

# The Love Letter

Spring 2006

From the Episcopal Cursillo Community of Minnesota

## **The Convenor's Corner...**

Dear Friends.

One of the comments heard around the general Cursillo community is how amazing it is that the Via De Cristo, the Walk to Emmaus, or the Unidos en Cristo are such active movements and the Episcopal Cursillo is not seeing the same participation. We are all the same movement in our respective denominations, yet our Cursillo seems to have some challenges that we need to address. Let us examine our situation.

1. We need active support at the diocesan level.
2. The 4th Day community (everyone) is not supporting/attending Ultreyas.
3. Active support and participation from the 4th Day community is needed for the serenades, agape dinners, and closuras.
4. Active support and participation from the 4th Day community is needed for group reunions and renewal groups.
5. We need to more actively recruit clergy to attend the Cursillo weekend to expand our spiritual director base. The number of clergy called to participate in the upcoming Cursillo numbered 40 attempts before the call was accepted.
6. We need 4th Day support for membership on the Cursillo Secretariat.
7. We need additional support and participation to have active parish liaisons for parish coordination, local activities and communication with the Cursillo Secretariat.
8. Recruitment for weekend team participation is becoming more of a challenge.

These are some of my concerns as to why our movement has been seeing a slower growth of late than in prior years.

One thought is that *the Episcopal Church doesn't have the numbers* that the other denominations have, but I don't see that as a good enough excuse. Our membership has grown while our activity and participation level has not.

## **Upcoming Events...**

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### **Cursillo Co-Ed #32**

**St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church  
Saint Paul, MN  
June 15–18, 2006**  
(Details on page 3)

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### **4th Day Ultreyas**

**Parish Ultreyas:** Parishes are encouraged to hold their own Ultreyas on a regular basis.

Another comment is that *we are all active and busy with our own agendas*. This reason is used by many people. I remember when I went through in 1979 the serenades and agape dinner serenades had so many 4th Day members that they stretched completely around the tables four to five deep. It was very impressive. Even today, with fewer numbers participating, it remains a very heartfelt experience. However, the last several Cursillos have been disappointing because of the lack of support and participation by the 4th Day community.

The excuse of being too busy just hits me wrong. Once a year! One time a year! We have one weekend per year and participation by our 4th Day community should be more than evident.

Our next weekend is June 15–18 at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church in Saint Paul. This is advance notice. What are we going to do? How will you plan to enlist the participation of the Cursillo community at your church?

For complete and current information, log on to the Minnesota Cursillo site at [www.mncursillo.org](http://www.mncursillo.org) or e-mail at [MnCursillo@kmtel.com](mailto:MnCursillo@kmtel.com).

Keep the Faith, Mike Kramer

<b>Episcopal Cursillo Secretariat 2006–2007</b>	
<b>Secretariat Convenor</b>	
<b>Mike Kramer</b> Stillwater, MN	651-439-7103 krame029@tc.umn.edu
<b>Secretariat Spiritual Directors</b>	
<b>Rev. Don Nesheim</b> Minneapolis, MN	612-730-3537 dnesheim@earthlink.net
<b>Rev. Alice Mae Applequist</b> Chatfield, MN	507-867-3028 vegag91357@hotmail.com
<b>Secretariat Members</b>	
<b>Rose Harris</b> Mantorville, MN	507-635-5789 raharris@kmtel.com
<b>Kate Johnson</b> Elk River, MN	763-274-2206
<b>Cara Knittel</b> Burnsville, MN	952-953-3609 cpknittel@yahoo.com
<b>Mary Lou Lamain</b> Burnsville, MN	952-892-5058 mlamain@lindquist.com
<b>Lynda McPherson</b> Hastings, MN	651-437-1459 lyndasmc@hotmail.com
<b>Linda Storlie</b> Farmington, MN	651-460-4015 llstorlie@hotmail.com
<b>Cal Swenson</b> Burnsville, MN	952-891-4375 dsweiven@juno.com
<b>Open position</b>	
<b>Open position</b>	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Day Palanca Coordinator</b>	
<b>Jerry Harris</b> 60444 – 272 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue Mantorville, MN 55955	507-635-5789 raharris@kmtel.com
<p><b>The Love Letter</b> is a publication of  <b>The Episcopal Cursillo Community of Minnesota</b>            5224 Minnetonka Blvd., St. Louis Park, MN 55416  <b>Phone:</b> 952-929-2952  <b>E-mail:</b> MnCursillo@kmtel.com  <b>website:</b> www.mncursillo.org</p> <p>Spring 2006 issue date: April 2006            Newsletter publisher: Linda Storlie            Newsletter editor: Nickie Dillon</p>	

