

**CURSILLO NEWSLETTER OF THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE**



**THE EVANGELIZER**



**March 2016**

**New Website: [www.BellevilleCursillo.org](http://www.BellevilleCursillo.org)**

**FROM THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR FR. GARY GUMMERSHEIMER**

Resurrexit sicut dixit, Alleluia!!

He has Risen as He said, Alleluia!!

Greetings and a Blessed Easter Season to one and all. We enter these fifty days of celebration and rejoicing, realizing that the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah who came into the world as one like us, has offered Himself for us. He who is the Mercy of the Father was given up to death that He might rise to bring us life, life to its fullest, life in the Kingdom.

I hope that your Lenten Season was one that gave you new or renewed insight into the mercy of our God. I pray that it was a time for you to once again find, for yourselves, what it means to be a Baptized follower of Jesus Christ. A time to deepen your relationship with Christ: Piety. A time to come to know more fully your relationship with Christ: Study. A time to share the beauty of your relationship with Christ with others: Action.

Now as the springtime of this year opens to us in its fullness, may you blossom in your faith and love of our God, sharing the beauty of this Holy Year of Mercy with all those whom you love.

To all who made the weekends this year graced moments of God's mercy and love, thank you for your prayer, work, and witness that was shared with our newest Cursillistas. To those newest members of our Cursillo, welcome and may you continue to grow in your relationship with our Christ, the Son of our Loving and Merciful God.

De Colores,  
Fr. Gary



**FROM THE LAY DIRECTOR NICK LANG**

Happy Easter to you all. I sincerely prayed that each of you experienced a truly wonderful Lenten season and celebrated a Blessed Resurrection of our beloved Lord Jesus.

The two Cursillo Weekends have given us 33 new Cursillistas for the Lord to plant where He will and watch over them as they become the fruitful plants He desires. Thanks to all the team members, the staff at the Ruma Center Motherhouse, and especially to the 4th day Palanca army. Please continue to pray for dear, brave Susan Gass as she undergoes treatment for her back.

At this time our thoughts turn toward correcting anything necessary to improve our 3-day materials and prepare for our next round of weekends. If you have any constructive comments to aid in this process, please send them to me at [nplang415@gmail.com](mailto:nplang415@gmail.com).

Our primary task as Cursillistas is to “Make a Friend – Be a Friend – and Bring that Friend to Christ.” Sponsoring someone for a Cursillo weekend is a true commitment to Christ in that you must prepare them for the Cursillo and support your candidate as they enter the 4<sup>th</sup> day community by finding them a group and introducing them to the Ultreya.

Our God of Love continues to call us to Himself through the great feast of His Divine Mercy on April 3<sup>rd</sup> followed by His outpouring of the Holy Spirit on May 15<sup>th</sup>. May all His blessings empower you as you go forth to work in His vineyards. As Jesus said, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

God Bless, Nick Lang



**PRAYERS AND PALANCA** SUSAN MCCORMACK

As we all know, prayers do work. Keeping that in mind, thank you for your prayers and Palanca, not only for all our prayer requests, but specifically for the Men's and Women's Cursillo Weekends. God heard your prayers and sent the Holy Spirit down to ensure two very successful weekends.

Now we need His help for many other Cursillistas. First on my mind is Colleen. Let us pray for good health for her and her baby and for a safe full-term delivery, which might take place before you read this.

Prayers are needed for everyone who is fighting cancer, especially: Pat Cates, Evan, Jacqueline Racener, Kim Smith, and Aldara Henderson.

May God spread His love and grace for healing, strength, and recovery for those who have had accidents or have been in an accident, who have medical problems, who are very ill, who are having surgery, and who are recovering from surgery: Bill Sturm, Robert Dietz, Robert Verges, Scott Engres, Mark Adleman, Noel Wright, Susan Baum, Ray Kloess, Myra Coggeshall, Marilyn Neimeyer, Greg Straub, Joe's wife, Robin's sister-in-law, and Mel's sister, Carole,

We ask for God's guidance for those who are out of work and going on job interviews that they may find suitable employment.

