



# Why Cursillo?

So a friend or a family member has asked you to attend a Cursillo Weekend. Why should you take time from your busy schedule and allocate a long weekend to do this?

You already attend Mass regularly. Perhaps you are involved in a ministry in your Parish and yet you sense that something more should be happening in your life. Perhaps your friend has seen a yearning in you. Maybe you have seen something in your friend – a change that transformed them after they attended a Cursillo Weekend.

Consider what Jesus Christ has commanded us to do. From Matthew's Gospel we hear that he has called us to "make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19). In John's Gospel Jesus instructs us after the washing of the feet that "as I have done for you, you should also do" (John 13:15). In that same sermon Jesus tells us, "No one has greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13).

Those are but three examples of his instruction to us.

You have heard all these Gospel passages before. You hear them every Sunday morning. You leave Mass uplifted and encouraged, but soon thereafter life intrudes and you are left wondering how you go about bringing Christ into your world? The places you operate in each week - school, workplace, circles of

friends, family – all these environments seem so far removed from these ideas. How do you bring the message of the Gospel to these places? How do you find time? How do you prepare yourself? How do you act on these directives?

Cursillo can help you find these answers and move your life in this direction. Cursillo will equip you with the tools and support resources necessary to undertake this faith journey.

## What is Cursillo?

Cursillo is a lay Catholic movement providing a simple method for women and men to live and share a conscious and growing life of faith, hope and love in union with the Church. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the Cursillo Movement strives to bring about the Incarnation of Christ into all sectors of society.

*"After my Cursillo Weekend, I came into an even deeper relationship with Jesus and His Church, and a deeper understanding of and dependency on the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. I made so many holy, caring, GOOD friends. I came to realize what true friendship in Christ is – and it took my breath away!"*

—Barb Frazee, St. Pius X Parish Lombard, IL

## What Should You Expect from Cursillo?

Your entrance into the Joliet Diocese Cursillo community begins with an invitation from a “Cursillista” (one who has previously attended a Weekend) who will serve as your sponsor. Applications, which can be downloaded from the Joliet Diocese Cursillo Movement website at [www.jolietcursillo.org](http://www.jolietcursillo.org), must be filled out by the candidate, sponsor and candidate’s pastor and then mailed to the Joliet Diocese Cursillo Movement’s Pre-Cursillo Chairperson.

Once the candidate’s application is processed, the candidate will attend a three-day (72-hour) Weekend held at an area retreat center. The Cursillo begins on Thursday evening and ends on Sunday evening.

Transportation to and from the retreat center will be arranged by the candidate’s sponsor. Meals are included as part of the room and board fee. Snacks and beverages will be readily available all weekend.

The Cursillo is an opportunity to form and live in community with other Catholics and clergy members. It is immersed in Catholic Doctrine and the Sacraments.

The Weekend begins with meditation and silence. Daily Mass will be celebrated. There will be morning and night prayer, rosary, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Candidates may receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation as well as spiritual direction. They will listen to 15 Apostolic talks, ten given

by laity and five given by clergy, and will take part in small discussion groups following each talk.

## How did Cursillo Start?

The movement was started in Spain by Eduardo Bonin in 1944. “Cursillo” is the common abbreviated way to refer to the movement. The complete name in Spanish is Cursillos de Cristiandad, which means a short course in Christianity. Cursillo came to the United States in 1957 and to the Joliet Diocese in 1963. The first Joliet Cursillo men’s Weekend was in 1963 and the first women’s in 1964. Since that time, more than 6300 men and women have attended Cursillo Weekends in the Joliet Diocese.

Cursillo Weekends are offered today in more than 1500 dioceses in 60 countries around the world.

*“My Cursillo Weekend planted many seeds—seeds that help me grow...in my faith and in my dedication to others...These seeds are nurtured by friends who are also blossoming and growing. We join together like branches of a vine that not only nourishes each one of us, but reaches out to others. With Jesus as the vine, we receive strength and grace while continually planting new seeds!”*

—Marjorie Collette, St. Walter Church,  
Roselle, IL

## What Happens After You Attend a Weekend?

Cursillo is the “*Weekend that Never Ends*”! We describe it as such because the Cursillo method provides for a way to continue to reinforce the Weekend experience through reunions with fellow Cursillistas.