## Website Reminder

The website for Episcopal Cursillo Community of Minnesota is up and running. The site name is **www.mncursillo.org**

This website enables us to use resources more efficiently and to provide better and easier communication. *The Love Letter* will be distributed by e-mail or by U.S. Mail. Currently we have over 300 e-mail addresses versus 1500 distributed by mail. We need to distribute more by e-mail to yield cost savings of printing and mailing.

**To receive *The Love Letter* via e-mail**, go to the Cursillo website at [www.mncursillo.org](http://www.mncursillo.org), click on the link “Name & Address Change” and then select “Love Letter Delivery: Email.”

The same website page can be used to change other personal address information. If your e-mail address becomes invalid, *The Love Letter* will be sent to you by U.S. Mail.

Your e-mail address will be used **only** for alerting you when the newsletter or special information is available. It will not be provided to any other organization.

*The Love Letter* is available in Web (.HTML) view and Adobe (.PDF) view. The Web view is organized differently to make it more easily navigated; the PDF view is more attuned to obtaining a printed copy of *The Love Letter* as it was sent out via U.S. Mail.

The website is organized this way:

- ~ Cursillo ~ What is it?
- ~ *The Love Letter* (both HTML and PDF versions of the document)
- ~ Calendar Events
- ~ Applications & Forms
- ~ Secretariat
- ~ Other Cursillo Web Links

The Episcopal Cursillo Community of Minnesota has a new e-mail address: **MnCursillo@kmtel.com**  
 Use this address to communicate with the Cursillo Office via e-mail.

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***The Cursillo Secretariat (leadership group) is seeking new members.***  
 If you are interested in serving your Cursillo community in this important way,  
 contact Mike Kramer at 651-439-7103 or [krame029@tc.umn.edu](mailto:krame029@tc.umn.edu)

## Upcoming Coed Cursillo #32

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**When:** June 15-18, 2006

**Where:** St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, 60 Kent Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102

**Cost:** \$100

The **Cursillo Candidate Application** form can be downloaded from [www.mncursillo.org](http://www.mncursillo.org), or you can call the Cursillo office at 952-929-2952 and ask to have an application mailed to you.

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### Leadership:

- ~ The Rev. Steve Lander,  
Spiritual Director
- ~ The Rev. Joe Hopwood,  
Asst. Spiritual Director
- ~ The Rev. Steve Judd, Deacon,  
Asst. Spiritual Director
- ~ Vicki Kramer, Rectora  
651-439-7103 ~ [krame029@tc.umn.edu](mailto:krame029@tc.umn.edu)
  
- ~ The Rev. Alice Applequist,  
Spiritual Director, Palanca
- ~ The Rev. Bob Gunkle, Deacon,  
Asst. Spiritual Director, Palanca
- ~ Steve Linney, Palanca Rector  
952-941-9492 ~ [stlinney@yahoo.com](mailto:stlinney@yahoo.com)
  
- ~ Georg West III, Kitchen Rector  
952-894-4076 ~ cell 612-850-4273 ~  
[gwestiii@us.ibm.com](mailto:gwestiii@us.ibm.com)
- ~ Dennis Holland, 4th Day Rector  
763-745-0825 ~ [denyholland@yahoo.com](mailto:denyholland@yahoo.com)

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### 4th Day Events:

***Your participation is needed!*** Follow signs and directions on location.

- ~ **Agape Dinner:** Meet in 4th Day at 6 p.m.  
Dress clothes and song book.
- ~ **Mananitas wake-up Sunday morning:**  
Meet in 4th Day at 5:50 a.m.
- ~ **Closura:** Sunday, 3 p.m.  
Be in the sanctuary by 2:45 p.m.

### Events for Involvement From 4th Day Community:

**Palanca:** Please remember that Palanca can take many forms, not just notes and gifts sent for the weekend.

- ~ There is a need for parishes to come in and help with a meal, in donation and/or preparation.
- ~ You can do many things in the name of the weekend, such as visiting those who are homebound, offering a service with the community in which you live, praying for the team and candidates; you can offer to do childcare or other services for candidates during the weekend, and many other things.
- ~ If you send items for the weekend, remember that Palanca for the Rollo Room should include candidates and team. Palanca for a full room requires 60–65 items.
- ~ Gifts of monies to support the weekend are also appropriate; they will be acknowledged to the candidates throughout the weekend.

