

## What is Cursillo?

Cursillo (pronounced “cur see’ yo”) is a movement within the Episcopal Church which offers a method for Christian living, provides a core-group who are actively involved in bringing the Gospel to their environment, and helps Christian people discover and achieve their personal calling as a follower of Christ.

The three day experience is the passageway into the movement. It is an in-depth study of our sacramentally oriented Episcopal Church and living the Christian faith. It is a concentrated and intensive time of discovery, especially in the area of Christian community, support, and the great love and joy that this community shares. Cursillo is a powerfully spiritual and educational experience intended to equip each person with the basic foundation to do Christ’s work in the world. It is intended to be shared.

Cursillo is:

- \* A movement within the Episcopal Church
- \* A Way of Life
- \* A loving, growing community

The Three Day experience is:

- \* person-centered
- \* a gift of love to you
- \* worship, study, fellowship
- \* a short course in Christianity

It is not a therapy group or Confirmation instruction.

Is it a retreat?

The “retreat” portion of the Cursillo lasts only from the opening night until after worship the following morning, during which time silence is kept. Thereafter, the basic teachings of Christ are discussed in an atmosphere of joy, singing, and fun.

What is the format?

The Cursillo is a blend of seriousness and light-heartedness, of spiritual exercises and talks by lay people and clergy. Spiritual exercises include daily Eucharist, Morning and Evening Prayer, and other devotions. But these words fail to convey the experience of Cursillo, much like trying to use words to describe music can never replace the experience of actually hearing the music.

Since the three day weekend is the passageway into the movement, you will make a Cursillo only once. You may come back to help present it to others. You are expected to build upon this foundation for the rest of your life.

Form and shape:

- \* Three days and three evenings are spent “making your Cursillo.”
- \* A month later there is a one-day gathering of participants and sponsors on a Saturday (called Cursillo Beyond) to refresh your memory about the event.
- \* For the rest of your life (your Fourth Day) we hope you will meet regularly with others who are in the movement for support, sharing, learning and fun.

Accommodations:

Cursillistas (those who attend a Cursillo weekend) come from all walks of life and grow close to one another during the Cursillo weekend. They pray, listen, discuss, eat, sleep, sing, and share laughter in a family atmosphere. Furnishings may not be exactly like a first-class hotel, but a spirit of fellowship makes them adequate. There is plenty of good food available, and every care is taken to make everyone as comfortable as possible.

Cost:

This money is not raised in the usual manner by charging tuition. When you make your Cursillo, your cost will have already been paid by the donations of others who have gone before you.

Sponsors:

Every candidate for Cursillo needs to have two sponsors. One is your Parish Priest or Pastor. The other is a lay person, preferably a close friend, who has made a Cursillo. Both are to sign a sponsor application.

Who makes a Cursillo?

If you are a baptized Christian twenty-one or older, you may attend a Cursillo. You may apply by giving your completed application to a friend who has been to Cursillo who will serve as your lay sponsor. Your sponsor's role is to help you prepare for the experience and to share your Fourth Day.

The Cursillo weekend is a delightful time. Most people's lives are changed as a result; so of course, it is a time of physical and emotional stretching. Therefore, persons with serious physical or emotional problems should defer attending until they are stronger.

Oregon Bishop Michael Hanley has praised the benefits of Cursillo, saying, “I made my Cursillo in 1981 in Oklahoma along with my wife, Marla. It was a powerful experience with the love of God in community. I recommend it to anyone interested in deepening their faith and commitment to Jesus Christ. Yes, God can be encountered in many places and in many ways, but God is often most powerfully experienced in community. Cursillo provides a wonderful experienced and the presence of God in community.”