



Servant of God

**Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló**

Founder of

Cursillos in Christianity

1917 – 2008

*June 2024*

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## Friendship in Cursillo

*Gail Terrana, Diocese of Rochester*

**The ESSENCE of Cursillo is CHRIST, the PERSON, & FRIENDSHIP.**

Friendship is the ESSENCE within all phases of Cursillo: Precursillo, Cursillo Weekend, and the Postcursillo. This talk will focus on FRIENDSHIP IN THE CURSILLO WEEKEND. And particularly how we bring an **atmosphere of friendship** on the weekend.

**The PRELIMINARY rollo** states, “We have come here to become friends.” Do you remember hearing these words? We are also told about how “effective” Cursillo is. The word “efficacy” is used, meaning it has the *power* to achieve a desired goal. We are told that 3 things make up this efficacy: the Grace of God, organization, and their contribution of enthusiasm, dedication, and spirit of charity.

**First** is the Grace of God, which we know is our palanca, our commitment to prayers and sacrifices by the community and Cursillo worldwide.

**Second** is Organization, and that doesn’t mean the movement as an organization because we are not an organization; we are a Movement. It means planning and preparation so that everything is in place to bring about the desired outcome. This includes the organizational planning of the Team, handing out posters, markers, team preparations, and our bond in friendship.

**Third**, we ask each new cursillista for three things. Remember the three things asked of us on the first day of our Cursillo?

- Enthusiasm, which is one’s spirit of hope, hopeful joy.
- Dedication, which is the gift of themselves, we ask that they put their whole self into the weekend; and finally
- A Spirit of Charity, which is love. A love that comes through in our kindness, attentiveness, and friendship. It is basically our Baptism gift of theological virtue.

I want to focus on **organization** - our planning, and preparation when talking about friendship on the weekend, particularly the TEAM, especially as we begin to prepare our Teams.

The TEAM is the “living out” of Christian life. What we **HEAR** on the weekend about a Life in Grace is **SEEN** in the lives of each Team member. We need to first understand that the Cursillo weekend is for the **CANDIDATES**. It is not for the community or for the team.

### **Conversion Process**

With that, we must know that the weekend experience is a **conversion process**. Conversion, in fact, is not an **EVENT** that suddenly happens, but rather, a **PROCESS** that unfolds through a **SEARCHING** and an **ENCOUNTER** ... (Evangelization Through Conversion, p. 72 in The Thinking of Eduardo Bonnín)

For this conversion process to occur, there must be an atmosphere of **FRIENDSHIP and FREEDOM. Freedom and friendship go together.**

The TEAM sets this **atmosphere of Friendship**. If friendship and freedom are not present on the weekend, it will hinder the conversion process.

### **How does the Team create an atmosphere of Friendship?**

It starts with the TEAM becoming friends. That is why there are team meetings. We need to get to know each other, pray for each other, and pray for the candidates. There is grouping and sharing in the Team meetings to help our friendship grow.

The team needs to be aware of the organization of the weekend and what is in the weekend that helps build friendship and freedom. By understanding this, the team will respect the freedom and not be tempted to make additions to the weekend.

I would like to go through the Cursillo weekend and point out some specific aspects that will help facilitate this **friendship and freedom**.

- The weekend is comprised of **small teams** and more candidates. A small team is around 7 laypeople with 2 clergy or (1 clergy and 1 religious). It is best if the number of candidates is between 20 and 25. This **allows friendships** between the candidates to grow as they are experiencing the Cursillo together. Maybe their **friendship** group reunion will be made up of new friends they meet at the weekend. Several candidates are needed for friendships to begin.

#### Thursday Night

- We do not have **formal introductions**. We will use nametags because we have not fully embraced the Precursillo where the team meets with candidates before the Cursillo.
- New Cursillistas (candidates) are not asked to be lectors, etc. They are FREE. The new cursillistas are NOT asked to be a Cross bearer, or read the Stations of the Cross, or Bankruptcy stories, or say grace, etc. They are present “to be” . . . to be on a journey of conversion.