### **Kitchen ~ AGAPE Team & CLEAN Teams:**

- ~ Oftentimes people would like to be involved in a weekend but cannot commit to all the team meetings and the whole weekend.  
*Just know, there is still a place for you!*
- ~ There is a great need to have the 4th Day community come into the weekend to help behind the scenes in the kitchen on Saturday afternoon and evening so the Kitchen Team can get dressed and be ready to serve the candidates.
- ~ The Agape Team will also clean up after the meal.
- ~ Another meaningful way that your 4th Day community could be active is to come in to serve/prepare/donate one of the meals.
- ~ Contact the Kitchen Rector, Georg West.

## Action — Rollo #8

A talk given by Georg West III, Cursillo #31, Wilder Forest, February 2005 (edited for this printing)

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The Christian life is expressed in three distinct elements: Piety, Study, and Action. Action is the third leg of the tripod and it is the consequence of being a Christian. Action is an expression of our desire to share God's love.

All of us are called to a personal conversion marked by a fundamental change in the direction of our lives. God wants us to live our Christianity in our daily lives. He calls us to change our attitudes, our way of life, and to include Him in our everyday activities.

- ~ Christianity is more than an individual relationship (our life of piety) with God. This love of God that we direct to Him must also be directed to help and encourage our brothers and sisters.
- ~ Christianity is more than a series of truths to be learned or laws and regulations to be observed. It is more than a program of formation that we develop for ourselves. Many times people feel that if they fulfill their obligations and follow the laws of the Church, they are doing all that is necessary to be a Christian.
- ~ Christianity is more than a program to better mankind's place in the world. There is more to Christianity than social justice and performing Christian acts.
- ~ Christianity is more than a program to "preach" the Gospel. Christianity is the whole of life. It is to "BE" Christian in every aspect of our life; it is to live with a Christian attitude in all that we do and say.

A person who accepts this life has a greater love, understanding and compassion for family, coworkers and friends. This overall Christian attitude and direction in life greatly affects all of one's relationships with others. In reality, all relationships with others are summed up in God's words to Cain: "Where is your brother; what have you done to your brother?" (Genesis 4:9).

**§ We need to ask what we have done to our brother by asking, What is action? How do we define action?**

When our motivations for action are elevated and empowered by grace for the spreading of God's kingdom, our evangelistic efforts become apostolic, beyond everyday human actions that are motivated by friendship, brotherhood, and neighborliness. Our next door neighbor needs a ride to the grocery store or the pharmacy, or needs to borrow a lawnmower; we help them. These are human actions. Doing Christian things like work in a soup kitchen or deliver meals to the elderly out of a sense of what *God calls us to do*, and because we feel compassion for others and want to help them, is Christian action. Our planned apostolic action is reaching out to others as instruments of the Lord to bring someone or a group of people (Environment) closer to Christ.

Our actions—or to say it another way, our evangelization efforts—by God's design, are tied into His plan of salvation. For example, God chose Moses to lead the Israelites to freedom. At first, Moses didn't feel worthy to be the Lord's instrument. He did not believe that he was the right person for such an enormous task. However, after experiencing God's love, he wanted to take on the responsibility, respond positively to God's will, and become the leader to save his people. We too take on the responsibility of being God's messengers, and bringing the Good News to all of our brothers and sisters wherever we are.

**§ *We are the Church and, by virtue of our baptism and confirmation, we are obliged to be the bearers and messengers of the Good News.***

Mature Christians are those who are empowered by God's love. Love is having the attitude of Christ toward another person. He treats me as a unique individual. Christ gives Himself to me, as I know myself to be. Finally, the Lord gives of Himself faithfully, passionately, constantly, and completely.

It is possible to say that the total giving of oneself to another for the love of God is the measure of a person's human and spiritual development. True love fulfills the Call of the Cross, as we hear in Matthew's Gospel chapter 16, verses 24–25.

§ *We have found and experienced the love of God and we want to bring God's love, as we know it, to the rest of the world.*

God gives us His grace to accomplish our work; we do not have to do it alone. We are united to Christ by grace.

