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Rainbow

Newsletter

"Like the bow in a cloud on a rainy day such was the appearance of the splendor all around. This was the appearance of the glory of the Lord. Ezekiel 1.28

1. Lay Director *(Susan Little)*

Where is God's grace working in your life?

Take a moment to glance at that rear-view mirror we know as our memory and take note of what God has done or has been doing over the last little while. What do you see?

As we embark upon another year, we ask God to reveal His purpose for our lives and particularly, the Cursillo program as it sets sail toward its first duo diocese Cursillo weekend at the end of May. You can find out more about this in another part of this edition of The Rainbow. Where has God been active lately? In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he reminds us that "through grace we have been saved by faith" (2:8) and pointedly continues, that "it is not the result of [our] own efforts, but God's gift" (2:9).

Let's return to the initial question. What difference does Christ make in your everyday life?

Is it the sudden awareness of God's beauty in nature as you walk along complaining about the cold, blustery winter wind? Is it the 'sudden' (I think not) change of heart of a friend toward a prickly part of her relationship with a person she has been complaining about? Or is it the courage to have that conversation with a loved one about an annoying behaviour that you feel disrespects God? For me and the friends that I group with, it is some of these things and more.

Who do I group with? God has placed in my life through the mere randomness of a parish population several people with whom I have a deep and lasting affection and connection through Cursillo. We were friends long before we formed the Cursillo connection. Just like the slogan says, be a friend and bring a friend, these people came to Cursillo because God was working in their lives long before I asked them to attend. Through big and little ways, God had been calling them to dive deeper, go further, and come closer. It was not my friendship, nor my persistent prayers nor the faith-sharing moments that 'made' them go to Cursillo. My actions, my good deeds, did not have this effect. As I reflect upon those years and months before they said "yes" to going to Cursillo, it was God's grace working in me and through me that accounts for their response. But more so, it was through the words, the prayers and the casual 'coincidental' conversations with others belonging to the Wider Community around them that God provided the 'right' moment for them to respond. God surrounded them with people, and with incidents to bring them to their awareness of His Grace in their lives. God's Spirit inspired them to 'connect the dots', to take the next step toward what they sensed was a good, faith-based decision to intensify their relationship with God.

The friends I group with take risks. We work hard to practice our Faith, to regularly Study religious or inspirational texts and to plan Apostolic Action. Just like me, they also struggle, sometimes failing but nevertheless always trying. For me, the important part is that we do this together. We rely on one another and God's Spirit working in us to do more than we can ask or imagine. Through us and sometimes, in spite of us, God sends us the people and the incidents in our lives to remind us that we are loved and we are God's forever.

This is the unimaginable greatness and goodness of God's gift of love to us in His Son, Jesus Christ. At our baptism we are stamped, we are marked as God's special child, an Inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven. We become a Member of Christ, a part of the Body of Christ, the one part of the body that is important to the whole body so that the other parts are able to function. That's who we are and that's why it is important to be connected to others in God's Son, Jesus, through the power of God's Spirit.

What are you doing to walk with Jesus more closely?

You will notice that there is a link to a survey about Grouping included in this edition of The Rainbow. It has also been sent to you electronically before this publication. We are conducting a survey to see how Cursillo can improve its Fourth Day by creating stronger examples of grouping among its members. If we are to claim the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must work with our brothers and sisters to make God more accessible, closer to the world around us.

Please make sure you fill out the survey and submit or call your results to the people on our Education committee. With your input, we can strengthen the bonds that tie us together in our Lord Jesus Christ and make the Kingdom of Heaven just a little bit closer for everyone to enjoy.

Ultreya!

Susan

[Grouping Survey](#)

2.

Spiritual Director

(Rev. Stephanie Pellow)



As many of you know, ordained ministry was not my first calling in life. I trained as a teacher and taught primary and junior age children for thirty years before I attended seminary. I recall having a problem with “compartmentalizing.” By that I mean that when I was at the school I was totally immersed in the tasks and the interactions of the job. I found it extremely hard to pick up the phone to make an appointment with a health care professional, my mechanic or hair stylist. Those were home tasks and I was not at home.

