

Spiritual Director's Manual

OF

The Reformed Church In America

CENTRAL IOWA CURSILLO

By

Pastor Rodney Veldhuzen

V. CHRIST SPEAKS TO THE CURSILLISTA

Purpose and Setting:

This is the morning meditation of the third day, Sunday. It opens the final phase of the Cursillo weekend, the insertion of the cursillista into the world. It is designed to begin the process of thinking about leaving the Cursillo environment and moving back into the world that has been left behind. This meditation needs to start building a bridge between what has been taking place on the weekend and what will be taking place when the candidates leave. Don't let this be a somber speech about the horrors that await. Focus on the need to be the salt and light in the places where the candidates are already at, such as work, home, etc, and the power that is available to help them in those situations. You will also want to mention the importance of a support community.

Outline:

- I. The Transfiguration
You can't stay on the mountain top forever
- II. Elijah and the 6,000 who remained loyal to God
The importance of a support community
- III. John 15
You never walk alone
Empowered by the Holy Spirit

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Additional information and help can be found in the Spiritual Director's Manual published by the Roman Catholic Cursillo community and should be available from the New York Life insurance office in Pella, better known as the Cursillo office.

INTRODUCTION

This Spiritual Director's Manual has been several years in the planning stage, and it is written in the interest of further defining the Cursillo movement as it moves into maturity within the Reformed tradition. As the Spiritual Director of the Central Iowa Reformed Church in America Cursillo, it has fallen on my shoulders to write this manual.

I offer this manual with the knowledge that it will not answer every question, but then again, that is not its purpose. It is written to guide you, the Spiritual Director, in the task that you have taken on. I know that with the help of the Lord Jesus Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit that you will find the direction that you need in your role as the Cursillo Spiritual Director.

In this age of inclusive language, I am afraid that I was not always able to use it, if that is offensive to you, I apologize. When I came to a place where a pronoun had to be used, I did not feel comfortable with a 'he/she' arrangement, so the male pronoun was used in an attempt to make this easier to read and to understand. In no way does that imply that female clergy are any less valuable than males. It is my prayer that you will be able to overlook such short comings, and use this document to help you grow in your role as a Cursillo Spiritual Director.

This manual is written from the perspective of the over all Spiritual Director. If you are an Assistant Spiritual Director it will give you the whole picture. If you are in the Palanca Chapel I would encourage you to take a look at the materials related to liturgy, but don't spend a lot of time there. For any Spiritual Director, Palanca, or Assistant in the Confrence Room, this will give

you a better understanding of what is required and expected of you in the context of the Reformed Church in America Cursillo program.

I would like to thank the Central Iowa RCA Cursillo Secretariat for taking the time to read the drafts of this document and for their suggestions and input into this document. In particular I want to thank Geneva Jansen for correcting my grammar in a number of places and helping in the preparation of this for it's final draft.

May God's blessing be with you, may the Holy Spirit empower you and may the Love of the Lord Jesus fill you to overflowing as you carry out your role as a Cursillo Spiritual Director.

Pastor Rodney Veldhuizen
1987

THE PASTOR AS A CURSILLO SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

The role of the Spiritual Director for a Cursillo weekend is one that will be new for many Pastors. In this context, the Pastor is not the leader, he does not have to make sure that everything is in place and running smoothly. In this context, the Pastor is one of the team, one of the players in the scheme of things, not the one who is totally responsible. This is not to denigrate the role of the Spiritual Director and the Assistant Spiritual Directors, just to put things in perspective. During the Cursillo weekend, and in the preparation prior to the weekend, the Lay Rector is the one who is in charge of seeing that things are running smoothly, it is the Rector who watches the clock and the schedule, it is the Rector who has the final word in all things. The Spiritual Director is one who is there to assist and support the Rector in the implementation of the 'Cursillo Tool'.

The primary role of the Spiritual Director, both in the preparation and during the weekend itself, is to help form the kind of genuine Christian community in which the diversity of gifts and their functioning can flourish. In other words, the role of the Spiritual Director is facilitating the formation of a 'miniature church'. That should be developed first among the team in the weeks prior to the weekend and then among the candidates over the course of the weekend. In order for this to happen, the Spiritual Director must work closely with the Rector in forming this community. The primary role of the Spiritual Director should be found in the model of a servant, a servant that is available to help where and when needed, a servant who does not seek the spotlight, a servant who is willing to serve others with true humility, realizing that he is part of a much larger movement

As the title, Spiritual Director pre-supposes, there will be times

when the Spiritual Director will need to exercise that directing role in the course of preparation as well as during the weekend itself. The Spiritual Directors set the spiritual climate for the team during their preparation and during the weekend itself (see Appendix #2). That climate is set by your attitude toward the preparation process, your leading in prayer and your knowledge, all within the context of your role as a servant. As Pastors, the Spiritual Directors also need to function as theologians during the preparation time, as well as over the course of the weekend. The Spiritual Director needs to check to see that the rollos are Biblically sound, that the principles taught are in agreement with the doctrine of the church, and that the theology of the weekend agrees with the doctrinal position of your denomination.

The Spiritual Director will also need to be ready to give direction to candidates during the course of the weekend, to help them make sense out of what is taking place in their life as the weekend progresses, to help them find confession for their sins, as well as finding forgiveness and giving help in finding ways to correct past wrongs. In order to facilitate this, there is a time set aside on Thursday night when each Spiritual Director will be asked to participate in a time of private confession or counseling. This follows the Service of Public Confession. You will be assigned to an area or a room; during this time if any desire to see a Pastor, that person will be directed to one of the Spiritual Directors. You are free to handle these private sessions as the situation and circumstances may dictate. A form of Absolution, prayer, or simply the practice of 'Active Listening' may be needed. Don't feel pressured to find a 'quick fix', if someone comes to you with a problem that requires a lot of time; Deal With It!! The Service of Public Confession will

continue and you will be able to rejoin the group at a later time. At other times during the weekend you may be called upon by one of the candidates to talk about something that concerns them. If you need it, space can be provided for you to have a private conversation. As one of the Spiritual Directors, you are needed to help direct the total Spiritual life of the weekend, as those needs arise, you will be expected to meet them as best you can. A good rule of thumb is: Never be afraid to ask for help!!

While you will have the time for 'individual appointments', most of your 'counseling' will be done during the breaks between Rollos, while walking from one building to another, while at meals or at times when you least expect it. I would encourage you as a Spiritual Director to never give the person you are talking to your full attention. Don't tune me out yet-give them one ear and give the other ear to God so that you will be able to discern what the need is in the life of the person you are listening to as the Spirit prompts you.

