



April 2020 Newsletter

Check out our website at <https://www.buffalocursillo.com/> You will find dates and information on Ultreya, Weekends, Reunion mass schedule, Newsletters, Applications, and much more.

### Lay Director's Report:

Since everything is pretty much on hold due to Covid 19 virus, our normal information and reporting is very short this month. So, after we take care of normal business, we added a section called; [Personal Reflections and Comments](#) beginning on page 3. The Secretariat members are offering writings on things like:

- New opportunities for evangelization during these "different times".
- How is our prayer life different?
- Any witness on what you are experiencing.
- How is God present in my life now.
- Our social interactions while maintaining distance.
- Spiritual aids that we are taking advantage of this lent.

If you would like to add your own feelings, experiences, etc. comment on [facebook BuffaloCursillo](#)

### Historian

Carol Nowalk Stier (Buffalo Women's 7) has accepted the role of Historian for the Buffalo Cursillo. If you have any Buffalo Cursillo Newsletters or pictures from the 70's, 80's, 90's, and early 2000's. Please call Carol at 692-1606 if you would like her to keep them for the Cursillo Archives.

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### Spiritual Director's Reflection:

Please be assured that I washed and sanitized my hands thoroughly before beginning to write my final newsletter article as Diocesan Spiritual Adviser. I have three brief points to make:

#### **Point #1**

As some of you already know, I've been asked by Bishop Scharfenberger to immediately begin to create a new plan/ministry. Therefore, Jerry Casillo, myself and a host of Cursillo Deacons are meeting so we can use this time of social distancing to form a new spiritual adviser team that will be ready for the Fall weekends.

That being said, I want to sincerely thank you all for the most incredible 5 years! I could never express how much I appreciate this opportunity to serve with and to pray with all of you! Obviously, there are far too many of you to thank by name here, but, from my heart – I appreciate all that you have done for me and all you have taught me. You mean so much to me!

#### **Point #2**

It's hard to believe the times that suddenly we find ourselves in. While we can easily become overwhelmed by the pandemic and all that it brings and takes away, as Cursillistas, we know there's nothing God can't or won't get us through.

Amazingly, I just happened across a reading from James – he would agree with that sentiment.

In fact, it's not a stretch to say that the sense of his whole letter in the New Testament is about how to respond properly when we are under pressure.

At the outset, James, reminds us that trials are a necessary part of our spiritual growth James (1:2-4), and, that there is a blessing reserved for those who respond rightly (James 1:12).

But he also cautions us - do not blame God when hard times comes (James 1:13-15).

James 1:16-18 advances the argument by reminding us that God is good all the time, even during our hardest trials. We should think of it this way: God is not on trial during our trials; we are. Again, as Cursillistas, we know that He uses hard times not just to put our faith to the test but, more importantly, to teach His children lessons for eternal life.

This particular passage shows us three things we need to remember if we are going to pass the test with flying colours:

1. Remember God's Love
2. Remember God's Goodness
3. Remember God's Grace

And, we're not alone - God walks through every trial with us – and He will get us all through this one!

### **Point #3**

I asked Jerry to attach a recording I did of Leon Bridge's song "River" – a perfect song to reflect on during the remaining days of Lent. (WARNING: Please keep your expectations low and remember it's Lent so please forgive the poor singing and guitar-playing!)

Click to listen: [River 3-31-20.m4a](#)

So, pray with me one last time – one of my favorite prayers taken from the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and, one that is so fitting for this time:

“Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become

despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.”

God's love and mine!

Deacon Greg Moran  
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### **Pre Cursillo Report:**

We have put on hold calling candidates regarding attending a weekend until we are cleared to run the weekends. With that said, we only have about 3 possible candidates for the Men's Weekend and 2 for the Women's Weekends. I know that during your social distancing, you might not be able to discuss Cursillo, but know that when we resume the weekends, we will need candidates.

Diane-380-0187 and Marge-698-5828  
Email: [bfloprecursillo@gmail.com](mailto:bfloprecursillo@gmail.com)

### **Cursillo Section**

We hope this finds all of you safe and healthy. It was with a heavy heart that the Cursillo Section recommended to the Secretariat to postpone the Spring weekends, but keep those prayers going for our fall weekends.

