



Sponsor's Booklet

*An official publication of the
United States National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement*
Prepared for the South Carolina Catholic Cursillo Community



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Introduction

Why a Sponsor's Booklet?

This booklet has been developed in response to a growing need. Many diocesan leaders have urged the National Secretariat (National Cursillo Center) to provide some guidelines for sponsoring a candidate to the Cursillo Weekend. Several Diocesan Movements have developed their own guidelines; however, most of those guidelines merely scratch the surface of what sponsoring is all about.

If our purpose, in writing sponsorship guidelines, is limited to having a relative, friend, or acquaintance merely attend a 3-Day Weekend, then this booklet would not be necessary. We could produce a pamphlet that would provide all the necessary information. Similarly, if our purpose in writing sponsorship guidelines was to cover all aspects of the Cursillo Movement, then again this booklet would not be necessary. All of those aspects can be found in the Leaders' Manual, the Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement, and other National Cursillo Movement literature.

This booklet has been written primarily with the new Cursillistas in mind. Much care has been taken to insure that this booklet was published as an affordable tool and, at the same time, usable (it fits into a pocket, purse, or briefcase). Consequently, this booklet can be kept at-hand for continual reading and also as a quick reference source.

CHAPTER 1

Purpose of Sponsoring

In order for this booklet to be effective, there is one very important element that must be adhered to. **Do not begin to read any further unless you have read the Introduction.**

Before one can address the purpose of sponsoring, we must first have a good understanding of the purpose of the Cursillo Movement.

What the Cursillo Movement Is Not

It is important to note that, as we try to understand the purpose of the Cursillo Movement, it is also important that we understand what the Cursillo Movement is NOT. There have been many misconceptions about what the Cursillo Movement is for. There was a dialogue that appeared years ago in one of Spain's newsletters which is a good lead-in to one of the first misconceptions people have had about the Cursillo Movement. The dialogue was as follows:

Where do all the good people go? They go to Heaven.

Where do all the bad people go? They go to Hell.

Where do all the very, very bad people go? They go to the Cursillo to get zapped.

This misconception of what the Cursillo is for could be called the “problem case approach.” The Cursillo can make Christians out of people no one else can do anything with. Of course, the only problem is to get them there — and convert them.

Other misconceptions over the years have been:

- Pastors use the Cursillo for recruiting workers for the parish.
- People had a pre-Vatican II outlook on the Catholic faith; Cursillo could change their view.
- Get people involved with social action programs — work with the homeless, right to life, and so on.
- Use the Cursillo to produce leaders for other movements or organizations.

The Cursillo Movement is NOT a cure-all for personal problems. There are other programs, staffed by professionals, designed to help people with personal problems.

The Cursillo Movement is not just anything. It was designed in a certain way for a certain purpose. Before the Cursillo Movement can have a strong sense of direction, and be able to accomplish what it was designed to accomplish, there has to be a clear understanding of what the Movement is and what it is for.

What the Cursillo Movement Is

No one definition can truly explain what Cursillo is all about. However, we can define the purpose (or goal) of the Cursillo Movement. The Movement is the reason why we do what we do. Cursillo pursues a two-fold purpose: an immediate one and an ultimate one.

The immediate purpose is to provide a foundation for the person to live what is fundamental for being Christian — love of God and love of neighbor — experienced through three essential encounters: the encounter with oneself, the encounter with Christ, and the encounter with others.

The ultimate purpose is to vertebrae Christianity — to leaven the environments with the Gospel — in society, with those who live what is fundamental for being Christian, while strengthening the three encounters.

Therefore, the goal of the Movement is not about “preaching the Good News” and becoming Evangelicals, but to become the Good News; and, in a natural way, our actions will become evangelical in our daily lives (family, workplace, neighborhood, social life, and, in essence, wherever we are at the moment), in groups (Group Reunion and Ultreya) which will provide a more authentic, continuous, and progressive Christianity.

Since it is a Movement of the Church, the Cursillos in Christianity has the same apostolic purpose as the Church herself. And the Church, as Pope Paul VI told us, exists to evangelize.

The Cursillo Movement, by means of its own method, makes it possible for people to live what is fundamental for being a Christian, and to live it together; it helps people discover and fulfill their personal vocations, and it promotes the creation of core groups of Christians who leaven their environments with the Gospel.

