

The Witness

Mount Saint Francis Cursillo Center
Mount Saint Francis, Indiana 47146



You are my witnesses, says the Lord, my servants whom I have chosen [Isaiah 43:10]

Letters from Christ By Carlos Perez

Recently, in our bible study we came upon the seven letters in Revelation that St. John revealed to the seven churches. The final question was noted worthy to mention to our Cursillo community, which is as follows: Imagine Jesus composing a simple letter to your parish. What do you imagine would be his commendations and challenges to our faith community, and what are you doing to help your community to grow in faith and holiness?

When I read this, the first thing that came to mind is how different we would view our faith if instead of reading it as something from the past; we actually lived it here today. When I read the scriptures, I always think in past tense and how the first Christians managed with their faith. This time I was forced to look at what I would do in their place. I can only imagine that if Christ were to write the letter to my church and my faith community, that I would respond as a faithful Catholic with Christ as my never-ending light and love.

So, come with me and read along as we answer His letter. First, His commendation, I hope, would be that we are still together in Christ. We celebrate the Trinity, and keep the Sabbath. We receive the Eucharist and thank God for our blessing. We raise our children in the faith and pray for our salvation. The challenges we face would also have to be addressed. There is nothing you can hide from Christ.

Do we love our neighbors as we love ourselves? Do we turn the other cheek? Do we judge others and forget the wood beam in our eye? I believe that Christ would be a little broken hearted if He were to evaluate our lives, whether as a church or a faith community. The great news is that Jesus Christ forgives if we repent and atone. This helps with His final question: what are you doing to help your

community to grow in faith and holiness? The beauty of our Lord is that there is always hope in salvation. So what are we doing? Are we helping the less fortunate among us? Do we love our enemies? Are we forgiving our transgressors?

To use the modern colloquialism, "it's a work in progress." Christ knows what we are capable of, and knows our limitations long before we do. We are His children, and He loves us, but like children we need to learn what is right and what is wrong to help our souls reach heaven. Christ is not a hands-off Father. He gives us plenty to learn and several chances to get it right. He lets us fail, but is always there to catch us when we fall. So, since we get another chance to answer his letter we need to think what we would tell Christ in response. Maybe start out something like this; Dear Lord I will help Your church and Your children by.....

Are You Connected?

The Witness is a pretty good newsletter but the information here is just a drop in the bucket. For pictures, archived articles, and the latest Cursillo news, check out what Steve Volpert is doing at our website — www.cursillo.org/mtstfrancis. Then send your email address to msfcursillo@yahoo.com to get meeting reminders and real-time updates.

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Being Holy

By Sr Karen

We have all seen or heard people's typical reaction to the idea of being holy people. Our minds are filled with the preconceived images of the Holy Joe kind of personality. But the truth is that God wants us to be holy people. In 1 Thes. 4:3 we read, "This is the will for the Lord; your holiness and sanctification."

When St. Paul spoke of an ordinary believer he used the word *Hagio*. The literal meaning of the word is "saint" or "holy ones". He knew that is what we were called to become. What we seem to forget is that none of us actually "qualifies" as holy, but Christ's generous acceptance of us negates our own unworthiness. I think that is why I feel such emotion during the liturgy when we respond with the words "Lord, I am not worthy, but only say the word and I shall be healed."

Adam and Eve were such lucky people. We know from Scripture that their relationship with God was one of companionship. They knew God's voice and looked forward each day to seeing God. There was separateness but also an easy going connection; until that day when evil found the crack that caused the severing of this relationship. As a result of this act, we were gifted with the Incarnation.

Imagine! In Phil. 2, 5-8 we read that, "Jesus emptied himself and took the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of man." We have heard or read that so many times but think about it for a moment! Jesus willingly poured out his divinity, to become us. Jesus surrendered all divinity, all the essence of Godliness, all omniscience and omnipotence! Willingly! Jesus did this so he could face life's challenges just like us.

