

Canadian Anglican Cursillo



EVALUATING A DIOCESAN CURSILLO MOVEMENT

Cursillo; A movement of the church which, with its own method, makes it possible to live that which is fundamental to being a Christian, in order to create nuclei of Christians who engage in leavening their environments with the gospel....(Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement p. 34)

The Secretariat of every Diocesan Movement should periodically conduct an evaluation of the movement, comparing its function and results to the vision of authentic Cursillo enunciated by the founders, and based on Christ's Great Commission.

Overall Approach

1. **Develop a Vision** - "Without vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18). Start by imagining what would happen in your Diocese if every Cursillista left their weekend and lived out their Fourth Day fully. In other words what would be happening in your Diocese if every Cursillista was actively identifying environments and evangelizing them as discussed in the Weekend talks?
2. **Assess where you are** - Discuss how close to this ideal your Movement is.
3. **Identify gaps** between where you would like to be and where you are.
4. **Set goals** for where you want to be. Make the goals attainable and measurable, and set

yourself a time-frame for accomplishment.

5. **Plan actions** that will help you achieve the goal, thus bringing you closer to the ideal. Be specific. Assign specific people with responsibility to carry out or coordinate the actions.
6. **Evaluate yourselves.** Expect yourselves to be accountable. Set time frames for regular reports to Secretariat on the action plans and achievement of the goals you set.

Areas for Assessment

Without a constant examination of the essentials and the ideals, we run the danger of losing our direction and, in some cases, moving towards actions which actually *prevent* us from obtaining the goals of Cursillo. Cursillo is a movement with a purpose, a strategy, and a method. Following are some questions for self-assessment in each area.

Purpose

The purpose of the Cursillo Movement is to strengthen people in living out their baptismal covenants, and to assist them in impacting for Christ the environments of which they are a part. (*The Book of Common Prayer*, page 527; *Leaders' Manual*, pages 14, 15; *Fundamental Ideas*, page 35; *Fourth Day*, page 47.) Another way of saying this is that Cursillo is intended to make *saints* -people

Evaluating a Diocesan Cursillo Movement

who know God's love and grace and live their lives from this relationship - and *apostles* -saints who have a mission to share that knowledge with others. (*NEC Library, What is Cursillo'?*) [It is NOT to put on "feel-good" weekends centered primarily on individual spiritual growth.]

1. How has your Movement helped strengthen people in living out their baptismal covenants? Require yourselves to cite specific examples of what is different *not just in your parishes*, but in the communities where Cur-sillistas live and work, because of Cursillo.
2. What are some specific things that Cursillo could do in your Diocese in the future to help people live out their baptismal covenants? (Listing things does not indicate that Cursillo *will* do them. List as many things as possible; the list can be pruned in the final stages of planning.)
3. What specifically has Cursillo done to help people have an impact for Christ on their environments?
4. What specific things could Cursillo do to further help people impact their environments for Christ?
5. How are people more able to witness about Christ in their social and work environments than if Cursillo did not exist? What is Cursillo doing to enable people?
6. What specific things could Cursillo do that would enable people to witness about Christ more than they do at present?

Strategy

In *Fundamental Ideas*, the strategies that were considered by the founders of the Cursillo Movement are enumerated (pages 21, 22). The selection of leaders to Christianize chosen environments requires a pastoral plan.

1. What is the nature of the Bishop's pastoral plan in your diocese?
2. In what ways does Cursillo implement the pastoral plan?
3. How specifically could Cursillo further implement the diocesan pastoral plan?
4. How are candidate selection criteria for the weekend affected by the pastoral plan?
5. What specifically would change about candidate selection criteria if the pastoral plan were implemented fully by the Cursillo Movement?
6. In what ways does the Cursillo Movement support other diocesan structures and movements, (Evangelism and Renewal, for example) in sharing the Good News of Christ beyond the doors of the churches? If it doesn't, how could it?
7. Does the Movement follow the CACS Guidelines regarding interdenominational participation?
8. How has Cursillo been defined for non-participating clergy in your diocese?
9. What has been the experience of the Cursillo Movement in conducting Servant Community/ Leaders' School?

Evaluating a Diocesan Cursillo Movement

10. What are some of the benefits that the Movement would receive from a more active Servant Community/ Leaders' School?

11. What specific actions could the Secretariat take to establish and/or increase the activity of Servant Community/ Leaders' School in the Diocese?

12. Has your Secretariat ever had a discussion of the human and spiritual needs of your community at large, and identified particular areas or institutions (e.g., schools, media, justice system) where, if there were a committed core of Cursillistas linked together, they could make a significant impact for Christ? If so, have you deliberately identified leaders in those environments and introduced them to the Cursillo method?

13. When was the last time your Diocese held a Cursillo Leaders' Workshop (CLW)? (This is an excellent way to rekindle the ideal of an authentic movement and provide a chance for new Cursillistas to gain a more complete vision of what the Movement is intended to accomplish .) A CLW is recommended every three to five years.

Method

The Cursillo method is defined as sharing a disciplined life of piety, study and apostolic action, mutually supported by the community through Group Reunion and Ultreya. (Leaders' Manual, pages 13-17; Fundamental Ideas, pages 85-92). The method of Cursillo is best assessed by subdividing into the three phases of Cursillo - Pre-Cursillo, the Weekend, and the Post-Cursillo or Fourth Day.

1. Pre-Cursillo- selecting the key, baptized members of the designated environments who would be supported by the Cursillo

method.

1.1. What has the Movement done to educate sponsors about appropriate selection criteria, and sponsor responsibilities before, during and after the Cursillo weekend?

