

THE ROLE OF THE ROLLO ROOM TEAM

Our real purpose as a team is to:

1. Give the Weekenders an experience in community living
2. Let the Weekenders know through us what it means to be loved by God.

Our obligation as team members then is to learn to know the Weekenders and to show them that we love them – exactly as they are – and the work begins when the first Weekender arrives on Thursday night and continues throughout the Weekend; not just at the tables during the talks and discussions but at meal times, in the dorm rooms, in the hallways during the breaks – constantly.

The Cursillo is for the Weekenders – not the team members. The team is the core in forming Christian community during the three days.

Your work begins immediately on Thursday night. The role of the team member is to talk to the Weekenders create a welcoming atmosphere and draw them into the group. Make them feel like this is a good place to be. This starts in small ways helping them find their beds, getting their coffee, and so forth – in any small way without making it obvious that you are running anything. Let the Weekenders know that you are excited about being there and that you are glad they are there. If they express fear or apprehension, let them know that you understand because you probably experienced similar feelings on the Thursday night of your Cursillo. Assure them that it will be a pleasant weekend, that this is a nice group of people and just to relax. During the social, make sure there are not three or four team members talking to two Weekenders. If you find yourself in such a group, tactfully excuse yourself and seek out some other Weekenders.

During the introductions and always during the three days, don't sit with other team members – spread yourselves out.

During the three days the team members are always the leaders – take the lead in answering the bell promptly, singing etc. Especially on Thursday night set an example during the silent retreat do not be talking amongst yourselves. During Rollo's set an example by taking notes.

During the dialogue homilies on Saturday and Sunday give the Weekenders a chance to respond first. If there is no response, a team member might say something and then again allow the Weekenders a chance to speak. The point is that if all of the team members are jumping in quickly, this allows little opportunity for the Weekenders to participate.

For the first Rollo on Friday, one of the team members will lead the discussion, and one will be the secretary, after that choose a secretary and a leader from the Weekenders. The secret of leading the table discussion is just that – to lead not to dominate. Your chief duty is to involve all of the members of the group in the discussion. You are not expected to be a teacher or an expert. You must respect each individual in the group even if you privately disagree with their views. You should refrain from forcing anyone to change their views. Ask for their opinions and respect their opinions. It isn't necessary for the group to reach complete agreement on all questions; the purpose of the discussions is to make the Weekenders think. The team members should tactfully keep the discussion on track avoiding tangents.

Team members should get to know the members of their tables first and then branch out and get to know others. As mentioned before, this goes on continually during the three days, wherever you find yourself. One of the most important times we can get to know the Weekenders is in the Snack Room after hours. It is important for the clergy to participate too because it gives the Weekenders a chance to see them in a more relaxed atmosphere and to see them as being very human. It is a time when we all really can relax and have a good time; also there is more time to talk to the Weekenders then, than at any other time during the three days. Remember the 4th Day teams have to clean up in the Rollo Room and deliver palanca etc so keep out of their way and do not stay up too late.

If you are asked if you are a team member be honest and tell them yes. Be sincere and honest in all of your contacts with the Weekenders. Be friendly and open and don't be afraid to be human. Let them see your weaknesses and your

strengths, share yourselves with them. Most people cannot relate to a saint but they can relate to someone who is striving to become one and trying to live a Christian life.

Never leave a Weekender standing or sitting alone. Seek out the shy person. Listen intently when a Weekender is talking to you; don't be looking across the room so that they get the feeling you would rather be with someone else. Don't try to counsel a Weekender, be a good listener. Don't be little or minimize their problems; it may not seem like a problem to you but let him know by your response that you are understanding and sympathetic. If there is a problem which require advice or counseling you might suggest they visit with a clergy and set up a meeting, but never force. Perhaps you might suggest going to the chapel to pray together.

If you are talking with a Weekender when the bell rings – perhaps they are pouring their heart out to you – respond to the bell but not without making plans to continue the conversation at a specific time later that day. Be sure to keep the plans you make to see them.

Team members should never discuss Weekenders among themselves. If someone tells you about a problem you may want to tell your table partner so that you both will be more aware and sensitive of them. In some cases, you should make the Rector(a) or the clergy aware of the problem.

If a Weekender asks what time it is or what is going to happen next, just say that the Rector is the timekeeper and that he/she has a schedule. For this weekend we can just forget about time and relax.

Never say something like 'just wait until you hear the next talk' or cause them to anticipate. This can cause disappointment and prevent the Weekender from getting the point of the talk or whatever is going to happen next. Be on guard about mentioning anything to a Weekender about the serenade or the closing.

During Chapel Visits, we never want the Weekenders to feel like they are being forced to pray. It is the responsibility of the team member to immediately set the tone of the visit and put the Weekenders at ease. Perhaps the team member who begins the prayers might say something like "Lord, we come to talk to you, each in our own way; sometime we find it difficult to say what is in our hearts but we know that that is not important because You already know".

Do not worry or fret about how people are going to react to you and about how you are feeling, but relax, be open and natural; concentrate on being sensitive to, and aware of the Weekenders and their needs. Probably the most important thing to be said is that team members should relax and be themselves, and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

HISTORY OF CURSILLO

Cursillo in Christianity began on the Spanish Island of Majorca in the early 1940s. The Diocesan Council of Catholic Action Youth devised a Cursillo or “short course” for the spiritual preparation of those making the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela – The Advanced Pilgrims – and this was followed by the Cursillo of Pilgrimage Leaders. The results of these Cursillo were astounding. Even those living on the edge of Christianity were inflamed and filled with Christ. This zeal was apparent not only during the pilgrimage but also after their return. An apostolate was created.

A Leader’s School of the Diocesan Council went into operation to collect data on these early Cursillo, to analyze results and make detailed experiments with this method. From these studies, the forerunner of the present Cursillo was devised. The first Cursillo was given on January 7, 1948 and by March of 1951 was followed by 32 more. During this period the problem of perseverance was defined, reunion groups were formed, and later the Ultreya was organized. It was also during this period that new ideas were introduced and others eliminated: a period of sharpening or focusing.

Cursillo #34 was the expansion of the movement by including priests and laymen from beyond Majorca. At this time, the name Cursillo in Christianity was first used. In 1954 Cursillo were begun for men who were recruited parish by parish. Cursillo for women were started during the early 1960’s.

The Cursillo movement was born in the Roman Catholic Church. Transplanting the movement to the Episcopal Church was a logical and natural step. In April of 1972, a small group of Minnesota Episcopalians made their Cursillo in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In May, an Iowa team put on the first Minnesota Cursillo for Men followed two weeks later by the first Women’s Cursillo. The Palanca and Kitchen teams for these two Cursillo were staffed largely by Minnesota Roman Catholic Cursillistas – an example of sharing in Christian work.

In January of 1980, the first set of Lutheran-sponsored Cursillo weekends was held at Normandale Lutheran Church in Edina, MN. The Episcopal Cursillo Community supported and helped establish Cursillo in the Lutheran Community in Minnesota.

In July of 1985, the Lutheran Cursillo community of Minnesota accepted the challenge of presenting the first two Lutheran sponsored Cursillo weekends in Papua New Guinea. In November 1995, the Minnesota Community sponsored the first two Lutheran Cursillo weekends in Utah. And the rest they say is history.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Cursillo is to create a living community of Christians which can renew the whole life of the church. The church needs to know that God is at work in the world through the Holy Spirit.

The most important thing for a human being is to know and accept Christ personally, and work daily to spread Christ's message.

The Cursillo Method does not involve changes in the doctrines of the church.

DEFINITIONS

Abrazo - A hug, embrace or a grasping of shoulders introduced in Cursillo in the "Passing of the Peace," and which spills over into the everyday life of the 4th Day community.

Bible Processional - A ceremony performed each of the 3 mornings symbolizing in the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the Word of God. The 2 candles indicate that the Word of God is the light of the world.

Clausura - A closing ceremony at the end of the three day Cursillo.

De Colores - Literally "of the colors". A greeting like "hello" signifying that life is more colorful with Christ. A group of Spanish laymen returning home from a Cursillo weekend stopped by the roadside while repairs were being made to their bus. Seeing a rooster, hen, and chicks nearby, they passed time singing the familiar folk song, "De Colores". They noted the many iridescent colors in the rooster's tail and neck feathers and recognized this as a sign of the many ways God loves us. A tradition was begun, and an old folk song became Cursillo's theme song of God's colorful grace.

Decuria - The Spanish word, Decuria, literally translated means an assembly of 10. For Cursillo purposes it is a table of eight persons who take notes from the Rollo's, discuss them among themselves, and then put the main points of each Rollo into a picture poster. In the evening, each table has the opportunity to reverse the process and put their posters' ideas into words for the benefit, enlightenment, and fun of the Rollo Room and invited teams. Most often Decuria refers to this poster party.

Palanca - The Spanish word, palanca, means "lever". As a lever, it is used to describe prayer and sacrifice because a lever allows a person to move things which are beyond his strength, just as prayer and sacrifice allows an apostle to accomplish more than he would otherwise be capable of accomplishing.

Renewal Group - Christian friends who gather regularly to continue their renewal in Christ through Piety, Study, and Action.

Ultreya - This is a gathering of the larger 4th Day Community - usually held once a month and the host church is different each month. The post weekend Ultreya are held at the Weekend host church.

DENOTING PROGRESSION

Agape Dinner – One of the special events on Saturday evening is the Agape Dinner. Agape is defined in Jude verse 12 as a “love feast” referring to the common meals which bore the name Agape because they cultivated God’s love among Christians. The dining hall is lit with candles and the tables are decorated and the scene is one of peace and beauty. The tables are arranged in the shape of a cross with the flower cross at the cross – and Jesus at the head of the table as the host for the evening.

Banners – Only a few banners are displayed at the beginning of the weekend, but more and more appear as the tempo increases. These messages are a creative way of sharing thoughts, insights, ideas, scripture, joy, and love.

Chapel Visits – Following the Agape Dinner table members are scheduled to be together in a quiet place to share their feelings. This is a time of sharing, prayer and love. A deeper understanding of the newly acquired family can become evident at this time.