As we lay our loved ones to rest, we ask for your prayers for the repose of the souls of: Marilyn Browey, Bob Steckler, and Steve Schaefer's mom. May they be safely in God's arms in heaven.

Please pray for the families and friends of all these people and ask Jesus to give them strength to accept His will. Let us not forget to pray for the our military, especially for those who are away from their families; for those who have strayed from the church, may they find God's love and the peace that only He can give us; and the poor and homeless. I also ask that you offer prayers and Palanca for our country, and for our freedom to live as Christians

In closing, I want to mention that this will be my last quarterly article. I find it hard to believe that it has been over three years since I took this position, and it is now time to turn it over to another Cursillista. It has been a pleasure praying for your intentions, and be assured, I will continue to do so. Keep the love of God in your heart; and remember to Trust in Jesus and that "Christ is Counting on You."

Love, Peace, and Joy. De Colores!



**PRECURSILLO MARGIE REAKA**

Through the graces of the Holy Spirit and the encouragement of their sponsors, 12 men and 21 women began their Cursillo journey when they sent their application to attend one of the Belleville weekends. When I received each application I could imagine their excitement and wonder about what they were about to experience during their three days. Then they were welcomed as candidates.

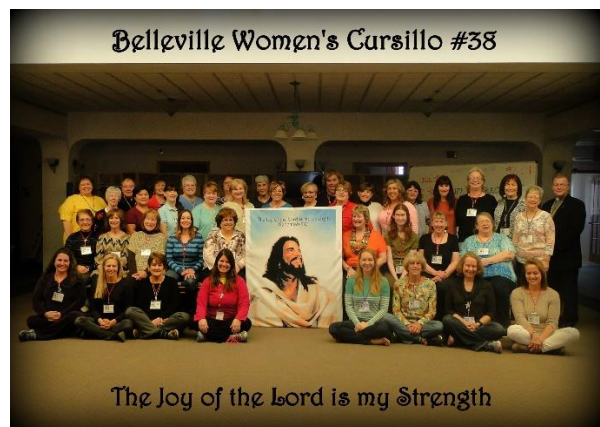
Please join the entire 4<sup>th</sup> day community in praying for and welcoming our 33 new CURSILLISTAS and thanking their sponsors who brought their friend to Christ. May Christ's love shine on each of you as you go forward in Prayer, Study, and Action on this new journey as leaders in the Cursillo movement.

DE COLORES!

Belleville Men's Cursillo #35		
Name	Parish/City	Sponsor
Dan Cozzi	Holy Childhood	Jody Cozzi
Robert (Bob) Cozzi	St. Mary Immaculate	Jody Cozzi
Kenneth (Ken) Diekemper	Corpus Christi	Jim Ruppel
Francisco A Flores	Holy Childhood	Deacon Wayne Weiler
Mike Gross	St. Michael	Jim Ruppel
Jesse Nelson	Holy Childhood	Deacon Wayne Weiler
Sean Nolan	Holy Childhood	Scott Anderson
Donald Norrenberns	Holy Childhood	Scott Anderson
Fr. Joseph Oganda	Sacred Heart	Bishop Stanley Shlarman
Gerald Palmisano	St. Peter's Cathedral	Tony Gugliotta
James Rellihan	Holy Family	Steve Schaefer
Chris Stroot	Corpus Christi	Terry Kostel



