

ST. HILDEGARD of BINGEN

Virginia Thomas

A snippet from Virginia Thomas' talk given at the 2013 Women's Retreat

... Hildegard came from humble beginnings. Born in 1098 in what is now Germany, she was the tenth child in a noble family. It was the custom at that time for a family to tithe the tenth child to the church.

She lived with her family for the first years of her life and while with her family, she began having visions of God. The visions were accompanied by crippling headaches. She was only 3 years old when they started and she shared them with no one for many years. At age 8, Hildegard's family honored their tithe and sent her to live in a 400 year old Benedictine monastery. She was placed in the care of a holy woman named Jutta. Jutta's job was to teach and take care of Hildegard. Jutta could have no contact with the world outside the monastery, so her teachings to Hildegard were about what she knew best, scripture and the Benedictine rule, and Hildegard learned to love both. While under Jutta's watch, Hildegard taught herself how to play the harp, paint, garden and use herbs from the garden as medicine. Under Jutta's care, she grew comfortable enough to share her visions of God. She also shared them with a monk named Volmor, who became her secretary because of her limited writing skills. He wrote down her visions and other writings and helped her when she experienced a vision that changed her life forever at age 42. The vision told her that God wanted her to write down everything that she had observed in her visions and share them with the world. Her writings and her fame soon spread throughout Germany and beyond.

Hildegard's writing and teachings, though written nearly 1000 years ago, hold value for those of us today. As in her time, we live in a world that can be filled with fear and anxiety. How do we face these fears? How do we apply our faith and live the abundant life that Jesus said he came to give us? Hildegard wrote "we cannot live in a world that is interpreted for us by others. An interpreted world is not hope. Part of the terror is to take back our own listening. To use our own voice. To see our own light."

Her writing reminds us that we should not live our lives by what we see and hear around us, but we should look at the light inside ourselves, which we can find through Jesus. Hildegard wrote that if you find your own light and follow it, you will live an authentic life - the life that God wants us to live. If we trust and listen to God speaking to us, we can rise above our fears and anxieties and can answer his call in our own unique way that makes a difference in our world and lets the light of Christ shine through.

Hildegard lived an authentic life. As the tenth child in her family, there was no guarantee that she would be clothed or fed. She was only 8 years old when she was sent away to live a new life with strangers. She was able to find her way with God in her new life and was able to thrive. She grew in her faith and intelligence and loved her life. When Jutta died, she was unanimously voted the abbess of the monastery. She had to overcome great feelings of self doubt, she felt unworthy to fulfill such an important role. She turned inside with prayer and found the light which allowed her to run away from self doubts and follow God's plan. In her new role as abbess, she grew to be seen as a great visionary, healer and preacher. Pilgrims flocked from far and wide to the monastery to learn from her. She had allowed her light to shine in the world. Hildegard was sent to the monastery at a tender age, and could have lived out her life in the quiet and safety of the monastery. Instead she chose to face

her fears and live her authentic life. She did not allow negatives to guide her life, but instead chose to follow God's light.

God has had a hand in my journey, and when I turn inward to find my light, I know that this is where I am suppose to be. The world may not see



CLIP OUT & SAVE!