Jesus' example shows us what we are asked to do. Just as Jesus emptied himself of the divine, we are to empty ourselves of the vices of humanness and fill ourselves with the virtues of the divine. That is what becoming holy is all about. We seek-- we must seek holiness in order to heal the separation caused by human arrogance and regain that person to person friendship that makes us companions to the Holy once again. That is what it means when we say we

are called to become fully alive. St. Iranaeus said, "The glory of God is humanity, fully alive."

We are the only species that is incomplete. In the Ideals talk we heard about plant, animal and mineral life. They are what they are. But humanity, us — our whole life, is an invitation -- an invitation to strive to become the person who is intimately connected to our creator. Metanoia, that continual transformation, is what this continued evolution of our soul is about. Continue being *hagio*, ordinary believers, saints, holy ones.

Newest Cursillistas

The end of April brought us more than just spring flowers this year. The Women's Weekend, the last week in April, added 23 new cursillistas with a rededicated devotion to Christ too. We wish to welcome and congratulate **Marilyn Banet, Sue Buck, Judy Cox, Jan Fishback, Kathy Fowler, Mary Hall, Stacie Henehen, Mary Jackson, Tracey Kelley, Bernadette Kok, Dona McCrite, Carmen Mas, Bari Richards, Gayle Schrank, Sharon Schuhmann, Theresa Simmons, Terri Summers, Jackie Veri, Faith Wade, Pam Waller, Debbie West, Renee Wimsatt, and Nancy Whitaker.**

What a wonderful scene to witness so many holy women entering their 4th Day. Of course it didn't happen without months of preparation. The Women's team was lead by Angela Hayes and included: Yvonne Abel, Carol Aemmer, Sr. Karen Byerley, Ann Marie Camarata, Br. Ambrose Eischens, Kathy Eberle, Tish Kimbel, Barbara Morris, Charla Parez, Sadie Powell, JoAnn Reas, Cathy Reising, Michele Rowe, Laurie Slusser, and Fr. Jerry Timmel.

The community must now support these new members. Let us encourage our newest members to join in grouping, attend Ultreyas and other Cursillo events, and become involved in our common movement. At the same time, let us rededicate ourselves and our commitment to Cursillo. How is our attendance? How is our involvement? Only we know if we are doing enough. As you can see, many are becoming more involved all the time.

**The Following
Cursillistas Need
Your Prayers**

The lost I will seek
out, the strayed I will
bring back, the injured
I will bind up, the sick
I will heal
Ezekiel 34:16

The Franciscan
Friars
Sharron Barker
Sharon Beck
Archbishop Daniel
Buechlein
Keith and Ron
Byerley and Family
Joann Day
Malia Edmonds &
Family
Juanita Engle
Fr. Bill Ernst
Jackie Fouts
Sally Halas and
Family
Tish Kimbel and
Family
Matt Kruer
Eva Libs
Mary Jane Lockett
Patty Lockett
Eunice Luther
Jeanette Voyles

*Please help keep our
prayer list updated.
Contact Sr. Karen at
812-949-3189 or send
an email to
karenbyerley
@msn.com*

IT'S NOT "JUST ANOTHER MEETING!"

By Joe Proctor

I recently had the opportunity to discuss the importance of a friendship group and how this weekly sharing of our "tripod" enables us to persevere in the evangelization of our environments. I was struck by the fact that everyone in the discussion shared on how important grouping was to their spiritual growth. This was a diverse group, men and women, some new Cursillistas and some having years of grouping experience. But time involved with grouping wasn't a factor. All in the group mirrored the same thought, that the coming together with other Catholic Christians to share their faith strengthened their resolve and helped them persevere in living out what is fundamentally a Christian life.