The Cursillo Movement is focused to help each of us fulfill our baptismal responsibility: to go forth, as apostles, and proclaim the Good News that God in Christ loves us. We can no longer afford to sit passively by and “hope” that the world comes to know Christ. We must make a conscientious effort to “tell” the world about Christ. The Cursillo Movement provides us with the method necessary for fulfilling our baptismal responsibility, along with the support for using the method.

Knowing the purpose of the Cursillo Movement, we now focus our thoughts on the purpose of sponsoring. Keep in mind that this must be a very conscientious act, and the results will be life changing.

The purpose of sponsoring is to prepare a person or persons who can bring about a change in the environments. You should have a plan on how you are going to do this. Part of your plan would include identifying those individuals with the talents to bring about the change — to bring Jesus Christ into their environments.

So sponsoring is not a haphazard circumstance. It should be a deliberate act to bring Jesus Christ into the world. Therefore, a sponsor should know the candidates very well. If they are married, you should know their spouse as well. Your candidates will become the agents of change in their families, work situations, neighborhoods, social gatherings, and so on. Your candidates will become active participants in their particular Group Reunion, and at Ultreya. Your candidates will become part of the Christian community that links together with others to bring Jesus Christ to the world. **This is the purpose of sponsoring!**

CHAPTER 2

What Sponsors Should Know and Do

Being a sponsor is committing one’s self to the selection and preparation of a person for the Cursillo, and to their ongoing assistance in the Postcursillo. The only way a sponsor can interest potential candidates to experience Cursillo is by living a conscious and growing life of grace through personal contact on a regular basis and establishing a sincere friendship with the person. This process takes time. It should awaken in the potential candidates the desire for conversion and offer them great possibilities for their life and happiness. A sponsor can be either an individual or a group. Whichever the case, there are certain things that a sponsor

should know about the Cursillo Movement. More importantly, there are many things that a sponsor should do.

Things to Know

Know about the purpose of the Cursillo Movement. If you have read and understood this booklet completely, then you should have a firm understanding about the purpose.

The sponsor must know that potential candidates for the Cursillo Movement generally fall into three categories. These three categories are:

Those who should go:

- They are individuals who are truly the backbone of their environments.
- They have a deep personality, a capacity for humility, and are able to make their own decisions.
- They are mature, responsible, and concerned about the social conditions of our times, and they have the ability and desire to live in and for community. In short, they are natural leaders.

Those who can go:

- They are simply anyone who is eligible to receive the Sacraments.
- The ordinary Catholic — the one trying to live the Catholic life as best they know how.

Those who should not go:

- Those who have psychological or emotional problems.
- Those of abnormal situations due to illness or vice.
- Those whose moral lives are so disoriented that they are incapable of understanding the message or of living the Cursillo.
- Persons who, due to circumstances, cannot receive the Sacraments — especially the sacrament of the Eucharist — because their life is contrary to the life of grace, and the Cursillo is centered in the Eucharist where one experiences the life of grace.

If the purpose of the Movement is to be realized in a diocese, the majority of candidates for a given weekend should come from the first category, and the remainder from the second category.

Again, know your candidate as well as possible, using the Cursillo method of making a friend, being a friend, and bringing your friend to Christ or to a better relationship with Christ. Pray for direction from the Holy Spirit. **Remember to speak to God about the person before speaking to the person about God.**

Through this method of friendship, you will be informed about your candidate — such as marital status, number of children, the parish the candidate belongs to, the specific environments your candidate is immersed in, and the reasons why this candidate should attend the Cursillo Weekend. In addition, your candidate:

- Must be a baptized, practicing Catholic.
- Must be able to participate in the Sacraments of the Church.
- Should be able to make decisions as an individual.
- Should be free from obstacles that hinder the ability to join a Group Reunion.

All of this information must be provided on the application form to the Diocesan Secretariat.

What to Know About Sponsoring Married Couples

Before sponsoring an individual, the sponsor must determine if that individual is married. If the individual is not married, then proceed with the responsibilities of sponsorship (as outlined in this booklet). However, if the individual is married, then certain steps must be followed before sponsorship takes place (if it does at all).

The purpose of the Cursillo Movement is to transform the person so that the person, once converted, can in a natural way Christianize their environment. With this in mind, and taking into consideration the pluralistic society in which we live, we will encounter situations where a spouse may not be Catholic, or where the spouse of the natural leader does not wish to attend the Cursillo Weekend — thus the reason for guidelines on couples.

