

# 2024-25 NH Cursillo Apostolic Plan

## Introduction:

The official name of Cursillo is *Cursillos de Christianidad*, or Short Course in Christianity. The first Cursillo weekend in NH was held in July, 1964 at St. Anselm College and continues to hold weekends at various locations around the state of NH, usually four times a year (2 Men's weekends and 2 Women's weekends). At this writing we held our NH Cursillo # 325 and #326 at Camp Sentinel in Tuftonborough, NH in March/April and we are having 2 weekends in the Spring, 2025. Over 11,000 people have experienced Cursillo in NH. What a wonderful gift for those of us who have lived Cursillo!

## Mission Statement

In the Gospel of Matthew 28:15 and Mark 16:15, Jesus Christ clearly instructs His disciples to, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." Our founder, Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló took this to heart and was graced with the charism to go out to the world and preach the Good News. Over the past 80 years world-wide, this has been done through the apostolate of Cursillo which states, "To communicate the best news of the best reality: that God, in Jesus Christ, loves us; communicated by the best means, which is friendship; and directed towards the best of each one; which is the person, and his/her capacity of conviction, decision, and constancy." (Articles of Operation, November 2019)

## Vision Statement

Through the various phases of the Cursillo Method, as covered in this plan, we hope "to facilitate the living and sharing of what is fundamental to being Christian through the discovery of three fundamental encounters: with oneself, Christ, and others." (Articles of Operation, November 2019) By knowing ourselves more fully we can actualize into the Christian disciple Jesus Christ calls us to be. By loving God above all else and our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-39), we fulfill our true nature as God intended for each of us.

## Discovering the Essence of our Goals and the Method

"Cursillo in Christianity is a Movement which, by its own Method, attempts from within the Church, to give life to the essential Christian truths in the singularity, originality and creativity of the person." (National Cursillo website-<https://www.natl-cursillo.org/what-is-cursillo/>) The method helps to create communities of Christians who are interested in bringing the Good News to their environments as they grow and become authentic Christians themselves. This goal is accomplished by the Cursillo Method of fostering Piety, Study and Action through the various groups and structures of the Movement.

With the 2024-2025 Apostolic Plan that follows, we aspire to strengthen the Cursillo Movement in the diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire. In the aftermath of Covid-19, which essentially shut down community gatherings for activities, we will:

- Reach out to those who have lived Cursillo, and help them review the essence of Cursillo, the charism, and re-evaluate their evangelistic mission and goals.
- Continue to strengthen our commitment to and fellowship with the National and Regional Cursillo Movements.
- Continue to provide authentic Cursillo weekends and follow-up programs.
- Re-establish a School of Leaders for the NH Cursillo Movement and Ultreyas around the diocese.
- Remind potential sponsors of their apostolate to “Make a Friend, Be a Friend, and Bring a Friend to Christ,” to be true to this method, and not see sending a candidate to a weekend as the only purpose/goal.
- Reinforce the Method by encouraging Piety, Study, and Action via Small Group Reunions and Ultreya attendance.

## Groups and Structures of the Cursillo Movement and Method

### Pre-Cursillo

**Purpose:** The Pre-Cursillo phase is vital for the evangelizing effectiveness of the Method. It is an essential phase that encourages and prepares the person, through an offer of friendship, for an encounter with self, Christ, and others on the Cursillo Weekend experience, so that the person might live a new life according to this triple encounter, which continues in the Post-Cursillo. (Articles of Operation, November 2019)

**Objectives:** As our founder, Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló espoused in the charism of friendship of Cursillo, Cursillistas seek out people in their natural environments, or “moveable square meters,” to authentically befriend people, especially leaders of various types in their environments, so that these friends may share in the joy of being in friendship with Jesus Christ, and thus, evangelize (or Christianize) their environments.

Through this friendship, Cursillistas may invite these friends to experience Small Group Reunions and Ultreya before attending a Three-Day weekend, as well as other social gatherings to deepen their friendships.

### Actions:

1. An annual review for Cursillistas on the charism of friendship and the importance of befriending people, especially new Cursillistas, is a great reminder of our apostolate.
2. Assist potential sponsors to understand the scope of their responsibilities in the Pre-Cursillo phase.
3. Monthly attendance at School of Leaders sessions centering on topics relating to ways to evangelize environments, the charism of friendship, and our founder’s vision and history of Cursillo will reinforce our apostolate and the Pre-Cursillo phase.

## The Three-Day Cursillo Weekend

**Purpose:** The Cursillo Three-Day Weekend is a short course in Christianity. It is a specific and concrete form of kerygmatic evangelizing activity, described as the “jubilant communication of being Christian,” in which the living and sharing of what is fundamental to being Christian is encouraged, a profound personal experience that can determine a new orientation of the life of the person. (Articles of Operation, November 2019).