WE ARE ONE IN CHRIST



<b>Belleville Women's Cursillo #38</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Parish/City</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
Michelle Biver	St. Joseph	Irene Biver
Vivian Bossler	St. George	Pat Cates
Catherine Cease-Flores	Holy Childhood	Karen Wobbe
Mary Haberer	St. Paul	Engie Walker
Deborah (Deb) Hartmann	St. John the Baptist	Rita Randle
Kelly Hoffman	The Newman Center	Clare Mitchell
Jennifer Hopfinger	St. Joseph	Sue Gass
Mary Edith Jackson	St. Joseph	Cheryl Rajski
Sharon Kippenbrock	Saint Francis Xavier	Jacqueline Feather
Dorothy Kohler	SS Peter and Paul	Rita Randle
Linda Kranawetter	St. Elizabeth Parish	Theresa Madel
Joyce Kruse	Immaculate Conception	Nancy Meyerscough
Karen Lawhorn	St. Augustine	Janice Bassler
Samantha Maloy	Cathedral	Mary Feurer
Carolina Nelson	Holy Childhood	Deacon Wayne Weiler
Peggy Padgett	St. Augustine	Sue Gass
Mary Pettis	St. Teresa	Phyllis Lang
Dolores Schiermeir	Cathedral	Susan McCormack
Judi Schoen	St. Mary	Cheryl Rajski
Patricia Swagler	Holy Trinity	Carla Fickett
Anna Williams	St. Joseph	Deacon Corby Valentine

### PRAYER REQUESTS

Please send all prayer requests to: [CursilloRequestedPrayers@gmail.com](mailto:CursilloRequestedPrayers@gmail.com)

The Cursillo email system allows for one email blast to be sent per 24-hours period. All email requests received within a 24-hour period are grouped and sent as one email blast. Sometimes, emergency requests are received and must wait to be sent. Please feel comfortable praying for incoming prayer requests that may be waiting to be delivered.

### YEAR OF MERCY – DECEMBER 8, 2015, THROUGH NOVEMBER 20, 2016

**“It will be a holy year of mercy!” – Pope Francis**

Check out the Cursillo Diocese of Belleville website: [www.BellevilleCursillo.org](http://www.BellevilleCursillo.org)

Let us know your thoughts! You can email your comments to [Webmaster@BellevilleCursillo.org](mailto:Webmaster@BellevilleCursillo.org) or add a comment on the moderated website.

**POSTCURSILLO TONY AND SHARON GUGLIOTTA**

Greetings, Fourth Day Community! That includes each one of our newest Cursillistas!

Yes, the men's and women's weekends were recently held again at Ruma. It was very nice to see so many of you come out to the men's (Feb. 28) and women's (Mar. 6) weekend closings! We weren't able to get around to greet everyone (you know, we like to say hello!), but thank you for coming! For those of you who were unable to come, we missed you. Thank you also to those of you who stayed after to help us get the Peace Center picked up, all packed up, and loaded into the trailer. Many hands make light work!

(Tony) Concerning the Men's Weekend #35, what an incredible time we all spent together! There were 12 men who attended, and it was wonderful how the Holy Spirit worked in each candidate who came to continue to grow and love their faith like never before. It was a pleasure getting to know them, and watch them all grow closer to Christ. The teamwork that takes place on a Cursillo weekend is a truly spiritual experience for all who attend. We are models of scripture to others; possibly the only models some people will ever be exposed to.

(Sharon) It was an incredible experience to serve on the team for Women's Weekend #38, held on Mar. 3-6, 2016. We were blessed to witness the work of the Holy Spirit among us and in the 21 fantastic women who came with open hearts to attend the weekend. I am happy to have met each and every one of them, and walked briefly with them on their journey. May we remember that Christ calls each of us to receive and show mercy, and to live in Grace. He calls on us each day to be a living example of His Love in the world, and He is with us. The Joy of the Lord is my strength!

To the new Cursillistas: Jesus is counting on you to continue His good works in whomever you meet on your journey and in whose lives you touch. On behalf of the entire 4<sup>th</sup> day community, welcome and be confident of our continued prayers for you all.

It is the purpose of the Postcursillo Chairperson(s) to support all of you on your 4<sup>th</sup> day journey to grow in your friendship with Jesus, and in bringing others to Jesus, as well. If any of you are not yet in a friendship group, and are looking for one near you, please reach out to us. We will do whatever we can to help you. Perhaps, you need information on upcoming Cursillo events or would like to make a suggestion or ask a question, we look forward to hearing from you and welcome your comments. Our contact information is as follows: Home phone #618-239-9480 or [guggang@charter.net](mailto:guggang@charter.net).

