

## Cursillo Reunion Address

Cursillo has helped me to deal with the important things in life. I have ten minutes to mention four things and remind you how Cursillo continues to make a difference in our lives as Christians:

- PSA Tests
- Facebook
- Climate Change
- Return On Investment

### **PSA Tests**

The doctor says I should have one every year. I think we need them every day. PSA = Piety, Study, Action.

### **Piety**

If Jesus were on Twitter, would you be his follower? More importantly, do you realize that He follows you, 24/7? I recommend reading *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence to affirm the fact that we are never out of His presence.

At your confirmation, the church prayed that you would "daily increase in the Holy Spirit". I think that's like fine wine maturing. Trust that God is at work in you, that He is forging your Christian character. Like downloading a new update, you have to let God through your firewall.

### **Study**

Lots of inspiring and helpful Christian books out there. I highly recommend Robert Farrar Capon's books, especially his emphasis on the grace of God in his trilogy on the parables. You might try the Bible occasionally too. Commit passages to memory and meditate on them until the "Aha!" moment comes.

Read other books to help you be as wise as a serpent. Be astute about what's really happening in the world, so that your response may be informed and useful. Love the Lord with all your mind. Suggested reading: *Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*. Study to show yourselves approved before God. It doesn't hurt the credibility of the Gospel if you win the respect of others through your competence and understanding, all the while clothed in humility and patience.

### **Action**

Proclaim the good news at all times; use words when necessary. Actions speak louder than words, and your actions should be good news. It's not rocket science to figure out how to be good news to the people you encounter every day. For my wife, there are any number of little practical things that I can do around the house that say "I love you" and show her that I don't take her for granted. For the janitor in your office building, it could be a smile and the occasional sincere expression of appreciation for the work that he or she does that everyone else takes for granted. Do you know the name of your barista at Starbucks? Mine is Bree and she just had her first child. His name is Kyler. Will he be baptised? Stay tuned.

A kind and supporting word at the checkout (they have name tags), an appreciation of someone who is obviously tired or overworked, all tiny actions that might be just the cup of cold water that person needs at the moment. Repeat it often enough, and you become a welcome sight. What is good news for the new mother next door with three kids? For the friend going through a hard time? For your employer or employee? Be a credit to God in everything you do. Be good

news.

## **Facebook**

Can I add you as a friend? Can I recommend you add Jesus as a friend? Are you friendly to all, gracious, affirming, non-judgemental? Can you give guidance and share wisdom without condescension? Collect, connect, and then correct is our method of discipline (discipleship) at the school where I teach..

Do you belong to a group? Is there a community where you serve and where you are served? Are there brothers and sisters with whom you have shared your fears and failures and frustrations as well as your joys and steps of progress? It doesn't have to be formal or formulaic. Better if it is natural and real.

## **Climate Change**

The climate has changed since we first believed. Not the weather, but the climate of belief and the climate of security. Now if you mention that you are fond of "There is a Balm in Gilead" you get put on the Terrorist Watch List. Christians are no longer in the majority. Parishes are closing instead of thriving. Megachurches, however, continue to appear. The climate is changing. Are you influencing your environment? Are you making choices that will draw your neighbour closer to God? How are you helping to address a poisonous working environment or labour strife? How are you contributing to your community at large by your volunteer hours?

Are you influencing the climate in your church? Are you helping your rector overcome his fear of having to become an insurance salesman if the numbers dwindle? Are you encouraging her to be bold in her proclamation of Christ, inspiring in her person and her words, and vibrant in her leading of the liturgy? Your pastor may not be getting encouragement from any other sources, even the diocesan office.

Are you aware that your ministry is not primarily in the church? It isn't even in the Cursillo movement, even though it's a great invention for bringing Christians to a greater awareness of the life in Christ. Your main mission field is where you are planted every day. It's your community, and, in case this hasn't been made clear to you yet, it's getting to be a global village. If you focus too much on the organ and the politically correct pew leaflets, you might miss greater opportunities to serve. Being leaders in civic and educational organizations is something to which Christians should aspire.

## **Return On Investment**

We grow too soon old, and too late smart, or so my father is fond of saying. In the words of Christ, "Why do we labour for that which is not meat"? What kind of treasures are we storing up in heaven? It's time to ask ourselves if we are majoring in minors. I am more inclined to refuse to give my time to anything that doesn't appear to have the potential of making a significant effect on the life of another individual or group.

Let's think about palanca, leverage. We must be ready to let go of the old and comfortable ways that aren't bearing any fruit. We must also be ready to let go of the latest innovations and reinterpretations when they don't bear fruit either. Christ said that the vultures would gather where the body is, which is an unpleasant metaphor to say that when we provide something that truly feeds human needs, people will show up, and Christ will be known in our midst. If your broker is making you broker, it's time to find a new investment counselor. Be wise in the investment of your time, talent, and treasure, and don't believe every deep, well-modulated voice you hear.

In the end, the reason it's called Cursillo is because it is a short course, a brief three days. God

is efficient. It only took three days to save the world, and there isn't a whole lot of material to cover for us to understand how we should live our lives as his people. The Cursillo is only three days. Yes, three long days, but it is enough. Enough to cover PSA tests, Facebook, climate change and ROI.

And if you've been through this experience, then every day you can wake up and say, "Today is fourth day of the rest of my life." Onward and upward.

**Gregg Perry**

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