### **Supply Coordinator**

We do have some good news Diane Reese has agreed to join the Section as our new "Supply Coordinator". Thank you to Cathy and John Agugliaro for all their dedication and support in this position over the years. Please keep John and Cathy in your prayers.

MAY GOD BLESS US AND KEEP US  
IN THE PALM OF HIS HAND! And

remember make a friend be a friend and bring that friend to Christ. Even though it may have to happen 6 ft. apart.  
ULTREYA!!!

Joan and Mary Ann

Joan Conklin and Mary Ann DeMaria  
Section Team Coordinator  
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Call/text: Mary Ann at 716-512-4765  
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### Post Cursillo:

All In-Person Ultreya meetings will be cancelled for April, as The President has issued another 30-day stay at home order for non-essential matters.

God Bless and stay safe,

### Bethany Ultreya

Last month we reported that Bethany Ultreya is reforming. For the next several months the Ultreya will be held in members houses. Harvey & Carla Gress hosted the Ultreya on March 12. Fifteen Cursillistas attended and had a very Spirit filled and social evening. Harvey wrote: We now have 5 people ( Pat, Denice, Lynn, Vita, and myself) committed to keeping Bethany Ultreya going in memory of Mary Lynn Heidle. We will continue to keep it going, meeting in houses for the foreseeable future, and let the Holy Spirit guide us. Our hope is for the Ultreya to grow, and flourish with the grace of our Lord.

All Cursillistas are invited to Lynn Lomonto's house when we get started again, especially those from Amherst, Cheektowaga, Williamsville, Lancaster Snyder, and Eggertsville areas.

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### School of Leaders:

Our next School of leaders will take place in June (Ah spring). Date and place TBA.

Bill Gross  
Email: [wfgross45@gmail.com](mailto:wfgross45@gmail.com)

### Secretary:

May the gift of peace be with you.

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### Personal Reflections & Comments

#### **From Mary Bitka:**

- New opportunities for evangelization is a bit more difficult since we are "self-isolating." I was away to AZ (the Grand Canyon and Sedona) with my daughter and son-in-law and pointed out the majestic beauty and spectacular beauty reminds me of the glory of God.

- How is our prayer life different? I've begun to watch, along with my husband, Sunday mass on TV. I also started taping the Daily Mass, but don't watch it as frequently as I'd like. Also, our church is open to 2:30 each day and I try to make it in 1-2 per week for private prayer.

- How is God present in my life now? I have found this situation to be difficult; not being able to go to mass, receive Jesus Christ. But I am reading more, including "33 Days o Greater Glory" by Michael Gaitley and I am really enjoying it.

- Our social interactions while maintaining distance. We have been exchanging foods, deserts and adult beverages with neighbor friends, but leaving items in mailboxes, porch or car drop-offs. Yesterday we had a virtual happy hour with my daughter and son-in-law using facetime projected on our TV.

- Spiritual aids that we are taking advantage of this lent; Because of Lent, I am also doing added daily readings “I Thirst, 40 days with Mother Teresa” and Bishop Robert Barron’s “Lenten Gospel Reflections.”

**From Bill Gross:**

It’s not easy to think about Divine Mercy in this time of corona virus. In fact, I would really like to think about anything but what is happening in the world right now. Our time is one of grave concern, and mercy may not be the first thought that comes to mind.

Even as Divine Mercy Sunday approaches, I struggle to focus on mercies received. I prefer to consider mercies hoped for. After all, I know next to nothing about the future, so I ought to be able to cover what little I do know briefly.

When I grow up, I want to be a comma, well, maybe just a small part of a comma. You know, the mark of punctuation that’s shorter than a period but longer than a breath. Yeah, that comma. But not just any comma. I want to be taken inside the comma in the Apostle’s Creed that comes between “was born of the Virgin Mary” and “suffered under Pontius Pilate.” Now that’s a spectacular comma, a thirty three year long comma.

It stretches through the flight to Egypt, to the discovery in the Temple, to the temptation in the desert, through the Sermon on the Mount, to the loaves and the fishes, to Christ’s institution of the Eucharist. That comma curves its way

through parables and miracles. Inside that comma are the great commandments to love God with all your strength and your neighbor as yourself.

