

# Leaders

## Introduction

The title of this Rollo is Leaders.

Being a Leader is not a matter of honor nor a matter of being a Professor in Cursillo. Being a Leader does not necessarily mean to lead. It is more about personal behavior or personal attitude. This is not about being in charge, directing some situation, or having a position.

## Definition

A Leader is a Christian who accepts to be a fully alive Christian in the world. Being a Leader is not about preaching or telling others how they should be. Being a Leader is about passing our joy of life on to others through what we live.

That's why to be a Leader is to learn to conduct oneself accordingly, to be the Leader of my life and to be the pilot of my freedom.

## **A Leader is a Person with a Capacity for Conviction, Decision, and Criterion<sup>1</sup>**

Men and women have been gifted by God with the faculty of '*being a person*' with a capacity for:

- *conviction*, to be able to convince and be anchored in reality with truth,
- *decision*, to decide to do what can really improve him/her
- *criterion*, to increase and use their capabilities with:
  - intention,
  - opportunity, and
  - effectiveness

*Conviction* is the backbone of the principles that are possessed and articulated to take on a reality and be realized in it as a person.

*Decision* is the disposition or willingness to realize a desired outcome.

*Criterion* is the will to balance in the truth to possess it more fully.

---

<sup>1</sup> Forgotten Evidences [Evidencias Olvidadas] by Eduardo Bonnín

## Attributes of a Leader

### a) To Know Himself.

We have established that a Leader is someone who is a fully alive Christian in the world and in order “*to be Christian*”, we have to strengthen our *being*. How do we accomplish this?

- By accepting ourselves as we are. “*He who truly seeks his best self, seeks God; and he who truly seeks God, finds himself*”. (Eduardo Bonnín)
- By accepting and understanding that we can be more, and we can be better. “*The person is the reflection, the expression, and the splendor of God’s specific plan for the human being. Being a person is a reality always open to becoming more of a person and a better person*”. (Eduardo Bonnín)
- By accepting to journey in the company of friends. “*A loner who does not integrate into a group of friends, risks getting lost and perishing*”. (Eduardo Bonnín)

The Founder explains that the only way you and I can define ourselves as *being Christian* is to actualize Christ. It is more important to actualize Christ than to do Christian things. Being Christian is to live Christ. Doing Christian things is to live the actual moment in the name of Christ. Eduardo goes on to say that some do because they are Christian, and some seem to be Christian because they do Christian things. Make real what Christ wants you to be and what he wants you to do.<sup>2</sup>

### b) To Know His Ideal.

Let us review the definition of Ideal. Ideal is defined as the *combination of ideas, goals, and preferences that center our life* and decides our will. It is the driving force that turns our efforts into realities. In other words, the Ideal attracts the person and moves him toward its attainment. It sums up happiness for the person. It is the axis of the person’s life.

The *combination of ideas* that become our Ideal are the convictions that preside over our life. The *goals* of our Ideal are what motivate us towards a determined purpose in life. Our *preferences* are what help us to judge and choose at will what we want from a wide range of possibilities. Therefore, these *ideas, goals and preferences are what center all our activities in life*.

Cursillo Leaders need to know their Ideal, that is, to know what is proposed, to know where we are going, to know what we want to accomplish and the best way

---

<sup>2</sup> Structure of Ideas

to accomplish it. Our Ideal encompasses an awareness and knowledge of the reality that surrounds us, that is, the environments in which we move.

Is our Ideal still fully alive or have we lowered our aim? Hopefully our Ideal aims higher than having material things, having control or power or having knowledge. Speaking of knowledge, there is a quote that goes like this: “*nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care*”. (Anonymous) Hopefully our Ideal aims at being thankful for the past, enjoying the present, and being fully aware of all the daily wonders and the gifts that our Lord grants us each moment in life.

c) To Know His Reality.

The Cursillo Leader needs to be aware and know the reality that surrounds him if he is to take the person he encounters seriously.

Our Founder writes that Cursillo is not only about saving souls, but also about building up Christianity. Cursillo and the gift of baptism seeks for all the redeemed to be *saints, apostles, and men and women of their time*.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, the Cursillo Leader is called to be a *Saint* living:

- in a conscious, shared and ever-growing grace,
- in friendship with self,
- in friendship with Christ,
- in friendship with his brothers and sisters.

