



THE ARK

Toledo Diocesan Cursillo Mission Statement: Cursillo is a Catholic Lay Movement embraced by the Diocese of Toledo to bring hearts closer to Jesus Christ in order to transform society and be of service to the whole church. It is our mission to form small Christian Communities to deepen Spirituality in ourselves and in others.

February 2024

Application Forms are on the Website:

www.cursillo419.org

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Our Spiritual Advisor

Ark Spiritual Directors Article

Brother and Sister Cursillistas -

New voice! Let me do a little intro: I'm Fr. Charlie Ritter. I made Cursillo #9 in 1967 when men's and women's weekends were numbered separately. I made my weekend in Spanish and between then and the late 1980's probably worked 15-20 weekends in English or Spanish. From the early 70's to the late 1980's I was one of the diocesan spiritual directors; after that I shifted my focus to other ministries.

I was asked to do a reflection for this ARK, and my focus was all laid out for me by the fact that this year Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day coincide! Of course—Lent is all about our hearts, and God's heart, and where they meet (or don't). My experiences within Cursillo were a major part of God's helping me come to see

that it's not my behavior that matters so much to God, but where my heart is. What a grace it has been to see that God truly wants me to fall in love—because God has already fallen in love with me!

The Friday rollos spell out God's tremendous self-gift using the image and terminology of "grace." God is the "gracious One"—the Creator and Savior who draws us into existence precisely so that we can be drawn into God's own "circle of life." God is the One who both says to us "You have no idea how much I love you" and also asks THE question: "Do you love me?"

Saturday and Sunday talk about maintaining and strengthening this love affair—prayer, sacraments, study—and then how to share this Good News with others and invite them to hear and respond to this same loving call from God. Our efforts to reach out are grounded in that command to "love one another," but the background of our love for others is always the awareness of how much God loves us and them. It's not a "sell job" to give them what we found; it's an invitation to them to let God find them. We reach out gently and lovingly to people we realize are already deeply loved by God—they just may not be aware of how much they ARE loved.

And moving from Day Three to Day Four—especially as regards the Group Reunion—we should pay attention to finding and sharing with others our enthusiasm for the treasure we have found. But

Toledo Cursillo Weekends



Spring

Men--- March 7 - 10

Women-- April 11 - 14

Fall

Men—Sept. 12 - 15

Women—Oct. 17 - 20

it's even more important to be in touch with others who have this same awareness that we are loved—intimately, powerfully, undeservedly. To share the sense of “what have we done to deserve this?” Unless we are humble, grateful and joyous apostles, we can get stuck in an attitude of “What do I need to do?” rather than “How can I keep responding—and invite others to respond—to all that God is already doing and will continue to do?”

So...as we move into this “great season of grace”—as the Church calls Lent—we might best focus on how we can become more aware of, and more generously responsive to, God's great love. Don't worry too much about “more this” and “giving up that.” Slow down. MAKE quiet space in which to better listen to God (give up the distractions!). Truly believe that—as St. Ignatius points out—we can indeed find God in all things...but we have to watch and listen. Searching for God isn't like crashing through the woods looking for the rare and wonderful bird—it's sitting quietly and letting the bird find you. And God is quite good at finding those who really, hungrily want to be found. May your Lenten journey be filled with joy, with gratitude, with being more and more amazed at how God loves you! De Colores!



Lay Director

Jonah and the whale. A story about running from God. God is calling each one of us to a plan that He has. Do you hear God calling you? As I thought about this, I thought “No, I really haven't heard God call”. It's confusing to me. I think I'm doing what God wants me to do; and then it all ends up in a big mess. I just don't get it. I thought He loved me and wanted the best for me. My life has been one big disaster! I run from one project to another trying to put fires out. I get so dizzy trying to remember what to do next and where! Maybe I should just give up! I mean really, am I making any difference in my world? There is so much hatred and evil. So much killing.

