



# Anglican Cursillo Tasmania

March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Grace, peace and a quiet spirit be with you all.

In this time of great uncertainty and upheaval, it's good to be reminded that God is in control and that he knows what he's doing, even if we might sometimes puzzle over his methods. There are many, many passages of reassurance in the Scriptures, but I'd like to begin this letter with a couple that I am finding particularly helpful just at the moment:

One is Jesus's words of comfort in John's Gospel:

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

The other is from Paul's letter to the Romans, which is packed full of 'good stuff':

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

COVID19 is having a massive impact on all our lives at present and will continue to do so for an unknown period of time. Cursillo Tasmania is, obviously, not immune from this. Sadly, our Very Northern Ultreya on Flinders Island has had to be postponed. We are praying that we will be able to reschedule it within the next 12 months. We are also postponing the Diocesan ultreya that was to be held in May and all Regional ultreyas, until further notice. Secretariat business will be conducted via email.

Training for MW34 has also been suspended until early August, when we will reassess. If all the restrictions on gatherings and travel have been lifted by then, Greg and Kathryn (our Lay Co-ordinators) are confident that they can complete the necessary training during the two remaining Training Days they have scheduled for August and September. If restrictions still apply, then we will defer MW34 until 2021. For the moment, we suggest that you do not approach potential candidates, in case the weekend doesn't eventuate. If we get the 'all clear' in August, then you will have to work hard and fast with invitations, so we certainly recommend you continue to pray about potential candidates in the interim. Please continue to pray for Greg, Kathryn and the team as well.

What about Group Reunions? You may need to be creative in the way you support one another. If your Group Reunion is only very small, you may still choose to meet, but consider prayerfully what is best for all involved. Just because you stop meeting face to face, does not mean you have to stop supporting and encouraging one another. Use technology. Send palanca notes (and keep Australia Post afloat in the process). However you do it, stay in touch with each other.

How do we make the most of the Cursillo method during this 'new normal' of social distancing? Piety is crucial, especially while Sunday services and many other church gatherings are not taking place. Make use of some of the many on-line resources that are being offered. Share inspirational books or other material with others, especially those who don't have internet access. Immerse yourself in the Bible and be faithful in prayer. There will surely be no shortage of prayer needs over the next few months. Sing hymns or choruses with your family, if you can do so without being evicted. However you do it, stay close to the Lord so that you are not caught up in the fear and selfishness that is sadly being displayed by many in the community.

If you find you have more time on your hands or are staying at home more than usual, then it's an ideal opportunity to do some study. I'm not suggesting you embark on a Theology degree, although do so by all means, if this is the added incentive you needed, but read or listen to material that deepens your understanding of the Bible or challenges you to be more informed about the things you believe. Be creative in ways to have Bible Study without necessarily meeting face to face. Have theological discussions with others on-line – but make sure you keep it nice!

Which brings me to Action. Now is the time for Christians to shine. Be kind to others. Be generous. Be aware of the needs of others and find ways to help, if you can. Importantly, stay in touch with folk who may be in danger of becoming socially isolated, especially those in nursing homes or other places that may be in lock-down. Send notes. Make phone calls. Share jokes. Above all, in the words of Corporal Jones in 'Dad's Army': "Don't panic!"

While on the topic of Action, I would like to thank all those of you who have helped at Diocesan events over the past 6 months of so. Your assistance has been hugely appreciated and has really helped to show others that Cursillo is not a secret society, but a movement intended to benefit the whole Church.

Once again, this has become lengthy. At least it has given you something to occupy your time if stuck at home.

May you feel the Lord's peace settle upon you; may you feel his love enfold you and the warmth of his embrace while you refrain from embracing others; may you find joy in unexpected places; and may you radiate the love of Christ to all around you.

With every blessing,

Ultreya!  
Shirley Tongue  
(Diocesan Lay Director)