

The Early Years

Hazen Walters

In the fall of 1984, Bishop Mark Genge, Rev. Ron Lee, and Rev. Walter Hammond, traveled to Nova Scotia, to experience a Cursillo weekend. They were impressed, and felt it would be good for our diocese: The Bishop decided to make Cursillo part of his pastoral plan, and requested the program officer Ron Lee, to recruit some people to attend the Roman Catholic Cursillo weekend to be held in St. John's in the spring of 1985. Cyril Bull and Mac Kelligrew of Eastport along with Hazen Walters of Gander attended that weekend. The ladies weekend was held the following month and we sent Jane Winsor of Eastport, Sylvia Moss of Lewisporte, Nora Lush and June Walters of Gander.

We now had a core group to begin the advancement of the movement. We held an organizational meeting in January 1986 to form a secretariat. The full minutes of that meeting can be read elsewhere in this booklet. The bishop appointed Hazen and June Walters as the lay Directors and Rev. Ron Lee as the Spiritual Director. Other members of the first secretariat were Nora Lush and James Attwood. It was also decided to send Hazen and June to a leaders workshop in London, Ontario, so that they could further experience Cursillo leadership, and bring back more ideas and suggestions, for our movement. That workshop took place in February 1986.

All were excited about Cursillo so we then started meeting on a regular basis to study more about the method. As we continued to meet we encouraged others to join the movement and sent another group to each of the next mens and ladies weekends in St. John's, in the spring of 1986. Members of those two groups were John Barnes, Charlie Hunt and Rev. Wilfred Sullivan of Gander, Selby Moss of Lewisporte and Norm Purchase of Eastport Beryl Barnes, Ruth Hunt, Joan Lee and Alvina Thoms of Gander and Glenys Holwell and Jacqueline Parsons of Lewisporte.

We immediately started meeting weekly in small groups in the towns where we had members and from the very start we promoted openness. Invited non members to join and share with us in a Christian setting to show this was truly a movement of the church. Even though we met in the church halls with the approval of the Rector and the blessing of the Bishop we still had many people who referred to us as a closed or secret society and many distrusted anything we did. Many times this unfair criticism came from our friends and this really hurt. And made the advancement of our movement very difficult. In spite of those problems we continued to move ahead because we knew that if God was for it no force on earth could it back. *(Guess the proof is that we are now 10 years old and growing stronger every year.)*

We held our first Ultreya in February 1986 in Gander with a grand total of 14 Cursillistas in attendance and we thought that was a big crowd. My how we have grown since then! We held the next Ultreya in Lewisporte the following month with the same big crowd. It wasn't until May of 1987 before we had enough members to move the Ultreya to another area and the next Ultreya was at Eastport. We have continued to rotate the monthly Ultreya ever since.

We held our first set of weekends in the fall of 1986 and at that time separated weekends were held for men and women. We were helped greatly those weekends by our friends from the St. John's

Roman Catholic movement who sent many members to be part of our teams. More details on those weekends can be found elsewhere in this booklet. We were the first Anglican movement in this province and realizing this we invited participation from the Eastern and Western Dioceses. Members from both Dioceses did attend our weekends and in early 1988 we had the privilege of helping the eastern Diocese start their first weekend. We also were proud to have our Lay Director Hazen Walters elected to the National Secretariat in 1989 and three years later he was elected the National Chairman.

We held a Cursillo Leaders Workshop in June 1990 and have continued to offer our members many opportunities for leadership training thru the years. We have helped set up and sponsor the TEC movement in our diocese. Offered Co-Ed weekends, held family camps. Revista weekends training meetings and many other events.

We have done a lot in these first 10 years and we should all be proud, but let's not rest on our laurels because there is still work to be done in our Lord's Vineyard. It won't get done by itself and remember:

THE LORD IS COUNTING ON YOU:

ULTREYA.