

REPORT ON THE VII CURSILLO WORLD ENCOUNTER

ST. LEO'S COLLEGE
BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

20TH – 24TH NOVEMBER 2013

Wednesday 20th November 2013

This was a time of Registration and of settling in for many of the delegates and observers at St Leo's College, situated within the campus of the University of Queensland on the banks of the Brisbane River. St Leo's is a Catholic residential College for university students from the State of Queensland and from overseas. It was a typically fine summer's day for this time of the year.

Towards nightfall, all roads led to the Cathedral of St Stephen, in the middle of Brisbane city, both from St Leo's College by bus, and from other parts of Brisbane and South East Queensland for the opening Mass with the theme of "Christian Unity". The chief celebrant was Archbishop Mark Coleridge of the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

The liturgical action was initiated by a welcome from the OMCC President, Yvonne Carrigan, and then by the procession of the OMCC banner and the flags of the Vatican, Portugal and Australia. The Mass Readings were Ezekiel 36:24-28, Colossians 3:12-15 and John 15:9-12.

Thursday 21st November 2013

The College Chapel was just big enough to accommodate all 187 delegates and observers from the 23 countries represented.

Morning Prayer and Meditation: Prepared and Presented by GLCC

The opening words of Thursday's Morning Prayer set the scene and purpose of the whole Encounter: 'O Lord Jesus, we have come before you at this VII World Encounter, and we are opening our hearts and our minds so that you can reveal to us the mystery of your love'.

Welcome

After breakfast, with all delegates and observers gathered in the main Conference Room of St Leo's, OMCC President, Yvonne Carrigan, acknowledged our aboriginal ancestors, and welcomed to her home country all delegates and observers gathered. She acknowledged with gratitude the presence of so many of the Spiritual Advisors of the Movement. Yvonne extended the official welcome to Australia, commonly known as the Great South Land of the Holy Spirit, adding that the work of the Encounter was really the work of the Holy Spirit. She stated that Palanca had been received from all around the world, and that it continues to come in each day.

After acknowledging an apology from the Apostolic Nuncio based in Canberra, the National Capital, Archbishop Paul Gallagher, the President invited Fr Adrian Farrelly to read an official message of good will and Blessing from His Holiness Pope Francis. The President then acknowledged her Executive Committee: Derek Moylan, Fr Adrian Farrelly, Peter McMahon and Margaret Morris.

Then, one by one, the 23 Countries were introduced and were warmly applauded by all. Apologies were received from Honduras and Mexico, who were unable to attend because of Visa difficulties.

Thursday 21st November 2013

First Presentation

Rosemary Haydock, Brisbane Archdiocesan Cursillo President, introduced the first presenter, Kathy Nix, a Brisbane Cursillista, who would speak on the topic of 'Friendship'. After prayer to the Holy Spirit, Kathy commenced her presentation by saying that 'the Cursillo way was a work of God, built on Friendship'.

Key statements were:

- As Cursillistas we try to live out our friendship with others and with God
- God wants to be our friend
- We discover our gifts and weaknesses in friendship
- Jesus is my best friend
- The Cursillo method teaches us to renew and establish friendships
- The Group Reunion and Ultreya carry on the joys of friendship

Kathy challenged all.....

- to value the dignity of each person
- to distinguish between the important and not so important
- to maintain vitality
- not to complicate events in our lives

Group Discussions

Participants were then formed into various language groups, with six to eight persons in each group.

The groups moved along easily, reflecting on the above Presentation of 'Friendship', and quite naturally on the Cursillo journey of each member of the small group. No matter whether each one's journey was long or short, ultimately it was the same journey and the same message for each one, namely, Encountering Christ in his/her Cursillo experience, and then grouping to sustain the impact of this original Encounter.

Outreach Report

GECC reported on the growth of the Movement in South Africa. This was a double English and Spanish power point presentation, tracing the Movement in Africa from Morocco in 1956 to Burkina Faso in 2012. There were expressions of hope that the Movement would soon move into Madagascar, and finally there were (i) a report of the financial situation and (ii) an appeal for funds to assist the growth of the Movement in this part of the world. Reports of this presentation were available.

A second power point presentation covered the growth of Cursillo in Korea. Enormous blessings have been showed in the growth of the Movement since its foundation in 1957. For example, there have been 5,531 Cursillo weekends; 16 National Ultreyas and many Diocesan Ultreyas.

A booklet detailing the structure and growth of the movement in Korea was readily available.

