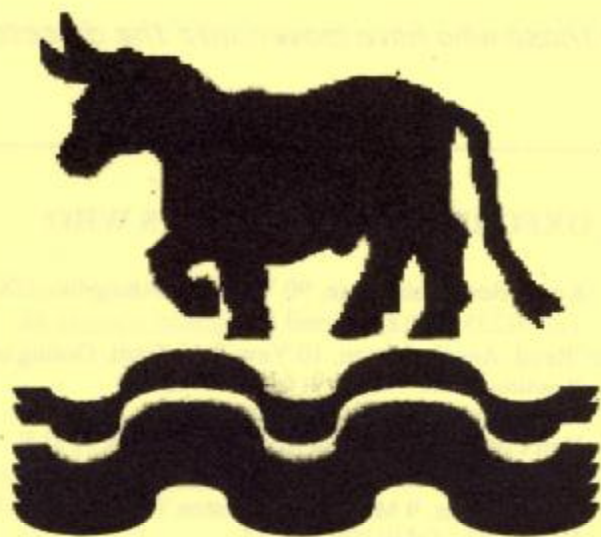


Oxon'Ourth



The magazine of
**OXFORD ANGLICAN
CURSILLO**

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*Welcome to all new Oxford Cursillistas,
both those who have recently been on Weekends
and those who have moved into the diocese.*

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A message from our Lay Director

“How was your weekend?” a work colleague asked casually as I turned up for a meeting on the morning of Monday 30th April. I gave a sort of inane grin that let him know it had been a very good one – his assumption was that I was still suffering a hangover. The conclusion “Definitely high on something!” was reached after I explained that I’d spent Thursday through to Sunday away leading a Christian course.

It would be wonderful to say that, in the power of the Holy Spirit, I had brought Christ into my workplace, but there were no sudden conversions. To be honest, I wasn’t really expecting any, but I felt that Christ was with me in that brief exchange and it was “work in progress” – a bit like His work in me. The question that arises is how do we measure our success?

A Cursillo weekend has been described as experiencing new wave of God’s Love – this may be the opportunity to stop and simply enjoy life again as a child paddling on the beach; for some a cleansing as they dive right in; for others perhaps exhilaration as they catch the wave and ride it; at times it may feel more like a tsunami sweeping much away before it in awesome power. No matter the size of the wave, we all have a different experience and come away somehow changed.

Is the success of a weekend just measured by our personal spiritual high? What’s it for? Of course, we give God all the glory and our thanks for His blessings over the 3 days of Oxford#3 in answer to so many prayers, but our response in our 4th day and its results are the real measure of success.

Measurement is usually by numbers, so here are a few: 3 weekends = 27 Oxford cursillistas, bringing us up to around 50 with regular meetings in 8 reunion groups. Now turn these numbers into people – each a fellow saint and apostle sent back to their own particular set of

environments that God has prepared for them - our monthly prayer diary is there to support one another in this our mission.

To really know whether Cursillo is working, we need to review our progress against our purpose: to empower Christians to grow through prayer, study and action enabling us to share God's Love with everyone. It may be that for some, this balanced growth and sharing is an every day part of their walk with Christ – great news, we rejoice with them! For the rest of us, the Cursillo method is there to help and I encourage you to make full use of it.

If you are not already in a reunion group, invite a few of your church friends; share your moments closest to Christ, worship and spiritual experiences; any books, films, TV, whatever study you've found useful; recent successes or failures, potential opportunities and future plans for action. Gossip the gospel with Christian friends and then carry it into all the environments where God has placed you. Christ is counting on you...

ULTREYA!

Kevin

Oxford 3 Weekend

The joining instructions for the Cursillo weekend contained a list of "Things to bring", which ended with the word "... an open heart".

