



Address for BAC Council Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> November 2015

South St. Baptist Church, Exeter

On behalf of BAC I welcome all of you here today and especially to the new members of the council. Our thanks go to Exeter Cursillo and Roberta (the LD) in particular as well as Cursillistas in Truro for hosting this event today.

On behalf of you all I would like to thank Bishop Sarah for joining us today, and for the support and encouragement which she and her fellow Bishops in Exeter have given to Cursillo. Bishop Sarah, you are most welcome to join us for our full BACC meeting today.

I'm sure you will all be concerned to know that Roberta has had a bad fall and has been banned by her family, who have come from Fleet, from leaving the house. I know that you will remember her in your prayers.

God has called us to be leaders.

We have answered that call – we answered it when we first accepted the invitation to join in a Cursillo activity, whether it was to an Ultreya meeting, a Group reunion, or to go on a weekend.

We have all responded and I thank God for all of you.

It's useful, from time to time to look at and consider the purpose of Cursillo in the Anglican Church – it is of course to make leaders.

The organised church is, as we all too painfully aware, desperately short of priests to be the cure of all souls and so many of them have more than one parish to look after. We the laity have to share our priests with several other parishes and the need for lay people to work hand in hand with the clergy is huge. I know that many, perhaps all of you here, have roles within your own churches, according to your God-given strengths, and may be readers, pastoral assistants and other roles within your own churches and I thank God that you do. But we are here today because we believe that Cursillo has a vital role to play in building up leaders to

keep sending out the Gospel message of love and forgiveness to everyone. Cursillo is a 'Leader making' organisation- and in many ways we have become the victim of our own success! I expect that you will all know Cursillistas, who, through their experience of Cursillo not only on a weekend, but through the ongoing supportive method we have of sharing our prayers, our study -whatever that might be - and in our actions, through this sharing in Group Reunions at Ultreyas, by serving on team, and working in the wider community, have felt called to serve God in other ways and have gone on to become readers or priests. Hugh here is one example!

So, Cursillo has a much needed and vital role in supporting the church today – to make leaders and to encourage each other 'provoking one another to love and good deeds,' and 'not neglecting to meet together'. So a huge thank you to all of you for making the effort to come today. We know that the Cursillo method works and that it can help to build up the church.

As I said at the National Ultreya in Blackburn (what a great day it was!) 'Your Cursillo needs YOU' As a body representative of Cursillo nationally we are needed as its leaders to help provoke others to 'love and good deeds' and to make leaders, where God wants them to be. We have a big responsibility here and it is up to us to return to our Dioceses enthused and reinvigorated and to share this with our secretariats and the wider Cursillo community in the best way possible. There is much to be grateful for.

So let us not 'neglect to meet together' but join in our floating Group Reunions.

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You may recall from this morning that I began my talk with reminding you all of the purpose of Cursillo, that God has called us all to be leaders and that we have an empowering method which we would like to share with everyone.

We have had the privilege of having Hugh as our NSD for the last 2 1/2 years and he has been consistently provoking us to move Cursillo forward. You will remember his challenge to us to put the Cursillo method in every church within the next 5 years, which is of course much less now, but we have moved forward. This time last year, in response to a request in this Diocese from the Bishop, the Cursillo here, led by Roberta their LD, decided that Hugh's challenge was just what was needed. She shared the idea with the Bishop and it was met with much enthusiasm, support and encouragement. Roberta and I spent a happy evening 'brainstorming and drawing up an initial draft of a leaflet to go in every church in the Diocese – 'brought to you by Cursillo'. It has taken a whole year, with much to-ing and fro-ing of drafts, with comments and tweaks and contributions from many folk, but at last- here it is!

It is hoped that the inside – the Cursillo method pages- will be able to be used by any Diocese and the outside cover personalised with endorsements from your own Bishops, contact details and a first page which is eye-catching and pertinent to the Diocese. You are welcome to take these back into your own Dioceses.

You will recall that Cursillo can only operate with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop, so now it's over to you to make appointments to see your busy Bishops, and offer them the Cursillo method as a way of helping in mission within the Diocese. Offer to tell them about our shared vision and how Cursillo is about making leaders to work alongside their hard pressed priests to bring the Kingdom of God nearer, and how, we, the Cursillo community, want to help, sharing our method, which we know works so well, by offering this in every church in the Diocese via the means of this leaflet. And let's share the progress that we have made at the 'Catch the Vision' in May!

It would be wonderful if you could all take this information back to your own Dioceses, share it with your secretariats, and with your wider Cursillo community, through Ultreyas, whether local or Diocesan and to work out ways in which it could be distributed and shared – maybe you could share it at PCCs, Deanery Synods, or perhaps even at the Diocesan Synod. You know your own Cursillistas and their strengths best so please use them well.