(i) International Group Reports:

(i) APG – Ha Nguyen, APG vice-president, presented the Report on behalf of Tam Nguyen. The report covered recent events; communication and correspondence; challenges and hopes for the future. Copies of the Report were available in Spanish and English.

Thursday 21st November 2013 (cont.)

(ii) GECC - Hans Perchtold of Austria reported on activities of the group from 2010 to 2013. Copies of the Report were also available in Spanish and English.

Group Photo

At 5pm all participants gathered on the lawn for joyful photography, which included the official photo of the entire Encounter gathering.

Mass

Mass for the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary was held in the evening, immediately before the evening meal, and was celebrated in Spanish with Fr Jorge Farfan as chief celebrant. The Mass Readings were Zechariah 2:14-17 and Matthew 12:46-50.

Evening Prayer

This was a strong prayer in the Chapel, thanking God for bringing us all together and for giving us so many blessings both now and over the years, and looking forward to His continued assistance in the other days of the Encounter.

OMCC Meeting

An informal OMCC meeting was held following Evening Prayer in the chapel.

Friday 22nd November 2013

Morning Prayer and Meditation: Prepared and presented by NACG

The content of Morning Prayer was taken from the Official Prayer of the Church, Matins, Week 2. We prayed for God's mercy in Psalm 50, and we glorified Him again in Psalm 147.

Second Presentation: "Through Him, With Him, In Him"

The speaker, Rev Dr Adrian Farrelly, was introduced by a member of his weekly Group Reunion, President Yvonne. Fr Adrian has been a Priest of the Archdiocese for 40 years; he has served in various Parishes, and is currently the Vicar Judicial and Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. For the past four (4) years he has held the role of Spiritual Advisor to the OMCC.

The well-known prayer of "Come Holy Spirit" launched us all into this presentation. Fr Adrian stated that the Spirit was already clearly at work, simply judging from the large numbers who had gathered in Brisbane for this Encounter, and the vast amount of Palanca already received from throughout the Cursillo world.

The aim of the Presentation was to see more clearly the meaning of "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world."

We recall the words of Paul VI who asked the question, "Can the Gospel win over people in urban areas?"

Friday 22nd November 2013 (cont.)

When in Argentina the future Pope Francis stated that it was possible to have a personal encounter with Christ.

Through Him:

Here Fr Adrian drew our attention to the reality of the mediation of Christ: "He was in the beginning with God (John 1:2). "No one can come to the Father except through me." And, we are familiar with word of the apostle Thomas who exclaims, "My Lord and my God," clearly recognising the divinity of Christ

With Him:

Again our attention was drawn to the reality of Christ's presence with us. He is present as teacher and friend, and we are at home with him. "The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) Even after his resurrection his presence remains with us, and the memory of Him is carried on His own command: "Do this in memory of me."

In Him:

Here Fr Adrian drew our attention to the reality of our capacity "to live within Jesus". Jesus clearly identifies Himself with St Paul and all of us with the words, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

And in answer to Saul's question "Who are you Lord?" the reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." We live within Christ. We first come into Christ, into His body, by our Baptism, and so we can have this incredible identity with Him. We can rightly say that "He is in us, and we are in Him."

Conclusion

Fr Adrian concluded by expressing the hope that we would see the transformation in its true light, and he drew upon recent statements from Benedict XVI and Pope Francis to support his word throughout. His final message was "Christ is counting on us as Cursillistas." De Colores.

Group Discussions

As on the previous day, the small groups met to continue their conversations from, and to reflect on the Presentation delivered by Fr Adrian Farrelly, and to share how Christ was operating in their lives as Cursillistas. Meeting and sharing with others from different parts of the Cursillo world was indeed a rich experience.

Mass

At noon all gathered again in the College Chapel for the Eucharist. It was a Votive Mass to the Sacred Heart, in which we asked God to "clothe us with the virtues of the Heart of Your Son, and to set us aflame with His love." The Mass Readings were Ephesians 3:14-19 and Matthew 11: 25-30.

Friday 22nd November 2013 (cont.)

International Group Reports: GLCC and NACG

(i) GLCC:

A summary of the last 4 years

The Spirit of this Report allows the OMCC to know what took place in Bogotá, Colombia.

Survey of each Latin American group was taken to enable them to know and to deepen the Charism.

Regional Group Encounters were held in 2010.

Still a strong conviction that the Cursillo Movement is relevant by providing many opportunities for evangelization of the world.

(ii) NACG:

Attempts have been made to strengthen connections.

Promotion of Book

Prayer intention for Cuba for this World Encounter

Financial requests for Cuba

Encounter Report from Niagara Falls, Canada

Attempts to display a unity of Spirit.

