



The British Anglican **Cursillo**[®] Council
®Cursillo Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

What Is Cursillo?

Revised 2018

© British Anglican Cursillo Council 2018

Introduction

These booklets, which form the Resource Manual or Handbook for British Anglican Cursillo (BAC), are revised versions of the original documents gifted to BAC from the Episcopal Church of the USA in 1989. In the early to mid-2000s and again in 2013/4 They had been revised for basic differences between the American ways of doing things and for language alterations, but it became apparent that the booklets were not being read or used effectively by Diocesan Cursillo.

This major revision and rewording of the booklets was made by a group of experienced Cursillistas in 2017/8 and is intended for use by Diocesan Cursillo in order to explain and guide such groups in the practicalities and use of the Cursillo method. We believe that this reflects best practice.

In line with recent legal requirements there are also attached Guidelines and Policy Documents, particularly in regard to safeguarding, insurance and financial matters.

It is recommended that any future reviews of these booklets refer back to the original documents received from the Episcopal Church of the USA (ECUSA), copies of which should be held by the BAC President.

February 2018

Cursillo is 'A movement of the Church providing a method by which Christians are empowered to grow through prayer, study and action and enabled to share God's love with everyone.'

What Is Cursillo?

The purpose of this booklet is to provide an overview of authentic Cursillo. It is intended both for those who are already acquainted with Cursillo and those enquiring into it. The word Cursillo (pronounced coor-see-oh) comes from the Spanish and means “a short course”. Its full title ‘Cursillos in Cristiandad’ is translated as ‘short courses in Christian living’.

A Brief History

Following the Spanish Civil War at the end of the 1930’s a pilgrimage to the shrine of St James in Compostela was arranged to encourage the Christian faith in young people and help change their damaged society to one that was fully centred on Christ.

Leaders of the pilgrimage in Mallorca were prepared through short courses, meeting together, and sharing with each other. This aimed to improve their knowledge of faith, and living it out effectively to facilitate the organisation and success of the pilgrimage.

One of the leaders, [Eduardo Bonnin](#), was passionate with the idea of the Cursillo. With help he developed a three-day Cursillo structure which aimed to remedy the ‘ignorance of faith, the superficiality of ritualism and the apathy of non-faith commitment in daily life’. This idea has since spread across the world and is active in most of Europe and the Americas, as well as parts of Africa, India and Australasia.

The Cursillo Weekends

A Cursillo weekend is three days long, normally running from Thursday evening through to Sunday afternoon. All weekends are led by a team of lay people and clergy in shared roles, who have all experienced a Cursillo weekend themselves.

Generally, participants on a weekend are invited to attend by an existing Cursillista who becomes their 'sponsor'.

Cursillo is for you if:

- You are already a committed believer, **but** sometimes think '*there must be more to Christian life than this*'
- You read and listen to the Scriptures and you pray **but** you long for energising grace.
- You are part of a church community **but** you wish it were more alive with the joy of Christ.
- You long to serve Christ in speech and action in the world **but** you need the confidence to find the way.

During the weekend the participants (Cursillistas) will live, worship and learn together. Talks will be given by the leaders on some of the main areas of Christian life and faith. These areas will also be discussed in groups, alongside worship, prayer and quiet reflection times.

There is more information about the weekend in the booklet 'The Authentic Three-Day Weekend'.

What do I get out of the Weekend?

A Cursillo weekend attempts to help Christians to:

- measure the depths of their faith to find its reality and richness
- inspire Christians to get on with their mission in the world by hearing and heeding God's call
- bring a strengthening of Christian commitment

- provide an opportunity to discover our personal gifts and use them for Christian service and leadership
- enable participants to become witnesses for the Church so that it may be renewed and transformed.

What does Cursillo offer YOU?

- A stronger faith and a deeper experience of God's presence and purpose
- A lively sense of the Christian community and of prayer
- The confidence to seek to serve the people of God and with his help to intervene for good in the environment in which you live and work.

What happens after the Weekend?

Following the weekend, Group Reunions are held to maintain encouragement and support to the Cursillistas. Area and Diocesan wide meetings (Ultreyas) are held regularly when there is an opportunity to meet others who have shared in the Cursillo experience. National Ultreyas are held annually, usually in a Cathedral.

The Group Reunions offer a method to strengthen our life in prayer, study and action and help us to follow a 'Rule of Life' which we commit to.

Cursillistas are also encouraged to find a 'Spiritual Director', a person who has experience and maturity in following a life with Christ, to help guide and pray for the Cursillista during their spiritual journey.

You will find further information and a glossary in other booklets in this resource manual.

