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Buffalo Cursillo Historian

Buffalo Cursillo History #2 (November 2021 Newsletter)

(continued from last month)

After meeting with Bishop McNulty, the first response of those who met with him was a prayer to the Holy Spirit. Then Lou and Fr. Barry opened a checking account for the Movement with \$1 and established an address: P.O. Box 175, Hiler Branch, Kenmore, NY 14223. (*P.O. Box not valid now, do not use*). They were on their way. (at some point, the diocese agreed to pay the necessary insurance for each weekend).

Lou went to Erie to speak with the Erie Spiritual Director, Fr. Jim Peterson, and Lay Director, Tom Peterson, who also were the spiritual director and rector for the first Buffalo Men's Cursillo. After a discussion with them, they agreed that Erie would supply the team for Buffalo's first Men's Cursillo. Buffalo had to provide the location, the supplies and all the food. Erie was also helpful in offering outlines of the weekend proceedings, sample menus, supplies needed, etc.

The Buffalo group searched for a place that allowed sleeping accommodations, had a kitchen, a dining area and a room for a chapel.

St Mary's parish on Broadway and Pine filled the bill. There was an empty school, a cafeteria and Church. The parish was run by the Redemptorist priests and pastor John Sullivan gave permission to use the facility for the first Buffalo Men's Cursillo.

An announcement of the Men's Cursillo was run in the Catholic paper and applications began to arrive. Fr. Hugh Brady, a Cursillista from Rochester sent some ten candidates to the weekend.

Lou & Liz ordered whatever books were available at the time about the Cursillo Movement (history, etc.). The Only literature available in English was mainly about the technique of putting on the weekend, the responsibilities of the team members, and the outline of the "Rollos" or talks. At this time there was no organized national Secretariat.

Prior to weekend men's #1 in August, 1965, Fr. Barry and Lou began shopping at the Army/Navy Surplus Store purchasing 50 army cots; and later chasing down office supplies, Bibles and all the food needed for the weekend. They had charged \$950 that had to be paid the next week. Forty-four men made the weekend. Amazingly, the white envelope free-will offering totaled \$1,025. They paid their bills and had enough left to promote the next Cursillo weekend.

While they had arranged for the team from Erie to direct the first men's weekend, the Buffalo group was responsible for staffing the weekends. These included cooks, maintenance, and food servers. Local Cursillistas and Pauly's neighbors provided these essential roles. After this, Buffalo was on its own.

It is always amazing to see how God works!

Fr. Dave Doyle was Spiritual Director for the second Men's Cursillo and Lou Pauly was the Rector. Team members were from Buffalo. The second Cursillo gave them much more confidence to embark on future Cursillos.