Coming up on Saturday, April 9, 2016, from 12:00 noon – 4:00 p.m., there will be a Cursillo Reunion at the Guild Center located at the National Shrine of our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL. The Guild Center is across from the Church of Our Lady of the Snows. A potluck meal will be provided by this year's team members and sponsors. Mr. Brian Trentman will be the guest witness speaker. All Cursillistas are cordially invited. Come on out and enjoy the afternoon together with fellow Cursillistas! Information on future events such as the Day of Recollection and Grand Ultreya will be released at a future date.

Love, Joy, and Peace to you all!

Tony and Sharon Gugliotta  
Postcursillo Chairs

**SCHOOL OF LEADERS TERRY KOSTEL****Finding Joy**

The experience of joy, a Metanoia if you will, on the recent Men's and Women's Cursillo Weekends was somewhat diminished by our return to reality. Being "One in Christ" is constantly challenged when the general attitude of people seems to be, "what's in it for me, what is the very least I can do, and if it feels good do it"?

We are easily distracted. After all, God has made some really great stuff for our enjoyment. Even He found everything He made to be "Very Good," back in the Book of Genesis 1:31. The problem is that all too often the pleasures of this world have our full attention. For most people, there's no room for anything else. The things of God are not anywhere near the top of most people's lists. It is easy to become blind to His presence as a result of worldly influences that cause us to become victims of our own devices.

In Matthew Kelly's CD, "Becoming The Best Version of Yourself," he tells the story of a teenage boy who wants a \$94,000 sports car for his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. When his father gives him a small rectangular package, he is sure he will find the keys to his new car. Instead, he discovers a book, the Bible! Disgusted, he goes to his room, throws it against the wall, slams his door in anger and goes to bed without talking to anyone. The next day his dad died of a massive heart attack and the boy is devastated. He again goes to his room, lays on his bed, and weeps nonstop. Then he sees the Bible, picks it up, and reads the following inscription inside the front cover, "Dear Michael, within these pages, you will find the answers to all life's questions and the secrets to all life's success. With love on your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, Dad." He wept some more and flipped through the pages hoping to find some words of comfort. He then discovered that his father had placed a bookmark in the Bible. He removed it and found that it was a check for \$94,000. In the story, the father was able to give his son everything from a material standpoint, but more importantly, he wanted his son to place the Word of God at the center of his life.

How often are we like the son in the story? Disappointed instead of joyful for what we have been given? How much is the sheer business of our life and the ways of the world preventing us from living the life God is calling us to live? To experience the fullness of joy in His presence?

We all want things to happen in our lives - we have desires, hopes and dreams. Many of us spend several years of our lives chasing those dreams, hoping they will come true. We hear it said many times that God wants our hopes and dreams to come true. And that He will give us the desires of our heart. But so often, years go by and we feel empty and unfulfilled because so much of our thought has been that things, people, accomplishments, or pleasures of this world will bring us the joy we desire. Instead, we are left wanting more. At some point, we finally realize that the joy we are

seeking does not come from worldly things. Just as a person's hunger indicates the body's need for food, our longing for more points to the fact that there must be more than this unfulfilling life.

The interesting thing is that God wants all of us to have complete joy. He created us for it. Jesus came so that we could be immersed in complete joy: "I have said these things to you so that my joy might be in you and that your joy may be complete." John 15:11

There's a secret to making sure God gives us the desires of our heart. It isn't some kind of magic prayer or a special type of fasting; it isn't about attending the right church or singing the right praise and worship songs; and it isn't about having the right amounts of money - it's all about our hearts.

As we seek God and build a relationship with him, the desires of our hearts will begin to change. We will begin to long for the things that God wants in our lives, not just the worldly things that we used to chase. As this happens, we will begin to see things fall into place for us, and we will have the desires of our hearts.

St. Augustine tells us, "Our hearts were made for you, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in you."

