

Canadian Anglican Cursillo

SERVANT COMMUNITY



Developing a Servant Community

What it is?

Servant Community is a gathering of Cursillistas who are or could be workers, committee members, leaders and potential leaders. They gather periodically through the year for study, prayer, action and mutual support related to the work of their diocesan movement.

The Servant Community is the “working” body of the diocesan Cursillo movement, reporting to the secretariat. The Servant Community consists of a number of Working Committees: e.g. Pre-Cursillo, post Cursillo, 3-day weekend, Communications etc.

One function of the Servant Community is the provision of the “continuing education component” or Leaders’ School. Leaders’ School events provide an awareness of our unity of purpose for Christ and leadership-training opportunities for Cursillistas. Through it, a deeper understanding of the Cursillo method is achieved that ultimately strengthens Group Reunions, Ultreyas, weekend teams, and emphasizes the Fourth Day. For participants, the Servant Community becomes an additional Group Reunion - a Leader’ Group Reunion. (See *Servant Community*, NEC 2003)

Who Should Come?

The core of Servant Community is leaders who have chosen to work inside the Cursillo movement as their main apostolic action at this time. They are active in the movement, in Permanent Group reunion and attend Ultreyas regularly. They are a “community of service” to Cursillo especially for the Fourth Day and Weekend needs of the movement. It should include members of Secretariat and Servant Community committees. However, the spiritual and skill capacity of the movement is increased by including other Cursillistas as well. Servant Community is a place to build knowledge, skill and confidence in all aspects of Cursillo, through participation in working committees and education events. The Chair of the Servant Community is a member of Secretariat.

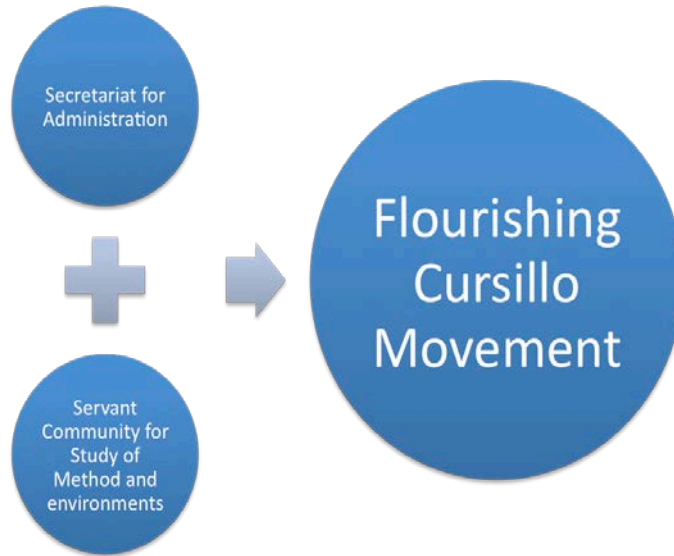
What does Servant Community do?

This groups meets regularly (e.g. quarterly) under the auspices of the Diocesan Secretariat. The Servant Community is the "heart and hands of the local movement,"

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and the Secretariat functions as the "head of the local movement." The Servant Community "brainstorms ideas" but it is the Secretariat's responsibility and authority to make all decisions regarding the local movement.



Servant Community within Cursillo

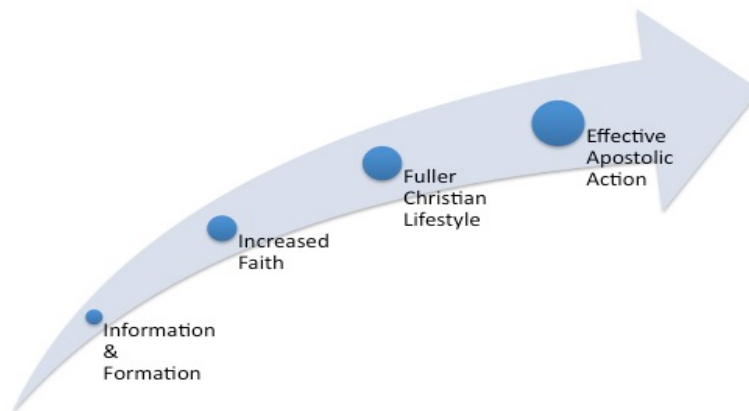
The "servant" responsibility of this community is to carry out the actions and implement the policies as directed by the Secretariat. The community side is created as those tasked with running the operations of the local Cursillo movement meet and work together regularly as a body.

