

Chronology and Genesis of the Charism of Cursillos in Christianity

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Prayer and presentation...

TO TALK ABOUT THE CHRONOLOGY AND GENESIS OF THE CHARISM OF CURSILLOS IN CRISTIANITY IN 20 MINUTES, IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE, BECAUSE WE COULD SPEND A WHOLE WEEKEND TALKING ABOUT THIS TOPIC AND WE WOULD NOT FINISH. BUT ANYWAY, I WILL TRY TO BE OBEDIENT AND ASK GOD THAT, WHEN I TRY TO GIVE YOU SO MUCH IN SUCH A SHORT TIME, I WILL NOT CONFUSE YOU TOO MUCH.

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE ORIGIN OF THIS CHARISM OF CURSILLOS IN CRISTIANITY, IT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO STUDY THE ORIGIN OF THE MENTALITY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS CREATING IN EDUARDO BONNIN AGUILO, SO THAT HE WOULD UNDERSTAND THE CHARISM HE WAS RECEIVING.

THIS ORIGIN OF EDUARDO'S MENTALITY, HAS ITS BEGINNINGS DURING A TIME OF WARS, THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN, BETWEEN 1936-1939, AND THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR THAT LASTED FROM 1939-1945. DURING THIS TIME, CATHOLICISM SUFFERED MANY PERSECUTIONS AND THE CATHOLIC FAMILIES OF MALLORCA, CONSCIOUS OR NOT, SUFFERED A SOCIAL ISOLATION AND A LOT OF DISCRIMINATION FOR HAVING "XUETAS" SURNAMES, THAT IS TO SAY, DESCENDANTS OF A PART OF THE MALLORCAN JEWS, CONVERTS TO CHRISTIANITY. THESE FAMILIES, THEY ONLY HAD CONTACT WITH ENVIRONMENTS RELATED TO THEIR FAMILIES, AND TO THEIR BUSINESSES. FRANCISCO FORTEZA TELLS US IN THE BOOK "*HISTORY AND MEMORY OF CURSILLO*".

TO ONE OF THESE CATHOLIC FAMILIES OF MALLORCA, BELONGS EDUARDO BONNIN AGUILO, WHO WAS BORN ON MAY 4, 1917 IN PALMA DE MALLORCA, AND WAS ONE OF THE 10 CHILDREN (3 men and 7 women) OF DON FERNANDO BONNIN PINA AND DONA MERCEDES AGUILO CORTEZA. THIS FAMILY WAS DEDICATED TO THE COMMERCE AND EXPORTATION OF GRAINS AND NUTS, AND THEY CARED A LOT ABOUT THE EDUCATION OF THEIR 10 CHILDREN.

IN FACT, EDUARDO'S OWN EDUCATION WAS WITH THE AUGUSTINIAN FATHERS AND AT LA SALLE SCHOOL IN PALMA. AND, ABOVE ALL, WITH TEACHERS THAT HIS PARENTS HIRED TO GIVE THEM CLASSES AT HOME. IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT HIS TEACHING WAS IN LINE WITH THE THINKING OF THE CHURCH.

FROM THE FIRST DAYS, HIS MOTHER AND HIS GRANDFATHER JORGE, TOOK CARE TO INSTILL IN HIM THE CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALS: THE LOVE OF GOD AND THE IMPORTANCE OF "MAKING THE WAY", IN COMPANY. **AND THIS IDEA BECAME THE MAIN GUIDE IN EDUARDO'S LIFE, THE FIRST LITTLE FLAG THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT RAISED IN EDUARDO'S MIND ABOUT HIS CHARISM.**

THEN EDUARDO ARRIVED AT HIS YOUTH, NOT ONLY FULL OF "CHRISTIAN SPIRIT", BUT ALSO WITH A NONCONFORMIST RESTLESSNESS, BECAUSE HE **CONSIDERED THAT "THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST WAS PRESENTED IN AN INSIPID WAY", THAT IS TO SAY, BLAND.** WITH THIS RESTLESSNESS, HE TRIED TO KNOW THE THOUGHT OF ALL THE WRITERS WHO WERE ON THE "CREST OF THE WAVE" OF THE

SPIRITUAL, DEEPENING IN THE STUDY OF THE PERSON AND FRIENDSHIP. **ANOTHER LITTLE FLAG THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT PLANTED IN EDUARDO'S MIND.**

DUE TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR, EDUARDO JOINS THE MILITARY SERVICE WHEN HE IS ONLY 20 YEARS OLD, AND THE COINCIDENCE OF THIS EVENT WITH THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, FORCES HIM TO STAY IN THE BARRACKS FOR ALMOST NINE YEARS.

