

## **ACTION**



## ACTION

### SYNTHESIS OF ITS CONTENT AND CHARACTERISTIC NOTES

#### THEME

The sole value of apostolic action is that it is a consequence of being Christian. Action that is not an expression of intimacy does not have the force of efficacy, because it does not truly take on the unmistakable mark of a vital commitment; at the most it serves to pacify those who believe that by having a certain quota of activities they have fulfilled their obligation.

#### NOTE

The real definition of Action: Being Christian without action is equal to not being Christian. An action without being Christian ends up not being an action. In order to have an apostolate one needs to be an Apostle.

#### WHAT IS ACTION?

We are referring to apostolic action: which is the exercise of the power of love; and that through the combination of exercising both supernatural and human powers drives us to expand the Kingdom of God.

##### *Necessity:*

- A. Internal and vital for ourselves. There is no Christian life without Christian action. The Christian doesn't know rest; he can't cross his arms and do nothing.
- B. External and vital for others. The world needs a living ferment mixed into it, acting as a leavening agent;
- C. Essential for the Church, "Go and preach to all the people."

##### *Elements:*

- Head, Will, Arms, Knees. All the faculties of man at the service of God.

##### *Qualities:*

- Rational, resolute, enthusiastic, constant; supernatural and apostolic. All actions at the service of God.

##### *Methods:*

- A. Make friends, by means of our initiative.
- B. Become friends, by making them want our "living together."
- C. Make them friends with Christ, showing them that the maximum proof of our friendship is making them friends with Christ.

## **SITUATION**

This is the third rollo of the second day, usually given right after Lunch. Because of the timing, it may be difficult to catch their attention.

## **ATMOSPHERE**

At this point in time most of them are living in Grace. The Cursillistas have been warmed up by the Piety rollo, their prejudices against Study have been cleared away and their souls have been stirred up by the Sacraments rollo, they're ready to have their horizons widened to greater things.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The Piety rollo has awakened a restlessness in them to "do something," and in the Action rollo they are presented with a specific way to do this; achieving the realization in them that Christianity is a great adventure; that all those who truly look, in times of difficulty, will find the help they need; and all this is based on the commandment of Christ to "*Love God above all things and love your neighbor as yourself.*" This is a consequence and application of the "Layperson in the Church" rollo.

## **TECHNIQUE**

The rollo is an explanation of apostolic action. The theoretical foundations are laid and then explained and reinforced by using personal example from the Rollista's own life.

## **STYLE**

It is necessary to expose the theme of this rollo like an adventure that demands a response. This rollo should be given with clarity of the outline, convincing and cheerful. This rollo is a necessary consequence of our active Christianity that forms the basis of and essence of the Cursillo®.

# ACTION OUTLINE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Action is the consequence of being Christian. Action then is an expression of our desire to share God's love. At the end of the Piety rollo it was said that Action is the completion or perfection of Piety.

## 2. DEFINITION

- A. Action in general is exercising a power. Human Action: exercising our human powers (head, will, and senses) that allow us to reach our Ideal.
- B. Apostolic Action: exercising the power of Love; love of God and love of neighbor for God; that, based on the exercising of those supernatural and human powers impel us to spread the Kingdom of God.
- C. The term "Action" in this rollo refers to Apostolic Action. To be instruments of the Lord so that through any type of action we may exercise, we move our brothers and sisters closer to Christ.

## 3. NECESSITY FOR ACTION

To communicate Christ, our apostolate: the perfection of our Piety.

### A. Internal and vital for us.

We are the power of Christianity, and all power demands action as a vital necessity, since the characteristic of one's life is reinforced, developed, strengthened, and is perfected by means of action. All vital power condemned to inaction becomes sterile, atrophies, and dies. We are the vanguard of Christianity and as vanguards we cannot know rest. *"Always maintain a spirit of conquest"* (Pius XII).

### B. External and vital for others.

The world suffers from corruption. Life cannot spring from corruption, but from a living ferment that, when put into dough, acts as a leavening agent. *"A Christian example and guide for a world that is extremely ill."* (Pius XII) Spontaneous generation would be a miracle and God does not reward our laziness. We must seek out people where they are, if we do not win them over, they will overtake us. *"The time for action is now"* (Pius XII).

### C. Essential in the Church

Essentially the **same** as above... it is not a brotherhood for religious parades during Holy Week. "Go and preach to all people" says the Lord. We must be active participants in the apostolic hierarchy.

