



CURSILLO SCHOOL GROUPS

Lesson Plan # 3

Directions: Have a member of the School Group read this and all members discuss as you go along. Stay on track.

HOW DOES ULTREYA FIT IN?

The story is told of a burglar apprehended in the act of breaking and entering. The arresting officer inquired "What are you doing here?" Unabashedly the man responded "Everyone has to be some place." That's the way it is with Ultreya. It fits in some place. Do we understand where?

Hopefully we have been faithful in attending Ultreya since our weekend. But DO we have a clear vision of its real purpose and function in the overall picture of the Cursillo movement? Etymologically ULTREYA is Spanish, is taken from two Latin words "ultra" and "ea" which together mean further or beyond. You might say it is something like the contemporary chant of a crowd at a football game "GO ... GO". Our word Ultreya originated in the language of pilgrimages of former ages. Bare footed and fasting often on bread and water alone, pilgrims' feet began to blister and their stomachs to growl. Often as not sleep and rest was kept to a minimum. Yet HOLINESS was the quest of the Christian pilgrim and holiness came no more easily then than it does now. Always holiness is associated with the Cross. So, weary pilgrims chanted from time to time, when others began to lag behind ULTREYA ... ULTREYA ... FORWARD ... ONWARD. Life was a journey of faith and if your belief was strong, no price was too high to pay in order to share in the holiness of Jesus.

For us, today, ULTREYA signifies that as authentic Cursillistas we never say "enough ... no more .. that's it." Whenever we gather it is to encourage each other to move further along the road. We are always searching for what Vatican II called "the universal call to holiness". In no way are we called simply to avoid sin. As Christians and Cursillistas, our baptismal calling is to become holy as our Big Brother Jesus was holy. Moreover, holiness is really a community process. No one becomes holy alone. Of course this demands a knowledge of our goal and time to pursue it.

Some questions, then:

1. Do you honestly look forward to the Ultreya? Why? In an Ultreya small group sharing sessions, do you feel as much at home as you do in your friendship group? What advantage do you see in these Ultreya sharing groups?

2. For the most part, do you see those attending your Ultreya coming together to GET or GIVE? Explain your answer. Is there anything you can do about it?

The founders saw ULTREYA as a larger group but animated with the same spirit as one's friendship group reunion. The purpose of your friendship group is ultimately to grow together toward holiness of life and in that way to permeate the atmosphere with the spirit of Christ. This is to be accomplished in the group by mutual good example and encouragement, by telling our stories. In addition the founders saw Ultreya as a special force that would increase the faith, hope and love that inevitably leads to missionary activity. As each individual friendship group presupposes a plan of action as an essential part of coming together so does the Ultreya. Whence originate the dictum, TO HAVE NO PLAN IS TO PLAN TO DO NOTHING. For that reason Ultreya was conceived as part of an overall plan to change the environment by first changing self, and then turning new-found divine energy towards others by making new friends, by continuing to BE a friends and leading those friends to Christ. In time Ultreya became known as "the reunion of the group reunions".

Some questions:

- 1) In the Ultreya groupings do you find the focus of responses and questions themselves turned INWARD OR OUTWARD? Is the thrust mainly on me and my personal spiritual growth or on the needs of others, - the world around us as the authentic Cursillo means of growing closer to Christ our Brother?
- 2) Does your Ultreya help those attending to focus on and to penetrate the environment? How? Do you believe this penetration is the main purpose of both grouping and the Cursillo itself? If the main thrust of your present Ultreyas seems to be social, how can you help to turn things around from mere socializing to social action?

Eventually our diocesan Cursillo plans to zero in on the education environment throughout the diocese. It might be well to do some advance thinking about how we can link together when the time arrives. In the Spanish edition LOS TRES DIAS DEL CURSILLO on p. 608 the statement is made "*We need open Christian communities - we need contact with other apostolic groups to give life to our own little community.*" The book goes on to say that another purpose of Ultreya is to develop a deeper Christian formation in members as well as an education in our faith to help members in their conversion process. This is how we develop a truly committed and adult laity. A summary states: "*Ultreya exists to assist in developing persons and groups who can truly and practically influence the Christianization of the environment*" (p. 610).

More questions for discussion:



- 1) What does the phrase "contact with other apostolic groups" say to you? Is it reinforcing the original purpose of Ultreya sharing by implying that your friendship group and mine need each other to go beyond the inevitable limitations of any group? Perhaps it says more than that to you, if so what?
- 2) LOS TRES DIAS refers to developing a deeper Christian formation - "truly and deeply committed laity". That in mind, what is the purpose of the witness talk? Have the witness talks you have heard or given focused on personal holiness or spiritual preferences or on penetration of the atmosphere? What should be their focus? Do you feel comfortable revealing yourself and your apostolic successes and failures?

(It might be well if, now that you hopefully have a clearer notion of what it ought to contain that you sit down and write a talk when you have some free time. It's been said that anyone really living the Cursillo should be prepared at any time to give witness talk ... to share the faith, hope and love that draws them Ultreya, onward!!)

ULTREYA says LOS TRES DIAS (p. 610) "*ought to take place weekly as group reunions do*". But the text has a noteworthy addition: "Even though this interval is not necessary for the life of the Ultreya it IS essential that community contacts be periodic and not too long between gatherings".

Final Questions:

- 1) Just what do you think IS essential for the life of the Ultreya? Why? What intervals do you think should divide Ultreyas in your area? A week? Two weeks? A month? State your reasons to the group.