

**THE
CURSILLO
MOVEMENT'S**



**SPONSOR'S
BOOKLET**

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by: THE NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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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 Office) 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, for 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* and *The Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement*.

This booklet has been primarily written 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 (fits into a pocket, purse, briefcase). Consequently, this booklet can be kept at-hand for continual reading and also 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, etc.
- Use the Cursillo to produce leaders for other movements/ organizations.

The Cursillo Movement is NOT a cure-all for personal problems. There are other programs designed for, and have staffed professionals 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

There are several different definitions for the purpose of the Cursillo Movement (depending on what literature you read). While the wording (of the definition) may vary, the idea is the same. This is due, in part, to the fact that the purpose of Cursillo is multifaceted. No one definition can truly explain what Cursillo is about. However, all the definitions can give a much richer meaning to the purpose of Cursillo.

- In the Leaders' Manual (page 13) it states: "The purpose (or goal) of the Movement is to make Christian community possible in neighborhoods, parishes, work situations and other places where people live the greater part of their lives. It makes possible for anyone in the world to live a Christian life in a natural way."

- Again on page 65, of the Leaders' Manual, it lists the purpose of the Cursillo Movement as: "The leavening of environments with the Gospel."

- Now if we look at the definition in *The Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement* (page 51) we find that it states: "Since it is a movement of the Church, the Cursillo Movement

has the same apostolic purpose as the Church herself. And the Church, as Pope Paul VI told us, exists to evangelize.”

- Then again on page 53 it describes the purpose as such: “The Cursillo Movement is a movement of the Church which 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.” These “core groups” are now referred to as “Environmental Groups.”

As it was mentioned earlier, while the wording of these definitions may differ, their

ideas are the same. The Cursillo Movement is focused to help each of us fulfill our baptismal responsibility: to go forth, as apostles, and proclaim the Gospel. 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 necessary tools, for fulfilling our baptismal responsibility, along with the training for using those tools.

Knowing the purpose of the Cursillo Movement, we can 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.

In determining the purpose of sponsoring, it is important that we focus on two important aspects. The first aspect: We are communal

people. The second aspect: We are teamwork people.

WE ARE COMMUNAL PEOPLE

By our very makeup, which was conceived by God, we need relationships (interaction of two or more persons). A relationship of husband/wife was required to bring about our conception. A relationship of mother/child was required to bring about our birth.

Our growth from newborn to adulthood is filled with relationships in school, family reunions, Church, vacations, etc. When we enter into the working environments we find ourselves thrust into completely new relationships. Neighborhoods can also provide various opportunities for relationships. Social/Civic/Political involvement(s) most definitely depend upon relationships.

WE ARE TEAMWORK PEOPLE

Early in our youth, many of us came to understand the value of teamwork. Even if one was not involved in a formalized sports program, most were involved in some form of team competition during P.E. (Physical Education class) at school. We learned the value of studying together in an attempt to better our grades.

For those that serve (or have served) in the military, they realize that the purpose of Basic Training is to de-emphasize the individual and emphasize the team. Besides all these examples of teamwork, Christ gave us the encouragement to work as a team: *“Again, [amen,] I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are*

gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18: 19-20).

BACK TO THE TITLE

The purpose of sponsoring is to 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 that have the talents to bring about the change - 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, you should know your candidates very well. If they are married, you should know their spouse as well. Your candidates will become the agents for change in their families, work situations, neighborhoods, social gatherings, etc. Your candidates will become an active

participant in Group Reunion, Ultreya and create Environmental Groups. 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

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

The sponsor must know that potential candidates for the Cursillo Movement

generally fall into three categories. These three categories are:

- Those who ought to go.
 - They are individuals who are truly the backbone of their environments.
 - They have a deep personality and are able to make their own decisions and are interiorly motivated.
 - They are mature, responsible, 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 the 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 cannot or should not go.
 - Those who have a physiological or emotional problem.
 - Those who have a deep drinking, drug or moral problem.

If the purpose of the Movement is to be realized in your diocese, the majority of candidates (for a given weekend) should come from the first category and the remainder from the second category. We don't recruit people from the third category; however, sometimes the Holy Spirit sends us someone from that group and so we accept that.

Know your candidate, as well as possible, and pray for direction from the Holy Spirit. **Remember to speak to God about others before speaking to others about God.**

Know the information about your candidate. This information would include such things as gender, marital status, number of children, parish that your candidate attends, specific environments that your candidate is immersed in, and 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 Secretariat.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT SPONSORING COUPLES

Before sponsoring an individual, you must always 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 National Secretariat revised the Guidelines concerning couples, in July 1993. That revision is listed here, in its entirety:

COUPLES

The purpose of the Cursillo Movement is to evangelize environments through the natural leaders of those environments. 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, the spouse of the natural leader does not wish to attend the Cursillo Weekend. Thus the reason for GUIDELINES on couples.

The COUPLES' GUIDELINES: When selecting a person for Cursillo, male or female, it should be determined if that person is married before preparing that person for Cursillo. 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 and if participation in a Cursillo by one and not the other might have an adverse effect on that Sacrament, then we suggest some other form of individual spiritual renewal.

Once it is known that the person is married, we need to determine whether both are eligible to attend the Cursillo or if 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 cannot or should not go” - earlier in this chapter) or that person does not wish to attend, then the following steps would be taken.