Also, it is the task of the Spiritual Director to wrap up the day, to give a summary of each day's talks and to bring the theme of each day into focus for the candidates. A good rule of thumb here is: Keep it short, humorous and to the point!

THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR AND THE CLERGY TALKS

There are five clergy talks over the course of the weekend and each talk, or Rollo, has a particular focus and purpose in the flow of the weekend. The outlines are purposely structured so that each part of the Cursillo weekend finds its proper place and its proper time. It is vital to the flow of the weekend that the Spiritual Directors remain within the boundaries of the talk they have been assigned.

To get as precise a definition as possible of what Cursillo is designed to do and be and how the talks fit into this process, I am going to quote the Roman Catholic Spiritual Director's Manual.

[Cursillo] "As a movement of the church which, with its own method, makes it possible to live what is fundamental for being Christian, in order to create nuclei of Christians who engage in leavening their environments with the Gospel, helping to discover and achieve their personal vocations with respect to the same. (i.e. "Structuring Christianity)." (Spiritual Director's Manual, 1976, Ultreya Press, p. 16)

What the Rollos are designed to be, are the fundamentals of the faith, not a full treatment of Christian doctrine. They are designed to move the candidate a little closer to the goal of realizing that they too can be a vital part of the church. So don't get all tied up in theological niceties (that means you can leave the 50 cent words at home in your text books), be practical.

We must also keep in mind that Cursillo is not a problem solving organization. It works to form a group of individuals who can transform the world and work with its problems, but Cursillo does not address these problems directly. Positively, Cursillo is designed to make it possible for the Candidate to live what is fundamental for being a Christian, that means, "Living the life of grace and spreading it." (Spiritual Director's Manual, p. 19)

Style of Talks

That word 'talk' is purposely chosen to avoid the academic terms like 'lecture' or 'lesson' as well as the religious connotations such as 'sermon'. These talks are humorously called Rollos a term used by Spanish students to refer to long and boring university lectures,

and if your Rollo is long, boring, or even a lecture, then you have missed the whole idea behind the talks. The talk, "the proclamation of the message should be done without arrogance and false humility (which would not be in the Gospel spirit), with conviction, simplicity, authenticity, and yet with a certain reserve in doing so before others. The talks are both doctrine and witness." (Spiritual Director's Manual, p. 24).

Length of the Talk

Each talk has a specific amount of time assigned to it. NEVER, I repeat, never, feel that you have the right to go over time just because you are a Pastor. That because you are an accomplished speaker you have the right to keep on going beyond the time allotted to you. The Clergy would do well to try and trim five minutes from their finished talk to be sure that it will not go over the time limit. The weekend is intense enough as it is, the break times are needed to keep the Candidates from becoming too weary and if a Pastor takes more time than is allotted, it puts a strain on the Rector to try and make up that time, as well as putting an added burden on the Candidates. I would repeat, never let the Spiritual Directors be the cause of a cramped schedule.

The Meditations:

There are five meditations over the course of the weekend that the Spiritual Director is responsible for; each has its own purpose and design and each one marks a transition in the movement of the weekend.

The thrust of each of these meditations should be to cause the candidates to begin some serious prayerful reflection. The emphasis

should be on the individual and their relationship to Jesus Christ. While these talks are not primarily 'content' oriented, each one seeks to raise some questions appropriate to the Candidates' personal growth.

The source of each meditation is the Word of God, and each meditation should include the reading of a passage or passages. The style should invite the candidates to hear the living word of God in a new and dynamic way at this time and so a 'sermonic' style is not very helpful. Rather a style of quiet sharing is what is expected. Gently prod the candidates to open themselves to what God would say to them on that day.

Schedule of Meditations

Thursday Evening: Know Yourself, Matthew 6:26-34; Matthew 6:32-33;
Luke 10:41-42.

The Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-32,

Friday Morning Chapel: The Three Glances of Christ

(men's weekend)--Mark 10:17-22

John 6:71

John 13:11

Matthew 26:50

(women's weekend)--Mark 10:38-42 (Mary and Martha)

choose 3 } John 4:7-26 (Woman at the well)

John 8:1-11 (Woman caught in adultery)

Matthew 9:20-22 (Woman Healed)

Matthew 15:12-31 (Woman's faith)

Saturday Morning Chapel: The Figure of Christ

John 1:26

Matthew 26:37

John 11:15 (God-Man)

Sunday Morning Chapel: Christ Speaks To The Cursillista

The Transfiguration

Elijah-6000 Know Me

John 15

[For further help in preparing the Meditations, see Appendix #1]

The first three meditations are part of the first phase of the Cursillo Weekend, the preparation or the Silent Retreat. The third meditation is a transitional one, moving from the Silent Retreat to the proclamation phase on Friday. The fourth and fifth meditations

set the theme for the Conversion and Insertion phases on Saturday and Sunday, respectively. What these meditations do is mark the movement of the weekend, they set the mood for the day and encourage the candidates to be open with God in that day, now in this way. Their style, 'conversational sharing' (to coin a phrase) should limit them to 5-10 minutes. They should be personal and reflect the pilgrimage of the Spiritual Director giving the meditation. In other words, there is no need to preach!

LITURGY IN THE CURSILLO MOVEMENT

Liturgy, or the celebration of the Lord's Supper as the community is one of those 'stretching' times for the candidates and therefore it must be done in an atmosphere of love and concern. As we come to the Lord's Table on the Cursillo weekend, let's not be bound by the culture or the tradition that we have come from; this is a time to experience Christian Community in a new and exciting way.

After careful and prayerful consideration, the Central Iowa Cursillo Secretariat has set up some guidelines for the serving of the Sacrament within the Cursillo community. First, a common cup is to be used, and to facilitate serving, two cups are provided as well as two pattens. Secondly, grape juice is the element that is served, rather than wine. Those who do not wish to partake of the cup by drinking, can partake 'symbolically' by holding the cup and raising it to their lips without drinking if they so desire.

The means of distribution can be varied from day to day, and to help vary this there are three ways that this has been done in the RCA Cursillo movement. 1) By continuous distribution-this is done with two Pastors assisted by two others, usually Assistant Rectors or the Rector and one Assistant. The Pastors serving the cup and the

ones assisting, serving the bread to the candidates and team in a continuous line. 2) By tables or families. To set this up the Spiritual Director, during Liturgy practice will instruct the table families to sit together as a group in the Chapel. When it is time to serve the elements, the Presiding Pastor invites two 'tables' to come forward at either end of the table, then the Presiding Pastor hands, first the bread and then the cup, to one person in the circle instructing them to serve the person on their right, at the same time the Assisting Pastor does the same thing with the other table group. This will allow the table groups to serve each other. The Pastor's will need to stand by to refill the cup when that is needed.