Flower Pot – The centerpiece of each Rollo table is an empty flower pot. Then a package of seeds appears inside the container, indicating new life. As the Rollo’s are presented – stirring the soil with emotions and laughter, watering the seeds with tears, and warming the plants with love and friendship – the flowers begin to grow. Soon leaves and buds appear and by Sunday, the flowers are in full bloom.

Music – The music on Thursday evening is limited to get-acquainted type Christian songs, such as “Here We Are”, “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”, and other familiar Christian songs. Friday’s music focuses on the ideal of Christian Living with “They’ll Know We are Christians By Our Love”. Saturday’s music reveals the character of Jesus Christ as man, savior, redeemer, lover and servant. Songs like “Have You Seen Jesus” “Look Out Your Window” and “Apple of My Eye” all lead up to the Agape dinner. The music for Sunday shifts back to the world with such songs as “Pass It On”, “Freely, Freely”, and “Tell the People.”

Placemats – Placemats the first morning are undecorated as befits the simple breakfast. This is symbolic of the Weekender who is emerging from the silent retreat of introspection. As the weekend progresses, so do the placemats in adornment and color.

Rosebud – On the first morning of the Cursillo weekend, a single rosebud is placed on the Eucharist Altar in the Weekender’s Chapel. Each day thereafter, the rose unfolds its petals until it is open and in full bloom on Sunday evening. This particular form of God’s creation is used to symbolize the color, openness, and beauty that is revealed as God’s love surrounds us.

Serenades – Three serenades are a part of every weekend, and there is a progression that builds to the final on Sunday afternoon.

Agape Dinner Serenade – The first serenade is at the Agape Dinner. This serenade is given by the team and angels from the 4th Day community.

Morning Serenade – The second serenade is the wake-up call on Sunday morning. The serenaders are the team and sponsors. This is the start of the Weekender’s return to the outside environment.

Evening Serenade – The third serenade is at lunch Sunday afternoon. This serenade returns the weekenders to their communities. As they see the large number of Cursillistas circling the room and singing with such joy and love. This serenade is open to all 4th Dayers.

Stations of the Cross - Friday evening, Stations of the Cross is an event depicting incidents of Christ’s passion and death. The Stations are placed along a route or done in “freeze frame” in the sanctuary. The “route” of the stations, whether moving or stationary, is symbolizing Christ’s path from Gethsemane to Calvary. This is a time for meditation, along with the devotional exercises appointed to be used at each station.

WHAT IS PALANCA?

There are many questions about palanca, and because it is such an important part of a Cursillo weekend, this information is offered with the hope of answering some of them.

What does the word mean? Palanca is used to illustrate the Spanish word “intendencia”. Palanca means the prayer and sacrifice which is offered to God to obtain something. The Spanish word means “lever”. It came to be used to describe “intendencia” (prayer and sacrifice) because a lever allows a person to move things which are beyond his strength, just as prayer and sacrifice allows an apostle to accomplish more than we would otherwise be capable of accomplishing. Because of the Spanish heritage of Cursillo and because there is no literal interpretation in English of the word palanca, other than of “lever”, the word palanca remains.

What is good palanca? It comes in the visible and the invisible. Needless to say, the visible is a sight to behold – like the loaves and fishes multiplying. Food is a great part of palanca, but there is much more. Banners, letters from faraway places, flowers, etc., are seen by the Weekenders in their “physical” form. Included also are the efforts of all the teams to make the Weekend a success. Then there is the invisible – the spiritual palanca. It makes its greatest impression through a sacrifice of time, effort of prayers and offerings of love. It might be a letter saying, “I am praying for you at a certain time each day”, or “We are celebrating Eucharist for you this weekend”.

While palanca may be from an individual, a particular church, or a renewal group, it is always intended for all the Cursillistas. For, palanca to one particular person strays from the concept that “all are loved”. Individual palanca is saved and presented to that person on Sunday afternoon.

How else can you help with palanca? Palanca is providing transportation and being a sponsor, washing dishes for a specific meal, baking bread for a meal, making desserts for a meal, helping break down the dorms on Sunday morning, running a vacuum cleaner after the Clausura, ad infinitum. There is so much to do and when everyone pitches in, the load is lightened for the teams.

Following are ideas of specific palanca, sometimes known as Angel Crew tasks.

Thursday set up and Sunday breakdown. These are big jobs and the 4th Day Rector needs help.

Kitchen help – doing dishes after a meal, making a dish for a meal, or clean up after the Agape Dinner. After Sunday lunch is a great time to help as this allows the kitchen team to attend the 4th Day Eucharist.

Palanca letters to the weekenders or little gifts with bible verses etc. to be placed in palanca bags given out at the end of the Clausura.

Banners, posters, notes. Little gifts which will defray Weekend costs – folders for the Rollo Room, markers, canned food or fresh food items for a meal.

A check to the “Utah Via de Cristo” community in the name of the Weekend

Gifts of time, talents and sacrifice.

Prayer as Palanca is so powerful that it must be in a category by itself. Time and talent don’t substitute for a chance to talk with God. You do not have to be on your knees, in the church. You can be mowing a lawn, driving on the highway, or cooking a meal. There are endless opportunities to simply say “Dear Lord, please be in the hearts and minds of the Cursillistas this weekend. Let them see love as I did. Amen”

TEAM FORMATION

Being a member of a Cursillo team includes many opportunities to share God's love with others. In fact, the major task for every member of a Cursillo team is to bring others lovingly to Christ so they may come to know and experience Him more fully. A Cursillo team aims to be a close community of committed, caring loving, active Christians. For this reason, each Cursillo team meets 6 – 10 times over a period of 2 – 3 months prior to each set of weekends.

During team meetings, we will pray for each other and for those who will be entrusted to our care. We will break bread together, sing together, hear and affirm rollos, learn more about Cursillo, and make plans for best meeting the needs of those who will be coming to the Weekend. When the Cursillo team has allowed the forming of a Christian community, the body of Christ, they will be prepared to have the Weekenders join in our Christ-centered pilgrimage. A Cursillo Weekend is gently leading and challenging, allowing freedom to accept or reject and allowing the Holy Spirit to center and to move freely and powerfully throughout those three days.

The Secretariat determines when and where Weekends are to be held, and chooses the leadership for each weekend (a Rector(a) and a Spiritual Director). The Rector(a) selects the Rollo room Assistant Rector(a)s, the Palanca, Kitchen and 4th Day Rector(a)s, and they then choose the team members. The SD selects the Assistant SD and Palanca SD and also clergy to present the grace rollos.

Rollo Room Team

There are 14 rollos given during a Weekend. Five are given by Clergy, and nine are given by lay people. All rollos follow prescribed outlines which are presented in a careful progression of ideas. Each Rollista is encouraged to allow his/her personality and unique background to shine through as a living, loving, Christian witness. Some members of the Rollo Room Team will not give rollos, but will have as their major responsibility building table community and aiding the group through discussion periods when necessary. These are Assistant Table Leaders.

Kitchen Team

Via de Cristo meal times are joyous, relaxed, warm, fun, beautiful, and a tasty time together. The kitchen creates a very necessary and important changing environment for the Weekenders. With their loving hearts and hands they prepare the meals. Many varied and lovely occasions arise for showing Christ's love in the kitchen and in the dining room. One member of the kitchen team will take on the persona of a chicken and act as liaison for bringing up the Weekenders for meals as well as providing "light relief" to the Rollo Room in the teaching and singing of 'De Colores'.

Palanca Team

The Palanca team's primary function is prayer. This team works in and from the Palanca Chapel. The Rollista's are supported in prayer in the Palanca Chapel before and after presenting their talks. The Palanca team is also the Weekend's Altar Guild, also looks after the spiritual needs of the upstairs team with Morning Prayer and Eucharist each day. The Palanca Team is also responsible for cleaning bathrooms.

4th Day Team

This team acts as the Via de Cristo hosts and coordinators of all 4th Day involvement during a weekend. They assist in decorating for the Agape Dinner and managing the delivery, set-up and clean up of the Weekend.

Musicians

Musicians are an important part of the Rollo Room and Palanca teams. Musicians are also required for the Agape Dinner serenade which is organized by the kitchen team, the Morning Serenade on Sunday Morning organized by the Palanca Team and for the Lunchtime Serenade on Sunday organized by the 4th Day Team.

THE STRUCTURES AND DYNAMICS OF CURSILLO

The First Phase: The Pre-Cursillo – Team Formation

The first phase presupposes a structure formed to oversee the work of cursillo within a given area; city or state. This is a cursillo Secretariat which operates with the approval of the 4th Day community. The Secretariat determines when and where cursillo Weekends are to be held and recruits the first two leaders for each Weekend: a Rector and a Spiritual Director. They in turn call upon others to perform leadership duties in the 4th Day, Kitchen and Palanca areas. The Rectors of the individual teams-within-a-team have called upon other people to help with the many and varied tasks performed during a cursillo Weekend - and so we have a cursillo team.

Being members of the cursillo team will give us many, many opportunities to share God's love with others – both team and new cursillistas, alike. In fact, the major task of each of us to bring others lovingly to Christ so they may come to know and experience Him more fully during our Weekend together. Each team member shares that responsibility in the spirit of community – within this portion of the Body of Christ. A cursillo team must be a close community of committed, caring, loving, active Christians – an enlarged renewal group, if you will.

The team meetings have three purposes:

1. To prepare us spiritually for apostolic work.
2. To prepare us technically for the tasks we will perform.
3. To form us into a community wherein exists a great spirit of loving and sharing of a common experience.

We will pray for each other and for those who will be entrusted to our care. We will break bread together, sing, hear and critique rollos, learn more about Cursillo, and we will make plans for meeting the needs of those who will be coming to their Cursillo Weekend. When our Cursillo team has built a Christian community, our part of the body of Christ, we will then be privileged to have a new group of people join us in our Christ-centered pilgrimage together.

The Second Phase: The Cursillo Weekend – Information Only

A Cursillo Weekend is to be a meeting ground for Christ and His people. A Cursillo Weekend is a Christ-centered Weekend. It is to be Christ-Like, unfolding normally, naturally, and gradually, gently leading and challenging, allowing freedom to accept or reject. There is a progression and structure to a Cursillo Weekend, but it is a gently unfolding progression and structure where we allow the Holy Spirit to enter freely and to move freely and powerfully throughout the 3 days.