- 1. 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.*
- 2. During this meeting, a full explanation of the purpose/method of the Movement would be given.*
- 3. A complete explanation, of what is expected of those who attend the 3-Day weekend, is given.*

4. *Most importantly, an explanation of what is expected during the 4th Day (Group Reunion and Ultreya).*
5. *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 the Cursillo Weekend, then both should be prepared at the same time 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 meant to complement the work already done by the sponsor, not to take the place of the sponsor.

One more thing that needs to be known.
*Non-Catholics are not eligible to attend the
Catholic Cursillos.*

WALK THE TALK

Above all else, you should be a member of a Group Reunion. Your candidate should be able to see the 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 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 you neighbors and speak out for Christ.

If you are not currently active in the Movement, do your candidate a favor and

find a Co-sponsor. If you are going to sponsor your friend to the Cursillo Movement, provide your candidate with an opportunity to learn the tools of the 4th Day. Have an active cursillista, or their friendship group sponsor your candidate. To do otherwise is a selfish act because it denies your candidate exposure to Group Reunion, Ultreya, and participation in the Christian community that you have left behind. It is like giving someone a brand new car, but not the keys that go with it.

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 all be told about Group Reunion and Ultreya during the Weekend.”*

This type of preparation is one of the biggest reasons the Postcursillo programs, of Group Reunion, Ultreya, School of Leaders and Environmental Group Reunion, 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.

Would you ever knowingly sponsor an individual, to a Cursillo Weekend, with the understanding that this person will never attend a Group Reunion or an Ultreya? Would you ever knowingly sponsor an individual, to a Cursillo Weekend, with the understanding that this person will never make an attempt to be an apostle for Christ?

If your answer to either of these questions is yes (or maybe) then you should proceed no further in this booklet. Go back to page 1 of this booklet and begin reading it again.

If your answer to both questions was a resounding NO, then apparently you have some expectations from the person you are planning to sponsor to the Cursillo Weekend. Since you have these expectations, isn't it

only fair that you share your expectations with your candidate (BEFORE THEY SIGN UP FOR THE CURSILLO WEEKEND).

Besides sharing these Postcursillo expectations, with your prospective candidate, share also all aspects of the Cursillo Weekend. Explain to them about the complete Cursillo Weekend and provide special emphasis to Thursday night, 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 that 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 that have special needs, such as a particular diet or physical needs, will be attended to properly. 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 to encounter God” (*Leaders’ Manual* page 130). The retreat phase (done in 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 themselves. Friday should help them discover what motivates them in different situations.

During this day all the candidates will hear five presentations. Three presentations will be given by members of the laity and they are: 1) *Ideals*, 2) *The Layperson as the Church in the World*, and 3) *Holiness*. The other two presentations will be given by the Spiritual Directors and they are: 1) *Grace* and 2) *Faith*. While the presentations provide all the candidates with information and witnessed experiences, it is the table discussions (following each presentation) 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 presentation. Furthermore, all the candidates have the opportunity to hear how other candidates perceived that same presentation.

After each presentation and table discussion, all the candidates will draft a written summary of the presentation and table discussion. Later all the candidates will have an opportunity to graphically illustrate their ideas of the presentations 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 that fully realized self (that they learned about Friday) with a wonderful 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. Again, there are three laity presentations entitled: 1) *Formation*, 2) *Evangelization*, and 3) *Leaders*. As with Friday's schedule, there are also two Spiritual Director presentations 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 presentations. The summaries (of each presentation) and the graphic

illustrations are shared with all, just like on Friday.

SUNDAY

The focus for Sunday is the understanding of ourselves, our relationship with God and how we can help Him in fulfilling His Will. We learn what environments we belong to and how we can affect those environments.

The same format is used on Sunday, except there is only one Spiritual Director presentation - *Christian Life*. There are the usual three laity presentations, which are: 1) *Study and Evangelization of the Environments*, 2) *Christian Community*, and 3) *Group Reunion and Ultreya*.

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, etc.). See if your candidate will need assistance with things such as the home, spouse, children, pets, etc.

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: WHAT IS THE CURSILLO MOVEMENT?**

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 there 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 CURSLLO WEEKEND

Be willing to meet with this 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 the answers.

GROUP REUNION AND ULTREYA

Be sure that this 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!

PENETRATING ENVIRONMENTS

Ask about this person's environments. Help them develop a plan to change their environment. Try to give ideas about possible ways of evangelizing each of those shared environments. Share also, your own environments. This new cursillista may have some suggestions, to share, about evangelizing your environments.

PERSONAL CONTACT

It is not enough to send someone to the Cursillo Weekend and expect the team to work miracles. The new cursillistas need 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.

CONCLUSION

Having read this booklet you should realize that sponsoring is a very important aspect, within the Cursillo Movement. We can no longer take our role, as laity in the Church, lightly. The future of our society is in our hands. We must realize that we, as individuals, can have a great impact on our society. More importantly, we can have an even greater impact when we find other individuals that are ready and able to accept the challenge.

In the past, the Cursillo Movement was primarily thought of as a source of individual spirituality. Today, we must realize that this individual spirituality is just not enough. Today, we must add to that spirituality. Our society needs us to be apostolic. Our Church needs us to be apostolic. Our world needs us

to be apostolic. But most of all, our Lord wants us to be apostolic.

Let us strive to be Christ-like. He chose individuals to become “fishers of men.” Should we do any less?