

Anglican Cursillo[®] in the Diocese of Oxford

Mission Statement

Anglican Cursillo is a movement of the Church providing a method by which Christians are empowered to grow through prayer, study and action and enabled to share God's love with everyone.

Clergy information leaflet



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What is Cursillo?

Cursillo has been called 'a modern version of the Acts of the Apostles'. It puts before us God's call to us to be Saints, (people transformed by the grace of God) and Apostles (people sent to play their part in God's mission to the world.) All the activities of Cursillo are open to scrutiny, and full details of the Three Day Weekends are available from the local Diocesan Lay Director or Diocesan Spiritual Director. There is also a national web site: www.anglicancursillo.co.uk

Cursillo offers to committed Christians a proven way of discipleship in which they are supported and encouraged.

Is Cursillo a Lay led or a Clergy led organisation?

Leadership is shared. Cursillo is a movement of the whole Church in which all members, lay and ordained, are equipped to be apostles of Jesus Christ. It is a movement in which the laity are empowered to develop and use the gifts that God has given them. And it is a movement in which the clergy, through the awakening of the laity, are enabled to assume their proper roles in the Body more naturally and effectively.

Why use Spanish terms?

The Spanish words used simply reflect the roots of the organisation.

What happens on a Three Day Weekend?

The weekends begin on a Thursday evening, ending the following Sunday evening. Away from the everyday pressures of life the pilgrims and team form a Christian Community, learning, praying, sharing, singing and living together. During the weekend the team of lay people and Spiritual Advisers give a series of talks covering the basics of Christianity and centring on the mission concepts of prayer, study and action.

What are the benefits of the Three Day Weekend?

As a result of the weekends many Christians become more active in their Churches as they become more aware of their gifts. Cursillistas (i.e. those who have taken part in a Three Day Weekend) may report a new confidence in mission, and their new activities may include such things as sick visiting, leading worship and intercessions, preaching and leading house groups. Sense of vocations are awakened as well and some of our Cursillistas go on to offer themselves for the Reader or Ordained ministry.

Perhaps the most frequently reported benefit of the Weekend is a powerful experience of the love of God.

What happens after the Three Day Weekend?

After the three day weekend Cursillistas, as they are then known, go into the Fourth Day, which is where we continue our Christian journey together. They join small Group Reunions which meet regularly. The meetings last from half an hour to an hour during which members, following a set pattern, will be invited to share what they have learnt about God since they last met, moments in which they have felt close to Christ and ways in which they have attempted to infuse the community of which they are a part with Christian values. All are invited to share encouragements and disappointments, and to discuss any action they propose to take in the furtherance of the Gospel. This underscores and supports apostolic action, providing a structure for a lifetime's experience of Christian love and service.

Will Cursillo take members away from my church?

Certainly not! However, as already noted, you may find that they become much more active members of your Church.

To whom are the Cursillo officers accountable?

Both the Diocesan Spiritual Director and the Diocesan Lay Director are appointed by the Diocesan Bishop and are directly accountable to him. They are also accountable to the President of the British Anglican Cursillo Council and are themselves members of the Council during the term of their appointment.

All Anglican Cursillo officers must be active members of Anglican Churches.

Is Cursillo active in the other denominations?

Yes. The Methodist Church adopted English terminology in preference to the Spanish and Cursillo is known as 'Walk to Emmaus'. Cursillo in the Roman Catholic Church in the UK is known as Catholic Cursillo. Cursillo in the Free Church is known as Tres Dias. However, the form of the Three Day Weekends and the Fourth Day is essentially the same in each of the denominations.

Is a Cursillo weekend suitable for all members of my congregation?

No. Anyone who is going through a time of personal crisis - for example who is undergoing treatment for depression or mental illness - may need to wait until life has, for them, returned to an even keel before embarking on an introductory weekend. Discernment also needs to be used in the case of those recently bereaved.

The contacts mentioned overleaf would be happy to discuss this with you.

A Brief History of Cursillo

Cursillo began in Spain but can actually be traced back to an encyclical written by Pope Pius XI in which he invited the laity to become 'true leaven of Christ in the human dough.' Through this, Catholic Action was born. In Spain the young men formed the most active wing of this. After the Spanish Civil War at the end of the thirties the Christian Church was under attack. However, many of the young Christian men remained faithful to Christ and decided to work at transforming a society which was without Christ into one that was centered on Him. After reflection and prayer it was decided to stimulate the Christian faith in young people through a great pilgrimage to the shrine of St James in Compostella. It was to be an opportunity to share and to pray, to deepen faith and commitment to Christ. Group leaders were to be prepared through short courses (Cursillos) which dealt with the knowledge of faith, the nature of leadership and Catholic Action and the organization of the pilgrimage. 70,000 young people took part in the pilgrimage which was a great success. One of the leaders, Eduardo Bonnín, was captivated with the whole idea of the Cursillo and the pilgrimage which led him to the concept of pilgrimage to the Father to which we are all invited. Together with others he formulated a three day Cursillo which sought to remedy the 'ignorance of faith, the superficiality of ritualism and the apathy of non-faith commitment in daily life.' Immediately after the three days the new 'cursillistas' were integrated into permanent group reunions to maintain their commitment and aid their spiritual growth.

The movement spread from Spain throughout the world. Cursillo is now active in nearly all the South and Central American countries, the USA, Canada, Mexico, Portugal, Puerto Rico, UK, Ireland, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Australia, Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, several African countries and South India.

For further details, please contact

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