I had been introduced to Cursillo by a friend and had gone along to a Breakfast Ultreya where the welcome, warmth and music had left me wanting more. A kind and enthusiastic lady offered to sponsor me, I sent off my application form, was accepted and then waited for the weekend to arrive. I had little ideas of what to expect. My sister in America – an Episcopalian – was extremely doubtful that it would be my "sort of thing"; my Team Rector thought it might possibly be; and a wise and trusted friend, who had done it in Coventry, was wildly excited for me! I met up with my sponsor for lunch and she

proved helpful and reassuring about this leap in faith. Thus I headed for Cold Ash.

Being directionally challenged, and in spite of having stayed there before, I found the Centre more by divine guidance than good navigation – the promised yellow signs turned out mostly to be publicizing the local Liberal Democrat candidate! Once installed, I was relieved to see several familiar faces from the Ultreya that I had attended. I was immediately struck by the desire of everyone to be friendly and helpful. This became a powerful theme throughout the weekend. There were introductions, explanations, a convivial meal, an hour of peaceful thoughtfulness and finally Evening Prayer. So far, so good – although an early night was greatly appreciated. Thus the weekend unfolded and I am left with impressions of meticulous planning and preparation, and intense prayerfulness. I was reassured to discover that we were from very diverse backgrounds and were simply “Pilgrims on a journey”. There was a great deal of wonderful singing – grace before meals was a particular favourite. We worshipped, listened, shared, created, ate, prayed and laughed. Seldom have I laughed so much in a short space of time! We cried too – touched by grace, or challenged. That was OK because we were being held in prayer and supported by the Team. There were wonderful surprises and there was the joy of making new friends.

So what were my feelings, as I left Cold Ash on that sunny Sunday afternoon? Chiefly there was a sense of being loved. There was joy and affirmation, with a large dose of encouragement and a fair amount of exhaustion. Three weeks on I’m realizing just how much I want and need to continue my pilgrimage, and I’m looking forward to the June Ultreya and picnic. I’m so glad that I went along with that “... open mind and heart”. It enabled me to receive a precious and lasting gift.

Sue Jago



At the top of the hill

Some years ago, I was on holiday in the sleepy village of Deia in northern Mallorca. This was the birthplace of Cursillo in the years following the Spanish Civil War. At the top of a steep hill, at the heart of the village is the church, unremarkable except for the fact that the writer Robert Graves is buried in the churchyard.

One day, late in the morning, the summer sun baking down, I walked up the hill and before seeking refuge within the solid walls of the church, I sat on the low stone wall beside the cobbled road, sheltering in the shade of an ancient olive tree. Beside me was a sun-wrinkled ancient man in black. Since it would have been unforfeivable to share the wall without passing the time of day, I plucked up the

courage to try out my Spanish on him, and eventually got round to asking him if he had ever heard of Cursillo. His face lit up, he raised his hands Heaven-wards and said: "Si, Cursillo, la mano de Dios" – "Yes, Cursillo, the hand of God". Was he new to



Cursillo? By no means, it turns out that he had been a Guest on Mallorca Cursillo #1, in other words the very first Cursillo weekend ever held and he had just returned from a trek to the southwest of Spain to attend the Clausura of Sevilla #100. To cut a long story short, what he couldn't tell me about Cursillo simply wasn't worth knowing!

We made our farewells and set off in opposite directions, he trudging his arthritic way down the hill, me going into the church to look around. The next day, ever one to try and find my way back into Narnia, I returned up the hill, looking for him. He wasn't there, so I asked someone in the church, and they said that I had been talking to the priest.

Matthew Caminer



“My heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky”.

So writes William Wordsworth in his poem *The Rainbow* and, I'm sure along with many others, so does mine. It always has done because a rainbow has that effect known in modern parlance as the 'wow factor', something so beautiful and awe inspiring that it takes your breath away, and is a reminder of what a truly remarkable world we live in. The rainbow is also the sign of God's promise (Genesis 9:12-17) shown to Noah and given to all the world for all time. We can know why and how and when rainbows occur but none of those can explain the increased beat of the heart – that is more to do with the experience and the moment.

