

OxonFourth



The magazine of
OXFORD ANGLICAN
CURSILLO

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WELCOME TO EDITION TWO OF OXONFOURTH

A word from the editor...

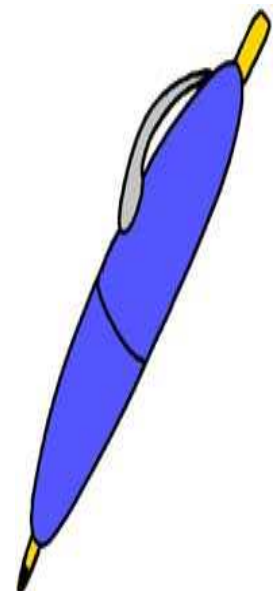
It's hard to imagine that nearly a year has flown by since the first edition of OxonFourth, and yet in that time so much has happened, and we can now look forward to Oxford Cursillo #1 in April. As befits the season of Advent, in this edition of OxonFourth, the focus is very much on expectation and preparation.

The decision to launch Cursillo in a diocese is not taken lightly. One of the pillars upon which this decision is taken is the existence of an active Fourth Day. Ultreyas and Reunion Groups lie at the heart of the Fourth Day, building upon our individual lives of prayer, study and action. In Oxford Diocese we have been holding quarterly ultreyas for two years, and there are now regular reunion groups in all four Episcopal areas. This provides the solid foundation upon which we are now preparing for our first Cursillo weekend, and it is into this community that we will welcome our first home-grown cursillistas in April and October.

A magazine like this forms part of the cement that keeps us in touch with each other, and as we go to press, the new internet web page is being launched, providing an opportunity for us to reach out into the world, and for people to find out more about us.

The editor welcomes articles and contributions for future editions of OxonFourth.... perhaps a reflection on your own Cursillo experience, or maybe a highlight in your life of prayer, study and action. It could be a poem or a book review, or perhaps something which shows how Cursillo supports the life of your church.

Please send your contributions to:
OxonFourth, 9 The Grange, Old Windsor, Berkshire SL4 2PS
or email them to
OxfordCursillo@yahoo.co.uk



A message from the Diocesan Spiritual Director Revd Canon Dr Marilyn Parry

When I was a rather younger and even busier Christian, a kind friend said to me that there was more to being a good follower of Jesus than rushing about doing good. She commended an old prayer to me and suggested that I use it when I was working hardest for the Gospel. This is it:



***Lord, temper with tranquillity
our manifold activity
that we may do our work for thee
with very great simplicity. Amen.***

We work to get ourselves, our families and everything else ready for big events (like Christmas or Oxford #1), and our lives get very complicated. But the truth is that our God is best served in simplicity and tranquillity. The Lord is honoured by lives that show Christ's peace and love.

So how does this happen? Well, the first step is prayer, prayer that we might become Christ's peace. That starts by becoming still in the presence of God. I find that becoming quiet like this is harder to do than it sounds. Stray thoughts come into my head and the next thing you know, I've forgotten that I'm trying to pray. So, if we are trying to know God's peace, we need to allow our business to seep away as we pray. Some people find that they can do this best by repeating a short prayer over and over until they get lost in God. The little prayer above is one that might be used, another is the Lord's Prayer. Or you might say "Jesus, let me be your peace." Whatever you use, the focus is God, and as you continue prayerfully, a time will come when you are at peace, however briefly. Once you have touched this place, you will begin to know more deeply how to do your work for Christ the way he wants it done. It is my prayer that Oxford #1 may be a tranquil and simple work for God, however great the activity that surrounds its advent.

Ultreya!

Marilyn

A message from the Steering Group Leader Matthew Caminer



Some years ago, Bishop Michael Marshall said *“When an organisation starts to call itself a movement then it’s generally stopped moving altogether!”* There is always a temptation to be nostalgic and to settle for inertia: I am at least as guilty of that as everyone else.

The reality of launching Cursillo in Oxford Diocese is that the Cold Ash Centre where we are holding our weekends presents all sorts of logistical challenges. Even before we start, therefore, we will be making small modifications to the model that we are receiving as a gift from Coventry. So, while it is true that we have a vibrant heritage and a time-tested model upon which to build, we will always seek to remain dynamic so that we may ensure that we always meet the needs of the diocese and of the congregations within it.

We are immensely privileged to be working in partnership with Coventry Cursillo as we prepare for Oxford Cursillo #1. On behalf of the Steering Group, many thanks to our friends in Coventry, and to everyone who is helping to turn the dreams and prayers into reality. Now that’s the sort of thing to praise God about and be very grateful for, but I’m going to startle you by taking one layer off the onion skin to see what lies below.

