

What is Cursillo?

Cursillo is intended to help Christians learn and live what is fundamental as a Christian and to help these same Christians discover and live out a personal vocation. Cursillo is a ministry of the Episcopal Church, under the authority of the Presiding and Diocesan Bishops. The goal of Cursillo is to bring the world to Christ by empowering adult Christian leaders through the use of a specific method, which equips and encourages Christians to live out their Baptismal Covenant to serve Christ.

What is the Purpose of Cursillo?

Its purpose is to help those in the church understand their individual callings to be Christian Leaders. The leadership may be exercised in work situations, in the family, in social life, in leisure activities, and within the Church environment. Leadership, in Cursillo, does not mean power over others, but *influence* on others; all of us need to be aware that we can exert a positive influence on those around us.

What does Cursillo do?

It helps to renew and deepen Christian commitment. Many people have said Cursillo provides an important learning experience which causes many to feel like newly made Christians with a purpose and with support.

What is the Cursillo Ministry About?

Cursillo is patterned on Jesus' own example. He searched out and called a small group of potential leaders (pre-Cursillo); He trained them by word and example and inspired them with a vision (the Three-Day Weekend); He linked them together and sent them out into the world to bring the world to Him (the Fourth Day).

Pre-Cursillo

During this period, sponsors (i.e. those individuals that have been to the Three-Day Weekend and are living the Fourth Day) identify and recommend the candidacy of those Episcopalians who are leading an active Christian life and are a living witness to their love for Christ. It is also the period in which selected candidates are informed of what to expect at the Three-Day Weekend and are assisted in appropriate preparations.

The Three-Day Weekend

The weekend brings together a diverse group of Episcopalians to share the richness of many modes of worship and to broaden each one's appreciation for our Church. Lay people conduct the weekend with two or three members of the clergy functioning as spiritual advisors. Cursillo presumes that those who attend weekends are already well grounded in the faith. It is intended to be an enriching and deepening of what

is already there, not a conversion experience. It often provides new insights into our faith as well as fostering ministry among lay people.

The weekend usually begins Thursday evening, which is spent in the Chapel with meditations, discussions, and Compline. Then blessed silence is kept until after the worship on Friday morning. After breakfast participants are assigned to table groups for the weekend. The next two days are filled with talks and group discussions with emphasis on the doctrine of Grace, the Sacraments, and of the great Cursillo tripod: Piety, Study, and Action. Plus, there is fellowship, singing, good food, and time for privacy, meditation, prayer, and walks. Eucharist is celebrated each day.

Fourth Day

The Three-Day Weekend is not an end to itself. It is a starting point for something that lasts the rest of one's life. It is a springboard to a long-range practice of the Baptismal Covenant in the life of the Church called the Fourth Day. The Fourth Day is composed of three major elements:

The Group Reunion, the heart of Cursillo, is a small group of friends (usually 3-5) who meet weekly, and who hold each other accountable for their spiritual journey. They report on their piety, their study, and their apostolic action. A bond develops that institutes a strong support group for life.

The Ultreya, which is usually held monthly, is a “reunion of the reunions”. It provides support and builds community by allowing the sharing of communal experiences.

Spiritual Direction is an important element of the Cursillo Ministry. It is a commitment to seek out skilled clergy or lay persons for spiritual direction to provide help in deepening one’s union with Christ.

Are there Cursillo Secrets?

Some people have been told by some who have attended the weekend that they cannot tell you what Cursillo is all about or what goes on during a Cursillo weekend.

This is not correct. Everything that goes on during the weekend may be told to anyone. Cursillo literature is available to anyone who wishes to read or purchase the materials.

“... But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ . . .”

Ephesians 4:7, 11-12

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Cursillo

A Ministry of the Episcopal Church