Strangely, since I first became involved with Cursillo, my life has taken on a goodly number of multi-coloured objects and continues to do so, some noticed and purchased and others generously given. For Christmas my daughter gave me a USB glitter lamp which plugs into my computer and, whilst I work, gently ranges through the spectrum whilst all the little flecks of foil move within reflecting the light. Ah, the joys of modern technology!! I love it because it reminds me of how much I love her.

However, of all the rainbow accumulations, it is the clear cut crystal hanging in the window which has the most impact and truly reminds me of God, for so often when things are difficult the sun will shine through it and tiny rainbows appear in odd places in the room, always bringing a smile to my face.

We also need to look at this the other way round. Every Cursillo weekend is different simply because the people attending are different and what a richness there is in that diversity, for each one of us brings a whole spectrum of personality and experience into a carefully structured framework in order to work together, in the power of the Spirit, to become true disciples of Christ.

Paul Cezanne, the great French artist commented that “we live in a rainbow of chaos” and what wonderful paintings he produced with his colours. When we offer ourselves to God, in our true colours and open to the work of the Holy Spirit, only then can we reflect his wonderful light and love into the world and if we can do that all together, with all our differences ...WOW!!!

With every blessing

Angela Linton

Spiritual Director for Cursillo in Oxford Diocese

Bring and Share

While preparing for the Diocesan Ultreaya I realised that **bring and share** is a very good motto for Cursillo. The Cursillista way of doing things is by pray, study and action, but not in isolation. We are encouraged to listen and learn from each other; we each have our own gifts and talents. We bring and share; not just lunches but ourselves and journeys with Jesus in our reunion meetings.

Oxford Cursillo is an exciting place to be and it is growing. We have become a Registered Charity No 1117925. Now we can benefit from Gift Aid. Oxford 3 was a success and a big thank you to Kevin Beer and his team, not forgetting Sister Sylvia and the staff at Cold Ash.

Are there other ways to **bring and share**? Yes there are. We all have our own individual gifts and talents. If you have anecdotes, poems, jokes or other ideas to share please bring them to me so that we can make this magazine ours and not mine. Jesus said ‘let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven’. Don’t be afraid to have a go! The next edition will be published in time for the AGM in November.

Bishop John is a Cursillista with a wide experience of the Movement and Oxford Cursillo gives thanks to God for bringing him to us. So I will close by sharing with you with his endorsement of Cursillo.

'Cursillo is one of god's secret gifts to his Church. It has a wonderful contribution to make in renewing faith and planting joy and gratitude at the heart of the Christian life. I do hope many will come and taste this bubbling water and help to re-energise the churches of our diocese.'

Mary Willets

PS Margaret Gilson's drawing of our last picnic is included.

A Weekend Memory

The 'party piece' from one of tables at the London 8 Weekend.

*Chorus: All things bright and beautiful
Cursillo's butterflies,
Rainbows and Rollos
They've opened up our eyes.*

To Christ we all aspire
We all need an ideal
God gives us grace to reach
He helps to make it real.

We all should help each other
Encourage and support.
All hope on God is founded
"Have faith" is what we're taught.





The pious ones among us
Are humble when they pray.
The Bible and creation
We study every day.

The sacraments are many
And we know of them all.
We're always spurred to action
And answer to God's call.

Sin always will befall us
We're human through and through;
But like the Servant King, we
Can become leaders too!

