

Dear friends in Christ,

As we prepare for our AGM it is amazing to think the amount of work and acts of faith that have taken place over the past year. Not only have we gathered for worship on a reasonably regular basis, and pulled off successful weekends, but we have also invested deeply in a “re-imagining” process of what Cursillo might look like for the Diocese of Ottawa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

During that process we have collected information from clergy across our diocese, as well as connecting with lay people to help us understand what our modern needs are, and what we might do differently so that Cursillo can continue to meet the spiritual needs of the faithful in our time and place.

As someone who specializes in development and transformation within the church, I feel it is safe to say that anyone who takes up the role of leading change, or chooses to engage in the process of change with regards to the church, is committing an act of deep love and faith for the Gospel. Change can be hard, especially in the church. Many of us like things that are familiar, comfortable, and especially in a world that can seem so chaotic at times, we like things that ground and stabilize us. Yet, it is at moments like these that we are reminded that our God always calls us towards new life. New wine must have new wineskins, and God is always doing a new thing. Until the Kingdom comes in its fullness, we can always expect to be called forward.

It would have been easy for our community to choose to not do this hard work. It's not always fun, and brutally honest self-reflection can take a lot out of anyone. Yet, our community has chosen to do the hard work, and to faithfully put forward a series of recommendations that chart a way forward. It is a way forward that is shaped by the direct feedback from the faithful across our diocese. From clergy and laity, as well as Cursillestas to those who have not participated. This document is an act of faith, and I am so pleased to commend it, and the work of the Cursillo community to your consideration.

As a spiritual director you always hope that a love for the faith, and for the community will inspire people to step into difficult places. Over this past year I have watched this community live into that hope. God is doing a new thing! Not only have we perceived it, but we are leaning into it. God bless our community as we step into this new time.

Ultreya!

The Rev. Dr. Jon Martin