

Pittsburgh Cursillo Movement



The Fourth Day

Advent/Christmas 2025



Life Changes

by Father Tom Galvin,
Pittsburgh Cursillo Spiritual Director
2013-2025

The Secretariat honors Father Tom Galvin, our tireless spiritual advisor, who passed away on October 11, 2025. These are Father Tom's final words to our community.

After three months I can step back and examine the journey our Lord has taken me on. Needless-to-say, it has been a long and winding road. While it doesn't necessarily have an end in sight, it's purpose is more clearly seen from my side of the median strip.

I've struggled through so much in accepting limitations and restrictions that I see myself as a different person -- as have others. I've gone from checking off activities being completed to activities not being attempted --erasing plans solidified years ago for nursing homes, hospital, parish, Pittsburgh Cursillo Movement, the international Fraternity of Priests, and monthly healing Masses.

In a way, all of this has been our Loving Father telling me that the mission He has asked me to live is being changed, and the gifts I have been asked to share are now to be somewhat changed.

But this is what all of us need to be about.

LIFE CHANGES. And God calls us to make the changes needed for the future -- just as all of us had to do years ago when we came together as one, forming a new parish.

As I've had to look at tomorrow's horizon with a new perspective, now all of us -- as a parish, a people of God, and as a Church, we must ask as I've had to do while lying in a hospital ICU or rehab bed, what is your plan for me in the future, Lord? I have no intention to stop ministry. I may be crazy, but I've prayed it out to understand Our Loving Father's plan. And I trust His will.

SINCE JUNE 10

Since that Tuesday when I was attacked with pneumonia, and Wednesday when I fulfilled a bucket-list wish with a med-vac chopper flight to Mercy complicated with a stroke, blood clots, asthma, and allergies.

Folks, you deserve to know I spent four weeks in Mercy Hospital, two weeks in Peters Twp. Rehab, and one week at Vincentian Rehab in the North Hills, which were followed by three weeks in the ICU at Passavant Hospital.

I haven't really questioned God's plan. Rather I simply questioned how it was all going to get done.

Love and prayers,
Fr. Tom Galvin



Priests from the Diocese of Pittsburgh celebrate Father Tom's funeral Mass.



Change is Always with Us

by Julie Fleckenstein,
Pittsburgh Cursillo Lay Director

We have seen a lot of change this year in our Catholic Church. We lost one Pope (God rest his soul) and we have seen the election of the first American-born Pope. Long live Pope Leo XIV! We have also seen Bishop Zubik replaced with Bishop Eckman. Some of us have seen changes in our priests at our parishes or maybe we have changed jobs or welcomed a new life into our homes.

Change is not something that should be feared; rather, it should be sought out and celebrated. We should strive to be ever-changing as to mold ourselves to be more like Christ. Because of our humanity, we get bogged down in the familiar, the routine of life that becomes a rut, and then we do not know how to dig ourselves out of that rut we have created for ourselves.

It is difficult when faced with unforeseen changes to take the time to reflect on what good came out of that situation. However, this is where time spent in prayer, especially in front of the Blessed Sacrament, is key to embracing change and looking forward to the new challenges that the Lord is putting in front of us.

As piety is part of our tripod, we need to carve out time to spend with our Lord so we can understand why certain changes have happened in our lives. Sometimes change happens in an instant and other changes take place over the course of months, even years. That is why keeping true to our piety and seeking time in front of the Tabernacle or Monstrance is key for us to keep that line of communication open with the Trinity.

When we let go, we humble ourselves so that God can be in control and then we are the vessels in which He does His good works.

De Colores!

The Fourth Day Can Last a Lifetime

by Mike Albanese,
Pittsburgh Cursillo Chairperson

The last several months, all the normal excuses (along with some new ones) popped into my head for stepping back from Cursillo. "I am too busy." "I've got a son now so I need to do less." And my most annoying tempting thought: "It just doesn't feel right." One of the eye-opening experiences working this past Men's weekend was being reminded how fast we can forget the power and gift of living a Cursillo weekend. The more we actively live out the method, the more fruit it bears. I can testify to this in my life.

The Three-Day Encounter can last a Lifetime but there are obstacles. We can get in the way with our excuses like I mentioned earlier. This year I have been perpetually reminded that one of our biggest obstacles in Christianity and within the movement is "the wedge." Someone or something becomes such an issue that it becomes our enemy, quickly allowing us to lose sight of our brother or sister who is imperfect on this journey with us.

Please pray that instead of wedges, we forge unity during this Jubilee Year of Hope.

De Colores!

60th Anniversary Mass and Dinner

at Resurrection Parish, St. Thomas More Church



Thank you to Father Mike Ackerman, Father Joe Luisi, Father Dan Waruszewski for celebrating a beautiful Mass, and to everyone who came to celebrate this milestone year for the Pittsburgh Cursillo movement!

Cursillo Picnic 2025



Nunzio Galletta, who made Weekend #1 here in Pittsburgh!



