**Spiritual Director Report to Annual Meeting Re: Ten Pilot Parishes**

I have memories of well over 50 years ago, when I began my career as a Medical Laboratory Scientist, back in the UK. One of my tasks was to maintain the lab equipment in a stable and reliable condition and one example of those the pieces of equipment, was the Blood Gas Analyser. The analyser measured the gasses contained within a patient’s blood sample by recording, in millimetres of mercury, the pressure of that gas at a known fixed volume. So long as the analyser was set up properly and the mercury was contained and kept in a stable condition, it all worked perfectly. However, I vividly remember how difficult it was trying to keep the mercury in a stable condition. The problem was that mercury seems to have a mind of it’s own and is almost impossible to control and contain in a stable condition. It naturally wants to constantly change its shape and run off into different directions. Which is why it’s also known by the name Quicksilver and if you’ve ever broken one of those old mercury filled thermometers and spilled the mercury, you’ll probably know what I’m talking about.

So why am I sharing this information about my former career with you? Well, it’s because trying to control a stable and reliable list of Ten Parishes who are willing to participate in our new collaborative model, has often reminded me of those days back in the 1960’s when I struggled to control and contain a pool of mercury in a stable condition, when it naturally just wanted to keep changing its shape.

Indeed, I’ve actually lost track of the number of spreadsheets of Ten Parishes and Priests, that I’ve created over the last three years since the first one in October 2020. Just like Quicksilver, at the blink of an eye, the spreadsheet would transform itself as Priests left for new Parishes or retired and I would have to start calling around again. It soon became very apparent that although we will still need Ten parishes to review to analyse the impact of the changes brought about as a result of the new Model, we may well have to be flexible about which Ten Parishes they are. Consequently, rather than have just the Ten Pilot Parishes use the Weekend Registration Form that was revised to reflect the new Model Process, all Parishes sending participants will use it. The process now requires all Sponsors meet with a potential Participant’s priest to ensure that the priest will support that person going on a Weekend, before the Sponsor invites their potential participant to attend a Weekend. Thereafter the participant needs to meet with their Priest before and after the Weekend and the Priest must sign their Registration Form to approve their attendance. Cursillistas who made their Weekends over 20 years ago will recognise that what was old is now new again, because that was always the process in the earlier days of Cursillo.

We do still have a list of Ten Parishes where the priest has agreed to participate as a Pilot Parish but in reality, we have no guarantee that we will actually receive Participants from those parishes. Consequently, we may also have to follow-up with priests with participants on the upcoming Weekend who were not identified as a Pilot parish, to gather data required to assess the effectiveness of the New Method.