Thursday – late afternoon

Team arrives, stashes luggage, and helps complete preparations.
Team shares Eucharist and dinner.

Thursday Night – Friday Morning

FOCUS: Preparation of the Weekend withdrawal from the outside world, introspection and silence.

1. Weekenders and sponsors arrive – team guides, assists, and socializes.
2. Photograph (may be done at this time)
3. Rollo Room – welcome, introductions, singing, preliminary talks.
4. Chapel – Communal Spiritual Examination and Celebration of Forgiveness (meditations: “Know Yourself” & “The Prodigal Son”), the Litany
5. Silent Retreat
(Team Meeting in Dining Hall)
6. Friday morning chapel – Morning Prayer (meditation: “The Three Glances of Christ”)
7. Breakfast – Kitchen Team is introduced.

The team begins immediately to envelope the Weekenders into the community. As soon as the first Weekenders arrive the action spreads as we help them unload and feel wanted. If not yet comfortable. We drink coffee together and share our past and present lives while we wait for everyone to be registered. It is important at this time that no Weekender or group of Weekenders is left alone.

Next we pair off and then introduce our partners (New Best Friend) This is still another way of showing our love as we share our lives openly with the entire group. Be specific when you introduce your partners; really say something! When trying to blend in with the Weekenders, team members should never be deceptive or dishonest. If asked, “are you on the team?” or “are you going to give a rollo?” answer honestly. Laughter draws the team and Weekenders closer together and further builds our community. Occasionally, this introduction period will be the only time an individual gets in front of the group, so the community is built in this way also.

The singing session which comes next continues this feeling of involvement and togetherness. Again, don’t be upset if the team leads – the team is the moving force and should lead in the singing, praying, answering the bell, the meditations in worship and the other activities throughout the first day or two. Don’t all jump but use good common sense and don’t expect the Rector to go first.

The Rector(a) gives a short talk which briefly defines a Cursillo and urges the Weekenders to be thoughtful, active and charitable participants throughout the weekend. After our opening session, we go to the chapel for the examination of Conscience and Celebration of Forgiveness. It is important that a good explanation of this celebration be given by the Spiritual Director. Many of the Weekenders are not familiar with repentance or are concerned about it and a good explanation helps them to understand and feel more comfortable with it.

The Spiritual Director should also explain the value of the Silent Retreat on Thursday night. It is important to keep the silence during this time and team leaders should be leaders in remembering it. The Weekenders have come, have made pleasant chatter and smiled, and now it is easier for many of them to not have to worry about things to say or being sure to greet whomever they consider the “right” people. It is also important that the dormitory be as dark as possible this evening: darkness is security for some. Some Weekenders will complain about the silence and not being able to find their bedclothes.

After the chapel there is a short team meeting to answer any questions and for prayer. The team community still grows during this time and it is important that all team members feel comfortable about what is going on and what will happen tomorrow. It is also important to thank God for what He is already doing for the Weekend. Keep the meeting brief so that the team members who are in the dormitories with the Weekenders do not leave them alone for too long.

Should a Weekender really feel the need for talk this evening, it is wise for a team member to lead him/her to the chapel or some nook so no one else will be disturbed. If there is a major problem that you are not comfortable with, do not try to counsel the person, but suggest that they talk to one of the Spiritual Directors. Remember this throughout the Weekend. Remember also, that although we need our sleep, Weekenders need to talk.

Friday morning you are still in silence. The chapel this morning should be short and still quietly undertaken. After this the silence is ended and you go to breakfast. The important dynamic during the meals and free time is that you get to know the others. You get to meet them eyeball-to-eyeball; so it is a good idea to sit with different people each time, listen closely, and be sincere. Also be careful that one table does not end up overloaded with team members or Weekenders.

Friday

FOCUS: Proclamation of the message.

THEME: The Ideal of the Christian Living the Life of Grace.

1. Table assignments given.
2. Bible Processional Introduced.

3. 1st Rollo – Ideal – layperson (discussion and poster to follow each rollo)
4. 2nd Rollo – Habitual Grace – SD
5. Eucharist #1
6. Lunch
7. Kitchen Team introduces “De Colores”.
8. 3rd Rollo – Laity in the Church – layperson.
9. 4th Rollo – Actual Grace –SD – Palanca concept is introduced
10. Dinner
11. “Arise” is introduced.
12. 5th Rollo – Piety – layperson
13. De Curia – kitchen team invited.
14. Summary of the Day – SD
15. Bible Recessional
16. Rector Talk – Palanca Rector(a) and Palanca SD are introduced
17. Stations of the Cross
18. Chapel – Evening Prayer
19. Retire (team meeting in Dining Hall)

At the first session in the morning the Weekenders are assigned to the tables in the Rollo room. The team members should concentrate first of all on building community at the table to which they are assigned. Later on in the Cursillo a feeling of community among the entire group will begin to grow. The Weekenders are grouped at tables according to diverse ages, occupations, churches and any other factors that may help them to learn from one another in their discussions. This is done by the Rector prior to the Cursillo or on Thursday evening together with the Assistant Rector(a)s.

The Bible Processional should be introduced now by the SD and executed by team members. This is an important dynamic that allows us to share, and the open Bible and burning candles are a good reminder of Christ’s ever-presence with us. The Assistant Rector has charge of finding someone to do the Processional and Readings as well as the Grace and Thanksgiving at meals. It is important that each Weekender be asked to do something during the Weekend. Those who do not feel comfortable reading or praying aloud can hold a candle during the Bible Processional or Recessional.

The dynamic involved is participation and involvement.

The lay talks will usually be approximately 30 minutes in length. The laity and pastors are witnessing their love for the Weekenders and for Christ, so the talks should be well-prepared. Use of power-points or hand-outs can be used to make note-taking easier for the Weekenders so that they have complete notes to review in the weeks following their Weekend.

It is important for team members to set an example and take notes during the talks. After the talks is discussion, and it is during the discussion that the feeling of real community forms. The table leader is there to help guide the discussion.

The aim of the discussion is to get the main idea that the rollista was talking about and to have each person at the table personalize it for themselves. The table leader may need to start or keep the discussion flowing by asking questions or through short witnessing. Everyone should be included in the discussion and encouraged through gentle questioning. After the discussion is summarized, the main idea is put down on a poster. The dynamic is most effective when everyone is involved. Shared participation and enjoyment is more important than artistic quality.

Eucharist on Friday is subdued and low key. The “peace” is usually just exchanged verbally, the songs easy and fairly quiet, the elements are given as the Cursillistas pass in front of the altar. Eucharist builds with our community throughout the Weekend. On Saturday the songs are a little livelier and the abrazo will be demonstrated and used. On Sunday the Weekenders pass the elements themselves and the songs are louder and more spiritual.

Change places at all the meals and talk about the things that have happened during the day. Do not reveal what is coming up. The Weekenders need to go at their own rate and too often team members “forget” and begin talking about what happened on “their” Weekends.

Friday afternoon the Palanca talk is given and the Weekenders begin to realize that the Holy Spirit is alive and that He is working through other people. The letters from Cursillo communities all over the USA and the world really have an effect on the Weekenders and team when they realize the extent of the prayers for them during the Weekend.

Throughout the Cursillo we try to build community slowly. If we try to build it too fast, we could lose some of the Weekenders. We don’t want anyone behind on Sunday afternoon. If someone is a little bit slow in reacting to the Cursillo, they may feel isolated and outside of the community. The more love, joy and peace they see around them, the more they are liable to turn inward and resist becoming a part of the group. The Cursillo “process” should be geared to the slowest Weekender if this is at all possible.

The Piety talk is the most personal rollo of Friday and leads into the “De Curia” (poster party) where the whole group begins to experience a community feeling through the sharing, the clapping, the laughing and relating to the entire group. Up to this point we were more concerned about creating community at the tables; now we begin to shape the whole community with all the Weekenders involved, not just at their tables, but within the entire group. Your role is to be open to everyone that evening, to be charitable and encouraging, especially to those who are a little reluctant to get up and give the summary or talk about the poster. Do not try to force anyone to contribute. If someone does not want to do either you might say something like, “Some people just don’t like to get up in front of a group” and let it go at that. Maybe by Saturday night things have changed. It is wise to remind the table to keep the summaries fairly short, but do not demand that they do. Each member should give their name and home church before presenting each poster.

Following the De Curia and Bible Processional the Rector(a) introduces the Palanca SD and Palanca Rector. The Palanca Rector speaks a little about the prayer ministry during the Weekend and shows the Weekenders the prayer request forms and where they will be positioned. (Usually in a basket just outside the Rollo Room door). The Palanca SD then explains the Stations of the Cross and the music team assists with learning “Whatever you do to the least of my children...”

The Weekenders are taken up to the sanctuary one table at a time and members of the Palanca Team seat them. Once all of the group are seated then the Stations of the Cross are presented. Some Weekenders will find the Stations of the Cross very moving and meaningful, while others may be confused by the experience. After the evening chapel there will be a team meeting. Any team members who are speaking with Weekenders at this time may be excused from the team meeting.

Spiritual Directors should be available for counseling and it is a good idea if they speak directly to the Rollo Room group and give an idea of the best time to meet with them.

Saturday

FOCUS: Conversion
THEME: The Person of Christ

1. Chapel – Morning Prayer (meditation: “The Figure of Christ”)
2. Breakfast
3. Bible Processional
4. 6th Rollo – Study – layperson
5. Bibles are given out in the Rollo Room.
6. 7th Rollo – Sacraments – SD “Abrazo” introduced.
7. Eucharist #2
8. Lunch
9. 8th Rollo – Action – layperson
10. Long break

11. 9th Rollo – Obstacles to Grace – SD
12. 10th Rollo – Leaders – layperson
13. Agape Dinner and Serenade
14. Chapel visits – table groups meet in sanctuary for prayer and sharing.
15. De Curia – whole team invited.
16. Summary of the Day – SD
17. Bible Recessional.
18. Chapel – Examination of Conscience. Evening Prayer and “The Healing of Memories”
19. Retire – team meeting in dining hall.