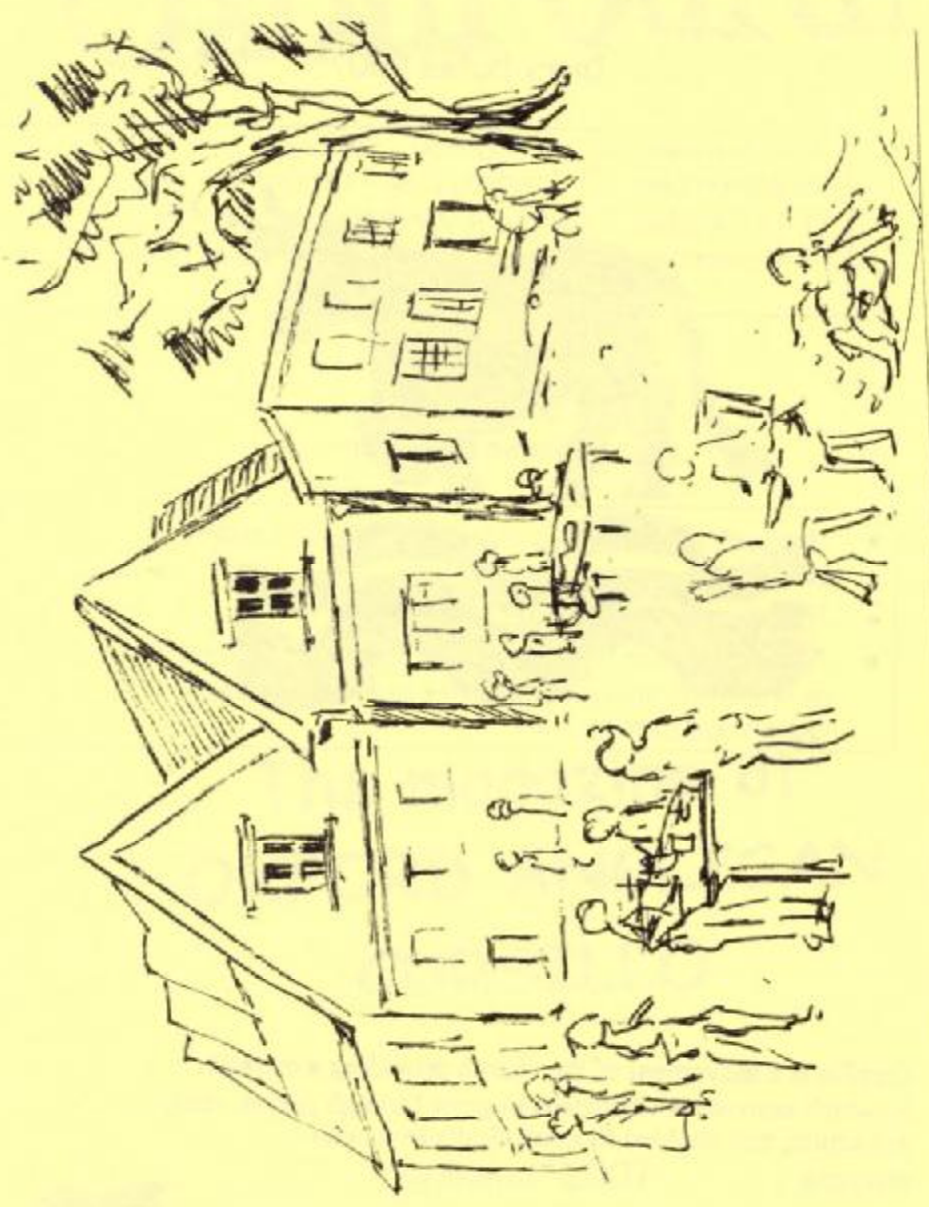
With evangelization
Consider how and where.
Get spiritual direction
to help plan life and prayer.

Community in action –
Can't do it on your own.
So join a Group reunion,
You'll never be alone.



We'll press ahead together.
We'll spread God's love about.
We'll bring more people to the Lord,
ULTREYA!s what we'll shout.





Diary Dates 2007

- 1 September: 1st Training Day – Oxford 4
- 15 September: 2nd Training Day – Oxford 4
- 11-14 October: - Oxford 4 Weekend at Cold Ash
- 17 November: Diocesan Ultreya and AGM at Christ The King, Sonning Common.

Please pray for

- The well being and growth of Oxford Cursillo
- Bishop John and his family
- The members of the Secretariat
- Alison Shaw in her role of Lay Rector of Oxford 4, as she finds and prepares her team, and that our guests will come.

Cursillo is a movement of the church providing a method by which empowers Christians to grow through prayer, study and action, and enabled to share God's love with everyone.

OxonFourth is published by Oxford Anglican Cursillo.

