



The RAINBOW

Niagara Anglican Cursillo Newsletter

August 2007

www.niagaracursillo.org



CURSILLO CALENDAR

Sep	8	Huron Diocese Ultreya Tobermory
Sep	16	Cursillo Niagara AGM St. George's, Guelph 3:00 PM followed by Diocesan Ultreya and Pot Luck Supper
Nov	2-4	Renewal Weekend Mount Mary Immaculate

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We welcome submissions

from readers as viewpoints, faith journey stories, book reviews, news and coming events from parishes.

All submissions must include a name, telephone number or e-mail for verification purposes. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for content and length.

(see last page for submission details & deadlines)

FROM OUR LAY DIRECTOR

Report to AGM – 2007

Zandra Pennylegion

It hardly seems like a year since the 2006 AGM, but it has been, and a busy one for members of Secretariat. We have had a very heavy year of meetings and review of weekends, which I will briefly report on here.

Secretariat Meetings

Rev. Susan Wells, our Spiritual Director, and I met prior to the 2006 AGM to plan for our year of renewal. As we had a number of new members on Secretariat (Susan Little, Lise Simmons, Jan Collinson, Nancy Harris and Lorrette Shermet), we planned two orientation events which had not been done in the past. Following the September 10 AGM we had an 'orientation' night, which was primarily an overview of the positions on Secretariat and determining who would chair which committee. At that meeting Laura Mackenzie, retiring as Secretary, expressed an interest in being a member-at-large and we welcomed her to Secretariat in that role.

After the busyness of October leading into Weekend #42 on the first weekend of November, Secretariat met again November 10 & 11, which was a 'retreat' for a more in-depth orientation and strategic planning for 2007. At this meeting we also determined that in order to complete an in-depth review of the Cursillo method and weekend, we would need to meet monthly, rather than bi-monthly as in the past few years. We also determined a schedule of what materials to read between meetings so that our discussions would be productive.

I believe everyone benefited greatly from the time taken to understand our role and purpose as a Secretariat, and to listen to our Lord for direction.

We held our first 'formal' Secretariat meeting the second Saturday of January, and continued to meet the second Saturday of each month.

As we worked through the official National Episcopal Cursillo (NEC) materials and discussed them, it was awesome to see the Holy Spirit working and bringing everyone to the same conclusions and agreement on how to apply what we were reading and learning to the Niagara Cursillo movement. There were times when issues were re-discussed at a subsequent meeting and a new direction taken, but always, we had consensus. Nothing was done by 'majority vote', and there was a genuine feeling of unity in everything – what an amazing Blessing!

In this Rainbow you will find an article dealing more in depth with the why's and how's of the review, and some of the results.

(continued on Page 2)

FROM OUR SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

Report to AGM – 2007

Rev. Susan Wells

Another year has passed. It has been an exciting year and your Secretariat has been very busy. Again this year we have been working closely with the Diocese of Huron and are grateful to Marion Bailey and Jessie Johnstone, our liaisons with Huron.

At last year's AGM we set out a four-stage plan in hopes of revitalizing the Cursillo Movement in Niagara and Huron.

- To conduct an every member visitation (probably through small groups gatherings). The purpose is to ask each of you questions like:
 - What does Cursillo mean to you?
 - How can/does Cursillo help you to grow in your faith and support you in your ministry?
 - What do you see as the role of Cursillo (just weekends, fourth day, or has it ceased to be relevant)?

We had hoped to conduct this visitation in the spring of 2007 but unfortunately it was not possible. We hope to begin shortly after the renewal weekend and continue into 2008

- To hold a renewal weekend in the fall of 2007.

This event is planned for November. Please mark the dates on your calendar. Jan Collinson and team have been working hard to ensure that this will be a time of renewal, a time to grow in your faith, and a time to reconnect with friends both old and new. Consult the web site to see the bio's of the key-note speakers. "Come to the well and be refreshed".

- To take a critical look at the Cursillo weekend in order to ensure that we are still following the authentic Cursillo Method.

Secretariat has met one Saturday a month since the AGM. Part of each meeting was set aside to study prayerfully our weekend. It has been a time of insight and growth for the members of Secretariat. We know that the Spirit has led our discussions and our decisions because we have total agreement on all issues. Amazing what happens when we allow God's Spirit to guide our actions!

- To present a narrative budget to the wider community through the every member visitation.

The Narrative Budget was presented to last year's AGM but unfortunately it has not been widely distributed because the every member visitation has not yet occurred. It is expected that the Narrative Budget will be revamped to reflect our 2007-2008 budget, and then distributed to the wider community at the AGM and through the every member visitation.

