

Spiritual Director Report

I must admit, it feels a bit strange to be writing an AGM report when I've only been in the position for a few months. However, even in that short time some things have stood out for me.

The first thing I noticed in my "return" to Cursillo is that members seem to be just as passionate about God, the movement, and spending time together as they were back in 2005 when I made my Cursillo. This was a wonderful discovery, and the recent Ultreya at Andrew Hayden Park lifted my spirits greatly. There is much potential here to work with as we look to the year ahead.

The other thing I've noticed is that some things have changed. It will come as no surprise that there have been struggles over the past year(s). Numbers are lower, and that means finding volunteers can be a challenge. And, if Cursillo is anything like every other place in our diocese, the Shape of Parish Ministry consulting has pointed out that this also puts a greater amount of work onto the shoulders of volunteers. This has led to some fatigue amongst members.

However, as I said in the second paragraph, there is much potential to work with. One of the few "gifts" of COVID (if I can use the term) has been that it has allowed the church to let go of some things that needed to end. In parish life that might have looked like fundraisers that took tons of work, but didn't produce results that were worth the effort. It looked like letting go of the "cult of busy" where we kept doing everything, so it seemed like nothing had changed. COVID gave us permission to stop trying to do everything, and to focus on what was essential.

I wonder if that same "gift" might be helpful for Cursillo? We are excited to resume weekends in the near future. Now we have time to consider how best to approach our "new normal". What is it that we should hold onto as we go into the future? What can we give ourselves permission to let go of? What new thing might be emerging in our midst that God is calling us to take up?

As the diocesan Shape of Parish Ministry has pointed out, our diocesan future will rely on faithful and well-trained lay leadership within our parishes. Cursillo is well placed to be a major player in this shift. If we are wise, we will take the time to discern what Cursillo needs to look like for us now. All social organizations need to adapt and transform to the changing needs in every generation. I get the sense that our time to do that is now. If we can do this faithfully, who knows what kind of space can open up, and the Holy Spirit can move in new and exciting ways.

I am so excited to be a part of this journey with you all. Should you have any thoughts or questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. Be well.

Ultreya.

The Rev. Dr. Jon Martin