

## History and Terms

The Cursillo movement began in Spain in the late 1940s as a means of preparing people for a religious pilgrimage within the Roman Catholic Church. These short courses ("Cursillos") were brought to the United States in Spanish in 1957. By 1961, Cursillos in English were held with the purpose of developing lay ministry. It started in the Episcopal Church in 1971 in Texas and came to the Diocese of Maryland in 1979.

The movement of Cursillos in Christianity is a powerful instrument of renewal in the Church. Its aim is to concentrate closely on the Person and teachings of Jesus Christ. The Cursillo gives those who attend it a living understanding of basic Christian truths and the desire to serve Christ within the fellowship of His Church. What's more, it provides a means to continue the Christian formation which is just begun in the three-day exercises.

**Cursillo:** refers to a "short course" in Christian living

**Cursillista:** someone who has made a Cursillo

**DeColores:** a song which is sung during the weekend; it means "the colors" and symbolizes the many facets of God's love for us

**Palanca:** prayers offered on the Cursillista's behalf

**Ultreya:** a Spanish word that is roughly translated "onward" or "keep going". It is a word of encouragement for all of us in our Christian vocation and ministry.

**Group Reunion:** a small group who meet weekly and who hold each other accountable for their spiritual journey. We share our spiritual growth as well as our growth in becoming a person who strives to bring a Christ-like attitude to our environments

**Fourth Day:** the "after" activity of the Cursillo. It is a starting point that lasts the rest of your life. Cursillistas are expected to live out their ministry after the weekend.

## More Information?

For additional information about the Maryland Episcopal Cursillo, or to obtain an application to attend the next Cursillo Weekend, please visit:

[www.MDEpiscopalCursillo.com](http://www.MDEpiscopalCursillo.com)

or email

[MarylandEpiscopalCursillo@gmail.com](mailto:MarylandEpiscopalCursillo@gmail.com)

To give financial support to Cursillo in the Diocese of Maryland, please write to:

*Maryland Episcopal Cursillo  
% St. Andrew's Episcopal Church  
7859 Tick Neck Road  
Pasadena, MD 21122*



**For Information about the Ultreya leader in your area, members of the Secretariat or Servant Community, or your Area Representative, please visit**

[www.MDEpiscopalCursillo.com](http://www.MDEpiscopalCursillo.com)

## Cursillo in the Diocese of Maryland

*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

Ephesians 2:19-22



## Cursillo in Christianity

### Cursillo in the Diocese of Maryland

Explaining Cursillo to someone who has never experienced it can be difficult. For those who have experienced Cursillo, it is still somewhat mystifying.

*The reason behind the mystery is God.*

No one can fully explain how God touches each person in His unique way throughout the various elements of the Cursillo movement.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Can Christianity penetrate the many areas of secular life in today's world? Can it live there? Can it grow there? Can it transform the world in a way that is more fruitful than the past and in keeping with the times? The Cursillo movement thinks so! It proposes no new type of spirituality but simply a method through which one's spirituality may be developed, lived and shared in any area of human life where there are Christians willing to dedicate their lives to God.

The purpose of Cursillo is to help those in the Church understand their individual calling to be Christian leaders. Leadership may be exercised in one's work situations, in one's family and social life, in one's leisure activities, and within the Church environment. Leadership, in Cursillo, does not mean power over others but *influence* on others; all of us need to be aware that we can exert a positive influence on those around us. The goal of Cursillo is the goal of the Church: to bring all to Christ. This is done when informed, trained leaders act with the support of others having a similar commitment.

Cursillo is patterned on Jesus' own example. He searched out and called a small group of potential leaders (pre-Cursillo); He trained them by word and example and inspired them with a vision (Cursillo Weekend); He linked them together and sent them out into the world to bring the world to Him (post-Cursillo or the Fourth Day).

Persons who are part of Cursillo start by attending a three-day weekend. It is a "retreat" only in the sense that the group attempts to limit the influence of the outside world. The word "advance" would probably be more descriptive. The Cursillo weekend is a deeply moving time in which we ask ourselves: *What am I doing here? What does God want of me? What does Christ see in me? What do I see in Christ? What is Christ saying to me?*

### Pre-Cursillo

During this period, sponsors identify and recommend for Cursillo those individuals who are leading an active Christian life and are a living witness to their love of Christ. It is also the period that candidates are assisted in making appropriate preparations.

### Three-Day Weekend

The Cursillo weekend brings together a diverse group of Episcopalians to share the richness of many styles of worship and to broaden each one's appreciation for our Church. Laypeople conduct the weekend with two or three members of the clergy functioning as spiritual advisors. Cursillo presumes that those who attend are already well grounded in the faith. It is not intended to be a conversion experience but an enriching and deepening of what is already there.

The weekend begins on Thursday evening in the Chapel with meditations and Compline. Silence is kept until after the worship on Friday morning. After breakfast, participants are assigned to table groups for the weekend. The next two days are filled with talks and group discussions with emphasis on Grace, the Sacraments, and the great Cursillo tripod: Piety, Study, and Action. There is fellowship, singing, good food, and lots of laughter, as well as time for privacy, meditation, and prayer. Eucharist is celebrated daily.

### Post Cursillo or Fourth Day

The Cursillo weekend is not an end to itself. It is a starting point that lasts the rest of your life. The Fourth Day is composed of three major elements:

*The Group Reunion*, the heart of Cursillo, is a small group of friends who meet regularly and who hold each other accountable for their spiritual journey.

*Ultreya*, usually held monthly, is a "reunion of the reunions." It provides support and builds community by allowing the sharing of communal experiences.

*Spiritual Direction* is a commitment to seek out a skilled lay person or cleric for spiritual direction to provide help in deepening their union with Christ.

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Any Episcopalian, eighteen years of age or older, may attend a Cursillo.

### Are there Cursillo secrets?

You may have been told by someone who has attended the weekend that he cannot tell you what Cursillo is all about or what goes on during a Cursillo weekend. This is not correct. Everything that goes on during the weekend may be told to anyone. Cursillo literature is available to anyone who wishes to read or purchase the materials.

### How much does it cost?

There is a small fee attend the three-day weekend for members of the Diocese of Maryland. **Candidates from outside the Diocese of Maryland pay the full weekend cost.** Information on costs can be found at [www.MDEpiscopalCursillo.com](http://www.MDEpiscopalCursillo.com)

Limited scholarships are available. Please contact your rector or sponsor to inquire about financial support or a scholarship.

### What if I don't have a sponsor?

Your sponsor is an invaluable support person before, during, and after your Cursillo experience. If you are interested in attending Cursillo and don't have a sponsor, contact your rector or a member of the Secretariat and Servant Community for help in finding a sponsor.

### How do I sign up?

Candidate applications are available online at [www.cursillo.ang-md.org](http://www.cursillo.ang-md.org) Please also speak with a Cursillo member or a member of the clergy for more information.

### When is the next Cursillo?

Cursillo weekends are offered two times a year at The Bishop Claggett Center near Frederick, MD. The dates for upcoming Cursillo weekends are listed on the Maryland Episcopal Cursillo website at [www.cursillo.ang-md.org](http://www.cursillo.ang-md.org) **Please note the deadline for registering is 1 month prior to the weekend.**