Being a leader within Cursillo nationally also requires us to keep moving forward and finding new leaders, who for a 3 year period, will commit themselves to reviewing and helping others to not only build up Diocesan Cursillo groups, but to encourage each other on our spiritual journeys and to revive and revitalise flagging spirits. Hugh has, I think done all of these things in abundance and has given much time to individual Dioceses and to us nationally. Although his term of office does not end until the AGM next May this will be the last time that he will be with the full BAC council as, after our standing Committee meeting in February, he is setting off on a Pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostella, which sadly will not be finished in time for the 'Catch the Vision' Conference or the AGM. Hugh has been a great support to me and I know that he hopes that he will be able to support Cynthia Hebden in her new role as NSD after the AGM. Thank you Hugh for all that you have done and are continuing to do to move Cursillo forward and to keep us all enthused and positive.

The content of the Conference in May is still in the planning stages and Hugh has every intention of putting his mark on it. We are blessed with many gifted and committed priests in Cursillo and it is our intention to make the best use of them as possible so that the conference is a lively and interesting event. It will run from registration at 5pm on the Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May until after lunch on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Linda will be sending out the booking forms in the next week or so. All LDs, SDs and BACC reps are expected to attend. The closing date for applications will be 20<sup>th</sup> March and after this it will be offered to the wider Cursillo community. My sincere thanks go to Jacqui Johnson and her team from Leicester, who have undertaken the organisation of the more practical side of things and are doing a wonderful job. Please do book early – we hope to be able to open the conference up to the wider Cursillo community once all the places have been taken up by BAC council members – that's all of you!

Although I am only now half way through my term of office as President we do need to be looking ahead. The election for a President-elect should take place at the AGM, according to our constitution, so that they may shadow me for a full year before they take office in May 2017. Please can I ask that you prayerfully start consider who might take on this role? We will be seeking nominations after the Standing Committee meeting in February. There will be others on Standing Committee whose term of office will be coming to an end, so please be aware of these matters when you find emails from Linda on your computer.

I have been told that the mark of a good leader is delegation and involving other people - so I have tried to do this! I am extremely fortunate that I have so many willing and enthusiastic people to share in decision making, planning and carrying out assigned tasks and I thank God for all of them. I have already mentioned the arrangements for the CTV and Team Jacqui, and I am delighted to tell you that a Pilgrimage is being planned for July next year by Cursillistas in Canterbury. The team there have exciting venues to visit in and around Canterbury itself including a visit to St. Mildred's Minster, Augustine's Abbey and Thanet as well as Canterbury cathedral. It will be led by those in the know in Canterbury and based at Aylesford Priory. Please look out for alerts from Linda about his and look too for the booking forms to appear on the website.

You have already heard about the National Ultreya in York in September from Trevor – thank you York for taking this on and getting so many bookings in already. Well done! The response so far has been amazing. Thank you Trevor and all your team for taking on this responsibility for BACC.

The BAC Pages are finally out on the website, I am so sorry that it has taken much longer than I anticipated. I'm afraid articles went to the wrong email address and this delayed things considerably. Please, please make sure that it reaches as many of your Cursillistas as possible – a lot of hard work goes into producing it and I thank Jenny Neve who has continued to put it all together for BACC – it's a wonderful effort. Please do keep looking on the website for news, forthcoming dates and events and do please help to keep it up to date, it is a great resource.

It would be good for the Standing Committee to have proper overview of the health of the Cursillo community nationally and despite best efforts to do this, it has not been entirely successful. Please could I ask that if you are sent a short 'questionnaire' type form that you fill it in and return it to your Area Rep and also to me? This

overview would help us in the planning of future events, and in knowing how BAC might be able to help strengthen Cursillo.

At our February meeting your Standing Committee will be looking at the gifting process, how it operates (or not) and how it might be updated within the terms of the Cursillo licence. If there is anything else that you think BAC should be looking at, please do let me know in good time. We will also of course be making final plans for the CTV.

However what BAC needs of you is that you feel able to go back to your Dioceses enthused with all that is going on and full of ideas for planning ahead on how to share our 'tried and tested' ('tried and true' as my American sister-in-law would say) method with everyone. You are needed to ask of your own Cursillos how this may be achieved so that when we come back together for our conference in May we will be able to share developments and ideas of sharing our method with everyone, of the progress you have made in your own Diocese with developing and sharing the leaflet in your own Diocese and, I hope and pray, of the progress that we are making! The best way of thanking Hugh for all that he has done for Cursillo nationally is to be able to say that we are making much progress with this so that his vision may become a reality and bear much fruit in making apostles for Christ.

So I end with thanking all of you for your commitment, your patience and all your hard work in your own Dioceses and in your contribution to BAC council as well, especially if this is your last meeting on the council.

May we end with the prayer of thanksgiving which we say at the end of every Group reunion?

We give you thanks Almighty God for all the benefits you have given us, you who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen

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