IN THIS BARRACKS, HE MET YOUNG PEOPLE WHO SHARED, IN A VERY COMMON AND NATURAL WAY, THEIR ADVENTURES IN THE BROTHELS AND ALL THE THINGS, THAT WERE NOT VERY GOOD, THAT THEY DID IN THEIR FREE TIME. IN OTHER WORDS, OF "OTHER" VALUES, VERY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE HE HAD BEEN TAUGHT AND HAD SEEN AMONG THE FRIENDS OF HIS YOUTH. AND HE ASKED HIMSELF, "*ARE THESE PEOPLE WEIGHED DOWN BY THE LAW OR DO THEY SIMPLY IGNORE IT?*" CONCLUDING THAT THEY HAD NO IDEA OF WHAT CHRISTIANITY WAS, AND **IN THIS WAY, ANOTHER GUIDE, ANOTHER LITTLE FLAG IN THE MIND, LIFE AND WORK OF EDUARDO.**

STARTING FROM THIS EXPERIENCE IN THE MILITARY SERVICE, AND AFTER THE SPEECH OF POPE PIUS XII, WHICH PROVIDENTIALLY CAME INTO EDWARD'S HANDS, THREE PRINCIPLES BECAME THE BASIC GUIDELINES OF HIS THINKING, OF HIS MENTALITY: **THE LOVE OF GOD, FRIENDSHIP AND THE PERSON, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO WERE FAR FROM GOD.**

SINCE THEN, HE BEGAN TO DEDICATE HIS WHOLE LIFE TO DEVELOP THE CONJUNCTION OF THESE PRINCIPLES, SHAPING THE CONCLUSIONS IN A WORK TO WHICH HE GAVE LIFE WITH THE TITLE OF "**THE STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT**".

THIS "*STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT*" BECOMES THE "**BIRTH CERTIFICATE**" OF WHAT WOULD BECOME KNOWN AS THE CURSILLO MOVEMENT.

AFTER ATTENDING THE SECOND CURSILLO FOR PILGRIMS, AT THE SANCTUARY OF THE PATRON SAINT OF MALLORCA, OUR LADY OF LLUC, WHICH WAS HELD IN PREPARATION FOR THE PILGRIMAGE TO SANTIAGO IN 1948, AND PRECISELY DURING THE HOLY WEEK OF 1943, EDUARDO CONSIDERED THAT THE STRUCTURE OF THIS CURSILLO, ALTHOUGH WITH SOME SUBSTANTIAL ADJUSTMENTS, COULD BE USEFUL, TO GIVE REAL LIFE TO THE PRINCIPLES CONTEMPLATED IN THE "STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENT". THE DESIRE THAT THIS MENTALITY HAD CAUSED HIM WAS FULFILLED!

WITH THESE IDEAS AND WITH THE MAJORITY SUPPORT OF THE CATHOLIC ACTION CENTER OF FELANITX, THE FIRST CURSILLO IN HISTORY WAS ORGANIZED AND HELD ON AUGUST 20, 1944 IN A VILLA - "MAR I PINS" - IN CALA FIGUERA (SANTANYI), WITH EDUARDO AS RECTOR, ACCOMPANIED BY JOSÉ FERRAGUT AND JAIME RIUTORT AS LEADERS.

