

## Welcome to Cursillo School of Leaders 2014-2015

We are truly fortunate in having a Pope who ignites the imagination of people throughout the world, and not only Catholics. From his choice to live simply and among the people to his public call to political and religious leaders to stop the slaughter of innocents in Syria, he is making his mark on the world and, with any luck, on our lives.

When Pope Francis wrote an exhortation to the Church on the “Joy of the Gospel”, the message seemed to drive to the heart of the charism of Cursillo. It’s hard to ignore his words as they come sailing out of the pages as a challenge to rethink our Baptismal commitment.

*Reading the Scriptures also makes it clear that the Gospel is not merely about our personal relationship with God. Nor should our living response to God be seen simply as an accumulation of small personal gestures to individuals in need, a kind of “charity a la carte”, or a series of acts aimed solely at easing our conscience. The Gospel is about the kingdom of God (cf Lk 4:43), it is about loving God who reigns in our world. To the extent that he reigns within us, the life of society will be a setting for universal fraternity, justice, peace and dignity.*  
Evangelii Gaudium, Chapter 4, 180.

These words excite and challenge. They speak to our charism “to be the Good News” and they point to evangelization, the object of our piety, study and action. Thus, we are using this papal exhortation as the background for our study this year in School of Leaders.

We are starting off slowly, focusing on the preface and first chapter during the remainder of calendar 2014. With the new year, we will look at the final section of Chapter 1 and go on to Chapters 3 and 4. We recognize that it is not possible for everyone to get to our sessions and in an effort to reach more of our community, we will be posting a study plan with the chapter on which we will focus, some scriptural reference and the discussion questions we will use during our sessions. Please read and think along with us, use the questions for discussions in your own gatherings, and come join us at School of Leaders whenever you can. We meet at St. Joseph’s on Route 202 just outside the beltway from 7:00pm until 8:45pm, usually on the third Wednesday of each month. This year’s sessions are: Sept. 17, Oct. 15, Nov. 19, Jan.21, Feb. 25, Apr. 15, May 20, and June 17.

Look at the School of Leaders’ section on the Cursillo website for lesson plans and for a free copy (provided by the Vatican – no copyright issues) of Evangelii Gaudium.