Brief History of Cursillo Movement
in Our Diocesis

It was around 1960 that the movement of spiritual renovation called “Cursillo de Cristiandad” started in the city of San Angelo. It was Father Gabriel Fernandez who sowed the first sacred seeds of the Cursillo. From that moment on, the religious environment of that which was later to be the “San Angelo Diocese,” changed completely. Those who have lived in this region for the last few years can attest to this fact.

Many were the spiritual fruits produced by this minute seed. Many are the homes which since then bless God and the “Cursillos de Cristiandad.” Many are those who with love remember Father Gabriel Fernandez, Father Fidelis and Father Jesus Quintero, and that group of Apostles of Christ who did not think any sacrifice too great to bring peace and grace to so many souls.

We cannot overlook the marvelous work of Father Fidelis, who was the Spiritual Director of the first Cursillo in English in the world. It was here, in this humble center of San Jose, in San Angelo, where that first Cursillo in English took place from the 9th to the 12th of November, 1961. Henceforth, Cursillos in English became known the world over.

The great enthusiasm of Father Villaverde, of Msgr. Marthaler, of Father Tieheimer, of the dynamic and eager Father Valladares and other Spiritual Directors who kindled in this Center the flame of the love of God and mankind in the hearts of thousands of Christians, was responsible for the preservation of the Cursillo in our Diocese like a gem inherited from our ancestors and which we zealously try to improve by following the norms set down by this Movement of Salvation.

At present the Diocesan Cursillo Movement is directed by Father Antonio Otero Suarez and Father Michael Fernandez. Father Fernandez was Spiritual Director from February, 1965, and Father Suarez was named Diocesan Coordinator on January 10, 1966. From then on, the Cursillo Movement received a new impetus and we expect that with the help of God and the great love and support which his Excellency, Bishop Thomas Tschoepe, is dedicating to the “Cursillo de Cristiandad,” the seed sowed in 1960 by Father Gabriel Fernandez will bear the desired fruit.

Many were the lay “Cursillistas” who decidedly stood side by side with their priests since 1960. Among these stand out the Cursillo Rectors who are ever ready for any sacrifice for God and the souls: Elpidio Torres, Carlos Flores, Pablo Favela, Mrs. Gabriela Tambunga, Juanita Velez, Mr. Richard Blake and others. The effort of the Diocesan Secretariate, of our “Rollistas,” “vocales” and others in this Diocese, many will expect their recompense from God.

Would to God that this the 75th Cursillo of our Diocese be a shot in the arm for all of us toward the road of the “apostolado!”

Here’s hoping that on September 10, gathered together in the San Angelo Coliseum more with the heart than with mere words, we could sing “De Colores” like a pure prayer, rewarded by Heaven with the immaculate dew of Divine Grace to purify and comfort “this world so profoundly sick.”

“DE COLORES”
Mission San Jose of the Workingman
San Angelo, Texas

OVER TWO HUNDRED years ago, three dedicated Franciscan missionaries were offered the Martyrs' crown in the country watered by the three Concho rivers. Just as these three rivers flow together to bring life-giving water to the arid plains of West Texas, these three Franciscans gave their life blood so that the Faith of Christ might be established in the hearts of the Apache and Comanche Indians living near the Conchos. The first of these brave Franciscans to give his life was Friar Alonso Giraldo. His companion at the San Saba Mission (some seventy miles from here), Friar Jose Santiesteban, was martyred a few moments afterwards before the gate of the Mission. Friar Jose's last prayer before the altar of the Mission must have been a plea that his death would bring forth fruits of conversion among the very Indians who were bringing that death about. The third Franciscan was wounded badly and crawled away to safety. Thus we say three Franciscans gave their blood in order that the Faith might come to the land of the Three Rivers — San Angelo, Texas.

NEAR PAINT ROCK, TEXAS — a short distance from San Angelo, on the side of the rocks is told the story of the martyrdom of the three Franciscans. The Indians thought they had killed the three and so depicted the story as having killed three. There were three Franciscan martyrs in the same period. The third was near what is now near Rockdale, Texas, where the Indians' arrow brought forth the martyred blood of Friar Jose Gonzalez of the Mission of Nuestra Senora de la Candelaria as he held high the candle of light until he fell from the death blow.

TWO HUNDRED YEARS afterwards, the Franciscans of the Cincinnati, Ohio, Province of St. John the Baptist continued that work of spreading and keeping the Faith by presenting to the Community a replica of the Old Franciscan type of architecture — Mission San Jose of the Workingman, the actual Cursillo Center.
Cursillo No. 1 (primer Cursillo en Español celebrado en este centro)
Director Espiritual: Gabriel Fernández
Rector: Luis Salinas
Fecha: Mayo 27-30, 1960

First English Cursillo in the world was held at San José Mission, San Angelo, Texas, November 9-12, 1961. Spiritual Director: Rev. Fidelis Albrecht, O.F.M. Rector: Richard Blake.
Cursillo No. 1 de mujeres en Español
Director Espiritual: Rev. Jesús Quintero
Rector: Pablo Favela
Fecha: Septiembre 7-10, 1961

First English Cursillo for women
Spiritual Director: Rev. Antonio Villaverde
Rectora: Mrs. Pedro Velez
Date: October, 1963