

Carol Stier  
Buffalo Cursillo Historian

**Buffalo Cursillo History #8 (June 2022 Newsletter)**  
**(continued from last month)**

Forming Saints, Being Apostles

The Method of Cursillo is to foster the spiritual growth of the person through the means of Piety, Study and Action. Piety facilitates one's growth in friendship with God through prayer and the sacraments. Study provides knowledge of one's self, Christ and others. Through Action, Cursillistas seek to spread the kingdom of God in their environments of home, work and society by living a Christlike life.

The Cursillo Movement is an apostolic movement of men and women Cursillistas who work as apostles in their daily lives, without necessarily being part of a Catholic organization. Cursillistas are already part of a supportive community which sustains and encourages them through faith friendship groups in Ultreya Group Reunion and the monthly Diocesan Reunion Mass.

With Vatican II's invitation to the laity, many Western New Yorkers, after their Cursillo, felt called to participate in their parishes as catechists and lectors, in music ministry or on parish council, and as Eucharistic Ministers.

Plans for the continued growth of the Cursillo Movement in the Buffalo Diocese were formulated under the leadership of what is called the Buffalo Cursillo Secretariat, which is directly responsible to the Bishop. From 1965 – 1967, the first Secretariat included the Diocesan Spiritual Director – Fr. David Doyle, Lay Coordinators - Louis and Elizabeth Pauly, Asst. Co-coordinators – Sebastian and Lenore Rosica, Recording Secretary – Miss Mary Beilman, Corresponding Secretary – Mrs. Agnes Johnson and Treasurer – Michael Ventura.

Also included were the Chairpersons of the following sections: Pre-Cursillo, Cursillo (Men and Women), Post-Cursillo, Commissary, Publications, Liturgy, and Leaders School, plus the spiritual directors to many of the sections.

Leaders School (open to all Cursillistas since they are considered leaders in their environment) met twice a month. All were given the opportunity to grow in true Christian Community and to study the Cursillo method for the further growth of the Buffalo movement. These were held at parish or school sites. Sometimes there was standing room only, given the numbers of people who made Cursillo in the 60's & early 70's.

In November 1967, a team from Buffalo conducted the first Men's Cursillo in the Diocese of Rochester and also aided in putting on some of the Women's Cursillos.

In 1972, the Diocese of Trenton held its first Cursillo with a team composed chiefly of men from Buffalo. A Women's Cursillo soon followed. Fr. Jim Lynch, CP, a native of New Jersey, stationed at Holy Cross Passionist Seminary in Dunkirk, and Bill and Mary Ellen Cortright, Buffalonians who had moved to New Jersey, worked very hard to get the movement started in Trenton.

Buffalo Cursillistas were also part of teams putting on leadership workshops in Pittsburgh, PA and Covington, Kentucky.

Sometime after Vatican II, Pope Paul VI enthusiastically approved the Cursillo as a prime instrument in the renewal of the Church. He told a group of Cursillistas visiting Rome: “Christ, the Church and the Pope are counting on you”.

(Addendum to July, 2022 #8)

The 1<sup>st</sup> World Encounter was held in Rome in 1966 with delegates from the National Secretariats affiliated with the Cursillo Movement attending. This was combined with the 1<sup>st</sup> World Ultreya open to all Cursillistas from around the world.