#### 4. ELEMENTS

- A. Head: intelligence, reflection.
  - B. Will: decision, constant.
  - C. Arms: action, diligence
  - D. Knees: prayer and sacrifice
- All informed by the heart (love)

#### 5. QUALITIES

- A. Rational
- B. Resolute, bold, and sure
- C. Enthusiastic
- D. Constant
- E. Supernatural, trusting in God
- F. Apostolic (to be an apostle, courage is needed and an internal wisdom such that nothing will be able to unbalance us).

#### 6. APOSTOLIC METHODS

##### A. *Make friends:*

- (1) Look for them; don't expect them to look for you. Look for those who can be better (open to change).
- (2) Find them; don't wait for them to find you.
- (3) Get close to them; don't wait for them to get close to you.

##### B. *Become friends:*

- (1) Live the Truth
- (2) Be interested in them
- (3) Be cheerful and optimistic
- (4) Be understanding
- (5) Support them
- (6) Love them supernaturally, speak to them about Christ

##### C. *Make them friends with Christ:*

*For Christ:* Not how we do it, or how much we do it, but who we do it for. We are not looking for each other, only Him; we do not try to prevail; only that He prevails. We do not want them to love us, but that they love Him.

*With Christ:* Living in Grace, praying. Trusting in Him.

*In Christ:* Living out our Baptism, we nurture the seed planted in their souls; we have to wake up and make their seed of faith sprout.

*Like Christ:* Samaritan, Zaccheus, Dismas (Good Thief)

*“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”* (Jn. 20:21)

## ACTION

### METHOD OF PREPARING THE ROLLO

The rollo Action should have the tone of embarking upon an adventure; it is an explanation of Apostolic Action. Apostles are trying to do an extra-ordinary thing—to bring the world to Christ. The rollo should be exciting, because as the rollista unfolds the ideas and the method, he/she is also telling stories of how God works and how the world is to be brought to Christ. For many, if not most of the participants, this will be a new dimension of Christianity.

The rollo should have examples/witness of apostolic action to clarify the points. The examples do not have to be inspirational the way the examples in Leaders and Christian Community will be. The examples/witness are instructional and clarifying, showing that the ideas are a reality. The remainder of the rollos present through their witness the reality of the concepts presented.

The rollo must not be dull, or most participants may literally fall asleep! It is important that the ideas be put across with excitement but, likewise, clarity is of utmost importance to set the stage for the following talks.

The Action rollo does not just talk of doing good deeds. To be a good parent, employee, employer, etc., is not action. Non-Christians do the same things. Rather, the Action rollo is based on the commandment of Christ to "Love God above all things and love your neighbor as yourself". Being a good neighbor, for instance, is an important step in the role of action. A person could not love or give of themselves (be as Christ) to their neighbor without in fact being a good neighbor. But being a good neighbor is not automatically action. Apostolic Action must contain a conscientious effort to build the Kingdom of God. It must strive to renew the world in Christ and to create an atmosphere wherein people can grow in God's sight.

The "Action" rollo, then, centers on Christian love—the giving of self to another with the express purpose of helping the other to grow toward God. The rollo describes the need to befriend those people God has placed in our everyday lives. The accent is on friendship and caring for others. The "Action" rollo has set the stage for the rest of the talks. Each succeeding rollo shows how the concepts presented in "Action" are applied in the world. The "Action" rollo presents the key to true Christian efforts—the redemptive love of the Christian for each person in his/her life.

### PREPARING THE ROLLO

The Introduction ([Section 1](#)) sums up "Piety" and "Study" and once again places the call for personal conversion before the participants. This section is summed up by presenting God's words to Cain to the participants: "Where is your brother?" The remainder of the rollo discusses what the Christian's attitude toward others should be.

[Section 2](#) defines the general term action. It has to make it clear that the action we are talking about is the "Apostolic Action": Exercising the power of Love; love of God and love of neighbor for God. We are not referring on just doing good deeds, doing Christian things, belonging to a parish group or civil organization, etc.



Section 2 then describes authentic action by separating good human efforts from Christian efforts: The prominence of Christ in the life of the Christian underlies and provides the motivational force for his/her acts of service and love.

Section 3 forms the heart of the rollo by discussing our Apostolic Action not only as a consequence but as a necessity of serving God becoming the "Good News" ourselves; a Christian love. It sums up all of the previous talks on the Christian's approach to life and points out that self-giving is a measure of a person's human and spiritual development. In this way it is a logical extension of the "Ideal" rollo, and a consequence and application of the rollo "Layperson in the Church".

Section 4 deals with the elements we need to employ so our Apostolic Action be efficacious. All our human faculties put at the service of God.

