

Report of a Spiritual Director

As we approach our AGM in 2023, I can tell you that our Cursillo community appears to be spiritually well. We have, apparently, come through the main part of the Covid 19 pandemic and our society is returning to 'normal' ways of interacting. The OACM found ways not only to get through the pandemic, but also to keep in touch. We stayed together. We cared for one another and kept contact. We remained in communion with one another.

Our community had a gathering on May 6th of this year to begin a process of reimagining Cursillo for the 21st century. Good work was done, ably facilitated by The Rev. Kerri Brennan and guided by our bishop and our secretarial leadership. Much work remains to be done. For me, the high point of our time together came when one member posed the question, 'Does Cursillo have a future?'. This very appropriate question was responded to by a resounding 'Yes!' by other participants. We may not have had specifics with which to substantiate our response, but the very vehemence of the affirmative spoke volumes. The fact that several people made time on a beautiful Saturday morning in May, and others wished to be there, affirmed our commitment. We are moving forward into the 21st century.

Preparations are well underway for our first Cursillo weekend since 2019. By the time we meet for AGM, the dates reserved for that weekend will be past. Preparations were far advanced last year, in 2022, and the weekend was postponed after covid cases rebounded. This year all signs are hopeful that we can go ahead. The decision to postpone last fall was a very difficult and painful one for all involved. Secretariat decided that it would be very difficult to assure the safety of all taking part, and that the measures to attempt that safety would interfere with the candidates having the full Cursillo experience of sharing and closeness. It was not a unanimous decision for Secretariat and it was divisive within the team. However, the rector of the weekend, Gillian Mattock, was fully supportive of the process and then of the choice made. Gillian, who had already spent years preparing for her weekend, showed great courage and selflessness. Let us all continue to pray for Gillian, for the members of her team, for all new Cursillistas and for all upcoming weekends.

Covid forced many changes in the way we live our lives. It also, I think, made us look at those lives, at assumptions about what is important, about what we value. It helped us to realize how very necessary coming together can be. It taught us, I think, how essential touch can be. Contact is so essential that where physical touch is not possible, other means must be found. In Cursillo, we have learned to make this possible during weekends through palanca indicators, and through prayer.

My husband, John, quips that what I mean to say is that hugs matter.

The importance of touch, of contact, is something Jesus taught us long ago. He showed us how to care for each other, especially through hard times.

Ultreya!

The Rev. Jan Staniforth