Research being undertaken into the History and origins of the Movement

Meeting with the PCL – with reference to Statutes, and Fundamental Ideas...

Presentation of the Statutes

The major aim here was to approve a change in Article 03 of the Preamble, so as to reflect clearly the Decreto, and to be reflected also in the Fundamental Ideas Draft.

After preliminary speeches from the President (Yvonne) and the Spiritual Advisor (Fr Adrian Farrelly), and after some discussion, delegates were asked to vote in favour, or not, of the new wording of the Preamble. This wording was displayed on an overhead.

The delegate from Ireland gave notice at this stage that they would abstain from any voting, whilst the USA delegate registered some concern over the new wording. Frances Ruppert, from Germany, a former OMCC President, addressed the gathering and spoke powerfully of the origins of the Statute work and the process carried out over the years.

Voting then took place on approval of the Modified Statutes – 21 countries present voted in favour, and there 2 abstentions. One abstention as indicated above was from Ireland. The second abstention was from Taiwan, not in opposition to the proposed changes, but in a feeling that they had insufficient study of the document to register a vote.

Evening Prayer

Fiesta

After Evening Prayer, and to bring the day's proceedings to a fitting finale, an impromptu Fiesta was held in the Conference Room.

Saturday 23rd November 2013

Morning Prayer and Meditation: Prepared and presented by GECC

After an opening hymn was sung with its praise of God for His wondrous gifts, Psalm 42 (My soul pants for you O God) was prayed in choir. This in turn was followed by a Psalm of Generosity, a reading from John 15: 9-15, the Canticle of Zechariah, and intercessory prayer. The final prayer prayed together "Make me a channel of Your Peace."

Third Presentation: The Heart of the Charism

After an enjoyable breakfast, delegates and observers assembled in the College Conference Room for the Third Major Presentation. Fr Manuel Hinojosa introduced our main speaker, **Alvaro Martinez Moreno** from Cordova, Spain. To lead into this Presentation, we meditated briefly on Psalm 108: Prayer and Praise for Victory.

At the very start, Alvaro stated that this topic of the Charism had been debated many times over the years, and that it still remains a complex, but powerful, issue in the life of the Cursillo Movement. However, this ongoing situation has had its blessings as we continue to deepen our insights into the Charism. For certain, the result has been a broad doctrinal foundation for our Movement.

Aspects of Alvaro's talk can be summarised as follows:

- We need to understand that the Charism of Cursillo is but one of many Charisms within the Church, and that it is the nature of Charisms that they are gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church, and that these gifts are to be shared by the whole Church.
- We need to remember that the gift of the Spirit is the gift of Grace shared by many people throughout the world, and that the Charism of any group needs to be lived out and shared for the good of others, for the building up of the Body of Christ.
- We learn to realize that the Charism of our Movement is a gift of our times, to help us in the evangelizing mission of the Church.

Alvaro went on to establish four (4) points concerning the Heart of the Charism:

- At the core of the Heart is God Himself, the Son and the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- The outward expression of the Heart is the drive towards others with our will and determination

- Cursillo is a process of our journey to Christ..... pre-Cursillo, Cursillo, post-Cursillo
- At the Heart is the promotion of Christian groups which lead to a Christian community (one cannot live a true Christian life on one's own)

Discussion Groups

As on the previous two days, we moved into our small discussion groups: to reflect on the Presentation on 'The Heart of the Charism', to share what the VII World Encounter was meaning for us, and to recall God's goodness in our Cursillo journeys.

Saturday 23rd November (cont.)

Presentation of FI Work

President Yvonne gave us the history of and the background to the work to bring out a revised edition of the book "Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement", detailing work by the subcommittee and committee from 2007 until the present time. She noted there had been much frustration along the whole process, but that, in a spirit of unity and with the help of much prayer, the commission members were finally in agreement generally with the drafts presented.

Details of the enormous amount of work both in English and Spanish were explained. Maria Elisa Zanelatto and Margaret Morris, both commission members, were asked to give the audience some idea of the work of collation needed after worldwide consultation and comment on the Draft Points presented in this revision.

Fr Farrelly then explained that one problem paragraph in the History chapter has caused bitter arguments. A letter from the PCL pointing out some discrepancy between the Statutes and the History chapter exacerbated the problem.

Questions were raised regarding the possibility of someone writing a History of the Movement. President Yvonne was unable to answer this clearly, but indicated that the current OMCC executive committee would recommend that this matter be on the Agenda for the incoming OMCC.