Saturday is a continuation of Friday’s progress, but with the emphasis not so much on one’s self but what one can do using study and action. The Abrazo may be introduced following the Sacraments Rollo by the SD and exchanged at the Eucharist. In the evening on Saturday, each table is asked to make a Chapel visit. The important element in this dynamic is freedom. Let the Weekenders be free to express themselves as they feel. Silence in the chapel visit is very beautiful, but there is a lot of pressure in silence, and we don’t want anyone to feel pressured into praying out loud if they don’t want to. So if you’re in there for a few minutes and nobody has said anything then the team member in the group should start with a simple prayer.

The Leaders talk which is before dinner can be very effective. Some of the most dynamic rollos can be given by very quiet persons and the Weekenders then come away with the impression. “If they are so quiet and can talk to us about Leadership then there really is something I can do too!”

One of the high points Saturday evening is the Agape Meal. The dining hall is lit with candles, the tables are decorated, and the scene is one of extreme peace and beauty. Two things that add much are having the tables arranged in a cross and having the Kitchen and Palanca Teams, plus outside help, sing two or three mood setting songs to the Weekenders as they enter the room.

The De Curia (poster party) Saturday night should be great fun. Everyone is in a great mood, and people you never suspected may be giving summaries or showing posters. Team members should again be leaders in applauding other tables and in creating joy and love during the De Curia. Help your table organize for each summary and poster.

Following the poster party is evening chapel. Here the “Examination of Conscience” is read and may put many in a reflective mood. They may feel the need to talk so be prepared to stay up late and SDs should prepare to be busy.

Sunday

FOCUS: Our presence in the world and our relations with others.

THEME: How does Christ want us to live in the world.

1. Sunday Morning Serenade – “Las Maninitas” & “Morning Has Broken”.
2. Chapel – Morning Prayer (meditation: “Christ’s Message to the Cursillistas”)
3. Breakfast – served in the Rollo Room
4. Bible Processional
5. 11th Rollo – Environment – layperson
6. 12th Rollo – Life in Grace – SD
7. 13th Rollo – Christian Community in Action – layperson
8. 14th Rollo – Total Security in 4th Day
9. Eucharist #3
10. Lunch – (4th Day Serenade)
11. Apostolic Hour/4th Day Eucharist
12. Clausura
13. Departure of Weekenders – Team Clean Up and brief team meeting.

Sunday, the third day, is directed to dealing with others and persistence. On Friday we dealt primarily with the self, on Saturday the focus was on what one can do to change his/her environment, and now it is “go out and get busy “. Just as the team met and formed a community, then the Weekenders entered into this community – the outside world – and try to form their own environments into a living joyous Christian family. The morning serenade can be beautiful and one of the emotional highlights of the Weekend for many Weekenders. The appropriate dynamic is a peaceful, beautiful awakening for sleepy Weekenders. The Palanca Team are responsible for the serenade and need to make sure each Weekender receives a flower and glass of juice.

The Eucharist on Sunday is full of cheer and goodwill. The elements are passed from person to person in real Christian giving and the songs may be exuberant.

If by Sunday a Weekender has not opened up to the group wait for the serenade and the closing. Let the Holy Spirit work in the person’s life beyond the Weekend. We can never force a religious response from anyone. God always respects a person’s freedom to love Him or not. We too, must respect the person’s freedom to respond to the Spirit, to become part of the community or not to. The most important thing in loving is loving people as they are, with no conditions or expectations attached.

During the remaining talks on Sunday and in the afternoon the Weekenders may seem sleepy or inattentive so you as a team member need to continue to be an example of taking notes. After the “Total Security in Your 4th Day” Rollo – given by the Weekend Rector(a) it is appropriate to talk about renewal groups and if appropriate suggest a table renewal group. Cursillo exists primarily to create renewal groups – so encouragement and help with those logistics is very important.

At the lunch serenade the Weekenders begin to realize that they are a part of a larger Christian community and that people really care. They see that living the Fourth Day is possible because these people who come to the closing are living it. The team and Weekenders are taken to the Weekender Chapel from the serenade for the Apostolic Hour. Here the Weekenders are given their crosses and are given an opportunity to give their impressions of the Weekend. At the close of the Apostolic Hour the Clausura is explained. It is wise for the Rector(a) to caution the Weekenders not to thank the team or sponsors.

At the Clausura the emphasis is on the testimony of the weekenders. The people who come to the closing come for the Weekenders and the team plays a very minor role. In providing an opportunity for the Weekenders to speak of their experience and its meaning for their lives, the Rector(a) should carefully avoid pressuring anyone who chooses not to speak.

There is a progression and a structure within a Cursillo Weekend just as there is a progression and structure within a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Christ calls to Himself during the Eucharist....So too, He calls us to Himself during a Cursillo Weekend. He does this within the framework of the Weekend.

Christ would have us go the second mile. We should continue the pilgrimage started on Thursday evening. We should continue to reach out to the new 4th Day community members and do all in our power to make sure they become as involved as they would like to be with renewal groups, attendance at Ultreya and being a team member on future Weekends. Each team member should use their own unique gifts to assist with this.

- Continue to pray for the Weekenders
- Monday or Tuesday call any person you particularly got to know.
- Follow up calls as you feel would be appropriate.
- Palanca – a note or a small gift.
- Renewal group – invite people to join your group, start a new group – find out other groups.
- Outreach – church, family, community, etc.
- Encourage sponsorship for future Weekenders.

DYNAMICS AND PROGRESSION OF THE WEEKEND

A Cursillo Weekend is a Christ-centered weekend and is a meeting ground for Christ and His people. It is to be Christ-like, unfolding normally, naturally, and gradually, gently leading and challenging, allowing freedom to accept or question. It is a quietly developing progression where we allow the Holy Spirit to enter and to move freely and powerfully throughout the three days.

Thursday Night

- Focus: Preparation of the Weekender's withdrawal from the outside world.
Theme: To look into one's self for the examination of conscience and celebration of forgiveness.
Meditation: Know yourself. Introspection, examination, confession. We ponder God's love and compassion for us and the condition of our soul.
Silent Retreat: The silent retreat provides a setting for the talks, an introduction. It stresses the need for self-examination and response; self-surrender or dedication, the willingness to be concerned for God and for other men. From this point on, the Weekender is face to face with Christ. Christ is looking at him/her and waiting for him/her to respond.

Friday

- Focus: Proclamation of the message
Theme: The Ideal of the Christian living the Life of Grace
Meditation: Three glances of Christ – help us make our response to God. This day brings us face to face with ourselves. We are presented with a new set of values. Every Rollo is geared to this.

There are a number of ways of bringing out the progression of the talks of the Weekend. The clergy talks present the Theology of living the life of grace, and the lay talks teach how to live the life of grace as a layman. Each day of the Weekend has a specific theme and builds into the Weekend. The first day tells the Weekender what he should be, the second tells him/her what he/she should do, and the third tells him/her what he/she should accomplish. The five talks of the first day are intended to present the ideal of the Christian living the life of grace.

Objectives:

- Rollo #1 -Lay - Ideal: to convince the Weekender of the need of having an ideal. To leave him/her with a clear understanding of the elements of an ideal, and lay the groundwork for further rollos, in which they will learn that Christianity is the perfect ideal.
- Rollo #2 – SD - Habitual Grace: Life in grace is the Christian ideal, and a life of grace is God's gift. This talk should describe both in Scripture and in experience the way God approaches us in a "Grace Style". God is a God of Grace.
- Rollo #3 – Lay- Laity: To present the church as a visible society founded by Christ to perpetuate His mission, the mission of the layman as a living and operating member of the body. This Rollo lays the groundwork for the idea of lay action in the church.
- Rollo #4 – SD – Actual Grace: to describe the realization when the Grace of God becomes personalized in the life of a believer – when habitual grace becomes experiential grace. The Palanca concept is introduced in this Rollo.
- Rollo #5 – Lay – Piety: "Arise" introduces the Rollista. The key talk of the day presents most clearly what is fundamental to being a Christian and makes the strongest call to make God the center of all. Piety states the basis of the Christian life is a living relationship with the Father, or life in union with God.

Saturday

Focus: Transition from existing as a Christian to acting as a Christian.

Theme: The Person of Christ

Meditation: Figure of Christ – shows humanism of Christ: We are invited to an intimate friendship with Him – to learn to know and love Christ.

Objectives:

Rollo #6 – Lay Study: This Rollo makes one feel the need for giving depth and solidity to the Christian life. Instilling the desire to know well the Biblical truths that uphold Christianity. Thus changing our mentality, our way of thinking. Study can help us ‘put on the mind of Christ.’

Rollo #7 – SD Sacraments: This Rollo underlines the incarnational approach (“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself”) and the unique position the Bible puts upon Baptism and Eucharist. Also to see sacramental-type grace as present in thousands of other events in the life of a Christian.

Rollo #8 – Lay Apostolic Action: This Rollo serves as a transition from “being” to “doing”. It describes the importance of apostolic action and its place in the life of a Christian. The talk centers on personal contact, and drawing people to Christ.

Rollo #9 – SD Obstacles of Grace: This Rollo should explain the stumbling blocks interfering with accepting a life in Grace. We can be assured that “All things work together for good to those who love God”.

Rollo #10 – Lay Leaders: This Rollo inspires the Weekenders with what can be achieved by a Christian who brings all their natural and supernatural abilities into action, for the service of Christ, in order to influence all those around him/her to live the Christian ideal.

Sunday

Focus: Our presence in the world and our relations with others.

Theme: How does Christ want us to live in the world?

Meditation: “I have chosen you and have appointed you that you should go and bear fruit”.

Objective:

Rollo #11 – Lay Environment: This Rollo challenges the Weekender to analyze his environment and commit it to Christian transformation. We need to recognize the fields of harvest God assigns each of us and work to extend the kingdom of God. The Weekender will see him/herself more and more as Christ’s person in every situation of his/her life.

Rollo #12 – SD Life in Grace: This Rollo tells us to continue to apply the principles of piety, study, and action, achieving a deeper understanding of grace. The emphasis is on God who will continue to shower this grace on us as we return to the world that we have left.

