



# The Cursillista

“The Cursillista” is a quarterly publication of the West River Cursillo Movement.

Volume 5 / March, 2025

## Ultreya!

Ultreya’s are held on a quarterly basis, and include a potluck dinner. As usual, our last Ultreya was a dynamic event with a great turnout, and featured an outstanding presentation by Kent Bryant. It also included a lot of fine food, faith, and fellowship.

The first Ultreya of 2025 will take place at 6pm Sunday, March 9th, and will be held at Blessed Sacrament Church. Bill Colson will be our featured witness, and it promises to be a dynamic event.



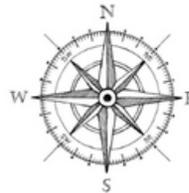
If bringing a dish for the potluck is difficult for you, don’t worry about it! Nobody’s keeping score. It’s YOU that we want to see. And bring a guest!

What: Ultreya!  
When: 6pm, Sunday, March 9th  
Where: Blessed Sacrament Church in Rapid City

The word Ultreya signifies “onward” or “proceed further on”. The Ultreya is the sharing of our Christian life. It’s a lot of fun, and you don’t want to miss this event. Besides, it’s Spring. A little spiritual spring-cleaning might be in order for you. Ultreya’s only come around once every three months! Don’t miss it!

## The Real North Pole

by Cursillo Spiritual Director Father Andrzej



For a few days , or maybe weeks, the Church celebrates Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. This feast takes place forty days after Christmas. In memory

of the rescue of the firstborn sons of Israel during the Egyptian captivity, every firstborn son among the Jews was considered God’s property.

Therefore, on the 40th day after birth, the son had to be taken to the temple in Jerusalem. The child was then placed in the hands of the priest to be redeemed for a symbolic fee, equal to five days’ work. At the same time, the rite of offering and redeeming the firstborn son was accompanied by a ceremony of purification of the child’s mother. On this occasion, the mother was obliged to sacrifice a lamb, and if she was poor, at least two turtledoves or pigeons. The fact that Mary and Joseph offered a turtledove shows that they were very poor. After fulfilling the provisions of the Mosaic Law, Jesus’ parents went to Nazareth. The Evangelist Luke showed that God’s grace was constantly present in the life of Jesus.

God with his grace is present in the lives of each of us. His generosity depends on our openness. Our confirmation comes from the prophetess Anna and the old man Simeon. Inspired by grace, they found themselves in the temple at the moment of the presentation of Baby Jesus. Anna’s life was described as the fruit of mature faith. As a widow, she devoted her time to serving in the temple, “serving God

with fasting and prayer day and night" (Luke 2:37). She could not have been informed in any way, and yet "she came at that very moment, praising God and speaking about Him to all who were waiting for deliverance" (Luke 2:38). Anna announced that the Child in the temple was the answer to the Israelites waiting for the Messiah. In this way, the prophetess bore silent witness to the importance of Jesus for people who eagerly await redemption.

Old man Simeon also "was an upright and devout man, and he waited for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him (Luke 2:25). He took the six-week-old Child in his arms and raised him high with the utmost reverence, recognizing Him as the Savior of the world and blessing God's goodness: "Now, O Master, let Your servant depart in peace" (Luke 2:29). In this way, the goal of his earthly life had already been achieved, because he saw the Savior, whose appearance begins the last stage of saving history.

God's grace is a response to our sacrifice, i.e. a life dominated by the desire to trust and devote ourselves to God.

The call to be witnesses of God's grace in the world is taken up by consecrated persons. Through their lives they show how different the ways of "being a Christian" are. Since 1997, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, the universal Church celebrates the feast established by St. John Paul II "Day of Consecrated Life", dedicated to prayer for people who have given their lives to the service of God and people in countless orders, congregations and secular institutes, according to the grace given to them. In this way, they strive for perfect love - the goal of every Christian.

The Feast of the Presentation is an opportunity for our personal trust in God who constantly works in our lives. Let us allow the Lord to work in our everyday lives so that we can be visible signs of the action of God's

grace in the world. We may not be living in a consecrated state, as members of a religious community, but we have made a commitment to Christ and His Church. Christ is counting on me and you, as leaders, as helpers, as active members of the Rapid City Diocese Cursillo.

Fr. Andrzej (with the help of Fr. Leszek Smolinski)

## Message from the Lay Director

De Colores 4-dayers,

I am sorry if you missed our last school of leaders, we covered our bylaws (I know super exciting). Fruit that came from it was, those that attended, refocused our attention on what is truly important, "... bring a friend to Christ!". In other words we need to continue inviting and encouraging others to group with us.

Thank you to those that are carrying the cross of pain and medical issues. Please remember to offer your sufferings for those that need Jesus. Please pray for comfort of those in pain, that they find some consolation in Jesus, and what Paul wrote. "...To makeup for what is lacking in Christ's suffering on the cross"-That being in summary that I join in his mission by my "participating" in calling others to conversion.