How does ‘next April’ sound to you? A long time? But if I change that to **20 weeks**, does that seem a little closer? That’s the reality of how little time there is to do a great deal, whether continuing to build our Fourth Day, working with the Weekend team to make sure that everything’s in place, or selecting individuals to participate in that weekend. So let’s get motivated for Oxford Cursillo #1 because Christ **is** counting on you.

Ultreya!

Matthew

Let's change the world for Christ!

Did you know... *'The goal of the Cursillo Movement is to change the world for Christ'*? Yes, of course you know – it's in all the literature, and you've been hearing this from the beginning of your involvement with Cursillo, I'm sure.

I am constantly amazed by the Eucharistic prayer which says *'We thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you'*. To think that our God can use us – cracked pots as we are – to bring others to a knowledge of his Son makes me awe-struck, but also propels me into action. Through Cursillo, we have been given a marvellous tool to change the world for Christ, by inviting into Cursillo those people we know who are able to influence their environments, who will be renewed by the love-filled weekend, and energised to use their gifts and talents to spread the good news of Jesus.

To enable us to do this, we need to use the things which Cursillo gives us to maintain our Life in Grace; we need contact with Christ through prayer, Scripture, the sacraments and spiritual direction and contact with our Christian brothers and sisters – in other words, our Group Reunions and Ultreyas. This part of Cursillo will help you decide whether you want to be 'involved' or 'committed'. (If you haven't heard my definition of the difference, ask me next time you see me!).

One of the prayers in a Celtic Eucharist I took part in recently said: *'Take us out to live as changed people, because we have shared the Living Bread and cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us'*.

My Cursillo cross is inscribed: *Christ is Counting on You*. The response to that awesome responsibility is: *And I on Him*. So let's not be timid about the task ahead of us – with believing, expectant prayer and faith in a great God, we can indeed 'change the world for Christ'.

Hope to see you soon – in the meantime Ultreya!

Jenny Lowery

Jenny is the President of BACC, the British Anglican Cursillo Council, with which Oxford Anglican Cursillo is affiliated. Without the endorsement and support of BACC, as well as the sponsorship of the Senior Staff of the Diocese, it would not have been possible for Cursillo to be launched in the Diocese of Oxford. The Steering Group is endlessly grateful for the support it receives from BACC.



Oxford #1 is just round the corner. Welcome to Terry Tipple from Coventry Cursillo, our very first Lay Rector...



Hola! to you all. (I feel that Cursillo ought to have a good Spanish greeting, as well as finishing!)

Following Keith Hayward's message from Coventry Cursillo in OxonFourth 1, I am pleased to be able to introduce myself as the Lay Rector for Oxford #1. I have met quite a few of you at the Ultreyas at Diocesan Church House and at Princes Risborough, but for those who weren't there, let me tell you briefly about me. My name is Terry Tipple, I am married to Neil (who will be my Rector's Gopher, and so will have to do all that I ask!!). We worship at St Peter's, Hillfields, an inner city church in Coventry. I made my Cursillo in 1997, have staffed

several times, including once at Worcester #2 and once as Lay Rector for Coventry.

I have very much enjoyed your Ultreyas, and I was especially pleased to meet some of the Cursillistas in the Oxford diocese. It will be a pleasure to work with you over these next few months, and I am sure that we will be able to put together a wonderful Cursillo weekend. I have been able to visit Cold Ash Centre, where the weekend will be held. I wasn't too sure what to expect, but it surpassed everything I could have hoped for. As we were walking round, I could imagine the Cursillo weekend happening – Eucharists in the chapel, the rollos in one lecture room and the more relaxed gatherings in the other. It felt like what it is, a house of prayer, and I am sure that God will bless everyone on the first Cursillo weekend there.

But before we get that far, there is a lot to think about and to do. And this is where you all come in. I know that you are already praying for the weekend, so I would just ask you to target your prayers as the months go on. The Steering Group and I will need wisdom as we take the information and timetables from Coventry and tailor them to Oxford. This needs to be done before Christmas, as I would like to have the staff selected by the end of January. We also have to decide what 'things' we need to run the first weekend. I am very conscious that Coventry Cursillo has a vast amount of 'stuff' that has grown over the years, so I have to think about what is really necessary for the weekend. I'm sure that Oxford will gain 'stuff' as well, but it needn't all be there to begin with. Please

would you pray for wisdom for us as we make these decisions? And please be ready to respond to requests for help of different kinds. We will let you know the next prayer needs in due course.