Thank you to everyone who attended our annual Cursillo picnic!
We look forward to seeing you next year!
De Colores!



In Memoriam
Please pray for the repose of the souls of:
Father Tom Galvin
Eugene Frischione
David Wiezorek

Working with the Spirit

by Kelly Raybuck

I didn't set out to start an Ultreya. In the spring of 2024, my now-husband, Dave, had just proposed, and I was planning a wedding, preparing for a move, and searching for a new job.

While sorting through things to pack, I came across some unopened mail from the winter. One letter, from Father Tom Galvin, had been sent to the entire Cursillo community. In it, he mentioned praying for an Ultreya to start in Lawrence County. Here I was, moving there and I knew, at that moment, that I was meant to do this. I kept it to myself.

A month later, I received a job offer at an amazing, faith-filled parish in Beaver County. Shortly after that, Mike Albanese asked me to consider starting an Ultreya. I think he expected more resistance—he seemed prepared with arguments, offered to help, and asked me to pray about it. But I already knew my answer. I laughed, told him God had already paved the way, and said yes.

Mike and his wife, Nicole, were going through big life changes too with a baby on the way and a new house, so we decided to aim for fall 2024. I started my new job in June and brought up hosting an Ultreya there. But ultimately, it wasn't God's will.

That brought me to Dave's home parish, Divine Grace, which spans Lawrence and Butler Counties. When I approached Father Freedy, he readily agreed to host us at Holy Redeemer in Lawrence. With help from Mike and Nicole and the Butler Ultreya, we began meeting in October and quickly connected with several other Cursillistas and new candidates.

All I had to do was say yes, pray for it, and be where God put me. It has been such a blessing, and as with any gift, I want to share it. All Cursillistas are welcome to attend, whether you're looking for renewal, or just simply a place to be supported on your Catholic journey.

Are You a Martha?

by Jess Heuler

In Luke 10:38-42, the story of Mary and Martha sounds like sibling rivalry or a squabble, but this story has so much more depth and meaning than that. It says in the story that Martha was "distracted with much serving." I think most of us can relate. I run a program at my parish and I often help set up and clean up various dinners, picnics, etc. I'm one of the first to arrive and one of the last to leave. I'm constantly taking care of everyone else first and neglecting myself. I, like Martha, am often distracted, anxious, and troubled. Jesus appreciates her effort and hospitality, but what he really wants is for Martha, like Mary, to "waste time" with Him. He knows He is on this Earth for a short while, He knows that Martha is anxious and troubled, and out of Love, He corrects her, "one thing is needful." Martha doesn't have to worry and be distracted by all the hustle and bustle, she only needs to be with Jesus. Yes, people need to be fed and taken care of, and caring for others is a good thing! However, we need to take care of ourselves, too! We need to "waste time" with our Lord, just being in his presence, spending time with Him!

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Diocesan Spiritual Advisor			

ALLEGHENY VALLEY

Group Reunion
Victoria Polvocek
Call 724-274-7955 for info.
The meeting location varies.
2nd Tuesday of the month.

BEAVER VALLEY

Tony Manno
412-613-5958
minpin05@comcast.net
Meet at Our Lady of Fatima
2270 Broadhead Rd.
1st & 3rd Tuesday, 7:00PM

CITY NORTH

Bob Corcoran
412-931-4928
klunk50@yahoo.com
Meet at Martina Spirituality Center
5244 Clarwin Ave. Pittsburgh, PA
15229
Route 19 - Ross Township
3rd Monday 7:00PM

SOUTH CENTRAL

Mary Fleckenstein
412-678-1723
mkfleck1963@gmail.com
Meet at St. Michael Church,
Meeting Room
101 McLay Drive
Elizabeth, PA 15037
2nd & 4th Thursday at 7:30PM

PITTSBURGH ULTREYAS

SOUTH HILLS

Kay Houston
412-965-5261
katyann41@gmail.com
Meet at St. Thomas More
Parish (Rooney Room)
(across from South Hills Village)
2nd Monday at 7:30PM

SOUTHWEST BUTLER

Terry Schur
724-799-0818
ferschur@gmail.com
Meeting at St. Ferdinand
Parish
(Upper Room of Parish Center)
Cranberry Township
2nd Monday at 7:00PM
One Week later if Holy Day

SOUTHERN LAWRENCE COUNTY

Kelly Raybuck
theraybucks2@gmail.com
Holy Redeemer
Ellwood City
Contact Kelly for
day and time

TRES RIOS

Jack Patnik
412-793-0476
jppatnik@hotmail.com
Meeting at St. Bernadette Church
(Biedenbach Hall — under
church), Monroeville
3rd Thursday at 1:00PM

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Jan Cushma
412-523-4057
mjcushma@verizon.net
Meeting at St. Patrick
Parish Center
317 W. Pike St., Canonsburg
2nd Tuesday at 7:00PM

PARACLETE ULTREYA

Julie Fleckenstein
215-272-3331
jkfleckenstein@gmail.com
Location currently varies.
Third Friday of each month.
Always call for details.