April	May	June	July	CALENDAR
19	17	21	19	DIOCESAN Ultreya - 7:30 p.m. (3rd Fri.) Blessed Sacrament Parish Hall, Holyoke, MA
	TBA - on hold			School of Leaders 7-9pm (2nd Wed.) St. Patrick's Chapel, South Hadley, MA
13*	3	-	-	Monthly Vigil for Cursillo St. John's, Agawam, MA (sign up info below) No Vigil held June-Sept.
April 12-15th				Women's Cursillo Weekend - St. John's AGAWAM CLOSING 7PM April 15th
~~~~SAVE THE DATE~~~~				
Men's Weekend - Columbus Day <b>Oct. 11-13, 2013</b> -- <b>Sponsor Today!</b> Rector, Matt Lavallee, Asst. Rector, Tom Rodriguez				
<b>Visit our website for applications</b> <b>www.cursillowmass.org</b>				

me as a traditional mother, but the love that God has allowed me to share through my role as a nurse and manager of a birthing unit and as a loving aunt is a mother's love and part of my authentic life, the true light in my life.

Hildegard wrote in 1176, "A human being is a vessel that God has built for himself and filled with his inspiration so that his works are perfected in it."

So if we listen to God, and find his inspiration, if we find our answers within rather than from the outside world, we can find our own authentic life or light, one that brings joy and meaning to our lives, and brings us closer to Jesus.....

*De Colores*

### SIGN UP....

We now send out Cursillo Email Notices and Updates. If you or someone you know hasn't signed up, please send your email address to [dorene@pipmail.com](mailto:dorene@pipmail.com) *Spread the word, thank you!*

### CURSILLISTAS IN ACTION - HELP Jason George

The Women's Cursillo Weekend is scheduled for April 12 - 15, 2013. I am looking for **volunteers, male and female, to help with setting up for the weekend on Friday the 12th starting at 12:30.** The set-up takes about 4 hours depending on participation. The more volunteers, the faster we are done. Any portion of the set-up time you are available will be a great help.

We will **also need help** for the tear down and then set-up for the closing. I'll post the exact time later. If you have been wondering what you can do to keep your commitment to Cursillo strong then this is a great way to satisfy your call to "ACTION" and ideal for a Palanca sacrifice.

Please remember that CHRIST is counting on you and so are all the team members and candidates.

If you have the time and would like to HELP please RSVP to me as soon as possible at [jason.a.george@comcast.net](mailto:jason.a.george@comcast.net) or calling me at: 413-265-0833

### VIGIL FOR CURSILLO held the 1st Friday of EVERY MONTH

Please consider volunteering for one hour on the 1st Friday at St. John the Evangelist church, Main St., Agawam. ***On the month with a Cursillo Weekend, it is held the Saturday of that weekend, so call today for the upcoming Women's Weekend -Vigil will be held Saturday, April 13.** We have a request from the faithful volunteers that have been keeping this going for some new volunteers. This would be a wonderful Action for your group and for yourself, or palanca for a loved one. Please call Irene Breton 572-1103 or Faith St. Onge 322-9635 we want to make sure all the hours are covered. *Thank you!*

**PALANCA**... for the Women's weekend comes out on Saturday, April 13. It can be delivered to the rear of the kitchen located on the left side of the social center before noon if you want your candidate to get your palanca early. IF that is not possible, of course you can deliver it any time during the weekend.



THE CURSILLO COMMITTEE  
P.O. Box 1207  
HOLYOKE, MASS. 01041-1207  
Time Dated Material

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Springfield, MA  
Permit No. 1128

# WOMEN'S TEAM

Friday, April 12-15, 2013 St. John's, Agawam

Rectora	Rose Stella	Action	Katie Orellana
Assistant Rectora	Carol Tourangeau	Leaders	Ann Marie Duffy
Spiritual Advisors	Fr. Michael Bernier	Study of Environment	Sue LaMondia
	Sr. Catherine Leary	Christian in Action	Patty Deshies
Ideal	Barbara Ripa	Ninth Member	Donna Gaudrault
Layperson in the Church	Alaena Podmore	Head Cha Cha	Linda Lavallee
Piety	Pat Mack	Cha Cha	Shauna Dobek
Study	Dawn Lapierre	Cha Cha	Kara DeVoie

## CANDIDATES

Email Blasts will go out with updates/changes if you are not on our list and would like to be email [dorene@pipmail.com](mailto:dorene@pipmail.com)

CANDIDATE	CITY	SPONSOR
Linda Bathel	Southwick	Jean Raczkowski
Barbara Begley	Springfield	Andrea Lanzillo
Patty Byrnes	Westfield	Pat Mack
Kathy Canavan	Springfield	Dottie Mitchell
Rosie Caracciolo	Feeding Hills	Diane Murphy
Mary Conroy	West Springfield	Jean Raczkowski
Maureen Craig	Springfield	Mary Jean Daly
Amy Danise	Suffield, CT	Mary Gulluni
Marjorie Duteau	Springfield	Bill Toller
Anne Falcone	Springfield	Theresa D'Amato
Amelia Figueroa	Springfield	Lou DellaCroce
Mary Ellen Fydenkevez	Agawam	Jan DiPietro
Maureen Garner	Springfield	Mary Jean Daly
Jayne Hastings	Suffield, CT	Kara DeVoie/Shaua Dobek
Denise Heywood	Belchertown	Linda Tammi
Lisa Kessler	East Longmeadow	Shauna Dobek
Colleen Kutz	Hartford, CT	Nicole Fusco
Ellen Labonte	Chicopee	Terri & Augie Stuetzel
Barbara Loos	Enfield, CT	Faith St. Onge
Maureen MacPhail	East Longmeadow	Rose Stella/Sue LaMondia
Linda McElhone	Chicopee	Joanne VanKrunnigen
Gina Mongeon	East Longmeadow	L. DiMichelle/B. Andrukonis
Cheryl Moynihan	Springfield	Annette Plourde
Ann Novak	Granby	Jim Murphy
Aliscia O'Connor	Springfield	Bella Andrukonis
Christine O'Toole	Agawam	Jo Sears
Lorri Perkins	Reading, PA	Pat Mack
Andrea Richards	East Longmeadow	Kara DeVoie/Shaua Dobek
Carrie Anne Bernardi Schaub	Springfield	Bella Andrukonis
Myya Seago	Springfield	Bob Farrell
Michelle Temple-Forna	East Longmeadow	Bob and Diane Farrell
Terry Sternala	South Hadley	Jason George
Marci Toomey	Agawam	Kathy Klimoski
Joanne Walsh	West Springfield	Carol Tourangeau

