

Cursillo Weekender Information **Episcopal Diocese of Newark, New Jersey**

What is Cursillo? Cursillo (pronounced Kur-see-yo) is a Spanish word which means "short course." A Cursillo in Christianity is a short course in Christianity. The Cursillo Movement originated in Spain in the 1940's and continues to be active in the United States and around the world.

Cursillo is recognized nationally by the Episcopal Church and is authorized locally by the Bishop of each particular diocese. Essentially, the Cursillo Movement provides a method to focus our Christian lives in such a way as to impact individuals and our surroundings with the Gospel. There are three parts of the total Movement:

Pre-Weekend: Men and Women are informed about, sponsored, and prepared to participate in the weekend phase of Cursillo.

Cursillo: The weekend phase of Cursillo begins on a Thursday evening and ends Sunday evening. During these three days, the participants live, work, worship, play, pray, eat and sing together. They listen to presentations given by laypeople and clergy who have spent weeks praying and working to prepare for the weekend. The weekend is a combination of workshop settings, meditations, talks and discussions all woven together in a structured format. The format is designed to bring the message that by virtue of our Baptism into Christ, all Christians share a call to be witnesses of new life in Him. This message is delivered through:

- ▶ liturgical and sacramental action that sharpens and strengthens our awareness of life in Christ;
- ▶ meditations that help us hear in ever clearer ways the voice of our Lord calling us to action; and
- ▶ talks that articulate the shape and possibilities of Christian action.

Fourth Day: Those who have experienced the weekend phase of Cursillo are encouraged to participate in small communities (called Group Reunions and Ultreyas) to help them continue to grow and be effective in the renewal of their environments through the Cursillo method.

Instrument of Renewal: The primary thrust of the Cursillo movement is the revitalization of Christian living through:

- the clear proclamation of the Christian message
- the individual and community witness of people living out a deep Christian commitment
- the formation of genuine Christian community within existing environments (home, Parish, place of work, etc.)
- the sending out of Christians to spread the Good News of the Gospel

Cursillo proposes no new type of spirituality. Rather, it introduces a proven method through which one's spirituality may be developed, lived and shared in today's world. It concentrates on the person of Jesus Christ and His teachings and gives a living understanding of basic Christian truths and a greater desire to serve the Church.

Cursillo is not a retreat - in the sense of having the individual solitude of many retreats. During the weekend, the Person of Christ and His teachings are discussed in an atmosphere of community with joy, love and sharing.

Who should go to a Cursillo? Those who seek a deeper understanding of the Christian life and a greater commitment to Christian action. The Cursillo weekend is not designed to solve serious personal problems, e.g. marriage difficulties, alcoholism, emotional disturbances. Any adult, upon recommendation of his or her priest, may attend Cursillo.