This has been an exciting year but also a year of disappointment as attendance at Cursillo functions continues to fall in spite of good quality programs. It is hoped that the every member visitations and the discussions that occur at those meetings will shed some light on why this is happening. Secretariat needs

(continued on Page 3)

FROM OUR LAY DIRECTOR (cont'd from Page 1)

Weekend #42, November 2006

Weekend #42, with Ted Moore as Co-Ordinator, was also a blessing for the 22 participants, team and wider community. For the first time in many years, almost all participants shared at the closing, and we pray that they have continued to be blessed, and to bless others, as they continue on their 4th Day.

Selection of Co-Ordinator for Weekend #43

We are pleased to announce that Marion Binns has agreed to be the Coordinator for our next weekend. We had originally planned to hold Weekend No. 43 in the spring of 2008, however following our review we felt that we would be rushing the Weekend Committee and team training too much, and have decided to hold it in the fall of 2008. The Weekend Committee is working on booking a facility and more details will be provided by the committee as they are known.

Celebrating 25 years of Cursillo in Niagara

With the spring being freed up, we are planning to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Niagara Cursillo's first weekend (March 1983) in the early spring. A committee will be formed to plan and organize the event – stay tuned for more details!

Each of the Committee Chairs (Marion Binns, Lise Simmons, Nancy Wood, Nancy Harris, John Pennylegion, & Jan Collinson), as well as our Huron Diocese Liaisons (Jessie Johnstone & Marion Bailey) have submitted a report on their activities during this past year, and I think you'll agree they all deserve a big vote of thanks for volunteering their time and talents to keep the Cursillo Movement alive and well in Niagara, and revitalizing it in Huron. I personally wish to thank all of them for their support and their servant hearts. I also want to thank our Member-at-Large, Laura MacKenzie, as well as our Recording Secretary, Lorrette Shermet, and our Treasurer, David Eccles, for volunteering their time to do the administrative work of Secretariat. In particular, I want to thank Marion Binns, who is retiring from Secretariat at this AGM, for her planning and leadership of Continuing Education. May our Lord Bless each and every one of you as richly as you bless others.

Ultreya

Zandra Pennylegion

+

COINCIDENCE

is when
God chooses
to remain anonymous.

+

your help, as part of its discernment into the future direction of the Movement.

I want to thank all the members of Secretariat for their dedication and their commitment.

As we prepare for our AGM let us ask as Solomon did, for Wisdom.

Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom
*'O God of my ancestors and Lord of mercy,
 who have made all things by your word,
 and by your wisdom have formed humankind
 to have dominion over the creatures you have made,
 and rule the world in holiness and righteousness,
 and pronounce judgement in uprightness of soul,
 give me the wisdom that sits by your throne,
 and do not reject me from among your servants.*

REPORT FROM SECRETARIAT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's Annual General Meeting will take place on September 16, 2007, starting at 3:00 pm, at St. George's, 99 Woolwich Street, Guelph.

A Nomination Committee from the wider community, chaired by Winnie Burk, was struck pursuant to our By-Laws and Screening Procedures. Nominations of the Committee will be presented at the AGM. The tenure of Secretariat members is two years, with the option to renew for one consecutive two-year term.

Nominations from the wider community should be submitted in writing, either by e-mail or hard-copy. Every nomination should provide brief details of the person being nominated and confirmation that each one is willing to let his/her name stand. Nominations must be received no later than September 7, 2006, and should be sent to: Winnie Burk, Chair of Nominating Committee, 2408 Baintree Cres., Oakville, ON, L6M 4X1 or winnieburk@cogeco.ca

Members of Secretariat wish to express their gratitude to Marion Binns for her service to the wider community in her role as Continuing Education Chair.

Niagara Cursillo Secretariat

WEEKEND COMMITTEE

NANCY HARRIS

It was decided by Secretariat that there would be no weekend held in 2007. Instead we would take the time at our 2006-07 Secretariat meetings to review the weekend schedule.

A lot of time was spent doing this and we have made quite a few exciting changes to the weekend schedule.

As Weekend Committee Chair, I will be spending the next few months revising all the manuals with the changes.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

SUSAN LITTLE

This year has been an active one, building on the foundational work begun by Sue Anderson. Her compilation, teaching sessions, and reproduction of all of the music books have been a terrific boon for our Cursillistas and for Niagara.

This committee organized and led music for the Break-In and Closing Eucharist for Weekend 42 on Sunday, November 5, 2006. Special thanks to Nancy Wood for her work in this important part of the Weekend.

On November 18, 2006, the committee led the music for the Day of Deeper Understanding at the Church of the Nativity, Hamilton.