3) Community Distribution-this is accomplished with the Presiding Pastor inviting the assembled community to form a line in front of the Pastors who then serve the first one in line, the bread and then the person who has been served, turns and serves the person behind them. Once this first person has served the bread to the one behind them, the Pastor then serves this person the cup, allowing that person to then turn and serve the one behind them, the cup. Once the Pastor has served the first one in line, the Pastor may then stand by to refill and replenish the elements as need be. The Pastors can partake either before serving the Community or after; it is a matter of personal preference that is left up to the Presiding Pastor. Any of these three manners of serving are acceptable and the Spiritual Director is encouraged to utilize all three over the course of the weekend.

A very important aspect of the Cursillo liturgy and the serving of the elements of Communion, is that when a person is offered the elements, they should always be addressed by their first names. During Liturgy practice, the Spiritual Director should mention that name tags

should be worn in a visible place to help those who are serving.

Dress For Liturgy:

Pastors are asked to wear vestments when involved in the Liturgy; the preference is an alb, but a Geneva robe or other pulpit vestment is also acceptable. (The Secretariat has two albs available)

Homilies:

It is the responsibility of the Pastor assisting with the Liturgy to deliver the Homily that day. Listed below are the suggested Scripture lessons for each of the three days:

1st day theme: Emphasis on the Person of Christ

Lessons: Genesis 12:1-9 - the 'call' of faith dramatized
 I John 4:16-21 - based on ministry of grace
 John 1:43-51 - - made visible in the person of Christ

2nd day theme: Emphasis is on Christian Community

Lessons: Isaiah 61:1-4 - The Work of Christ
 Romans 12:1-8 - Transformed in Community
 Luke 24:13-32 - Sustained by Christ's Eucharistic Presence

3rd day theme: Emphasis is on Mission

Lessons: Isaiah 6:1-8 - - Our Response-ability
 II Cor. 5:16-21 - In Sharing Christ's ministry of Reconciliation
 John 14:12-24 - - Empowered and Supported through the Holy Spirit

The first day the clergy will need to take the initiative in the Homily, plan on some assistance from the team and a little from any candidates who would like to share.

The second day the clergy can talk less, with a little more help from the team and hopefully a few more candidates will be comfortable participating in the homily.

The third day, be brief-just prime the pump. By this time, with a little priming and a little patience the candidates should be able to carry the homily. Be careful that neither the clergy or the team dominate on this third day.

The Role of the Pastors in Liturgy

The presiding Pastor is the one who will be in charge of the liturgy for the day, especially prayers and consecrating the bread and the cup. The assisting Pastor is responsible for the Homily of the day and assisting in serving the elements.

THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR AND THE APOSTOLIC HOUR/CLOSING

It is the responsibility and the joy of the Spiritual Director to give the crosses to the candidates at the Apostolic Hour and the commissioning for the Fourth Day. What this means is that the Spiritual Director not only gives the crosses in the Chapel service, but he must also prepare the Candidates to share at the closing; remind them to give the praise and glory to Christ and not to one particular team person or even their sponsor. Prepare them for what will take place at the Closing.

The Spiritual Director will also be responsible for setting the Spiritual climate at the Closing.

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APPENDIXES WHICH FOLLOW

1. Suggested Outlines for the Five Meditations
2. Chapter 6 from the Handbook written by Rod Jackson
3. The Weekend Schedule of Clergy Assignments and Scriptures
4. Chapter 7 of the Handbook written by Rod Jackson
5. Outlines of the Five Clergy Rollos

APPENDIX 1

SUGGESTED OUTLINES OF FIVE MEDITATIONS

As the title indicates, these outlines are not rigid, they can be adapted to your style and the 'flow' of the weekend that you are a part of. They are intended to help you, use them as they help, discard them as they hinder. The key in these meditations is to allow God's Word to speak through you to the candidates.

I. KNOW YOURSELF

Purpose and Setting:

This meditation begins the first phase of the Cursillo, it takes place on Thursday evening and is the first of two meditations that evening. This first phase is the preparation phase, it is designed to help the candidates listen to and accept the message that will be proclaimed over the next three days. As the title indicates, this is a call to self-examination, a call to the candidates to become more aware of who they are and what their potentialities and limitations are. In this meditation the candidates are invited to a self-encounter, which paves the way for an encounter with God. You will want to stress the uniqueness of each person's situation, and let them know that there is no one 'expected response' to the Cursillo weekend.

Outline: Based on Matthew 6:26-34

- I. God Provides for Our Needs
 - A. Disciples were worried
 - . You May be worried
 - B. God Provides for your needs
 - Allow God to take care of your worries back home
- II. The Need for Quiet Reflection
 - A. Jesus withdraws
 - We should follow his example
 - B. Jesus Word to Martha Luke 10:41-42

III. Time For Reflection This Weekend

A. Where to Begin?

Take a long look at yourself

What are my strengths and weaknesses

B. Humility basis For God's Work in our Lives

Take Time to Know Yourself

II. THE PRODIGAL SON

Purpose and Setting:

This meditation follows almost immediately after the first one. After the first meditation, some will find that their story is similar to that of the Prodigal Son and that the only way that they can live is to return to the Father. The meditation seeks to present the reality of the goodness and mercy of God. The objective of this is to place the candidates at the mercy of God. It is important that when this meditation is given that the parable be shared, not just talked about. As you share it with the candidates they will be able to identify with it as their story, since in reality, it is everyone's story!

Outline:

- I. Knowing the Father
The Parable of the Forgiving Father
- II. Everyone's Story
Read Luke 15:11-16
focus on self-centeredness
- III. Conversion
Read Luke 15:17-20
Coming to our senses
- IV. God's Mercy
Read Luke 15:21-24
- V. Human Reaction
Read Luke 15:25-30
The reaction of the older brother
- VI. Conclusion
Read Luke 15:31-32
The Father is waiting for your return

III. THE THREE GLANCES OF CHRIST

Purpose and Setting:

This is the first meditation of the First Day, Friday. It is a transition meditation as it moves from the preparation phase of the Silent Retreat to the proclamation phase of the first day. Its purpose is to awaken in the candidates a sense that they are personally responsible for opening or closing themselves to Christ.