WITH THIS MENTALITY, THE CURSILLO MOVEMENT WAS BORN BY THE GRACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WITH THE SAME LESSON OUTLINES, OR ROLLOS, USED IN CALA FIGUERA, WITH SOME MINIMAL CHANGES, 4 MORE CURSILLOS WERE GIVEN BETWEEN 1945 AND 1948, AND ALL THE OTHER CURSILLOS THAT HAVE BEEN CELEBRATED UNTIL TODAY, INCLUDING THE CURSILLO CELEBRATED IN SAN HONORATO ON JANUARY 7, 1949, WHICH, AFTER THE "EUPHORIA" OF THE PILGRIMAGE TO SANTIAGO, IT WAS DECIDED TO NUMBER IT, OFFICIALLY, AS CURSILLO NUMBER 1.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ADD THAT THE DAY WE BURIED EDUARDO BONNÍN AGUILÓ, IN THE CHAPEL OF THE CAPUCHINS IN PALMA DE MALLORCA, ON FEBRUARY 9, 2008, ON HIS TOMBSTONE WAS WRITTEN:

EDUARDO BONNÍN AGUILÓ

MAY 4, 1917 - FEBRUARY 6, 2008

FOUNDER OF CURSILLOS IN CHRISTIANITY

WHO HE SAID HE WAS AN

"APPRENTICE CHRISTIAN"

HE DIED ON FEBRUARY 6, WHICH WAS ALSO ASH DAY. AND THIS IS VERY MUCH RELATED TO THAT SECOND CURSILLO OF THE ADVANCED THAT EDUARDO LIVED IN OUR LADY OF LLUC, ALSO ON ASH DAY. AND IT ALSO DESCRIBES PERFECTLY THE HUMILITY AND SIMPLICITY OF THIS MAN OF GOD.

HIS REMAINS NOW REST IN THE ATRIUM OF THE CHAPEL OF THE CAPUCHINS, IN A VERY SIMPLE WAY. THIS WAS ALSO VERY SIGNIFICANT FOR EDUARDO'S LIFE, BECAUSE THIS CHAPEL WAS THE CHAPEL OF THE PRISON WHERE HE WENT TO VISIT THE PRISONERS EVERY WEEK, AND IT WAS ALSO WHERE HE ACCOMPANIED THOSE TWO MEN, WHO HAD BEEN CONDEMNED TO DEATH, UNTIL THEIR LAST MOMENTS.

AND ANOTHER VERY IMPORTANT POINT THAT WE NEED TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT THE DATE OF HIS DEATH WAS ALSO THE 68TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SPEECH GIVEN BY POPE PIUS XII, ON FEBRUARY 6, 1940, TO THE PARISH PRIESTS AND LENTEN PRIESTS OF ROME, WHERE THE HOLY FATHER URGED THEM TO LOOK FOR "NEW" WAYS, DIFFERENT FROM THE USUAL ONES, SO THAT EVERYONE, BUT ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO WERE FAR AWAY, WOULD KNOW THE LOVE OF GOD.

I WANTED TO SHARE THESE FACTS WITH YOU, BECAUSE THEY WERE VERY PROVIDENTIAL, AND HAD A GREAT MEANING, IN RELATION TO THIS "APPRENTICE CHRISTIAN", AND TO THE BEGINNING OF THIS FOUNDATIONAL CHARISM OF CURSILLOS IN CRISTIANITY.

THE CHARISM RECEIVED BY EDUARD BONNIN AGUILO

Well, having already talked about how this charism that Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló received originated, now let's talk about the charism that Eduardo received and the friends that accompanied him.

But as you can well imagine, to fully explain and understand this Foundational Charism of Cursillos in Christianity, it is necessary to deepen in its Mentality, its Essence, its Purpose, its Strategy and its Methodology.

And this is precisely what is intended in a Cursillo de Cursillos. And this CDC, has the same duration as a regular Cursillo. It begins on Thursday afternoon and ends on Sunday afternoon, almost 72 hours!

Here we only have about 30 minutes to talk about this topic, and I've already eaten 15, so I'll try to synthesize as best as possible, so as not to confuse you too much.