On January 21, 2007 it led the music for the Diocesan Ultreya at Grace Church, Milton.

Similarly at Grace Church on Saturday, February 24, the Music Committee had a modestly successful workshop where six musicians played and four singers sang heartily to a wide variety of songs led by Sue Anderson. We could have gone on for hours more but decided to keep to our schedule.

There was a good response from musicians for the Diocesan Ultreya on March 18 at the Church of the Nativity in Hamilton.

The Music Committee also had the privilege of providing music at the Walk in the Spirit on Saturday, April 21 at St. John's, Thorold, where three musicians played at various intervals throughout the day. With music selected by Susanne Adams, the participants agreed it was another channel of God's grace that helped people benefit from the talks.

The Music Committee looks forward to another year, especially with the renewal of our mandate as Cursillo in Niagara Diocese. Special thanks to these people for offering leadership and support whenever music has been requested.

It is our job to ensure that all music sung is covered by licence and that annual payment is channeled to the licensing organizations. Thanks to our treasurer, Dave Eccles, who works hard to cover this essential part of our work.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan A. Little

As time goes along the Wider Community will hear all about these changes. Stay tuned!

We are hoping to have a Weekend in the fall of 2008. We'll let you know the details as they develop.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Harris
 Chair, Weekend Committee

NOMINATIONS FOR SECRETARIAT

This year, one member of Secretariat is retiring, creating a vacancy, one has completed a 2-year term and is eligible to stand for re-election, and a third was appointed last fall to fill a vacancy by Secretariat and is standing for election. This creates three openings on Secretariat at this time.

Members serving the 2nd year of their 2-year terms:

John Pennylegion (second 2-year term)
Nancy Harris
Jan Collinson
Lise Simmons
Susan Little

Retiring:

Marion Binns

Standing for election/re-election for a 2-yr term:

Nancy Wood – Nominated for a second term

Nancy has served on Secretariat for two years as Communications Chair, and for several years as a member of the Weekend Committee under Jack Bedgood. Nancy has also served on Weekend Team in the Conference Room and in Palanca.

Laura (Sweet) McKenzie – Nominee

(Appointed Member-at-Large by Secretariat in September, 2006)

Laura made her weekend in May of 1993 and has served on team in Palanca. She has also served on Secretariat as Recording Secretary for one year, and for the past year as a member-at-large.

Richard Turner – Nominee

Richard made his weekend in 1984 in Chateauguay, and served on Secretariat in Montreal Diocese as general rep for two years, Vice-President for two years and President for one year, resigning as President due to his transfer to Burlington. He was active on many weekends in Montreal for the Anglican Cursillo, and served twice on the Montreal United Church Weekends to help them “get off the ground”. Since moving to Niagara, Richard has served on team several times. This would be Richard’s first time serving on Niagara’s Secretariat. Quote from Richard: *“All in all I think I have been on about... oh, a whole lot of weekends, and been blessed by God on each and every one of them. Even the ones that were cancelled!”*

Nominating Committee
Winnie Burke, Chair

REGIONAL ULTREYA SCHEDULE

Niagara Peninsula:

(currently inactive)

Hamilton & Burlington:

Second Friday of month (excl. Jul & Aug) at 7:30 pm
Church of the Nativity, Hamilton
Contact: Tim Standish (905) 318-7405

Oakville:

Sunday afternoons as determined, at St. Simon's
Contact: Lorraine Cassidy (905) 842-5832

Guelph:

Third Friday of every month at 7:30 pm, rotates among:
St. George's, Guelph St. Matthias', Guelph
St. John's, Elora St. James, Fergus
Contact: Brian & Elizabeth Rothwell
(519) 823-1124

Georgetown/Milton:

First Friday of month (excl. Jul & Aug) at 7:30 pm
Meetings at Grace, Milton
Contact: (interim) Lise Simmons (905) 878-2377

*The task ahead of us
is never as great as
the Power behind us.*

CURSILLO PRAYER CHAIN

If you have a prayer request (for a Cursillista or an immediate family member) please phone or e-mail Doreen Langston, the coordinator.

The members of the prayer team will offer prayers daily for 14 days; if further prayers are required after this time please renew the request. All requests are strictly confidential.