One of the things that we do need to be able to run a valuable first weekend is participants! Anyone who has been on a Cursillo weekend and has carried on into the Fourth Day, knows how much strength and encouragement we can get from that time of being with God, and then from each other as we continue on our path. After my weekend, I could see the people at church who needed that experience, and I was desperate to get them to go on a Cursillo weekend. But Cursillo is not for everyone, and not everyone is right for Cursillo! As you look at the people you know, please pray that God will show you the right one to invite onto Oxford #1. We need people who will continue in the Cursillo way, who will help to build up the Fourth Day in the diocese, and above all, people who are living as children of God and disciples of Christ. And it is you, the Cursillistas of the Oxford Diocese, who have to encourage and pray for these people to make their Cursillo, and you who will have to take on the responsibility of praying for them, spending time with them, and loving them as their sponsor. It is you who will have to introduce them to Group Reunion and Ultreya after their weekend. And it is you who will gain so much in seeing God working in them, and them working for God.

I look forward to meeting you before Oxford #1. And of course I am praying for the Diocese of Oxford, for Cursillo here, and for all of you. May you know God's love for you as you work to present that love to others through Cursillo.

Can I volunteer to serve on the team for Oxford Cursillo #1?

Who are we looking for? We are especially interested in people who show commitment to Cursillo, for instance through membership of Reunion Groups, attendance at Ultreyas or other Fourth Day activities.

Do I need experience? In a word No! Training will be given as we work alongside our more experienced friends from Coventry Cursillo. That does mean that you would need to be able to commit yourself to attending both training days, on Saturdays 12th March and Saturday 9th April. You would also need to be able to commit yourself to arrive by mid morning on the Thursday of the weekend, 21st April

Want to be considered? Please contact a member of the Steering Group as soon as possible. Even if we can't find room for you on the team, there are bound to be other ways you can help make Oxford #1 a success.

NOTES FROM THE DIARY

- **September**

Congratulations to **Liz Dowding** and **Shane Griffiths**, both Cursillistas, who were ordained deacon and priest respectively in September.

- **November**

Best wishes and welcome to three new Cursillistas who have been on Cursillo weekends in recent weeks.... **Bishop Colin**, who went to Ripon and Leeds, **Hazel Markham** and **Daphne Stallwood** who went to Coventry, where they will have bumped into **Kevin Beer** who was serving on the team.

- **December**

Good luck to **Marilyn Parry** and **Andrew Garrett** who are serving on the team at Southwell Cursillo in December.

WWW...WWW...WWW...WWW...WWW...WWW...WWW...

Yes, we've hit the world wide web, and now people all over the world can find out all about Oxford Anglican Cursillo, check dates for weekends and ultreyas, post prayers and messages, link across to other related web sites and much, much more. The web address is **www.oxfordcursillo.co.uk**

There are a few tweaks and formatting improvements on my to-do list, but it is good enough to do the job without waiting any longer. Thanks go to Mark Lumley of Chichester Cursillo for his advice and to York Cursillo whose website provided the essential "DNA" HTML for us. Thanks also to Phil Hind & the Oxford Diocese for hosting us!



Kevin Beer
Web Servant

Editor's note: Kevin is being far too modest. He's done a superb job, and we are all very grateful to him for bringing Oxford Cursillo into the Cyber age.

Pre-Weekend: Sponsoring participants



Cursillo weekends happen because there are people to go on them: we don't select individuals simply so that weekends can take place. So why *do* people go on a Cursillo weekend? After all, whatever our recollections of our own weekend, it's been said often enough that a Cursillo weekend is a means to an end and not an end in itself.

Let's start with the Cursillo literature, which talks of selecting leaders and identifying environments. In short, we invite people to go on a Cursillo weekend because we believe that by doing so it provides the time and space for God to touch them in a way that will help them to move forward in their life of prayer, study and action. When Cursillo talks of leaders it means people who will influence those around them; and when it talks of environments, it means where we are, in our homes, at work, in our congregations... wherever.

So when does the process start? NOW!

And how does the process start? WITH PRAYER!

Only then do we start thinking about how to raise the idea of going on a Cursillo weekend with specific individuals. Now some people ask how we should explain what happens on a Cursillo weekend? After all, the work of the Holy Spirit cannot adequately be put into words. In any case, perhaps it's a few years since you went on your own weekend and the details may be a bit hazy. Even if you remember every moment, each activity, warts and all, maybe you don't know which bits to highlight. The golden rule is that there are no secrets in Cursillo, so be open and honest, and just share whatever will help them to understand what a Cursillo weekend is all about, what it's for, what is expected of them, and how Cursillo will support them afterwards. Better still, invite them to your Reunion Group or to an Ultreya so that they may see Cursillo in action.