1. The Foundational Charism of the CM, like every Foundational Charism, in order to be recognized by the Holy See, needs four different essential elements:

- a. **First, that this charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit** (and when we see the simplicity, the simplicity and the effectiveness of this charism to transmit the love and friendship of God in Christ Jesus to the person, we can only admire that it is really a great gift of the Holy Spirit. And in the same way, the Holy See has seen it).
- b. **Second, that it was deposited in a person or group** (looking at the true history of the beginnings of this movement, we can easily see how it was transmitted to a group of lay people, led by a young man named **Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló**).
- c. **Third, that it was a gift, for the good of the people of God** (seeing how it spread so rapidly throughout the five continents, one can easily confirm that this Charism was indeed given for the good of the Church in the world).
- d. **And fourth, that all the above mentioned, has been recognized and accepted by the Holy Church** (Again, reviewing the history of its origins and its journey in the world, we can see how, from the beginning, was recognized and blessed, with both hands, by Bishop Juan Hervas himself, when he presented Eduardo what he had in his hands. He even assigned Fr. Sebastián Gaya as a consiliary. And when he returned from Rome, Fr. Juan Capo, as Vice-consiliary, to assist them. In this way, opening the doors of the Church to cursillos. Since then, all Popes, including Pope Francis, have blessed them. In short, this charism is fully recognized by the Holy See).

2. Already recognized by our church, and as we begin to study it, we can realize that it is a specific and unique Charism within the Universal Church.

- a. I personally had the privilege of attending the II World Meeting of Ecclesiastical Movements and New Communities in Rome in 2006, and there we realized that there were already more than 105 different charisms, recognized by the Holy See, and many more in the process of recognition.
- b. At that World Meeting, we also realized that they are all very different. And that, in addition, they all have the same value. So they exist, not to compare or compete with each other, but to complement each other, each one of us being faithful to the charism that we have freely chosen to serve the church in the world.
- c. So, studying the specific Charism of the CCM and the elements that constitute it, we can find that this charism has:
 1. **His own message:** "God loves you". God loves me, He loves you, He loves us all individually and unconditionally.
 2. **His own vision:** A true, new and dynamic vision. Because it is not the same to have to love God as to know that God loves me.

3. **His own approach:** A basic and total approach that goes to the root. And as we well know, the root of the Christian is grace.
4. **It also has its own awareness** - An awareness of the real reality in which we live, of a study of our environment; in its time and space.
5. **It also has its own proposal** - A concrete, attractive and possible proposal (i.e., the possibility of living and living together, what is fundamental for being a Christian).
6. **It also has its own Response** - A convinced, lucid and jubilant response to this possibility.
7. **It also has its own proclamation** - A living proclamation that tends to awaken in others, the newly discovered evidence.
8. **And finally, it has its own projection** - A projection exclusive to the person, the man or woman who has the capacity for conviction, decision and constancy. In this way, it favors the vision, outlines and refines the reality, not to start decisions, but to mature convictions.

Putting it all together

We could say what Eduardo himself told us during the World Ultreya of 2001 in Rome, that *"The Cursillo of Christianity is a Movement, which by means of its own method, tries and with the Grace of God achieves, that the realities of Christianity, become life in the Singularity, in the Originality and in the Creativity of each person, so that, discovering his potentials and accepting his limitations, he leads his freedom from his conviction, strengthens his will with his decision, and propitiates Friendship with his decision, in the Originality and Creativity of each person, so that, discovering their potential and accepting their limitations, they may lead their freedom from their conviction, strengthen their will with their decision, and promote Friendship by virtue of their constancy, in their daily individual and community life"*.

And in other words of Eduardo Bonnin himself, we could also say: *"The Cursillo Movement consists of proclaiming the best news of the best reality: that God in Christ loves us. Communicated by the best means which is Friendship, towards the best of each one, which is his being as a person, his capacity for Conviction and Constancy"*.

3. And what is the Purpose of the Foundational Charism?

- a. **May the alienated** (although not exclusively), encounter the love and friendship of God in Christ Jesus, through the three encounters of his methodology: **with oneself, with God** and with **others**. Of course, those who are far away are the people who live far away physically and/or by criteria from the evangelical truth of the love and friendship of God in Christ Jesus, from Christianity. And all this, for ignorance, for not being informed, or for being misinformed.

- b. **But that, through their own constant conversion**, these distant ones will leaven with that love and friendship of God in Christ Jesus, all the environments where they move 24 hours a day.
- c. **So that the candle that God lit in the center of his heart** continues to burn and illuminate all those in his mobile square meter, which accompanies him 24 hours a day.

