

“Perseverance: The Path of Cursillo”

I. Opening: The Great Christian Marathon

Good morning, mis hermanos y hermanas en Cristo.

Welcome to the Fourth Day. No, not the Fourth of July—that one has fireworks and potato salad. This one is even better: it’s the Fourth Day of your Cursillo journey—the rest of your life in Christ.

Now, let me ask you something: has anyone here ever started a diet on Monday and quit by Tuesday?

Or said, “I’m going to pray the Rosary every single day!” and by Friday you’re already negotiating with God like,

“How about just one decade and a sincere Our Father?”

Welcome to the club. That’s not failure—that’s the human condition. That’s why perseverance matters.

La perseverancia es el pegamento del discipulado.

Perseverance is the glue of discipleship. It’s what sticks us to Jesus even when the wind is blowing hard, or we’re tired, or bored, or tempted.

Today, we’re going to look at perseverance from three angles:

1. Psychologically – how your brain is wired to keep going
2. Catholically – how saints and scripture guide us
3. Cursillísticamente – how your Fourth Day and the Cursillo method equip you

II. Perseverance and Your Brain: Dopamine, Habits, and Joy

Let’s talk science—and rats.

Back in 1954, two researchers stuck a little lever in a box with a rat and gave it a jolt of pleasure every time it completed a task. That rat went from “meh” to “marathoner” real quick. Why? Dopamine.

III. Perseverance in the Christian Life: Saints, Struggle, and Sacred Stubbornness

Now let's go from brain science to beatitude.

Let's talk about holy perseverance.

James 1:2 says:

"Count it all joy, brothers and sisters, when you face trials of many kinds, because the testing of your faith produces perseverance."

Notice it doesn't say:

"Count it joy when life is a cruise and everyone loves you and your Wi-Fi is strong."
Nope.

It says: Trials + Faith = Endurance.

Pruebas más fe igual a Perseverancia.

And who teaches us that best? The saints.

Let's take a few examples from the "Hall of Faith":

Saint Catherine of Siena:

"Nothing great is ever achieved without much enduring."

She wasn't talking about CrossFit. She meant love, family, faith, even Church reform! And she did all that... while living at home with her parents. ¡Eso sí es perseverancia!

Saint Philip Neri:

"We must pray incessantly for the gift of perseverance."

Even he knew—this isn't just about effort. It's about grace.

Saint John of the Cross:

"Though the path is smooth, without courage and perseverance, we will not go far."

Dopamine is your brain's "Yes! I did it!" chemical.

Finish a task? Dopamine.

Make your bed? Dopamine.

Don't slap that annoying coworker? Heavenly and neurological reward!

You can think of it like this: every time you finish something good, heaven gives you a little fist bump.

But here's the trick—you've got to notice it.

Celebrate the small stuff. ✦

"Señor, gracias porque lavé los trastes sin quejarme. ¡Milagro!"

When you persevere—even just a little—your brain and soul both light up.

So give yourself credit:

- "I prayed a decade." Boom—dopamine.
- "I didn't yell at the kids before coffee." Dopamine.
- "I actually went to my group reunion instead of fake-sneezing and cancelling." Double dopamine! ✦

You're not shallow for wanting to feel good—you're human. God designed you this way.

So celebrate perseverance. Celebrate effort. Celebrate showing up. Because spiritually and biologically, you're training your brain—and your soul—for endurance.

Look, even the spiritual path has potholes. Ever try to focus in Adoration and end up planning your grocery list? We've all been there. That's why we keep showing up.

The saints didn't coast—they climbed.

And here's the good news: you're not expected to sprint. Just keep going.

No se trata de velocidad. Se trata de fidelidad.

(It's not about speed. It's about faithfulness.)

IV. Cursillo and the Gift of the Fourth Day

Now, let's bring this home: Cursillo-style.

Because this movement was made for perseverance.

1.

Group Reunions & Ultreyas: Spiritual Spotters

Have you ever tried to go to the gym alone and just stood there trying to look like you know what you're doing?

That's what the Christian life feels like without support.

Group reunions are like your faith gym buddies. They're the ones spotting you when your spiritual bench press is shaky.

- They remind you you're not alone.
- They pray for you when you forget to pray.
- And if you're lucky, they bring donuts.

2.

The Fourth Day: The Rest of Your Life in Christ

You've had the mountaintop weekend. ¡Aleluya!

Now comes the long walk down into real life.

Tu Cuarto Día es donde se vive el Evangelio.

The Fourth Day is where the Gospel is lived.

Cursillo teaches us:

Piety. Study. Action.

Or as I call it:

Prayer, Learning, and Doing Stuff for Jesus.

These three keep us steady.

- Piety reminds us we belong to God.
- Study renews our minds with truth.
- Action brings heaven to earth in our environments.

And when you put them together—even on your bad days—you're persevering. Even if you trip, you're falling forward.

3.

Evangelizing Your Environments: Being Christ in Costco

Let me be real: Evangelizing your environment isn't about preaching at strangers in the bread aisle.

3.

Use checklists.

Seriously—check stuff off.

Jesus loves a to-do list.

“Fed the hungry?”

“Didn’t roll my eyes at that person in line?”

4.

Say, ‘Yes! I did it.’

Don’t wait for someone to clap. Clap for yourself (quietly).

That’s how dopamine and dignity meet.

5.

Lean on community.

Don’t ghost your group reunion.

Even when you don’t feel holy—especially then—show up.

6.

Remember the saints.

They weren’t superheroes. They were just stubborn in love.

7.

Ask for the gift.

It's bringing Christ:

- To your spouse when they're hangry
- To your kids when they're sticky
- To your workplace when someone microwaves fish (Lord, give me strength)

Evangelizing means persevering in kindness.

Even if your environment is difficult, dull, or disappointing... remember:

You are the salt. You are the light. You are the reason someone might feel loved today.

V. Practical Steps to Persevere (5–6 min)

So how do we do it?

How do we wake up on Day 1,483 of our Fourth Day and keep going?

Here are seven simple steps to keep your soul caffeinated:

1.

Start with Jesus every day.

Doesn't have to be fancy. Just say:

"Señor, aquí estoy. No soy perfecto, pero soy tuyo."

2.

Break big tasks into tiny steps.

Don't try to fix your whole life before lunch.

Just love one person. Just finish the Rosary. Just make your bed.

As Saint Philip Neri said:

“Hay que orar constantemente por el don de la perseverancia.”

Every morning:

“Señor, dame la gracia de no rendirme hoy.”

(Lord, give me the grace not to give up today.)

VI. Closing Challenge and Blessing

So here's the truth:

- You won't always feel holy.
- You won't always feel strong.
- Some days you'll just want to go back to bed.

But perseverance isn't about feeling. It's about faith.

And when you stumble—God doesn't shake His head. He holds out His hand.

“The righteous fall seven times,” Proverbs says, “but they rise again.”

El justo cae siete veces... pero se levanta.

My friends, you don't need to be perfect. You just need to keep going.

Because the one who began this good work in you?

He will bring it to completion.

And as we say in Cursillo...

¡De Colores!