



The British Anglican Cursillo[®] Council

[®]Cursillo Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.

Health and Well-being of the Movement

Revised 2018

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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.

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The Health and Wellbeing of the Movement

The Cursillo Movement is a valuable tool in the lives of many individuals, parishes, and dioceses of the Anglican/Episcopal Church. It offers a resource for the renewal and refocusing of faith and action and, as such, is widely perceived as an instrument whereby Christ can be known and served in an effective manner.

Unfortunately the movement can falter if the **authentic Cursillo** method is not adhered to. This booklet identifies some problems which can arise in Dioceses, and suggests some remedial actions.

PROBLEM ONE - Loss of Vision

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

When movements lose sight of their purpose they can be seduced into other paths or focuses.

Cursillo is a movement and a method that has three distinct phases: the Pre-Cursillo, the Three-day Weekend, and the Post-Cursillo (Fourth Day)

Some of the inherent dangers are:

‘Weekenditis’ — “putting on weekends” without also developing a Fourth Day programme;
using it for limited purposes: for example, to build up parochial or diocesan programmes;

treating Cursillo as if it were applicable to all the tasks of the Church instead of as a specific tool for a specific task; allowing Cursillo to take the place of the Church instead of recognizing it as only a part of the whole life of the Church; using Cursillo as a panacea for all the problems or limitations people may have.

REMEDY & RECOMMENDATIONS

The simple remedy would seem to be:

Get back to basics - there is a wealth of information to help you in the booklets.

Three recommendations are:-

- Secretariat or Servant Community “away days”
- Days of Deeper Understanding (see DDU booklet)
- CLWs - attendance and in-depth feedback to Diocesan Cursillos - every 3 to 5 years. (See CLW booklet)

PROBLEM TWO - Inappropriate Sponsorship

Problems readily arise when those who have experienced a Cursillo 3-Day weekend have enjoyed such a stimulating weekend, that they wish to Sponsor others to have a similar experience; disregarding whether those persons are in a suitable frame of mind to become participants. Those who are about to Sponsor a participant must have the purpose of the movement clearly in their minds. .

The **goal of Cursillo** is to make Christians who are, or can become, leaders into vital, inspired witnesses for Christ. Through

the Pre-Cursillo phase we seek out those who are in positions of influence within different environments and then, through the Three-day Weekends and the Fourth Day programme, provide them with the tools and the support system necessary to enable them to change their world for Christ. Ideal candidates are, therefore, natural leaders who have a capacity and opportunity to change their environments.

Cursillo Weekends are not periods during which problems can be solved for those attending. **Sponsors should be extremely vigilant** that they do not invite anyone to a 3-Day weekend who is either suffering a life-crisis of some kind or who is bereaved, or indeed, has a current mental illness issue. Such misplaced compassion by the Sponsor can lead to a crisis for both the participant and the weekend team. Prior to anyone being invited to take part in a Cursillo Weekend, prospective Sponsors should discretely approach that person's Priest or someone in leadership in pastoral ministry to ask if there is any reason as to why they should not be asked to attend at that time.

REMEDY

Reference to the BACC booklet in the Resource Manual "**Sponsorship**" is recommended.

PROBLEM 3 - Inappropriate selection of team members

Poor selection can manifest in the temptation to select friends, or other agreeable or likeable persons/for service on the team. Over- familiarity between team members can easily force a 'divide' within the team.

REMEDY

Persons for the teams should be selected with great prayer and for specific tasks. They should also possess requisite experience, skills or temperaments for those tasks.

See “Weekend Team Formation” for further details.

PROBLEM 4 - Emphasis on extraneous resources.

The team has problems when it allows extraneous material to become more important than the authentic message of the Cursillo.

The Authentic Cursillo weekend must have five meditations and fifteen talks—anything else may be added, but only with due consideration to their impact.

REMEDY

Back to basics. *See the booklet “The Authentic 3-day Weekend”*

PROBLEM 5 - Cursillo is perceived as a ‘cult’

The weekend is often wrongly presented in terms of:

"Make a friend, be a friend, bring your friend to Cursillo."
rather than "Make a friend, be a friend, bring your friend to Christ."

This sells the **movement** rather than the **Faith**; the weekend is designed to prepare Christian leaders to return to their own environments and to change them for Christ—not to create the Church of Cursillo.

REMEDY

- Remember that the Cursillo Weekend is a course on basic Christianity and discipleship.
- Understand that the Cursillo method is a support system for Christian Living
- Remember that the Cursillista is called to minister in the whole of his or her Fourth Day.
- Understand that Group Reunions should happily accept non-Cursillistas -
- As people come away from their Cursillo Weekend they must be linked up with others in Group Reunions and participate in Ultreya on both a parochial, area, and diocesan level. This is the task of both sponsors and the Secretariat.

PROBLEM 6 - Concern over levels of fourth day involvement

In many local movements literally hundreds of people make their Cursillo, but not all are active in the Fourth Day. This can cause concern and unease about the health of the organisation. The total number of Cursillistas might be divided as follows:

- those who are deeply involved;
- those who are somewhat involved;
- those who are not involved, but who are putting into practice what they learned through the Cursillo;
- those who are not involved and are not practising any aspect of the Cursillo Method.

REMEDY

In any organization there is always a core group of those who

are deeply committed, there are those only partially committed; there are those on the fringe and beyond. Cursillo is not for everyone. We need to recognize this. There are many who will walk away from the Weekend and never again be seen at a Cursillo event. They may, however, be bearing fruit quietly and unobtrusively - flourishing where they are planted.

- Secretariat should look at their communication methods and their effectiveness in reaching more Cursillistas.
- All Members should be encouraged to staff—this is healthy! Reach out to those who are flourishing as well as those who aren't.
- Try to work with different people, not the 'same old bunch'.
- Remember 'distant' people in your prayers as well as those who are engaged.
- Palanca can be used to move those who have grown cold.
- Accept criticism with good grace and don't become discouraged by it - use it to grow and develop.
- People will offer what they can—accept their offer gracefully—no judgments.

If there are any problems that arise that seem insurmountable, please feel free to contact BACC - we may not have an instant answer, but we will help in whatever way we can.