Section 5 defines the qualities of action. All our potential at the service of God. In order for apostolic action to be effective, it needs to include certain qualities. It is necessary to employ a great effort for God's things. Just as we do it for other things of less importance, then we should not limit what we do for God. It is necessary to place all our human efforts to the service of God.

Section 6 introduces the Cursillo's method of action through personal contact by describing how to, "Make a friend, be a friend, and bring your friend to Christ." It re-assures that this final step is accomplished only when done for Christ, with Christ, in Christ, and like Christ.

To make friends is achieved in many different ways. In our case, since it is about Christianity, it consists of an exemplary life. The example attracts and the witness draws. But an exemplary life is not sufficient to obtain the third step of the action method (to bring them to Christ). A true apostolate searches to find opportunities to announce Christ; it is here where we fail. Daily, we are presented with opportunities to announce Christ, his love, his gospel; through normal conversation with our friend, coworker, neighbor, children, spouse, and other members of the family. Christ takes advantage of every occasion to attract persons to Him: with the fisherman, with the Samaritan Woman, with Mary Magdalene, Zaccheus, etc.

The rollo then ends with the words of Jesus, sending His Apostles (Jn 20:21).

Duration: Not more than 35 minutes.

## **ACTION**

### **SAMPLE ROLLO**

#### **(35 MINUTES)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the Piety rollo, we learned that the Christian life is expressed in three distinct elements, they are: piety, study, and action. Action is the third leg of the tripod.

(1) *Piety* is directing our whole life to God. This intimate relationship with God empowers us to love and attract others to do likewise. Piety is the base from which Action is launched, the foundation from which the shot is fired.

(2) Study is engaging in an ongoing process that helps us to establish a better relationship with God and to come to know His will for us. Study is the aim of action as sighting the rifle is the aim of a well directed shot.

(3) Action then, is the consequence of being Christian; The Lord asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" Action is then an expression of our desire to share God's love. At the end of the Piety rollo it was said that Action is the completion or perfection of Piety.

### **2. DEFINITION**

Action in general:

Action is exercising a power; exercising our human powers (head, will, and senses) which allow us to reach our ideals.

- To walk, to move a chair from where it stands we exercise our physical power.
- To study for an exam, we exercise our intellectual power.

Apostolic Action:

- Exercising the power of Love; love of God and love of neighbor for God; that, based on exercising of those supernatural and human powers impel us to spread the Kingdom of God.

The sole value of apostolic action is that it is a consequence of being Christian:

- Being Christian without action is equal to not being Christian. An action without being Christian ends up not being an action. In order to have an apostolate one needs to be an apostle.

The term "Action" in this rollo refers to "Apostolic Action".

A. If our next door neighbor needs a ride to the grocery store, to the pharmacy, or needs to borrow a lawn mower; we help them. These are human actions.

When our motivations for action are elevated and empowered by grace for the spreading of God's kingdom, our evangelistic efforts become apostolic, beyond everyday human actions which are motivated by friendship, brotherhood, and neighborliness.

B. Apostolic action also goes beyond "Christian" actions; which is doing Christian things. For instance, visiting the sick or delivering meals to the elderly out of a sense of what God calls us to do and because we feel compassion for others and want to help them. This is Christian action.

C. Apostolic action is both an expression and a consequence of our love for God. What the Cursillo® Movement means by Apostolic action is taking our Christian actions a step further. The example of visiting the sick or delivering food to others, giving a ride to somebody to the pharmacy becomes apostolic when we become instruments of the Lord bringing the Good News as well, so those who receive the meals or the favor become aware of Christ in their life.

Jesus did many miracles, He cured the sick, the blind, He raised the dead, etc., but beyond that, Jesus was more concerned with the spiritual life of the people; He was always preaching to the people and to His disciples. The Gospel narrates all His works. The Gospel of St. Mark tells us a story of a paralyzed man that was brought to Jesus so He can cure him. "Because of the crowd, however, they could not get the man to Him. So they made a hole in the roof right above the place where Jesus was. When they had made an opening, they let the man down, lying on his mat. Seeing how much faith they had, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, 'My son, your sins are forgiven.'" (Mark 2, 4-5) All the effort was so Jesus will cure the man; instead, Jesus forgave his sins... We know that the narration continues and Jesus also cured the man.

Jesus wants the same from us, that we also be more interested on helping people in their spiritual life, so they can be closer to Him. We need to do good and then take our actions a step further.

To feed the hungry is good, to clothe the naked is good, but if we forget to introduce them to Christ, we forget the punch line; we have only half the Gospel; we miss the part most vital to our mission from Christ, the part most vital to the life of the person I am befriending.

