read individually. I found the account in the first part of the various sources of the Old Testament the hardest going, but after that it was fascinating. Definitely a book to be read and reread.

Richard Tabberer

Putting faith into action in our current tragic situation

We reproduce here a message to all Cursillistas from our spiritual director the Rev Stephen Bowring

To all Cursillistas of the Church in Wales, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of England:

The current Coronavirus outbreak has led to stringent recommendations from the government that have an impact on every aspect of our daily life at present. The need to “self-isolate” and to curtail all but essential human contact runs contrary to the very heart of the Cursillo ethos: how can we be a “Christian community in action” if we can't gather together? What can we do to be Cursillistas if we cannot meet in Group Reunion?

Beyond the very obvious practical questions lay deep theological issues. Are we placing human understanding above God's providence – should we just ignore the whole business and trust in God to protect us? We come back to the age-old problem that St Paul wrestles with, the need to be “in” the world but not “of” the world. How we strike a balance is a question we all struggle with from time to time, and has been brought into sharp focus again by the situation we now find ourselves in. There are no easy answers.

Given that Paul gives instruction (Romans 13.1) that as followers of Christ we should all pay due obedience to the civil authorities, the “ostrich head buried in the sand” approach is clearly un-biblical. On the other hand, we surely can't just switch off our faith in an all-powerful, all-merciful God for a few weeks until we all feel a bit better and are ready to go back to church. How do we put Christ on the throne of our hearts through this crisis?

One thing to note is that when Jesus needed to be close to his Father he often withdrew from those around him for a time – he “self-isolated.” Fasting has long been seen as a useful tool in our spiritual journey, and fasting can be much more than just going without food. The Desert Fathers and many since have found a closeness to God in withdrawing from normal society. I know that for those with children at home or money worries made worse by job threats or a host of other life-changing problems thrown up by no fault of their own this may be a hopeless aspiration, but perhaps for some of us to some limited extent we can view the present situation as not so much a restriction from on high as an opportunity from even higher. At the very least we can try to lift ourselves out of everyday pressures by picking up that book that's been languishing unopened on the shelf ever since we bought it.

It's easy to see how it might be possible to turn our enforced internment into advantage for piety and study, but what about action?

Well, one thing that Cursillo shows us is that Christian action can take a wide variety of forms. We are all familiar with the power of Palanca, and the current restrictions don't prevent us from sending messages of prayer and support to one another, or perhaps picking up the phone to ring that friend or relative who normally somehow we never quite get round to contacting despite our best intentions.

Thanks to modern technology we can still have *virtual* meetings through video calling and conferencing – that may sound frighteningly complicated if you've not done it before, but many people of all ages do now keep in touch with far-off family and friends this way. "Skype" Reunion Groups might even catch on and persist when we start to get back to normal!

For those of us who (for the present at least) are considered to be in the low risk category there will be ample opportunities to look out for those who cannot or dare not step outside. In a way this situation opens a door for us to put our faith into practice in ways we might not have previously considered, or thought appropriate. We will all be surrounded by those who need us to be *the hands and feet of Christ* right now. Remember the promise? "Christ is counting on you..."

It would be no use pretending that this whole Coronavirus business is anything but an awful tragedy, and for some a very unpleasant or even fatal situation. There is so much uncertainty around the immediate future and beyond, but one thing we can rely on is that God does not abandon us, and that he too understands pain and loss. He transformed the tragedy of the cross into the glory of resurrection and atonement; so then we can safely look to him to draw good things out of this mess. Back to Paul's letter to the Romans (8:18) again: "*I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.*"

London and Southwark National Ultreya 2020 Saturday September 5th

Booking information: For swift and easy booking, please go online and fill in your details:

<https://www.londoncursillo.org.uk/> or <https://www.southwarkcursillo.org/>

If you need to book by post, please fill in this form and return to:
Martin Carr, 5 Warren Road, Croydon CR0 6PE

Name (s): _____

Number in party and diocese: _____

Contact details: _____

Additional information / questions: _____

Please indicate above if you have any mobility needs or additional requirements.

Depending on demand, we may organise a Thames river trip, or similar, on the Saturday, early evening. Please indicate if this would be of interest to you.

Bake, serve and enjoy!

A gluten, dairy and egg free cake.

With so many people nowadays having food allergies it can be hard to find suitable recipes to use when baking for family and friends.

Mary Jemma Lee, a member of Leicester Anglican Cursillo, has sent us a recipe for a cake which caters admirably for the "Free-From" brigade

8oz Flour Dove Farm Gluten Free from Tesco.

8oz Pure (Sunflower vegan spread).

8oz Sugar

4 measures of No Egg™ EGG REPLACER Orgran (brand name)

2 tbsp Cocoa powder (Dr Oetker) (For Chocolate Cake)

1 tsp Vanilla Extract

1 tsp Baking Powder (Dr Oetker)

1 tsp White Vinegar

1 - 2 tbsp Oat Milk (Alpro)

- Pre heat oven to 150°/160° (Fan)
- Mix Sugar and Pure together, mix in flour a bit at a time.
- Whisk together Egg Replacer powder and water as instructed on the box in a small basin gradually adding water to the powder. Add to other ingredients and mix in.
- Put Baking Powder and White Vinegar into a small pot and mix a little.
- Then add Cocoa powder (if required) Vanilla Extract and baking powder, white vinegar mix. And mix together
- Add as much Oat Milk as required to slacken mixture.
- One 8 in tin or two small shallower tins. Put greaseproof paper in base of the tin and grease the sides with Pure.
- Add mixture to tin(s) Small cakes 55mins max. Large cake 1 hour 15mins max. Leave to cool for a short while and remove from tin(s). The cake bottoms will be sticky, this is nothing to worry about, and the top will have a thin crust. Place on cooling tray.
- You can make normal butter icing by just using Pure and icing sugar, add cocoa powder to make chocolate icing as normal.

If you don't have No Egg™ Egg Replacer you can replace eggs with one of these:

- 2oz apple Puree.
- Half a very ripe Banana.
- 1tsp Bicarbonate of Soda with 1tbsp Cider Vinegar (not tried)
- Or others you may know.

BACC Pages is the bi-annual magazine of the British Anglican Cursillo® Council.

Editor: Trevor King

Compiler: Vivien Leeming

Thank you to all our contributors for this issue.

If there is anything you would like to contribute to the next issue, any thoughts, prayers, study recommendations or action tips that you would like to share please send (preferably by email) to either of the following addresses:

Email: president@anglicancursillo.co.uk

Post: 28 Duchy Ave, Scarborough, N. Yorkshire. YO13 0SE.

Phone: 01723 375852 or 07941 338466



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***Cursillo - Encouraging and supporting
Christians living out their faith in
practical ways.***