

The Essence of Friendship

By Sis Belle Caronongan

I lived my Cursillo in September 2016 in Aptos, California, Women's Cursillo #93, and my Decuria is Our Lady of Fatima.

This is how I introduced myself along with my name to Filipino Cursillo Community, my dear friends.

Eduardo Bonnin Aguilo was the founder of the Cursillo Movement.

The teachings, literature, words of wisdom he left behind have inspired me to write about the humble beginnings of the Movement. He started it with few friends coming from different walks of life in the 1940's. The bond of friendship had grown to what it is right now, a successful movement in Christianity called Cursillo.

According to Eduardo Bonnin, Friendship is the most profound way of living together with others sharing the same beliefs, purpose, and intent; and the wonder and beauty of life can be best captured and represented inside the person.

Bonnin also went on to say the quality that can give a person more joy is the ability to understand, feel, and spread the joyful experience of being among friends. Regardless of type, a friend can either be an acquaintance or a best friend. The difference between the two is faithfulness, Sirach 6:15, 8, and 14 respectively.

"A faithful friend is beyond price, no sum can balance his worth." Priceless.

"For one sort of a friend is a friend when it suits him, but he will not be with you in time of distress". A fair-weather friend.

"A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter: he who finds one, finds a treasure". A grounded refuge.

Friendship is openness to each other, forthcoming in praises and criticisms, and respectful. You can think aloud without fear of being misunderstood. You can talk without saying a word. You can finish each other's sentences. You can read each other's thoughts. It's built on love and trust.

In Eduardo Bonnin's talk on Friendship, he discussed a few important points:

1. Climate of Friendship

It requires an appropriate climate of harmony, nurturing, and patience to flourish and maintain its growth.

2. The process of Friendship

Sometimes friendship can rise from love at first sight which can become fleeting or long lasting. Strong relationship is valued to weather attitudes, change in character, distance, beliefs, and principles.

The course in achieving true friendship requires effort from all parties in its degree of difficulty or ease like courtship.

When one woe love and affection from a woman, he will do everything to please her, make her happy, follow her around to open doors for her, and do whatever it takes to gain her trust and love.

3. The point of convergence

This is the point where the intentions of the two friends meet.

Their shared enthusiasm produces the contentment and joy of knowing that each other exists, that each one matters, that each one has a special place in one another's heart, that both are part of each other's world in harmony and utmost bliss.

4. Paths

Friends can be someone's, but still be their own.

Each one chooses a path of life that leads to eternal happiness with God, which guides them in the journey of salvation.

5. Pure Friendship

Real friendship must be sincere, disinterested, not influenced by considerations of personal advantage, and non-recoverable.

We never count the cost in friendship, no competition as to who is better, who is giving more, or who is spending the most time for each other.

Friendship is a mutual and continuous discovery of new qualities that enables us to live the amazement of new things, and when we see them alive in the life of friends, there is always something to tell, to comment on, and to share.

Sometimes the talk drags on, the farewells never end, and most of the time, it even continues to virtual means i.e., texting, Zoom or Facetime.

6. Anchorage

Anchorage is a place of safety, stability, and a source of reassurance that provides a secure hold. It also represents overcoming adversity and being resilient in forgiving and asking for forgiveness. It bonds the friendship to be stronger and more stable through the years.

7. Friendship with Oneself

According to Bonnin, in any place or situation where every individual is regarded as a person and is respected and appreciated for what she or he is, the first step for each one of us to realize our true self, is acceptance of ourselves.

Regardless of what other people think who you are, what matters most is who you accept you are.

8. Friendship with Christ

"Where there's two or three, Christ is in the midst" – the essence of a Group Reunion Team.

Each Cursillista should belong to a group reunion gathered in friendship.

An excerpt from Bonnin's talk on Friendship:

"When the friendship between two friends is affirmed and strengthened by the friendship that both have with Christ, then the joy of being friends increases, and they enjoy a deeper level of friendship because the friendship forged and cultivated within the light of Christ and warmed by His grace seems to be supported and somehow secured by Him."

To grow and develop in life, it is necessary that we have the “Why” with an answer that is credible, possible, enlightening, capable of creating a channel for, and making sense of our wonderful existence.

I believe Friendship brought me to the Cursillo.

Since then, I have gained many friends, and because of these friends I am a better person today.

I admit I did have my ups and downs and disappointments in the Cursillo. But every time I fall, my friends raise me up, and every time I rise, I become stronger. These friends made me realize that God loves me. Christ came not only to save me but made it possible for me to live a life of joy, hope and love to save others.

De Colores!

