

# GO 4th

Issue 4 Volume 2  
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THE SAN JOSE FILIPINO

CURSILLO MOVEMENT NEWSLETTER

## SJF Cursillo News Bits

- *Save the Date for the Cursillo Leaders Retreat on Jan. 22, 2022 at St. Francis of Assisi church. Watch out for email Invitations in the next weeks.*
- *Stand up and be counted. See you at the monthly Ultreya, every first week of the month. Watch out for the monthly Zoom meeting email invitation.*
- *Keep showing up – the SOL is counting on you! See you at the School Leaders, every 3rd Friday of the month. Watch out for the Zoom meeting email invites and Facebook announcements.*
- *Let's pray for your intentions. Join the Call to Pray the (Cursillo Family) Rosary every Monday at 7:30pm via WebEx. Use the same meeting ID and passcode for all WebEx meetings.*
- *Help us tell the San Jose Filipino Cursillo story. We're looking for volunteer writers, photographers and editors for the Go 4th SJFCM newsletter. Contact Bro. Harvey or Sis. Robin if you are interested.*
- *Support the National Cursillo Movement. Pledge donation to the \$3/Yr. campaign and/or register at Amazon Smile to donate a percentage of your purchases in Amazon. Visit the National Cursillo website for more details. [www.natl-cursillo.org](http://www.natl-cursillo.org)*

## From the Spiritual Director's Desk

### California dioceses don't give out vaccination exemptions

By Fr. Francis Kalaw



DIOCESE OF  
SAN JOSE

Office of the Bishop

**Memo To:** All Clergy and Pastoral Leaders in DSJ  
**From:** Bishop Oscar Cantú  
**Date:** August 13, 2021  
**RE:** Religious Exemption from COVID Vaccination

As recent COVID vaccine mandates have been imposed in certain industries and professions, some Catholics may seek a "religious" exemption from you to the several vaccines now available.

For clarity, a religious exemption is a public declaration that a person's decision to refuse a vaccine is rooted in and supported by – in the case of a Catholic – authentic Catholic faith. However, such a declaration is inconsistent with the Holy See's declaration that the COVID vaccines are morally permissible, especially considering the urgency and common good (the need to help curb the loss of life, diminished mental and physical health, and a struggling economy, etc.) during this pandemic.

While a person may decide that, in conscience, they cannot receive the COVID vaccine, we cannot equate individual objection with doctrinal authority. Though an individual has a right to conscientious objection, the authority of their objection derives from their personal conscience, not from the teaching of our Church.

For these reasons, I ask our Pastors to compassionately decline requests to sign declarations rejecting the COVID vaccine on religious grounds.

All California dioceses including our diocese do not give out vaccination exemptions since the Church clearly teaches that it is morally permissible to use the available vaccine and there is no existing Catholic teaching that prevents any Catholic from receiving it.

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Below is guidance from the Diocese of San Jose:

**Q: Can Catholics receive the COVID-19 vaccines?**

Yes. Currently, all three of the vaccines in common use in the United States – Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson – have some connection to the use of aborted fetal tissue in testing or production, which has led some Catholics and other people of good will to wonder whether they can in good conscience make use of the vaccines. This connection, however, is remote and those who receive any of the vaccines neither cooperate formally or materially in moral evil. In the absence of alternatives, and when there is a sufficient reason to do so (such as to contain the spread of a serious infectious agent), Catholics can, in good conscience, receive the vaccines. See the section below on the Statements on the Moral and Ethical Aspects for more detailed information.

**Q: Does the Church encourage Catholics to be vaccinated against COVID-19?**

Yes. While the available vaccines do not provide 100 percent protection against transmission and infection of COVID-19, and in particular against the so-called “Delta variant,” they do still provide a significant degree of protection and greatly reduce the risk of hospitalization and even death should breakthrough infection occur. For these reasons, Pope Francis and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, have all encouraged Catholics, in consultation with their doctors, to make use of the COVID-19 vaccines as an effective means of preventing COVID-19.

**Q: Can Catholics choose, in good conscience, NOT to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes. While everyone has a duty to preserve his or her own life and to act in accord with the common good, medical treatment should, in principle, be voluntary. No one should ever be forced to undergo any medical treatment, including vaccination. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services states, “The free and informed consent of the person...is required for medical treatments and procedures.” However, if someone chooses not to be vaccinated, then, in keeping with the common good, he or she has an obligation to observe additional measures (i.e. frequent testing, masking, social distancing, etc.) to limit the spread of infectious disease.