After your Weekend, you are invited to join a small group of men or women known as a “Group Reunion”. This may be your sponsor’s group or a group of men or women in your parish who have previously attended a Weekend. Each week these groups meet to discuss their faith in confidence and to encourage each other.

Each month at various parishes around the diocese, a reunion of the small groups is held, generally following a Saturday or weekday evening Mass. Such a gathering is called an “Ultreya”. An Ultreya is a chance to reunite with friends from outside the small group, hear a witness speaker and share fellowship.

Also, monthly, Cursillistas who wish to become more involved in Cursillo as a leader are encouraged to attend the School of Leaders. This is a gathering for which the objective is to study the Cursillo purpose and method as well as Catholic Doctrine.

Finally, there is an annual Ultreya Grande for the entire Cursillo community of the Diocese.

“It seemed that I had heard all of these things before; however, the message was structured in a way that finally made sense. God loves me and wants to have a relationship with me. He wants me to be a part of a Christian community. Through word and example, he wants me to make his presence known in the world.

*The path I’m on now includes time for a brief meeting each week with a special group of friends, so we can discuss our faith and prayer life. It’s a time to encourage one another, and to be encouraged.”*

—Dominic Longo, St. Philip the Apostle Parish, Addison

## How does Cursillo Operate?

A committee of volunteer laypersons known as the Secretariat, oversee the ongoing operation of the Cursillo movement in the Joliet Diocese. They schedule Weekends, discern staff for the Weekends and help coordinate Ultreyas.

The Secretariat is guided and advised by a Spiritual Advisor (a Priest or Deacon) assigned by the Bishop and Assistant Spiritual Advisors (generally Deacons) from the Diocesan Clergy, who work closely with the Secretariat laity. A national organization, headquartered in Texas, provides publications and support to all of the Diocesan Cursillo organizations in the US.

## What does Church Leadership say about the Cursillo movement?

### A Message from Bishop Ronald Hicks, Diocese of Joliet:

“I am delighted that Cursillo is available to the people of the Diocese of Joliet! This movement provides Catholic men and women in our parishes an extraordinary opportunity to grow in their relationship with our Lord, while at the same time being accompanied by others sharing this path towards a stronger faith.



### A Message from our Holy Father, Pope Francis:

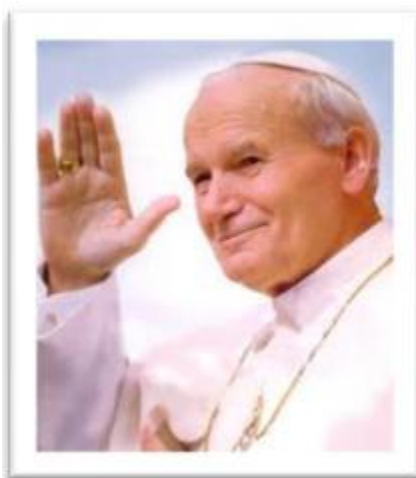


“Being pilgrims in our city means not to be sedentary, but open to life and to pay attention to what is happening in our heart like a Good Samaritan seeing the harshness of life for so many of our brethren.

It is necessary that the Cursillo Movement, through the participation of all, continue its path of pastoral conversion...”

Letter of June 13, 2011 to the Cursillistas of Buenos Aires from then Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio SJ, Archbishop of Buenos Aires (now Pope Francis).

### A message from Pope St. John Paul II:



“The Cursillo method aims at helping to transform in a Christian way the milieus where people live and work through the involvement of 'new men and women' who have become such from their encounter with Christ.”

Excerpted from Saint John Paul II's Address to the Cursillos de Cristiandad Movement,  
July 29, 2000

## A Message from our previous Spiritual Director, Fr. Matt Pratscher:

“Inspired by St. Paul, the Cursillo Movement proclaims the Good News of Christ and calls all into a deeper friendship with Christ through the grace of the Sacraments and in the life of the Church. It is a great support and source of joy as we walk this Christian journey together.”



## **Where Can I Learn More?**

More information is available at our Joliet Cursillo website: [www.jolietcursillo.org](http://www.jolietcursillo.org)

You can also email us at [info@jolietcursillo.org](mailto:info@jolietcursillo.org).

**Christ is counting on You!**