Then I listened to a homily by Bishop Barron. He says God calls us always through our conscience. You know, that still quiet “voice” inside that tells us what is right from wrong. We often say, “I don't hear God.” I just don't know what He wants me to do or where to go. But how often do we take the time to be quiet, really quiet and let God “talk” to us? I'm with you, not nearly enough. My life, and maybe yours, is filled to the gills from the time I get up until I go to bed. How much time do I spend praying and “listening” to God? I keep telling myself I'll do more tomorrow. And truth be told, tomorrow doesn't come.



My resolution for 2024 was to pray more, worry less, and give more to God to handle. He does a much better job at it than do I. One month in, not too bad. But I still need to find the niche to be quiet! I think sometimes that the devil likes it if I'm too busy. Hmmm. Something to ponder. God wants all of me. Not just the surplus I am willing to give Him. He wants the first and the best not the leftovers. How am I going to do this? Pray some more and see where God leads me. “What do you want of me Lord? Where do you want me to serve you? Where can I sing your praises? I am your song!”

There is nothing more beautiful than the name of Jesus! Nothing calms my spirit more. It is the best, no THE best prayer! JESUS. This helps to calm my spirit. It helps me to hear Him, Jesus “talk” to me. Come Jesus come!

In a world of so much turbulence, craziness, unlove, unrest, darkness, what do we need? More of the very best love for all of us! Jesus. I really believe that if each one of us would take the extra time to pray, on top of what we already do, we would see a change. I really believe that is what God is calling, no challenging us to do. Take *extra* time to pray! A rosary, time after Mass, time in adoration, time in chapel, time in a chair in our living room. St Paul tells us to “pray unceasingly”. What does that tell me? To pray ALL the time. Offer up my work, whatever it is. The daily grind of 8-5. Washing the dishes, sweeping the floor, dusting, watching the grandchildren, helping the neighbor, taking out the garbage. Whatever we do, do it for God. With a joyful spirit! As it’s been said, who likes a grumpy Christian? SMILE ☺. If nothing else, people will notice and wonder what you are up to. And that opens the door for conversation about God and evangelization.

And that takes us back to Jonah. So if God were to tell you to go and preach repentance to a community that you are not familiar with, say Galveston, Texas. What would you do? Take the next flight to Antarctica? That’s similar to what Jonah did. He said, I think I’ll go the opposite way. God kind of has a way of getting us where we need to be/where He wants us to be. God’s timing is perfect! Even if we don’t agree.

So my challenge to you is to step out in faith and pray more. Give God 10 more minutes each day and see just how much closer you can get to God. I’d love to hear your stories.

As a wonderful Deacon (in his 5th day) said; May the peace of Christ always disturb your life!

Ultreya!!

John Lyons

Kathy Otermat



Pre-Cursillo

No applications for the Men's weekend received yet. We are working on several candidates (that were unable to make the Men's Fall weekend due to scheduling conflicts) and hope to have them confirmed for attending this Spring's.

We have heard there may be an additional 6 candidate applications in process.

Looking forward to receiving candidate applications (for both the Men's and the Women's) soon. (Don't forget the sponsor's applications:).

The Men's #293 weekend is March 7 thru 10, 2024 and the Women's #294 is April 11 thru 14, 2024.

And as always: now is the time to Make a Friend, Be a Friend and Bring a Friend to Christ!

