

A Letter to Cursillistas in the Upper Peninsula of Marquette
From the Secretariat and NonRoman Council
A Plan for the Cursillo Movement in the U.P. 2020-2021

Dear Cursillistas,

It has been a little more than a year since the closing of Marygrove, and for many of us it was a source of great sadness. Marygrove's closing has presented great challenges for the Cursillo community. Since the mid-1970s Marygrove has been the Spiritual, Administrative, Communications, Financial, and Operational Headquarters of the Cursillo movement in the Diocese of Marquette in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. That all ended in July 2019. It has taken a full year to find our bearings and figure out the many pieces, formerly handled by Marygrove, that we need to put in place in order to go forward, and to renew and strengthen the Cursillo Movement here in the U.P.

As the year progressed and the magnitude of our task became evident, we realized that the workload was too much to expect our Secretariat Lay Director, Sheryl Carobine, to carry alone. Therefore, 6 members of the Secretariat have joined with Sheryl to form a Steering Committee. Please take a moment to send a prayer and blessing to Sheryl who has so generously served in the role of Secretariat Lay Director for more than 20 years! Our seven-member steering committee was formed with volunteers from Dickinson, Escanaba, Marquette, and Keweenaw Ultreyas. The committee members are: Sheryl Carobine, Lisa Nelson, Al Hansen, Janet Lindstrom, Anne and Terry Dehring, and John Benson. The Steering Committee along with Father Larry Van Damme the Cursillo Chaplain, and the members of the Secretariat and Non-Roman Council comprise the leadership team for the Cursillo Movement in the U.P.

Though it was a great disappointment to cancel the Cursillo weekends this year, it may be that the pandemic's Great Pause gave us a gift. You may recall from your Cursillo weekend the three big questions posed to you: Who am I? What am I to do? How am I to do it?

In the wake of Marygrove's closing these questions surfaced for the steering committee as well:

Who are we - now?

What are we to do?

How are we to do it?

During the shelter-at-home order, God gave us plenty of time and encouragement to bring these questions to PRAYER and STUDY and ACTION (in the form of many Zoom meetings.)

In the past, most of the Secretariat and non-Roman Council's effort was spent preparing for Cursillo weekends and assisting Marygrove with those weekends. In the course of our studies, we soon realized that we need to broaden our view beyond Cursillo weekend planning in order to sustain the Cursillo Movement in the Upper Peninsula. We need to put just as much work, effort and commitment into the Pre-Cursillo {making a friend, being a friend & bringing that friend to Christ} AND the Post-Cursillo {continuing our friendship through small group reunions and the gathering of all groups at our monthly Ultreya gatherings – and living your 4th Day}.

Because we were certain that we are not the first group to need help making a major transition, we reached out to the Regional and National Cursillo coordinators to discuss our concerns. Cef Aguillon, the Director of Cursillo-National, and Carol Reyes and Lisa Dubinsky, our Regional coordinators, met with us via Zoom. At the very beginning of this meeting, Cef reminded us that first and foremost Cursillo is about friendship. As we shared our hopes and concerns for sustaining the Cursillo their warmth and friendship was apparent. The meeting closed with their offer to help us re-establish a

strong foundation for our Cursillos in the U.P. and to walk with us for as long as we need their help. By the end of the meeting we had a plan.

One of our first concerns was to help Cursillistas know that Cursillo is alive even when we do not have a Cursillo weekend. We also sensed that people long to reconnect after being separated by the pandemic. We asked, “how can we gather as Cursillistas from across this large diocese when miles and pandemic have kept us apart?”

Because it appears Covid will be with us for a while, we will begin by offering a series of gatherings, via Zoom, which lead up to a “**Cursillo de Cursillos**” gathering of Cursillistas in Marquette in the summer of 2021 (God willing, and the pandemic subsides.)

The Zoom gatherings will last approximately one hour each. These gatherings are meant to offer a way to reconnect and go deeper in our understanding of Cursillo, how Cursillo came to be, and how to live its gifts more fully. Each gathering will consist of a short talk (15-30 minutes.) After this we will break into separate Zoom discussion rooms for 15 to 20 minutes and then return to the large group for a 15-minute Question and Answer session with the presenter. The presenters will be people from the National and Regional Cursillo districts. We plan to offer these teachings bi-monthly beginning September 27, 2020. We will offer this more often as scheduling allows.

Next summer, one or more of our presenters will join us for a **Cursillo de Cursillos** weekend. This is an event using a format similar to a Cursillo weekend. It begins on a Thursday evening and ends on a Sunday afternoon. Patterned after a Cursillo Weekend, the Cursillo de Cursillos offers Cursillistas a chance to step away from daily life and refresh their spirits in the experience of God’s love and Christian community while deepening their understanding of the Cursillo movement. It will also give us the opportunity to try out our new venues for future Cursillo weekends. Here is a link to the National Cursillo website if you would like to read a little more about Cursillo de Cursillos: <https://www.natl-cursillo.org/what-is-cursillo/cursillo-de-cursillos-opportunities-benefits/>

Our first Zoom gathering will be Sunday, September 27, 2020 at 2 PM Central/3 PM Eastern.

Prior to that date we will schedule tutorial sessions to help those unfamiliar with the Zoom meeting platform - and for anyone who wishes to pop in to say hello. If you would like to learn more about using Zoom here is a link to their website’s FAQ (frequently asked questions)

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206175806-Top-Questions>

Through these first steps we hope to reunite our diocesan Cursillo community in friendship and the shared love of the gift that is Cursillo. We strongly encourage all Cursillistas across the U.P. to participate in these events especially those who wish to be on Cursillo teams. As we develop a deeper understanding of the Cursillo movement and its methods and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will find the way forward. Together we will build a strong foundation for the Cursillos in the Upper Peninsula.

Christ continually invites us to draw closer to Him, to ourselves and to each other. Are we accepting that invitation? The opportunities laid out above, will provide all Cursillistas with inspiration and encouragement to help us live out Christ’s invitation to seek and draw closer to Him, to ourselves, and to others.

Cursillo is alive in us!!

Christ is counting on us!!

DeColores