Hello, I’m John Gomolak with the Gaylord Cursillo Movement. I belong to Sacred Heart parish in Elk Rapids, I made my Weekend in 1996 and sat at St. John’s table.

Welcome to this, the second of our Cursillo Formation Workshops.

As with all things, let us start with prayer…

*In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name,*

*Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done – on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive our trespasses as we*

*Forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation,*

*But deliver us from evil. Amen.*

This study is on the Precursillo. The reading assignment was from *Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement*, (hold up book) section 7, pages 93-104.

Right out of the gate we find the Precursillo as the “first of the three stages of the Cursillo Movement.” As its prefix suggests, it focuses on that time before the Cursillo, referring to the 3-Day Weekend. Likewise, the Postcursillo focuses on that time after the Cursillo – and is the topic of the 6th Cursillo Formation Workshop. So Precursillo, Cursillo, and Postcursillo form the circle defining the Cursillo Movement.

Like any circle, there is no beginning, no end. Each part is essential to that before – and after. So, where we start depends on where we “jump on” – so to speak. For most of us, that was the Cursillo Weekend.

**So, why is it important to study the Precursillo?**

My sponsor, the person who invited me to Cursillo, must have had a reason for doing so. For whatever reason, his “decision” was made in the stage of the Precursillo. But why me? What did he know about me, or go out of his way to learn about me to come to the decision that he should ask me? Did he have any criteria to go by?

For some of us, this discussion could end right here. How many of us have asked someone to make a Weekend simply because they were an acquaintance and we knew they would “enjoy” it, or “it would kick start their faith walk”, or they would be a “good fit” in the community”, or “they could really use it”?

We are here at this study because we profess to be leaders in the Cursillo Movement, and the movement has a specific strategy to conduct its purpose. No one will deny that any of the reasons given above might ease bringing someone closer to Christ, but none of them make use of the strategy of Cursillo. So it is to that end that we study Precursillo, or for that matter - anything about the method or charism of the Cursillo Movement to conduct its purpose.

Let’s stop for a minute and review the purpose of Cursillo. In Fundamental Ideas, section 3a on page 66, paragraph 95 reads (read out of the book for effect and continue onto 96)

We read there are three components of the Precursillo strategy:

1. The search for…people to whom the Christian message must be directed,
2. The …selection…of people to whom the Christian message must be directed,
3. The …preparation of people to whom the Christian message must be directed.

Let’s look at each of these and discuss them in light of what we read.

1. The search for…people to whom the Christian message must be directed.

What we are talking about here is a study of environments, the people within them in need of evangelization. A good argument could be made that in our world today, it would be easier to select an environment not needing evangelization! However, not every community is faced with the same challenges so the needs will be different. In our diocesan movement, we have 9 Ultreya communities and it could be possible that each has a different environment more pressing for evangelization. We must also remain cognizant that as a diocesan movement, we are committed to the apostolic plan of our bishop. The first step is to prayerfully ponder the question and prioritize the list.

LET’S STOP HERE FOR DISCUSSION PERIOD 1

1. The second component, The Selection of people to whom the Christian message must be directed.

If a particular environment has been found within a community, the ideal situation would be to find someone (or someones) within that environment that could ease change. Using the Cursillo method of *Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ*, that person or persons would be invited to Cursillo. It is also important to note that some people have an infectious personality capable of affecting anyone around them. Even if they themselves are not part of the environment, they may know someone who is that would be affected.

Paragraph 182 tells us “The Precursillo is open to all who are able to participate fully, actively, and consciously in a Cursillo.” In that Cursillo is a movement of the Catholic Church, to fully take part candidates must be baptized Catholic and capable of receiving the Sacraments. This does not mean that they must be as active as we would all like! In fact, when reading the purpose of the Cursillo in Fundamental Ideas, paragraph 96 says “especially to those who are far away…”

There are other criteria that should be considered as to who could, should and should NOT be invited to Cursillo that is spelled out in our reading assignment.