After I attended a Cursillo when I was 29, while I continued to have difficulty integrating the secular aspects of my life into my work day, I found that integrating my faith into my work came rather easily. I thought about my teaching as part of the apostolic action. Kindness, patience, fairness, joy, caring and encouraging were well integrated into my days working with children. Of course teaching is an obvious career for practicing those fruits of the Spirit. Jesus welcomed the children. Following the way of Jesus involved welcoming children on an everyday basis. It included the necessity of putting the other first. The children in your charge need to be your first concern. The commandment to love your neighbour was highlighted as well. Working closely with children was a “neighbourly” activity. You were a part of their community and they of yours. I don’t think anyone can teach successfully unless they love being with children in general and love those in their charge in particular.

While teaching provides immediately recognizable opportunities for Christian action, most likely all occupations have some venues for interaction in the way in which Christ taught us. In the later years of my teaching career, I routinely bought my gas at a station on route to my school. The young man who pumped the gas (Remember those days?) was cheerful and enthusiastic about the day ahead even on the coldest of February mornings. He expressed care for and interest in his customers without being obtrusive. Over time I got to know that his father had bought the station and asked him to manage it even though he had to suspend his education to do so. He was a Christian and had wanted to study theology possibly leading to a career in ministry. Kevin asked a colleague of mine who taught grade 7 & 8 to help him with teaching techniques for his Sunday school class. I admired Kevin both because he did such a fine job of extending Christian hospitality and because he had sacrificed his own plans to help out his family.

Eventually Kevin was no longer at the gas station and I missed seeing him, a friend in Christ known only in a few brief conversations. In my last year of seminary, I was delighted to encounter him at the beginning of term in one of my classes. We had a lovely reunion. He caught me up on the news of his young family. I shared what I was doing in retirement and gathered greetings for Steve who had helped him out with the Sunday school lessons. It was a one day reunion as Kevin decided not to take that class and I did not run into him again at the college. I have not forgotten his wonderful example of taking his faith into a job that could otherwise have been unrewarding and using it to bring cheer to others.

In each of our occupations, volunteer work, church functions, and even retail interactions how have we strived to make that the moment when someone else felt closest to Christ that week?

Be a friend,

Make a friend,

Bring a friend to Christ

3. Huron Liaison

(Marion Bailey)

I think that the year 2015 will be marked in my memory as the new beginning of Cursillo in Huron! We have received enthusiastic support from Church House and Cursillistas in our diocese, as well as the Niagara Diocese and the Canadian Anglican Cursillo Secretariat. In Matthew 14, Peter, with faith, responded to Christ's invitation to step out of the boat he was in and into the turbulent sea. In faith, we have stepped out of "the boat" and into the unknown, trusting God.

There are some housekeeping issues to attend to as we create a new Niagara and Huron Secretariat as this has not been done before in Canada. The concept of working together bringing strength to the Anglican community crossing diocesan borders is exciting and, once begun, may have a valuable impact in other geographical areas in Canada. I have been blessed to be elected as the voting member of our newly formed Secretariat as we work towards making the changes necessary to the constitution of the Canadian Anglican Cursillo Secretariat. The spring Canadian Anglican Cursillo Secretariat meeting will be hosted in Hamilton this April 18 – 20th. Please pray for safe travel and fruitful discussions.

The next weekend – Weekend #51 - May 26th – May 29th - will be the first weekend when clergy and team from both dioceses will work together to bring participants into a walk with Christ, using the Cursillo method. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit and our new Secretariat, supported by prayer, the team will make a journey with Christ to help create an environment where each person is encouraged to invest their time and talent in learning more about their Baptismal Covenant with God in their personal daily walk.

We trust the Spirit will guide us and direct us in all we do with His most gracious favour – and further all of us with His continual help – that in all our works - we may glorify His holy name. Amen

Ultreya

Marion Bailey

4. Pre-Cursillo Report

(Open)

Our next weekend is Weekend #51, May 26-29, 2016. Please think and pray about someone you may like to attend this weekend. Don't forget to invite them, the worst that can happen is they say NO, but remember, the seed has been planted and may bear fruit at a latter time.

