

# MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY (MECM)

---

## Information About Cursillo

### What is Cursillo? (pronounced cur-see-yo)

The full name is Cursillo de Cristiandad meaning short course in Christian living. The Cursillo movement started in Spain in 1949 under its founder, Bishop Juan Hervas. The Cursillo gives those who make it a new understanding of basic Christian truths and the desire to serve the church.

From Thursday evening until Sunday evening, lay people and clergy live and work together to gain a deep, permanent living awareness of the treasure and responsibility of their faith. They come with many questions and some apprehensions. They leave full of joyful enthusiasm as brothers and sisters in Christ, determined to extend His kingdom.

### Is it a Retreat?

The Retreat portion of the Cursillo lasts only from the opening night until the following morning, during which time silence is maintained. Therefore, the basic teachings of Christ are discussed in an atmosphere of joy, song and lightheartedness.

### How often should one make a Cursillo?

You may make a Cursillo only once in your life, but you are encouraged to build upon it for the rest of your life. It is not suitable for a retreat, but rather compliments it. The Cursillo will make subsequent retreats more profitable. Those who have made a Cursillo often want to make an annual retreat. They are encouraged to do so in order to renew their Cursillo resolutions.

### What is the format?

The Cursillo Weekend format consists of series of spiritual talks, exercises and conferences, blending seriousness with lightheartedness. These activities are conducted by clergy and lay people. Although the MECM Cursillos are lay directed, the clergy assists in this effort most enthusiastically. Most of the talks are given by lay people.

### Cursillo is *NOT* a Society.

During the Cursillo Weekend, the candidates are repeatedly told NOT to form cliques or special groups, but to get involved in the greater life of the parish and community. In other words, the Candidates are to leaven the world for GOD!

### Is it Parish Centered?

Cursillistas are strongly advised to become active in their parishes. It should be noted however, that all do not come out of the Cursillo experience with the same outlook. Cursillo is, for many, the start of a growing experience that varies in each person's life according to the individual.

# MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY (MECM)

---

## Post Cursillo

The Weekend lasts three days, with the Fourth Day being the rest of one's life. Cursillistas are urged to make some sort of commitment to God to intensify the growth and deepening of their faith. The Cursillo Weekend neither pretends to nor is able to give complete Christian formation in just three days. Cursillistas are by no means *finished* products on Sunday night of the Weekend. Therefore, additional activities are available to increase their knowledge and keep aflame their enthusiasm.

Cursillistas are encouraged to join or form small Reunion groups that meet regularly to share their walk with Christ and their progress with piety, study and action. Periodically, another large type of reunion, called ULTREYA (Spanish for Onward), is held. At an Ultreya, Cursillistas give brief talks developing one of the points covered during the Cursillo Weekend.

## Who Lives a Cursillo?

Christians who are looking to deepen their faith and commitment to Christ attend a Cursillo. In the case of husbands and wives or significant others, MECM recommends that sponsors talk to both members of the couple. It is important to know that Cursillo is lived by an individual, but is a shared experience, strengthening a couple's commitment. If possible, a couple should agree to live their Cursillo Weekends consecutively (or simultaneously) and submit their applications together. However, if there is a vital reason that one or the other does not apply, the other may still attend. Every Cursillo applicant MUST have a Sponsor who is a friend and someone knowledgeable enough about the candidate to assume the responsibilities of Sponsorship.

---

Please keep this sheet for your information  
or to pass along to someone  
else that may be interested in Cursillo

---

*Any member of the MECM Secretariat (see the list in the Tripod issue or at <https://Masscursillo.org>) would be happy to answer any questions you may have about Sponsorship or Fourth Day activities.*

*Please keep this document as a guide.*

---

*<https://masscursillo.org>*

MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY

## **DUTIES OF THE SPONSOR**

*"Being a Sponsor is a commitment not only to the Candidate but to the Cursillo Movement."*