Rollo #13 – Lay Christian Community in Action: This Rollo shows us the need for Christian community. Our mission which is the Christian renewal of society is not ours alone, but ours as a member of a community. This talk must describe a Christian community as a living organism, with a mission in “the world”.

Rollo #14 – Lay Total Security in Your 4th Day: This Rollo is to convince the Weekender of the need for perseverance for extending and applying what you have learned into their life style for the rest of their lives (4th Day). The Weekenders know they have been called to the mission of bringing Christ into their environment.

Overall Whereby individuals through small groups may grow and work together to set goals to create a Christ centered environment. Strong emphasis should be placed on the importance of renewal groups and Ultreya which focuses you towards changing the world you live in.

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

THURSDAY

RECTOR _____

2.00 – 4.00 P.M. TEAM MEMBERS ARRIVE. Make beds, pick up name tags. Help complete preparations. Fourth Day Team set up projector/laptop and screen in Rollo Room for Rector's Thursday night talk.

5.00 p.m. TEAM EUCHARIST BY SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR.

6.00 p.m. TEAM DINNER

6.30 p.m. TEAM MEETING

Rector's Comments:

Team should be:

1. Sensitive to Weekenders including early arrival.
2. Avoid over-zealous abrazo with sponsors.
3. PATIENCE, not zeal, is the order of the day.

Greeting Procedure – suggested:

1. Assistant Rectors will be stationed at the check-in table – each Weekender gets a name tag and mug.
2. Kitchen team member and sponsor accompany Weekender to her bed. Assist with making up the bed. Leave personal effects on the bed. Weekender and kitchen team member go to Rollo room, weekender is introduced around and then kitchen team member returns to pick up another weekender.
3. Sponsor goes to Fourth Day to drop off Bed Palanca and sign bibles. 8.15 p.m. Sponsor Service in Palanca Chapel.
4. Rollo Team waits in the Rollo Room to help greet the weekenders.
5. Palanca Team spends this time preparing for Sponsor Service and preparing for next day. (OUT OF SIGHT OF WEEKENDERS)
6. Fourth Day Team will spend this time greeting sponsors and logging in palanca (OUT OF SIGHT OF WEEKENDERS)

7.00 p.m. ASSISTANT RECTORAS GREET EARLY ARRIVAL WEEKENDERS

1. Rector takes final check of Rollo Room.
2. Rector assures "Prayer to the Holy Spirit" is taped to podium and presentations on overhead/laptop are set up.

7.30 p.m. WEEKENDERS ARRIVE AND CHECK-IN

1. Assistant Rectors sign in weekenders and issues name tags
2. Kitchen Team members guide weekenders to sleeping rooms and help them locate beds and stash luggage.
3. Rollo Team socializes with weekenders
4. Rector verifies number of weekenders in attendance
5. Rector checks on refreshments in the Rollo Room.

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

THURSDAY

RECTOR _____

6. Assistant Rector assigns 3 table leaders as readers for Thursday night Chapel Service (1. Isaiah 58: 1-3, 5-9; 2. Phillipians 2: 1-11; 3. (Gospel) Luke 15: 11 – 32)
7. Assistant Rector assigns 3 table leaders for Friday morning Chapel Service Gospel readers. (Mark 10: 17-22; John 6: 66-71; Mark 14: 27-31)
8. Assistant Rector asks 3 table leaders for Bible Processional on Friday morning. (Scripture: Matthew 8: 23-27)

8.00 p.m. Rector rings the bell to call weekenders and team to seats in the Rollo Room.

8.10 p.m.

ROLLO ROOM

1. Rector introduces him/herself, welcomes weekenders to LUTHERAN VIA DE CRISTO # _____
2. Rector introduces Assistant Rectors, Musician and Spiritual Directors and have them stand briefly.
3. Rector announces she has others who have agreed to help with the weekend (table leaders stand up and sit down).
4. Rector asks Weekenders and team members to take five minutes to talk with someone else, introduce person by name, congregation and favorite place, or something special about that person. NOTE: Occupation and place of employment are to be avoided.
5. Music Session led by Music Director – Rector introduces
6. Assistant Rector passes out songbooks and Cursillo guides.
7. Music Director leads group in 3 or 4 songs.

9.15 p.m.

GROUP PHOTO

9.30 p.m.

RECTOR'S COMMENTS

1. Explain the term Rector.
2. Opening greeting – refer to Rector Manual page 141

9.45 p.m.

RECTOR INTRODUCES SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

1. Welcome by Spiritual Director (See Spiritual Director's Book) (Teaching Intent and Purpose of Cursillo)
2. Explanation of Spiritual Examination and Celebration of Forgiveness Service.
3. Weekenders asked to take songbooks and Cursillo Guides to Chapel with them and everywhere else they go this weekend.

10.00 p.m.

CHAPEL – “Communal Spiritual Examination and Celebration of Forgiveness” – SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR Cursillo Guide page 16. See Chapel Format for Weekend on page 20 or this schedule.

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

THURSDAY

RECTOR _____

11.15 p.m.

TEAM MEETING AND PRAYERS

1. Announcements
2. Stress professional confidence that surrounds all matters discussed at team meetings. Any serious problems should be discussed with Rector or Spiritual Director in private.
3. Review table assignments. Memorize names of everyone at your table.
4. Remind team to lead weekenders in taking notes, obeying the bell promptly, picking up bottles, cups etc.
5. Ask team not to mold weekenders into any preconceived images. Give them the freedom to be themselves. Loving them means accepting them where they are. Don't dominate discussion or posters. Ask creative questions. Listen. Be yourself.
6. Remind them that atmosphere on Friday is low key. Build unity gradually. If we try to move too fast, some may be left behind.
7. Team members should mix with the weekenders at meals. Be servants. Get coffee – hold doors.
8. Skip team meetings if Weekender wants to talk.
9. Ask Spiritual Directors, Assistant Rectors if they have any comments. Ask team members if they have any questions.
10. Assistant Rector checks Rollo Room for supplies, pencils, paper, pen, etc
11. Assistant Rector asks table leaders for Grace and Thanksgiving for Friday breakfast.

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

FIRST DAY – FRIDAY

ASST. RECTOR _____ GOPHER _____

- 6.30 a.m. ARISE
- 7.00 a.m. CHAPEL – Morning Prayer – Cursillo Guide pages 4 -5
- 7.25 a.m. ANNOUNCE TABLE ASSIGNMENTS
- 7.30 a.m. BREAKFAST
- 1. Grace by team member.
 - 2. Assistant Rector introduces Kitchen Team
 - 3. Thanksgiving by team member.
- 7.50 a.m. BREAK (10 min)
- 8.00 a.m. ROLLO ROOM
- 1. Music session – Music Director
 - 2. Table procedures – RECTOR – explain summary and poster procedure, and urges note taking.
- 8.15 a.m. BIBLE PROCESSIONAL
- 1. Explanation – SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR
 - 2. Reading – 3 team members (1 reads, 2 carry candles)
- 8.20 a.m. ROLLO #1 – “IDEAL” – Layperson
- 8.50 a.m. SUMMARY AND POSTER
- 1. Asst. Rector asks 2 weekenders to be lectors for Eucharist #1 and tells SD who they are... (1st Genesis 12: 1-3 2nd – 1 John 4:16-21)
 - 2. Asst Rector selects 2 weekenders for Grace and Thanksgiving at lunch.
- 9.20 a.m. ROLLO #2 – “HABITUAL GRACE” – Spiritual Leader
- 9.50 a.m. SUMMARY AND POSTER
- 10.25 a.m. BREAK (20 Min)
- 1. Asst Rector selects 3 weekenders for evening Bible Processional (Romans 5: 1-11)
- 10.45 a.m. MUSIC SESSION – MUSIC DIRECTOR
- 11.00 a.m. CHAPEL – Eucharist #1 – SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR
- 11.45 a.m. BREAK (15 min)

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

FIRST DAY – FRIDAY

ASST. RECTOR _____

GOPHER _____

- 12.00 p.m. LUNCH
1. Grace – Weekender
 2. Thanksgiving – Weekender
- 12.45 p.m. REST AND FELLOWSHIP (1 HR)
- 1.45 p.m. ROLLO ROOM
1. Music – MUSIC DIRECTOR
 2. Gopher fetches Kitchen Team for “De Colores” to be sung in the Rollo Room.
 3. Kitchen Team assisted by Rector, Assistants and Spiritual Director sing “De Colores”. Kitchen Rector tells the story of “De Colores” to the group and has all join in the singing. Kitchen Rep(s) (chicken) is introduced and sings thru song once.
- 2.15 p.m. ROLLO #3 – “LAITY IN THE CHURCH” – Layperson
- 2.45 p.m. SUMMARY AND POSTER
- 3.15 p.m. BREAK (15 min)
1. Spiritual Director for Actual Grace talk receives palanca in the Palanca Chapel.
 2. Assistant Rector(a) selects 2 Weekenders for Grace and Thanksgiving for dinner.
- 3.30 p.m. ROLLO #4 – “ACTUAL GRACE” Spiritual Leader
- 4.15 p.m. SUMMARY AND POSTER
- 4.45 p.m. BREAK (10 min)
1. Assistant Rector(a) asks 3 Weekenders for the Bible Processional for Saturday morning.(Romans 15: 1-6)
- 4.55 p.m. Kitchen Rep is brought to Rollo Room by Gopher. Goes through DeColores once.
- 5.20 p.m. DINNER
1. Weekenders sing DeColores before supper.
 2. Grace – Weekender
 3. Thanksgiving – Weekender
 4. Kitchen Rector(a) announces any Food Palanca
- 6.00 p.m. ROLLO ROOM
1. Music Session – MUSIC DIRECTOR
 2. Introduce “Arise” (Page 29 Cursillo Guide)