5. Weekend Chair

(Open)

Weekend #51 is fast approaching. Keep the team and participants in your prayers on their weekend May 26-29. We have a change of venue this year to the Crieff Hills Conference Center in Crieff. This year the team is a mix of people from Huron and Niagara with the hope of getting a good seed started for Huron to eventually host their own weekends.

6.

4th Day Chair

(Paulette Switzer)

***“Let your light shine
before others that
they
may see your good
deeds and glorify
your
Father in heaven”***

(Matthew 5:16)

Our annual meeting was held in September at Cathedral Place. I am honoured to serve for the next 2 years. To share Christ's light for God's glory is truly humbling.

In November we had an Ultreya at Holy Trinity. You could feel the Holy Spirit with us. Shirley Kitchen's Witness talk on Her El Camino in Nova Scotia truly inspired us. Thanks to Ann Grose and Susanne Adams for leading us in wonderful songs of praise and thanksgiving. Thank You Victoria for Your hospitality.

The Ultreyas between St. Alban's and Grace continue. They are on the 2nd Friday of the month alternating between St. Alban's and Grace. Check the website or Shirley Kitchen for more information. Ultreyas are open to everyone. "Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ"

Ultreya,
Paulette Switzer



7. Weekend Coordinator

(Marion Bailey)

Weekend #51

May 26 – 29, 2016

Crieff Hills Community

Puslinch, ON, N0B 2J0 www.crieffhills.com

Matthew 14:27-33 (NIV)

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."



I am amazed – once again – by the Holy Spirit!! My journey towards Weekend #51 has made me realize how much like Peter I am – boldly stepping out and then, like Thomas, doubting – doubting my decisions, my reasons, my actions. I find it so easy to tell others to “have faith” or “trust God” and “keep your eye on Christ”: but it is something different to remind myself in times of uncertainty. I wonder: Is this merely a human condition?

I have been walking with a woman with whose friendship I have been blessed. Over the past year and a half, we have mostly laughed together. Our first meeting – our first discussion - immediately revealed we had much in common. Not like me, she is very brave but, like me, she loves to study the bible – especially John. What an amazing relationship we have developed as she gives witness to anyone and everyone of how her pain subsides after prayer and how much better she feels after having communion. What joy I find to watch our God at work! We often go back to Matthew 14. Then as we part ways and she returns to her abode and me to mine -- then my doubts step in.... What if.....I wonder if.....I hope that.....She tells me that this is the same for her. We weep.

It seems to me that we can't always see Christ in the turbulence and unsettled waters. He reminds us that if we ask His reply is – “take courage! Don't be afraid”. He encourages us to step out of the boat and into the uncertainty. Even when we doubt and become afraid, He is there for us immediately. And when the wind is calm we can worship Him saying “Truly you are the Son of God”.

In prayer I asked God for a theme for this weekend. I asked for some scripture to guide me. There was silence – nothing immediate that I could hear. Little did I know that His response was contrary. He was working through my friend as we encouraged each other. He was working through Alec who drew a picture that became the front cover for a Sunday bulletin – you can see it here. He was also working through my grandchildren who gifted me with a t-shirt for my birthday celebration at the A&W in Orangeville at 6pm on a Friday evening. The t-shirt reads “Lifesaver – mine walks on water”. A coincidence??? I think not!! I take comfort in knowing that Cursillo has a method and our team doesn't have to invent the wheel. We have to follow the guidelines set out for us and listen to God, knowing that The Holy Spirit is leading us and will be with us always.

Ultreya

Marion Bailey

8. *The Witness Box*

'Cursillista testimony of their journeys in Faith ,Study & Action'

Sharing Christ's Light

I have been volunteering for the John Dougan Centre. It is an organization that offers support to people with mental issues.

The Christmas Party was a huge success. A lot of us volunteers put in many hours to make it happen. Our clients enjoy a turkey dinner and Santa comes with gifts. There were 160 people who enjoyed this party.

I have been filling in for Graham and Pam Worsfold (who are also Cursillistas) while they are in Florida. That means helping people pick out coats and organizing the winter clothing bank. It is so good to see that people can be warm this winter. I also went to Eden House (a seniors home) to assist Rev. Brian with communion. It was humbling to visit with the residents. Some of whom never get visitors.