## MEET YOUR RECTORA - Rose Stella

**"Joyfully we will bring to our Savior a harvest of souls"** Any of you who know me, know that this line from our beloved "De Colores" describes me professionally and moves me personally. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Rose Stella and I am the Rectora for the upcoming Women's Cursillo in April.

Thanks to my persistent sponsors, Kathy and Al Blanchard; I found out that God had a plan for me in April of 1992 when he dragged me, kicking and screaming, to Cursillo. From the first time singing De Colores, I couldn't help but cry at **joyfully bringing our Savior a harvest of souls!!** And from the moment my fourth day began, I have watched God's plan for just that unfold.

Nowadays, you can find me trying daily to bring some others, who are also kicking and screaming, to God. I am the Director of Religious Education at St. Michael's in East Longmeadow. Yes, I am a "soul harvester!" This job is exactly what I've been prepared to do and while it can have its frustrations...it makes me happier than any other thing I've ever done!

I am and have been a member of a permanent group since my weekend, and enjoy being challenged, supported, instructed, and embraced by that group! If you come to Ultreyas, then you've probably seen me, as I attend them as often as I can. The Cursillo Method is something that has helped me sustain and enhance my faith and I, for one, am "eternally" grateful! I work toward daily metanoia... sometimes minute to minute metanoia!!

Thanks to Cursillo, I am transformed! And Joy should be my middle name! I can't think of an honor greater than giving back to this community by **"joyfully bringing our savior a harvest of souls!"** The team God has chosen for this weekend is divine! Each one on a genuine walk with Christ. I couldn't have asked for better! Thank you for journeying through this spirit-filled life with me. I ask your prayers for the team and for those souls we will be bringing to our Savior.

*De Colores*

## NOTE FROM THE LAY DIRECTOR

*Mike Riley*

Is Cursillo alive and well in the Springfield Diocese? Well, if the attendance at our recent Ultreyas and our recently concluded Men's and Women's winter retreats is any indication, the answer is a resounding YES. While we'd like to see more of each and every one of you, I am mindful that we all have busy lives that draw on our time and energy. But, the one thing we can count on from most of the men and women that have made the Cursillo weekend over the past 46 years is that their dedication to the extension of the kingdom of God is undeniable. Granted we might not see them as much as we'd like, but they are in their groups, parishes, at work, and most importantly with their families. So, as much as we'd like to see more of you, we know you are doing what Christ has called us to do.

The Secretariat is very excited that we will be conducting a Women's weekend beginning on Friday night April 12th and concluding on Monday night April 15th. This weekend will be held, once again through the generosity of St. John's the Evangelist Church in Agawam.

Recently, we have suspended our regular Leaders School meetings for the time being due to the lack of new faces and the obvious burden that it puts on those who remain. Instead, many of our committed core leaders will be gathering shortly to assess where we are, where we've been and focus our attention on where we want to go. Please understand, this is not a closed gathering, everyone is welcome to share their thoughts and ideas, so please let us know if you'd be interested in contributing to this process.

As you know we're well into the information age and the era of paperless communication. While the Cursillo is not there yet, we would like to start moving in that direction. To that end, I am asking each of you who have not yet received our e-mail "blasts" to send your name and e-mail address to Dorene Pennell at

[Dorene@pipmail.com](mailto:Dorene@pipmail.com). I promise we won't share your address for any reason and will try not to inundate you with material.

Finally, It's such an exciting time in our church, the election of a new Pope is always a time for reflection and hope within our Church so let us all pray that the Holy Spirit guides Pope Francis, so that all God's people are touched in a very positive and spirit filled way. As we conclude this Easter season, let's all be mindful of the wonderful gifts and blessing God has bestowed upon us. But let us also remember that while God's love for us is unconditional, we all are called upon in our own unique way to be his hands in extending his kingdom. So I pray that you all reflect on the words we all heard at our closing, that "Christ is counting on us" and put those words into practice in our everyday lives in whatever we do.

God Bless and I sincerely hope to see you at the Women's closing on Monday April 15.

*De Colores*

## DEAR FRIENDS

*Msgr. David Joyce*

When you read these few words, Easter will have passed already. I hope that your Easter was blessed, filled with the hope that Jesus' Resurrection brings - hope for our own resurrection, hope for the resolution of so many problems, personal and global, that seem to surround us at times. It's our unshakable belief that Jesus is alive and with us, that makes us a people of hope. May that virtue be continually renewed in your life.

Speaking of hope, our Women's Weekend (April 12 to 15) makes us all think of our own weekends and the hope which filled us at our closing. So pray for our candidates, do palanca, come to the closing, and remember with gratitude the gift that Cursillo has been for you.

May the new life of these beautiful Spring days (if they ever come!) remind us all to look ahead, to the challenges and opportunities that each day offers. As new life surrounds us, may it also be found within us, because we are truly an Easter people!

*De Colores*

## ~ CONTRIBUTIONS~

**Christmas donation in Memory of Dick St. Onge and Joe Murray and in Thanksgiving for Faith St. Onge and Marie Murray**  
from Irene & John Bledsoe

**in Honor of Irene and John Bledsoe and Faith and Dick St. Onge**  
from Cathy & Fred Rook

**Christmas Gift for Irene and John Bledsoe**  
from Faith St. Onge

**to Cursillo**  
from Doris Fagnant  
Jeanne Gaudet

*Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken, my love shall never leave you...*  
*Isaiah 54: 10*



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