### **FIRST----- Preparation:**

1. YOU MUST KNOW THE CANDIDATE, PREFERABLY WELL!
2. It is recommended but not necessary that you have lived your Fourth Day for at least one year before you sponsor a candidate. If you have not yet lived your Cursillo year, and through prayer, you have found a candidate for whom you truly believe this is the right time to attend Cursillo, you may sponsor this candidate. You may co-sponsor a candidate at any time with another Cursillista.
3. A sponsor may present only one candidate per Weekend. Sponsorship is a big responsibility, and requires a major time and energy commitment to make sure the candidate is supported in every way both on the Weekend and during the Fourth Day.
4. Remember that Cursillo is an experience of persons coming together to form a Christian community. It is not the solution for people with deep personal problems or for people dealing with alcohol, drug addiction, or extremely emotional upheavals in their lives. Such persons will probably not profit from the weekend, and may very well ruin the weekend for others who find themselves on the receiving end of their pain. *(This does not mean that people who have come to terms with such problems may not be accepted on weekends.)*
5. Ordinarily, candidates should be from an area where there are other Cursillistas who will be there to provide Fourth Day support. However, there will be situations where that is not possible. The key then is for you to be sure to find a way to provide that support.
6. BE HONEST! Your candidate needs to know that a weekend is a learning experience in Christianity, a very busy and intensive one, not just a vacation. It is crucial to make sure that they do not think it is a retreat.
7. Explain the basic format of the Weekend. Answer questions as truthfully as possible. While we do not want to give away surprises that make the Weekend more meaningful, **SECRECY HAS NO PLACE IN CURSILLO**. If you think about it, you can be pretty sure that no candidate will think to ask you about a party or Palanca!
8. Talk to a couple together, stressing the importance of Cursillo as a shared experience and a strengthening of their marriage commitment. Although, both partners should plan to attend a Cursillo, it is okay if only one partner attends.
9. Once your candidate has been admitted to a weekend, it is very important that arrangements for the attendee's transportation to the location of the weekend be made **AT ONCE** unless this has already been done. *Do not* let your candidate be one of the dropouts as a result of the lack of sponsor contact and interest at this point.

## SECOND --- The Weekend!

1. As mentioned before, you are responsible for transporting your candidate to the Weekend location and home again. Please arrive on time, between 7:00 and 7:30pm Thursday evening. The Weekend will not begin until all candidates are present. **IF YOUR CANDIDATE IS NOT GOING TO ATTEND, LET US KNOW IMMEDIATELY SO THAT WE CAN BEGIN THE PROGRAM!**
2. There is a Sponsor's Liturgy at 8:00pm in the Chapel, which all Sponsors and Co-Sponsors are expected to attend. You will receive a candle to burn all weekend while you pray for the Cursillo Weekend and your Candidate. Getting your Candidate off to a good start at this Liturgy is one of your major responsibilities.
3. Read the sheet "PALANCA GUIDELINES". Then write Palanca, including personal notes, for your candidate and for other candidates, and an extra 2 or 3 for someone who is not receiving much Palanca. Letters of prayer, sacrifice, and positive action are the type of Palanca expected. *Posters and banners must state prayers and sacrifice or they will not be displayed.* In fairness to all candidates, *please withhold any gifts until later.* Your thoughtfulness will be most appreciated by your candidate early in their Fourth Day. GENERAL PALANCA IS: Items or things that can be shared by the entire group and/or at least by their table mates, i.e. cookies, warm fuzzies, fruit, candy, snacks, etc. along with personal Palanca.
4. Another major responsibility of the Sponsor is to attend the Closing Ceremony. THE SPONSOR MUST BE AT THE CLOSING by 3:00pm. YOUR CANDIDATE WILL BE LOOKING FOR YOU!

## THIRD --- MOST IMPORTANT --- The Follow - Up!

1. CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE YOUR CANDIDATE.
2. Your candidate will be looking for guidance in finding a Reunion Group, attending Ultreyas, and other Fourth Day activities. Remember, YOU are the Sponsor and not the Spiritual Advisor. They will look to you as an example of how to live their 4th Day.
3. Sponsors are encouraged to stay close to their Candidates for at least one year, preferably longer.

