

YOU AND YOUR TEAM REUNION

● Guillermo Tejón, O.P.

In *You and Your Post-Cursillo* we spoke briefly of the Team Reunion. And we agreed that the Team Reunion is the most important means of perseverance in the Post-Cursillo. And that you need it...

Unfortunately, the Team Reunion is something to which some cursillistas pay little attention. There are cursillistas who consider it useless. Some even dismiss it as an ostentatious show.

These, I believe, are sufficient reasons to select the Team Reunion as our topic for today's conversation.

1.—A Gathering of Friends.

The Team Reunion is patterned after the reunions of the early Christians, who used to meet in private houses to pray together and help one another keep alive their fervour in the service of the Lord.

The Team Reunion is a gathering of friends. It is like a small club where friends meet.

This is not only natural, but—what is more important!—supernatural friendship.

The members of a team have one thing in common: a strong determination to live up to the expectations of the Post-Cursillo!

They are friends among themselves. And they are friends of and in Christ...

Friendship..., love for one another..., and for God!... This is the basis of the Team Reunion...

The advantages that you, as a cursillista, can derive from this friendly gathering—the Team Reunion—are many. The Team Reunion provides you with an opportunity to give meaning to the motto of your life: Idealism, Surrender, Charity. . .

The Team Reunion helps us realize that the salvation of many others depends on us, on our holiness, on our spiritual idealism. And, as a logical consequence, it invites us to surrender to the two guiding principles of the life of a cursillista: Personal Sanctification and Apostolate. It spurs us to improve ourselves and to work for the spiritual improvement of others.

The Team Reunion increases our love for others. It makes us more understanding of their faults and less impatient with their shortcomings.

The Team Reunion teaches us in a practical way how to live our Christian Ideal. . . .

It deepens our conviction that we are the Church, and that as such we are working together for the extension of the Church of Christ.

In the Team Reunion the dogma of the Communion of Saints becomes a tangible reality. You work with other christians, with other saints. . .

They learn from your experience; and you learn from theirs.

Working with others, we get rid of that *human respect* that so often makes us cowards in the service of God. How many times do we fail to do good simply because we are afraid of what others might think or say of us! . . .

And there you are, in the Team Reunion, telling your brothers about your Christian life, about the good things you have done, about your failures! . . . With sincerity, with naturalness, without fear, without human respect. . .

The example of the others is a powerful palanca for you. Can anybody who attends Team Reunions regularly and who is a witness to the wonders that the Grace of God works in the souls of others. . . fail to be impressed? . . . , continue to live in sin? . . . , to live without prayer? . . . , without idealism, surrender, charity? . . .

The Team Reunion forces us to pay attention to the Service Sheet.

The fact that we have to report on it every week is a great incentive to keep it up...; if only out of shame!...

Life in Grace explained to you the value of the daily examination of conscience. The Team Reunion is a most fruitful weekly examination of conscience!...

The Team Reunion strengthens our determination to serve Christ.

The "Thermometer of the Will" is perhaps low: *I do not want to...; I cannot...*— In the Team Reunion the example of the others, their prayers, their charity, their advice... will make us shake off our laziness, stand up and say: *I can!...; I want to!...;* will give us the courage we need to put our resolution into practice: *I do!...*

If others can do it, why can't I?... Am I not as much of a man as they are?...

Very often all a man needs to become great, to become a hero, to become a saint... is the challenge thrown at him by the example of others. This challenge is thrown at you in the Team Reunion!...

The Team Reunion is a gathering of friends. Friends who are moved by the same spirit, who share the same ideals, who care for one another, who are ready to help one another...

When one is low, the others try to raise him up...

When one is up, he tries to bring the others to his level...

This is not a contest. This is mutual help, a common effort...

A mutual help that is given in all sincerity, in all humility... Without offending anybody, without hurting anybody, without making anybody feel that he is not as good as the others!...

This is brotherly love!... This is Christianity in action!...

Let us see how Bishop Hervas explains it. Quoting St. Francis of Sales, he writes on page 268 of the *Leaders' Manual*:

The same Saint goes on to say that those who in this world embrace true virtue must join with each other in holy and sacred friendship through which they encourage, stimulate, and help each other to do good. And just as those who travel over rugged and slippery paths must grasp each other's hand to make their way safely, so also those who live in the

world need good friendship to reassure each other and to give mutual assistance along the many difficult paths that they must get over.

Remember that you are a pilgrim on your way to your Father's House; and that sometimes the way is rough and full of obstacles. . . You need the helping hand, the supporting shoulder, the encouragement, the prayers. . . of friends. . .

You will find all this in the Team Reunion. . .

Finally, for us, cursillistas, the Team Reunion is a guarantee of perseverance in the Life in Grace and of success in the Apostolate.

The Team Reunion, in the words of Bishop Hervas,

is as important as the Cursillo itself, since it offers the key to the perseverance with which all are so concerned

(Questions and Problems, 330)

It is a key that you cannot afford to throw away, because it is irreplaceable.