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

FIRST DAY – FRIDAY

ASST. RECTOR _____ GOPHER _____

- 6.15 p.m. ROLLO #5 – “PIETY” – Layperson
- 6.55 p.m. SUMMARY & POSTER
1. Assistant Rector(a) invites Kitchen Team to DeCuria
- 7.35 p.m. BREAK (15 min)
1. Assistant Rector(a) selects 2 Weekenders for Grace and thanksgiving for breakfast.
- 7.50 p.m. DeCuria
1. Assistant Rector(a) explains procedure.
- 8.45 p.m. SUMMARY OF THE DAY – Spiritual Director
- 8.55 p.m. BIBLE PROCESSIONAL by 3 Weekenders
- 9.00 p.m. “After the Piety Talk” – Rector(a) (include reminder of clergy visits)
- 9.15 p.m.
1. Palanca Rector(a) and Palanca Spiritual Director are introduced.
 2. Prayer requests are introduced
 3. Palanca Spiritual Director explains procedure and meaning of Stations of the Cross.
- 9.30 p.m. STATIONS OF THE CROSS
- 10.45 p.m. End of planned schedule. Dismiss for bed.
- 11.00 p.m. TEAM MEETING AND PRAYER
1. Prayer
 2. Explain Chapel Visits and encourage team members to start the Prayer.
 3. Review the day
 4. Report on progress at tables
 5. Encourage team to continue to learn ALL Weekender’s names, to be good listeners.
 6. Questions
 7. Announcements
 8. Comments by Spiritual Directors and Assistant Rector(a)s
 9. Closing Prayer
 10. Assistant Rector asks 3 table leaders for Saturday morning Chapel Service. (1st Phillipians 1: 2-7; 2nd 1 Timothy 2: 5 -6; Gospel – John 1: 1 -26) (Gospel optional at the discretion of the SD)

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

SECOND DAY – SATURDAY

ASST. RECTOR _____ GOPHER _____

- 6.30 a.m. ARISE
- 7.15 a.m. CHAPEL – Morning Prayer – Cursillo Guide pgs 4 -5
 1. (SEE PAGE 24 OF WEEKEND SCHEDULE)
 2. Gopher brings Kitchen Rep to Chapel. Kitchen Rep leads weekenders to breakfast.
- 7.45 a.m. BREAKFAST
 1. Sing DeColores
 2. Grace – Weekender
 3. Thanksgiving – Weekender
 4. Introduce Palanca Team
 5. Kitchen Rector(a) announces food palanca
- 8.15 a.m. BREAK (10 min)
 1. Assistant Rector(a) asks 2 Weekenders to be Lectors for Eucharist #2 and tells SD who they are (1st Isaiah 61 1-4; 2nd Romans 12 1 -8 or Ephesians 1; 7-12)
- 8.25 a.m. ROLLO ROOM
 1. Rector(a) reminds Weekenders to take notes, compliments them on yesterday’s work and urges them to be attentive again today.
 2. Bible Processional by 3 weekenders.
- 8.45 a.m. ROLLO #6 – “STUDY” – Layperson
 (Bibles handed out by Assistant Rector(a)s following the Rollo)
- 9.15 a.m. SUMMARY AND POSTER
- 9.45 a.m. “After the Study Talk” – Rector(a)
- 9.50 a.m. BREAK (5 min)
- 9.55 a.m. MUSIC SESSION
- 10.05 a.m. ROLLO #7 – SACRAMENTS
- 11.00 a.m. ABRAZO explained and demonstrated
- 11.05 a.m. BREAK (10 min)
- 11.15 a.m. CHAPEL – Eucharist #2 – Spiritual Leader
 ROLLO 7b – SACRAMENTS EUCHARIST

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

SECOND DAY – SATURDAY

ASST. RECTOR _____ GOPHER _____

- 12.05 a.m. Gopher gets Kitchen Rep – Rep practices “De Colores” with weekenders and leads them to the dining room.
- 12.15 p.m. LUNCH
1. Sing DeColores
 2. Grace – Weekender
 3. Introduce 4th Day Team
 4. Thanksgiving – Weekender
 5. Kitchen Rector(a) announces any food palanca
- 12.45 p.m. BREAK (10 min)
Assistant Rector(a) selects 3 weekenders for Saturday evening Bible Processional (Scripture – Romans 8: 31 – 39)
- 12.55 p.m. MUSIC SESSION
- 1.00 p.m. ROLLO #8 – “APOSTOLIC ACTION” – Layperson
- 1.35 p.m. SUMMARY AND POSTER
1. Assistant Rector(a) asks 2 **team members** to offer Grace and Thanksgiving for AGAPE dinner
- 2.00 p.m. EXTENDED BREAK
- 3.30 p.m. GATHER WITH SONGS – MUSIC DIRECTOR
1. Assistant Rector(a) invites Kitchen, 4th Day and Palanca Teams to tonight’s DeCuria.
- 3.45 p.m. ROLLO #9 “OBSTACLES TO GRACE” – Spiritual Director
- 4.15 p.m. SUMMARY AND POSTER
- 4.45 p.m. ROLLO #10 “LEADERS” – Layperson
- 5.15 p.m. SUMMARY & POSTER
- 5.45 p.m. BREAK (15 min’s) (adapt according to timing for Agape Dinner)
- 5.55 p.m. Gopher fetches Kitchen Rep – Kitchen rep takes weekenders to Agape Dinner.
- 6.00 p.m. AGAPE DINNER
1. Assistant Rector(a) checks beds and bathrooms to ensure ALL weekenders are in attendance.
Grace – Team Member Thanksgiving Team Member

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

SECOND DAY – SATURDAY

ASST. RECTOR

GOPHER

- 7.00 p.m. BREAK (10 min)
Assistant Rector(a) asks 3 Weekenders for Sunday morning Bible Processional (Scripture – Acts 1: 6 -8)
- 7.10 p.m. ROLLO ROOM
Music Session – Music Director
- 7.25 p.m. Spiritual Director explains Chapel Visits & Palanca Chapel viewing.
- 7.30 p.m. CHAPEL VISITS
1. Table Leaders escort their tables to Palanca Chapel and shows them candles burning – then into the sanctuary for table group prayers.
- 8.30 p.m. BREAK(15 min)
- 8.45 p.m. DECURIA – led by Assistant Rector
Avoid criticism. Encourage team work; everyone gives name, name of table and church home. Applause before and after each.
- 9.50 p.m. SUMMARY OF THE DAY – SD
- 10.00 p.m. BIBLE PROCESSIONAL by 3 Weekenders
- 10.10 p.m. CHAPEL
- 10.30 P.M. DISMISS FOR BED
Announce morning packing and bed disassembly, encourage to retire – full day ahead. Encourage to stay in bed until the bell rings the next morning.
- 10.45 p.m. TEAM MEETING AND PRAYERS
1. Review of the Day. Was this day centered on Christ?
2. Remind each Table Leader to contact each person at their table by phone and/or note within the week after Cursillo. Also, ask if they need help with a renewal group.
3. Remind the team members to proceed with the group renewal discussions after the security talk.
4. Keep taking notes. Remind them to avoid talking at the table during the Rollo's. Now is the time to encourage the weekenders to carry the discussion, but watch out for anyone dominating the discussion.
5. Coordinate plans for morning Serenade. All are needed for singing, but only wake up person if you are the sponsor.
6. Go through Clausura schedule

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

THIRD DAY – SUNDAY

ASST. RECTOR

GOPHER

- 5.00 A.M. Rector and Assistant Rectors arise and wake teams.
- 5.30 a.m. Serenaders gather and receive flowers & juice in dining room.
Sponsors and others are matched up with weekenders.
- 6.00 a.m. MORNING SERENADE
1. Sing “Las Mananitas” and “Morning Has Broken”
 2. All weekenders are woken and receive flower and juice.
- 6.15 a.m. Weekenders arise, dress and pack.
- 6.45 a.m. Assistant Rector(a)s show Weekenders where to stack their personal belongings if no sponsor to take away.
- 7.15 a.m. CHAPEL – (Cursillo guide pages 4 -5)
- 7.45 a.m. BREAKFAST – Continental Style in the Rollo Room.
1. Grace by Weekender
 2. Thanksgiving by Weekender.
 3. Assistant Rector(a) asks 3 Weekenders for pm Bible Processional and Reading (Psalm 91 : 11)
 4. Assistant Rector(a) asks a Weekender for lunch grace.
- 8.15 a.m. ROLLO ROOM
1. Music session
 2. Rector reminds Weekenders to take notes and summaries, but no posters today.
- 8.30 a.m. BIBLE PROCESSIONAL 3 Weekenders – scripture_____
- 8.40 a.m. ROLLO #11 “ENVIRONMENT” – Layperson
- 9.10 a.m. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION
- 9.20 a.m.. SHORT BREAK (5 min)
- 9.25 a.m. ROLLO #12 “LIFE IN GRACE” Spiritual Director
- 10.10 a.m. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION
- 10.20 a.m. ROLLO #13 “CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION” – Layperson
- 10.55 a.m. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

THIRD DAY – SUNDAY

ASST. RECTOR _____ GOPHER _____

- 11.05 a.m. BREAK
- 11.15 a.m. CHAPEL – Eucharist #3 – Spiritual Director
- 12.00 p.m. “TOTAL SECURITY IN YOUR 4TH DAY/JOG TALK” – Rector
Renewal Card Distribution
- 12.30 p.m. SUMMARY DISCUSSION AND BREAK
1. Inform Weekenders that they will be lunching together in their tables.
 2. Advise Weekenders that this is the last time they will be in the Rollo Room – tell them to take their belongings into the chapel.
- 12.55 p.m. BIBLE RECESSIONAL – 3 Weekenders – Psalm 91:11
- 1.00 p.m. LUNCH – Grace by Weekender
- 1.30 p.m. SERENADE – 4th Day
- 1.45 p.m. APOSTOLIC HOUR – Chapel – Spiritual Director and Rector (with Rollo Room Team and Weekenders)
1. Spiritual Director leads Weekenders in an open discussion of the weekend and their relationship to Jesus Christ.
 2. Weekenders are invited to share what this Weekend has meant to them.
 3. Spiritual Director speaks about the Weekenders being Apostles for Christ, saying “This is the Apostolic Hour. Apostle means ‘sent one’. You are sent from this place by Christ to work for him. You represent his business, to serve him. It is a joyful responsibility that we have. Each of you will be called by name and presented a cross to wear to remind you of Christ’s call and of his love for you. On the back of the cross are the words “CHRIST IS COUNTING ON YOU”. Come and receive your cross as your name is called
 4. Rector calls each Weekender in turn saying “(Name), God loves you and so do I (abrazo)
 5. Spiritual Director presents the cross to each Weekender saying “(Name) God loves you and so do I” (Abrazo)
 6. Spiritual Director speaks to the Weekenders saying “We hope that you have enjoyed the weekend. We have enjoyed being with you and getting to know you. There have been a number of surprises experienced during the three days, some or all of which we want our friends to share and enjoy, so the temptation is to turn the surprises into secrets. Nothing is MORE DETRIMENTAL to a well-intentioned movement than to give others the impression that there are secrets. There are, in fact, NO secrets whatsoever! When you tell your friends about your weekend. Tell them EVERYTHING Please refrain from using the word “secret” or even “surprise” as they both may be misunderstood. These “special moments” can be referred to as just that, and be left for your friends to experience when they attend their