**Q: What about a religious exemption if I choose not to be vaccinated?**

A religious exemption, rather than appealing to the judgment of one’s individual conscience, appeals explicitly to religious teaching or doctrine. While an individual to appeal to his or her own conscience in refusing COVID-19 vaccination, a Catholic cannot claim that any teaching of the Catholic Church actually prevents him or her from receiving any of the COVID-19 vaccines, since the Church has clearly taught that it is morally acceptable to make use of the available COVID-19 vaccines.



## Cursillistas in the Community



**Cursillo Memorial Mass, Nov. 6 at St. Francis of Assisi church** celebrated by Fr. Francis Kalaw. Although only snacks were served, the fellowship took long when Cursillistas met other Cursillistas coming out of the lockdown. (Photo by Bro. Reuben Regucera)



**Adopt-a-priest, Cursillo Christmas Mass & Fellowship, Dec. 4 at St. Elizabeth of Portugal parish, Milpitas.**

Covid-19 did not stop the annual SJFCM Christmas Mass and adopt-a-priest. Pictured at right are some of the priests at Pastor Fr. Andy Ligot's residence (seated, L-R) Fr. Joe Galang, Fr. Michael Gazzingan, Fr. Joseph Page, Fr. Vincent Pineda, Fr. Celso Singson as (standing, L-R) Sis. Maria de Quinto, Sis. Desi Lucas, Sis. Marcy Reyes and Fr. Francis Kalaw look on. Other priests who were also there for faith, fellowship and food were: Fr. Anthony Uytingco, Fr. Michael Syjuco, Fr. Reynaldo Sarmiento and Seminarian Quizzer Besinio. (Photo by Sis. Robin Barkin)



**Men's chorus line, Cursillo Christmas Mass & Fellowship, Dec. 4, Fr. Andy Ligot's residence.** Missing the big voices of Fr. Edsil Ortiz, Fr. Eddie Obrero and the late Fr. Norman Segovia, the brothers stepped up to prove SJFCM's men's got talent, too. (L-R) Bro. Andy Ramones, Bro. Chito de Quinto, Bro. Jun Esteves, Bro. Vince Songcayawon, Bro. Tony Mijares, Bro. Harvey Barkin, Bro. Reuben Regucera and Bro. Titus Raceles belt out "Dahil sa Cursillo Nagbago ako." (Photo by Sis. Robin Barkin)



**San Jose Filipino Cursillo Christmas Mass & Fellowship, Dec. 4, at St. Elizabeth of Portugal Church in Milpitas.** Fr. Joe Galang (center) celebrated with other priests. (Photo by Sis. Robin Barkin)

## Ask and you shall receive an answer

### What is the Origin of Simbang Gabi?



Two traditions concerning the Mass to usher in the event of Christ's birth developed in the early course of history. Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary and Poland came to celebrate this Mass every day — four weeks during Advent. A second tradition developed in the Latin Church. These countries celebrated the Misa Aurea on the nine days before Christmas.

The original Simbang Gabi was thus called the Misa Aurea (Golden Mass) or Angel's Mass. In 1587, Fray Diego Soria, Prior of the convent of San Agustin Acolman, petitioned the Pope for permission to hold Christmastide Masses outdoors because the church could not accommodate the multitude that attended the services. The request was granted through a rescript and in the 17th century, the Misa de Aguinaldo or the Simbang Gabi or the Misa de Gallo became a Filipino spiritual tradition.

This novena of Masses expressed the sentiments of the people towards Mary and manifested the Filipino rite of celebrating Life in more festive ways. The readings, the prayers, and the chants of the Misa de Aguinaldo or Simbang Gabi made it clear, that it was a celebration of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Father's eternal word — the fruit of Mary's womb.

Simbang Gabi masses were celebrated in the early morning hours, when the roosters crow to announce the coming of a new day (hence, the name Misa de Gallo) for a very practical reason: Filipinos were farmers or fishermen who either began or ended their day at dawn. Workers in the field began their work at the crack of dawn to avoid the intense heat and take advantage of the capacity of the carabao to work. Fisherman who spent all night at sea came home to sell their yield.

The missionaries decided they could gather all the people together at one time, implant in the hearts and minds of the catechumens the substance of Christianity, preserve the Catholic faith, and continue the propagating of the gospels by integrating the distinctly Filipino custom with the needs of the Catholic worship. Thus at the first sound of dawn, the local band played traditional Christmas carols all over town or the sacristan mayor pealed the bells and the whole town was up for Simbang Gabi. The entire family would walk or ride the carabao sleds to the nearest church. By 5 a.m. the mass and accompanying catechism were over and celebration continued with a variety of delicacies displayed in the churchyard for everyone's pleasure, and lighted lanterns fashioned out of bamboo and paper (parol) hanging from windows and decorating the streets leading to the church.

