

Canadian Anglican Cursillo



WEEKEND TEAM SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of Cursillo is well expressed in the phrase, "For us . . . for others." That is, it captures the Old Testament sense of the call of Abraham, "I will bless you ... so that you will be a blessing." (Gen. 12:2) [NEC Library, *What is Cursillo*, p. 2]

With the growth of Cursillo, it became apparent that training others in Christian witness needed to be developed. Therefore, the authentic three-day weekend evolved as a means to give those involved in Group reunions and living the life of grace the tools to live the Fourth Day.

A team needs to walk the walk; to live what it proclaims. Cursillo weekends are not "put on," they are lived. Therefore, leaders in the Cursillo community need to ensure that teams which form are made up of men and women who seek to live out their faith and witness. **Team members need to be chosen from people who know how vital grouping is and are actively involved in a regular Group Reunion.**

Minimum Functions of a Team

The Lay Coordinator and Spiritual Coordinator, along with the Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, should begin at the earliest moment to live the spirit of Group Reunion and prayerfully consider all who will be chosen to serve on team, being mindful of their gifts and abilities to perform the following functions:

- Selection and training of team
- Overall weekend coordination
- Worship coordination and provision of spiritual direction
- Supply logistics
- Time control
- Music coordination
- Prayer coordination
- Food coordination
- Palanca coordination
- Speakers for 15 talks
- Speakers for 5 meditations
- Table enabling
- Back up support

Each team members' task is important and vital to the success of the team. No one person or task is more important than another. All work together to make a complete and successful team.

Goals of Team Development

The goal of team development is to build a community of laity and clergy that has sacramental unity, is focused on the gospel, has mutual love and acceptance of one another, and an enthusiasm for the mission of Christ and His Church. Team members will grow very close to one another in the process of forming. A team is a Group Reunion and should practice and participate in grouping together as part of each team meeting.

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It is also important that team members have an understanding of, and a commitment to, the essential elements of the authentic weekend, including the logical order and the interconnectedness of the fifteen talks and five meditations. The team should ensure that all talks are heard and reviewed. The team also needs to develop and understand the skills of group dynamics for table enablers. Each team member should uphold and support all others in prayer. In a spirit of servant hood, there should be a united focus on the purpose of the weekend, rather than on individual agendas.

Key Points to Remember

- Team development takes time - allow enough (a minimum of 25 hours.)
- All members are expected to attend all meetings.
- Meetings should follow a Piety, Study, Action format (not necessarily in that order).

A Sample Meeting

- Piety - songs, prayers, reflection, Group Reunion
- Study - knowledge for weekend, i.e., how to give a talk, presentation of and feedback on talks, table dynamics
- Action

In some communities, the day begins or ends with the Eucharist or evening prayer, serving to bind the team together.

- The elements which make up the message of the weekends are not infinitely variable or flexible. There is a strong tendency among communities to keep incorporating new ideas and new actions, the assumption being that if some is good, more is better. Usually, it is not.

Cautions

- Team leaders, as well as the Secretariat, need to be vigilant to ensure that weekends are simple, normal and natural.
- Team members must not be so eager to achieve results that knowingly, or unknowingly, they apply pressure on participants to have a certain kind of experience.
- Team leaders should give without strings attached.
- Team need not be over-anxious about results. Be confident that as they share and proclaim what they have truly found by God's grace, the message will hit home.

Eligibility Criteria for Team Members

There are some minimum criteria that should be considered when selecting team members:

- Team members should be part of a regular permanent group reunion.
- All team members should be living their faith and witnessing to it
- Ideally, team members should be members of the Servant Community and attend its programs
- Team members should be able to receive the sacraments of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Considerations for Selecting a Team

In addition to ensuring that all team members meet the minimum criteria, there

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are a number of other factors to consider when selecting a team.

Balance is an important factor. Aim for a mix of ages, a balance of gender (if co-ed), and marital status. It is important to make sure that a good variety of Cursillo experience is evident on team. This will allow new Cursillistas to gain valuable experience, yet still maintain the depth provided by those with more experience. A good general rule of thumb is one-third very experienced, one-third with some experience, and one-third with no weekend experience. It is advisable that a person not serve on two consecutive weekends or in the same capacity every time. Finally, aim for a balance in parish representation, in particular being careful not to allow any one parish to be over-represented on the team.

The size of the team will vary, depending on the number of candidates anticipated. Too many team members can overwhelm and threaten the candidates, as well as hamper the building of significant community. Too few will mean that each is overworked.

Role of Secretariat in Team Selection and Development

The Secretariat, in consultation with the Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, has the responsibility for choosing the lay leader and spiritual advisor for the weekend, thus ensuring that one lay person assumes the overall coordination of the weekend, and that one ordained person assumes the overall coordination of the liturgical/spiritual life of the weekend. It is also the role of the Secretariat to prayerfully support the team and candidates, maintaining liaison with, and accountability from, the lay leader of the weekend. Ensuring leadership development on each weekend will provide for future weekend leaders.

It is wise for all who are involved in team selection and development to keep in mind that Cursillo is not an organization but is part of **The Body of Christ - The Church**. The team's form should reflect its essential function.

Successful team formation and development results in a working community of faithful people who are freed from worry and concern for the mechanical structures and are able to be devoted to the candidates and their needs.

The work of the Cursillo movement is the work of the whole Church. Jesus did not give Peter a position or a title, but a directive to serve: "Feed my sheep." A team member is first and foremost a servant who is helping the Cursillo Community by going the way and showing the way.

Further References

National Episcopal Cursillo Library

The Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement

The Cursillo Movement's Leader's Manual