It is said in the Leaders' Manual, and is taught in the Cursillo, that the Group Reunion can replace many things in the maintenance of perseverance, but that "anything" is not able to replace the Group Reunion, since it is what normally actualizes and stimulates the idealism, self-surrender and spirit of charity proper to the tone and style of the cursillistas

(Questions and Problems, 329).

In other words, the Team Reunion is a summary of the Cursillo. It helps you carry out your triple apostolate: with yourself, with the members of your team and with others. . .

With yourself, because it increases your piety, your union with God, your sanctifying grace, your holiness. . .

With the members of your team, because your spiritual life is a source of inspiration for your brothers, and your apostolic zeal an example for them to follow. . .

With others, because the Team Reunion sustains you in your apostolic vocation. It is the best way to make sure that your apostolic plan

of last week was carried out, and that you prepare another plan for the next week...

It is also the best way to make sure that the collective apostolate of the group is not forgotten...

It is almost impossible to be faithful to our Team Reunion and unfaithful to our Cursillo commitments!...

The Team Reunion is a guarantee of perseverance and success, not only because of the Cursillo Method—with its many years of experience—, but also because of another—more reliable!—guarantor: God Himself!...

For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them (Mt.,18,20).

You and your brothers meet in Christ's name. As your Service Sheet says: "We will have our Team Reunions in the name of Christ".

If you pray and work together in Christ's name..., won't Christ keep His promise?...

I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven (Mt.,18,19).

2.—Genuine Cursillo Team Reunion

I hope that you agree with me that the Team Reunion brings about many spiritual benefits and blessings. But this is so *only* on condition that the Team Reunion is organized and conducted in accordance with the spirit and rules of the Cursillo. In other words, on condition that it is a *genuine* Cursillo Team Reunion.

In order to produce the wonderful results explained above, your Team Reunion must have the characteristics of an authentic Cursillo Team Reunion. Which are these characteristics?...—Let us mention the most important among them.

a) *Regularity*.— Your Team Reunion must be held regularly once a week. Once a week is not too often; and not too far apart...

A cursillista should be very slow in accepting reasons for sus-

pending his Team Reunion. If, on account of some unavoidable and unexpected circumstances, the Team Reunion cannot be held at the appointed day, place or time, arrangements should be made to make up for the deficiency.

If a member of the group is sick, the others can perhaps gather around his bed and have their Team Reunion there. This will bring a great spiritual consolation to your sick brother...

And your elder brother, Christ, will be happy and grateful:

I was... sick and you visited me... (Mt. 25,36).

If you are far from home and the other members of your group, look around for an Ultreya, for brother cursillistas. You will be welcome. Meeting new brothers and holding a team reunion with them will be beneficial to you and to them...

And if, by any chance, you cannot find anybody, still don't give up the Team Reunion. You are not alone. Christ is with you. Pick up a Crucifix...; and make your Team Reunion with Him!... You will find the experience most rewarding!...

b) *Seriousness*.—The Team Reunion has to be taken seriously. Without rigidity; but with seriousness... To start on time; to do it conscientiously; not to be in a hurry...

c) *Discretion*.—The Team Reunion is a gathering of friends, of brothers... Whatever transpires in it should be kept secret among them. Lack of discretion in this respect will undermine the confidence that the members of the team must have in one another, and, therefore, their friendship. And it will pave the way for the disintegration of the team and the death of the reunion.

d) *Sincerity*.—Our reports have to be truthful. The Team Reunion is not a comedy, or a show... We are there, not to impress anybody, or to pretend to be what we are not...; but to improve ourselves and help others improve themselves...

e) *Life*.—There must be life in your Team Reunion. It cannot afford to be dead or a matter of routine... You do not go to the Team Reunion to see what happens. You go there to see to it that something happens...

How will you and the other members of your Team make sure that your Team Reunion possesses these characteristics? . . . — Make sure that the Theory and Method of the Team Reunion are followed strictly! . . .

You know the Theory, because you know the meaning and purpose of the Team Reunion. The Method was explained to you when you made the Cursillo. You even witnessed a demonstration of a Team Reunion.

See to it that the Theory is not forgotten by you or your brothers. . .

And that the Method is followed, with regard to:

the number of members of a group (not too few, not too many; as a general rule, from four to six);

the day, place and time (always the same);

the Cursillo rules on *who should compose a team* (of this we shall speak later);

the Order of the Reunion (as you find it in your Service Sheet).

We do not have to go into more details, because, as I have said, you know how a team reunion is conducted.

However, I would like to add just one more thing. If the Cursillo Method is followed strictly, your Team Reunion will, without any doubt, prove most useful to all the members of the team. . . . If, on the contrary, changes are introduced, if everybody feels free to conduct the reunion in the way he likes. . . ., then we shall have a reunion, but *not necessarily a Cursillo Reunion*. . . . And the result will be anybody's guess.

Of course, individual characteristics—depending on the particular circumstances of persons, places, time, etc.—will always be present. Everybody is different from everybody else. . . .

But the Theory and Method as such cannot be abandoned if we want our Team Reunion to be a guarantee of perseverance and success in the Post-Cursillo. . . .

(to be continued)