The key is to remember that God is not the means to an end. He is the end. He is who we should be seeking after continually. "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides." Mt 6:33

As a Christian, we are invited to follow Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. As we study Christ, we are convinced that without His Way, there is no going; without His Truth, there is no knowing, and without His Life, there is no real living.

As Bishop Robert Barron tells us in a recent Lenten Perspective, "Instead of seeing money, success, fame, power, and pleasure as ultimate goods, see them as nothing compared to the grace of God. Instead of living as though worldly success were ultimate, live as though the things of this world don't matter at all. In a word, change your mind, and see things from the perspective of God."

Experience joy in all you do by placing, Jesus first, Others second, Yourself last.

**Some final thoughts:** "You don't have to leave behind all the things of this world to put God first, but you must put God first in all the things of this world." Author Unknown

"If you can't find joy in the path you are on and what you are working toward, how do you expect to find joy once you get there?" Author Unknown





**PRAYER REQUESTS VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

Roni Juracek is retiring from servicing Cursillo Prayer Requests. Special thanks to Roni for the years of prayer distribution service!

And now.... We need volunteers! What's involved? We need people who will accept prayer requests via email and then on the same day or the next day distribute the prayer request to all our cursillistas via email. Since group mail is involved, some technical expertise on sending group emails is needed – or – someone with technical ability who is willing to learn.

If you are willing to accept this critically needed prayer service, please email Christine Leja at [lejachristine@yahoo.com](mailto:lejachristine@yahoo.com).

If you are unable to volunteer, please pray for volunteers to come forward!

May the Holy Spirit inspire the volunteers we need to come forward!

**Secretariat Meetings**

March 30<sup>th</sup>, May 25<sup>th</sup>, July 27<sup>th</sup>, September 28<sup>th</sup>, and December 28<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm at St. Joseph Parish, Freeburg, IL

**School of Leaders**

School of Leaders will begin again on April 12, 2016, and continue each month on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm at St. Joseph's in Freeburg. Contact Terry Kostel (618) 234-8010.

**Ultreyas**

**Belleville Area:** Monthly on the second Friday at 7:30 pm in the Undercroft at St. Peter Cathedral. (Entrance on W. Garfield St.) Contact Bob McCormack (618) 277-3709

**New Athens Area:** Monthly on the fourth Sunday at 10:15 am at St. Agatha's Parish Center in New Athens. This is immediately after the 9 am Mass. Contact Joe or Ann Haubrich (618) 475-2006

**Murphysboro:** Every other month on the last Sunday of the month at St. Andrew's school cafeteria. This is immediately after the 10:30 am mass (approximately 11:30 am). Contact Joan Sherwood (618) 529-4351.

## **Make a friend. Be a friend. Bring that friend to Christ!**

### **Excerpts from a Witness Talk**

FOURTH DAY - Freeburg and Belleville Ultreya Witness Talk - September 2015

My name is Bernadette Charlton, and I began my Cursillo journey high on a mountain top in Seoul, Korea in November of 1989. I sat at the table of JOY (J-O-Y): Jesus, Others and You. What seems like yesterday was over 25 years ago and six geographic moves from Korea to Hawaii, to Oklahoma, to Nebraska, to Virginia and lastly, to Illinois. ☺

I am a cradle Catholic. As I became a teenager, getting to know God was not high on my list. Even so, I do remember a time when God made Himself known to me. I was thirteen years old, and I was attending a weekday Mass which was very unusual for me. However, for Lent that year I decided to attend Mass more frequently. While kneeling in that quiet, fairly empty chapel of Saint Anne's surrounded by the statues of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I felt an uplifting feeling of peace that seemed to enter every cell of my body all at once. It was a joy that swept through me. I believe that through the Holy Spirit, God was knocking at my door at that particular moment in my life. Unfortunately, I didn't open that door then, so when I walked out of the chapel, those feelings remained locked up inside me for the next 25 or so years.

