



Wouldn't it be amazing if everyone just understood what Discipleship really means?

Wouldn't it be great if there was a tried and trusted way to enable this?

The good news is...there is!  
Please read on...

“Through Cursillo the love of God is experienced afresh, an experience which draws us into prayer and compassionate action. Because of this, Cursillo is a much needed instrument for the renewal of the life of the Church today, and one for which I give thanks.”

**Archbishop of Canterbury  
The Most Rev'd Justin Welby**

“Cursillo is about making disciples; it transforms people’s lives and empowers them for service. Cursillo is active in most Dioceses of this Province, for which I praise God.”

**Archbishop of York  
The Most Rev'd John Sentamu**



“I have been involved with Cursillo since 2008, firstly as a pilgrim during my curacy and then as staff on Cursillo Weekends ever since. I am sufficiently impressed and encouraged by its methods to have been Diocesan Spiritual Director for the former Ripon and Leeds Diocese and the current SD for the Diocese of Leeds.

I have seen pilgrims transformed over the course of a Weekend, from nervous, hesitant nominal Christians into confident disciples and evangelists, eager to work to grow the Kingdom in their parish when they return home.

The enthusiasm doesn't wane when they come down from the mountain-top. Regular Group Reunions (similar to cell groups) and local gatherings for worship (Ultreyas) ensure that relationships, with each other and, more importantly, with Christ, are maintained and, indeed, strengthened.

I wholeheartedly commend the Cursillo method to any parish priest who is looking to revitalise the life-blood of their church and its community.”

**Revd Mandy Rhodes  
Team Vicar of Lofthouse in the  
Rothwell, Lofthouse, Methley with Mickletown, Oulton and Woodlesford  
Team and  
Diocesan Spiritual Director for Leeds Anglican Cursillo**

## **“I am among you as one who serves...”**

(Luke 22:27)

**The essence of the Cursillo movement seeks to lead Christians to a deeper relationship with God and help them understand their individual calling to be Christian leaders**

The Goal of Cursillo is ... *“to change the world, to remake the world in Christ, to restore all things to Christ. It has a strategy to structure Christian life and provide a backbone for Christian life in every environment.”*

- Cursillo is a movement within the Anglican Church which can help in the search for what is fundamental in Christian living.
- It is a resource to be used by the Bishop and their clergy for the task of witnessing to the love of Christ. To assist parishes to get on with mission by equipping active parishioners with new orientation and effectiveness.
- Cursillo is designed to help participants convert their Baptism/Confirmation commission into positive apostleship and evangelism; and to produce Christian witnesses who understand the tradition out of which they come and are enabled to put that witness into practice.
- Cursillo is a catalyst for Christian action and has a carefully articulated strategy for the purpose.
- Cursillo provides a common ground for practising Christians to test their faith and plumb its depth; helping to produce Christians empowered by the Holy Spirit with a vision for apostolic action, strengthened through the Scriptures, Prayer, the Sacraments and Community.

**Cursillo is emerging as a mature instrument in the hands of committed clergy and lay Christians to enable the ministry of the laity to be fulfilled.**

*Let them who have ears to hear, let them hear; let them who have eyes to see, let them see ...*

## **WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT CURSILLO**

*“My Cursillo experience was just like changing the TV from black & white to colour. The vision is the same but it is definitely enriched.”*

*“I felt renewed, refreshed, recalibrated, more confident in my faith, more ready to share it others and more receptive to Christ’s Grace.”*

*“To take me away for a short while from the serious world, to have me all to Himself and to remind me that His love is there, that He is still with me and always will be and that now is the time to move forward, to look ahead.”*

*“I will say this much that the time we had in prayer, in meditation and in discussion revealed something of us all, but mainly our commitment to our Lord.”*

The attempt to give a dynamic course in basic Christianity may be a bit overambitious and perhaps naïve; but it works because of the wide variety of those members who staff the weekend who, as part of this presentation of faith, give generously of themselves and their insights into the Christian faith. These are often very moving. Some people are a trifle overwhelmed by the weekend. Participants need a modicum of stamina although usually quite elderly people cope very well.

The effect of the weekend is to give those taking part an experience of Christian living. At its best, Cursillo shows how the Church could become. The weekend gives everyone a very powerful experience of Christian love, and the renewal that often comes about in people’s lives as a result is maintained by ongoing Group Reunions and small groups meeting together to give mutual support and prayer.

A number of parishes in the diocese have begun to experience the benefits of Cursillo: lay people becoming more confident in their faith and able to articulate it and commend it to others.

The Cursillo course is an experience; a personal encounter with God. As a result the “benefits” tend to be as diverse and varied as the course participants themselves.