CURSILLO WEEKEND SCHEDULE

THIRD DAY – SUNDAY

ASST. RECTOR _____ GOPHER _____

6. Weekend. Every weekend is unique, so there will always be surprises. Besides, your friends can't possibly remember everything anyway, so tell them all about it."
7. ON MEN'S WEEKEND – Rector(a) speaks to the weekenders about the upcoming week and the women's weekend. (Outlined in Rector Talks section of the Rector's Manual)
8. Spiritual Director initiates the free prayers of Thanksgiving – all may offer prayers at this time. Conclude by all standing and saying the Lord's Prayer together.
9. Rector's Apostolic Hour Talk (from Rector talks section of the Rector's Manual)
10. 4th Day Team has placed one chair for every weekender. Spiritual Director and Rector(a) will sit in the front pews reserved for Rollo Room Team.
11. 4th Day Eucharist is conducted during Apostolic Hour.
12. Bathroom Break

2.45 p.m.

CLAUSURA – Sanctuary

1. 4th Day Rector meets weekenders at the door and escorts weekenders to their places. Rollo Room team follows.
2. 4th Dayers and Team applaud the weekenders. Rector should ask for applause to stop after a reasonable time.
3. Rector introduces himself/herself to 4th Day Community and welcomes them.
4. Rector addresses weekenders and gives "Clausura Talk" – explains that the applause was for "Praising the Lord" not the weekenders graduating.
5. Rector asks the weekenders to give their name, church, and then if they would like to make a brief comment on the weekend they may.
6. 4th Day Speaker – previous rector(a)
7. Rector introduces ENTIRE TEAM (all stand) WITHOUT SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO ANY SPECIFIC LEADERS
8. Rector continues:
9. Introduces host clergy and thanks host church.
10. Asks for all clergy to stand, thanks them for their support.
11. Asks for all members of other Cursillo communities to stand – Catholic Episcopal, Emmaus, United, Tres Diaz, Charis and TEC.
12. Asks everyone to stand and join hands. New 4th Dayers asked to connect to 4th Day Community
13. All sing Doxology
14. 4th Day Community mingle to greet new 4th Dayers.

CHART 2

THE FLOW OF THE THREE DAY MESSAGE

FIRST EVENING

A

What am I doing here?

Know Yourself

B

What does God want of me?

My Return!

Waiting Father

SILENT RETREAT
by all participants

A,B,C,D,& E are meditations given by Spiritual Directors

DAY ONE

C

What does Christ see in me?

The Three Glances

DAY TWO

D

What do I see in Christ?

The Figure of Christ

DAY THREE

E

What is Christ saying to me?

Christ's message to the participants.

TALK 1
What is a human being?
One who lives by an...

IDEAL

TALK 2
What is a Christian?
One whose ideal is...

GRACE

TALK 3
Where is this ideal to be found and lived?
In the Church...

LAITY

TALK 4
How is the ideal lived out? Faith...

GRACE IN ACTION

TALK 5
How can I live in grace?
By offering my heart

PIETY

TALK 6
How can I live in grace?
By using my mind to gain knowledge of Christ.

STUDY

TALK 7
How can I live in grace?
By hearing God's call.

MEANS OF GRACE

TALK 8
How can I live in grace?
By offering my hands.

ACTION

TALK 9
What is likely to block my progress in the life of grace?

OBSTACLES

TALK 10
How can I move beyond obstacles?
By acting with others as

LEADERS

TALK 11
What do leaders do?
Develop a plan & study the...

ENVIRONMENT

TALK 12
Where do I begin? By developing a personal rule of life.

LIFE IN GRACE

TALK 13
Can these plans actually work? YES!

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN ACTION

TALK 14
Where can I turn for help and support?
(Group Reunion)

TOTAL SECURITY

TALK 15
Can we do this?
If we do it together!
(Ultreya)

FOURTH DAY

THE FOURTH DAY!

Condensed Outlines

For all talks of the Via de Cristo weekend

1. Opening Talk

Introduction

What is the three-day weekend (Via de Cristo?)

Purpose of the Via de Cristo

For whom is the weekend intended?

How to obtain the greatest benefit from the weekend experience

How will it be accomplished?

Beginning our Via de Cristo properly

2. Meditation - "Know Yourself"

What is a meditation?

Matthew 6:26-34 - How do you think the disciples reacted to this?

We each need times for reflection.

Luke 10: 41-42 - the Martha syndrome

We can challenge and change by asking fundamental questions.

Socrates, "Know yourself."

Augustine, "That I may know you, O Lord, and that I may know myself."

The Via de Cristo - Fill our heads with ideas and our hearts with fire!

3. Meditation - "Waiting Father"

Christ pictures God in the parable of the Prodigal Son - Luke 15:11-24

Every man's story.

The cruel insult.

Father's release "He can never be mine by force."

The mad search for satisfaction in things and fun.

The difficulty and decision to return.

The incredible joyful welcome.

Day One

4. Meditation - "Three Glances"

Introduction - eyes as instruments of communication

Rich young ruler - Mark 10:17-22

Why can't we trust Jesus instead of ourselves?

Judas - John 6:66-71

What keeps us from seeing Jesus' glance of love?

Peter - Mark 14:27-31 - trust in himself

Luke 22:54-62, but he repented and we have John 21:15-17

What does Jesus see in our hearts? Our minds? What do we see?

5. Ideal
 - Introduction
 - Consequences of being human
 - Limitations of being human
 - Despite limitations, persons have limitless hopes and dreams
 - Self-giving is a measure of a person's human development
 - Process of becoming fully human
 - What is an ideal?
 - Qualities of an authentic ideal
 - Influence of the authentic ideal on life
 - Kinds of ideals
 - Necessity of knowing our ideal
6. Grace
 - Introduction, three R's of God's grace
 - Revelation of God's grace
 - Rudiments of God's grace
 - Results of God's grace
7. Laity
 - Introduction
 - God's plan for the world
 - What is the Church?
 - Mission of the Church
 - Specific mission of the layperson
 - Characteristics of the laity's mission
 - Conclusion
8. Grace in Action
 - Introduction
 - How does God help us live the life of grace?
 - Why do we need God's help?
 - When does God help us?
 - How does God help us?
 - How much help does God give?
 - Responsibility
 - Role of prayer in asking for God's help
 - Conclusion
9. Piety
 - Introduction
 - False piety
 - Authentic piety
 - Style of piety
 - Acts of piety - nourish a life of piety
 - Conclusion

Day Two

10. Meditation - "The Figure of Christ"

John 1:1-26

How can we truly know Jesus?

Jesus true God. Jesus true man.

Jesus subject to all the things of humanity.

Jesus the one mediator.

Philippians 2:8-11

Jesus our brother

11. Study

Introduction

Definition: applying minds to learn the truth

Need for study

Objectives of study

Methods of study

Obstacles to study: cowardice, childishness

Remedies to obstacles: courage, childlike humility

Resources for study

Conclusion

12. Means of Grace, Word and Sacrament

Introduction: means of grace central in life of Church

Jesus is the means of grace

Word and sacrament as means of grace

Word of God

Holy Communion

Holy Baptism

Sacramental character of the Christian life

Conclusion: the mark of the cross

OR Grace Filled Days (Day in the Life)

Introduction

Baptism

Lord's Supper

Confirmation

Marriage

Children

Ministry

Death

Conclusion

13. Action

Introduction

What is apostolic action?

False concepts of apostolic action

Authentic apostolic action

Qualities of apostolic action

Method of action

1. Make a friend
2. Become a friend
3. Bring your friend to Christ

14. Obstacles to Grace

Introduction

Definition

God's plan

Man's sin and obstacles to grace

God's remedy for our obstacles

Conclusion

15. Leaders

Introduction

Definition

Natural qualities of a leader

Supernatural qualities

Christian leaders

Me, a leader?

Conclusion

Day Three

16. Meditation - "Christ's Message to the Participant"

Who brought you here? God!

Mountain tops are lived and then shared.

Go — bear fruit.

The strength is Christ in us.

Be in community and receive by giving.

Continue this work. Go renew your community!

17. Environment

Introduction

Christianity

Environment

Study of the environment

Christian transformation of environments (evangelization)

Conclusion

18. Life in Grace
Introduction: how can we keep this faith alive?
What is this life in grace?
A plan to deepen this grace life:
- piety
- study
- action
Conclusion
19. Christian Community in Action
Introduction
Christians in the Christian community
Need for community
Christian community
Christian community in action
Conclusion
20. Total Security
Introduction
What do we insure?
How do we insure ourselves? (group reunion)
Guarantees of the insurance
Ultreya
Conclusion
21. Fourth Day
Introduction
Your mission
Your responsibility
Two dangers encountered in the fourth day
Solution to avoiding these dangers
What the Christian should be
What the Christian should have
What the Christian should know
Life is a perennial Via de Cristo
- OR Total Security in the Fourth Day
Introduction
Perseverance of Christ in life
Purpose of the group - to be in community
Elements of the group reunion
Characteristics of the group reunion
Group and its reunion
Ultreya: the reunion of the groups
Purpose and mission of the ultreya
Characteristics and content of the ultreya
Conclusion

THE AUTHENTIC THREE-DAY WEEKEND OF VIA DE CRISTO

Introduction

“Renewal movement,” is the description most often assigned to the Via de Cristo. Christianity can be viewed as a renewal of the Jewish faith and Judaism the renewal of “Creation’s faith.” Life in this world brings changes and it is normal and natural to practice renewal in order to elicit healing from the many and varied wounds caused by hostile changes. Healthy renewal is not going back, it is bringing forward that which is good and sane. It encourages those ideals that will make a good tomorrow possible.