As an adult, the practice of going to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days with my own family continued. However, my attendance at Mass seemed more like a routine than my actual desire to be there. It was not until I made my Cursillo weekend that I fully realized just how much God loves me, and Mass took on a whole new meaning. During my Cursillo weekend in Korea, while sitting before the Blessed Sacrament I felt that same peace I had experienced at Saint Anne's as a teenager. I immediately recognized that joy. I truly believe that I found my "soul" in Seoul. Actually, I also found my "soul mate" there at the chapel ... but that is a story for another time!

As wonderful as my Cursillo weekend was, it ultimately has been the Cursillo tools – specifically, friendship group reunion and Ultreya that have sustained me in my faith, helped me with all challenges in my life and reminded me of how much God and others love me. "Grouping" with friends each week strengthens my conversion which began on that weekend so long ago and reminds me of the commitment I made to Christ on my Cursillo weekend, and keeps me bonded to a loving Christian community.

From Korea, I moved to Hawaii. One Sunday morning, shortly after arriving in Hawaii, I was sitting in the chapel on Hickam Air Force Base feeling lonely, missing my friends from Korea and wondering if Cursillo was active in Hawaii. So I decided to seek out other Cursillistas in my parish. You know it was kind of easy to recognize them .... they were the ones always hugging each other! In Hawaii, our friendship group consisted of couples. While we grouped, all of our young children played in another room. They looked forward to these times almost as much as the adults did, and my children still talk about those fun times today.

My friendship group in Hawaii helped me through the long illness and death of my father. When my father died after a 15 year battle with Alzheimer's, I was preparing my talk on "Leaders" for the upcoming Women's Cursillo Weekend. As I traveled to New York for his funeral, I was very aware of how the team was preparing for the upcoming weekend back in Hawaii. I can remember coordinating what was happening in Hawaii with what was happening in New York .... dad's wake, Mass, burial and celebration of his life. Naturally, I was experiencing a deep sadness. However, I felt the prayers from the couples in my friendship group and many other Cursillistas in Hawaii. It is hard to explain the total connectedness I felt with them. I could sense their prayers for me as I was praying for them for the success of the upcoming weekend. On Thursday evening, the day of my father's funeral Mass and burial I could not sleep and I tossed and turned for hours. I finally got up and checked my watch for the time in New York and in Hawaii. I realized that my friendship group was "grouping" at that exact moment. I knew I had to call. Hearing their voices at 3:00 in the morning was the sweetest sound to my ears. They had just said an Our Father for those not present ... for me. So, we shared our "Piety, Study and Action" over the phone for a good hour ... money well spent ... a great reunion of friends via the phone.

From Hawaii to Oklahoma to Nebraska to Virginia, Cursillo was the bond that made moving easier and grew my Cursillista friendships. Though my grown children have settled in Nebraska, I was drawn to Virginia where my fiancé lived.

In Virginia, I found myself in another new area. Besides my fiancé, John, and my brother, John, I knew no one else in the area, and I again found myself a bit lost. I have to admit that I did not immediately look for Cursillistas or a friendship group. Now, as a divorced Catholic, I felt a bit uncomfortable with my faith community. I felt spiritually lonely. Although I did not fully understand it at the time, I came to realize that I missed the support of my friendship group that I had relied upon over the years. One day, I decided to take a day off from work and attend a day of reflection at the Dominican House. It was a wonderful day because the speaker was a most inspiring priest. I wanted to know more about this priest, so I googled him when I got home. His name was Father Mike Hahn, and he was the spiritual director for the Arlington Cursillo. It struck me then how much I missed my friendship group. Even though I was feeling uncomfortable about being divorced, I decided then and there to seek out another new friendship group. I like to think of that moment not merely as the whisper of the Holy Spirit, but rather as the "shove of the dove." I was welcomed with open arms by my friendship group and the Cursillo community in Virginia.

So, here I am, Lord .... Freeburg, Illinois. Since my sister and her family have lived in Freeburg for over twenty years, this community was already familiar to me. I frequently attended Mass at Saint Joseph's and had fallen in love with our little church. Before actually moving here, I contacted cursillistas. I must say I was and am very pleased with our loving, faith-filled community!

