



# Cursillos in Christianity

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Cursillo Movement of the Diocese of Gaylord, Michigan

The purpose of the Cursillo Movement is to make Christian community possible in family, social and work situations and in other natural environment of mankind. The Cursillo hopes to make a natural Christian life possible for anyone.

To fulfill its purpose, the Cursillo seeks to introduce Christ's love into every human environment through the actions of Christian leaders who know Christ's love and the joy of Christian community. These Christian leaders are guided by the wisdom, conviction and love of Christ's teachings in fulfilling their responsibilities to family, job and friends.

The Cursillo method takes a Christian beyond a passive belief in God to a daily interaction with God and His people. It helps one become more committed to Christ. A Cursillo participant is provided with a simple means to persevere and grow in holiness while building God's kingdom on earth.

## **THE CURSILLO WEEKEND**

The spirit of the living Christ is renewed, examined and enjoyed in the Cursillo. During the Cursillo weekend basic Christian beliefs and truths are reviewed. The weekend is the first introduction for many people to the power of genuine Christian community. The weekend is for all a welcome respite from a society that has largely forgotten the Lord's simple request to "love one another as I have loved you."

The weekend begins on a Thursday evening and ends the following Sunday night. During these three days the participants live, work and pray together. The activities for the weekend revolve around a series of short talks that are given by Cursillo team members. The talks are entitled: *Ideal, Grace, The Layperson as the Church, Faith, Piety, Study, Sacraments, Action, Obstacles to a Life of Grace, Leaders, Study, and Evangelization of Environments, Christian Life, Christian Community and Group Reunion and Ultreya*. Each talk is followed by a discussion period during which participants may share their thoughts and questions on the topic of the talk.

The Cursillo team is made up of lay people and clergy. A great deal of prayer and preparation go into each weekend.

## **NOT A RETREAT**

A Cursillo weekend can be made only once and therefore is not a substitute for a retreat. The basic atmosphere of a Cursillo weekend is unlike the individual solitude of a retreat. During the weekend the teachings of Christ are discussed in a climate of joy and community. Actually the Cursillo weekend makes succeeding retreats more profitable and participants are encouraged to make regular retreats.

## **AFTER THE WEEKEND**

The Cursillo weekend is merely the beginning of a person's growth as a Christian. The life-long work of every Cursillo participant is to bring Christ's love and spirit to each of his or her environments through each person's special talents. A participant's "Fourth Day" is living and acting at all times as Christ would. The Cursillo Movement believes that actions speak louder than words.

Cursillo participants persevere in their Fourth Day by meeting on a weekly basis in small groups to share their accomplishments and failures and to support each other's Christian work. All Cursillo participants in an area gather monthly to share the spirit of Christ.

## **ORGANIZATION**

The Cursillo Movement is not an organization per se. While some structure is necessary to assure continuation of the movement, what structure does exist concentrates on scheduling Cursillo weekends, preparation of Cursillo teams, prayer and supporting Christian leaders. While interaction with other Cursillo participants is encouraging and desirable to many, a Christian's commitment is not to the Cursillo, but to Christ and the Christianization of environments.

## **CURSILLO CANDIDATES**

Candidates for the Cursillo weekend must have a desire to become more of a person through deeper life in Christ and in service to others. They must desire to grow in perfection as persons and as Christians. Candidates need to understand clearly that the Cursillo weekend is about life, about people, about the Church and about a concrete, visible and experiential community. Candidates should understand that they are not going to attend a mere theoretical course and that no extensive knowledge of scripture is expected. Candidates need to have an attitude of listening and friendship together with a disposition of change.

While there are no specific criteria for Cursillo candidates, the purpose of the Cursillo will best be met by persons who:

- have strength of character and self control
- can make their own decisions
- are mature and responsible
- are concerned about the social conditions of our times
- have the ability and desire to live in and for the community.

Persons may attend a weekend only if they are sponsored by someone who has attended the Cursillo weekend and is living out his or her Fourth Day. A sponsor is responsible for preparing a Cursillo candidate for the weekend and for supporting the candidate for a minimum of one year after the weekend. Accordingly, the relationship between a sponsor and a candidate must be one of openness, honesty and sincerity.

Selection of candidates to make a Cursillo weekend is based on a great deal of prayer. Sponsors are encouraged to "speak to God about men before speaking to men about God." In addition, sponsors and other Christian leaders consider the environments which need Christ's influence. Cursillo weekends are for people of all social classes and income levels.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

The decision to become a Cursillo candidate can be made only after the candidate and sponsor have sincerely discussed the expectations, questions and concerns of the candidate. If a candidate is married, his or her spouse must be included in such discussions and be fully informed of all aspects of the Cursillo. Both spouses are to attend a Cursillo weekend. A candidate is encouraged to discuss the Cursillo with his or her pastor. In addition, other Cursillo participants in the community may be able to assist in answering a candidate's questions.

A candidate applies to make a Cursillo weekend by completing the attached Cursillo Candidate Application which is then returned to the sponsor. The sponsor will then return the application to the contact person. In addition to all of the foregoing considerations, availability of space at the facility where the Cursillo is held may require applicants to be placed on a waiting list.

A candidate who has been accepted to make a weekend will be informed by a letter with further instructions about what to bring for the weekend. Once a candidate has been accepted, prayer by the candidate and the sponsor is most important. The sponsor will arrange for the candidate's transportation to and from the Cursillo weekend location.

**PLEASE RETAIN THIS SHEET FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.**