

What is “Cursillo”

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What is “Cursillo?”

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 (Cursillo Three-Day Weekend); He linked them together and sent them out into the world to bring the word to Him (Fourth Day).

What does the word “Cursillo” mean?

Cursillo (pronounced “kur-SEE-oh”) is a Spanish word that means “short course.” In the context of the Cursillo method, it means short course in Christian living.

How did Cursillo start?

The first Cursillo Weekends were developed in the Roman Catholic Church in Majorca, Spain. Cursillo was brought to the United States in the early 1960s by Spanish airmen who were stationed at air bases in Texas. The first Cursillo weekends in the U.S. were conducted in Spanish. A few years after it took root here in the Catholic Church, it spread into the Episcopal Church, which licenses the name Cursillo and many materials from the Roman Catholic Church. The first official Cursillo Weekend in the Episcopal Church (in English) was conducted with help from Roman Catholic sponsors in the Diocese of Iowa. Cursillo came to the Diocese of East Carolina in the early 1980s from South Carolina.

What goes on at a Cursillo weekend?

Cursillo weekends begin with dinner on Thursday evening, and ends with a Eucharist on Sunday afternoon. The weekend centers around a series of fifteen talks called “rollos” (pronounced “ROY-oh”), about various aspects of Christian life. There are also group discussions and activities relating to the talks, as well as music, worship, prayer, food and fellowship.

When and where are Cursillo weekends held?

In the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina, Cursillo weekends are held in late April and early November at Trinity Center, an Episcopal camp and conference center near Atlantic Beach, N.C.

What does “De Colores” mean?

In Spanish, it simply means the “the colors”. It’s also the name of a song traditionally sung on Cursillo weekends that praises the beauty of the diversity and simplicity of God’s creation. “De Colores” has also come to be used as a greeting among cursillistas (those who have attended a Cursillo weekend) but mostly just in the United States.

What’s the deal with the chickens?

Actually, they’re roosters. The rooster has long been a Christian witness symbol. The bright colors on the rooster images associated with Cursillo represent the diversity and beauty of God’s creation.

Is there a cost?

The cost for Pilgrims (those attending a Cursillo weekend for the first time) is \$250.00. A \$50 deposit is requested with your application. Scholarships to cover all or part of the fee are available, so financial difficulties should not be an obstacle to attending.

Who may participate?

Cursillo in the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina is open to any adult, man or woman, married to single, who is active in an Episcopal parish in the diocese and is seeking a deeper relationship with Christ. Laity and clergy alike are invited to join the fellowship. Husbands and wives may attend the same Cursillo Weekend, or they may go on different weekends. Confirmation in the Episcopal Church is not a prerequisite; however, Cursillo applications must be approved by an Episcopal priest before being submitted.

How can I make my Cursillo?

Each participant is sponsored by someone who is active in the Cursillo Community. The sponsor is responsible for providing his or her Pilgrim with an application form, seeing that it is completed properly, signed by a priest and mailed for processing. Sponsors are responsible for ensuring that the Pilgrim clearly understands the concept and objectives of Cursillo, seeing that the Pilgrim arrive for the Weekend on time, has transportation home and is integrated into the Cursillo community after the weekend. If you are interested, but don’t know someone willing to serve as your sponsor, please let us know by sending e-mail to worr2@nc.rr.com.

Pre-Cursillo

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

The Three-Day Weekend

The Cursillo 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 are already well grounded in the faith. It is not intended to be a conversion experience but an enriching and deepening of what is already there. It often provides new insights into our faith as well as fostering ministry among lay people.

The weekend begins on Thursday evening 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 three days are filled with talks and group discussions with emphasis on the doctrine of Grace, the Sacraments, and 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 Cursillo weekend is not an end to itself. It is a starting point that lasts the rest of your life. It is a springboard to a long-range practice of the Baptismal Covenant in the life of the Church called the Fourth Day.

What happens after the weekend?

Although Three Day Cursillo Weekends are incredible experiences, they are just the beginning. The real point to Cursillo is Life AFTER the Weekend. Each individual who returns from the Weekend with a renewed commitment to work for Christ is encouraged to join in the activities of an existing community of persons who have also experienced the weekend. The purpose of this community is to give strength and support to each other in order that each person might grow in faith and develop their particular gifts of ministry. The support is provided through two methods

- **REUNION GROUP MEETINGS (“Grouping”)** that are held frequently when several people gather together for mutual encouragement and support through **PRAYER, STUDY, and ACTION**. If you have difficulty finding a reunion group, remember that “when two or more are gathered in my name...”. So you can create your own group with a few as one other Cursillista! There is also an active Online Reunion Group. If you’re interested in joining, please Email worr2@nc.rr.com.
- **AREA MEETINGS (Ultreya’s)** that are meetings of larger groups of people, usually from more than one parish, who have either participated in a Weekend or who might be interested in doing so. Here we share and witness to each other so that the Church and our own faith may be enhanced. Ultreya’s in our Diocese are centered in Elizabeth City (including the Outer Banks), New Bern, Kinston, Fayetteville and Wilmington. If you would like more information on your local Ultreya, please check the contact information in the Secretariat section of this Web Site.

How does one serve on a team?

You submit an application each time you want to serve on a team. If there is not an application in your parish office, you can get one from your local Ultreya Rector, or by visiting this website. Currently, the team fee is \$250.00. Scholarship assistance may be available through your Ultreya.

There are four required meetings for team members prior to each Cursillo weekend. The first is held at Trinity Center (Beach House) prior to the Clausura of the Cursillo Weekend prior to the one on which you will serve. The second is usually held on a Saturday approximately six weeks prior to the Weekend. Time and locations of this meeting is announced at the first meeting. The third meeting is held on a Saturday one month before the scheduled Cursillo Weekend. The fourth meeting is held at Trinity Center on Thursday morning usually at 10:00 AM, prior to the team commissioning. This is held prior to the arrivals of the Pilgrims on Thursday afternoon.

