



# THE CURSILLO CONNECTION

Easter 2020



Cursillo News for the Diocese of St Albans



**He is risen! He is risen! Alleluia! Alleluia!**  
**Praying for God's rich blessings on you this Easter**

## *A message from your Lay Director*

I do not need to tell any of you what a terrible and sometimes terrifying time we are living in.

Everybody whoever you may be is affected by Covid-19 in some way. As I sit at home and follow the government advice to stay at home and protect the NHS, I have plenty of time to think and worry but I also see signs of hope through Christ and through actions of others. The children of Europe have been painting rainbows and putting them in their windows at home for hope and positivity and of course rainbows are one of the signs we use in Cursillo.

Many people in our communities are doing acts that to them may seem small but are having massive impacts in people's lives. A few examples are; I work for a disability charity and a couple of weeks ago I set up a teleconference account to allow our Care Managers to meet which took me five minutes to set up, That meeting has had a big effect on the safety of our residents and the care staff. **A small act - a major effect.**

Laurie is setting up a buddy system for our Church in which we are ringing parishioners for a chat, see if they are ok and ask if there is any way we can help. One of the lady's I am in contact with who is living alone with her mother who has dementia said it was the only contact she has with anybody and how she looks forward to me calling. **A small act - a major effect.**

Our Church is delivering sealed consecrated wafers so that we can all receive the gift of the sacrament. **A small act - a major effect**

We are all going out of our doors on a Thursday evening and clapping for the key workers and also seeing our neighbours that we have not seen all week.

### **A small act - a major effect**

Although all our Churches are now closed it of course does not mean that the Church is closed. Many are streaming their services and you can now watch services locally or from anywhere around the world. Some Churches have reported that more people are watching the streamed service than they normally get on a normal Sunday. This is a real opportunity for spreading the good news.

What can we do in Cursillo? You can if you have not already hold a group reunion over skype, facetime or one of the other methods we are all discovering. Zoom that I use to keep in touch with the grandchildren and for work is a brilliant method of keeping in touch. Emails, WhatsApp messaging and telephoning members of your group and wider are great ways without experiencing possible technical problems we have with the new methods. Perhaps we could even have a Ultraya using Zoom, but I will need to look at this closer.

Finally can I wish you a blessed Easter and leave you with the words of her Majesty the Queen "We should take comfort that, while we may have more still to endure, better days will return: we will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again."

Geoff



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*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16*

I write this on day 16 of my isolation and think how we could have never foreseen that there would be a day when we would not move through the tridium and on to celebrate the joy of Easter. What strange and unimaginable times we are living in!

I do hope that your churches have been able like so many to stream live services from priest’s study’s and garages or wherever and that you have all found new ways of worshipping as the advent of technology has provided a truly amazing way for us all to keep inContact and to partake in worship.

This April and May include the major festivals of Holy week, Easter, Ascension Day, and Pentecost, which would have been a busy time in our church calendars.

Many in our world today look forward to Easter for the chocolate eggs and bunnies. Nothing wrong in that. What’s not to love? But Easter is more than this and its significance extends to more than just one day.

To fully appreciate the resurrection of Jesus, it is helpful to appreciate what took place beforehand. “For forty days we have been celebrating the joy of the resurrection, his bursting from the tomb” Typically starting with Palm Sunday, Holy Week is a time for reflection and study – a time to look into the events leading to the death and resurrection of Jesus. A time to commemorate the Last Supper when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, on Maundy Thursday. The word “maundy” comes from the Latin word that means “commandment.” This is referring to John 13:34 where Jesus says, “A new commandment I give to

*you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”* In the time of Jesus, the washing of feet was a responsibility only for a servant, so it was shocking to the disciples when Jesus began to wash their feet. This demonstration of His great love and servant leadership is the example of how we should treat one another. In John 13:14, Jesus tells his disciples that this loving, servant attitude is expected of them as well: *“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”* In addition to the foot-washing and “new commandment,” Maundy Thursday recognises the Last Supper. Jesus blessed the bread and wine as a symbol of his body and blood, which He would sacrifice 5 the very next day. After this blessing, Jesus tells his disciples to *“do this in remembrance”* of him. Let’s reflect on these passages of Scripture and ask ourselves, are we loving others the way Jesus loves me? are we serving in the way that Jesus served? Do we keep a remembrance of what Jesus did for his followers?