The guidelines on couples: Even though the Cursillo Weekend is lived individually, the spiritual life of the couple, both before and after the Weekend, must be considered. The Cursillo Movement holds in highest regard the Sacrament of Marriage. If participation in a Cursillo by one spouse and not the other can have an adverse effect on the marriage, then we suggest some other form of individual spiritual renewal for the person.

Once it is known that the person is married, we need to determine whether both are eligible to attend the Cursillo, or whether both are interested in attending the Cursillo Weekend. If something would prevent one spouse from attending — either because that individual is not eligible (see “Those who should not go” earlier in this chapter), or because that person does not wish to attend — the following steps should be taken:

- The couple would be invited to meet with the Spiritual Advisor of the Movement, a member of the Secretariat, and/or a leader from the School of Leaders.
- During this meeting, a full explanation of the purpose and method of the Movement would be given.

- A complete explanation of what is expected of those who attend the Weekend is given.
- Most important is the explanation of what is expected during the 4th Day (Group Reunion and Ultreya).
- If both agree that one spouse attending the Weekend, while the other spouse does not, will not have an adverse effect on their Sacrament of Marriage, then the one who is eligible and wants to attend should be allowed to do so.

In the case where both are eligible and both agree to attend a Cursillo Weekend, then both should be prepared, and the question of who attends first is not important.

The purpose of the Spiritual Advisor, a member of the Secretariat, and/or a leader from the School of Leaders meeting with the couple is to complement the work already started by the sponsor, and not to take the place of the sponsor.

One more thing that needs to be known: non-Catholics are not eligible and are not to attend the Catholic Cursillos **under any circumstance**. This includes non-Catholic spouses.

Walk the Talk

Above all else, you should be a member of a Group Reunion. Your candidate should be able to see Jesus Christ in you and be attracted by His presence. In this way you can show your candidate how to develop a deeper and fuller relationship with our Lord, one which will continue to grow and mature.

Don't tell your candidate what type of Christian to be. Show your candidate how to be a Christian by the way you live your life, love your family, care for your neighbors, and speak out for Christ. Provide your candidate with an opportunity to learn the tools of the Group Reunion and Ultreya.

CHAPTER 3

Before the Weekend

In the past, our candidate preparation may have been along the lines of:

Oh, you just have to make the Weekend. I can't tell you anything about it because I don't want to spoil it for you.

Another method (in the past) was:

I won't explain the Group Reunion and Ultreya because this person probably won't go to the Weekend if they know that there is a follow-up program, and besides, they will be told about Group Reunion and Ultreya during the Weekend.

This type of preparation is one of the biggest reasons the Precursillo method and the Postcursillo method of Group Reunion and Ultreya are not as successful as they

should be. It can be said that our Postcursillo will only be as good as our Precursillo. So, candidate preparation is an absolute necessity!

Besides sharing this Postcursillo method with your friend, share also all aspects of the Cursillo Weekend, starting with Thursday night, and then Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Overall

Each day of the Cursillo Weekend begins with Morning Prayers and ends with Night Prayers. Mass is celebrated daily (except Thursday). Each candidate should be aware that, since prayer is such an intricate part of the Cursillo Movement, there will be other Cursillistas who will be continually praying and offering up sacrifices for the success of the Cursillo Weekend. There will be proper nourishment provided, and also adequate rest periods. Those who have special needs, such as a particular diet or physical needs, will be properly attended. Be sure to explain the costs associated with attending a Cursillo Weekend.

Thursday Night

This is a time to get to know each other and to have an overview of the Cursillo Weekend. This is also the retreat phase of the Cursillo Weekend, which is designed to awaken the moral consciences of all the candidates, beginning with an analysis of their own lives and causing them to desire an encounter with God. The retreat phase (done in an atmosphere of silence) includes three meditations and “The Way of the Cross.” The meditations are: (1) Know Yourself, (2) The Prodigal Son, and (3) The Three Glances of Christ (this is given Friday morning).

Friday

The focus of Friday should be to help each candidate to have a better understanding of self. Friday should help them discover what motivates them in different situations.

