



**H**eavenly Father, we come to you as a pilgrim people. Just as Abraham was one of the first pilgrims, so also do we journey forth. First, on that long inward road, that inward pilgrimage that will make us touch Christ who dwells within us; and then, that outward journey where we encounter you in those whose lives we touch by our presence; and share you with others by preaching your gospel in the way we live our lives from day to day. May this pilgrimage lead us to everlasting joy with You in Your kingdom.

*Deacon Mike Ascolese*

# The Cursillo

## An Encounter with Christ



*A Method to find, form,  
and sustain a personal relationship  
with Christ and provide  
lay leadership for His Church.*



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## The Cursillo – An Encounter with Christ

The Cursillo is a world-wide movement of the Catholic Church, and it is officially recognized by the Holy See and supported by our Holy Father.

The purpose of the Cursillo Movement is to help people understand how much God loves them. As each person grows in the knowledge of God's love, they are in a position to naturally share that love with the people they find themselves with everyday: family, friends, parishioners, neighbors, co-workers, etc.

### It Begins With A Weekend

The Cursillo Movement is introduced over a Three-Day Weekend. The Weekend begins on Thursday evening and ends Sunday evening. A team of clergy, religious, and lay people presents a series of talks to the candidates. The candidates and team call upon the Holy Spirit for enlightenment and guidance, and the entire Cursillo community prays for the candidates. Over the Weekend, the team and candidates live as a small Christian community and discuss the talks in small groups. The discussions provide an opportunity to share insights about the presentations. The talks and discussions cover a variety of topics including:

- The lay person's role within the Church
- Grace and obstacles to Grace
- The importance of prayer and the study of scripture and Church teachings
- The Sacraments
- Christian leadership and living Christianity in community
- The importance of supporting one another to live truly Christian lives.

Throughout the Weekend, participants pray together, attend daily Mass, and have an opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation.

Typically, by the end of the Weekend, candidates have a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and a better understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit. Many call the Weekend an encounter with Christ.

### The Cursillo Method

The Cursillo employs a method that emphasizes the importance of a balanced life of prayer, continued spiritual formation, and apostolic action.

The Cursillo founders envisioned that Cursillistas (people who have made a Three-Day Cursillo Weekend) would function like the vertebrae of a backbone, providing the strength and basic form for Christian life. The idea is to leave the environments we naturally find ourselves in every day.

The Cursillo Method recognizes that an isolated Christian is very vulnerable, and if Cursillistas are to experience a continuous and progressive conversion, they must be supported in Christian Community. There are two parts to this support.

**Group Reunions** are informal gatherings of three to five people who meet regularly to share their faith journeys. Within these small friendship groups, people share the events in their lives and discuss how prayer and studying Scripture, Church teachings and other educational material, are helping them grow closer to Christ. They also share how they are trying to make the many small environments in which they live more Christ centered. In a spirit of love, the members hold each other accountable for balanced spiritual growth.

**Ultreyas** are gatherings of Group Reunions. During Ultreyas, people pray together, share with one another, and witness how God is working in their lives.

Through Ultreyas, we recognize that each one of us is a part of the Body of Christ and, that through our individual and collective efforts, we help build God's kingdom on earth.

### Sponsorship

To attend a Cursillo Weekend, you must have a sponsor who is an active Cursillista. Your sponsor is responsible for preparing you for the Weekend, establishing you in a Group Reunion where you work or live, and introducing you to the Ultreya in your area.

Since the sacraments are important parts of the Catholic Cursillo experience, members of other faiths are encouraged to attend a similar program of their own denomination. Although separate Weekends are held for men and women, if you are married, it is desirable but not necessary, for both you and your spouse to participate. Due to the intensity of the Weekend, those recently divorced, grieving the loss of a loved one, or hurting for whatever reason should wait for a less stressful time before applying.

### History of Cursillo

The full name of Cursillo (Cur see' o) is Cursillo de Cristiandad. The word "Cursillo" means short course. The full name translates into English as "a short course in Christian living." The Cursillo Movement began in 1944 when a group of men dedicated themselves to bringing the young men of their city, Majorca Spain, to know Christ better. The Cursillo was first brought to the United States via Waco, Texas in 1957, and it was brought to Cincinnati in 1962. Since that time, thousands of people in our local Archdiocese have attended a Cursillo Three-Day Weekend and are active members within the Movement and in the local Church.

**Please join us in developing a deeper personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**