That comma feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, gives drink to the thirsty, visits the sick and the imprisoned. Inside that comma the prodigal son is forgiven and the good Samaritan honored. How I yearn to be a single pixel in that comma!

I pray that Jesus in his mercy will banish my self obsession, lead me toward that comma, and then immerse me inside of it. And I truly believe he will for his mercy is infinite.

Still, If I cannot be inside that comma, Lord, let me be a witness to it. Let me keep that comma in my heart when I lie down and when I rise up, when I sit at home and when I go abroad, when I teach your children and when I proclaim your word.

Let that comma show itself in my thoughts, in my voice, and in my every deed. Merciful Jesus, carpenter, priest and healer, for this I pray.

**From Diane Putt:**

This weekend I went for a drive. In many windows and on church kiosks were phrases of encouragement, such as “this too shall pass” and “God is in control”. It did my heart good to be reminded of the things we forget when life takes a sudden turn. In my conversation with various folks or when I listen to a homily, I am reminded that God is our Father and he is benevolent. He will take care of us.

God has us in the palm of His hand.

I am reminded of when Paul was diagnosed with cancer. It was a very frightening time on many levels. I knew that I could not solve anything - I could not heal Paul nor did I have the means to

take over the finances. I literally had to place "IT ALL" in Jesus' hands. Jesus did take over and He helped us in ways I couldn't imagine.

I don't have a cure and I don't know how this will look as people and business' get back on their feet but I do have Jesus and He is walking with us. He is in the midst of the good, the bad and the ugly. Will we allow His light to shine in and through us?

**From Martin A Ruhland:**

"Jesus Calling" reflection of today basically says to wake up each day with the thought "Jesus I trust in You."

We have to try our best to put our faith in God no matter what this morning's headline reads or what is at our own door steps. Trust that he has a plan and that good will come from these incredibly difficult circumstances.

Everyone is being impacted in some significant way. My daughter is less than a month from her due date to have my first grandchild. Her husband works at the Lockport hospital as a PT. She is so fearful that he will unintentionally bring something home. She also fears that the longer her pregnancy goes, the worse the conditions in our local hospitals will become. So I am praying for an early birth.

I am trusting in Jesus to carry my family through and that we will become closer to each other and to Him as we progress through this crisis.

I am praying harder than ever for all of you.

God bless us everyone!

**From Mary Ann DeMaria and Joan Conklin:**

Joan and Dennis have been in Florida since January however Joan wrote a bit of a reflection on her experience there.

As you know I have been in Florida for 3 months, and I wanted to share with you that I have been blessed in being able to volunteer at the St. Joseph food pantry. In doing this I have had the opportunity to meet some wonderful people and also realize how blessed I am. These Clients have made me see how grateful you can be with very little. To see the smiles on the little ones when they are handed a coloring book, a cookie or a sucker....the little things in life Or how my heart breaks for the client who goes through the bags and returns all of the can goods that do not have a flip top because they are homeless and don't have a can opener, how blessed am I? I could go on, but I think you get the message that I am attempting to send, we are blessed having each other.

In the midst of chaos, we need to have faith that we will get through this (with Our Lord in the midst) and come out stronger. It seems to be bringing out unity in most of us.

Thanks, Joan, for the work you do and your most generous spirit. I would just like to comment about all that is happening now and how I am trying to deal with it all. As a people that knows the value of sacrifice and prayer ( Palanca ) that is how I am coping. Just trying each day to check on friends and family have some kind of routine for myself. As scripture says all things work together for the good for those that love the Lord, I have had more time to spend with Jesus. I hope that you are all doing well and are healthy and please remember that you are all in my prayers.

**From Jerry Casillo:**

I feel compassion for all who are affected and all who are just plain scared.

I have been noticing how friendly everyone is in public; taking walks, at the grocery store, gas station, etc. I pray that continues throughout the “Social Distancing” time and beyond.

I miss daily mass and Holy Communion but I have been spending a lot more time talking to the Lord, reading devotionals, praying the rosary and Novenas and watching mass readings and homilies on tv and my computer. I feel close to God and Our Blessed Mother and my guardian angel Gladstone.

I must admit that I have felt relaxed with the slowdown in activities. I’m not bored yet. I have been going outside a lot and exercising and doing a lot of chores around the house. No time pressure to get things done (other than this newsletter).