We cannot consider our actions to be apostolic if all we do is to be kind and considerate towards our neighbors. A non-Christian and non-believer can perform good deeds, and act in a civil manner.

### **3. NECESSITY FOR ACTION**

Apostolic Action is necessary as an incitement, resonance and an expression of our life in Grace and our action is necessary to communicate Christ, our apostolate: the perfection of our Piety—to communicate the Grace in us to others.

Our Apostolic Action is necessary through three points of view:

- (1) Internal and vital for us – what it means for us (in order to live the Christian Ideal).
- (2) External and vital for others – what it means for others (in order to bring them to Christ).
- (3) Essential in the Church – what it means for us as Church (for us to become the "Good News").

#### **A. Internal and vital for us.**

We are the power of Christianity, and all power demands action as a vital necessity, since the characteristic of one's life is reinforced, developed, strengthened, and are perfected by means of action. Where there is no action, there is no life. If the heart is not pumping, there is no life. If the lungs are not working, soon there is no life. If the muscles are not used, soon they wither.

Being Christian is to live the life of Grace 24 hours a day.

Our apostolic work is not limited only to those times when we feel like it or when the particular apostolic action allows us to be in the spotlight. Action is not a hobby. It is part of our vocation as lay people.

All vital power condemned to inaction becomes sterile, atrophies, and dies.

We are the vanguard of Christianity and as vanguards we cannot know rest.

*"Always maintain a spirit of conquest"* (Pius XII).

There is not Christian life without apostolic action. We are the Church we are the branches; Christ is the Vine. Christ willed for the branches to bear fruit, to be alive to produce. *"In this is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples."* (John 15:8)

Piety is life and this life needs action.

B. Secondly, my Apostolic action is External and vital for others.

The world suffers from corruption. Life cannot spring from corruption, but from a living ferment that, when put into dough, acts as a leavening agent. We need to be, *"a Christian example and guide for a world that is extremely ill"* (Pius XII).

We need to be apostles of today, living in Grace hand in hand with our brothers and sisters to conquer everyone for Christ. God works through persons to bring others to Him. Christians, exercising apostolic action, are God's people, His apostles for the Christianization of the world. *"You did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear much fruit."* (John 15:16) This is God's will.

And, He has put many people in our path:

- Our spouse... parents
- Our friends, neighbors, family
- Our co-workers, employees, supervisors...
- Persons in your environments

Saint Paul told the first Christians "the hour to awake is now"; Pope John Paul II told us *"We are in need of a new Evangelization."* One must go out and awaken so many that have never heard the message of Christ.

The moment has arrived to come out of our homes, to come out of our routine in our job and in our daily living, to seek others, with a spirit of conquest. You are in a Cursillo® in Christianity, and have heard the voice of our Lord Jesus, *"Let no one remain asleep."*

Spontaneous generation would be a miracle and God does not reward our laziness. We must seek out people where they are, so that nobody can complain not to have known the happiness of this life in Grace. If we do not win them over, they will overtake us. *"The time for action IS NOW."* (Pius XII)

C. My Apostolic Action is essential in the Church.

Without our action, without the action of each baptized the Church would not be able to carry out the mission which was entrusted to it by Christ.

It is not a matter of "doing Christian things", it is not a brotherhood for religious parades during Holy Week. *"Go and preach to all people"* says the Lord. The Church is "go

and preach" not "stay and comment". The essential of Christianity is to live and to participate in such a way that the Gospel makes new the Good News, living our Christianity each moment with vigor and joy.

Our life in Grace needs to be apostolic; the Church to be Church needs our witness, the world needs of our action.

Only when our life of Grace has apostolic projection, and our professional and social Christian life becomes a witness of Church can we attain what is pretended: to save souls and transform the world.

We must be active participants in the apostolic hierarchy.

#### **4. ELEMENTS**

Our apostolic action can be efficacious if we apply certain elements: head, will, arms, knees. All informed by the heart (love).

A. Head: My action will be performed making use of my intelligence; planning, knowing what I am doing; after giving it due consideration and reflection. As laypersons, each one of us has a mission to personify Christ in all the circumstances of our lives—work, sports, social events and in our families. We need to take advantage of the moment's grace, but the Christian must learn to be sensitive to the moments when they arise (for often they are subtle), and the Christian must learn to make the moments happen, by what they say, act, and do.

What we propose is more than saving souls, what we propose is to "vertebrae Christianity" which is the only way of saving our world. The building of love (through friendship) is not accidental, but is the result of time and effort to know and understand other people.

