

## *Canadian Anglican Cursillo*

# **The Authentic Cursillo Weekend**

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Cursillo is one method of renewal for the Church. Its purpose is to lead Christians into a deeper relationship with God so they can better understand their individual callings to be Christian leaders. The goal of Cursillo is to Christianize our environments through the apostolic action of Christian leaders in all areas of human activity. It does this by providing a strategy for structuring Christian life. (See the Episcopal Cursillo Ministry (ECM) and CACS guideline papers on The Fourth Day.)

The Authentic Weekend is one part of the Cursillo method that includes Pre-Cursillo and Post-Cursillo activities. The purpose of Cursillo is not just to bring people to Weekends, but rather to provide help and support to them in their walk with Christ for the rest of their lives, their **Fourth Day**, using the Cursillo method. All activities on the Weekend should contribute to providing this support through an intentionally reflective and simple atmosphere. No activities should be secret; candidates should be told whatever they need to know.

To be an authentic Cursillo weekend it must include the following:

- Celebration of the Eucharist
- Morning and Evening Prayer and other spiritual exercises
- The 15 Talks and 5 Meditations provided for in the ECM Lay & Clergy Talk books
- Quiet time
- Personal contact, including Spiritual Direction
- Prayer time
- Responsive discussions and summaries of table groups
- Apostolic Commitment Service
- Clausura (Closing) See the ECM Library “The Cursillo Path” booklet.

Some Movements may have tried to add additional features and details which may contribute to the joyful and spiritual atmosphere of the Weekend; however, these should not detract from the purpose of the Weekend. These additions do not contribute to the goal Cursillo is trying to reach, that is to awaken and empower apostles for Jesus Christ. Consequently, any additional activities need to be continually evaluated and reviewed by Diocesan Secretariats with free time and personal spiritual needs of the participants in mind.

The tendency has been to overload the weekend with activities, therefore leaving little free time for the participants which is an essential component of the weekend. Free time contributes to mental and physical health, provides an opportunity for the Weekend message to be internalized through reflection and allows for personal contact with team members.

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There must be room for the Holy Spirit to work, for the spontaneous to happen, to foster an understanding friendship with God and the good news of grace, to live in the moment and for shared joy to become a reality.

On the Authentic Weekend, a team of lay people and clergy give a series of fifteen talks covering the basics of Christianity. These talks cover such topics as - what it means to be a human being; to be a Christian; the very real need to be with others growing and witnessing in faith; and the unique Cursillo means by which this can be carried out. It is important to understand that there is only one talk, with fifteen related parts, and that each speaker realizes just where his or her talk fits into the context of the whole.

Experience has shown that the structure of the talks as outlined in the ECM Lay Talk and Clergy Talk Workbooks truly works. Leaders and team members should be responsible for the purpose and vision of the Cursillo founders and the needs of the people on the weekend.

The participants, secluded away from the pressures of their everyday lives, form a Christian community by learning, praying, sharing, singing and living together. Bathed in prayer and the Holy Spirit, the participants hear with fresh ears, how to become effective witnesses for Christ in their everyday lives.

### **The Fifteen Talks on the Weekend are:**

Ideal  
Grace  
Laity  
Faith  
Piety  
Study  
Sacraments  
Action  
Obstacles to a Life of Grace  
Leaders  
Environments  
Christian Life in Grace  
Christian Community in Action  
Group Reunion  
Ultreya

The Grace, Faith, Sacraments, Obstacles to a Life of Grace and Christian Life talks are given by the Weekend Spiritual Advisors. All other talks are given by lay team members.

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### **The Five Meditations on the Weekend are:**

Know Yourself

The Prodigal Son

The Three Glances of Christ

The Person of Christ

Message of Christ to the Participant

These meditations, given by the weekend Spiritual Advisors, bring the participants into the presence of Christ as portrayed in the scriptures and His call to each one of us as His apostles and witnesses.

### **Personal Contact**

Free time on the weekend is essential to developing personal contact between table communities, team members and Spiritual Advisors. Personal contact includes listening with an attitude of caring and acceptance, friendship and sincerity, with no strings attached, and with only the desire to "Make a friend; be a friend; and bring your friend to Christ". Remember that it takes time to build trust and for the participants to join in open discussion. They must be free to experience as much or as little as they wish of the Weekend, without pressure, relying on the movement of the Holy Spirit for results.

### **Further references:**

Please check the CACS Library and ECM Library for further guidelines relevant to a Cursillo weekend.