De Colores,  
Daniel Brechtel

## Profile of a Cursillista - David Elkjer

Like many others in the West River Cursillo movement, David Elkjer has lived a life of soft-spoken service and faith.

The middle child of nine, David grew up a block away from St. Joseph's Cathedral in Sioux Falls in the 1950's. He views his childhood as idyllic, and St. Joseph's was at the center of the Elkjer family life. The entire family attended all church functions. His mother was especially devout, and insisted that the nine children go to

confession at least once per month. Meanwhile, David's father had converted to Catholicism, but usually chose to go to Mass by himself. With nine kids, of course, that's somewhat understandable.

David initially attended school at St. Joseph's Cathedral, then went on to O'Gorman High School, and ultimately graduated from the University of South Dakota. From there, he taught one year at the St. Francis Indian School, and shortly thereafter married his wife Cindi. Cindi had obtained a teaching job in Hot Springs, so they moved there, and David went to work for People's Telephone, where he learned to be a telephone repairman. Ultimately People's Telephone became Golden West, and when they opened their local office, the Elkjers moved to Rapid City in 1986, and David began a career in sales. It was a good career choice for this likeable man. David and Cindi have two children (Melissa and Joe), and are now blessed with seven grandchildren.

David's contributions to the church are almost too numerous to mention. After joining Blessed Sacrament church in 1986, he taught confirmation classes for many years. When Father Mulloy requested that he get involved with OCIA (RCIA at the time) in 1998, he led OCIA at Blessed Sacrament as a discussion leader and facilitator, and that involvement with OCIA continues today. David served on the school board at St. Thomas More, and even taught senior religion classes. He also served on the Parish Council at Blessed Sacrament for many years as well.

Cursillo was relatively new at Blessed Sacrament when the Elkjers moved to Rapid City. With the encouragement of his Mom (who was on the Sioux Falls prayer team that helped initiate Cursillo in Rapid City), he attended his first retreat in 1987, and has "grouped" ever since that time. Over the years he has helped administer the retreat,

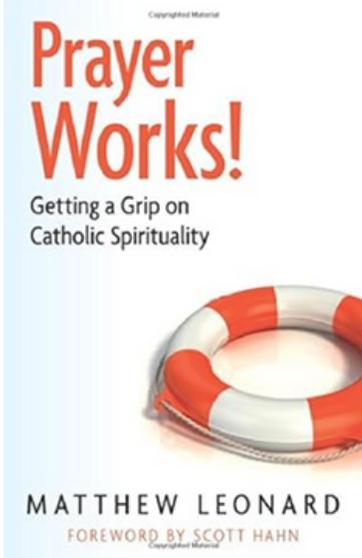
including serving as rector on two different occasions, and by presenting various Rollos. He has lived the slogan "Make a Friend, Be a Friend, Bring a Friend to Christ" by introducing many people over the years to Cursillo.

As you might expect from his deep involvement, David has an extremely positive view of Cursillo. In his view, "It has made me a better teacher, and a better husband." It has "helped me understand what being a Christian is.... A disciple of Christ.... what love is." He sees the group at Blessed Sacrament as "a brotherhood", and loves "all the work that our group does." He also added that he has seen Cursillo change people's lives many times over the years. Of course, his Cursillo brothers recognize that David was an integral part of that "changing of people's lives".

Sometimes people's contributions of time or treasure are taken for granted. They always contribute, so the assumption is that they always will contribute. This profile of David Elkjer is intended to pay homage, and to recognize the many lives that have been positively influenced by the inspirational man of service and faith. Well done, David. Very well done indeed.



# Study



**Prayer Works! Getting a Grip on Catholic Spirituality**, by Matthew Leonard

This is the first book that I’ve read that explains prayer in some depth. The author has a strong sense of humor, but he also can get down into the spiritual weeds in an understandable manner. I liked this book!

“Prayer is necessary and efficacious because that the way God wants it. It’s a homage to his providence. In fact, prayer acknowledges that there is a God and that we are governed by a divine Being who is deeply interested in the affairs of our life. It seeks a power that is beyond that of men. Prayer can obtain and achieve that which only God can give. You just have to have a little faith.”

I must say, my “study” has absolutely taken off with the assistance of Cursillo. I’ve learned a lot, and I’ve enjoyed virtually everything I read. This book, as well as the list below (mentioned at Cursillo group meetings) are all great books that you would likely enjoy.

Once again, I hope you enjoy this as much as I did. If the Mustard Seed doesn’t have a copy on hand I believe they’ll order one for you. Support your LOCAL Catholic bookstore!