After much discussion and arguments presented, the President asked that all leave the room, except for the nominated Delegates of the 23 countries present. Many chose to remain. After another interval she asked again that only the one delegate who was to vote remain for this crucial vote.

A vote which would accept the draft points presented and thus allow for the writing of the third edition of FI was then taken. Results of the vote: 17 in favour, 6 against. The vote in favour was, therefore, carried.

The President expressed her thanks to the delegates, noting that there was disappointment from some, but assuring them that all care would be taken in the final writings to convey clearly and faithfully the Charism of the Movement.

National Ultreya

On Saturday evening the Australian National Secretariat hosted an Ultreya. This celebrated the 50 years' history of Cursillo in Australia.

- Words of welcome were given by the incoming Australian President, Rhonda Porteous.
- The Hymn "The Great South Land of the Holy Spirit" was sung to a background of Australian scenery.
- A review of Cursillo in Australia, acknowledging the early assistance of the USA, was given by Joe Jambour.

- Dianne Garland led the Prayer: Imploring the Holy Spirit; a Scripture reading from Samuel; A prayer to St Mary Mackillop (Australia's first canonised Saint)..... all of which led to the plea: "Keep us as the apple of Your eye."
- Testimonies were then given by four (4) Cursillistas Yen Nguyen; Catherine Vargas; Jane Kim; Lester Smith.
- The Australian Spanish community led us powerfully in song "How Great Thou Art"

National Ultreya (cont.)

- Fr Peter My Bui, - Chaplain to APG then drew the witness talks together.
- Floating Group Reunions followed.
- The evening concluded with prayer and song, followed by the cutting of an Anniversary Cake

Sunday 24th November 2013

The Feast of Christ the King

The Official Closure of the Year of Faith

Morning Prayer and Meditation

This was prepared and presented by APG and led by Fr Peter My Bui. This power -point presentation centred on the figure of Christ the King and on the conclusion of the Year of Faith.

Report from the Philippines

The morning session opened with a report from Rosendo Quiriquini on the situation in the Philippines and the many tornado devastated areas there. He offered thanks to all Cursillistas for their compassion and generous support, and pleaded for a continuation of their prayers.

OMCC Report. Final meeting

The OMCC President, Yvonne Carrigan, then presented her Report for the four- year term of the office of the Executive Committee based in Australia. A full copy of this Report was distributed to every National Secretariat present at the Encounter. This Report will be available in English and Spanish.

Symbolic Handover

The four current International Group Co-ordinators were accompanied to the stage by the incoming International Group Co-ordinators. A Crucifix, which is to be handed from out-going IG co-ordinator to incoming IG co-ordinator every four years, was presented by:

- APG - Tam Nguyen of Vietnam in Diaspora to Joo Young Chang of Korea
- GECC – Johann Perchtold of Austria to Alvaro Marino Martinez of Spain
- GLCC – Alberto Omar Stang of Argentina to Felipe Vanososte of Venezuela
- NACG – Gail Terrana of USA to Estellita Rene of St Lucia

Sunday 24th November 2013(cont)

The OMCC banner, as symbol of the Executive Office, was handed by President Yvonne Carrigan of Australia to Francisco Salvador of Portugal. An image of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, a painting commissioned from the World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia 2008, was presented as a gift to Portugal.

Symbolic Handover

Richard Garnaut, a Cursillista from Cairns, Australia, offered a free DVD of the major Encounter Presentations (Friendship; Through Him, With Him, In Him ; and The Heart of the Charism) to all international visitors.

There followed a joyful exchange of gifts and greetings among all present, finishing with a gift of a small toy Koala (an Australian animal) to each non-Australian participant.

Closing Mass

The closing Mass for the Feast of Christ the Universal King was concelebrated with Fr Adrian Farrelly as the chief Presider. This Mass also marked the closing of the Year of Faith. The Readings were 2 Samuel 5:1-3, Colossians 1:12-20 and Luke 23:35-43.

Final lunch

After a shared lunch, 64 participants travelled to the Lone Pine Sanctuary to see a wide of Australian fauna (kangaroos, koalas, etc.)

Final words

During days before and after the Encounter, many visitors took the opportunity to explore Brisbane and its surrounds. Transport to and from International and Domestic Airports was provided by Cursillistas of the Brisbane Archdiocesan Movement.

During the Encounter NACG and APG took the opportunity to have committee meetings. The OMCC also conducted its Third Ordinary meeting.

The Venue for the Encounter, St Leo's University College was appreciated by all. We sincerely thank the Rector of the College, Bro Vince Skelly CFC and his staff for their hospitality and co-operation.

“Christ is counting on you - De Colores”