"Follow me and I will make you fish for people." Matthew 4:19. A strong Leaders' School builds "fishing and disciple skills". The process and format accelerates greater conversion to being an active disciple of Christ, examining and changing environments for Him – that is "living what is fundamental for being a Christian".

We know this process is not complete at end of the Weekend. When the leaders come together to pray, study, reflect and plan, it helps to create individual norms, enhances spiritual growth and encourages group reunions and Ultreya attendance. Through the process of study, Cursillistas are able to engage in examination and dialogue, develop formation in the Cursillo Method, increased faith, a fuller Christian lifestyle and more effective apostolic action. Thus, it increases the overall maturity of the movement through its leaders.

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Value of the Servant Community to the Individual

Format

The format should meet local needs. However, the gathering should facilitate discussion, questioning, deep dialogue, mutual understanding, spiritual growth and an exchange of concerns, experiences, new ideas and information. One model looks like this.

Typical Servant Community Agenda Saturday 9 AM – 12 PM

Community Building (Piety) Phase:

Opening Prayer, Morning Prayer, or some other devotion
Grouping, using the Leaders Grouping Card

School (Study) Phase

Study of Scripture or theology by clergy, relevant to the planned tasks at hand.
Study of the Cursillo Literature by lay member, relevant to the planned tasks.

Work (Action) Phase

"Brainstorming" about the needs and resources of the Community in relation to the Pastoral Plan.

Committee Meetings (e.g. Pre-Cursillo, Weekend, Post Cursillo, etc.) to organize and do the work of the Community and report back to the full Meeting as needed.

This is where mentoring takes place, where committee chairs can recruit interested members who are encouraged, make new friends, gain support and build new skills that support the movement.

Final Prayer

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The Secretariat could then meet in the afternoon to act on Servant Community recommendations.

How it is formed?

Formation of a Servant Community and Leader School takes the commitment and informed understanding of all who serve as leaders within the diocesan movement. It is suggested that you aim for four meetings a year. Topics for study are easily accessible: the National Episcopal Cursillo (NEC) Library, Canadian Anglican Cursillo Secretariat guidelines, Cursillo literature and the Bible. It is recommended that annual topics include material from the NEC booklets on Group Reunion, Sponsorship, Ultreya, Fourth Day First as well as Palanca.

What creates and sustains interest?

We know that anyone who steps into a leadership position likely already has a busy life. Suggestions for making Servant Community meetings an enjoyable and efficient use of time include providing a social meal and time to share, meeting needs for quality education, being organized, inviting people in person rather than via email, and use of technology to share continuing education and Servant Community meetings for those who cannot travel.

Being friends is crucial to initial and sustained involvement. It requires inspired communication, and personal support and outreach – becoming friends. Promotion can be done at Ultreyas, Day of Deeper Understanding, Newsletters, weekend training and by clergy support. Some Diocese have developed a system of Parish Cursillo Contacts who personally talk to and encourage each Cursillista at their church.

Resolving distances is a Canadian issue. Local movements should explore the use of accessible technology, such as conference calls, email or blogs for the leaders school talks, use of drop box, or iCloud to share reports. Weekend meetings allow for travel time. Some Movements take their Leader school on the road and billet. Others keep it central. One strategy is for Committee chairs to find committee members who live in their local communities.

Evaluation of the Servant Community is strongly recommended to ensure that it is making an impact on the Fourth Day in the context of the Diocesan mission plan. The format is found in NEC Library booklet *Servant Community*.

References:

National Episcopal Cursillo (2013) *Servant Community* (Essential reading)

Websites:

Ottawa Anglican Cursillo Movement
Anglican Diocese of Central Newfoundland
San Diego Episcopal Cursillo

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