My introduction into my 4th day occurred in September of 1980 on Cursillo #13. I cannot truthfully tell you I remember much of the talks of that wonderful weekend, but this I can say without hesitation: my sponsor introduced me to a friendship group immediately and I have been a member of a group since that time. I always knew that grouping was important to me but didn't really realize to what extent until one day several years ago. I was talking to a fellow Cursillista about Cursillo and he said, "you know Joe, grouping has become a part of your life, hasn't it." After reflecting on his statement that evening, I realized that he had observed something in me that I had not considered. Grouping is a part of me! I cannot think of my life without a friendship group in it.

I have had the honor of being a weekend coordinator for our community and one of the great frustrations I had was giving the Ultreya and Grouping talk on Sunday afternoon. I say this because I knew that while sharing my experience of grouping, I knew that they had no way of knowing how much of a blessing was being offered to them. As all of you know that belong to a group, you must participate in grouping for awhile before you become aware of just how powerful it is. That's why it's so important to guide our new members into a group as soon after their weekend as is possible. That's why we stress that the sponsor is grouping and has a responsibility to their candidate for at least a year or until they are settled into a group and attending Ultreya. As is often said in the business world: **Time is of the essence!**

I suppose that in my 28 years of grouping I have experienced most of what works and what doesn't. What follows is certainly not meant to be a comprehensive listing

(Continued on page 4)

Calendar Of Events

Pilgrim's Way 3rd Monday 7:00PM

Ultreya 4th Monday 7:30 PM (No Ultreya Aug or Sep)

Summer Fiesta Aug 9, 2008

4th Day Retreat Sep 27, 2008

Men's Weekend Apr 2-5, 2009

Women's Weekend Apr 23-26, 2009

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but just some of the more basic rules I have learned through trial and error: Weekly meetings are a must if the group is to stay healthy and provide its members with a steady spiritual feeding. Grouping should be made a priority. If it is put on the same level as our normal daily activities, it will fall by the wayside. Once the group begins sharing, stay on topic! Refrain from any other subject except Piety, Study, Action and Close Moment. (After my sharing, if my group doesn't know how I lived my tripod since our last meeting then I haven't done my job!) Listen, really listen to the others as they share. Must anything more be said about confidentiality? The breaking of this cardinal rule has destroyed many wonderful groups. And of course, open and close the session with a prayer. One word of caution to our newer members. Don't set your expectations too high. A friendship group allows us to stay on course and on a level keel. It is not meant to nor can it match the "high" of your weekend so don't come away from your first few meetings feeling letdown. Also, there will be times when your sharing will come easier than others. This is normal; it is something we all have experienced. The most important thing is to persevere and keep grouping.

You may have wondered why I entitled my article as I did. In the discussion I mentioned, several people said that had they been told of grouping, they might not have made a weekend. After all, here we go with another meeting! I

have heard this statement many, many, times before and I believe that rather than looking at it as an obstacle, I suggest that it actually presents us with a wonderful opportunity to share with our candidate the tremendous benefits grouping provides. In place of hiding this Cursillo technique, why not share with them the many blessings you have received from your group? Tell them how your weekly sharing has enabled you to persevere in your journey and how it has brought you to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Remember, your candidate sees something in you that they want. So, let them know how you got there! The bottom line is that it works!

These are just a few of my thoughts and observations on something that is precious to me and has become a thread that is woven into the fabric of my life. Grouping is the "life's blood" of the Cursillo method. Those of us who are grouping know this; for those who aren't, please pray about it and seek out a group with which to share your journey. I promise you that it will provide you with more blessings than you can imagine. Grouping is life giving and spiritually rewarding. It keeps our Cursillo weekend alive and helps us to live an authentic Catholic Christian life. One thing's for sure though, it is most definitely not "just another meeting!"

Secretariat

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Wanted: Your witness articles

E-Mail your newsletter items to: greg.hamilton@insightbb.com, or mail to: Greg Hamilton 3007 Shoreline Turn, Georgetown IN 47122.

Printing done by the grace and good will of Eric Hobough @ Reliable Printing 583-0115 and Copy Connection 944-1916. Your patronage is appreciated

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