

Cursillo 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.

October 2020

Application Forms are on the Website: www.cursillo419.org

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As I begin this reflection, I'd like to share a little about a beautiful and natural woodland area which is very close to where I live. It is called **OLD WOMANS' CREEK**, a nature reserve and estuary which runs off of Lake Erie to the south and connects with the Huron River just outside of Huron. It is a forested wetlands area where The Senator Mike DeWine Reserve does research on how the climate affects the environment and other studies. According to a sign along the path, the reserve is named after legends of early Native Americans.

As I walk through the rugged woodlands on the boardwalk/stony paths, I am touched by the sunlight peeking through the leaves onto the very old and large tree trunks streaming high into the sky. The flashes of light on the leaves enhance their shapes and varieties. And at this time of year, assorted wildflowers are seen along the path through the woods. I'm especially attracted to the beauty of the goldenrod.

The Holy Spirit had invited me to take a walk on this particular day! Earlier in the day, Sister Edna had invited me to consider writing this article in the ARK. The Holy Spirit was right on! As I walked, I recalled the many times I have walked this path over the years. Each time, I'm wondering if the tree which forms an arch over the path is still there. Sure enough, there it is! And through the eyes of my imagination, I see myself walking through the arch opening up to the beauty and silence of God's creation!

As I reflected on this article, I was inspired to remember that we are now celebrating what is called **The Season of Creation**. The season began September 1 and goes to include, Oct. 4, the Feast Day of Francis of Assisi. St. Francis is the patron saint of ecology and beloved by many Christian denominations; and, of course, all Franciscans and those who are Franciscan in heart! Held annually world-wide, an ecumenical committee suggests a theme. The theme for 2020 is: **Jubilee for Earth: New Rhythms, New Hope**. Even this theme calls us to use our gifts and imaginations to respond to the many ways we can treasure, act and pray for our common home. A wonderful website to follow in our response to creation is: catholicclimatecovenant.org.

Upcoming Cursillo Weekends

Weekends are postponed until Spring 2021

Please share how Christ is working in your life.

Email
Nancy Cook at
nancy750@bex.net

The honoring of creation began in 1989 when Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios proclaimed September 1 as a day of prayer for creation in the Orthodox tradition. The World Council of Churches was instrumental in extending the special time of the season. Pope Francis made the Roman Catholic Church's warm welcoming of the season official in 2015 with his reflective and challenging Encyclical letter, entitled **On the Care For Our Common Home, LAUDATO SI'**.

In the encyclical, Pope Francis references his predecessors, Pope John XXIII, Paul VI, St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and present day Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew who have expressed deep concern on environmental issues which affect our world communities in multiple ways. In recent years, statements from religious leaders around the world have also encouraged the faithful to know and believe that we are part of a world-wide community connected through prayer and action for our common home.

The encyclical is profound, beautifully written and very readable. I encourage you to read it if you haven't had the opportunity to do so. Paragraph 53 includes: "Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years. Yet we are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired when he created it and correspond with his plan for peace, beauty and fullness."

Nature has a way of lifting us and nourishing us. Taking walks, sitting outside or simply taking time to look out our window delights our heart. And so I'd like to invite you to a prayer practice which was given to me many years ago from a Franciscan Sister Retreat Director. She entitled the prayer "A Walk of Thanksgiving and Praise." We could perhaps adapt the title to: "A Loving Gaze in Thanksgiving and Praise."

Sister invites us to pray using each of our senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. Along with my Sister friend, I invite you to allow yourself to go deep within and know how God has used your senses to open your whole being to His life in you. I quote: "Reflect upon all that sight has contributed to your life experience to enrich it: beauty, happiness, pleasure, reading, observing etc." Allow your thoughts, emotions and reflections to open your soul to gaze and pray in thanksgiving and praise.

My walks at Old Womans' Creek have given my senses wonderful opportunities. Even if you are reading this article after October 4, the beautiful Fall season will give each of us many opportunities to praise God.

Oh and by the way, one of the benches at Old Womans' Creek caught my eye. Carved on it is: **"ADOPT THE PACE OF NATURE; ITS SECRET IS PATIENCE."** by Ralph Waldo Emerson This quotation seems 'just right' as we move through this difficult time due to the virus. We know God walks with us!

Every blessing to all my Cursillo brothers and sisters....

Sr. Pat Meyer



Lay Director (Each month one of our Lay Director's will write an article)

Recently, the well-known reading from Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 that starts, "There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for everything under the heavens..." was read at a daily Mass. It struck me how I forget about those words from Scripture when I am adjusting to the different way of life I am experiencing now, not necessarily viewing that this is the appointed time for these events.