The roots of Simbang Gabi are all but forgotten now. However, the fascination of going to church at dawn, in order to start the new day with worship, is as strong as ever among Filipinos. For the children, it announces that Christmas is just around the corner. For most, the practice has acquired its own smell and flavor, and spiritual significance distinct from any other time of the year.

The Filipino immigrants brought this tradition with them when they came to the United States. In 1992, at the request of the Filipino community at Our Lady of Peace, a novena of Masses to prepare for Christ's birth was started at the parish. The first attempt was a success.

*(Excerpted from Catechesis on Simbang Gabi, Office of the Pastoral Care of Migrants and of Refugees, US Catholic Conference)*



## How was your Weekend?



**Q: When was your Cursillo Weekend and who was your Rectora?**

A: Year 2015. Sister Robin Barkin.

**Q: What part or activity of your Weekend was the most meaningful or made you decide to change your life?**

A: Having the chance to spend time in the chapel to pray and the chance to reflect on life.

How and why? My mother passed away in 2014. My father passed away in 2012. The only way I can give back to my parents is to pray for the eternal repose of their souls.

Sis. Liza Amog

**Q: How did you apply this decision when you came out of your Cursillo Weekend?**

A: I think part of the grace I received during the 3-day weekend was the chance to learn how to pray and just realize the importance of spending quiet time to pray. I just continued to pray for the eternal repose of the souls of my late parents. My late mother has a huge devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. I started to learn more about the Blessed Virgin Mary. With the grace from God, I was able to visit places where the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared ( Our Lady of Guadalupe in 2016, and Our Lady of Fatima and Our Lady of Lourdes in 2017).

**Q: What was the life-changing situation that occurred that prompted you to go back to Christ?**

A: Passing away of my late parents. Realization that life on earth is just temporary.

(As told to Sis. Marcy Reyes by Sis. Lisa Amog)

## Vocation on our Vacation

### St Anthony church & Sanctuary of Fatima, Portugal



St. Anthony Church, Lisbon.  
(Photo by Sis. Maria DeQuinto)

On October 18, 2021, Bro Chito and I had the opportunity of traveling overseas again. We chose Portugal where the Covid case is low and the country has a vaccination rate of 86.6 percent. We started in Lisbon, the city of seven hills. Churches abound in Portugal, some of which are a block away from each other. Let me focus on two churches: St. Anthony Church in Lisbon and the more famous Sanctuary of Fatima.

The Church of St. Anthony was built on the site where St. Anthony was born in 1195 to a wealthy family. His birth name is Fernando de Bulhoes. While studying in Coimbra in 1220, he entered the Franciscan order and changed his name to Antonio. His missionary travels lead him to Italy where he settled in Padua. Lisbon celebrates his feast day on June 13 and he is a beloved and popular saint in Lisbon. Personally, I am in awe of the patience of St. Anthony. Each time I lose or misplace something, I call for his help and pray that he assist me in finding the lost article. How many of us have asked for his help?

This year is the 104th year of Fatima where the story of the miracle in Fatima began in May 1917. The Marian apparitions were witnessed by three young children, Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta while guarding their families' sheep.

The Sanctuary is visited by six to eight million pilgrims each year. There are rosary and masses held and the most attended is the 9:30pm rosary and procession. This pilgrim site is heartwarming especially when you see the dedication of the pilgrims who are walking on their knees to reach the Sanctuary.

There is also a station of the cross where you can meditate. My heart was filled with emotion participating in the procession and rosary. Inexplicably, I felt overwhelmed with gratitude, sincere devotion and unity with so many fellow pilgrims.  
(Sis. Maria de Quinto)

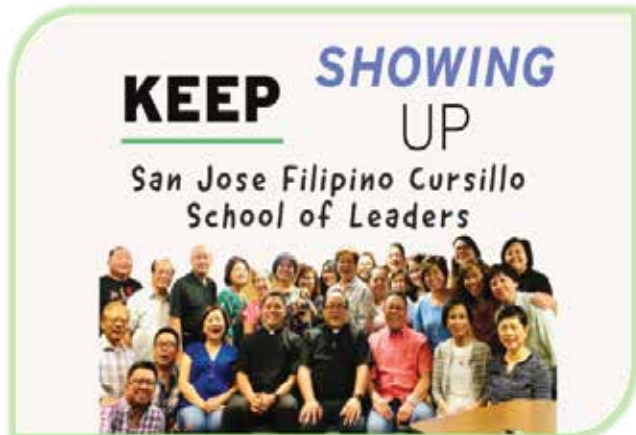


Sanctuary of Fatima (Photo by Sis. Maria DeQuinto)