## **For the individual**

Most of the people attending a course have never before spent three consecutive days in a worshipful environment concentrating upon the things of God. Those who are very good at giving to others often learn in generosity and humility to receive from others; those who have had very difficult times with “love” in some or other of its facets, often catch a glimpse of God’s unconditional love for them. Some other lay members of the church sharing and speaking about their faith in a semi-formal setting, often stimulates and encourages others that they might do likewise, when called. Most leave with a much deeper understanding of their baptism and confirmation promises, leading to a deepening of their faith.

## **For the Individual and the Incumbent**

Cursillo’s main strength lies in the support network that participants are encouraged to join. Here individuals meet together at frequent and regular intervals to share each other’s Christian journey stories, to be uplifted by the good and supported in the bad. To share those things that have been of help in the walk with God. Arguably the most important part of these meetings is to strengthen one’s participation in Christian activity in one’s home, community, work and leisure places.

Those who attend a Leeds Anglican Cursillo weekend are encouraged to earth the practice of their Christian faith in the worship and activities of their own parish church and in their life in the world.

In no way is Cursillo any kind of cult movement nor does it set itself up to rival the ordinary life of the average parish church.

Whilst Cursillo has its origin in the Roman Catholic Church, people of all shades of churchmanship benefit and often begin to develop a wider understanding of the Church. People who seem to get most out of contact with Cursillo are often seasoned church men and women whose vision over a long period of time may have become somewhat dimmed.



## **Role of the Clergy**

In Cursillo, it is essentially the same as it is in the Church generally: i.e. to administer the sacraments, teach, preach and offer pastoral care wherever it is needed.

### 1. The Bishop

Authorises the work of Cursillo in their diocese and appoints a priest to be the Spiritual Director of the movement who serves for a period of three years.

### 2. The Spiritual Director

- a) Liaises with the Lay Officers through their ex-officio post on the governing body.
- b) Invites committed clergy to staff the 3 Day weekend and take part in the periodic diocesan reunions.
- c) Gives support in the widest sense, to the organisers of the various activities of the Cursillo at diocesan level.
- d) Attends national Cursillo meetings whenever and wherever possible.

### 3. Priest fully committed to Cursillo (Spiritual Advisors):

Staff on the 3-Day Weekend which involves help in the training of lay staff, giving talks on specific topics, leading meditations, administering the sacraments and being available to participants and lay staff throughout the weekend.

### 4. Parish Priests:

- a) Be informed about the aims and activities of Cursillo.
- b) Give advice and guidance to prospective participants.
- c) Sign application forms for prospective participants. (Where this is seen as appropriate for them.)
- d) Give encouragement and support to small group reunions within the parish.
- e) Encourage and support the spiritual growth and development of participants following the 3-Day Weekend.

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## **How to become involved in, or informed about Cursillo:**

Ideally, by first being a participant on a 3-Day Weekend, either in this or another diocese.

For further information please contact:

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## **APPENDIX 2**

### **The History of Cursillo**

The Cursillo movement started in Spain at the end of the Civil War in 1939, when a group of young men wanted to organise a pilgrimage to the shrine of St James at Compostella; the purpose of this was to rededicate young people to the Christian life. Study workshops and leadership schools were set up for the spiritual preparation but due to the second world war, the pilgrimage did not take place until 1948. Meanwhile a new Bishop, Juan Hervas, set up the first three day weekend, as we know it, in Majorca in January 1949 with the title of “Cursillos de Cristiandad” (Short courses in Christian living). Originally designed for the restless youth of Spain, they were later expanded to include older and more mature Christian men and women.

The movement spread from Spain throughout the world. Cursillos are now held in nearly all the South and Central American countries, the USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Portugal, France, Germany, Holland, Austria, Italy, Finland, Japan, Korea, Australia, Sri Lanka, South India and many African countries.

Up to 1961 all Cursillos were held in Spanish, but obviously this was not practical, so now only the basic Spanish terminology has been retained. The US was the first to use their own language (English) and as a result, in 1973, 130 out of 160 RC Dioceses had introduced the Cursillo movement and a National Secretariat was established in 1965.

During all this time, many Anglicans in the US were making their Cursillo as guests of their RC brethren until finally, in 1968 in San Francisco, a joint Cursillo was held. From then on Cursillo became an established method of renewal and mission in the Episcopal Church. Modifications were made to fit the Anglican ethos and since 1972 the movement has spread to most dioceses of the Episcopal Church.

In 1981, a team from the Episcopal diocese of Dallas, Texas, came at their own expense to put on a weekend in Wales and one in Gloucestershire. As well as training, they also provided considerable financial support and the wealth of their experience. Cursillo flourished in these two areas and has spread throughout the country to over 40 Anglican dioceses,

Cursillo weekends are part of a developing method, throughout the Anglican and Roman Catholic Communion, for the renewal of the Church.