This mobile metro cuadro, which is with us 24 hours a day, is the environment, which is referred to in the methodology of the Foundational Charism of Cursillos in Christianity.

Now let us look at some peculiar characteristics that express this Foundational Charism:

- a. **The Cursillo is a Course where they are completely isolated**, men with men and women with women - not in pairs, to focus the attention and sharpen the intention (and be careful, here there is no room for anyone who is not part of the candidates or the team).
- b. **It is a short course**, three days. But three days in a row. Not two-day cursillos, nor two-day cursillos on one weekend and two more on the following weekend. Three days in a row.
- c. **It is a precise Course:** Giving the precise aspects of Christianity in a concrete and concise manner.
- d. **It is a simple course**, lively, testimonial and immediate.
- e. **It is also an attractive course** that responds to the current and real needs of the person. That is to say that the members of the team are totally up to date with the gospel, the magisterium of the church and the current reality in which they are living.
- f. **An affordable course** that is accessible to everyone and for everyone. If leaders go first, it is only to accelerate the process.
- g. **A verifiable course**, based on the current reality of life.
- h. **And, in short**, let it be a self-discovery of a great personal treasure - Of that "Pearl", which everyone is looking for. Of that Spring of living Water, like that of "The Samaritan Woman".

4. Now, what is the strategy or the means to live the Foundational Charism?

- a. As I mentioned earlier, in the words of Eduardo Bonnín, "The Cursillo message of love and friendship of God in Christ Jesus, is projected by the Foundational Charism through the best vehicle which is **Friendship** to the best of each human being, which is his own Person".

- b. This Strategy of friendship is applied throughout its methodology - Precursillo, Cursillo and especially in the Postcursillo. And at all times and places, it needs to be a true friendship. When it is a friendship simply to bring them to a Cursillo or to obtain some particular benefit, it becomes a conditional friendship, which is definitely not true. It needs to be an unconditional friendship!
- c. Within this strategy, a constant experiential growth is needed in the three encounters - with oneself, with Christ and with others. These three encounters cannot be exclusive to the three days of the Cursillo. The beginning of these three encounters begins in the Precursillo itself, is deepened and presented as a possibility for Christian living in the Cursillo, and is confirmed and continues to grow in the Postcursillo.
- d. In this way, we can see that Charism is communicated and promoted by contagion, since it is a kerygmatic, experiential Charism, nothing more, nothing less!

5. Methodology of the Foundational Charism

- a. Precursillo
- b. Cursillo
- c. Postcursillo
- d. School of Leaders
- e. Secretariat
- f. Group Meeting
- g. Ultreya
- h. Our mobile square meter

6. In a nutshell

- a. The Foundational Charism of Cursillo is an attitude that is characterized by its:
 - 1. Optimism
 - 2. For your Joy
 - 3. For his audacity and tenacity
 - 4. By the constant decision of his conviction
 - 5. For valuing the values that are always worth
 - 6. And because he does everything from Christ, through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, in other words, he is totally Christ-centered!

7. Concluding

The Foundational Charism is a Charism of the Holy Spirit:

- a. Therefore, no one (neither you, nor I, nor any priest) can change or modify it.
- b. The responsibility of each CQI leader
 - 1. Study the Foundational Charism
 - 2. Living the Foundational Charism

3. To keep up to date with the reality in which we live, the gospel and our Faith, so that our message is always up to date without the need to remove or change any Idea, Point or Comma from the schemas of the rollos.

- c. And I consider that we could make a scheme composed of three words that basically synthesize the Essence, Purpose and Strategy of the Charism of Cursillos in Christianity:
1. Christ
 2. Person
 3. Friendship

But when I say Christ, it needs to be a Living, Normal and Near Christ, whom we can call a friend and talk to Him, just as we are doing now.

And when we say, “person”, we need to see him in his totality, with all his dignity and all the respect he deserves as a child of God, a brother of Christ and a living Temple of the Holy Spirit.

And about friendship, it needs to be a totally true and unconditional friendship, a friendship that is based on the love and friendship of God, in Christ Jesus.

And so in this way, we can make real these three elements of the Foundational Charism of Cursillos in Christianity:

Christ
Person
Friendship

De Colores
Juan Ruiz