



The magazine of The British Anglican Cursillo® Council

Cursillo is all about personal contact

*Spiritual Director, Rev Stephen Bowring
challenges us to do our bit*



Three people, '*Nobody*,' '*Somebody*,' and '*Everybody*' got together to discuss a serious problem. They all agreed that something needed to be done, but who was going to do it? *Everybody* thought *Somebody* should do it, but in the end *Nobody* did it.

Sound familiar? It's a situation that we come across in all walks of life, and that includes the Church in general and Cursillo too. Perhaps it's just me, but I can't help thinking that if all the hours and money that have been poured into researching and analysing the decline in church attendance in the last half-century had been poured into acts of actually reaching out with the gospel, there might not have been quite so much decline to worry about.

Archbishop William Temple once described the Church as an organisation that existed primarily for the benefit of those who were not yet members, so why do synods and PCCs spend most of their time discussing with each other things that have no relevance whatsoever to mission? In the last 30 years I must have endured hour after hour of 'important' discussion which has produced absolutely *diddly-squat* in terms of extending the Kingdom of God.

And that is why I am passionate about Cursillo. At the heart of what we are about is the mantra "*make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Jesus*," which is exactly what Jesus did in the gospel. He didn't gather a committee, he spoke individually to a few who would listen (Mt.4.18). He didn't establish his church on the

rock of synodical government, he handed the keys to Peter (Mt.16.18-19). He didn't compromise his message to court widespread popularity, he allowed many to fall away who couldn't take the hard teaching (Jn.6.60-66).

What you won't find in the Bible but has been proved true over the years are the sayings that *"faith is caught, not taught"* and that *"belonging comes before believing."* Our Cursillo method is built on the concept of inviting others to the foretaste of heaven we have discovered. How do we do this? By putting a leaflet out at the back of an empty church? I've listened to so many testimonies at the closing services where new pilgrims have said something to the effect of *"I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for (so-and-so) who persuaded me..."* or *"I owe it all to (so-and-so)..."* The Holy Spirit moves in any way the Holy Spirit wants, but very few Cursillistas are attracted to the movement by what they've read about it; it's all about personal contact.

Which brings me back to our three friends at the start of this rant. Are you one of the *everybodies* who know that something needs to be done to attract new pilgrims and wants to spend time sorting out just how that's going to be done and by whom (but not *actually* doing anything yourself)? Or are you one of the *somebodies* who feels that *Everybody* is putting it on you and you have no answer? In the end, maybe it's better to be a *Nobody*, and just go out there and get on with the real business of 'gossiping the gospel' and showing others what they are missing.

ULTREYA GB 2022

Saturday 3rd September 2022

Hosted by Anglican Cursillo in the Dioceses of London & Southwark

Undergirded by prayer

Looking unto Jesus

Telling good news

Rooted and grounded in love

Enabling and encouraging one another

Yielding abundant fruit

Attentive to the Holy Spirit

Giving glory to God

Building up the body of Christ

Please pray with us:

that these might indeed be the marks of Cursillo
and of Ultreya GB 2022;

that God would give his people the inspiration
and insight we need as we plan and prepare;

that many amongst us might embrace this vision
and willingly offer themselves

that the vision might become a reality

See Page 5 for more information

Message from our National President, Beth Roberts



Firstly apologies for the late production of BACC Pages. The conference was my first priority earlier in the year and then some other matters distracted me. It is however here now.

I would like to thank all who made the conference the success that it appears to have been, helping set up, provide wonderful Palanca and welcome as well as the speakers. I understand that many attendees went back to their secretariats with news and ideas and much inspiration for their own dioceses. If nothing else it was wonderful to have all but one of the active dioceses represented and for us to get together in fellowship and worship.

The AGM provided all the BACC reports, and thanks were passed on to Cheryl as she stood down as BACC Treasurer at the end of her period of office, and we welcomed Beth Gascoigne from Durham Diocese into the role. Without any nomination for the role of BACC Secretary, Richard valiantly agreed to maintain the workload in the interim. Following the suggestion of splitting the responsibilities we have later received a nomination for Minute Secretary and Richard would be agreeable to maintain the archives in a Servant Community position. These suggestions are yet to be formalised.

Adrian Trotter was elected to take over as CLW Convenor next year. Unfortunately we still have no Area Representative for the North-West, so maintaining direct contact with Blackburn, Carlisle (Cumbria) and the non-active Manchester & Liverpool dioceses is limited. Other Area representative changes were Yvonne Hayes for Yorkshire and Victoria Button for Durham & Scotland. Thanks again to those standing down, Sue Orr and Sally Mair respectively.