#### The Rollos

- Regarding the Rollos. We do not have personal **biographies** before a rollo. No mention if married, single, having kids, College Education, Doctorate Degree in Theology, etc. The Rector announces that the next rollo is given by “Name...”. It is not about our status in life but how we live our Christian life. It is not about how much we know, but how much we love (that is from the Study rollo). We are on a journey together. This atmosphere is open and inviting. All of us are a “WE” and “WE” are on a journey together.
- Similarly, when we give a rollo, we do not wear a dress with heels, a suit and tie, or a tux or gown. We do not leave the rollo room to change clothes. We are sharing our ordinary, normal life in the framework of a rollo.
- We share our rollo without songs to embellish it, no handouts, no technology or PowerPoint, no chalkboard, etc. We are just simply sharing our witness of how we are living the rollo.
- The Team is **present** in the Rollo room during all the rollos. They do not leave to pray in the chapel, to have a private meal... etc.
- **Prayers:** The team will gather naturally (no announcement is made) in the Chapel to pray over the next Rollista. That means 5-10 minutes before the bell rings to go to the rollo room, the team knows to go to the Chapel to pray a short prayer over the next Rollista – 2 minutes! Now, if a team member is in deep conversation with a new cursillista, they do not interrupt and say I must go.
- When **Table assignments** are made on Friday morning, each person will be called to their table. The Rector will start by announcing the name of the team member already at the table, then the names of the new cursillistas that will join that table.
- **Saint Names.** The Rector will announce the Saint’s name for each table. All Tables are named after a Saint. This naming is done before the weekend. Each Team member assigned to a Table group will let the Rector know who they choose as their Saint. This used to be done by the whole table group, but it is the job of the Team in preparation for the weekend. Only one saint is assigned per table. The Saints are our friends, too. This lends to the doctrine of the “Communion of Saints”. When meeting a Cursillista, they say, “I sat at the table of St. Monica,” or “I sat at the table of St. Peter,” etc. This is a hallmark of Cursillo.

#### Friendship lays the foundation for Conversion.

Continuing with FRIDAY, there are:

- **Games.** Why are games important? Games take down our defenses and invoke a social atmosphere – perfect for friendship to take root. Recreation helps us get to know each other. WOW. So, games and free time create an atmosphere of friendship and freedom.
- **Music.** There are no pious songs on the weekend or song practice. There are silly songs to lighten or brighten the atmosphere.
- **Posters.** Have you wondered **why** we do posters? It is to facilitate **friendship**. The table begins to talk and share and come up with ideas. All the new cursillistas should contribute to preparing the Poster. It does not have to be perfect artistic drawings. It can be made up of ‘stick people’. The purpose of the poster is to facilitate **friendship!!!** One poster Friday, one Saturday, and no poster on Sunday.
- **Blocks of time are allotted for the Rollos. Friendship and freedom** go together. There is freedom in the time allotments for rollos. There is a block of time, usually 1½ to 2 hours. This time is used for - the rollo, the discussion, the posters, and the break, depending on the table group and what they want. So, if a table decides they want a break first and will work on their poster later, they have the freedom to do this.

#### Saturday:

- **Signing the Pilgrim’s Guide.** On Saturday, the signing of the Pilgrims’ Guides is introduced. Why? For Friendship! It starts with signing just between the new cursillistas. It allows them to approach the other tables to get to know someone and have them sign their Pilgrim’s Guide. The team does not get their Pilgrim’s Guide signed, only the new cursillistas - they are told it is a souvenir of the weekend.
- **Saturday of the Weekend.** The **visits** to the **Blessed Sacrament** begin. The Story of John (one of the appendices) is read, and this gives the foundation of friendship with Jesus. John goes each day for a quick, short visit with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and then Jesus comes to visit John when he is in the hospital. This story sets the tone for the day as each table begins visiting the Blessed Sacrament to speak to Jesus and become friends.
- **Palanca** is introduced on Saturday for the first time. Friends that we do not know are praying for us! It is a “general” palanca, meaning one palanca note addressed to the entire weekend - team and new cursillistas (candidates). There are no individual notes to a person. A personal note to one person is not part of the Cursillo. It evokes “emotion” and will interfere with the conversion process.

- The **Fiesta** is on Saturday night. The fiesta is referred to as a “social gathering”. This is for **friendship!** It is not a crazy, out-of-control party. It can easily get out of control because GRACE is flowing on Saturday. Most of the new cursillistas (and the team) are filled with grace. The team must be careful to tame this joy and not let it get out of hand. The reason for being on the weekend is to lighten the atmosphere and clear our minds, for the weekend is not yet over. The best is coming on Sunday!