To help them locate themselves in terms of their present reaction to Christ, the meditation focuses on the response of three different people to Christ. (That relates mostly to the men's weekend. On the women's weekend there is a wider selection of verses available and the Spiritual Director will need to choose three to help develop this meditation.) The three different people are:

The Rich Young Man--Refusal to follow because of difficulty and cowardice.

Judas--Refusal because of dishonesty and pride.

Peter--Failure due to self-confidence and weakness, followed by genuine repentance.

The meditation should focus on bringing the candidates to see the attitudes they **presently** have, not the ones they should have. The main points that you will want to bring out are: What does Jesus see in me? How will I respond to His invitation?

Outline:

I. The Rich Young Man

Mark 10:17-22

II. Judas

John 12:4-6

III. Peter

Mark 14:27-31--Peter's self confidence

Luke 22:24-62--The glance of Jesus

John 21:15-17--Peter is forgiven

Conclusion

Jesus is reaching out to you in this Cursillo weekend. What will your response be?

-Are you afraid of the opportunity and will you walk away?

Are you completely or partially blind to the opportunity because of sin?

-Are you imperfect, but willing because of your love for Christ?

IV. THE FIGURE OF CHRIST

Purpose and Setting:

This is the morning meditation of the Second Day, Saturday. It begins the conversion phase of the Cursillo weekend. The purpose of the meditation is to help the participants relate to Jesus as a person, God and man, the fullest revelation of God's love to us. You should express the fullness of both his divinity and his humanity as they are found in the person of Jesus. Because of his humanity he understands us and can share in our struggles. In light of his divinity he saves us and is the solution to our problems.

In this meditation the Spiritual Director should express this vision of Jesus in whatever incidents from the Gospels that appeal to you and would help the candidates the best. You have a freedom of choice as to which passages you choose, the ones listed here are given as suggestions.

Outline:

- I. We Don't Know Jesus!
 - A. II Cor. 13:4 He Lives!
We do know him-we can have a relationship with Him
 - B. Really don't know Jesus
John 1:26
- II. Jesus is A Person

-He works and gets tired	John 4:5,6
-He is disappointed	John 14:9
-He is angry	John 2:13-17
-He suffers	Mark 14:32-42
-He understands	John 8:3-11; Luke 19:1-10
-He asks for support	Matt. 26:36-41
- III. He Is Savior and Lord
John 11:15 the God-Man

Conclusion

Jesus lives. He is God with us.

Jesus invites us to encounter him in a new way today!

APPENDIX 2

CHAPTER VI

THE PROTESTANT SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

When a minister of the Gospel is asked to serve as a Spiritual Director for a Cursillo weekend one of the natural questions that will be asked is: "What is expected of me?" What are the requirements and duties of a clergy person who is asked to fill this important role? It is to this question that we now turn our attention in this handbook.

The first requirement, of course, is that the minister has actually made a Cursillo himself. One cannot lead in an event he has not personally experienced. There are three other areas which are vitally important in preparation for the minister.

1. Prayer. The Spiritual Director must be a person of prayer. The whole Cursillo movement and method is based on prayer and commitment. Many persons will offer their palanca and give sacrificial time and service to insure the success of a weekend. The Spiritual Director, too, must make a commitment to offer daily prayer for the Cursillo and incarnate in his life the friendship with God which is the message of Cursillo.

2. Attitude. Like other team members, the Spiritual Director needs to give the same living witness to the life in grace. A joyous, enthusiastic life in Christ which is shared with the candidates in a variety of contacts will characterize the minister who serves in this capacity. Openness to others, love of people and a willingness to share oneself are important attitudes for this ministry. The minister who is willing to come down off a pedestal and, in a natural and sincere way, give himself to the others on the weekend will find it a rich experience for himself as well. He ought never forget that Cursillo is a lay movement and that he serves not as "The Leader," but as a member of a team which itself demonstrates Christian community in action.

3. Knowledge. The minister who serves as Spiritual Director also needs a knowledge of the Cursillo strategy and method as a whole. In order to give the rollos and carry out the other responsibilities which are his, the minister will want to see how the total weekend unfolds and fits together. Because it is he who gives the doctrinal foundation to the weekend, he will want to study what it is that is being proclaimed so that what is said by the laypersons and what is done on the weekend become the logical consequence of the truth he brings.

Having this preparation, what are the specific duties and expectations of the Spiritual Director? Let us look at this in two stages: during team formation and during the weekend itself. The team of leaders which has been selected to put on the Cursillo weekend will have several meetings scheduled to plan together, pray together and be formed by the Spirit into a dynamic community of love and service. The minister(s) should be faithful in attendance at these meetings so he becomes a true part of the community, not an "outside expert" who only comes in for the weekend. He should assist

the rector with his counsel and help in the planning process for the entire weekend. His encouragement to other team members, his sharing of himself, his participation in the group reunions will be a support to the whole team. His prayers and his leadership will convey the message that all that is done is dependent on the grace of God. Specifically, he will plan, with the rector, times of worship during the team meetings and some opportunity for sharing the Holy Communion which binds men and women together in the bonds of unity and community.

On the weekend itself the Spiritual Director functions in a way that uses his distinctive ministry and gifts in conjunction with the overall purpose of the Cursillo. He should be available to counsel with individuals. Sometimes opportunity for counseling may occur already Thursday evening before the candidates go to bed, but more often it will take place in informal conversations at meals, between rollos and during other free time. Sometimes the writer has joined with a table group for discussion and posters at their invitation. The minister should be so prepared ahead of time that he is able to give his full time and attention to the candidates on the weekend.

The five meditations are the responsibility of the Spiritual Director(s). They are:

- "Know Yourself" - Thursday evening
- "The Prodigal Son" - Thursday evening
- "The Three Glances of Christ" - Friday morning
- "The Figure of Christ" - Saturday morning
- "Christ's Message to the Cursillista" - Sunday morning

The minister(s) may choose to give these meditations or ask a member of the team who is not giving a rollo to give one or more. The basic content should be given though additional devotional material may be added if desired. It is often effective to use silence during the meditations in the morning as a preparation for the day.

