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Audience with members of the Cursillos of Christianity in Italy

This morning, in the Paul VI Hall, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the members of the Movement of Cursillos of Christianity in Italy, on the occasion of the 7th National *Ultreya*.

The following is the Pope's address to those present:

Address of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning, welcome!

It is with joy that I greet all of you, members of the *Movement of the Cursillos of Christianity* of Italy, together with the bishops and priests who accompany you, who have gathered here in Rome for your seventh national *Ultreya*.

You use this ancient pilgrims' greeting, "ultreya", to indicate the meaning of these gatherings, which have characterized your charism since the beginning: they are moments of encounter, of proclamation, of witness and prayer, to urge one another to go "further", to "go beyond". They are not organizational meetings, not the "board of directors" of a company, but fraternal gatherings to rediscover the motivation and the impetus of faith that you have all experienced since the first *cursillo* in which you participated and which turned your lives around.

Already in your weekly group meetings you take a step "further". Indeed, you have the opportunity to go beyond a purely horizontal, earthly and materialistic view of life, to rediscover each time the new outlook that faith in Christ has given us on everything: on ourselves, on the world, on the meaning of existence. We are quick, in fact - out of laziness, out of inertia, out of timidity - to lose the outlook of faith and to conform to the mentality of the world, which extinguishes all zeal and all desire to remain faithful to the Lord and to bring Him to others. Now that the pandemic is passing, we are reminded of the admonition in the Letter to the Hebrews, "not neglecting to meet together ... but encouraging one another" (10:25). It is a great grace to have brothers and friends in the faith to support each other and keep alive the love for Christ, the foundation of everything, and to share it with

others.

In addition to the weekly meetings, it is above all your “*ultreya*” that propel you “further”. I would like to point out two fundamental directions for your “going further”.

The first is *moving towards communion*. It means going beyond oneself and beyond one’s own group to form a community and grow in the Church, which is always a body and never unconnected, separate members. Therefore, never isolate yourself and never shut yourself in! Always maintain and increase vital links with the places of communion in which we are integrated.

At a first level, you are required to form community with other groups, at regional and national levels, to enrich yourselves with broader experiences and perspectives, which help you understand better the ecclesial and social situation in which you are immersed and which constitutes the concrete field of your mission. In this way, faith and life, the Church and the world are unified in you.

On a second level, you are called to form community with the entire *Cursillos* movement. The great challenge here is to maintain a spirit of charity and unity, knowing that the founding charism of your movement is the one that was passed on to you by the initiators and the first generation and for which you are all equally responsible. Unity is not founded on the charism of a single individual or on the spiritual “line” of a “current”. No, unity is founded on the spiritual heritage accepted by all, lived and shared by all, understood by all and entrusted to all. I know that in the next few days there will be a meeting of the World Body of *Cursillos de Cristiandad*, which will be attended by leaders from all continents. I hope that this meeting will be experienced as a synodal event of listening and common discernment among those responsible, that it will give space to all, and that it will welcome the different sensitivities and visions, to create spiritual harmony within you. Harmony of identity, of apostolate, of governance, so that you can be and present yourselves to others as brothers acting in unity.

At a third and even broader level, there is forming community with the Church, which implies being close to and listening to the pastors and participating in the pastoral initiatives of the local Churches where you live. Your groups and your whole movement, in fact, are not “beside” the Church, but are also part of the Church living in that territory. You are therefore called to identify fully with the feeling and action of the Church.

The second fundamental direction of “going beyond”, and therefore of every *ultreya*, is *mission*. Going beyond means going on your mission. Your movement, too, is faced with the challenge of forming communities of missionary disciples who go out to meet those who are far away (cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, 24), going beyond the criterion of “it has always been done this way” (cf. *ibid.*, 33), which is not a Christian criterion. You have a particular charism, which has led you to rediscover and know how to proclaim in a simple and direct way the essential of the Christian experience, that is, God’s love for every man and woman. And you know how to convey this proclamation within the bonds of friendship and closeness that you establish, without pressure, with so many people you meet, even those with stronger personalities who seem almost indifferent or even hostile to the faith. I encourage you, therefore, to allow yourselves to be inspired by this charism that the Holy Spirit has granted you, to experience in this way the sweet joy of evangelizing, in all areas of life, private and public, that is, movement, movement for internal unity and movement to evangelize.

I would like to add one thing: being in the movement also means living the service of proclamation and Christian witness, and this is also up to the people who are in charge or responsible for each country or for the whole movement. A bad thing that you must avoid, before it happens – because it seems that it hasn’t happened with you, but I’ll tell you first – is “eternalizing” offices, that is, always keeping the same person in a given role. Please don’t. Everyone is good, but we are not all indispensable. We are not indispensable. I finish this job as coordinator, I don’t know what it’s called over there, either of the group or of the countries or general, and I go home – that is, I go into the groups as an ordinary person, an ordinary person. “No, but I did this, now we need to...”. You don’t need to do anything, you have to let go! Is that clear? And this renewal, to counteract personal ambitions, which are inspired by the devil, is a task in which you must persevere. Because so many movements have died out in the hands of a sole leader. We have much experience of this in the Church. So, renew the service of authority, let us say, renew it: no one is eternal in authority.

Dear friends, may the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, keep you always on the move, never still, always on the move, always ready to “go further”, towards communion and towards mission, and always in service, not scrambling for office. From my heart I bless you all and your loved ones. And you too, please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!