#### Sunday:

- The **Mañanitas** are a message of love. It is a popular Mexican birthday song. In Mexico, the family sings to the person to celebrate the day they were born. The saints were there; the heavens and the earth celebrate you and your birth. It is about love.
- The **Closing**. The Closing is particularly important. It is friendship with the larger Cursillo community. The purpose of the Closing is to let the New Cursillistas know that everything they heard on the weekend is true. The community is a living witness. Yes, you can live this life in grace – we are living it. Everything that happens at the Closing is to encourage the new Cursillistas. Any distinguished guests who speak share encouraging words with the new Cursillistas. It is not about sharing problems. It is a joy-filled reunion of new cursillistas that will be welcomed into the Ultreyas.

All this information is part of the **criteria** that help create friendship. If the conditions are right, God can touch a person’s heart. Cursillo seeks to facilitate the Conversion process, whether to begin, reactivate, or reinvigorate... depending on where the new cursillistas (candidates) are in their journey. The TEAM brings about an atmosphere that creates friendship and freedom. It is important for us to understand that it is in this atmosphere of friendship and freedom that God can **reach a person’s heart**.

### NCSA ANNOUNCEMENTS

**NATIONAL ENCOUNTER: JUNE 15, 2024 IS THE LAST DAY TO REGISTER AT \$450.00**

**SAVE THE DATE: WORLD ULTREYA IN ROME, JUNE 6-8, 2025**

## Pope Francis explains why Jesus calls his disciples friends and no longer servants

**A**round 20,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square to accompany the Pope in the recitation of the Regina Coeli prayer and to listen to his Sunday address. The address revolved around the Gospel of the sixth week of the liturgical season of Easter (John 15:15). After the address and the Marian prayer, the Pope congratulated the Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Christians who were celebrating Easter that Sunday according to the Julian calendar. Below is the translation into English of the Pope’s words:

Today, the Gospel tells us about Jesus, who says to the Apostles: “I do not call you servants any longer, but friends” (cf Jn 15:15). What does this mean?

In the Bible the “servants” of God are special people, to whom He entrusts important missions, such as, for example, Moses (cf. Ex 14:31), King David (cf. 2 Sam 7:8), the prophet Elijah (cf. 1 Re 18:36), up to the Virgin Mary (cf. Lk 1:38). They are people in whose hands God places His treasures (cf. Mt 25:21). But all of this is not enough, according to Jesus, to say who we are for Him, it is not enough. He wants more, something greater that goes beyond goods and plans themselves: it takes friendship.

Since childhood, we learn how beautiful this experience is. We offer friends our toys and the most beautiful gifts; then, growing up, as teenagers, we confide our first secrets to them; as young people, we offer loyalty; as adults, we share satisfactions and worries; as seniors, we share the memories, considerations, and silences of long days. The Word of God, in the Book of Proverbs, tells us that “Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel” (27:9). Let us think a moment of our friends and thank the Lord for them! A space for thinking about them...

Friendship is not the fruit of calculation or compulsion. It is born spontaneously when we recognize something of ourselves in the other. And, if it is true, a friendship is so strong that it does not fail even in the face of betrayal. “A friend loves at all times” (Pr 17:17) states the Book of Proverbs again – as Jesus shows us when He says to Judas, who betrays Him with a kiss: “Friend, why are you here?” (Mt 26:50). A true friend does not abandon you, even when you make mistakes: he corrects you, perhaps he reproaches you, but he forgives you and does not abandon you.

And today, Jesus, in the Bible, tells us that for Him we are precisely this, friends, dear people beyond all merit and expectation, to whom He extends His hand and offers His love, His Grace, His Word; with whom – with us, friends. He shares what is dearest to Him, all that He has heard from the Father (cf. Jn 15:15). Even to the point of making Himself fragile for us, of placing Himself in our hands without defense or pretense, because He loves us. The Lord loves us as a friend. He wants our good, and He wants us to share in his.

And so, let us ask ourselves: what face does the Lord have for me? The face of a friend or of a stranger? Do I feel loved by Him as a dear person? And what is the face of Jesus that I show to others, especially to those who err and need forgiveness?

May Mary help us to grow in friendship with Her Son and spread it around us. -[Vatican City, 05.06.2024](#)



## EDUARDO BONNIN AGUILO FOUNDATION (FEBA)

**M**y name is Maribel Gómez; I lived my Cursillo in 1999. In 2000, I met Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló on the steps of St. Peter. The moment he passed on to his 5th Day in 2008, I was on those same steps of St. Peter's Basilica. I had the opportunity to meet Eduardo a few times over those eight years because Eduardo was open to meeting all of us. He made time by phone, by letter, and in person to meet people and make friends with all of us. That is what he told his closest friends at the moment he was passing away, "Be friends of all." Eduardo made it a point to be a friend, and my husband and I had the opportunity to confirm this just a couple of years ago when on a trip to Mallorca and to Eduardo's office, where we got to look in his diary for the year 2005. And there, on January 7th, he wrote of our visit, and there are our names and the names of our sons. Eduardo gave himself entirely to the work of Cursillos and friendship so that we might be friends of Jesus Christ and friends of all.