Here are some sites for religious articles, prayers, videos:  
[formed.org](http://formed.org) 40 days free or get your parish code for free lifetime.

Eternal Word Television Network [EWTN](http://EWTN)

Medjugorje TV on your computer [Marytv](http://Marytv). If you have Roku you can add Marytv to your channel list. Pray Novenas starting today April 1<sup>st</sup>, Mary TV will begin a Novena for the world's deliverance from this coronavirus, so we can all receive the Eucharist again. We will pray for those nine days, from Medjugorje, ending on Good Friday. That same day we will begin the Novena of Divine Mercy! It is a double-header! (See "Novenas" window, bottom right hand column.

Other good sites: [Medjugorje.org/](http://Medjugorje.org/) or [Spirit of Medjugorje.org/](http://Spirit of Medjugorje.org/) Fr. Ray Donohue is the Spiritual Director. We went on a pilgrimage to Medjugorje with him in September. He is very knowledgeable about what is going on there.

If you want to video or phone conference with your permanent group or Ultreya, here are sites where you can join for free. [freeconferencecall.com](http://freeconferencecall.com) or [Zoom](https://zoom.us) You can get Zoom on your phone at your App store.

Donna LoVullo sent me this from Fr. Chris Alar. Place a picture of Divine Mercy, Jesus I trust in you, on your front door facing outward. Go to: [Seal the doorpost](#)

**From Mike and Marybeth Cucinotta:**

Do not distress though, there are still many things you can do to keep your spiritual life alive. Here are a few:

- Have a virtual Group Meeting.
- Have a virtual Ultreya
- Have a virtual Teams of Our Lady meeting
- Watch many of the live-stream masses, rosaries, stations, prayer sessions, etc. Your parish website might have these available to you. If your parish does not, check out Nativity of Mary’s: [www.nativityharrishill.org](http://www.nativityharrishill.org). Under the “News” heading there is a link to click. We have been watching on our family room TV using an Amazon Fire Stick to pull up the website.

Some ways to have a virtual meeting:

- Facebook Messenger
- Facetime (you can conference in multiple people)
- Zoom
- Google Hangouts

## Prayer Request:

Please keep the following people in your prayers and Palanca along with all Cursillistas who are ill or suffering:

Notify Casillo of any names to add or remove from the prayer list.

Ron Buticci  
Marie Lelek  
Frank & Martha Barry  
Owen & Aidan  
Laura, Betty and  
Angelo Ciavarella  
Chuck Stephan  
Marie and Jim  
Sorrentino  
Deacon Norm Foster  
Marie Gannon  
Loretta Sterling  
Betty & Leo Reiter  
Dan Siembida

Mike Ryan  
Timothy McCann  
Mike McCarthy  
Alice's daughter-in-law,  
Laura  
Joan Roberts  
Mary Flanagan  
Joe Insana  
Dell Leaderstorf  
Bob Yegar  
Bill Heidle  
Corinne Giermek  
Larry Lomanto  
Dcn Joe Barr  
Jim Youngers  
Cathy & John Agugliaro  
Shaun Vona  
Tim Heidle  
Owen Mangan  
Sister Antonita  
Dennis Hodur  
Michael Volk  
Kathy O'Keefe  
Denise Bressette  
Lynn Johnson

Diane Coughlin  
Deacon Dan McGuire  
Gary Banas  
Marcia Moretti  
Mary Jo Kapsiak  
Mical's Aunt Maryann  
Cheryl Besant  
Quinn children  
newborn Marylynn  
Joanne  
Mary Mercurio  
Paul & Terry Barone  
Father Sam Venne  
Elaine Stack  
Bobby Lovenetti  
Marie Sorrentino  
Frank Gallagher  
Pat Abraham  
Vinnie Barone  
Linda Orszulak  
Eva Tamoga  
Ellie Wieleba  
Lou and Liz Pauley  
Lorrie Dickerson  
Doug ShROUT  
Dan Graesser

## Cursillo Name Tags or Shirts

Contact Mike Szematowicz;  
Call/Text: 812 0633  
Email: [szematm@gmail.com](mailto:szematm@gmail.com)

View details at: [Cursillo Wearables and Name Badges](#)

List shirt size, color preference, weekend #. Mike will provide price and address where to send the check.