No nominations have yet been received for National Spiritual Director, a role which should be filled before the end of the year to enable a period of shadowing before Stephen steps aside in May.

Who is your diocese nominating?

We have the Ultreya GB to look forward to, organised by London and Southwark dioceses with an opportunity to meet and pray in St Paul's before the Walk of Witness across the Millennium Bridge to Southwark Cathedral for the Ultreya and Eucharist. A great opportunity to meet together in our capital city and share together in fellowship and worship. Please see the BACC website for more details and a link to the booking page for the Ultreya. www.anglicancursillo.co.uk/ukultreya/

Whilst transport logistics preclude a full resources table on the day, the one item that I am pleased will be offered for sale is the freshly available new Cursillo badges. If purchasing in bulk, then please notify Tony at resources@anglicancursillo.org.uk beforehand. These take the shape of the Cursillo logo and will sell at £2 each (& p+p). (The original rainbow badge will be available whilst stocks last).

So, whether coming to meet friends old or new, to see the sights, worship in wonderful historic churches or to get your new badge, there are many reasons to join us on 3rd September – I look forward to seeing you there.



Beth Roberts

A Prayer for our Season of Stewardship

A prayer card suggested by Sandy Harris, Blackburn Diocese

**My church is composed of people like me
I help to make it what it is.**

It will be friendly ~ if I am.

Its pews will be filled ~ if I help fill them.

It will do great work ~ if I work.

**It will make generous gifts to many causes
~ if I am a generous giver.**

**It will bring other people into worship and fellowship
~ if I invite and bring them.**

**It will be a church of loyalty and love,
of fearlessness and faith, a church of noble spirit
~ if I, who make it, am filled with these same things.**

**Therefore, with your help, Lord,
I dedicate myself to the task of being
all the things
that I want my church to be.
Amen**

Ultreya GB

September 3, 2022



Your invitation

Join us for the national Ultreya in 2022, in our capital city!

We assemble under the dome of St Paul's Cathedral at 9.15am (don't be late) for a longer-than-usual procession with banners across the Millennium Bridge to Southwark Cathedral, where the Ultreya and Eucharist will take place.

Full details, and booking info, are on the BACC website:

<https://www.anglicancursillo.co.uk/ukultreya/>

Updated timings:

- 09:15 Gather under the dome of St Paul's Cathedral
- 09:45 Pilgrim Prayers
- 10:00 The Walk of Witness to Southwark Cathedral
- 10:45 Coffee in the Cathedral
- 11:30 Ultreya, Witness Talks, Gospel Responses and Group Reunions
- 12:30 Lunch – see below
- 14:00 Gather for singing
- 14:15 Eucharist
- 15:45 Depart

BACC Conference 2022



Reconnecting!

It was so lovely to get together with representatives from all (bar one) Cursillo dioceses and provinces in May. A total of 65 Cursillistas had booked and attended on the Saturday for the AGM and most for the whole weekend at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire.

The conference lived up to all expectations of the title "Reconnecting" in the sessions as well as the free-time, which was often spent chatting with others in the sunshine, proving both useful and enjoyable.

The sessions covered inspiring detail on how Sheffield had engaged in encouraging the next generation of participants (thanks to Fiona Kouble) and new ways of looking at Cursillo and use of IT (thanks to NSD Stephen Bowring). Both sessions led to far ranging discussions and ideas and it appears that most delegates took ideas back to their own diocesan secretariats for ways of working or new priorities.

It was not all intense discussion, morning and evening worship as well as the eucharist with a witness talk from Dave Whittington (see separate article), enhanced the fellowship, and the AGM provided updates and reports on BACC activity. Judging by the sound level of the voices on the Saturday evening the quiz proved engaging and fun and the rivalry between teams was itself entertaining.

With the exceptional welcome and gifts of Palanca from Jacqui Johnson and Hilary Sykes along with others, the conference which had necessarily been postponed by 2 years, was deemed useful, enjoyable and valuable for all who were able to attend.

Perhaps now is the time to mark your diary to join with other Cursillistas in 2024.

More Conference photos



Witness Talk at Cursillo National Conference 7th May 2022

Trust – Faith – Prayer

Chosen Hymn - The Lord's My Shepherd (psalm 23) Lyrics - Stuart Townend



In the last two and a half years, these three words have become very important to me and my wife Thelma. The order is less significant since all three have equal status to us but this sequence mirrors my experiences over this time.

It began with breathlessness which can be attributed to a wide variety of health issues. I believe that mine began in 2015 sometime after I had completed my 9th London Marathon in dressed as our own Richard III.