The Spiritual Director(s) will plan a liturgy for each day which is appropriate to the mood and purpose of that day. There is room for some variety here. Sometimes a song will emerge from the group which becomes the theme of that particular weekend. Lay participation in the readings and prayers will be very meaningful to some persons. After a brief message from the Word of God by the minister there is often time for some reflection by the members of the community. Eucharist is provided, at least on Saturday and Sunday, as a part of the worship service. The writer has seen a simple Agape meal used effectively on Friday evening after the Piety rollo. Avoiding both stereotyped and radically experimental services, the Spiritual Director will seek to utilize worship to bring the candidates into joyful friendship with Christ and with their brothers and sisters in the faith.

Throughout the weekend the minister should be in close touch with the Rector and with any Co-Spiritual Directors about the progress of the weekend and any problems that may arise. He will be responsible for evening prayers just before the group retires for the night;

something quite brief in view of the heavy schedule of each day. The other major duty of the Spiritual Director(s) is to give five rollos on grace during the three days. To this responsibility we will give more careful attention in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here in summary what Juan Hervas said about the need a generation ago: The minister's strength is rooted in his being "fully a man of God, a man of the church and a man of his time."

THE WEEKEND SCHEDULE OF CLERGY ASSIGNMENTS AND SCRIPTURES

DATES: _____

SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS: _____
(CONFERENCE ROOM) _____

PALANCA SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS: _____

THURSDAY--

Service of Public Confession: _____

FRIDAY--

Morning Chapel: "The Three Glances of Christ" _____

Mens: Mark 10:17-22; John 6:71; John 13:11, Matthew 26:50

Womens: Mark 10:38-42; John 4:7-26; John 8:1-11; Matthew 9:20-22
Matthew 15:12-31

Habitual Grace: _____

Liturgy: Presiding Pastor: _____

Assisting Pastor: _____

Actual

Actual Grace: _____

SATURDAY--

Morning Chapel: "The Figure of Christ" _____

John 1:26; Matthew 26:37; John 11:15

Sacraments: _____

Liturgy: Presiding Pastor: _____

Assistanting Pastor: _____

Obstacles To Grace: _____

SUNDAY--

Morning Chapel: "Christ Speaks to the Cursillista"
Transfiguration; Elijah-6000 Know Me; John 15

Life In Grace: _____

Liturgy: Presiding Pastor- _____

Assisting Pastor- _____

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Bible Enthronements

Thursday-Mark 1:12-15
Recessional-Romans 1:11-12

Friday A.M.-Matthew 8:23-27
Recessional-Romans 5:1-11

Saturday A.M.-Romans 15:1-6
Recessional-Romans 8:31-39

Sunday A.M.-Acts 1:6-8

On Thursday Evening the Bible Enthronement and Recessional will be handled by team members. During the remainder of the weekend the Candidates will be asked to perform this ceremony. The Spiritual Director in consultation with the Rector will ask particular candidates to be involved in this ceremony.

APPENDIX 4

CHAPTER VII

THE SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S ROLLOS

The five rollos given by the Spiritual Director(s) are all about grace, God's offer of friendship in Jesus Christ his Son. Each looks at this central reality from a slightly different angle and each has a specific function to accomplish in the total progression of the rollos. For that reason it is important that all the points in the outlines are covered in the presentation.

Before we consider each rollo individually, let us make a few observations about the talks as a whole. Central to the message of the Cursillo and to Christianity itself is the fact that God takes the initiative in establishing a relationship with human-kind. God is the subject of this relationship before he is the object of it. He makes the offer. The primary attitude of men and women in relationship to God is receptivity. We receive, we accept, we agree and we ask for what God is offering to us. We have our part to do in building a relationship with God, but it is always a response to God's prior action.

The rollos given by ministers proclaim God's invitation to us to live in this relationship of friendship. They should be warm, personal, confident proclamations of the reality of grace. The style should be kerygmatic, not apologetic. The candidate is told that God loves him, that God is leading him into a saving relationship with Christ, calling him to a deeper personal surrender and a life of apostolic action. He is also told in these rollos how this relationship with God will change his life and what he must do to build and sustain this grace-full friendship with God. When God gives us grace he shares his very life with us, coming to dwell within and transforming us "from the inside out." Because "He first loved us" we are to love him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.

HABITUAL GRACE

The purpose of this rollo is very simple: to present Christianity as a personal relationship to God. It is the second talk on Friday and follows the Ideal rollo. If Ideal presents the call to be a human person, Habitual Grace calls us to be Christian human persons. This rollo gives both the foundation for authentic Christianity and the basis of the remainder of the Cursillo weekend. What is needed is a clear, warm, positive presentation of the life of grace by the speaker which conveys what a wonderful thing it is that God invites us to live in his friendship. The Spiritual Director's personal testimony as to his own response to this invitation is essential in this proclamation.

It is instructive to note the changes in the names of some of the Spiritual Director's rollos as Cursillo has evolved. Habitual Grace uses the classical medieval terminology, stressing the idea of God's continuing, "habitual" attitude of love and favor to mankind. In later editions, the talk is variously titled Grace, God's Life, and God's Transforming Presence To Us. Each of these describes in some way the fundamental reality which is being offered. If New

Testaments are to be given to the candidates it should be done just before this rollo so that they will see the Bible is the source of all that is said. The rollo has four basic points.

1. An attractive invitation to a personal relationship with God. The story of God's relationship to mankind may be summarized as a love story in three acts: call, fall, recall. God draws near again in the person of Jesus Christ. Man's search for meaning, his quest for an ideal is met by God's offer: "I love you. Is that OK?" (Jesus Christ) His offer is the gift of Himself, the gift of LIFE. He desires to communicate with us, to establish a relationship of love with us.

2. Grace--the gift of God. This section of the rollo gives the Biblical foundations for the entire talk. Grace is not a liquid; it is God's favor, the gift of new life which He offers us. Grace is God's attitude of lovingkindness to His fallen people. Scripture references such as I John 4:8, John 4:7-14, John 10:10 and Matthew 13:44-46 will help in developing this point about God's unconditional love. He loves us as we are and seeks to draw us into friendship with Himself. That friendship is personal and transforming.

3. A description of the grace-full life.

- a. It is a free gift. There is no merit on our part. Love is the only reason that prompts God. (I John 4:19) (Ephesians 2:8-10)
- b. Grace creates in us a new life by which we become friends of God. (John 15:15) He pays for and pardons our sin, reconciling us to Himself. We are called to be saints (I Corinthians 1:2) (Cf. II Corinthians 5:17)
- c. Grace brings us into union with Christ. (Galatians 2:20) We share in His life, death and resurrection. He is our Brother, God is our Father, we are the sons and daughters of God. (Romans 8:15-17) Because of this the Holy Spirit lives in us making us the temples of God.
- d. We make up the people of God. We live in relationship with other Christians, our brothers and sisters. When we respond to God's love we enter into a community of love.