THERE ARE PUBLICATIONS by the EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY which explain in detail the purpose of the Cursillo Movement. You may write or email to obtain a listing of their publications to the following:

Episcopal Cursillo Ministry  
P. O. Box 460506, Aurora, CO 80046  
Telephone: 303-905-6053  
[www.episcopalcursilloministry.org](http://www.episcopalcursilloministry.org)

ANY MEMBER OF THE SECRETARIAT (see list in TRIPOD) WILL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING SPONSORSHIP OR FOURTH DAY ACTIVITIES.  
*Keep this document as a guide.*

MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY  
SPONSOR'S APPLICATION

Candidate's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE READ THE OBLIGATIONS BELOW AND THE "DUTIES OF A SPONSOR"  
SHEET BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM.

**IMPORTANT: THIS APPLICATION, THE CANDIDATE'S APPLICATION, AND THE  
CLERGY FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED TOGETHER FOR PROCESSING.**

Following are a few suggestions in the choice of candidates for Cursillo:

1. The candidate must be at least 21 years old and a baptized Christian.
2. Cursillo is not a place for a person overwhelmed with alcoholism or drug addiction. On the other hand, members of AA and other such organizations who have faced their problems will normally be accepted.

Following are some reminders about your responsibilities as a sponsor:

1. The Cursillistas may co-sponsor at any time with a Cursillista who has lived their Fourth Day for at least one year.
2. Cursillistas may sponsor only one candidate per Weekend.

NOTE: The Weekend will cost \$290.00. A \$100 deposit (\$25 non-refundable) is required with the balance being paid at the registration. **Please let the Registrar know if the Candidate has financial needs.**

**ACOMPLETED APPLICATION INCLUDES:** completed Candidate and Sponsor Applications, with all signatures and the \$100 deposit, and a Clergy Form. **THE SPONSOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR GETTING ALL OF THESE ITEMS TOGETHER TO THE REGISTRAR:**

Massachusetts Episcopal Cursillo Ministry (MECM)  
c/o Kathy Doller, Registrar  
P. O. Box 815  
Norton, MA 02766

**NOTE: Electronic equipment is not welcome on the Weekend. If you must bring your cell phone, please leave it turned off and in your room so as not to disrupt or disturb others on the Weekend.**

**PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CANDIDATE:**

1. Why do you think the Candidate should make a Cursillo? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Are there any noteworthy physical or mental health problems, diet restrictions, or any problems with some form of substance abuse concerning this Candidate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Is there any reason why this Candidate should not be table leader or secretary? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you assume the responsibility of introducing your Candidate into 4th Day activities?  
Reunion Group ☐ YES ☐ NO                      Ultreyas ☐ YES ☐ NO
5. Have you explained the Weekend and 4th Day activities to your Candidate?      YES      NO
6. Do you assume the responsibility of:                      -                      -  
    Praying for your Candidate                      ☐ YES                      ☐ NO
7. Getting your Candidate to the Weekend                      ☐ YES                      ☐ NO
8. Sending Palanca                      ☐ YES                      ☐ NO
9. Attending the Closing                      ☐ YES                      ☐ NO
10. Getting your candidate home                      ☐ YES                      ☐ NO
11. Offering assistance to the family                      ☐ YES                      ☐ NO
12. Is your Candidate's spouse/ S.O. submitting an application now?                      ☐ YES ☐ NO  
    If not, is the spouse/ S.O. planning to submit an application in the future? ☐ YES ☐ NO
13. Sponsor's printed name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
    Sponsor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_
14. Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
    City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
    When and where did you make your Cursillo? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are you in a Reunion Group or its equivalent? \_\_\_\_\_  
    Do attend Ultreyas? \_\_\_\_\_, If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_  
    Name of your Church \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town \_\_\_\_\_
15. Co-Sponsor's printed name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
    Co-Sponsor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
    Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
    City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
    When and where did you make your Cursillo? \_\_\_\_\_  
    Are you in a Reunion Group or its equivalent? \_\_\_\_\_  
    Do attend Ultreyas? \_\_\_\_\_, If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_  
    Name of your Church \_\_\_\_\_ City/Town \_\_\_\_\_
16. Additional space for remarks \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY**  
**CLERGY FORM**

**PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM LEGIBLY AND SUBMIT TO THE  
SPONSOR FOR PROCESSING.**

**Candidate's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Is this person prepared for a Cursillo Weekend?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you attended a Cursillo Weekend ?** \_\_\_\_\_

**If so, where and when** \_\_\_\_\_

**Clergy's Printed Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Clergy's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

Street

City/Town

State

Zip

**Phones: Home** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Clergy Parish** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

Street

City/ Town

State

Zip

# MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY

## PALANCA GUIDELINES

**Palanca is:**

*An outward and visible sign through prayer and action of our Christian love.  
In this way, God's love is used as a lever to bring about that  
which we cannot do by ourselves.*

We offer ourselves in prayer and action to become a **PALANCA PERSON**.