Gary & Helen Keel

hkeel@buckeye-express.com 419-476-9347



Men's Team # 293
March 7 – 10

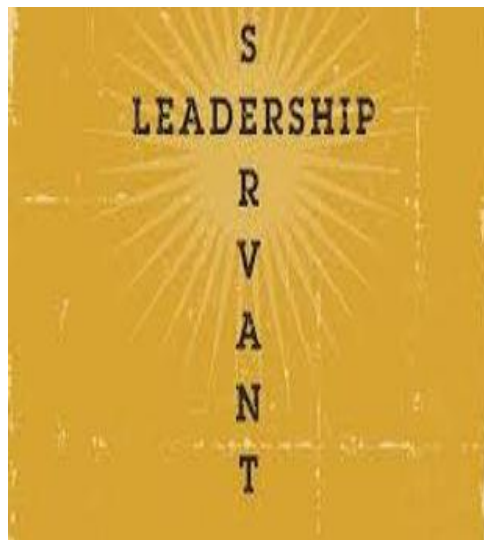
John Bonen- Environment/Table Leader	Roger Brickner-Head Disciple	Tim Distel-Security
Jeff Erd-Action	Bro. Dan Hall- Action/Sacrostam	Jeff Hammer-Piety/Table Leader
Mike Kachelek-Sheperd	John Lyons-Troubadour	Joe Manner- Ideal/Shepherd
Troy Peebles-Rector	Dea. Ron Plenzer-Sp. Adv.	Al Raminez-Disciple
Mike Roth-Leaders/Table Leader	Mike Ruhlen-Study/Table Leader	Dea. Tom Soper-Disciple
Scott Theis-Layperson	Jim Vasko-Asst. Rector	John Welch-Head Sheperd
Chris Witt-Disciple	Fr. John Murry-Sp. Advisor	

Cursillo

Please be sure to express your appreciation to God and to the people for serving on Secretariat. I say this because they do the best job they possibly can and need the rest of us to lift them in prayer. They love our God and they love the Cursillo and they love you.

As for any news or reports from our end of the world; please fill out the team applications and send them to me and or Robert if you want to work a Cursillo. The email addresses are on the applications. Thanks and GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

God Bless DeColores ---- Bob Drewior & Dave Zaborsk



School of Leaders :

School Of Leaders is February 17.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Happy Are Those Who Trust In The Lord. Let's all remember we can be joyful in our daily lives when we give everything up to our Lord. Not just when we think things are going well in our lives, but also when we feel stress and anxiety. The Lord knows our needs and gives us what he wants for us. Let's just ask for His Will to be done.

- **Our next School Of Leaders will take place on Saturday February 17 th in St.Michael Findlay.**
- **As always , we begin @ 9am. in the Marian Room (Enter the office doors: first hall on the right: first room on the right.**
- **Kathy Otermat will share scripture with reflection.**
- **Sr.Edna will be presenting from "Living With Real Presence" chapters 2.6 and 2.7**
- **John Lyons will be presenting from "Rescued" chapter 3**

Feel free to bring a snack or dish to share. We will have the coffee waiting for you.

We look forward to seeing you and hearing your singing voices. DeColores !

Rectors: Annie Blum annieblum516@gmail.com

Walter Beckford wbeckford@bex.net

Prayer Vine



(prayer requests for the month)

Jim McCarthy - hit his head, fluid on the brain and nerve cell damage, Gus Miller - heart procedure coming, Fr. Ed Littellmann- Covid, Kathy Decant - passed away, Jesse - biopsy, Derrick - surgery, friend's dad - blood clots in lungs, Mary Ann Baerkircher - intense pain after a fall, Gus Miller - surgery complications, Gus Miller - stroke, Mark & Annie Blum - continued prayers, Sr. Wanda Smith - surgery followup after gallbladder surgery found to be cancer, Bob Drewior - shoulder surgery, Nicole - heart surgery, Fr. Nick Weible - knee issues & in hospital, a special intention.



Ultreya for areas 7 and 10 will be Feb. 25th at Tiffin St. Joseph Upper Room at 7pm. Come pray with us for the Men's weekend.

Area 8

February 12 @ St Joe's Activity Center Galion 7:00pm-9:00pm

Fourth Day

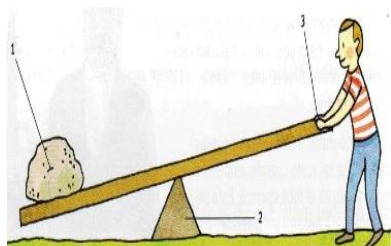
February is upon us. And spring is 6 weeks away. The spring weekend teams are beginning to form and we will soon be looking for Deacons and witnesses for the Holy Hours and Closings. Please consider helping and say yes if you are asked to help with this ministry. The Men's weekend is March 7th to 10th and the Women's weekend is April 11th to 14th. Also, plans are being made for the Focus Day on June 15th. Mark your calendars and plan on attending. Staying involved is the best way to keep Cursillo and your Faith growing. Prayers and Blessings to all! Bill and Betty Obringer and Becky Smeltz.