Besides the importance of our Cursillo tools of friendship group reunion and Ultreya, I would be remiss in not mentioning one other gift I experienced on my weekend. That gift is spending precious quiet time with Jesus. Through Cursillo I have learned and accepted that God loves me and that any time spent with Him is a treasure. Just to BE with our Lord. So, when I feel anxious, need discernment, or just need to feel close to our Lord by being with Him, I seek a quiet place and refer to Psalm 46: "Be still and know that I am God." I softly say with my inner voice this psalm. I would like to end with Psalm46 in hopes that it too might

encourage you on your journey. Please close your eyes with me.

“Be still and know that I am God.”

“Be still and know that I am.”

“Be still and know.”

“Be still.”

“Be.”

### Excerpts from the Ultreya Witness Talks

#### Witness Talk by Julie Weber on November 13, 2015

Julie’s talk began with her favorite biblical quotes (Mt. 18:20 and Romans 8:31) and one from St. Faustina “Jesus, I trust in you!” Here are few excerpts from her talk:

“If my talk is a little here, there, and everywhere, I apologize. It is reminiscent of my life. I am a very busy person. Do I want to be so busy? I don’t think I do. But, I have trouble saying “no” to jobs, people, volunteering, etc. But when I look at all the “things” I do, they are “good” things. Things I enjoy. People I enjoy being with. Jobs that pay my bills.”

Julie is busy with Cursillo (Secretary), an adorer, homecare job, teaching guitar, sewing, raising her children, teaching church songs and guitar at St. John the Baptist, choir practice, playing guitar at Mass, etc. All these activities fit her first favorite biblical quote (Mt. 18:20): “Where two or three or more are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Julie addressed her second biblical quote (Romans 8:31) which is “If God is for us, who can be against us?” this way: “I am a worry wort. Being afraid, being anxious, afraid to make mistakes, fear of the unknown, etc. I can worry about the least little thing. These fears cause me to have trouble sleeping. It is getting better as I learn to give my cares to Jesus, relax as I say my bedtime prayers, and realize that I am not in charge of my life, God is...The Blessed Mother is my “go to person” for everything! After she calms me down, I can pray more to Jesus and the Lord. I try to include the Holy Spirit more often...So, I have talked about being busy and trying to take time to pray and now, I will restate what makes me love my faith, be happy, patient, and as sane as I can be.”

“Since starting Adoration, making the Cursillo Weekend, praying the rosary daily, adding Catholic radio, grouping, going to Ultreyas, saying ‘yes’ to being Secretariat Secretary, and starting School of Leaders (which by the way is a wonderful learning experience”, I have learned to give up more stress and anxiety.”

“I’d like to thank Fourth Day...Jesus is looking out for me and all of us to make sure we are given the opportunity to grow in our faith. I just keep trying to do what He gives me to do...That is the best I can do. God will take care of the rest.”

“In summary, gather in the name of Jesus, God IS for us, Trus in Jesus!”

### Witness Talk by Chad Welch on January 8, 2016

My Cursillo journey begun in 1999. Cursillo was instrumental in giving me a foundation and system to fine tune and constantly improve my spirituality. It has not always been easy. Shortly after September 11, 2001 I renewed my commitment to Military Service and joined the Air Force reserve. I deployed in early 2003 to Saudi Arabia. I remember thinking as I attended Mass how fortunate I was to practice my right of religious freedom. This privilege is not normally exercised in that country. In 2008 I deployed to Iraq. Although it was a tough deployment I was fortunate enough to be able to spend a significant amount of time with a deployed priest which helped me continue to develop as well as sustain myself in a tough environment. In 2012/2013 I deployed to Afghanistan. This was to date the toughest assignment and time of my life. I remember attending Mass on Christmas Eve 2012. We began receiving incoming rocket fire during the Consecration of the Eucharist. The normal procedure during those times was for everyone to hit the deck and take cover. Nobody initially moved. The Priest had to stop and yell to everyone to hit the deck. It struck me how dedicated and reverent we as a Catholic people are to the Eucharist. The mass was attended by people from all over the world re-enforcing to me the universality of the Church. The scripture verse that best sums up my journey so far is 2 Corinthians 12:9- But he said to me "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weakness so the power of Christ will rest on me." No matter where you are in your journey, the foundations of Cursillo are a true blessing if we only chose to be open to the graces they provide.