The Cursillo Leader is called to be an *Apostle*:

- fulfilling through their life the redemptive yearning of Christ,
- and making a strong effort to have Christ live in all men and women through Grace.

The Cursillo Leaders are called to be *Men and Women of their Time (Reality)*:

- in tune with the needs of the reality that surrounds them,
- in step with the requirements of the reality, and
- enlightening it, directing it, and making it Christian.

**Virtues of a Leader** - A Leader possesses Natural and Supernatural virtues.

The *Natural virtues* of a Leader consist of *Initiative, Empathy and Generosity*.

- **Initiative** - A Leader is one who has the initiative to look for new ways to reach his Ideal. This can only be achieved if you have a passionate interest and

---

<sup>3</sup> Structure of Ideas

enthusiasm for your Ideal. A person will usually adjust his behavior according to his way of thinking (his mentality or platform of ideas). However, if we change our thoughts, we will change our behavior and therefore, the circumstances and Ideal in our life. A Leader's initiative to live by his Ideal instills *faith* in those around him.

- **Empathy** – A Leader is one who has the ability to identify with the feelings, thoughts, or circumstances of another. This means to have a real connection with the person. Being present means more than just being in front of a person with our mind somewhere else. To have empathy is to identify with our neighbor's joy and sorrow. Empathy instills *hope* in the Leader and those around him.
- **Generosity** – A Leader is one who is willing to give of himself to others. God proposes generosity as the path to happiness. Generosity is at the heart of the Christian life, just as it is at the heart of the Gospel. To be generous is to put our life and our time in God's hands in order for our neighbor to discover God's love and friendship which will give meaning to his life. Generosity instills *love* in the Leader and those around him.

The *Supernatural virtues* of a Leader consist of *Faith, Hope, and Love* which are known as the Theological Virtues.

- **Faith** is a supernatural gift from God. A Leader is a person of Faith. Faith is man's free response to God. Faith does not mean to have a vast knowledge about God but to feel loved by God; therefore, Faith is a dialogue of love with God that leads to a relationship with Him and others. A Leader gives personal witness of God's love through a living faith and a living union with God to encourage others to do likewise. Faith corresponds to the Leader's knowledge that God loves him.
- **Hope** is a gift of God through grace. A Leader is a person with Hope beyond himself and always striving towards the eternal. We have hope in God because we are certain that we cannot attain salvation on our own. God's grace, freely given to us, is necessary for us to be who we are called to be and to live what we need to live to attain eternal life.

Hope is the virtue of action because it gives us the certainty that what we do to encourage others to have hope is worth the effort. If this certainty is there we will do it; if this certainty is not there we will not do it. That's why Saint Teresa of Calcutta said: "*The poorest among the poor are not to be found in India; the poorest are those who have lost all Hope*". Hope corresponds to the Leader's will and dedication.

- **Love** - Charity is the last and the greatest of the three theological virtues. Charity is supernatural in the sense that God is both its origin and its object. *“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love”*. (1 John 4:8)

The Modern Catholic Dictionary defines charity as the “infused supernatural virtue by which a person loves God above all things for His [God's] own sake and loves others for God's sake.” Like all virtues, charity is an act of the will, and the exercise of charity increases our love for God and for our fellow man; but because charity is a gift from God, we cannot initially acquire this virtue by our own actions. Charity depends on faith, because without faith in God we obviously cannot love God, nor can we love our fellow man for God's sake.

A Leader is one who is capable of loving and being loved. Our world is searching for love. Love corresponds to the Leader’s heart and his spirit of charity.

St. Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 13:1-5: *If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*

### **The Leader’s Role in the Integral and Progressive Conversion of the Person**

How should the Leader of Cursillo serve to facilitate the progressive conversion of others and in the Movement? Based on the personal and sincere effort to achieve one’s own conversion – since no one can give what he does not have, and no one communicates what he is not – the role of the Leader is:

- To Know his friend,
- To Place his friend,
- To Enlighten his friend, and
- To Accompany his friend.

