

## WHAT IS CURSILLO?

- Cursillo is NOT:**
- a body of spiritual elite.
  - a para-church organization.
  - an evangelistic program.
  - a human potential movement.
  - a form of group therapy.
  - a parish renewal program,
  - an ecumenical movement.
  - a weekend extravaganza.

### **Cursillo IS: A METHOD THROUGH WHICH ONE'S SPIRITUALITY MAY BE DEVELOPED, LIVED AND SHARED.**

The **goal** of the **Church** is to bring the world to Christ. The **purpose** of the **Cursillo** movement is to free Christian men and women to "leaven environments with the gospel." Environments are people-settings in which Christians find themselves: at home, on the job, at leisure, in the Church.

**Cursillo** has a **goal** – to change the world, to remake the world in Christ, to restore all things to Christ. The **purpose** of the **Cursillo** Movement is to make it possible for us to know Christ, to share Christ, and to bring Christ into our communities and out into the world, linking Christians together in action.

The **Cursillo** Movement has **three** phases: 1) **Pre-Cursillo** (getting acquainted with the Movement), 2) **The Three-Day Cursillo Weekend**, and 3) **Post-Cursillo** (The Fourth Day, or the rest of our lives). The only requirement is a sincere desire to better know Christ and to serve him. And each individual is the only one that can make that judgment.

**Cursillistas** are those who have experienced the first two phases and are in their Fourth Day.

The Cursillo Three-Day Weekend did not happen by chance or as an afterthought. It was structured over a period of years and developed from lived experiences – experience with God and life. It is summed up in these words: "The living out what is fundamental for being a Christian." Cursillo seeks to enable us to live out our baptismal vows.

What is fundamental may be seen in four concrete ways:

1. Encounter with God, which entails encounter with self;
2. Developing a friendship with Christ;
3. Taking our place in a community of brothers and sisters;
4. Appropriating apostolic responsibility for the world.

Since these four elements are fundamental for Christian faith, the Cursillo Weekend may be seen as simply making Christianity come alive. It provides an occasion for a personal experience of the grandeur of life in grace, lived to it's fullest. Far from being an "extravaganza" *put on* to impress its participants, it is a place where the wonder of being the Church, the Body of Christ, can be focused and experienced. The ultimate goal, of course, is the empowerment of Christians to go into the world, equipped to witness this wonder.

As important as the Weekend is, it must never be looked at in isolation. It is part of the overall Method which involves Pre-Cursillo and Post-Cursillo as well.

Everything that drives Cursillo is focused in the Fourth Day (Post-Cursillo). The Three-Day Cursillo is a catalyst for awakening and equipping apostles. The Fourth Day is where the action is, and where the results of the previous efforts will show.

What good will it do if we carry out a “perfect” Three-Days, and have nothing more to offer?

The only thing that can sustain Christian witness (sharing) is – Christian witness! This is what Cursillo is dedicated to. And so it will come as no surprise to draw the lesson that the only thing that can sustain Cursillo is ALSO Christian witness!

Once we get the goal in focus, then we can aim at it. Christian witness is made possible by linking Christians together in small units – small enough to care and support one another. This is Group Reunion. The groups do not gather just to be friends, but to challenge one another and hold each other accountable for witnessing to Christ. Active groups are planning groups, They look to their environments and ask how they can make a difference. Then, with prayer, they set out to do so.

Ultreya, of course, is bringing these small groups together so that the groups can enrich and challenge each other just as individuals do. The center of Ultreya is the Lay Witness — in which apostolic efforts are shared and successes and struggles are lifted up as examples to all. The purpose is to inspire and sustain small groups with the concern and prayer of all.

(Above quoted from NEC Literature.)