

MASSACHUSETTS EPISCOPAL CURSILLO®

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 priests 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 silence is maintained. Thereafter, the basic teachings of Christ are discussed in an atmosphere of joy, with singing and joke sessions contributing to this atmosphere.

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 a substitute for a retreat, but rather compliments it. The Cursillo will make succeeding retreats more profitable. Those who have made a Cursillo often want to make an annual retreat, and they are encouraged to do so in order to renew their Cursillo resolutions.

What is its Format ?

The Cursillo weekend format consists of a series of spiritual talks, exercises and conferences, blending seriousness and lightheartedness, conducted by clergy and lay people. Although our M.E.C. Cursillos are lay-directed and controlled, the clergy assist 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 told clearly and often **NOT** to form a clique or special organization, but rather to *get lost* in the stream of the parish and community life, and 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 beginning of a growing experience, and the course that growth takes in each person's life varies depending upon the individual.

Post-Cursillo

The weekend lasts three days; the *fourth day* is the rest of one's life, and 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 nor is able to give a complete Christian formation in just three days. Cursillistas are by no means *finished products* on the Sunday night of the weekend. So additional activities are available to increase their knowledge and keep aflame their enthusiasm.

Cursillistas are encouraged to form small reunion groups that meet regularly to share their walk with Christ, and their progress with piety, study, and action. Periodically, another larger type of reunion, called an *ULTREYA* (Spanish for *Onward*) is held in which 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. In case of husbands and wives, the M. E. C. recommends that sponsors talk to both members of the couple. It is important to know that Cursillo is lived by an individual, but it is a shared experience, strengthening the marriage commitment. If possible, a couple should agree to live their Cursillo weekends consecutively (or simultaneously) and submit their applications simultaneously. However, if there is a valid reason that one or the other partner 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 of responsibilities of sponsorship.

**KEEP THIS SHEET FOR YOUR INFORMATION
OR FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO READ.**

***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***