Coordinator:
Doreen Langston
hdlangston@sympatico.ca

PRE-CURSILLO <i>JOHN PENNYLEGION</i>	POST-CURSILLO/4 TH DAY <i>LISE SIMMONS</i>
<p>In addition to participating on Secretariat in the review of the authentic Cursillo and how weekends are structured, the primary activity this year was our display table at Niagara Synod last November. Our display included banners, a display board and a PowerPoint presentation, along with hand-out materials.</p> <p>As the display board we've been using for the past several years was inexpensive cardboard and starting to fall apart, research was conducted on various types of good quality presentation boards. It is our plan to be actively seeking opportunities to have a Cursillo display at various church and diocesan events in both Niagara and Huron dioceses to pro-mote Cursillo, and we felt a good quality presentation board would give us a more professional appearance.</p> <p>Secretariat has reviewed the options and a new display board is now ordered, the cost of which is being shared by Huron Diocese.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted, John Pennylegion Chair, Pre-Cursillo</p>	<p>As part of Secretariat, 4th Day has participated in a busy year of meetings and activities, and hopefully one where we have also been listening to the Lord for His guidance as we seek His will in the changes being considered.</p> <p>Last November, a 4th Day team provided support on Weekend #42. Since then, the weekend schedule has seen significant revision; going forward, 4th Day will be one part of the larger Support Team.</p> <p>Included in the February 2007 Rainbow was a Survey on Regional and Diocesan Ultreyas. We were anxious to hear from you about why participation has diminished to the extent it has, and to receive your ideas about positive changes to Ultreyas that might turn the tide. We were disappointed to receive only three responses to this survey!</p> <p>Among the changes we have implemented, Diocesan Ultreyas were moved back to the Regions in which they were hosted. January was in Milton, March in Hamilton, June in Oakville; and September will be in Guelph. We received positive feedback on this change and we hope this will result in increased attendance.</p>
<p>WORLD WIDE PALANCA <i>TIM STANDISH</i></p>	
<p>Palanca is the essential 'lever' of prayer that we use to maintain our walk with Christ. It is the support of other Cursillistas for us and the prayers that we have for others. We can't make it on our own.</p> <p>We were first made aware of this as Cursillistas on our weekends when we received our packages of encouraging notes and prayers. But we were also made aware that this palanca came world-wide when we saw the notes posted in the halls. As the Palanca Coordinator for our diocese, it is my job to request palanca and prayers from other dioceses when we are preparing for a weekend and also to send palanca from us to other dioceses as they prepare for theirs. We have a database of about 55 diocesan Cursillo movements in Canada and around the world. Most of these are from the USA, Central and South America and Europe. When we are preparing for a weekend, I will prepare a letter giving as many particulars as possible about our weekend (date, place, men's/women's/co-ed, theme, etc.) and request prayers and palanca, usually about two months ahead of the weekend. Mailing labels are prepared and all the necessary printing, folding, stuffing, and stamping takes place, then off they go. I hope that someone reads English at the receiving end! After that some palanca will be received which can be posted on the weekend. Many dioceses will not send a letter but their Cursillistas will nevertheless be praying for us. It gives quite a boost to see these.</p> <p>Of course we get requests to pray for other weekends. Again, language can be an issue (my Portuguese is not so good!) Anyway, I can usually figure out when the date is and whether it's a men's or women's weekend. Then I'll prepare some palanca for them on rainbow paper. I try to get some Cursillistas to sign it. Depending on the timing of the request I may be able to bring it to a diocesan Ultreya. Then it is sent off. Recently we</p>	<p>Among the Regional Convenors who retired this year, we would like to express our thanks to Sharon Insley for faithfully serving over 10 years in Niagara Peninsula; Terry and Winnie Burk, in Oakville; Frances Valentine, in Guelph; and Lise Simmons, in Milton/Georgetown. We extend a hearty welcome to Lorraine Cassidy (Oakville) and Brian & Elizabeth Rothwell (Guelph), new Regional Convenors. (Please note the Regional Ultreya Schedule elsewhere in this issue for other changes.)</p> <p>We appreciate the support given by Tim Standish in sending out greetings and affirmations of Palanca support during the weekends of various Cursillo groups around the world. We also wish to thank Doreen Langston for her continued leadership in the Prayer Chain.</p> <p>I would like to encourage everyone to plan on coming to the next Diocesan Ultreya (& AGM), on Sunday, September 16. We will meet at 3:00 p.m. at St. George's Anglican Church in Guelph.</p> <p>What you think is important to us. We welcome your comments and questions, addressed to ... fourth.day@niagaracursillo.org. Thank you, and may God bless you as you seek to serve our Lord Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Ultreya! <i>Lise Simmons</i></p> <p>have been trying to remind Cursillistas with blast emails when that weekend is near so that they can begin their prayers. In the past year we have sent out palanca to about a dozen weekends including places as far apart as Newfoundland and Brazil.</p> <p>So when the Palanca is presented, please be sure to sign it and follow up with prayers. I am sure that it is an added thrill for those in far-off places to receive palanca from Niagara!</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Tim Standish</i></p>

CONTINUING EDUCATION
REPORT TO AGM – 2007 MARION BINNS

Continuing Ed sponsored several events this year ...