### **To Know (Your Friend)**

How can I help you if I don’t know you? As in the Precursillo and the 3-Day Cursillo, in the Postcursillo our interest continues to be to know the individual's personality, disposition, and circumstances. To find out, we will need to move from treatment to knowing the person and from this knowledge to friendship. Knowing leads to understand and admire the person.

Understanding is not only knowing who the person is and how he is, but why he is the way he is: how he thinks, what he wants, and how he lives or wants to live.

Admiration is to share with humility in order for the person to become what he can and should be and not what we want him to be.

### **To Place (Your Friend)**

Only in knowing the person, can we know where to place him. All too often and probably with good intentions, we begin telling the person what he needs to do and where he needs to be without ever knowing his circumstances.

To place does mean to assign new work or new responsibilities. It is not about creating new commitments for the person, but simply to clarify the commitments the person already has so he can discover his possibilities.

There are three elements to consider in orienting or placing the person in Truth.

1. Help your friend look towards Christ in every circumstance of life so he knows that Christ is always present in his life and to learn what Christ wants of him at this precise moment.
2. Help your friend live life with enthusiasm and to strive to live in grace so he in turn will attract others to Christ.
3. Help your friend recognize his talents – those he has and those that are still to be discovered – and place them in the service of Christ.

### **To Enlighten (Your Friend)**

To enlighten is to give criterion so the person's focus will be to keep his will in alignment with the will of God. Doing so, the person will possess, exercise and project through action: faith – through his enthusiasm; hope – through his dedication; and love – through his spirit of charity. To enlighten is to encourage and motivate the person to follow Christ even if it is challenging and precisely because it is challenging. Enlightening is about making your friend aware and being present to the realities and responsibilities where God places him or is calling him to: family, work, being Christian, to love God and to love neighbor, etc.

### **To Accompany (Your Friend)**

To accompany is to walk or journey alongside others so they will eventually learn to walk on their own. There can be two dangers:

1. *Paternalism* (managing or controlling a person) means not wanting to let go. To accompany is to walk alongside others, respecting the person's freedom, and allowing them the space to move at their pace.
2. *Abandonment* is the opposite of paternalism. Many of the failures are due to the abandonment after the 3-Day Cursillo, not only from the sponsor, but also by the team of Leaders who served in the person's Cursillo.

To accompany your friend is not only important, but essential. No matter if your friend is a Cursillista or not, your responsibility is to accompany him especially after he

establishes a friendship with Christ. And if he goes to Cursillo, the Leader needs to accompany him in his Fourth Day experience. The Leader's responsibility is to accompany his friend in the Precursillo, the 3-Day Cursillo, and the Postcursillo. Friendship does not end after the 3-Day Cursillo; rather it is intensified through *metanoia*.

### **Leader's Normality of Life**

These responsibilities should be realized by every Leader in the normality of their life:

1. By taking advantage of the normal circumstances of life.
2. By not increasing the number of commitments for the person.
3. By *'being an apostle'* and not have to keep *'doing apostolates'*.

### **In Conclusion**

As Leaders and as Christians, we instill faith, hope, and love in our neighbor through a personal witness of life and friendship. Cursillos' primary focus is the person; therefore, we need to take each person seriously and get to know them and admire them for who they are, not for what they have.

To be a Leader is *"to awaken the hunger for God"* in others.

To be a Leader is *"to use our capacity of conviction, decision and criterion"*.

To be a Leader is *"to be Christian"* in the moveable square meter where God places us at any given time.

To be a Leader is *"to know our Ideal"* to understand where we are and where we are headed.

To be a Leader is *"to be aware of the reality that surrounds us"* so that we may be able to help others experience the joy of knowing they are loved by God.

To be a Leader is *"to use our natural virtues of Initiative, Empathy and Generosity"* to move towards his true Ideal, in order to be truly present to the person and be ready to serve others.

To be a Leader is *"to use our supernatural virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love"* to freely respond to God and enter into a relationship with Him, and to have the courage to move towards eternity which is our goal.

To be a Leader is *"to allow our whole being to be fortified"* by:

- the love of God,
- the love of people, and
- the love for the world.