B. Will: My action will be performed in line with a well formed judgment. It is simply the decision of doing what I proposed on doing.

C. Arms: The arms are simply the human part of our action. It is the actual "doing" of what was proposed. My action will be performed with diligence. If I just think, plan and make the decision to do an action and then for any given reason, I don't execute it, I have just wasted some very precious time and missed an opportunity to build the Kingdom.

D. Knees: Prayer and sacrifice. My action will be performed with perfect reliance on the power of God, realizing that God can accomplish miracles through me which I, in my weakness cannot even attempt. I will pray and ask Jesus to work with me; I need to get Christ involved in all my situations. It is Christ who brings success: "Without me, you can do nothing." (Jn. 15:5) I need to get others to do Palanca for my intentions and situations as I would do for them as well. Our knees are the great "Palancas" of the Apostle.

All informed by the heart (love).

#### **5. QUALITIES OF ACTION**

There are six qualities that are included in every act of action. They are: Rational, Resolute, Enthusiastic, Constant, Supernatural and Apostolic.

A. Rational – We need to employ our intelligence; think and plan our action.

B. Resolute, bold, and sure – Our action must be decisive. The action we don't do ourselves, nobody will do it either.

C. Enthusiastic – If we lack enthusiasm for what we say we believe, and for what we say fulfills all of our expectations, how can anyone else be attracted to what we believe? Others will not be attracted to us, and ultimately to Jesus, if we are insincere, depressed, or always negative. God fills our hearts with joy! We cannot hide it. We must let people see this joy and enthusiasm for His work.

D. Constant – It is an ongoing desire, not a one-time hit or miss approach. Apostolic action is not necessarily easy, for it requires self-sacrifice and effort. Imagine what would have happen if the person responsible for you to be here had given up an hour before you agreed to attend to this Cursillo®. Christians must never become discouraged, for they should know that God rewards their efforts a hundredfold.

E. Supernatural – Always trusting in God—this is the quality which enables everything else to happen. We must always remember to "speak to God about our friend before speaking to our friend about God."

F. Apostolic – Everything we do, we do it for the Lord; not for our own "glory", but the Glory of our Lord. An expression and a consequence of our love for God and neighbor.

## 6. APOSTOLIC METHOD

So that our apostolic action has efficacy we need to apply the best method that we may know. This method consists of three steps: To make a friend, to be a friend, and bring your friend to Christ.

A. *Make a friend* – This is probably the easiest step. We can't expect them to look for you; we need to look for them. All it takes is the will to take the first step; to make the first introduction to this person with whom you desire to be your friend. A simple hello may start the entire process; maybe a common interest, like children, school activities, or work interests. All we need is the desire to become friendly with another person. Look for those who can be better (open to change).

B. *Become friends* – The next step is to really become a friend. This step takes time. In order to become a true friend, we must have a genuine interest in the other person. We must take the time to get to know him/her, their likes and dislikes, hobbies, etc. Be interested in them and think of them and their needs before your own. Love them spiritually as God loves us. Always live for the truth. It is important that we be authentic, honest and sincere when we share our lives with them. There is no gain in pretense. It can only shatter the relationship when the truth becomes known.

C. *Make them Friends with Christ* – The final step is to bring your friend to Christ. Lest we believe that we are doing this, alone, it is important for all of us to remember that this final step is accomplished only when done for Christ, with Christ, in Christ, and like Christ.

(1) *For Christ*: Not how we do it, or how much we do it, but who we do it for. We are not looking for each other, only Him; we do not try to prevail; only that He prevails. We do not want them to love us, but that they love Him.

(2) *With Christ*: Living in Grace, praying. Trusting in Him. Jesus is beside us, and sometimes carrying us, every step of the way.

(3) *In Christ*: Living out our Baptism, we nurture the seed planted in their souls; we have to wake up and make their seed of faith sprout.

(4) *Like Christ* – I must act with the qualities of Jesus. I must give witness to my life in Christ. I must show that I am trying to live the life that I am talking about. Jesus was a witness to His preaching (Zaccheus, Dismas (Good Thief), Samaritan Woman, etc.). Am I?

We need to actualize the saying: "Love one another", even those whom we consider our enemies, like Jesus said in Mt. 5:44.

[Rollista should witness to how he/she has used the method set forth above in his/her action efforts. It is important that the witness be related to efforts of apostolic action, not Christian action alone or simple good human action.]

*"Go throughout the whole world and preach the Gospel to all people" (Mk. 16:15). "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn. 20:21).* Jesus sent His Apostles, now he sends you to love and serve your neighbor through Apostolic Action.