### Small Steps to Grow Closer to God During Lent and Beyond by Paul E. Feurer

I am a layman and not a priest or religious brother or nun. I have been part of the Cursillo community for over 25 years. In Group Reunion, we prayerfully discuss our Piety, Study, and Action. In conversation with someone or others, do we say things that are hurtful and downgrading? Do we use useless words in conversation or is it better to keep silent? Do we tell the old jokes that can be repeated?

There are many people who have been through the Cursillo weekend over the years and I am asking: Does the candidate you bring to Cursillo see Jesus in your life? Do you share what Jesus has done for you in making a Cursillo weekend? Please, these questions you must answer yourself. I must examine my conscience daily because when God calls me home, I must know I have a pure heart.

**NEWSLETTERS ARE DELIVERED AT NO COST VIA EMAIL. PLEASE SEND YOUR CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS TO CHRISTINE LEJA AT [EVANGELIZER@BELLEVILLECURSILLO.ORG](mailto:EVANGELIZER@BELLEVILLECURSILLO.ORG) .**

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**SECRETARIAT MEMBERS**

Fr. Gary Gummersheimer, Spiritual Director

724 Mulberry St., Murphysboro, IL 62966; (618) 687-2012; [pastor@stamboro.org](mailto:pastor@stamboro.org)

Deacon Ron Tiberi, Assistant Spiritual Director

1201 Lebanon Ave., Belleville, IL 62221; (618) 233-3500; [rjtiberi@gmail.com](mailto:rjtiberi@gmail.com)

Nick Lang, Lay Director

7701 Baxter Dr., Belleville, IL 62223; (618) 213-6391; [nplang415@gmail.com](mailto:nplang415@gmail.com)

Terry Kostel, School of Leaders

2607 Lebanon Ave., Belleville, IL 62221; (618) 234-8010; [kostel\\_t@charter.net](mailto:kostel_t@charter.net)

Margie Reaka, Precursillo

308 Lake Pointe Ct., Freeburg, IL 62243; (618) 539-3765; [margiereaka@gmail.com](mailto:margiereaka@gmail.com)

Bob Emge, Cursillo

904 Reinhardt, New Athens, IL 62264; (618) 475-3438; [tkedngjr@yahoo.com](mailto:tkedngjr@yahoo.com)

Tony and Sharon Gugliotta, Postcursillo

2837 Smokehouse Way, Belleville, IL 62221; (618) 239-9480; [guggang@charter.net](mailto:guggang@charter.net)

Julie Weber, Secretary

306 Barker, Smithton, IL 62285; (618) 444-2894; [weber-julie@sbcglobal.net](mailto:weber-julie@sbcglobal.net)

Linda Bagsby, Treasurer

302 Cortner Dr., Smithton, IL 62285; (618) 960-1023; [lbagsby@gmail.com](mailto:lbagsby@gmail.com)

**SECRETARIAT AD HOC COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Susan McCormack, Publicity

3000 Lebanon Ave., Belleville, IL 62221; (618) 277-3709; [mccormac@charter.net](mailto:mccormac@charter.net)

Bonnie Browy, Palanca

309 S. Charles St. Rear, Belleville, IL 62220; (618) 420-1814;

[bonnie-jeffcity@hotmail.com](mailto:bonnie-jeffcity@hotmail.com)

Christine Leja, Newsletter

2813 Fairway Dr., Belleville, IL 62220; (618) 222-2798; [lejachristine@yahoo.com](mailto:lejachristine@yahoo.com)

Marie Caddell, Website

423 W. 10th St., Mt. Carmel, IL 62863; (618) 263-7124; [marie.caddell@gmail.com](mailto:marie.caddell@gmail.com)