

Canadian Anglican Cursillo

THE SERVANT COMMUNITY/LEADERS' SCHOOL



What is a Servant Community?

"Follow Me, and I will make you fish for people." (Matthew 4:19)

The Servant Community is one of the most misunderstood and neglected areas of the Cursillo Movement, yet it is vital. It has many names, but whether it is called Servant Community or Leaders' School, or any other name, the true version is a group of men and women dedicated to a mission of love. It is a means of distributing the work of the Church, and at the same time, a means of enabling the overall growth and maturity of the Movement, and the strengthening of the servants' faith.

The definition given in the glossary in *The Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement* (second edition), describes "Leaders' School" [Servant Community] as something more like a school of fish than a school of students. More than students following a course of lessons led by teachers, it is a community of workers with a common goal and mission. The book states it is a "community of Christians who, united by and in a climate of Group Reunion, seek to be more centered, more committed, and more united to accelerate the living of what is fundamental for being a Christian in themselves, in the Cursillo

Movement, and in the environments in which they live."

Why Have a Servant Community?

"Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves... I am among you as one who serves." (Luke 22:26-7).

There are two structures essential to the maintenance of the Cursillo Movement in each diocese. These are the Servant Community and the Secretariat. The Secretariat is the administrative arm, and the Servant Community is the working arm. The Secretariat has the responsibility of overseeing the Servant Community, freeing it from administrative details and holding it accountable for a fully integrated presentation of Cursillo. The Servant Community, on the other hand, gives its primary attention to the ongoing study of the Cursillo method and the environments.

All authorities, starting with Bishop Hervas and the other founders of the Movement, and all international movements assert unequivocally that without a Servant Community "a Movement will falter," whereas with one, "mistakes and misconceptions can be corrected."

The Servant Community/Leaders' School

Historically, the Cursillo Movement started from a Servant Community. Laity and clergy came to examine the problems facing the Church in the de-Christianized world of the time. From that examination and study of environments emerged the Cursillo Movement. The Servant Community came first, and then the Movement. **The Leaders' Manual and the NEC Library agree that no movement is fully Cursillo unless it has a Servant Community.**

Who are the Members of the Servant Community?

"To one He gave five talents, to another, two, to another, one, to each according to his ability." (Matthew 25:15)

All Cursillistas are called to be leaders in their own environments. Some are called to be leaders in the Cursillo Movement, too.

The Servant Community is not the "program," but the people.

These people will be those who have lived the Cursillo weekend, freely accepted responsibility for the evangelizing mission of the church, have the knowledge, desire and capability to inspire, energize and strengthen all three phases of the Cursillo Movement. The members will be leaders in their everyday lives.

To do this effectively, the members of the Servant Community/Leaders' School gather together in an atmosphere of Group Reunion to grow and learn in five areas:

1. *Spiritual*: promote growth and continual maturation in union with Jesus Christ.

2. *Doctrinal*: enable individuals to be able to give a reason for their hope. (I Peter 3:15)
3. *Human values*: develop understanding of the contemporary world.
4. *Social conscience*: encourage thinking about one's social and political responsibilities.
5. *Cursillo Movement*: promote understanding of the foundations and method of the Cursillo Movement

The results of a healthy Servant Community/Leaders' School will be:

- A team of leaders who live and understand the Cursillo Method.
- Members who know they have the spirit (fire in the heart) to carry it out.
- Members who know and live the weekend talks.
- Future leaders who are prepared for the Movement.
- Members who develop knowledge and experience about the Cursillo Method and technique.
- Members who exemplify a growing and deepening faith in their own lives.

These people can serve as a channel for questions and problems, can identify key environments in the community where Christian leavening is needed, and can support and encourage other Cursillistas in their Fourth Day.

How Should a Servant Community Be Conducted?

"Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not humanity." (Col. 3:23)

"Though the [Servant Community] is an essential part of the Cursillo Movement, there are no set rules concerning how it is organized or how it operates. There is no predetermined program or curriculum." (*Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement*, page 206.)

The Servant Community is not static, but responds to the needs of the Diocesan Movement at that particular time. It must also reflect the spiritual maturity of the individuals within that community. What may be necessary or possible in one diocese may not be right for any other diocese.

Bishop Juan Hervas gives an example of how the Leaders' School/Servant Community operates in his diocese. It meets weekly, but others meet monthly. Their schedule is as follows:

1. Prayer to the Holy Spirit.
2. Group Reunion, including a small questionnaire (about 1 hour).
3. Doctrinal lecture given by a priest (about 25 minutes).
4. Class in Cursillo Method (about 20 minutes).
5. Sections: studies of the activities of the Movement in the diocese; Pre Cursillo, Cursillo preparations, Post Cursillo; publications, etc. (about 30 minutes).
6. Devotions (about 15 minutes).

Evaluation of the Servant Community

It is necessary that an evaluation of the Servant Community be conducted by the Diocesan Secretariat on a regular basis. For guidance, please refer to the *NEC Servant Community Guideline* (pages 8-9) for evaluation of a Servant Community.

If the Servant Community is functioning well:

- Its members will receive basic principles that fill their heads with ideas, and the heart or spirit to carry them out.
- The Movement will receive a means of sounding out questions and problems.
- Members will receive inspiration and strength for core groups generated by Cursillo
- There will be a deepening of conversion for Cursillistas.
- Future leaders will be prepared in holiness, doctrine, method, and a spirit of service.
- The Servant Community will also provide an environment which promotes and energizes the Servant-Leaders, core groups, Church communities and civic communities.

It is possible to have more than one Servant Community per diocese, but it is strongly recommended that all Servant Communities in a diocese be under the administrative jurisdiction of only one "central" diocesan Secretariat.

Further References

The Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement (Second Edition).
The Cursillo Movement's Leaders' Manual.
Questions and Problems Concerning Cursillo in Christianity.
National Episcopal Cursillo Library, The Servant Community