“Journey Fourth” was held on Saturday, November 18, 2006, in Hamilton, following our last weekend. Ted Moore gave his talk from the weekend on Total Security/4th Day. Rev. Canon M. Murray then spoke about Spiritual Advisors and a Rule of Life, and we had a few Cursillo snapshots as well.

“Growing Our Spirituality” was held in Thorold, on April 21, 2007. Rev Paul Tinker led us through an Inductive Bible Study and gave a talk on discipleship. We then had a witness talk by Lorrette Shermet and practised a new form of grouping. Unfortunately our numbers were down due in part to it being the first nice weather of the season but those present had an excellent day.

The last Leader’s School was held June 2006, prior to the Fall ’06 weekend. As there have been no weekends this year, there has not been another Leader’s School offered.

After serving three years on Secretariat, it is time for me to say goodbye as Chair of Con. Ed. I am pleased to say that Jan Collinson will be assuming this position and I pray that all Cursillistas will support her as you have done me. Jan is also heading up our big Renewal Weekend this November 2 – 4, and I encourage all to participate in this event. I want to thank my committee for all its help over the past years and also the other members of Secretariat who have helped me grow and understand more about Cursillo.

We have some challenges but also exciting times ahead in Cursillo, both in Niagara and Huron Dioceses, and I would suggest all Cursillistas stay connected and help by blooming where you are planted.

Remember also, 2008 will be our 25th Anniversary for Cursillo in Niagara so stay tuned for updates of a celebration!

May God continue to bless each and every one of you as you serve our Lord.

Respectfully Submitted
Marion Binns
Chair, Continuing Education

COMMUNICATIONS
REPORT TO AGM – 2007 NANCY WOOD

Over the past year we continued to communicate with the wider community utilizing our email distribution list. We currently reach approximately 209 Cursillistas through this means. Communications included notification of Diocesan Ultreyas and Niagara Cursillo sponsored educational events, as well as requests for Palanca for weekends being held all over the world. In addition, the email list was used to reach the wider community with information related to Weekend 42 ... aspects such as Participant and Team lists, requests for items to be used on the weekend, and information related to the Moonlight, Mañanitas and Break-In.

The email distribution list is also used to notify the wider community when the on-line Rainbow is available

As always, Cursillistas should be aware that their email addresses are automatically placed on the Prayer distribution list. This is a separate list which is used to pass on prayer requests to the wider community. Cursillistas remain on this list unless a request is received to have them removed.

With all this information being sent via email, keeping distribution lists up to date is a very important on-going task. We rely on each Cursillista to advise us of any changes to their email address so our lists can be promptly updated. Changes to email addresses can be sent to *communications@niagaracursillo.org*.

Our newsletter, the Rainbow is a means of keeping the wider community informed of events and committee activities. It is also an open vehicle for Cursillistas to submit articles of interest or to advertise upcoming Christian events happening on the dioceses of Niagara and Huron

I would like to take this opportunity to extend, on behalf of the wider community, a big **Thank You** to Ken Simmons, our Editor/Publisher of the Rainbow. In addition to doing the layout of all the submitted reports and articles, Ken ensures copies are mailed to those Cursillistas who do not receive the Rainbow via email. Thanks, Ken, for your continued ministry to Niagara Cursillo.

During this past year, two articles were published in the Niagara Anglican, one in September, 2006 (by yours truly), and one in March, 2007, by Ted Bittle of St. John’s Thorold. We have a standing invitation from the Niagara Anglican so anyone who feels moved to share on a wider scale how Cursillo helps you in your Fourth Day journey, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Wood, Communications Chair
communications@niagaracursillo.org

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**I have to wonder ...
Why is it that some people
change churches so often?
What difference does it make
which one you
stay home from?**

* + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + *

HURON LIAISON REFLECTIONS

JESS JOHNSTONE

We now have seven new Cursillistas living out their 4th days in Huron, seven more than in 2005, from Tobermory in the north of the diocese to Ingersoll and Brantford in the south. What a joy to think about this, and to give thanks for the action of their Christian brothers and sisters, sponsoring, mentoring and helping in their action.

Shirley Clifford and I took the Niagara display board and some banners to the Synod meeting in London, and were well received. We enjoyed talking about Cursillo to "old" and potential members. Some new addresses were added to our mailing list.

A most pleasant Ultreya, stimulating and satisfying to our faith was held in Ingersoll in April.

Future plans include an Ultreya in Tobermory, Saturday September 8 at 3:00 pm. Church service is on Sunday morning, September 9.

