



Guidelines for Sponsors

As the Cursillo Movement in the UK continues to grow, more Cursillistas will be led to sponsor another Pilgrim on a Cursillo 'Weekend'. This is a great privilege but also an enormous responsibility. Places on weekends are limited and precious and we are called to play our part in assisting God's choice. Not only are we concerned with introducing others to Cursillo and supporting them in practical ways throughout their Weekend, we are also asking them to make a commitment to their Fourth Day - to meet regularly with fellow Christians (Cursillistas and non-Cursillistas alike!) in group reunions and Ultreyas and so be strengthened to serve others in their families, workplaces and communities (environments) in Jesus' Name. We are all on a pilgrimage together and our aim is to support, affirm and encourage one another in a continuous process of learning and of growth in our Christian discipleship.

A SPONSOR SHOULD:

- Have been a Cursillista for at least 6 months.
- Be regularly involved in Group Reunion, and in attending Ultreyas.
- Be familiar with the goals and methods of Cursillo, as set out in the handbooks;
- Above all, be active in living a Christian life, and a true witness to the love of Christ.
- Know the Pilgrim. Pray for the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- Promote, in the Pilgrim, an attitude of interest and growth.
- Take responsibility for incorporating the (new) friend into a Christian Cursillo community and, in particular, introduce them to regular attendance of the Sponsor's own Fourth Day Group, before the Weekend.

WHEN YOU HAVE A PROSPECTIVE PILGRIM IN MIND:

- Pray for guidance (vital). Sponsorship should never be undertaken lightly and Pilgrims should not be sponsored where the main intention is simply to make up numbers for a weekend. Sponsorship is a loving, prayerful responsibility.
- Invite the potential Pilgrim to your Fourth Day Group meetings.
- Discuss the matter with the Pilgrim, asking them to inform their Priest of their intention to become a Cursillista; if necessary go with them.
- DO NOT proceed against the Priest's advice.
- Should you have concerns about the above, inform the Diocesan Spiritual Director whose advice is binding.
- Help the Pilgrim to understand that the Cursillo Weekend is not an academic course nor a retreat.
- Be completely open and truthfully answer any questions they may have, without reservation. It is imperative that any 'surprises' are not 'secrets' which may unsettle the Pilgrim on their Weekend. There are ways of gently explaining that pleasant surprises are a part of the Cursillo experience but serve only to ensure that the Pilgrim knows they are being supported throughout in God's love and through the love and prayers of many others.

PLEASE REMEMBER, a Cursillo weekend is not designed nor intended to solve personal problems. It is not advisable for a person to attend a Weekend during or close to a personal crisis. It is kinder as a Christian to support your friend during a personal crisis until such time it is right for them to make their Cursillo.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SPONSOR

Pre-Cursillo

- Being a Sponsor AND working on Team for the Weekend is to be discouraged, but if unavoidable, a co-sponsor should be sought, because it would not be possible for you to take your Pilgrim to the venue or take part in services or prayer vigils if you are on Team.
- Sponsors should not sponsor more than two people per Weekend, otherwise this can conflict with responsibilities towards individuals. However, couples may be encouraged to attend a Weekend together, so that the Cursillo experience may be a shared one.

Cursillo Weekend

- The Sponsor should deal with any worries the Pilgrim may have about the house, garden, family or other commitments. Try to include their family in arrangements over the Weekend, but be sensitive to relationships and issues which may arise over faith. Just because the Pilgrim is a practising Christian, don't assume their family members are too; they (or the Pilgrim) may not wish them to attend the Closing Eucharist!
- Ensure that the Pilgrim has arrangements for medical and mobility needs in place for the Weekend and offer to drive them to the venue or make other arrangements as necessary.
- It is essential that the Sponsor sends palanca for their Pilgrim, remembering, above all, that palanca is prayer.
- Sponsors must be at the Closing Eucharist and assist with any final arrangements for the journey home. If this is a problem, they should ensure that another Cursillista (ideally from the Pilgrim's home church) is there to represent them. When a Sponsor signs for a Pilgrim, they become their link with the wider Cursillo Community.

Post-Cursillo

- Contact the new Cursillista within the first day or two so that they are able to share any first impressions.
- Continue to encourage their attendance in your Fourth Day Group; there may be a need to re-group after a Weekend or for the Sponsor to attend two groups for a while until a second one is established.
- Encourage attendance at Ultreyas, particularly the first one after their Weekend.
- Continue to pray for the new Cursillista!

SUPPORT—AFFIRM—ENCOURAGE

Finally, make no assumptions about this new Cursillista who may well be a very mature Christian. Remember Cursillo was not designed to make new Christians, but for inspiring, mobilising and supporting existing Christians. We all come to Cursillo at different stages on our journey of faith, and the joy is that we can all learn from one another.

ULTREYA!