This weekend, we were received and encouraged by Bishop Pulido's reflection at the Region XI encounter on being called to serve, in which he quoted our founder, Servant of God Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló. As he concluded his quote, he turned to us and asked if we knew Eduardo Bonnín. Across the hall, I heard affirmative, confident, and joyful responses. It was as if many were saying, "Of course," and "We are very happy to know who Eduardo is." And just then, a question came to my mind. What kind of a response will someone have if they ask cursillistas if they know who Eduardo Bonnín is 20 or 30 years from now?

Just like so many cursillistas, I had the opportunity to meet Eduardo. What can we do so that all cursillistas will know the founder after we are gone? As we are taught, we can meet with everyone at the Eucharist. Certainly, the most important thing we can do is to pray. We have been given a special prayer for his process of beatification. Let's all pray it often. We can request Masses for Eduardo. I request a Mass at my parish to be offered for Eduardo every year on the day of his passing, February 8th and this certainly has made my friendship with him grow. So, let us all pray for Eduardo's intercession and remember him during Mass.

Secondly, it is important to know our founder because that keeps the Movement faithful to its charism. The Holy Spirit wants us to be united to and by the founder for God's plan to continue to work effectively. So, it is important that we keep studying what Eduardo said about the Cursillos and how they were intended to be. So, let's keep studying so we can be faithful and united.

And thirdly, it is time for all of us to be active supporters of the Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló Foundation (FEBA). This foundation was made when Eduardo saw the need to prepare for his 5th Day. He wrote his Spiritual Testament and gathered friends to make things as clear as possible for us to carry on what he started. All his books, letters, diaries, and notes were entrusted to all of us through FEBA. The few who have kept the foundation active these past 20 years have received monetary donations occasionally. And now they need all of us to participate, so they have started a crowdfunding site called 'mi grano de arena', which means 'my grain of sand.' FEBA needs to make everything available for the beatification process to have a successful outcome for the good of the Movement and the good of the Church. This means we need to show we are devoted,

and we need to help with funds. Now it is time for all of us to join FEBA if we haven't yet. So, let us support Eduardo's beatification and support the future of the movement.

Visit the Cursillo National Website for Eduardo's writings and the Beatification prayer cards:

[National Cursillo](#) (click).

Visit the crowdfunding page to support the beatification and the work of FEBA.

<https://www.migranodearena.org/reto/fundacion-eduardo-bonnin-aguilola-herencia-de-eduardo->

May 25, 2024

### Crowdfunding for FEBA EDUARDO BONNIN AGUILO FOUNDATION

<https://www.migranodearena.org/reto/fundacion-eduardo-bonnin-aguilola-herencia-de-eduardo->

Select English from the upper right corner – Click the down arrow and select EN for English

Select: **DONATE**

How much do you want to donate?

Donors outside Europe must donate through QUICK DONATION option. Follow steps below:

SELECT: **ANOTHER AMOUNT** (USA donors must select this)

ENTER AMOUNT FROM **1 to 99** Euro (MAXIMUM cannot exceed 99 Euro)

Select how you want your donation to be viewed online.

If no boxes are checked your name and donation will appear in list of donors on the website.

X Hide the amount donated It will appear as: **Hidden Donation**

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Note: Option to leave comment for all to view by typing in the box provided.

Then SELECT: **NEXT**

SELECT: **QUICK DONATION**

SELECT: **PAGO (PAYMENT)**

Choose: **Credit Card or PYPAL**

Enter your Credit Card or PayPal information

**Note:** When you select Credit Card or PayPal, they will convert Euros to US Dollars. The rate is slightly higher. Example: 5 Euros approximately \$5.50 and 99 Euros is \$112.08

Select: **COMPLETE**

Thank you for donating and partnering with the Foundation of Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló



# 34<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL CURSILLO ENCOUNTER

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY | HEMPSTEAD, NY 11549



**JULY 25-28 2024**

Registration is now open at  
[www.natl-cursillo.org](http://www.natl-cursillo.org)



**NCSA ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
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