I have been enjoying immensely a daily reflection book named, "Balaam's Donkey" by Michael Casey, OSCO. [The purpose of the title reflects that "God can use any channel to communicate a message - and that includes Balaam's donkey".]

One of the reflections, aptly named "Seasons", says, "As the famous reading from the third chapter of Ecclesiastes reminds us, there is a season for everything under the sun. This is more than mere poetry; it is reality, and we had better get used to it. Everything changes." Not that everything may change, but that everything does change.

And the reflection continues, "There are seasons in our life. What was appropriate in youth may not be suitable for mellower years. If we are wise, we will not allow ourselves to adhere to attitudes and practices that have passed their **use-by date**." (Bold by me.)

I look at this term of "use-by date" to not only referencing age appropriate behavior, but also faith appropriate behavior. As ongoing conversion in my relationship with God continues, and I work to reflect that growth in my actions, the hope is that I will see more opportunities for positive change, *and take those opportunities*, large or small. Sending a card. Calling someone who I know needs to be called. Making a meal for a family struggling for whatever reason. Holding my tongue when it isn't necessary to speak. Being gracious in traffic and in the lines in stores, especially with those who are not being gracious. Speaking of Christ to someone who is thirsting for hope amid all the uncertainty of the world.

For those of us blessed to be in relationship with Our Lord, it is always the season for taking those opportunities for kindness, for thoughtfulness, for generosity, for affirmation, for accompanying each other in love and truth.

De Colores!

Kathy Otermat

Your Brother and Sister in Christ,

John Lyons
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Pre-Cursillo

Happy Fall everyone! This has always been my favorite time of year. All our senses are used in the fall. We feel the mixture of cool, crisp days, and warm (sometimes hot) days. We can already see the many bright colors of the leaves as they change, and some falling to the ground. We see the golds and browns of the corn and soybeans as they ripen for harvest. We see the winter cover crops being planted. We taste the many pumpkin and apple creations of pies, cakes, cookies, and so on. We hear the crunch of the leaves as we walk through them. We can smell the leaves as they begin to dry out and decay, and fruit as it ripens.

One of my favorite activities in fall is to watch the leaves. The brightness of the colors as the leaves change. The swirling of the leaves as they begin to fall. The crunch of the leaves as I walk through them. I even enjoy raking the leaves. Seeing the colors of the leaves reminds me of the verse in DeColores that talks about the colors in the springtime. It could just as easily say 'fall' with all the colors. I think that God made the beauty of fall to heighten our senses before we go into winter. As much as I enjoy the spring, fall is my favorite season for these reasons. What is your favorite season of the year?

As we continue into this fall, please remember to continue praying for our candidates. Dates for the spring weekends have not been set yet but hope to have them soon. If you have any candidate applications, please send them in. They will be added to our list. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Have a happy fall and enjoy the many colors of the season.

Decolores!

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Make a Friend – Be A Friend – Bring a Friend to Christ

School of Leaders...

Paraphrased Philippians 3:12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.

We have a perfect role model.

Christ is our example on how to treat other people.

Christ is our example of the influence we can and should have on those around us.

Christ is the classic and eternal example of the role model we are called to be.

No other role model even comes close to Him. A tour through Scripture reveals a Christ who was always finding people where they were and taking them where they needed to be. He was always seeking people who thought they were nobodies and making them into somebody.

In the verse above, Paul makes it clear that the goal we pursue--here on earth and in the hereafter--is Jesus Himself. He is the example we are to follow, the person we were meant to be like. We won't reach perfection until we see Him face-to-face, but we are called always to be moving in that direction. In His strength, we press on toward that goal one day at a time. He can make us who we need to be if we focus on Him and allow Him to work through us. The same Christ who went around making somebodies out of nobodies is still at work in our lives.

God has a purpose in shaping us to be like Jesus. We become His influence-His hands and heart-for everyone around us. Wherever we find ourselves, we can influence people for His glory. That begins at home in our families, but it extends to every other area: our friends, coworkers, neighbors, fellow church members, fellow students, teammates-everyone we come in contact with. God doesn't just glorify Himself by sending Jesus into this world. If we let Him, He glorifies Himself by sending Jesus into this world THROUGH US.

Today and every day, remember that you are a personal representative of Jesus Christ. Always strive for the perfection of Christ-for yourself and for those around you.

Our next School of Leaders meeting will be held via Zoom on Sat Oct 17th 2020 at 9:00 AM.

Scripture reading with reflection will be given by Luanne Welch.