I also have been helping with Food for Life as so many volunteers are away.

Ultreya,

Paulette Switzer.

Niagara Synod Memories

I was honoured to represent our church at this October's Niagara Synod. I was delighted and amazed by the number of fellow cursillistas I saw in attendance. For Apostolic Action a number of us handed out Cursillo Paphlets to a Priest or lay person of each church in the Diocese of Niagara for distribution at their church. On Saturday morning I had the opportunity to meet Primate Fred Hiltz! During our conversation he asked what I had done to earn the Order of Niagara. I responded that one of the things was being on Niagara/Huron Cursillo secretariat. He then proceeded to tell me how much Cursillo meant to him, and his last act as Bishop before becoming the Primate was to attend an Ultreya! At this point Bishop Michael Bird joined the conversation and stated how important Cursillo is to him and how much he appreciated the work Niagara/Huron Cursillo is doing. At this high point I gracefully bowed out of the conversation.

Ultreya,

James Gould

"Now concerning the spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed"

(1 Corinthians 12:1)

9. *Food for Thought*

From the book "Rebirthing of God by John Philip Newell
Be Filled with Light and Shine by Mary Oliver,

When I am among the trees, especially the willows and the honey locust, equally the beech, the oaks, and the pines, they give off such hints of gladness, I would almost say they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself, in which I have goodness and discernment, and never hurry through the world but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves and call out "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.
And they call again. "It's simple, they say" and you too have come into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled with light, and to shine"

Prayer in Honour of Those whom Jesus Loved

Text by Sr. Joan Chittister, O, S. B. 2011

Jesus who love the Samaritan woman, outcast proclaimer of your name, let us love and support all those who proclaim your name to the gay & Lesbian community.

Jesus who loved the lepers whom others called unclean, let us see the glory of creation everywhere , in everyone.

Jesus who loved the one condemned with him and promised him heaven by virtue of his faith, give us the faith to broaden our vision of the reign of God.

Jesus who loved the hemorrhaging woman, long ignored and thought to be intrinsically disordered, give us hearts large enough to embrace those whom the world call bent.

Jesus who loved the tax collector the community feared. Enable us to put down our fear of those who are different from ourselves.

Jesus who loved the Roman soldier, foreigner and oppressor, help us to love those who make exiles of our gay & lesbian brothers and sisters.

Jesus who loves us in all our humanness, all our glories enable us to love those glories we have failed to see.

Let us bless the God of differences.

An excerpt from the Prayer by Joan Chittister

Global Leadership Summit held October 20-21, 2016 recommended by a fellow cursillista. For more information call 800-804-0777 or visit the website growingleadership.com/summit2016.

C/o Cathedral Place
252 James St. North
Hamilton, ON L8R 2L3

Web:
<http://www.niagaracursillo.org>

Communications
Contact
niagaracursillocomm@gmail.com

We're on the Web!
Visit us at:
www.niagaracursillo.org

10. Communications

(James Gould)

Getting this **Newsletter** out to our **Cursillistas** and keeping you informed of what is happening in our **Niagara and Huron Cursillo** movement via the **niagaracursillo.org** website is a great privilege and I can only pray I am up to the task.

Please visit our website: go to the **weekend** page for applications and weekend info, go to **upcoming events** for what's up in **study, faith & action**, Ultreyas, workshops and more.

The newsletter is for ALL Cursillistas! Yes it is an important tool for the secretariat to keep all members informed of happenings. Ideally it is also for fellow Cursillistas to pass on ideas and or events that might help others on their journey.

If there is a Cursillista who needs our prayers contact me and I will gladly get their name to our Prayer Team.

Please contact me at niagaracursillocomm@gmail.com with any inquiries, if you find something missing, if you wish something added or if there appears to be a mistake.

Remember if you change your email address to please let us know so we can continue to keep in touch with you! If for some reason you wish to be removed from the email lists, email your request for removal from the list and I will remove you from our email lists.

Yours in Love and Service, **Ultreya!**

Now there are different gifts, but there is the same spirit; and there are different ministries, and yet there is the same Lord; and there are different activities, and yet it is the same God who performs them all in everyone."

1st Corinthians 12: 4-6

Ultreya