The purpose of the weekend is to facilitate an encounter with Christ to experience a full and progressive renewal of baptismal commitments. The focus of the weekend is initially the individual’s relationship with Christ, then the development of the Christian ideal, and finally the application of this ideal to their environment. The 3-day weekend is also the bridge connecting the Pre-Cursillo phase with the supportive Post-Cursillo community.

**Objectives:** During the course of the 3-Day cloistered weekend, participants (or new Cursillistas) hear a series of fifteen talks (rollos), ten of which are lay-oriented and five are spiritual-oriented, as well as daily meditations. Each day has a theme: 1. Encounter of self to examine who the person is at that stage of life, 2. Encounter with Christ to more fully understand how God’s grace is operating in one’s life, and 3. Encounter with Others so that upon returning to the natural environments the person will be able to engage others in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.

During the weekend, small groups are formed so that the participants will experience an activity (Small Group reunion) that is encouraged to continue in their “Fourth Day” (definition below)

During the weekend, new friendships may be made so that they will be able to share the Catholic Faith in a comfortable setting, thus assisting them to continue these friendships after the weekend.

### **Actions:**

1. Promote Cursillo more visibly throughout the diocese of Manchester, NH through various forms of communication, but especially through personal invitation of present Cursillistas, since a sponsor must invite a person to live a Cursillo weekend.
2. Help potential sponsors clearly understand the commitment involved in sponsoring someone, not just on a weekend, but in their Fourth Day journey, as well.
3. Inform pastors and parish communities what Cursillo’s mission and charism is: a vehicle for true conversion through friendships.

**\*\*“The Fourth Day”:** A term used to describe the remainder of a Cursillista’s life after living a Cursillo weekend

## Post-Cursillo

**Purpose:** The Post-Cursillo is an essential phase to enable each person to live constantly what they have experienced during the Three-Day Cursillo (what is fundamental to being Christian), by means of a process of a conscious, growing, and shared conversion. By being Christian and

Church in the world, the person transforms and renews this world from within according to God's plan (Articles of Operation, November 2019)

**Objective:** The \*Fourth Day is vital to the continuation of spiritual growth for each Cursillista. Our founder, Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló, developed these post-weekend activities in the hope that Cursillistas will seek out support and inspiration to continue their spiritual journey to Jesus Christ. By loving Christ more intimately, in knowledge and practice, and by bringing the Good News to their natural environments, the world will be transformed.

- **Ultreya**

**Purpose:** "Ultreya" is the word that many Spanish people have used while on pilgrimage on the Camino to Santiago de Compostela to encourage them to complete the challenging cross-country pilgrimage. It is Spanish for "Onward." The purpose of the Ultreya is to build unity and perseverance in the community through the sharing of Piety, Study and Action, followed by witnessing and discussion.

**Objective:** The Ultreya provides a place for new Cursillistas to make friendships, and to join or form Group Reunions. Ultreyas are regularly held in several NH communities. State-wide Ultreyas are held annually to bring all the NH communities together, as well as a State-wide Mass. Ultreyas are open to all. The number of Pre-Covid Ultreyas held throughout the dioceses of NH was 14. We presently have 4 active Ultreyas, but are hoping to re-establish all former and hopefully, new Ultreyas in the diocese.

**Actions:**

1. Enlist the help of a Fourth Day Coordinator to assist communities in establishing Ultreyas around the diocese of NH
2. Coordinator will oversee other Fourth Day activities, such as an annual State-wide Ultreya and Mass, and other social events to gather the community in the spirit of friendship.

- **Group Reunion**

**Purpose:** Group reunions support the Cursillistas in their Christian life. They are the cornerstone of the Cursillo Method. Each member assumes both responsibility and encouragement for each other for the purpose of being held accountable, and supporting new ideas, in living the Cursillo Method. Since Cursillistas are expected to "Preach the Gospel daily, using words, when necessary," we can only remain focused and authentic if others are encouraging, supportive, and collaborating/sharing our efforts.

**Objective:** Using the tools of Piety, Study, Action, and closest moments to Christ, individuals report back to their group on successes and failures, and thus, grow together as leaven in their environments. Sharing of ideas also promotes individual growth in areas not considered beforehand.

### **Actions:**

1. Encourage sponsors to help their new Cursillistas to establish or join a small group. With new technology abounding, there are many ways for people to “gather” online or in person to share their journeys.
2. Emphasize the use of the Group Reunion sheet that was given to them during the *Total Security* rollo on the Three-Day weekend as the proper format for a Group Reunion. This time together should not have another format, such as Lektion Divina or Bible/Book study.

### • **School of Leaders**

**Purpose:** The School of Leaders is the gathering or reunion of leaders, that illuminates, encourages, and relieves our restlessness with the best means possible: friendship. It is the place where leaders are in tune with the same spirit, following a common criterion, and where our apostolic nature is spontaneous. It is not preached, but lived together, and it is where the truth is foremost because we all desire it, and we all live it.” (Structure of Ideas)

**Objective:** School of Leaders should meet on a regular basis (usually monthly, but can meet more often, if desired) at a regular location to present teachings and ideas for Cursillistas to continue their growth in the study of the Cursillo Movement and their spiritual formation.