4. How we experience this grace-full life relationship. To enter into a saving relationship with God calls for the response of faith. Here the appropriate Scriptures are John 1:11-12, John 3:1-10 John 3:16 and Revelation 3:20. Faith involves us as total persons: our intellect, emotions and will are all employed. To trust ourselves to Christ's love completely is what we are being called to do now. Jesus is waiting for our response. Let God love you.

The conclusion of this rollo is that living in relationship with God--the Father, Son and Holy Spirit--is the basic solution to all our needs. It is an ideal worth living for and worth dying for.

ACTUAL GRACE

The rollo called Actual Grace also has had a series of different names among which are God's Help, Faith, and Ministry of the Holy Spirit. It has a two-fold purpose: to stress the absolute need of God's help in making the Christian ideal of graceful living possible and our corresponding responsibility to respond to God's offer of help which is always available. It is the fourth talk on Friday immediately following Laymen/Laywomen in the Church. The candidate has heard a triple call to be human, to be Christian and to be a responsible member of the church. The question is: How can I measure up?

The Spiritual Director, therefore, needs to convey a real confidence in God in order to overcome the discouragement any candidates may be feeling. The tone of this rollo is strong, clear and optimistic. Again, the personal witness of the speaker, his own deep confidence in God and the availability of his help, will be an important part of this presentation. The central stress on the availability of God's transforming power to all believers through the ministry of the Holy Spirit continues the proclamation phase of the Cursillo. An outline of the rollo follows in the next paragraphs, containing an introduction, a conclusion and five basic points.

Introduction: We review the offer of God made in the Habitual Grace rollo and stress our need to respond to his invitation to live in intimacy with Him.

1. We absolutely need God's help to enter and to live the Christian life. Without Him we can do nothing. (John 5:15) He must open our hearts and lives.
2. This help is available through the ministry of the Holy Spirit who, by His transforming power, enables us to live fully the Christian life. This is Actual Grace, that is, those specific and particular points at which God's help connects with our needs, where he intervenes with a touch to give us light or strength. We can count on God to enable us to become all we are meant to be. He is absolutely reliable.
3. When and how God's help comes to us. Anytime and any place, through different stages of our lives, through an experience, a book, a friend, a spouse; God's Spirit may touch our lives with an experience of grace. We need a readiness to be open to the process of progressive conversion which is life-long. The Cursillo weekend itself may be an actual grace, i.e., a means by which God is helping us.
4. We have a responsibility to respond to God's touch of grace. We also have the ability to do so. What is that response? We must really desire to live the life of grace, which involves repentance and faith. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ in our lives. Then we must act on our faith. Philippians 2:12-13 presents the mystery of God's work and ours, grace and faith, working together. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13) If we use the opportunities we are given God gives more grace.

5. Prayer is a powerful help God has given to help us live the life of grace. It is a personal dialogue between friends. Many persons are living in friendship with God: communities of faith exist around the world. Many of them are praying and sacrificing for you on this weekend. Their prayers are an experience of Actual Grace. Present palanca at this time, a lever to lift up the candidates to God. Give your own witness to the value and importance of intercessory prayer. Read some of the palanca letters to the entire group.

Conclusion: God offers you His help, His Holy Spirit. The rest is in your hands. He brought you to this Cursillo to speak to you: how will you respond?

SACRAMENTS

The second rollo on Saturday is given by a Spiritual Director on Sacraments. The whole emphasis of this day centers on the person of Christ. The purpose of this talk which follows the lay rollo on Study, is to describe the Sacraments as Christ's way of reaching out to humankind, becoming "present" to us in order to deepen our union with Him and transform our lives. It is the longest rollo of the weekend but ought not to be prolonged. The style should be warm, theologically sound and spring from personal conviction.

A word about theology is in order here. This is the place where our Reformed understanding of the meaning and number of Sacraments will differ markedly from that of the Roman Catholics who founded the Cursillo movement. The writer believes we need to do some careful thinking about our own theology of sacramentality before giving this rollo. Sacraments are viewed within the basic approach of the talk on Habitual Grace, namely God's offer of friendship and our response in faith and love. The emphasis is on personal encounter with Christ, a relational theology which has both vertical and horizontal dimensions. Sacraments are God's significant transforming presence to us, central encounters with Jesus in the church which make possible the fullness of the Christian life. Often the celebration of the Lord's Supper will take place immediately after the conclusion of this talk. An outline of the basic points follows:

1. Sacraments in general.

We speak of sacraments as signs and seals of God's grace. Calvin defines a sacrament as "an external sign, by which the Lord seals on our consciences His promises of good-will towards us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, and we in our turn testify our piety towards Him...."² We may think of sacraments as God's sign language. He desires to communicate with us, but how can He do so? The classic answer: by Word and Sacrament. They belong together. Just as man communicates by words and signs (symbols), so God communicates through various symbols. But when God wanted to communicate at the deepest level He sent His Son, Jesus the living Word, who became the sign of God's presence. (John 1:14; John 14:8-9) When Jesus ascended He left behind the company of men and women which Paul calls the body of Christ, the church. They became the sign of God's presence, the place where

²Institutes, 4:14:1.

we encounter Jesus Christ. The church is the community of faith where we meet with Jesus in prayer, in the Word, and in the Sacraments.

The Sacraments are special encounters with the living Christ, to confirm the Word, make it visible to our senses, and seal our union with the body of Christ. They are true means of grace; not empty ceremonies or magical tricks. There are two elements in a sacrament: the external and visible element, and the internal reality that is signified. Through such symbolic actions God drew near His people in the Old Testament and through such signs He also encounters us in the present. Grace becomes actual in the Word and Sacraments. Our salvation is something which happens to us in the "here and now," as the Christ who is central in every sacrament draws near to offer us the gift of life, the gift of Himself, which can never be earned. At the same time, the response of faith is essential if the sacraments are to truly effect what they promise in our lives. And the Holy Spirit must give the grace which is promised, the salvation of which the sacrament is the sign. Therefore, in the "mystery of sacramental union," as Calvin calls it,³ there is a closeness between the earthly ceremony and the heavenly act which defies human understanding. We only affirm that the sacraments are true channels of God's saving grace which He has given to the community of faith, His church.

2. Holy Baptism--the sacrament of new life.

Baptism is the sacrament of initiation, of new beginnings. It has a number of meanings which should be mentioned, most of which come directly from the Liturgy of the Reformed Church.