Even though the death of Jesus was a horrific and sorrowful event, the Friday before Easter is appropriately called “Good” Friday because it is only through his sacrifice that we are given life – eternal life. Romans 4:25 tells us that Jesus “was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” So, while it is tragic that God’s only begotten Son was crucified that day, Good Friday deserves its name because we are now people capable of being saved with “the right to become children of God (John 1:12).” Good Friday is the perfect time to thank God for the





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sacrifice of Jesus. He gave his only Son so that we might live! Could there be any greater gift? Holy Saturday or Easter Eve is not talked about as much as the other days leading up to Easter. It is a day of rest and reflection before the commencement of the Sabbath and we mark that Sabbath with our Easter Vigil's, the lighting of the Pascal candle with that wonderful intonation of "the light of Christ" and we hear said or sung the exsultet.

Recognising the days leading up to Easter hopefully strengthens your heart and mind to fully appreciate the most important aspect of the holiday: The Resurrection!

For in the Resurrection of Jesus we find our hope of eternal life. This event in the life of the early disciples changed everything. Before the Resurrection, they were cowering behind closed doors – hiding out in fear—but after the Resurrection, their faith was renewed and strengthened. The Resurrection of Jesus was given to us as proof for the Gospel. Build your faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ just as the early church did. We have been celebrating the joy of the resurrection, his bursting from the tomb and his defeat of the powers of sin and death. During this time he appeared many times to his disciples telling them of the Kingdom of God.

So into May and on 21st we have the Festival of the Ascension, when our Saviour and Lord ascends to his Father in heaven to take his throne over all dominions and powers. And we wait with the disciples until the 31st of May when we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost and with the disciples receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and hear once again the Great Commission: -

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* Matthew 28:19-20

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I do hope that although we cannot enter our churches and worship that you will all have had some opportunity to celebrate the joys of Easter and look forward His ascension and to Pentecost and let us pray that after then we may once again offer our praises and thanksgiving in the house of the Lord.

Laurie Little

### **CANCELLED, CANCELLED AND CANCELLED**

Like so much of life at present so much of Cursillo has had to be cancelled.

Many Diocesan Cursillo's have had to cancel their planned weekends and the Cursillo Leaders workshops have been abandoned for 2020. The new dates for 2021 are: 19th – 21st March 2021 at Shallowford and 15th – 17th October 2021 at Shepherd's Dene, Riding Mill, Northumberland

The National Ultreya being organised by London and Southwark Cursillo's on 5 September is at this time still going ahead, a decision will be made in May as to whether it is cancelled.

Our planned Ultreya for 16 May to include our AGM and the Commissioning of our Spiritual and Lay Directors by Bishop Alan has had to be cancelled and we will be looking to the future, once we know when it is safe to do so, to set new dates. Hopefully our Day of Deeper Understanding in September will still be OK.

The Cursillo Connection – Easter 2020

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The Greater London Area Cursillo diary of events is looking like this:

### JULY

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July London Cursillo Linked Evening ULTREYA.** (Timings to be confirmed) at St. Katherine's, Neasden Lane, London NW10 1QB all are welcome to attend.

### AUGUST

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August Southwark Cursillo EVENING ULTREYA** at St Peter & Paul's Church, Church Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3BP at 7 00 pm.

### SEPTEMBER

**National GB Ultreya 2020 is on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and hosted jointly by London and Southwark at St Paul's Cathedral and Southwark Cathedral. See details on London or Southwark websites. All are welcome to attend.**

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September St Albans Cursillo DAY OF DEEPER UNDERSTANDING (DDU)** at the Focolare Centre, 69 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City AL8 6JG. BACC National Spiritual Director, Revd Stephen Bowring and the new BACC President Beth Roberts will both be attending. This is open to all our Cursillistas.

### OCTOBER

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October Joint Chichester & Southwark Cursillo Weekend** (Chichester #33) at Wychcroft Retreat Centre, Blechingley, Redhill, RH1 4NE Staff and pilgrims only. Please pray for the weekend.

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October Clausura Joint Chichester & Southwark Cursillo Weekend.** All are welcome to attend. 2.45 pm for 3 00 pm in the Wychcroft Chapel.

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October Southwark Cursillo ULTREYA** at All Saints Church Battersea Fields Prince of Wales Drive, Battersea, London SW11 4BU (Morning Ultreya time tbc)

### NOVEMBER

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November London Cursillo ULTREYA and AGM** at St Cyprian's, Glentworth Street, London NW1 6A. all are welcome to attend.