

Canadian Anglican Cursillo



INTERDENOMINATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE ANGLICAN CURSILLO MOVEMENT IN CANADA

In the Cursillo movement in Canada, a question has arisen: "As the Anglican Cursillo Movement, what restrictions, if any, should we place upon non-Anglicans as participants on weekends or as members of teams?"

The Canadian Anglican Cursillo Secretariat (CACS) is charged with the responsibility of guarding the authenticity of the movement in the Anglican Church of Canada, and presents this guideline for your consideration. It is understood that these are what they claim to be: guidelines to be prayerfully considered in each of the sister Diocesan Cursillos.

On May 15, 1989, the CACS signed a letter of understanding with the national Secretariat of the United States Catholic Cursillo Movement (USCCM). Among the provisions of the agreement is the following: "[The Diocesan Cursillo] should apply the Cursillo weekend properly, according to the general practice and using the approved talk guidelines, to candidates of the same denomination (i.e., Anglican) by an Anglican team of individuals who are exemplary in their own living experience of the Christian life and the Cursillo method (8e)." In a **document titled, *NECC Response to Ecumenical Cursillo Issue*** of April 1997, the National Episcopal Cursillo Committee (NECC) of the United States states that, "Cursillo was not intended to make more Episcopalians [Anglicans]. It was intended to make Episcopalians more effective Christian apostles in their environments..." In summary, the

NECC states that although interdenominational Cursillos do exist, they would appear to be in violation of the Letter of Understanding signed between the Roman Catholic, Episcopalian and Anglican Cursillos.

However, the NEC Library makes it clear that it "does not have the authority to discipline its member movements . . . ultimately the legal authority to take action rests with the Roman Catholic Secretariat. . ." This is the legal position raised for the exclusion of non-Anglicans either as candidates or as members of teams. The question has been raised as to whether the USCCM has the legal right to hold copyright on the name Cursillo. That issue has yet to be resolved.

Discussion at the CACS meetings in Halifax in October 1997 and in Sault Ste. Marie in May of 1998 was prayerfully lively! The CACS reflected at great length on the "letter of the law" and on the "spirit of the law." We were reminded that many Diocesan Cursillos in Canada were in existence before the Letter of Understanding was signed with the USCCM and these are among the most active Cursillo movements in the country. We prayed about and talked about how we could uphold the fundamentals of the Cursillo Method while remaining faithful to those dioceses in which Cursillo is very much an interdenominational movement.

The Canadian Anglican Cursillo Secretariat offers these guidelines for consideration in every diocese in Canada:

1. If your Movement's current practice is to accept only Anglicans as candidates or as members of team, we strongly suggest that you continue this practice.

2. If your Movement's current practice is to accept non-Anglicans as candidates or as members of team, we strongly suggest that the following steps be followed:

- a) If there is a local movement in the potential candidate's own denomination, the Sponsor must advise the potential candidate and suggest he/she first explore the possibility of participating in it.
- b) The Sponsor must consult with the Diocesan Spiritual Director *before approaching the potential candidate*.
- c) The Sponsor must explain the "Anglican" content of the weekend (specifically the Sacraments and the celebration of The Holy Eucharist) and advise the candidate that the Spiritual Director will be contacting the potential candidate's priest/pastor.
- d) The Sponsor must point out the possibility that there may be friction in the candidate's own denomination and/or family if he/she participates in a Cursillo weekend.
- e) The Diocesan Spiritual Director must make contact with the potential candidate's priest/pastor and explain the content of the Anglican Cursillo Method, of the authentic weekend and of the Fourth Day.
- f) The potential candidate's own priest/pastor must sign the application form.
- g) The Diocesan Secretariat or the Screening Committee of the Secretariat must ensure that all the above steps have been enacted before approving the application.

2. The decision made by the local Diocesan Secretariat in this matter must meet the approval of the Diocesan Bishop.

The CACS recommends that local Secretariats that choose to include non-Anglicans as candidates implement the following guideline for selection of non-Anglican candidates for weekends:

1. That priority be given to Anglicans up to a certain date. After the deadline, other persons would be considered.
2. That the Diocesan Cursillo establish a limit on the number of non-Anglicans permitted as candidates on a weekend, and that number must not exceed 50 percent of the total number of candidates.

The CACS recommends that local Secretariats that choose to include non-Anglicans as members of team implement the following guideline:

1. That the Lay Director(s)/Rector/ Rectora **must** be Anglican.
2. That the Spiritual Directors) **must** be Anglican.
3. That non-Anglicans may be selected to fill other roles on team to a maximum of 20 percent of the team membership.

The CACS recommends that the following guideline be followed when choosing non-Anglicans as members of the Diocesan Secretariat:

1. That the Lay Directors) **must** be Anglican.
2. That the Spiritual Directors) **must** be Anglican.
3. That non-Anglicans may serve in other capacities on the Diocesan Secretariat to a maximum of 10 percent of the Diocesan Secretariat.

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4. That the composition of the Diocesan Secretariat must be approved by the Diocesan Bishop under whose jurisdiction the Cursillo of the Diocese operates.

The CACS realizes that this is a contentious issue throughout the Cursillo movement in Canada. We hope that these guidelines will

assist the Diocesan Secretariats as they individually wrestle with the concerns which have been expressed concerning the participation of non-Anglicans as candidates, team members and as members of Diocesan Secretariats.