During this day the candidates will hear five presentations, which are called “rollos.” Three rollos are given by members of the laity: (1) Ideal, (2) The Layperson in the Church, and (3) Piety. The other two rollos will be given by the Spiritual Director: (1) Habitual Grace and (2) Actual Grace. While the rollos provide all the candidates with information and witnessed experiences, it is the table discussions (following each rollo) that prove to be one of the real dynamics of the Weekend. The sharing, which takes place during the table discussions, provides all the candidates with an opportunity to share their own insights about the rollos. Furthermore, all the candidates have the opportunity to hear how other candidates perceived the same rollos.

After each rollo and table discussion, all the candidates will draft a written summary of the rollos and table discussion. Later, all the candidates will have an opportunity to graphically illustrate their ideas of the rollos and table discussions.

That evening, each table group will share their summaries and graphic illustrations with all the other candidates and team members.

Saturday

The focus for Saturday is to combine the fully realized self (that they learned about on Friday) with a merciful and loving God. Saturday helps all the candidates to understand the current relationship that they have with God, and should spawn a desire for a still deeper and fuller relationship with God.

The schedule for Saturday follows the same format as Friday. The Meditation given is The Person of Christ. Again, there are three laity rollos, entitled: (1) Study, (2) Action, and (3) Leaders. As with Friday's schedule, there are also two Spiritual Director rollos, entitled: (1) Sacraments and (2) Obstacles to a Life of Grace. Table discussions again play a very dynamic role in generating various insights concerning the rollos. The summaries of each rollo and the graphic illustrations are shared with all, just like on Friday.

Sunday

The last day of the Cursillo is completely dedicated to directing the candidates toward their future: the living out of what is fundamental for being a Christian, in personal contact with the Lord and in friendship with one's brothers and sisters. Everything in this day is meant to propel the candidate toward what has come to be called the "fourth day" — the time after the three days of the Cursillo when one takes up one's daily and lifelong task: putting Christianity into life, to leaven with the Gospel the environments in which one has been placed.

The same format is used on Sunday as on Saturday. The Meditation is Christ's Message to the Cursillista. There is one Spiritual Director rollo — Life in Grace — and four laity rollos: (1) Study of the Environments, (2) Christianity in Action, (3) The Cursillista Beyond the Cursillo, and (4) Total Security.

Sunday night, at the Closing, all the candidates come face to face with the larger Cursillo Community that has been so supportive during the entire weekend. It is during this meeting that all the candidates enter this Cursillo Community.

In Addition

Insure that your candidate has transportation to the Weekend. Find out what is needed for a comfortable stay (i.e., linens, towels, toiletries, medication, etc.). See if your candidate will need assistance with things such as the home, spouse, children, pets, and so on.

Last, But Not Least

Finally, there is one more thing that a sponsor should do before the Cursillo Weekend: **make sure that your candidate has read the booklet entitled *The Cursillo Movement, What Is It?***

CHAPTER 4

During the Cursillo Weekend

This should be one of the shortest chapters of all Cursillo literature. During the Cursillo Weekend, the role of the sponsor is to pray, pray, and pray some more. Sacrificing is also highly encouraged. Help with any of your candidate's things that need attending (i.e., transportation, home, spouse, children, pets, etc.). Then pray some more. Most important — be at the Closing! If you know that you will be unable to attend the Closing, then tell your candidate and make the necessary transportation arrangements so your candidate can get home.

CHAPTER 5

After the Cursillo Weekend

Be willing to meet with the new Cursillista in a one-to-one setting. Try to answer any questions that this person might have. If you do not know the answers, assure the new Cursillista that you will attempt to find someone who can provide them.

Group Reunion and Ultreya

Many people leave the Cursillo with enthusiasm, after having had the opportunity to encounter self, Christ, and others. That is sufficient only for the first step. The new Cursillista should be motivated to take the second step: to freely use the method of perseverance by seeking a group of friends and making a commitment to share the Christian way of life together, thus fortifying the three encounters initiated in their Cursillo. Be sure that the new Cursillista finds a Group Reunion. It may be yours or a different group entirely. Of course, the Ultreya is always a good place to find group members. That, by the way, was a subtle hint — **take them to the Ultreya!**

Personal Contact

It is not enough to send someone to the Cursillo Weekend. The new Cursillista needs as much personal attention after the Cursillo Weekend as they received during the Cursillo Weekend — probably even more! We must make a conscientious effort to insure that we do all that can be done.

Notes



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