Marion Bailey has been assisting Niagara with the purchase of a new portable display board to use in advertising Cursillo. Shirley and I have been assisting Jan Collinson with the Renewal weekend, November 2.

In all these events, we give thanks and ask for God's continual guidance.

Ultreya

Jess Johnstone

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

JAN COLLINSON

When I was asked to be on Secretariat I was assured the first year was easy as a member at large all you did was help out. Wrong!

I have spent the past year planning, along with others, the Remember Renew Rejoice Renewal Weekend. This weekend is being held November 2 to 4 2007 at Mount Mary Immaculate Retreat Centre in Ancaster. If you've been away from Cursillo for awhile, tired from working on so many weekends or just need to get away, then this weekend is for you.

We have planned a weekend of Praising the Lord through fellowship, singing, worship and talks. We have left time for relaxation to walk the grounds, have a discussion, or just sit and do nothing.

The cost of the weekend is \$150.00. This includes your accommodations Friday and Saturday nights, Saturday's meals, and breakfast and lunch on Sunday.

Applications are included in this Rainbow but watch your mail for more information. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Jan Collinson

The Rainbow is published about four times per year: at the beginning of November, February, May, and August.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Please send to: Kenneth Simmons, 622 Elliott Crescent, Milton, ON L9T 3G4 or e-mail Editor@niagaracursillo.org.

All submissions must be Cursillo or Christ oriented, not of a political or controversial nature, and are subject to editing.

Secretariat has final approval as to appropriateness of any articles submitted.

If you know of an event, concert or activity that you feel might be of interest to Cursillistas please let us know.

SECRETARIAT REPORT – THE CURSILLO WEEKEND

PART 1 – THE BASICS OF CURSILLO

Coming into this year of renewal it was apparent that the number of Cursillistas active *in Cursillo* had dwindled significantly. Regional ultreyas are struggling to keep going, Diocesan Ultreyas barely draw as many people as a Regional Ultreya did 10 years ago, and Continuing Education days are chiefly attended by those involved in putting them on.

We were also struggling with team formation – in some cases the same Cursillistas had served on every team for 5-6 years or more. We are burning ourselves out and need to find out why.

As we met and discussed where Niagara Cursillo was at, we felt that needed to start by reading our National Episcopal Cursillo manuals (our official literature) and following the method as it is set out. Here is a sampling of what the manuals say about the Basics of Cursillo:

“**The 3-Day Weekend** is part of the Cursillo Method which supports active Christian witness. It is summed up in these words: “*The living out of what is fundamental for being a Christian.*”

What is fundamental may be seen in four concrete ways:

- 1) Encounter with God
- 2) Developing a friendship with Christ
- 3) A community of brothers and sisters
- 4) Apostolic responsibility and action

The Weekend provides an occasion for a personal experience of the life in grace, lived to its fullest. It is an opportunity for the participants to encounter God, worship God and enjoy fellowship with other Christians. The ultimate goal is the empowerment of Christians to go into the world, equipped to witness to this wonder, and to work in their environments changing them for Christ. “Christ is Counting on You”, but always remember the response to that is “And I on Him”!

It is hoped that the new Cursillistas, supported by the Wider Community through Group Reunion and Ultreya, will leave with a sense of hope and confidence to assume their role as leaders for Christ in the world.

Keep it simple!

- “ensure the Cursillo weekend is kept simple, normal and natural. Weekends stand in constant danger of being deluged with gimmicks and hoopla.
- “if the weekend contains gimmicks, hoopla, roosters, skits, etc., etc., then the impression is created that Cursillo is really about all these ‘things’. It may be fun, but is it really presenting the grace of God and the tools with which to share it? The problem of this initial impression is compounded when the participants seek to hand on the same kind of experience to others. Thus every succeeding Weekend tends to gather more and more ‘traditions’.

Let the Holy Spirit work

- “The Weekend is given freely *for the sake of* the participants. We do this because we are convinced that when the call of God to be apostles is clearly heard, and the tools presented by which one can live effectively as an apostle, men and women will respond wholeheartedly. This means we must rely on the movement of the Holy Spirit for results – not on techniques or gimmicks. Participants must be *free* to experience as much (or as little) as they will.
- “Cursillo is, by its very nature, serious business. But it is also, by the grace of God, joyful at heart. This is another reason the schedule should be followed closely – not allowing a plethora of other activities to be added to its simple outline. There must be room in which the Holy Spirit can move and in which the spontaneous may break out.

Don’t forget to Pray

“Palanca is not a ‘thing’ much less a bag of ‘things’.
It is – first and foremost – prayer.”