### **Actions:**

1. Enlist the help of a new School of Leaders Coordinator so that we can have regular meetings again.
2. Help Cursillistas understand that they are all uniquely leaders and can effect change in their environments in multiple ways, so they should be encouraged to attend SOL. Leaders are not just “top of the chain” folks.
3. Ideally, selection for Teams and Secretariat should come from SOL participants.
4. Find a central location to consistently have School of Leaders meetings at a consistent time.

### **Secretariat**

**Purpose:** “The Diocesan Secretariat is a group of leaders who are responsible for the proper functioning of the School of Leaders and the whole Movement in a diocese. It ensures that the School fulfills what it is commissioned to do in each of its essential phases of the Movement; the Precursillo, Cursillo Weekend, and Postcursillo. It ensures unity in the message and the freedom of the Cursillistas.” (Leaders Manual)

**Objective:** Cursillos de Christianidad is a worldwide Movement that uses certain organizational elements that are needed for it to function and achieve its purpose. Working with laity and clergy, the NH Cursillo Movement seeks to fulfill its purpose and service to the whole Movement. The Secretariat gives life to the organizational forms and accelerates the total work of the Movement in all its three phases. Authority to do so comes from the local Bishop who charges the Secretariat to implement the Movement properly according to norm and guidelines established by the National Secretariat. (Leaders Manual)

## **Actions:**

- The Secretariat for NH Cursillo is undergoing many changes in board members, and thus should familiarize themselves with Cursillo literature, as well as develop and carry out an Apostolic Plan for the Movement in the diocese of Manchester, NH.
- Members of the Secretariat should come from the School of Leaders who have demonstrated ability and understanding of the Method.
- The Secretariat should have a small Group Reunion element to its meetings.
- The Secretariat will submit an annual report and Apostolic Plan to the Bishop of the diocese of Manchester, NH, the National Secretariat and Region 1 Secretariat.

## **2024 Secretariat (as of August, 2024)**

Diocesan Coordinator	Claudette Dachowski	(603) 498-0977
Asst. Diocesan Coordinator	(tbd in year 3 of DC's term)	
Secretary	Bobby-Jo Lafreniere	(603) 858-2777
Treasurer	Sandra Hauser	(603) 707-1474
Pre-Cursillo Coordinator	Michelle Pisacane	(603) 321-7948
3 Day Weekend Coordinator	(tbd)	
Post-Cursillo Coordinator	(tbd)	
School of Leaders Coordinator	(tbd)	
Technology Coordinator	Robert Dachowski	(603) 305-9508
Spiritual Advisor	Rev Christopher Martel	(603) 622-4966
Palanca Coordinator	Christine L Hamann	(603) 312-7601

## **Permanent Goals**

- Remain authentic in the Cursillo charism as expressed by the Cursillo Movement's founder, Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló, as expressed in *My Spiritual Testament* (2009) and other writings.
- Build upon the existing Cursillo community to increase the living Body of Christ in NH by promoting the Cursillo method of living a fully authentic Christian life.
- Abide in the Grace of Christ, His Church, and its Diocesan Pastor.

## **Short Term Goals**

- Appoint members to the open positions on the Secretariat to be a fully functioning board.
- Re-establish and support Ultreyas throughout NH through personal contact, and infusion of new Cursillistas.
- Introduce new social activities for the community to gather and grow in friendships.

- Encourage more Cursillista deacons to invite brother deacons to experience Cursillo weekends so that we can expand our diaconate presence on subsequent weekends (since our active number of Cursillo priests is diminishing).
- Encourage our Cursillista priests to invite brother priests to experience Cursillo weekends so that we can expand our priestly presence on subsequent weekends.
- Utilize technology to enhance/augment (not replace) and maintain the NH Cursillo website for the communication of diocesan/regional/national events, meetings, and activities.

## Long Term Goals

- Continue growth in the School of Leaders, giving preferential team and Secretariat selection for SOL participants.
- Continue to grow the Movement throughout the diocese of Manchester, NH by concentrating on the Ultreyas and School of Leaders.
- Introduce the NH Diocese clergy, and perhaps, seminarians, to the purpose of the Cursillo Movement, and help integrate the Movement into Parish life.
- Invite younger and newer Priests (and seminarians) to Cursillo weekends.
- Continue to provide opportunities for growth and deeper knowledge of the Cursillo Movement and discipleship in Jesus Christ.

## Bibliography Resources:

- National Cursillo Articles of Operation, November 2019
- *Cursillo Leaders Manual*. National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement in the USA, May 2003
- *Structures of Ideas*. National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement in the USA, 2007
- National Cursillo website- What is Cursillo? <https://www.natl-cursillo.org/what-is-cursillo/>

Respectfully submitted by the NH Cursillo Secretariat,



Claudette Dachowski- NH Cursillo Diocesan Coordinator

October 30, 2024