The proclamation of the Christian message transforms people; we begin to change our attitudes and actions and, in turn, we bring about change in all of the structures and environments in which we live. We could jump out and go into our little corners of the world and try to make them more Christ-like. We may even have some success. There is, however, a specific method of evangelization that will help us to be more effective as evangelizers in our families, work places, and social settings.

This method involves a three-step process: make a friend, be a friend, bring your friend to Christ. It is that simple.

- A. **Make a friend.** This is probably the easiest step. All it takes is the will to take the first step; to make the first introduction to a person whom you desire to be your friend. A simple hello may start the entire process; maybe a common interest like children, school activities, or work interests. All we need is the desire to become friendly with another person.
- B. **Be a friend.** The next step is to really become a friend. This step takes time. In order to become a true friend, we must have a genuine interest in the other person. We must take the time to get to know the other person along with that person's likes and dislikes, hobbies, etc. This does not mean that we talk without stopping. It means that we LISTEN, truly listen, to what the other person is saying. In this process, we are who we are but add joy and optimism; we sanctify ourselves for others. We think of them and their needs before our own, love them spiritually as God loves us and, finally, live for the truth. It is important that we be authentic and that we honestly and sincerely share our lives with them.

- C. **Bring your friend to Christ.** The final step is to bring your friend to Christ. Lest we believe that we are doing this, alone, it is important for all of us to remember that this final step is accomplished only when done for Christ, with Christ, in Christ, and like Christ.

We are acting for Christ when we realize that we are doing so because of our love of God. We must live the scripture verse in St. John's Gospel, chapter 3, verse 30: "He must increase, while I must decrease."

We are acting with Christ when we understand that we are not alone in our actions. Jesus is beside us, and sometimes carrying us every step of the way. We also come to the realization that everything we are doing we should be doing for the glory of God. (I Corinthians 10:31)

We must act in Christ. We all know that Jesus is already inside each person that we try to evangelize. Our role is to be a friend, and to try, as Jesus did in His life, to have others open their hearts to Him. We have to help everyone understand that they too have been redeemed by Christ.

Like Christ, I must act with the qualities of Jesus. I must give witness to my life in Christ. I must show that I am trying to live the life that I am talking about. Jesus was a witness to His preaching; am I? Do I really believe what I am proclaiming? Do I live what I believe?

In the letter to the Romans (10:13–15), St. Paul states, "As the scripture says, 'Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved. But how can they call to Him for help, if they have not believed? And how can they believe, if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear, if the message is not proclaimed? And how can the message be proclaimed, if the messengers are not sent out?'"

§ *We are the messengers and proclaimers of the Good News. The way we live our life will be the answer to God's question: "What have you done to your brother?"*

† † †

## Focus on the 4th Day

The Cursillo weekend is not an end to itself. It is a starting point that lasts the rest of your life. It is a springboard to a long-range practice of the Baptismal Covenant in the life of the Church called the 4th Day.

*The 4th Day is composed of three major elements:*

**The Group Reunion**, the heart of Cursillo, is a small group of friends (usually 3–5) who meet (weekly), and who hold each other accountable for their spiritual journey. They report on their piety, their study, and their apostolic action. A bonding develops that institutes a strong support group for life.

**The Ultreya**, which is usually held monthly, is a “reunion of the reunions.” It provides support and builds community by allowing the sharing of communal experiences.

**Spiritual Direction** is an important element of the Cursillo Movement. It is a commitment to seek out skilled lay persons or clerics for spiritual direction to provide help in deepening their union with Christ. †

## Putting the 4th Day First

The Cursillo Method involved much more than just “putting on weekends.” This has caused considerable development within both ecclesial communities—resulting in a better appreciation for what Cursillo is—and a sharper, clearer understanding of how to apply the Cursillo Method—philosophically and practically.

Today, that development is proceeding. Cursillo is emerging as a mature instrument in the hands of committed clergy and lay Christians to empower the “ministry of the laity.”

In the Cursillo Movement, we approach evangelization as a very natural act of being Christ-like within each of our daily activities. We realize that while most people would like to live their lives in a Christ-like manner, the pressures of the world often make this difficult. The Cursillo Movement provides a method and a technique to provide each of us with the tools, the mentality, the strength, and the support to make this natural type of evangelization possible. †

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## “Lord, I Have Time”

I want out, Lord.  
People were coming and going, walking and running.  
Everything was rushing: cars, trucks, the street, the whole town.  
People were rushing not to waste time.  
They were rushing after time, to catch up with time, to gain time.

