

Reunion a try, because it provides an environment that helps you to grow in Christ's love. We believe in the power of grouping so strongly that we refer to your entire life after the weekend as the Fourth Day.

What does the Movement do?

The joy of knowing Christ is such that it produces the desire to introduce others to Him. We do this by friendship, also. At the heart of the Movement is the expression "make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ." There is no better gift one can give to a friend than an introduction to the Master of the Universe. And since people learn best when they discover for themselves, we believe that inviting our friends to a Cursillo is one of the best ways for this to happen. We do everything necessary to put on the short course so our friends can discover Jesus for themselves.

How is the Movement linked to the Catholic Church?

We're focused on Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord. St Paul is our patron saint. Our mission is the Church's mission. We're fully Catholic, and obedient to the Magisterium. We are joined to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and through the Bishops' Secretariat for the Laity in Washington, D.C. Popes Paul VI (1966) and John Paul II (1980) mentioned Cursillo as one of the hopes for the church.

Many of us are active in our parishes. However, the Cursillo aim is to teach you how to live the Christian life. Your apostolate may be in the parish—or not.

"The Cursillo is a unique opportunity in which to deepen your awareness of

Christ's love and of our sharing in His saving mission through prayer, study and witness – all rooted in a true spirit of community. The Cursillo will change your life immensely! I know from personal experience!" — The Most Reverend Paul Loverde, Bishop of Arlington, Virginia

How do I get involved?

You need a Sponsor, a friend who invites you to the Cursillo. This person may have already invited you to his or her group reunion. The sponsor's job is to arrange transportation to the weekend site; to pray for you before, during, and after the weekend; and to get you into a group reunion.

If you have not already been contacted by a member of the Cursillo community, and would like join our movement or you would simply like more information, please contact your local parish priest for a contact name.

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Pamphlet 609

Cursillo

What is Cursillo? [cur SEE yo]

Cursillos in Christianity (in Spanish: Cursillos de Cristiandad, short course of Christianity) is a ministry that began in the Roman Catholic Church and has since spread to other Christian denominations.

History

It was founded in Majorca, Spain by a group of laymen in 1944, while they were refining a technique to train pilgrimage leaders. It has since been adapted by numerous other Christian denominations, some of which have retained the name "cursillo" while others have given the program a different name.

A layman named Eduardo Bonnín participated in the early years of the "short courses" in Majorca and helped develop the *cursillos* to the point that it became an active renewal movement in the Church. In 1957, the movement had spread to North America, when the first American *cursillo* was held in Waco, Texas. In 1959, the Cursillo spread throughout Texas and to Phoenix, Arizona. In August of that year the first national convention of spiritual directors was held, and *Ultreya* magazine began publication. In 1960, the growth of the Cursillo quickened in the Southwest, and weekends were held for the first time in the East in New York City and Lorain, Ohio.

Until 1961, all weekends were held in Spanish. That year the first English-speaking weekend was held in San Angelo, Texas. Also in 1961, first weekends were held in San Francisco, California; Gary, Indiana; Lansing, Michigan; and Gallup, New Mexico. In 1962,

the Cursillo Movement came to the Eastern United States. Weekends were held in Cincinnati, Brooklyn, Saginaw, Miami, Chicago, Detroit, Newark, Baltimore, Grand Rapids, Kansas City and Boston. In the West, the first weekends were held in Monterey, Sacramento, Los Angeles, Pueblo and Yakima. The movement spread rapidly with the early centers carrying the Cursillo to nearby dioceses. By 1981, almost all of the dioceses in the United States had introduced the Cursillo Movement.

The Cursillo Movement in the United States was organized on a national basis in 1965. A National Secretariat was formed and the National Cursillo Office (currently in Jarrell, Texas) was established. Today, Cursillo is a worldwide movement with centers in nearly all South and Central American countries, the United States, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Austria, Australia, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and in several African countries. The movement is recognized by the Pope as member of the International Catholic Organizations of the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome.

In 1980, the Cursillo Movement established a worldwide international office, the OMCC (Organismo Mundial de Cursillos de Cristiandad), located in Clayfield, QLD, Australia.

The Cursillo

The *cursillo* method focuses on training lay people to become effective leaders over the course of a three-day weekend. The weekend includes fifteen talks, some given by

priests and some by lay people. One emphasis of the weekend is on preparing those undergoing it to take the movement's methods back into the world, on what they call the "fourth day".

The short course is such a powerful experience that both the short course, and the movement, are known by the name "Cursillo". To distinguish the two, we'll use the word Cursillo when discussing the short course, and otherwise, the Movement.

The Cursillo is an opportunity to examine and celebrate yourself, your relationship with Christ, and your relationship with the Christian community. It lasts three days and is usually held over a weekend. We begin with a silent retreat Thursday evening through Friday morning. For the rest of the weekend, you'll hear short talks on a variety of topics from faith perspectives. During the days, you'll discuss the talks and your impressions with the same small group. In the evenings, each group summarizes its discussion for the other tables.

There's time for meditation and Reconciliation as well as community meals. Two spiritual directors, at least one of them a priest, will be on the team and present throughout the weekend. And there's a lot of music and singing—if you have an instrument, bring it along!

Men and women have separate retreats because the way we communicate is different.

This is a safe but challenging weekend. We strive to provide an environment that helps you to grow in Christ's love.

What happens after the Cursillo?

How do we continue to grow in the community after we leave the rosy glow of the

Cursillo for the real world? Through weekly Group Reunion. This is where we stay in touch with the lived reality of our Fourth Day. Jesus said, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15). Friends love each other, and listen to each other. We help each other—and hold each other accountable in growing in our faith through:

- piety - what we do to grow in holiness
- study - learning; the bridge between holiness and helping our neighbor, and
- action - bringing our Christian values to bear in all our environments.
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Using these three "topics," we break open our lives at Group Reunion so we can grow from our shared experiences, our successes and failures. This accountability helps us all stay on track. Our goals for a week may be large or modest-sounding. Group Reunion is often the most real conversation we'll have all week.

Your own Group Reunion will be unlike any other in your parish. That's OK. Find the one that meets your needs and fills your soul. Unlike the Cursillo, men and women may participate in the same group reunion.

Occasionally, a parish's groups renew contact with each other at larger gatherings we call *Ultreya* [ull TRAY ya], a Spanish word of encouragement. *Ultreya* usually features a guest speaker and live music, in addition to a potluck meal.

How much time you choose to invest is up to you, but we encourage you to give Group