Other study materials mentioned at recent Cursillo group meetings include:

- Living the Catholic Faith, by Bishop Charles Chaput
- Called to be Holy, by Cardinal Timothy Dolan
- The Rocking Chair Prophet, by Matthew Kelly
- The Bible in a Year podcast, by Father Mike Schmitz
- The Catechism in a Year podcast, by Father Mike Schmitz
- Things Worth Dying For, by Bishop Chaput
- A Teacher of Strange Things, by Cy Kellett
- Beautiful Eucharist, by Matthew Kelly
- Holy Moments, by Matthew Kelly
- The Bible in a Year podcast, by Father Mike Schmitz
- The Catechism in a Year podcast, by Father Mike Schmitz
- The Catechism of the Catholic Church

## Important West River Contacts

Position	Name	Contact
Lay Director	Daniel Brechtel	cdbrechtel@gmail.com   (605) 209-3389
Spiritual Advisor	Fr. Andrzej Wyrostek	(605) 787-5168 (OLBH Office)
Pre-Cursillo	Richard Rangel	Slagrande20@gmail.com   (605) 390-5496
3-Day Cursillo	Lisa Wattenhofer	polrbear2@aol.com   (605) 209-9267
Post Cursillo	Bill Colson (Assistant - open)	Billcolson9@msn.com   (605) 381-7353
School of Leaders	Daniel Brechtel	cdbrechtel@gmail.com   (605) 209-3389
Secretary	Nikki Dyczek (Asst - Robert Dyczek)	ndyczek@outlook.com   (605) 484-2801
Treasurer	Jim Blackwell (Asst - Ed Lee)	Jimbob75@hotmail.com   (605) 923-2955

Rapid City Diocese 200 Main St Ste 100, Rapid City, SD 57701 | [www.rapidcitydiocese.org](http://www.rapidcitydiocese.org)

Cursillo Movement PO Box 4072, Rapid City SD 57709 | [www.westrivercursillo.org](http://www.westrivercursillo.org)

## 2025 Calendar of Events

Secretariat – Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm at Blessed Sacrament Church. The next Secretariat meeting will be held on March 18th at 6:30 pm.

Ultreya – Upcoming Ultreya to be held on March 9th at Blessed Sacrament Church at 6 pm.

**NACG at the World Ultreya Rome** – June 6-8, 2025

**Region 6 Spring Encounter – Omaha** – March 28-30, 2025

Don't miss our next Ultreya!  
Sunday, March 9th • 6pm  
Blessed Sacrament Church

See Page 1 for Details

Christ is counting on you.

**“Make a friend; Be a friend; Bring a friend to Christ.”**

## Group Meeting Updates

Some Cursillistas attend a group meeting every week. Others haven't been to a group meeting in a long while. If you're one of the latter, consider attending a group meeting! A partial listing of group meetings is shown below:

Blessed Sacrament (across from Canyon Lake) – A Cursillo men's group meets every Saturday at 7am at Blessed Sacrament Church. This is a fairly large group meeting that is well-attended, but new members are always very welcome. Blessed Sacrament also hosts a women's group meeting, which takes place at 12:30pm on Tuesdays in Room 107. The men's group at Blessed Sacrament is seeing impressive growth. Since the last issue of The Cursillista, they have welcomed several new “groupers”.

Our Lady of the Black Hills (Piedmont) – Justin Carlin and Father Andrzej have organized a new Cursillo men's group at Our Lady of the Black Hills. Meetings take place at the OLBH parish at 7am Saturday. A new women's group is starting at OLBH! Blessings! Mondays at 7pm!

For the Ladies. Fork Real Cafe (lower Saint Joseph Street in Rapid City across from the courthouse) is the place to be Wednesday mornings at 11am.

Finally, here's a great offer for you, a Friday Night Cursillo Book Study. Jim and Becky Goodloe lead a Cursillo Book Study every Friday night at Blessed Sacrament Church. No homework is involved – the group reads and discusses what they've read during the group meeting, and your presence would be very welcome! This is a terrific opportunity to strengthen your study, to meet some of your fellow Cursillistas, and enjoy some truly outstanding company as well. This weekly study event is held from 6:30 to 8pm on Friday, in Room 29 downstairs at Blessed Sacrament. Questions? Please call Cindy Howell Washabaugh at (605) 381-7240.

Editor's note: The meeting you attend does not need to be connected to your parish. You can attend any group meeting you like! Is your group listed? If not, we'd love to include you! Please drop us a note at [info@westrivercursillo.org](mailto:info@westrivercursillo.org).



West River Cursillo

PO Box 4072 Rapid  
City, SD 57709

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE

**PAID**

PERMIT NO. 618  
RAPID CITY, SD

Don't miss our next Ultreya!  
Sunday, March 9th • 6pm  
Blessed Sacrament Church

See Page 1 for Details

Christ is counting on you.

---

## Other Cursillo News

The National Cursillo website has a wealth of information, including:

- A history of Cursillo,
- Leadership development articles
- Cursillo literature.

As “newsy” items are posted by the National organization, we will post many of them here. The National Cursillo movement website can be found at [natl-cursillo.org](http://natl-cursillo.org). There is also a website dedicated to the West River Cursillo movement. That address is <https://withjesusandmary.com/west-river-cursillo>

The Cursillista is a quarterly publication of the West River Cursillo Movement. Comments, announcements, or articles can be sent to [info@westrivercursillo.org](mailto:info@westrivercursillo.org).

Special thanks to Western Mailers for their invaluable contributions producing and distributing this document.