Being a typical male, initially I paid no attention to it believing that in time it I would recover as I had no pain to suggest that something more sinister was happening within my physical condition.

Twice in early 2019 I went to inquests in Brighton following my brother's death in May 2018. Whilst attending the first in February with close members of my family, they noticed how extremely out of breath I was getting walking up a hill. Needless to say, they each nagged me to consult with my GP. When visiting the GP, my blood pressure medication was reviewed as it was believed to be a side effect of the tablets I was taking. I notice little change, and there was a repeat of the experience at the second hearing in August 2019. The cause of his passing was not connected to my breathlessness experience.

Later in October, we had a family holiday in Cornwall with our youngest son and three grandchildren. During days out, breathlessness was again causing difficulty in walking more than 50-100 metres without stopping to recover before moving on. Still, I did not seek medical advice!

Then in November 2019 I experienced a near collapse due to low oxygen levels and my wife took me immediately to our GP, who arranged an emergency A&E admission to the Leicester Royal Infirmary.

Various tests identified a pulmonary embolism (Blood Clot) close to the right side of my heart, causing it to dilate to three times its expected size due to the strain that it was under to circulate oxygenated blood. I was then transferred to Glenfield Hospital

I was treated with blood thinners and advised to isolate until I visited a respiratory specialist again. Whilst waiting, at the beginning of 2020 I became aware that my weight had increased by 16kg – 3 Stone (due to water retention) and I ended up in hospital again, there I received an intravenous medicinal diarrhetic. At this point I was referred to Royal Papworth Hospital and just a couple of weeks later, the country went into its first lockdown. I was already isolating, and now I was shielding too.

Throughout the time we have been subject to Covid restrictions with a total of 19 PCR tests, I had to accept that in the circumstances touching me to assess my needs and progress was a necessary practice

A few months later, in September 2020, I visited Royal Papworth for a right heart catheterisation, which resulted in my diagnosis of Chronic thromboembolic pulmonary hypertension (CTEPH). I began medication and made a subsequent visit for a coronary angiogram in October, which showed no problems with cholesterol.

I had already been made aware that pulmonary endarterectomy surgery may be required, and on 6th October 2020 BB2 broadcast an episode of 'Surgeons: At the Edge of Life' which showed this very operation being carried out. This contained a lot of detail and I found it very reassuring that the team had the experience and commitment that I could trust.

Watching the programme reassured me that it would be the best course of action; therefore, I was prepared to proceed with the operation if it was to be suggested.

Shortly afterwards, it was. The operation was discussed in detail with me and Thelma, and I was made aware of associated risks and how long it may be (nine hours). I was happy to complete the form giving my agreement for the treatment.

I am very fortunate to be supported by my family and friends, as well as a very caring church family around the country who have remained in contact throughout. My own strength of faith also contributed to convince me that I had to trust the advice and co-operate with the doctors and medical staff with whom I had consultations.

Further, I felt I had two choices – stay as I was and continue experiencing breathlessness, or accept the operation with at least a 93 per cent chance of success. I felt I had little option and I was much more relaxed about everything once the decision had been made.

I had the surgery on 20th November 2020 and it was a success. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions and living 100 miles from Cambridge, I was unable to have any visitors. I was also able to reflect upon Peter's reaction to Jesus by saying not just his feet but his whole body (John 13:6-11) experiencing bed baths by the dedicated nursing staff.

Now, almost twelve months after the operation, my breathing has markedly improved and I am able to walk up and down stairs again - whereas previously I was using a stair lift that had been installed when my mother was living with us.

Now reflecting back over the events, I believe that I experienced my own resurrection. Placed unconscious at 8.00 am on Friday and connected to life support equipment for most of the operation and brought back to life again on the Sunday. The following Saturday I was allowed home having made a "Fantastic recovery" according to the surgeon, The next day back home we logged into zoom for our church Eucharist and being the first Sunday in Advent, the theme was 'New Life' - How true this is for me

I am feeling very positive that I will be able to resume swimming and jogging, as well as driving my 54-year-old Classic Car in the not-so-distant future.

I also look forward to attending church and resuming my governor duties at our local primary school. And - when COVID-19 restrictions allow - I'm looking forward to meeting up with the many people I haven't seen for more than two years.

I hope that anyone hearing/reading this might be inspired by the journey I have been on, most of which has been beyond my personal control!

Despite all the burdens placed upon NHS staff, the attention and treatment by every member of staff - from receptionists through to ward orderlies, consultants and surgeons - has been exceptional. I wanted or needed for nothing, and I cannot praise them highly enough.