LET’S STOP HERE FOR DISCUSSION PERIOD 2

1. The Third Component, The Preparation of people to whom the Christian message must be directed.

When talking about “preparing” the Cursillista for the Weekend, we need to interject the role of the sponsor. The sponsor handles preparing their candidate for the Cursillo *and* Postcursillo!

If we as Cursillo leaders believe what we preach, would we not be living the Cursillo Method in our 4th Day and at Ultreya? How is it possible to encourage someone to take part fully in something if we do not ourselves? This is why it is so important that sponsors believe and live the Cursillo Method.

Many good people have made Cursillo but are not actively taking part in the movement. This is okay, Cursillo is not for everyone. However, the quality of the preparation and the commitment and involvement of the sponsor are related to the candidate’s participation in the Postcursillo, i.e., involvement in their 4th Day and Ultreya.

There is a solution for “inactive” Cursillistas to sponsor; they can partner with someone who is active. In fact, we read in Fundamental Ideas, page 101, paragraph 188, “actually, this is a task of the entire [Cursillo Movement].”

LET’S STOP HERE FOR DISCUSSION PERIOD 3

The last section of our reading assignment is “The Leaders in the Precursillo.”

1. School of Leaders and the Cursillo Secretariat

First, it’s important to emphasize the meaning of Leader as it is used here. Remember the definition as it was presented on your Weekend? “Leaders” are simply those people who have influence in their environment.

“School”, according to Webster, can be defined as “the process of teaching or learning.” So, a “School of Leaders” could be defined as “the process of teaching or learning by those people who have influence in their environment.”

What does Cursillo say about “School of Leaders.” Well, there is little Cursillo literature on the topic and it is probably one of the most misunderstood components of the Cursillo Movement. If you have a copy of The Leaders’ Manual, (HOLD UP BOOK) you may want to read Chapter 6. It is probably the best information you can find on the topic.

Page 57 supplies a good overview so let’s take a listen. (READ 1ST 3 PARAGRAPHS) So, the “school” is simply the coming together of “like minded” Christians, in the atmosphere of the “Group Reunion” to study Cursillo as a means of living out of what is essential for being a Christian in their everyday environments.

In our diocese, the “School of Leaders” is simply referred to as “Cursillo Formation Workshops.” The workshops are how we study the Cursillo Movement; it’s purpose, strategy and method.

***The Secretariat*** is formed of Cursillistas committed to Cursillo by their involvement in the School of Leaders or CFW’s.

While the role of the School of Leaders is to ease the development of an in-depth understanding of the workings of the Cursillo Movement, the role of the Secretariat is to organize and supply the resources to conduct the work of the Movement throughout all three phases.

1. The Cursillo Team

The Cursillo Team is formed of Cursillistas participating in the School of Leaders, or CFW’s. Team members are selected to serve on a Cursillo Weekend and are committed to the Cursillo Movement as a means of evangelizing environments. The Cursillo Team are the leaders of the Movement, many of whom have chosen Cursillo as their primary apostolic vocation.

The team members are the proclaimers of the message on the Cursillo Weekend. They are the candidate’s first encounter with the Movement’s method of making possible a Christian life in the world today. Through their witness of love and charity, the message becomes real.

1. Attitudes of Leaders in the Precursillo.

In Fundamental Ideas, page 103, paragraph 194, we read that Leaders “need to have the basic attitudes derived from the charism and mentality of the Cursillo Movement.” Their lives are witness to the effectiveness of the Cursillo Method in making it possible to “live what is fundamental to being Christian” in their everyday environments. This is the purpose of the Cursillo Movement.

LET’S STOP HERE FOR DISCUSSION PERIOD 4

This concludes our Workshop on Precursillo. Thank you for your time and thank you for your commitment to the Gaylord Cursillo Movement and souls we have been called to serve.

God Bless and De Colores!