I expect the remaining places on Oxford #1 to go quickly. So the rest is over to you. Just let me know if you need further information, leaflets, application forms and sponsorship guidelines. And above all, to paraphrase that old Post Office chestnut, *“Pray Early for Cursillo”!*

Andrew Garrett (Registrar and Bookings Secretary)
Telephone 01865 739943 *or* e-mail: am_garrett_oxford@yahoo.co.uk

Fourth Day: News from the Reunion Groups

Reunion Groups lie at the heart of Cursillo, and as you've already read, we now have reunion groups actively meeting in all four episcopal areas of the Diocese. Let's start by hearing about the oldest established group, the **Goring/Streatley Reunion Group**. Wendy Middleton writes:

"I notice from a quick check in an old diary that we have been meeting regularly for just over 10 years now! Around 12 Cursillistas from a variety of Cursillos in the UK and abroad have been members of this group, although with several now moved away, we are quite a small gathering on the first Thursday evening of each month. Please do come and join us if you would like to (telephone 01491 875435 first to check the meeting has not been moved). It is a time of fellowship and sharing, and we support and encourage each other in our Christian lives. We find it valuable – which perhaps explains why we have been meeting for so long!"

On the other side of the Diocese and at the opposite end of the day is the **Old Windsor** reunion group. Miriam Caminer takes up the story. *"Five of us meet on Friday mornings before breakfast every two or three weeks. Because it is the same five people every time, we have developed a level of friendship and trust. Sharing the journey with others keeps me grounded in the truth of God in everyday life."*

Moving north to **Princes Risborough** is one of the two newest reunion groups. As Jill Iredale says: *"Three of us have been meeting once a month for just over a year. We are committed to meeting regularly and find our meetings invaluable. A second group which includes Weston Turville has just begun. Both groups are still really in their infancy but are starting to take shape slowly"*

And finally, in the 'capital' is the **Oxford** Reunion Group. Andrew Garrett explains: *"We've now been up and running for a year. Until about a month ago there were just two of us. Two is a minimum number for a reunion group and growth was the only option in town! In September we became three, and now we are about to become five. I have a feeling we may grow further in the next year so there may come a time when we split into an Oxford 1 and Oxford 2 group!"*

Not in a Reunion Group?

Contact any of the people mentioned on this page to find out how Reunion Groups work and how they can support your spiritual journey.

Fourth Day: September Ultreya at Princes Risborough

At the heart of every Ultreya is the Action Talk followed by the Gospel Response. Anne Beer from Old Windsor relives her moment in the spotlight.

After the Floating Reunion Groups which I always find enlightening and inspiring, it was my turn to give the Action Talk. I thought I'd be nervous speaking in front of such an impressive gathering, but I needn't have worried. Everyone was so friendly and I could feel their prayers giving me confidence.

I described my Godless youth, and one of the first indications of things to come. I was tending my pony in the stable one Christmas morning very early while it was still dark and quiet, and it suddenly struck me that Jesus was born somewhere just like this. For a moment I felt His presence there, not as a baby, but as Lord of the Universe. The next step was when the New English Bible was published. I bought a copy and began to read the Gospels.

I started going to church regularly after I'd got married and we moved to Old Windsor with the two boys. At a *Songs of Praise* service I introduced "O Sacred Head Surrounded" and said that if Jesus had gone through all that agony for me there was nothing I could refuse to do for Him. Having said that in public I felt obliged to volunteer for any church job they couldn't get anyone to do, but I didn't feel very enthusiastic!

But now, partly due to Cursillo, I learned to let go and let God, and I'm much happier and more committed.

The focus of Paul Fiske's Gospel Response was John 15:1-3 – We can do *nothing* without Jesus.



Anne is pictured fourth from the left at the Summer picnic held at Diocesan Church House

Dates for the diary...

Saturday 5^h February

Diocesan Ultreya, All Saint's Church Hall, Ascot

Oxford #1 Training Days

Saturday 12th March - Diocesan Church House

Saturday 9th April – venue to be advised

Thursday 21st to Sunday 24th April

Oxford Cursillo #1, Cold Ash Centre

Saturday 7th May

Diocesan Ultreya, Diocesan Church House

Saturday 9th July

Diocesan Ultreya, Checkendon Village Hall

Thursday 27th to Sunday 30th October

Oxford Cursillo #2, Cold Ash Centre

Saturday 5th November

Diocesan Ultreya, St Mary's Church Hall, Princes Risborough

All Ultreyas start at 11:00, with tea and coffee available from 10:30, and are followed by a bring and share lunch)

Cursillo is a movement of the Church providing a method by which Christians are empowered to grow through prayer, study and action, and enabled to share God's love with everyone.

OxonFourth is published by Oxford Anglican Cursillo