I April and October 2021, I was invited for review/Check-ups at the Royal Papworth Hospital at 6 monthly intervals after this major life-saving operation. I was subjected to a number of tests and investigations that confirmed I was continuing to make steady improvements with my health. All was positive and they will continue to see me at six monthly intervals.

Given all that has happened, I did my best to co-operate with all that was asked of me and I am sure that maintaining this attitude with the staff made the whole experience easier to tolerate." I now feel that I am living proof of Trust, Faith and prayer in action.

Dave Whittington



Daily Prayer podcast

Hundreds of thousands of people have discovered the ancient monastic cycle of daily prayer through a Church of England podcast which has received more than a million downloads in just six months. The Daily Prayer podcast, which is integrated into the free Daily Prayer app, brings listeners together twice a day for short traditional services of Morning and Evening.

The podcast, available both via the Daily Prayer app as well as all major podcasting platforms, has had just under a quarter of a million unique listeners since launching. The services follow the pattern of the C of E's Common Worship services, with readings recorded by people around the country and music from one of the choirs of St Martin-in-the-Fields in London.

The podcast, which was launched in March 2021, has around 8,000 people listening each day. Find it at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-dailyprayer/daily-prayer-app-and-podcast>

What's in a name?

asks our National Spiritual Director, Rev Stephen Bowring

Ever since I was first involved with Cursillo 30 years ago there's been a simmering debate over the use of Spanish terminology. Those who want to anglicise claim that using the original foreign terms is off-putting to newcomers; those who want to retain the original argue that the language is part of the unique heritage of a unique concept. Many of us can certainly see both sides, and the debate will doubtless still rumble on.

What nobody seems to have noticed however, is that some of our own English terminology is out of date – or at least beyond its 'best before.' In September we will have the marvellous opportunity to meet together in England's capital city for what most of us fondly refer to as "the National." More formally we call it the "*National Ultreya*," and we stumble over the title "*Ultreya GB*," even though I'm sure we are fully aware that Cursillo is alive and well in Scotland and Wales. Beth is generally spoken of as the "*National President*," and I'm officially styled as "*National Spiritual Director*," although we both sincerely hope that Cursillo Scotland and the Welsh Dioceses regard us as their own 'national' officers too. Is it time to look for more inclusive job titles, or does it not really matter very much?

It's actually the second part of my particular title that causes more confusion than the first – what do we actually mean by *Spiritual Director*? Every diocese and province as far as I am aware calls its priest-in-charge-of-Cursillo the "*Spiritual Director*," and usually calls other priests on a Cursillo *spiritual advisers*, but these terms have developed new meanings in the church in general over recent decades. In particular "*Spiritual Direction*" is a term that is widely accepted as referring to a process of (usually) one-to-one accompaniment of an individual on their journey of faith. When I am introduced to someone (as I often am) who knows nothing of Cursillo but knows a fair bit about Christian life, it regularly leads to a degree of confusion. I usually have about one to two minutes of someone's full attention to explain what Cursillo is all about AND what my role is.

Fortunately I've had quite a lot of practice, as the self-same dilemma has faced me in the past in previous roles as Diocesan Spiritual Director, once for Leicester and twice for Ely. What has become clear to me since taking up my present position is that there are varied interpretations of what being either a Lay or Spiritual Director for Cursillo involves. If your province or diocese is finding it difficult or impossible to find volunteers to take on these roles, perhaps it's time to radically reassess your expectations of these key people. Are the job titles appropriate? Is there a clear job description? Is there sufficient practical/spiritual/emotional support in place? Are we trying to squeeze a person into a straightjacket or being flexible about the role according to what a person has to offer? Does it need to be just one person, or can the job be shared, or can some elements be delegated?

So if we can't find a priest willing to take on the role of "*SD*," could it be a lay person who is trained in *Spiritual Direction*? Well, if your answer is yes, I refer you to the previous paragraphs! But what about an Authorised Lay Minister, Licensed Lay Minister, or Lay Reader depending on your own provincial or diocesan terminology? I have no doubt at all that there are many well-trained and capable folk who would do the job very well, but in my personal view there is an underlying principle that would be undermined if this were to happen. Despite attempts to massage the history, it was never the case that Cursillo was a "*lay-led movement*." Neither was it a purely clerical initiative. It is true that Eduardo Bonnin was at the heart of the creation of the first Cursillos, but these would never have taken place without the visionary support and encouragement of Bishop Hervez. Some years ago BACC formulated its 'strapline' that declares Cursillo to be "*a movement of the Church*," implying the involvement and co-operation of both laity and clergy alike, and I think it's vital that we see that modelled at all levels.