Good-bye, excuse me; I haven't time.  
I'll come back, I can't wait; I haven't time.  
I must end this letter—I haven't time.  
I can't accept because I haven't time.  
I can't think, I can't read, I'm swamped; I haven't time.  
I'd like to pray, but I haven't time.  
You understand, Lord, they simply haven't time.

The children are playing; they haven't time right now ... Later on.  
The students have homework to do; they haven't time ... Later on.  
The young people are playing at their sports; they haven't time ... Later on.  
The young married couple have their first house; they have to fix it up. They haven't time ... Later on.  
The grandparents have their grandchildren; they haven't time ... Later on.  
They are ill, they have their treatments; they haven't time ... Later on.

They are dying, they have no—Too late! They have no more time.

And so we all run after time, Lord.  
We pass through life running—hurried, jostled, overburdened, frantic—and we never get there.  
We haven't time.  
In spite of all our efforts, we're still short of time, of a great deal of time.

Lord, you must have made a mistake in your calculations.  
There is a big mistake somewhere.  
The hours are too short.  
The days are too short.  
Our lives are too short.

You who are beyond time, Lord, you smile to see us fighting it.  
And you know what you are doing.  
You make no mistakes in your distribution of time to us.  
You give each one time to do what you want done.  
So we must not lose time, waste time, kill time,  
For time is a gift that you give us,  
But a perishable gift,  
A gift that does not keep.

(continues...)

Lord, I have time,  
I have plenty of time,  
All the time that you give me.  
The years of my life,  
The days of my years,  
The hours of my days,  
They are all mine.  
Mine to fill, quietly, calmly;

But to fill completely, up to the brim.  
To offer them to you, that of their insipid water  
You may make a rich wine ... much as you made one  
in Cana of Galilee.

I am not asking you this day, Lord, for time to do this and  
then that ... but for your grace to do conscientiously, in  
the time that you give me, what you want me to do. †

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## The Little Hut

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a  
small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for  
God to rescue him, and every day he scanned the  
horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming.

Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut  
out of driftwood to protect himself from the elements,  
and to store his few possessions. But then one day,  
after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his  
little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky.  
The worst had happened: everything was lost. He was  
stunned with grief and anger.

“God, how could you do this to me?” he cried.

Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the  
sound of a ship that was approaching the island. It had  
come to rescue him.

“How did you know I was here?” asked the weary man  
of his rescuers.

“We saw your smoke signal,” they replied.

It’s easy to get discouraged sometimes when things  
appear to be going badly. But we shouldn’t lose heart,  
because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst  
of pain and suffering. Remember, next time your little  
hut is burning to the ground, it just may be a smoke  
signal that summons the grace of God.

For all the negative things we have to say to ourselves  
... God has a positive answer for it ...

You say, “It’s impossible.”  
God says: “All things are possible.” (Luke 18:27)

You say, “I’m too tired.”  
God says: “I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

You say, “Nobody really loves me.”  
God says: “I love you.” (John 3:16; John 13:34)

You say, “I can’t go on.”  
God says: “My grace is sufficient.” (II Corinthians 12:9;  
Psalm 91:15)

You say, “I can’t figure things out.”  
God says: “I will direct your steps.” (Proverbs 3:5–6)

You say, “I can’t do it.”  
God says: “You can do all things in Me.”  
(Philippians 4:13)

You say, “It’s not worth it.”  
God says: “It will be worth it.” (Romans 8:28)

You say, “I can’t forgive myself.”  
God says: “I forgive you.” (I John 1:9; Romans 8:1)

You say, “I can’t manage.”  
God says: “I will supply all your needs.”  
(Philippians 4:19)

You say, “I’m afraid.”  
God says: “I have not given you a spirit of fear.”  
(II Timothy 1:7)

You say, “I’m always worried and frustrated.”  
God says: “Cast all your cares on ME.” (I Peter 5:7)

You say, “I don’t have enough faith.”  
God says: “I’ve given everyone a measure of faith.”  
(Romans 12:3)

You say, “I’m not smart enough.”  
God says: “I give you wisdom.” (I Corinthians 1:30)

You say, “I feel all alone.”  
God says: “I will never leave you or forsake you.”  
(Hebrews 13:5)

† † †

Episcopal Cursillo Community of Minnesota  
5224 Minnetonka Boulevard  
St. Louis Park, MN 55416  
Phone: 952-929-2952  
www.mncursillo.org

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