Prayer is the operative word. As individuals and as a part of a praying community. We live our life as a **PALANCA PERSON** in these ways:

- ✓ Proper love and care for our family
- ✓ A good day's work reflecting God to our co-workers and friends
- ✓ Responsible citizenship
- ✓ Bringing Christ to our environment
- ✓ Seeing Christ in each person just as he/she is

A few specific ways of realizing the enormous potential are listed below.

Remember the outward signs (letters, posters, etc.) are indicating the prayer, the action, the offering, the sacrifice which is the palanca.

- **HOLY EUCHARIST:** Receive the elements in the name of a person.
- **OFFERING** a discipline or a sacrifice in conscious prayer for someone; fasting, not smoking, not drinking, practicing patience for example.
- **DIRECT COMMUNICATION:** Writing or speaking with someone to tell how they bring Christ into your life, how you admire their unique gifts, tell what is your specific prayer or offering is for that person, etc.
- **A GIFT OF SERVICE:** Such as taking care of their children, cooking a meal for an invalid, writing a letter for a handicapped person, visiting, etc.
- **OF AN OBJECT:** If, and only if, it is understood to stand as a symbol of your love in Christ, a poster, with Palanca always indicated; something you have made in love and prayer, something with a very special meaning.
- **OFFERING** a pleasant task or personal situation of thanksgiving and conscious prayer for the recipient; making something you enjoy doing, burning a candle, being in the midst of a happy family gathering, etc.
- **OFFERING** an unpleasant task or situation in conscious prayer for someone; being stuck in traffic, scrubbing the toilet, pain, etc. may be offered to the glory of God in someone's name.

Revised July 31, 2010





In conscious prayer, we offer these and other elements of our lives with the specific intention of becoming channels of God's love. This love then becomes a lever to bring about God's will. We become a part of the circle of light from God-to-us-to-others-back-to-God.


As part of a praying community of **PALANCA PEOPLE** we are blessed to have God's grace shower upon us as we attempt to Christianize the world.





## Practical Tips:


 You may put "Sponsor" or "Spouse" in lower left corner of envelope and indicate desired day for delivery (Fri, Sat, Sun). Palanca room workers will TRY to comply.


 You may visit the Palanca Room over the weekend.


 Gifts are NOT appropriate on the weekend; save them for the Fourth Day or for the ride home.

 Never put TEAM on an envelope or poster.

 Always show your palanca on the poster.

 One poster per weekend, one letter per day is appropriate for your Candidate.

 In the spirit of palanca, send or bring notes and posters addresses to other candidates, team members and spiritual directors.

 An example of a sacrifice (or discipline, or offering) could be to pass up breakfast if you like breakfast and to use the time to pray for the recipient. You may tell that person what you have done (or intend to do) or not. God knows, and the power is there either way.

**ANY MEMBER OF THE SECRETARIAT (see the list on the inside cover of the Tripod) WILL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING SPONSORSHIP OR 4TH DAY ACTIVITIES. Keep this document as a guide.**

## **PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:**

### **MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY**

#### **MECM WEBSITE**

**<https://masscursillo.org>**

*We are currently in the process of updating and reorganizing this website.  
Please check back periodically.*

\*\*\*\*\*

### **EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY**

#### **ECM WEBSITE**

**[www.episcopalcursilloministry.org](http://www.episcopalcursilloministry.org)**

*This website will connect you to several publications and resources available to the Cursillo Community, such as Crosses and Reunion Cards, Fourth Day Magazine, Items to Purchase, etc. This website was formerly known as the National Episcopal Cursillo.*