

ACTION

Source: National Cursillo Center Mailing – February 2006

The Action rollo is at the middle point of the series of rollos in the Cursillo. In a certain way it is the central rollo of the Cursillo because it is the rollo which describes the importance of apostolic action and its place in the life of a Christian leader. In order to explain apostolic action, the rollo has to show its relationship to the life of grace and also begin to describe an approach to apostolic action (to begin to show people what apostolic action is). The result of the rollo should be an increase in the desire of Cursillistas to bring others (friends) to Christ and to a life of holiness, and, as a result of that, an increase in the desire for their own growth in holiness in order to be able to help others.

The first day of the Cursillo lays the foundation for everything which is done in the second day. It describes the new life of union with God which Christ came to offer to men. And it describes the response – True Piety – which a Christian makes to that offer. The first day includes an emphasis on the importance of apostolic action in its description of the life of grace. In the Layperson in the Church rollo, the Cursillo describes the Church as a missionary Church, and it makes clear that the layperson, because he is a member of the Church, has an apostolic mission. He must work to bring the world to Christ and remake the world in Christ. Piety describes apostolic action as the natural consequence of fully living a life in grace. In the Piety rollo, apostolic action is sharing with others the best thing which we have – a knowledge and love of Christ.

The second day of the Cursillo begins to explain to the Cursillistas the kinds of things he can do to grow in effectiveness in the apostolic ideal described on the first day. During the whole second day, a picture is built up of the kinds of things which he has to do if he is going to become a formed Christian leader. The Action rollo explains an important part of his formation. If he is going to be a true Christian apostle, as a regular part of his life he is going to have to make a friend, be a friend so he can make them friends of Christ. He is going to have to become the kind of person who draws men to Christ.

The Action rollo, then, does not just talk about any kind of action. It is not, for instance, concerned with “doing good things” in themselves. To be a good father, worker, employer, etc. is not apostolic action. Non-Christians could do the same things. Rather, the Action rollo is concerned with apostolic action, action which brings the world to Christ and which makes the world new in Christ. Being a good

father, for instance, could have an important role in apostolic action (a man could not Christianize his family if he were not a good father), but it is not automatically apostolic action. It must be part of an effort to bring the world to Christ and to make it new in Christ.

Also, although the Action rollo does lay out the different goals and approaches in apostolic action, it is mainly concerned with what is known as “personal contact” – making friends with other persons to make them friends of Christ. The concrete change that should come about in people’s lives as a result of the rollo is that they should begin to work personally with people to draw them to Christ. This is the basis of all the rest of their action. The Action rollo centers on personal contact, because it is preparing the Cursillista for what the rest of the Cursillo has to say.

The Cursillo describes an approach for the Christian renewal of the person. The strategy of the Cursillo approach is described on the third day of the Cursillo, especially in the rollo Study of the Environment and Christianity in Action. The Cursillo is meant to give birth to a movement of apostles, of strong Christian leaders, who are working to penetrate their environments by drawing the men around them to Christ and transforming the environments in Christ. Each leader is working in his own environment to draw men to Christ and to a fuller Christian life and in that way he is working to change the world, remaking it in the new life which Christ is offering.

The core or heart of this work of changing the environments is the work of drawing men to Christ. Each Cursillista in his environment should be drawing those around him to know and love Christ and so to follow him in all things. Not everything he does as an apostle will be direct personal contact of the kind described in the Action rollo. But his efforts to bring his friends to Christ should in some way be the heart of what he does as an apostle. All of his apostolic work should be based on a love for men, and it should be based on a realization of the overwhelming importance of Christ for human life and happiness. Therefore, all of his apostolic work should aim at bringing others to Christ, because the person who realizes how important and how valuable Christ is and who loves other men will naturally introduce others to Christ as the center of his apostolic action. He will work, therefore, by befriending others and making them friends of Christ.

The Action rollo describes an approach to action. It shows how the Cursillistas with his new love of others and his new desire to bring them to Christ can begin to approach them. It helps the Cursillistas to begin thinking about what he has to be and do in the world. The Action rollo is a rollo, then, in which the Cursillista’s

attitude is changed. He is told about a new kind of activity. He is given some idea of what it is like. And above all, he is given a desire to do it (to bring others to Christ) and a desire to increase his own life with Christ, because he knows his apostolic action is an overflow of his Christian life. In other words, the Cursillista discovers that he must give a “personal testimony” of his Christian life and in order for him to do that, he has to be living a Christian life.

It's not enough to live consciously and ever-growing in grace; it must be shared through Apostolic Action!