- a. Claimed as God's own possession and named with His name. Baptism is "the owner's mark." This mark will influence all of one's life, giving full assurance of salvation in the covenant promises of God.
- b. Ingrafted into Christ, sharing in His death and His victory. (Romans 6:3-5) By this we receive the forgiveness of sins through His blood, and by it we are called to die to self and walk in a new and holy life. The water of baptism is itself a powerful symbol of this cleansing action.
- c. Incorporated into the community of believers in Christ. (Galatians 3:26-29) Baptism is the sign of our adoption into the family of God. It, therefore, has horizontal as well as vertical dimensions.
- d. Commissioned to responsible mission in the world. Baptism calls us to a new obedience, to live out its meaning for the rest of our lives. Our baptism is not fulfilled unless we confirm it with our own profession of faith. And we will never completely exhaust its meaning, for the spiritual grace of which it is a sign, namely conversion, is a continuing process active throughout the length of the Christian life. We may, therefore, think of baptism as the call of God, a call to witness and serve, a call which will lead eventually to our resurrection to eternal life. We, if we accept and live our baptism, we will live in Jesus' victory and with the support and encouragement of the faith community we will fulfill His mission.

³C.R., 9:200.

3. Holy Communion--the Sacrament of new covenant.

This sacrament stands at the very center of our Christian faith and worship. It is the sign of our union with God and our unity with other Christians. By receiving it our faith is nourished as we share in the infinite goodness of our Savior and partake of all His blessings.

- a. Covenant in the Old Testament. The story of God's saving action in the Old Testament revolves around the themes of the bondage in Egypt, the deliverance by God through Moses who leads his people to the promised land of Canaan. The feast of the Passover became the re-presentation of the mighty acts of God. It had a past, present and future orientation. The people of Israel were unfaithful to the covenant, however, and God promised a new covenant. (Jeremiah 31:31-33)
- b. Covenant in the New Testament. The story of God's saving action in the New Testament is the story of man's slavery to sin, God's salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ and the promise of eternal life and heaven beyond for those who are part of the new covenant community. The Lord's Supper or Eucharist (which means "thanksgiving") is the sacrament which presents the saving acts of God. Jesus gave it to His disciple as an act of His love for them and for us. It, too, has a past, present, and future orientation.
- c. The meanings which we attach to this sacrament correspond to these foci, as presented in the Liturgy of the R.C.A. We look back in remembrance to our redemption through the death of Christ on the cross. We come to have communion with this same Christ whom we believe is drawing us into union with Himself and strengthening us by His body and blood in the present. And we approach the table in hope and anticipation of the future celebration when we shall be with Christ in glory forever. The moods with which we come to the sacrament correspond to these three aspects of its meaning: sorrow at Jesus' sacrifice for us, joy at Jesus' presence with us, and expectation of Jesus' return for us. (In traditional usage, we have placed almost all the emphasis on the first meaning; this may be an opportunity to emphasize the aspects of present joy and future celebration in the Eucharist.)

The Holy communion, like baptism, must be approached with faith. As we express our gratitude to God and offer to Him the sacrifice of Thanksgiving, ourselves as holy and living sacrifices, the Holy Spirit raises us up to Himself so that we truly commune with and receive the living Christ. It is a personal meeting with the Lord, yet it is done only in the community of faith, the people of the new covenant. By it we are assured of a continuing relationship with Jesus Christ (John 6:54), who becomes known to us too in the breaking of the bread. (Luke 24:30-31)

4. Other rites and ordinances of the church. The Reformed Church, along with other Protestant churches, recognizes only two sacraments which, by definition, contain a promise and a command of the Lord and relate to our union with Christ. Our Liturgy, however,

contains Orders for other rites of the church among which are: admission to the Lord's table; ordination of ministers, elders, and deacons; solemnization of marriage; and visitation of the sick. Though not properly sacraments, they are ordinances by which the church in her work as the body of Christ encounters men and women at significant times and events in their lives. When the Holy Spirit is at work, for instance, the laying on of hands at a service of ordination is truly a personal meeting with the living Christ.

The Spiritual Director must exercise great sensitivity here, lest there be misunderstanding. The Sacraments rollo may end after the section on Holy Communion; however, the writer has found it to be very meaningful to the candidates to make the above distinctions and go on to talk about marriage and ordination at least. This decision should be made in consultation with the rector and other team leaders so that everyone feels comfortable with it. There is no attempt here to disturb people unnecessarily, but to look at some of the events in which we believe Christ is active and present even though we do not label them as sacraments. Or, to put it another way, can there be more to our understanding of sacramentality than is contained in the two sacraments which point to the death and resurrection of Christ and our union with Him? If so, the following points may be inserted in the rollo.

1. This is the one place in the Cursillo weekend where the minister can talk about marriage as an expression of the grace-full life. In the reciprocal giving of love within the covenant of marriage there is an opportunity to encounter the presence of Christ. The pattern of Ephesians 5:21-33 may be held up as a way in which we can live out this relationship of mutual self-giving. In God's plan we become models, that is, interpreters to our spouse of the love of God. In the intimacy of marriage we draw near to another person and share life with him/her, just as we draw near to God in prayer and share life with Him. And out of this loving relationship new life is born. Personal witness is very appropriate here.

2. This is also a place where one may give help to the candidates in understanding the meaning of ordination. Our current understanding in the Reformed Church is that ordination is to a function of ministry more than to a special status. Ephesians 4: 11-12 describes this in terms of "equipping the saints for the work of ministry." All Christians are called to service; pastors are to be teachers, enablers, intercessors and servants of the people of God. Ministers of the Word are human, too. Don't place them on a pedestal. They need understanding, love and prayerful support. This section can dove-tail very nicely with the Laymen/Laywomen in the Church rollo of the previous day.

OBSTACLES TO GRACE

The fourth rollo on Saturday, following Action, is called properly Obstacles of the Life in Grace. Its purpose is to give the candidates a sense of realism about the difficulties they may encounter in living a personal relationship with Christ. All the difficulties can be reduced to one--sin; yet the talk is not so much a detailed analysis of sins as it is a look at grace from the viewpoint of sin. The style of the rollo is explanatory and positive.

It seeks to balance the idealism which has been building in the candidate with a sense of realism about the dangers he/she will face. The tone can still be enthusiastic and optimistic inasmuch as the major emphasis falls on the ways of overcoming sin. As in the entire Cursillo sin and grace are seen in personal rather than impersonal teams. Man can spurn God's offer of friendship: this is the essence of sin. The outline contains an introduction and four points.