## Cursillo Manual vs Step by Step Comparison

### Sunday - Third Day

SUNDAY - THIRD DAY CURSILO MANUAL		SUNDAY - THIRD DAY STEP BY STEP RECTOR'S GUIDE	
7:00 am	Arise	8:55 am	Mañanitas <b>Appendix 13: Mañanitas</b>
7:30 am	Morning Prayer 5th Meditation "Christ's Message to the Cursillistas"	7:45 am	Morning Prayer 5th Meditation "Christ's message to the Cursillistas"
8:00 am	Breakfast	8:15 am	Breakfast and Free Time Group Photo
8:45 am	Study of the Environment Rollo	9:00 am	Study of the Environment Rollo
9:40 am	Free time	10:45 am	Life in Grace Rollo <b>Appendix 14: Service Sheet</b>
9:50 am	Life in Grace Rollo / Service Sheet	12:00 pm	Mass
10:50 am	Free time	1:00 pm	Lunch Rector explains cost of Weekend
11:00 am	Mass	2:00 pm	Christianity in Action Rollo
12:00 pm	Lunch Rector explains cost of Weekend	3:00 pm	The Cursillista Beyond the Cursillo Rollo
12:50 pm	Free time	3:30 pm	Total Security Rollo <b>Visitors Join the Group Reunion</b> Prepare for the Closing
1:15 pm	Christianity in Action Rollo	5:00 pm	Clausura <b>Appendix 16: Clausura</b>
2:20 pm	Free time	8:15 pm	Visit to the Blessed Sacrament
2:30 pm	Cursillistas Beyond the Cursillo Rollo		
3:15 pm	Total Security Rollo		
3:55 pm	Group Reunion Demonstration		
4:10 pm	Group Reunion by the Cursillistas and Leaders		
4:40 pm	Dinner and free time		
5:00 pm	Personal Reflections on Cursillo Experience		
5:30 pm	Prepare for the Closing		
5:45 pm	Closing and Apostolic Commitment service		
7:40 pm	Visit to the Blessed Sacrament		



### **A priest walks into a bar**

Church marquee announcements:

- ☺ Come tonight and hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa
- ☺ Come and watch our 8th grade basketball team kill Christ the King
- ☺ Don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.
- ☺ Don't let worry kill you – let us help
- ☺ Anyone who enjoys sinning, come join the choir
- ☺ Potluck Sunday – prayer and medications to follow
- ☺ Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.
- ☺ The students will present Shakespeare's Hamlet Friday at 7 PM. All are invited to attend this tragedy.
- ☺ Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM. Please use the large double door at the side entrance

A teacher collected well-known proverbs. Each kid in the class got the first half of the proverb and was asked to finish it. Here are what the kids came up with:

- ☺ People in glass houses shouldn't ... run around naked.
  - ☺ Better to be safe ... than punch a bigger kid.
  - ☺ You can lead a horse to water ... but how?
  - ☺ Don't bite the hand ... that looks dirty.
  - ☺ A miss is as good as a ... Mr.
  - ☺ If you lie down with dogs, you ... will stink in the morning.
  - ☺ An idle mind ... is the best way to relax.
  - ☺ A penny saved is ... not much.
  - ☺ Two is company, three's ... Musketeers.
  - ☺ When the blind lead the blind ... get out of the way.
  - ☺ Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, cry and ... you have to blow your nose.
  - ☺ As you shall make your bed so shall you ... mess it up.
  - ☺ Where there's smoke, there's ... pollution.
- Jokes from Oh! For Heaven's sakes! Jokes again? Volume 4 By Fr. Tony Peters, 1st Books)*

*Make a friend. Be a friend. And bring your friend to Christ.*

*Fr. Francis Kalaw*

*Sis. Desi Lucas*

*Sis. Melinda Collins*

*Sis. Marcy Reyes*

*Sis. Robin Barkin*

*Sis. Emma Forlanda*

*Sis. Maria De Quinto*

*Bro. Sam Sebastian*

*Bro. Marlon De Leon*

*Bro. Harvey Barkin*

*Send us your suggestions for topics, questions and photos. **De Colores!***