PART 2 – THE CURSILLO WEEKEND

The decision to look at our weekends came after attending both the closing of Niagara Anglican Cursillo weekend #42 and then attending the closing of a Roman Catholic Cursillo Weekend.

The Roman Catholic closing is quite similar to ours. Participants are encouraged to get up and speak about their weekend experience. Each and every participant at the Roman Catholic closing spoke about their encounter with Jesus (God). For some it was through a talk, for others it was about the time they spent in the Palanca Chapel alone praying in the presence of the Reserved Sacrament. For others it was experiencing Christ through the whole process of talks, prayers, worship and team. Many spoke about being prepared and anxious to go forth as Disciples of Christ.

Contrast that to the Anglican closing just a couple of weeks prior. At the Anglican Cursillo closing, most of the participants spoke. Few, if any, mentioned either God or Jesus. Those who spoke wanted to thank their sponsors (by name), or wanted to thank the team for all the special things that happened; most were excited and high but for some reason did not mention Jesus (God). Shortly after the weekend, A Day of Deeper Understanding was held; a place for team, sponsors and participants to come to reinforce the learning that had occurred on the weekend. It was disappointing when only 6 participants from weekend #42 attended.

The Roman Catholic and Anglican weekends seemed to have a different focus. Our weekend had 22 Participants and 36 team members; theirs had 50+ participants and only 18 team members.

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Why, with so few team members, did their participants talk so passionately about their encounter with God; and ours, with so many team members, talk so passionately about their encounter with team and community and their gratitude to their sponsors?

Another difference was the Palanca Chapel. Their Palanca Chapel was open to all participants and team at any time and people were encouraged to go in and spend time alone with God. On the other hand our Palanca Chapel is reserved for the back teams and team members who want to go and pray.

These were all questions that needed to be explored, that needed to be answered:

Are we being true to the Cursillo Method? Had we become so caught up in doing good works and making the weekend special that somehow the participants no longer saw our good works and glorified our Father in Heaven? It appeared that participants were seeing our good works (which we were doing for the right reason – to the honour and glory of God), as nice things and gifts rather than an insight into the Kingdom of God.

The Canadian Roman Catholic Cursillo Movement has been working for several years with founder Eduardo Bonin to ensure that their talks and weekend were authentic. They have shared some of their experience with us.

We, as your Secretariat, decided to take a critical look at our weekends, to try to ensure that everything we did pointed clearly to God, to ensure that all people (including participants) had time alone in the Palanca Chapel to reflect and to pray; to ensure that we build one team (including participants) and one worshipping community. Some of the roles of the weekend are support roles but we as true Christian Community need to be one worshipping community.

Our next weekend to be held in the fall of 2008 will have a few differences. But it will remain at its heart and centre an authentic Cursillo Weekend based on Anglican Theology and focused on helping participants and team grow in their relationship with Christ and to prepare them for the work of an Evangelist.

What Secretariat is purposing is not about change but rather about getting back to the basics. Over the years we have added many extra frills to the weekend. The question to be asked about each and every one of these frills is, “How does it point to Jesus?”.

PART 3 – CHANGES TO OUR WEEKEND

The review of the authentic 3-day weekend, which has been the major task of Secretariat this year, will result in some changes to the weekend. Some of the changes are logistical in nature. One such change is that the fee for the weekend is to be paid in full prior to the weekend. This frees up team members and eliminates the sometimes ‘mass confusion’ surrounding the registration process.

Other changes focus on the building of one Christian Community which, in the context of the weekend, includes participants, team members, and the wider community. We also need to ensure everything we do on the weekend is God-centered. →

Through discussions, it became apparent that some of the extras/‘nice-to-do’ things we have added to the “authentic weekend” over the years may have, in some cases, put up barriers to the building of this community. As a result, with this focus in mind we will try some changes on future weekends. Any changes will be evaluated during the review that takes place following every weekend.

So what can we do to promote the concept of Christian community? One way will be to have ALL team members join the participants for meals and for worship. Another will be to encourage all team members, and even participants, to bring their musical instruments. In addition, the wider community will be invited to join the participants and team for the Sunday morning worship following the mañanitas.

To emphasize the importance of being part of the wider community, participants will be commissioned and receive their crosses as part of the Closing Eucharist Service. This is the time when, if they wish, participants can share with us all.

Once the weekend review had been completed, we had to ask ourselves what “team” needed to look like to provide the support required to meet the needs of the participants. And in keeping with the focus of “one community”, it was thought that the participants should perceive that there is “one team”. Of course, within the “one team” there will be a support function. Roles and responsibilities will be consolidated within the “one team”. As an added bonus, we may be able to provide more opportunities during the weekend for the wider community to assist in the weekend.

