

Canadian Anglican Cursillo



PALANCA FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

Many persons offer their prayers and selfless acts of love (called Palanca) in support of the candidates and team.

Before anything else, the most characteristic mark of the Cursillo methodology lies in the whole concept of Palanca- prayers, sacrifices and works of mercy. Palanca must be genuine and offered by communities and individuals living in union with Christ and each other if the effectiveness of all other human efforts in the movement is to be assured.

TRUE PALANCA

True Palanca is the best gift that could possibly be given. Affirming or encouraging notes and little gifts are nice to give and to receive, but they are not true Palanca, merely Palanca indicators/signs.

The Cursillo weekend is enriched by **authentic Palanca** (prayer and selfless acts of love).

PALANCA IS:

PRAYER

An essential part of the weekend

- Deep, intentional and selfless; truly offered for the sake of candidates and team.
- Connection with God that allows his Holy Spirit to work, and the love of Jesus to be felt

SACRIFICE

(Selfless acts of love)

- Giving up of something (time, an Activity, etc.) to provide support for the candidates and team
- Is difficult and really only possible through prayer and a willingness to give ourselves to God and to others, in love
- Creates a bond of union between the giver and the receiver

Palanca for the Wider Community

The two types of Palanca are:

GENERAL PALANCA

In writing Palanca, you support and encourage candidates and team by telling them something of your prayer and sacrifice.

- A letter or poster addressed "To the Candidates and Team of Men's / Women's Cursillo #...."
- In keeping with focus on Christian community, general palanca should be written first.
- The term "Palanca" will be introduced during the "Faith" talk. And some will be used as part of the Faith talk
- The rest of the general palanca is posted, to be read throughout the weekend.

PERSONAL PALANCA

- Personal cards and notes addressed to individual candidates and team members, indicating what the Palanca activity is (e.g. prayer, fasting)
- Delivered by the palanca team.
- It is not necessary to send palanca to everyone. Write first to:
 - Candidates you have sponsored.
 - Relatives and close friends.
 - People in your church, organization, etc

PRAYER SUPPORT DURING THE WEEKEND

It is the community prayer support that allows:

- God's grace to be experienced.
- The Holy Spirit to open the hearts of all the participants, and provide wisdom and strength to the team.
- The loving presence of Jesus to be felt.

COMMUNITY PRAYER SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES ARE:

- Personal prayers, anytime, anywhere, and for anyone or any aspect of the weekend.
- Prayer times for specific speakers.
- Community morning, mid-day and special scheduled prayers or services.
- Daily community Eucharist
- Prayer vigil.

CONCLUSION

Bishop Juan Heaves reminds us "We should have the intimate and absolute conviction that everything in Cursillo is the work of God's grace. It is necessary therefore, to pray and sacrifice oneself for the spiritual and apostolic success of the same. The miracles of God's grace are granted to confident prayer, accompanied by sacrifice, not to knowledge or experience."

Bibliography

The Cursillo Movement's Leaders' Manual. United States National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement



Cursillo is one method of renewal for the Church. Its purpose is to lead Christians into a deeper relationship with God so that they can better understand their individual callings to be Christian leaders. The goal of Cursillo is to Christianize our environments through the apostolic action of Christian leaders in all areas of human activity. It does this by providing a strategy for structuring Christian life. (See the NEC and CACS papers on **The Fourth Day**).

The three day Weekend is one part of the Cursillo method that includes Pre-Cursillo and Post-Cursillo activities. The purpose of Cursillo is not to just bring people to Weekends, but rather to provide help and support to those people in their walk with Christ for the rest of their lives, their **Fourth Day**, using the Cursillo method. All activities on the Weekend should contribute to providing this support through an intentionally reflective and simple atmosphere. No activities should be secret; candidates should be told whatever they need to know.

To be an authentic weekend it must include the following;

- The celebration of the Eucharist
- Morning and Evening Prayer, and other spiritual exercises
- The 15 Talks and 5 Meditations
- Quiet time
- Personal contact, including spiritual direction

- Prayer time
- Responsive discussions and summaries of table groups
- Apostolic Commitment Service
- Clausura

Some Movements may have tried to add additional features and details (e.g. Stations of the Cross) that contribute to the joyful and spiritual atmosphere of the Weekend, but they should not detract from the purpose of the Weekend. They do not contribute to the goal Cursillo is trying to reach, that is to awaken and empower apostles for Jesus Christ. Consequently any other activities need to be continually evaluated and reviewed by Diocesan Secretariats with the needs, and especially the free time and personal spiritual needs, of the participants in mind.

The tendency has been to overload the weekend with activities, consequently leaving little free time, an essential of the weekend. It (i.e. free time) contributes to mental and physical health, gives space allowing the message to be internalized through reflection, and allows for personal contact with team members.

There must be room for the Holy Spirit to work, for the spontaneous to happen, to foster an understanding friendship with God and the good news of grace, to live in the moment, and for shared joy to become a reality.

On the three day weekend, a team of lay people and spiritual advisors give a series of fifteen talks covering the basics of Christianity. They talk about what does it mean to be a human being, to be a Christian, the very real need to be with others growing and witnessing in faith, and the unique Cursillo means by which this can be carried out. It is important to understand that there is

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only one talk, with fifteen related parts, and that each speaker realizes just where his or her talk fits into the context of the whole.

Experience has shown that the structure of the talks outlined in the Lay Talk Workbook works. Leaders and team members should be responsible to the purpose and vision of the Cursillo founders and the needs of the people on the weekend.

The participants, secluded away from the pressures of their everyday lives, form a Christian community by learning, praying, sharing, singing and living together. Bathed in prayer and the Holy Spirit the participants hear with fresh ears, learning how to become effective witnesses.

The Fifteen Talks

Ideal
Grace
Laity in the Church
Faith
Piety
Study
Sacraments
Action
Obstacles to a life of Grace
Leaders
The Study and Evangelization of
Environments
Christian life in Grace
Christian Community in Action
Group Reunion
Ultreya

Grace, Faith, Sacraments, Obstacles and Christian Life are the talks given by a Spiritual Advisor. All other talks are given by lay team members.

The Five Meditations

Know yourself
The Prodigal Son
The Three Glances of Christ
The Person of Christ
Message of Christ to the Participant

The meditations bring the participant into the presence of Christ as portrayed in the scriptures, and his call to each one of us as his apostles and witnesses.

Personal Contact

Free time on the weekend is essential to developing personal contact between table communities, team members and spiritual advisors. Personal contact includes listening with an attitude of caring and acceptance, friendship and sincerity, with no strings attached, and with only the desire to "Make a friend; be a friend; and bring your friend to Christ". Remember that it takes time to build trust and for the participants to join in open discussion. Candidates must be free to experience as much or as little as they wish of the Weekend, without pressure, relying on the movement of the Holy Spirit for results.

Further references:

National Episcopal Cursillo Library:

Authentic 3Day Weekend

Lay Talk Workbook

The Fourth Day First

Group Reunion

Personal Contact Techniques Canadian

Anglican Cursillo Library:

Group Reunion

Respecting Personal Boundaries