Maybe perceptions will change in the future, but I would predict that 'disestablishment' in this way at present would be disastrous for the movement, pushing us even further into the fringes of a church that we already struggle to convince about the value of our own particular "*pearl of great price*."

Ultreya!

International Palanca

David Leeming, the communications officer for Oxford diocese, has not only suggested that a list of International Palanca Contacts is created to assist Diocesan Palanca Secretaries, but that he is willing to collect the first sweep of such addresses.

Please would all dioceses respond direct to him, on his personal email address, with any contacts that your diocesan Palanca secretaries use so that we might consider how best these can be collated and shared with all to enable British Dioceses to support a host of our international colleagues with prayer and Palanca greetings.

David Leeming - davidleeming0@gmail.com



Eduardo Bonnin Aguilo

Founder of Cursillo

~

Visiting his resting place



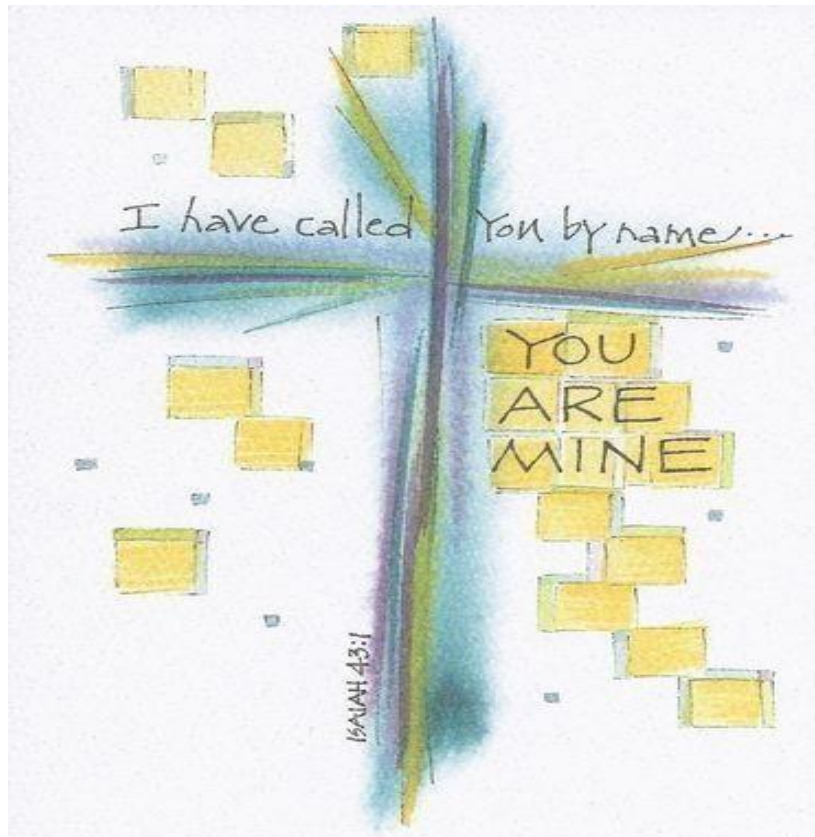
During October last year, Mary and I enjoyed a long-awaited Mediterranean cruise starting in Barcelona and one of the places our ship visited was Palma, Majorca.

We left the cruise terminal and arrived in Palma with its huge and magnificent Cathedral dominating the city. Palma is the city that houses the resting place of EDUARDO BONNIN - his grave can be seen at the "Iglesia de los Padres Capuchinos" which is a small church not far from the Cathedral.

Eduardo died at the age of 90 in 2008 having lived in Majorca all his life. This remarkable Christian man was indeed the founder of Cursillo. Read more about him at www.anglicancursillo.co.uk/eduardo.php.

We had visited his grave some years ago and if we find ourselves in Majorca again, we will no doubt go and pay our respects to the man responsible for the worldwide Cursillo movement.

Billy Hollis



This poem is written by Anne Munday, a Cursillista from St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocese.

It comes from her book 'The Missing Christ'.

A Promise

You stoop from the cross

Gather us in Your arms

Hold us close,

Whisper the words we need to hear.

Then you set us on our feet

And point to the way to go

With a promise 'I will be with you always

To the end of time'.

BACC Pages is the bi-annual magazine of the British Anglican Cursillo® Council.

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Compiler: Vivien Leeming

Thank you to all our contributors for this issue.

Deadline for our Spring issue: March 20th 2023

If there is anything you would like to contribute to the next issue, any thoughts, prayers, study recommendations, action tips or articles from your own diocesan newsletters that you would like to share more widely then please send them (preferably by email) to Beth.

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