Next we looked at team training and decided that some changes were required in this area – most notably more time and emphasis put on training table enablers. We all agreed that we have fallen down in providing table enablers with the tools they need to be more effective in guiding the participants.

Training days will also include “grouping” since this is what we hope will be a primary outcome of the weekend – Cursillistas on their Fourth Day, operating in Christian communities to provide support to each other on their journeys with Christ.

This has been an exciting and Spirit filled experience for Secretariat as we allowed God to lead us through the process. We are in unanimous agreement that the changes suggested are in keeping with the Spirit and Letter of the Cursillo Movement.

Changes always are wrought with controversy and Secretariat wants to assure you that nothing is carved in stone and that Secretariat will continue (as it has in the past) to conduct a comprehensive review after the next weekend. If you would like to be part of the next weekend please contact the Weekend Committee Chair, Nancy Harris.
(weekends@niagaracursillo.org)

Respectfully submitted by Secretariat

Niagara Anglican Cursillo Movement

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held Saturday September 10, 2006
At St. Christopher's, Burlington

1. A quorum to hold the meeting being present Lay Director Brian Galligan, acting as Chair, called the meeting to order at 3pm. Rev. Susan Wells opened the meeting with prayer.

2. **Approval of Minutes of the AGM held September 10, 2005**

The minutes were published in the August, 2007 Rainbow. There being no errors or omissions noted, the Minutes were adopted as read on a motion duly made, seconded and carried.

3. **Reports from Secretariat**

Reports from the Lay Director, Spiritual Director and all Committee Chairs as published in August Rainbow were reviewed, discussed and accepted on a motion duly made, seconded and carried.

4. **Treasurer's Report for 2006 and Budget for 2007**

David Eccles, Treasurer, reviewed the financial statement as published in the August Rainbow and invited comments from the floor. David then distributed copies of and presented the Budget for 2007 (attached).

Moved by David Eccles, seconded by Ken Simmons that the Budget for 2007 be approved as presented. Carried.

5. **Secretariat Retirements**

The retiring members of Secretariat were recognized and thanked for their contributions: Sharon Insley (4th Day), Sue Anderson (Music), Ted Moore (Pre-Cursillo), Gladis Cumming-DiPaolo (Member-at-Large), Brian Galligan (Lay Director), Laura MacKenzie (Secretary)

6. **2007 Strategic Plan for Renewal**

Portions of a DVD *A History of Cursillo*, featuring Eduardo Bonin, were played and short presentations on a Plan for Renewal made:

- Revisiting the "Why of the Weekend" (Zandra Miller)
- Community Building (Brian Galligan)
- 2007 Renewal Weekend (John Pennylegion)
- 2007 Narrative Budget for the Strategic Plan (David Eccles)

7. **Nominating Committee Report**

Report received as printed in the August Rainbow. Standing for nomination to Secretariat: for a 1-year term: Marion Binns

for a 2-year term: John Pennylegion, Nancy Harris, Jan Collinson, Lise Simmons and Susan Little.

No other nominations being received from the floor, on a motion duly made, seconded and carried nominations were closed.

Motion to acclaim new Secretariat members received from Bill Harris and carried.

Lorrette Shermet was appointed as Secretary, and David Eccles continues as Treasurer.

8. Appointment of new Lay Director

Rev. Susan Wells, Spiritual Director, announced that Zandra Miller had been appointed Lay Director by the Bishop for a term of two years.

Introduction of New Secretariat: Zandra Miller, Lay Director; Rev. Susan Wells, Spiritual Director; Marion Binns; Nancy Wood; John Pennylegion, Nancy Harris, Jan Collinson, Lise Simmons, and Susan Little, David Eccles, Treasurer; Lorrette Shermet, Secretary; and Jessie Johnstone, Huron Diocese Liaison.

9. The meeting closed at 4pm

The Meeting was followed by Eucharist and Commissioning of Secretariat.

Date Approved _____

Zandra Pennylegion, Lay Director

Secretary

c.c. Bishop Ralph Spence
Rev. Canon Michael Patterson

Draft Resolution Re Amendment to By-laws

To be approved by Secretariat and ratified at the AGM

RESOLVED THAT the By-laws of the Movement be amended by adding the following paragraph at the end of Paragraph 7 regarding composition of Secretariat:

Professor:

There shall be a Professor for Weekends for the Movement appointed by the Secretariat for a term of three years. The individual may already be a member of the Secretariat, but if they are appointed by the Secretariat from the wider community then they may attend meetings of the Secretariat but shall not be voting members. The role of Professor is set out in the Weekend Training manuals.