



# THE BUFFALO CURSILLO MOVEMENT

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Buffalo SSJs were in on the ground floor of the Buffalo Cursillo movement!

Sister Anna Kessen and future Associate Lenore Rosica participated in the first Women's Cursillo at St. Mary's Business School on Broadway (now closed) in 1966. Attending the second were Sisters Mary Anne Devine and Brigid Walsh, along with Bernice Bradley (now an Associate). I made Cursillo in 1969.

## What did we experience?

"Cursillo de Cristiandad" (Spanish for "Short Course in Christianity") is a lay movement in the Catholic Church. During participants' <sup>three</sup> day weekend, the method learned is to be lived on their "Fourth Day" -- for the rest of their lives.

Apostles of God's love by baptism, Cursillo makes men and women part of a supportive community sustained through faith friendship groups and monthly diocesan reunions which include Mass, witness and doctrinal talks. It seeks to help participants grow in friendship with God and self-knowledge. They seek to evangelize their total environment by example (living a Christ-like life) or by open invitation. "Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ."

With the Spanish church already in ferment after the country's Civil War, the movement began on the island of Mallorca, Spain, during

World War II. A young men's Catholic Action group headed by Eduardo Bonnin Aguilio (now Servant of God) developed the Cursillo method to bring people back to a lively faith.

The first Cursillo in the U.S. was held in Waco, TX in 1957; many followed. Until 1961, all were in Spanish. The same year, the first English-speaking weekends were held in five U.S. states. By the 1960s, Cursillo had total support from the American bishops. The movement came to Buffalo in 1965 via Louis and Elizabeth Pauly, who moved here from Erie, PA.

Carol A. Steer<sup>IER</sup> became the historian for the Buffalo Cursillo movement in <sup>2020</sup>2008. Her requests to Cursillists for material yielded an onslaught—"I felt like the Sorcerer's Apprentice!" Jessica Anderson-Rath, the congregational archivist, guided her in preserving materials and invited Carol to write an article for Presence.