

Updates Recommended by Sponsorship Team

OACM Secretariat Handbook

October 2023

6. SPONSORSHIP

6.1. General

Cursillo is a movement with a method – a method of living a life in Christ - a method of supporting and encouraging each other through prayer, and in planned individual and joint action in order to change the world for Christ. It is essential to remember that Cursillo is a movement whose primary foundation is the grace of God. Cursillo's most characteristic mark is "Palanca," that is, prayer, sacrifice, and works of mercy.

Perhaps one of the most important things to understand about Cursillo is the sponsoring of candidates. In the Cursillo movement, we must choose people after due thought and prayer have been given to the key environments in which they live. Potential candidates should be well known by the sponsor and should not be isolated in their environments.

Who are these potential candidates? They are men and women with stable personalities who are interested in spiritual growth and open to the challenge of the Cursillo method. For **married** couples, it is desirable that both partners attend a Cursillo weekend. Some people should probably not become involved at particular times in their lives. These include those who do not match the descriptions above. Others who should wait to become involved are those who have serious health or addiction problems, who have recently gone through a crisis that would prevent them from concentrating on the message of the weekend, or do not regard themselves as Christian believers.

Great care is needed in sponsoring. Some Cursillistas tend to believe that Cursillo is the answer for everyone. While it is true that everyone has the right to come to a full Christian life, Cursillo may not be the best means for every person. The Cursillo method has specific demands and requires concrete conditions for its effectiveness. It is not necessary or desirable for every Christian to follow the same path. Discernment in choosing a suitable candidate for Cursillo may take time. It takes time to become a friend and bring that friend to Christ.

6.1.1. Secretariat Role in Sponsorship

Secretariat shall support and guide sponsors in choosing potential candidates by:

- Providing sponsorship workshops (through Servant Community or Day of Deeper Understanding), and recommend or require attendance prior to sponsoring a candidate.
- Providing written guidelines or checklists for sponsors, outlining their sponsorship responsibilities (*see* form for trifold at Appendix L1).

- Providing of sponsorship forms which are completed by the sponsor, and accompany the candidate's application.
- Commissioning at the Send-off.
- Having sign-up sheets available at Ultreyas to match up ~~new~~ Cursillistas seeking a permanent Group Reunion, with groups available for new members.

6.2. Steps for Sponsoring a Candidate

Sponsorship must be taken seriously. The sponsor may be the candidate's first link with Cursillo. He/she is responsible not only for introducing the candidate to Cursillo, assisting him/her getting on a weekend, to the weekend and home again, but also for assisting the new Cursillista in becoming part of a Group Reunion, finding and accompanying him/her to the Welcoming, and assisting them in finding and becoming a member of a local Ultreya. The sponsor's role may last a year or more after the weekend if he/she is taking the role seriously.

1. "Before speaking to a person about God, we should speak to God about that person". It is important that those who come into the movement come in with their eyes open to the social environments surrounding them. Otherwise, they may seek only solutions to their personal needs. We must remember not to use Cursillo to add individuals to the movement, but rather to transform environments. The most appropriate persons are those who are able to understand the truth of the Gospel, wish to do so, and are able to help others understand it.
2. Once the sponsor has decided that to the best of his/her knowledge this person would benefit from and contribute to a Cursillo weekend, is physically able, emotionally stable and free from substance abuse problems he/she should contact the individual's Parish priest (worshipping community minister if non-Anglican) for his/her recommendation using the Sponsor Form at Appendix L2.
3. Once this initial screening has been completed the possible candidate may be approached through personal contact. **The sponsor should explain the purpose and process of the entire method.** This includes the weekend, the nature and importance of the Fourth Day, and the support available in the Fourth Day through Group Reunions and Ultreya. It is recommended that Sponsors should be in permanent group reunions and attending Ultreyas. It is appropriate for sponsors to consider inviting potential candidates to join their group reunion and attend Ultreyas before making a weekend. Of greatest importance is the prospective candidate's understanding of the purpose and method of the Cursillo movement. A potential candidate must be told:

- Something about the talks and about the dynamics of the weekend. Any surprise elements need not be mentioned and the person will probably not ask about them. However, there are no secrets if they should ask.
- Costs of the weekend. There is no financial cost for a candidate to participate in a weekend; all weekends are prepaid under the "Gift of Love" program; the weekend is a gift from the Cursillo Community. The candidate will have an opportunity to make a donation to pay forward this Gift of Love so that ~~that~~ others may attend future weekends. Tax receipts are issued for all Gift of Love donations.
- -Sponsors are not required to cover the cost of the weekend for their candidates; however, donations are welcome. Remember to emphasize the Gift of Love approach!

- Great care should be taken to explain the challenge of the Fourth Day. Invite the person to a Fourth Day experience, rather than a weekend experience!
4. Once screening has been completed, and the individual has expressed an interest in attending a weekend the Sponsor Form and Participants Application Form at Appendix L2 may be completed and forwarded to the ~~Registrar~~ (Pre-Cursillo Coordinator): (Registrar). Applications are considered for Cursillo in the order they are received, if fully completed and signed. If the spaces on the next weekend have been filled, the name will be kept on file for an upcoming weekend. The Pre-Cursillo Coordinator will contact the Sponsor when there is a place available on a weekend. The Sponsor will then contact the candidate and also pass along any other information that they may require.

6.3. Sponsor's Responsibility for the Weekend

On the weekend the Sponsor should arrange to take the candidate to the weekend site, attend the Mañanita, and the Closing, and arrange for Palanca for his/her candidate. The Sponsor may also assist the candidate by offering to help with family, babysitting, pets, etc., while the candidate is away. In the case of a couple, the Sponsor might contact the spouse left at home over the weekend and perhaps invite that person for dinner or other fellowship, and ensure that the spouse (if a Cursillista) has the opportunity to attend the Mañanita and Closing. It is the Sponsor's responsibility to take the candidate (and family) home after the weekend.

6.4. Sponsor's Fourth Day Role

There is a saying in Cursillo: *"Once a sponsor, always a sponsor!"* Sponsorship lasts longer than the weekend. A commitment of one year is encouraged, starting six months before a weekend and ending six months after a weekend. The sponsor must:

- Contact the candidate the day following the Cursillo.
- Accompany the new Cursillista to the Welcoming.
- Accompany the new Cursillista to a DoDU.
- Help the new Cursillista to become part of a Group Reunion.
- Accompany the new person to Ultreyas, offering transportation if needed.
- Support the new Cursillista in the Fourth Day with continued prayer.

Add Gift of Love Description

4.2.2 Weekends

4.2.2.1 Authentic ~~Three-Day~~Cursillo Weekends /Gift of Love Program

The major expense of the movement is the cost of weekends, and to put the cost of attending a weekend on a level footing for all, all weekends are prepaid under the “Gift of Love” program. Each weekend is thus a “gift” to the weekend participants from the Cursillo Community. Cursillistas may make donations to this program at any time. At the end of a weekend, candidates and team are encouraged to make a contribution to “pay forward”~~repay the this~~ Gift of Love so that others may attend future weekends. Tax receipts are issued for all Gift of Love donations.

In order to continue the Gift of Love program, and maintain charitable status, OACM needs to maintain a bank balance of at least the amount of the current cost of the number of weekends planned for a year. Should the bank balance fall below the amount required to pre-pay a weekend, candidates and team must be charged and pay the full cost of the weekend. In this situation, Only any amount contributed in excess of the actual cost of the weekend may be receipted for income tax purposes. The Secretariat will determine the cost of every weekend based on actual costs directly associated with conducting the weekend.

Add “Gift of Love” Term to Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

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