Spiritual Advisor's presentation will be given by Deacon Greg Kirk, Chapter 1 of [His Way](#) by Fr. David Knight. (available on Amazon and the National Cursillo website)

Lay presentation will be given by Dale Fair, Chapter 2, [The Study of the Charism](#), OMCC (available on the National Cursillo website. www.natl-cursillo.org)

If you plan to attend this zoom meeting, please contact Karen Bonen via Email at karenbonen@yahoo.com by Wed Oct, 14 with your email address. Invitations will be sent out with instructions on how to connect to the Zoom account on Thursday, Oct 15. While the Zoom approach isn't like being in person with one another, it is still a good way to be able to see one another and share our experience, strength, and hope. Hope to see you there.

May the fire of the Holy Spirit burn in each of you,

God Bless

John & Karen Bonen, Rectors.



Fourth Day

DeColores My Friends, (*Sisters and Brothers in Christ*)

How are all of you doing? We hope you are well and if you have extra time sharing some of it with our Lord. This year has been a year of challenges. The Mens Weekend was able to be held, with some twist and turns. From what We saw and heard at Closing the guys enjoyed the weekend with Our God! Thanks to all that prayed for their weekend. Thanks to the team to bring God closer to them. We hope that they are still on their amazing journey.

The Spanish Men's and Women's weekend were put on hold. They are looking ahead to next year. The English Women's was also put on hold. We were able to get a couple weeks of training in. Thank You Jesus, it has created a strong team of women. We are praying that we can meet in the spring of next year. We just have to wait and see what God wants of us.

The Post Cursillo Team and Secretariat have been asked questions about "The Next Weekend." There has been much discussion with Cursillistas about when our next weekends should happen. Which leads us to some questions. We need your input to help guide us on this journey and decision. We are inquiring to determine the possibility of holding a weekend at Carey in the Spring. To be on the same page please assume COVID 19 is still around and a vaccine is not ready for general release when answering these questions. There will be nine weeks of preparation before the weekend with these meetings using social distancing and mask. Holy Hour and closing will have (*normal guest and Cursillistas, limited guest and Cursillistas, very limited guest and Cursillistas*).

Please send your responses to these questions via email to: cursillo419@gmail.com The questions are below.

1. Do you feel comfortable in going to meetings and working a weekend?
2. What if it can be done as safely as we can make it be?
3. Should we wait until a vaccine is available to all or the pandemic has subsided?
4. Any additional thoughts, concerns or ideas.

Your Fourth Day Team

John and Karen Reinhart

John and LuAnn Welch

Facilities

This report will be short and to the point as will be most coming from us since we can't do much until the Cursillo weekends open up. In our move we had a casualty. While taking a statue down from a shelf the Blessed Virgin statue used in the Cursillo chapel slipped from our hands and became more than one piece. She was beyond repair so Cursillo has a new statue of Our Lady of Grace. Everything else made the trip without incident and when arrangements can be made, we will inventory the articles.

DeColores

Mike and Therese Cherry

Prayervine:

Mike Wise - cancer surgery, Herm Kimmet - ongoing sciatic pain, John Lyons - mom passed away, for all those searching for jobs, Jane Thompson - prayers of thanksgiving, Deacon Rick - heart attack, prayer for our country, Mike Wise - for continued healing.

Please send your prayer requests to Jane Distel at

prayersaregoingup@gmail.com.

Palanca Requests...

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Please pray for these few Cursillo events coming in October. They are still few and far between but at least we are seeing some activity. And please pray for our brothers and sisters who are yearning to

make a Cursillo. Pray that they will be blessed with the greatest joy ever when they finally are able to attend one. For it has been said “Good things come to those who wait”. And please continue your palanca for our new Cursillistas who have not been able to experience the true reality of the Fourth Day due to this pandemic. If you sponsored someone or know of someone reach out to them to offer support, love and prayer. You’ll be glad you did- and so will they.

De Colores- go forth and be that ray of color that Christ wants you to be to the world.

Jan Stainbrook

Cursillo Events Schedule for October 2020

| Start Date | End Date | Event | Location |
|------------|-----------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 10/1/2020 | 10/4/2020 | Men's 14th (Hungarian (magyar)) | Székesfehérvár, Hungary (Hungary) |
| 10/30/2020 | 11/1/2020 | Women's 88 (Portuguese) | Valença, Brasil |
| 10/29/2020 | 11/1/2020 | Women's Cursillo (English) | New York, NY |

Ultreya

IN KEEPING WITH TOLEDO DIOCESE Reopening Policies- ALL ULTREYA'S ARE CANCELLED THIS MONTH

‘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!!’

NATIONAL CURSILLO INFORMATION:

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

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