PALANCA

Please pray, fast, say rosaries, do “palanca” etc. for the Cursillistas and teams as they ready for their events.

share what you are doing for Palanca! email to = Palanca419@outlook.



Palanca means lever. Why would we need a lever. A lever makes it easier to move an object.

We as Catholics, are called by God to help convert people, to believing and accepting Jesus as the savior, as God. This is what Cursillo tries to do. The teams work very hard to let God work through them to help in this conversion. We, the catholic community, can do our part to be a lever to help move the candidates to this conversion. Our prayers, fasting and praising our lord all helps in this conversion. This is why we need Palanca, with many hands, the work is lighter.

Jack B. Reuter, Palanca Chair.

Witness : share how God is working in your life = email to = judbrick616@gmail.com

Heavens Grocery Store

I WAS WALKING DOWN LIFES HIGHWAY. A LONG TIME AGO. ONE DAY I SAW A SIGN THAT READ, “HEAVENS GROCERY STORE” AS I GOT A LITTLE CLOSER, THE DOOR CAME OPEN AND WHEN I CAME TO MYSELF, I WAS STANDING JUST INSIDE, I SAW A HOST OF ANGELS. THEY WERE STANDING EVERYWHERE, ONE HANDED ME A BASKET AND SAID “CHILD, SHOP WITH CARE” EVERYTHING A CHRISTIAN NEEDS IS IN THAT GROCERY STORE AND WHAT YOU CAN’T CARRY, WHY JUST GO BACK FOR MORE! FIRST I GOT SOME PATIENCE, LOVE WAS IN THE VERY SAME ROW. FURTHER DOWN WAS UNDERSTANDING, YOU NEED IT WHEREVER YOU GO. I GOT A BOX OR TWO OF WISDOM, A BAG OR TWO OF FAITH, I COULDN’T MISS THE HOLY SPIRIT, FOR HE WAS ALL OVER THE PLACE. I STOPPED FOR STRENGTH AND COURAGE TO HELP ME RUN THIS RACE, THOUGH Y BASKET WAS NEARLY FULL...I REALIZED I NEEDED GRACE!! I DID NOT FORGET SALVATION, FOR SALVATION...THAT WAS FREE. SO I GOT ENOUGH TO SAVE BOTH YOU AND ME. I THEN STARTED FOR THE COUNTER TO PAY

MY GROCERY BILL, FOR I THOUGHT THAT I HAD EVERYTHING TO DO MY MASTERS WILL, BUT AS I STARTED UP THE AISLE, I SAW PRAYER.....I HAD TO PUT IT IN FOR I KNEW THAT WHEN I STEPPED OUTSIDE, I'D RUN RIGHT INTO SIN. PEACE AND JOY WERE PLENTYFUL, LYING ON THE VERY NEXT SHELF, SONG AND PRAISE WERE HANGING NEAR, SO I JUST HELPED MYSELF. THEN I SAID UNTO THE ANGEL "HOW MUCH DO I OWE?" HE SMILED AND SAID "JUST TAKE YOUR BASKET WHEREVER YOU GO!" AGAIN I ASKED "HOW MUCH DO I REALLY OWE?" STILL SMILING THE ANGEL SAID "JESUS PAID YOUR BILL LONG, LONG AGO!"



Secretariat Member openings

Current Openings

Facilities

Please reflect on this opening and hear the Holy Spirit to be the Hands, Feet and Voice of Jesus, you can continue to grow in your faith!

'What a shame it would be if someone came looking for Christ and only found us! But what a blessing if they came looking for us and found Christ!!'

Eduardo Bonnin, Founder Cursillo Movement

NATIONAL CURSILLO INFORMATION: www.natl-cursillo.org Read about Cursillo news, palanca requests from around the world, or read the national newsletter.

TOLEDO CURSILLO WEBSITE: www.cursillo419.org Go here to view news of upcoming events, read the current month's Ark or download forms.