Introduction: A review of the talks on Habitual Grace and Sacraments. We were created to know, love and serve God--to live in grace as friends of God. Why then isn't grace-full living a reality in the world and in our lives? The answer is sin.

1. God's plan for our lives has been shown to us in Jesus Christ. We have the ability to know the will of God. Salvation in Christ with all that implies is the perfect will of God for humankind. We reach our true potential, our greatest happiness, when we accept the offer of friendship with God. (John 10:10) This is the fullness of life.

2. Sin is the rejection of the offer of God's life. By the gift of freedom with which we were created, we can close ourselves off to God and thus to His grace. This is the obstacle to living in grace: to say to God, "No way!" It is choosing to live in disrelationship with God. Sin affects all of life--our intelligence, our wills and our social conditions. It separates us from God and from each other and disfigures the image of God in us. We are truly free only when we accept God's plan for our lives.

3. The occasions of sin are many. Here we look at three enemies of the life in grace: the world, the flesh and the devil. The world, as organized against God and hostile to Him, is an enemy which can lead into sin. Here we are not speaking of "world" or indifferent to the Christian life. The attitudes and values of the world are competing for our highest allegiance with the Christian value of loving God above all else. (I John 2:15-17) The flesh is not to be viewed simply as sexual sin, but as those internal forces seeking to control us and vying for our highest priority. It is the "old man" as opposed to the new man in Christ. It is the tendency, found even in the best of Christians, to put self-gratification above love of God. The devil is a joke to many people but we have seen his works in our century. The demonic in our world may be seen in systemic evil as well as personal wrongs. We ought to be aware of him and resist him. (I Peter 5:8-9)

Besides these three enemies there is a fourth occasion which may be even more subtle. We ourselves are sometimes our own worst enemy. By the attitudes we take--of fear, of giving in to temptation and of lukewarmness--we may turn away from the personal relationship with God. The only way to sustain our friendship with Christ is to give it all we've got. Only you are in a position to block God's plan for your life.

4. The remedy by which we may overcome sin is given in this final point. Basically, it is to open the door to God and keep it open. (Revelation 3:20) The handle is on the inside. Several helps ought to be suggested in a practical way. Put on the armor of God. (Ephesians 6:10-18) Notice how Jesus overcame the devil

by the Word of God. (Matthew 4:1-11) Pray regularly. (Mark 14:38) You need contact with Christ in prayer and He will never leave you. Repentance plays an important part in the progressive conversion to which we are called. Confession of sin, being honest with God, leads to reconciliation and peace. (I John 1:9) Keep in contact with other Christians for mutual support. Sometimes we may need a personal counselor to give us help and direction.

God is with us! His will and plan are for us the best thing in life. Jesus is realistic about the dangers, but He also gives us this challenge: "Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) The life of grace can be lived and is being lived by millions of persons. It is possible because of Jesus' victory.

LIFE IN GRACE

The rollo called variously Life in Grace, Living With God and Christian Life is the final talk by the Spiritual Director. It occurs on Sunday morning following Studying and Vivifying the Environment and is an important part of the "insertion" stage of the weekend. Its purpose is to help the candidate solve in practical ways the problems of perseverance and growth in the Christian life. It brings the rollo on Habitual Grace down to a practical level by giving a clear outline of the means for maintaining a life in grace. The speaker should also take advantage of this opportunity to clarify any points of the weekend which may remain unclear. There is opportunity for personal witness to the practices which have been meaningful in supporting your own Christian life. The idea of contact with Christ should stand out as one of the strongest means of perseverance. This should prepare the way for the Cursillista to participate in meaningful group reunion after the weekend which is the heart of the Cursillo method. At the same time it tells him or her how to be nourished within the apostolate of influencing their environment. The rollo has an introduction and two main points.

Introduction: This rollo begins with a resume of the whole Cursillo up to this point. Grace is God's offer of friendship. Living in union with Christ is the greatest possible ideal. We have experienced God's grace on this weekend; but can it last? We have been called to sonship with God and to bring others into relationship with Him. We just heard we should be penetrating our environments with the Gospel; but how will we have strength to do this? We know that grace is not a "thing" but a transforming friendship with the person of Jesus Christ. The life of grace is a life to be lived by directing our whole lives to God. It is genuine piety.

1. A description of the Christian life. The grace-full life is a life of faith, hope and love. (I Corinthians 13) Through faith we believe what God has revealed in Christ, and we trust Him as our Lord and Savior. Knowing Jesus as our Savior brings pardon from sin; knowing Him as Lord gives purpose, power and peace. Believe this even when you don't "feel" it. (II Timothy 1:12) Hope is not just wishful thinking or superficial optimism. It is the certainty of Christ's victory and Lordship that enables us to be faithful and "hang on" every moment. The love of Christ

enables us to love Him and love our neighbor. (Matthew 22:37-40) To love is to become vulnerable, to risk. Christ lives in us and in our brothers and sisters; therefore, we can begin to "see" Christ in the face of another and to love them as we love Him. To love others requires a healthy self-love too. The grace-full life is also one which gives meaning to our earthly pilgrimage. We are called to be light and salt to the world. (Matthew 5:13-14) We respond to God's offer of friendship by an attitude of continuing conversion as we journey on through life.

2. The means of maintaining the Christian life. Here we become very specific about the practices of piety, the way to sustain and strengthen the life in grace. While the practices do not in themselves constitute the life in grace, it is almost impossible to maintain a living relationship with God without them. Here we witness to our own devotional life. Various means of keeping in contact with God are shared: morning prayer--beginning the day with God, personal devotions--including Scripture and prayer, and regular worship--including the Lord's Supper. These practices are means of keeping in touch with a friend. There is a discipline involved, for loving God is not merely an occasional emotion. Share your own witness here but allow room for each candidate to decide on his or her own program of piety. There are family devotions, Sunday School, small groups in the church and other means which may be helpful, including personal counsel with another wise and sensitive Christian. This is called "spiritual direction" and is a helpful practice for some Christians as they check in periodically with a trusted man or woman of God. If Christian Growth Cards are used on the weekend they should be distributed during this talk so the candidates can make concrete their plan for maintaining their own Christian life.

Conclusion: We have only just begun. But you can hang on if you want to. The means for an authentic piety are available. A continuing relationship with Christ is found in contact with Him through the means He has given. Life was not made for these practices; practices are made for life--so that our lives may be transformed and continue to grow by our relationship with God in Jesus Christ.