Are sponsors expected to be "living the method" themselves? Are they expected to support their candidate and help him or her become established in a Group Reunion?

1.2. What are some additional steps that could be taken to better educate sponsors about selection criteria and sponsor responsibilities?

1.3. Has your Secretariat considered offering a "sponsorship seminar" which would be required before a Cursillista is allowed to be a sponsor?

1.4. What part do the clergy play in the candidate selection process for Cursillo weekends? How could they be made more aware of selection criteria?

2. *The Cursillo Weekend* exists to awaken Christians to their commission to share Christ in whatever environment they live and work, and to teach them about a method to do so. The authentic Three-Day Cursillo Weekend consists of 15 talks and 5 meditations set in the context of total Christian community.

2.1. What are the activities on the Weekend which contribute to achieving the purpose of the weekend?

2.2. What are the activities on the Weekend that do not contribute to achieving the purpose? What *is* the purpose of each of these activities? Are there any activities on the Weekend that might detract from the candidates' ability to understand and internalize what is being taught? (Remember, the Weekend is for the candidates, not for the team.)

Evaluating a Diocesan Cursillo Movement

- 2.3. Is there enough free time on the Weekend for candidates to think about what they are hearing and experiencing, or is every minute crammed full of "extras"? Is there time for them to get adequate sleep?
- 2.4. List as many ways as possible to move the Weekend toward effectively presenting the essentials and eliminating "extras" that do not clearly contribute to the purpose?
- 2.5. Are there qualifications in place for Weekend teams which require team members to be actively living the method (members of a regular Group Reunion)?
- 2.6. Are team members selected from those who are regular participants in Servant Community/Leaders' School?
- 2.7. Is the Weekend Co-ordinator (Lay Director, Rector/a) accountable to the Secretariat for the conduct of the Weekend?
3. **Post Cursillo** refers to the process of forming and sustaining a dynamic community through Group Reunions and Ultreya.
 - 3.1. How healthy are Group Reunions in this Diocese? What proportion of Cursillistas is part of a regular Group Reunion?
 - 3.2. What specific steps could the Movement take to facilitate the further forming and sustaining of Group Reunions?
 - 3.3. How healthy are Ultreyas? Do they follow the authentic pattern, or have "extras" crept in? What proportion of Cursillistas participate in Ultreyas?
 - 3.4. What specific steps could the Movement take to facilitate the health of Ultreyas ?
 - 3.5. How has the Movement in this Diocese encouraged Cursillistas to seek spiritual direction?
 - 3.6. What could the Movement do to help form and sustain spiritual directors, both lay and clergy?
 - 3.7. How effective are Cursillistas in influencing their environments for Christ?
 - 3.8. What could the Movement do to help Cursillistas influence their environments for Christ? Has the Movement considered sponsoring a SENT (Strategies for Evangelizing EnvironmentNTs) Workshop?

Example

An example is provided here to illustrate how to use this approach in evaluation of your Movement. One single area for a fictitious Movement is used as an example.

Ideal: Every candidate who attends a Weekend becomes part of a Group Reunion.

Assess: Currently about 20 % of all Cursillistas are part of a Group Reunion, to the best of our knowledge.

Gaps: Ideal is 100 %; we are at 20 %. Some of the gap is due to candidates "lost" to Group Reunion a number of years ago. From the most recent weekend, about 60 % of candidates are now part of a Group Reunion.

Goals:

1. Within the next year, 80 % of new Cursillistas will become part of a Group Reunion.
2. Within 2 years, 100 % of new Cursillistas will become part of a Group Reunion.

Evaluating a Diocesan Cursillo Movement

3. Within 2 years, 10 % of Cursillistas from previous weekends who are not currently in a Group Reunion will become part of a Group Reunion.

Actions:

1. Initiate a sponsor workshop for potential sponsors by [date]. Make it a requirement for sponsorship. [Assigned to Person X.]
2. Encourage all sponsors to invite their candidates to their own Group Reunion, or help the candidate start or join a Group Reunion. Require sponsors to agree to this commitment in advance by [date]. [Co-ordination assigned to Person Y]
3. Have Weekend team members assigned to personally contact candidates within two weeks after a Weekend and offer specific help re: Group Reunion. [Person A assigned to incorporate this into weekend team manual.]
4. Make being part of a Group Reunion a requirement for being a sponsor by [date]. [Secretariat action - Pre-Cursillo Co-ordinator]
5. Ask each Cursillista who is in a Group Reunion now to identify at least one other Cursillista who is not in a Group Reunion, and personally invite and/or offer to assist them in becoming part of a Group Reunion. [Assigned to Person B to co-ordinate.]

Evaluate: One year from now [date] we will evaluate progress in achieving the goals. Interim progress reports due from Co-ordinators two months after next Weekend.

Ideas

The following is a non-exhaustive list of possible ways to move your Cursillo Movement towards the ideal.

1. Cursillo Leaders' Workshop
2. Fourth Day training
3. Reading of CACS Library
4. Reading of NEC Library
5. Publications of key concepts from CACS Library in newsletters
6. Sponsor workshops
7. SENT Workshop
8. Day of Deeper Understanding
9. Workshop on Group Reunion shortly after Weekend
10. Specific content at Servant Community to further your goals
11. Seminars
12. Team Training
13. Music workshop/training
14. Spiritual Director Training
15. Co-operation with other Movements
16. Helping other denominations' Movements or new Anglican Movements

Further References

National Episcopal Library: Health and Well-Being of a Movement

Acknowledgement: Parts of this material draw from the content of a document from the Episcopalian Movement put together in part by William P. Gardner, a doctoral candidate in organizational behaviour and personnel management.