Via de Cristo is a Christian renewal effort, inspired by God that works faith and renewal within the Church. While those who participate in the Via de Cristo would never claim singular rights to renewal, there is a solid confidence in its ability to provide healing, strength, and an effective guide for Christian living.

Wordsmyth[®] has two definitions for “authentic”. First, real, genuine, veritable; and second, conformance with the known facts, authoritatively valid, approved, accepted, and substantiated. When speaking of an Authentic 3-Day Weekend we are clearly referring to the second definition. It is requisite to keep a Via de Cristo Weekend “authoritatively valid” in order to protect its renewal benefits. “The more you know of Via de Cristo the less you want to change it,” is often repeated. This phrase has evolved from years of observing new additions, which, while well meaning, actually detracted from the overall impact.

This pamphlet has been written in an effort to protect the authenticity of the Via de Cristo renewal. It is designed to quiet possible human presumption and discourage unnecessary conflict among those using the method while recognizing the necessity for openness in the evaluation process. Through the Holy Spirit’s inspiration, this pamphlet outlines “best practices” and can be of practical assistance to all Via de Cristo secretariats. In good Christian style it is a presentation not a legislation. An open and loving dialogue within these established guidelines is wholeheartedly encouraged.

Essentials

An authentic 3-day weekend requires an authentic 4th-day movement. The business of Via de Cristo is *not* to put on weekends but to help build and equip participants in a 4th-day community. Responsible leaders will look at their 4th-day program soberly, cautious not to over-plan weekends. The weekend will be authentic only to the degree that group reunion, ultreya and true apostolic witness complete it. This is often the most overlooked truth. In the warmth and enthusiasm that surrounds a Via de Cristo Weekend, it is easy to pursue that experience for its own sake. Such emotionalism must be resisted. A balanced approach with proper emphasis on each dimension of the Via de Cristo method will more effectively accomplish the movements purpose.*

* For more detail on the strategy and purpose of the Via de Cristo see chapters 2 & 3 of The Essentials of the Via de Cristo published by the National Lutheran Secretariat of Via de Cristo

Each authentic weekend has a number of activities that are essential, and others that are subject to individual secretariat initiative. We will first make clear the distinction between those items that are essential and those that may not be. Then, we will look more closely at those essentials that are structural in nature and quite visible. Finally, we will review the dynamics that may be less apparent but are equally essential.

Essential Structural Elements

For the weekend, we have a plan and a general awareness of what needs to be done. We know what normally happens so that, at any given moment, what should happen and how it should happen, may in fact, happen. In outlining this, we draw a clear distinction between what is essential and what is adiaborous. Webster's New World Dictionary defines essential as: (1) of or constituting the intrinsic fundamental nature of something: basic, inherent... (2) absolute; complete; perfect; pure... (3) necessary to make a thing what it is; indispensable; requisite. And, Webster's defines adiaborous as: (1) morally neutral or indifferent; neither wrong nor right. (2) in medicine, neither harmful nor helpful.

The following items are essential for an authentic Three Day Weekend: palanca, retreat, 72 hours, 5 meditations, 15 talks, note taking, discussions, posters, decuria sharing, celebration of repentance, Holy Communion daily, closing and crosses. There may be some debate within the Via de Cristo about a specific individual item, but as a rule these are all and each present during an authentic weekend.*

Through the years many other activities have been used on the weekends. To name just a few, we have: skits, send-offs, foot washings, singing for meals, trinkets, and serenades. These optional activities are neither wrong nor right, but they are not considered essential to the purpose of the weekend. It is not our intention to have a weekend full of "good things" only to miss what is essential. More is NOT better!

Let's reflect on some of the reasons for this. If too much is added to a weekend schedule, it crowds out important time for reflection and community-building. The real need is for regular, consistent breaks and "free time" to think, meditate, or get to know other participants. Sufficient rest is necessary for *all* participants so all can be alert and responsive. There also needs to be adequate opportunities to seek Spiritual Direction first for individual needs but also to create better understanding of Spiritual Direction in the 4th day.

An example of how an adiaborous activity crowds essentials is the way palanca is often mishandled. Genuine palanca is deep, intentional, and selfless prayer; in a word "sacrificial." It takes place before, during and after the weekend. It is second only to the Holy Spirit in importance. Palanca letters are written to the participants so they will be aware of the many efforts on their behalf. But, "palanca" is misapplied when the team spends inordinate time before and during the weekend doing "cutesy" name tags, bookmarks, book covers, envelopes, etc. It is especially sad when someone spends \$10 at a bookstore and calls it palanca (unless there was genuine sacrifice made to set aside that \$10). Gifts of love are nice, but they are not the essential palanca.

Whenever a weekend is being planned it is crucial that the essentials be emphasized and the adiaborous placed in such a way as to assist the essentials. In many movements these extras

* for definitions of these essentials see The Essentials of the Via de Cristo published by the National Lutheran Secretariat of Via de Cristo pages 31 & 32

have reached such a beloved status that they may be viewed as essential. Each movement must carefully evaluate each activity that takes place. Much prayer and conscious discussion must be used concerning the impact on the purpose and results of the weekend. Nothing should be added or discarded without clear and consistent reason. In each and every situation adiaphorous must be placed as secondary to essential. Please respect the significance of healthy tradition without violation of the less apparent essentials. It is advisable for a governing secretariat on a routine basis to dissect all its weekend practices; to examine each for its validity and contribution to an authentic weekend.

The following positions or roles can be considered essential:

Rector (An experienced layperson who will accept responsibility for calling, training, and leading the team for a weekend); Spiritual Director(s) (Ordained clergy who support and are trained in the Via de Cristo method and give the 5 Grace talks); Assistant Rector (or Head Cha, an experience layperson who will assist the Rector by organizing and directing the physical plant for the weekend); 10 Rollistas (Team members who will each deliver a 20-45 minute talk to stimulate discussion among those who participate); Auxiliary (Additional personnel who will perform the necessary labor of the weekend.).

Additional staff may be added as needs become apparent. But, all changes must again respect all essentials. Each weekend needs properly trained leadership including the rector, team and Secretariat members. Future leadership must be intentionally cultivated. Fundamental considerations include:

- Enthusiasm for the mission of Christ and His Church
- Understanding the purpose of the weekend
- Genuine desire to build community
- Ability to instill the method through personal example
- Humble attitudes with a spirit of cooperation
- Acceptance of the decisions of the secretariat without trying to change the process
- Knowing how vital grouping is and participating in their own 4th day group
- Actively serving Christ and His Church in their environments -- NOT using Via de Cristo as their church

It is essential that Spiritual Directors understand the purpose and vision of Via de Cristo and the vital role they play. They need to be committed to full participation in team preparation and in the weekend, owning responsibility to become an integral part of the community before the weekend ever begins. Their rollos need to stay within the flow of the weekend message. Spiritual Directors are not to be put into compromising positions at any part of the process. Please remember that spiritual direction is not in-depth counseling.

Sponsorship is a key to creating the authentic three-day weekend. Haphazard and /or random selection of participants is neither desirable nor wise. It takes prayer, time, and follow-through. Educating the community of the sponsor's responsibilities is one of the most critical tasks of the secretariat.*

The schedule established by the secretariat should be faithfully observed. The rector is given latitude in team selection and training methods but the weekend design is established by the secretariat. The greatest rector brings gifts of administration and will lead a weekend that most

* For more information see Chapter 7 of The Essentials of the Via de Cristo published by the National Lutheran Secretariat of Via de Cristo

closely resembles the secretariat's intention. Remember, the primary charge to the rector is to train the team, their reward is to preside over the weekend and watch it unfold.

The three-day community should be protected from outside influence as much as possible and enveloped in prayer. The entire outside community consciously needs to protect the participants' isolation.

Essential Socio-Spiritual Elements

It is not always easy to describe the less apparent essentials of a weekend. You know when they are there and you can sense when they are absent. The key to their presence lies in the spirit that is generated by the team as it gathers. Are they open and yielding to the Holy Spirit or are they filled with their own desires? Are they grateful for the privilege to serve their Lord or are they coming for a great experience? Is it God's will or my will that is most in charge? The following essentials are some of those that need to be generated during the weekend.

Keep it simple. If there is any admonition that *must be heard* it is this one. It must be clearly understood that the weekend is really a whole piece. One long talk broken down into 15 sections that are given by both lay and clergy and extending through the three days. Ideas build steadily, one on the other. The talks and meditations probe each person and in turn help each person to probe their "world" finding new ways to relate the gospel to everyday life.

There is a flow through the entire weekend that is consistent through the meditations, talks, music, and discussions. If the weekend contains gimmicks, hoopla, roosters, skits, etc. it can break the flow. The impression is created that Via de Cristo is really about all these "things" and the connected message is lost.

Listening is essential. It is not a technique so much as it is an attitude. It is showing respect to whoever might be sharing. Seek lovingly to understand not only what is said but also the feeling within the words.

Table discussion and posters are at the heart of the weekend; tried and true parts of the method. This is when and where the message most often takes root and becomes a part of a participant's thought process. They must never be "cut" due to rollo over-run.

These discussion groups around the tables are really group reunions. The gathering of the groups to share the meaning of each day in the evening is an image of the ultreya.

Free time contributes to mental and physical health by providing "breathing space" and growing time in the often-dense schedule. It helps the participants "pull back" from the message and internalize through reflection. It also increases the likelihood of personal contact with other participants, building community.

An overly controlled situation without freedom gives the impression of "brain-washing". Participants must feel the freedom to proceed at their own pace and not be intimidated into keeping up. For the participant not to "get it" in any prescribed fashion is okay!

Remember:

- Psychological and spiritual necessity is individualistic.
- It takes time to build trust -- trust in each other, trust in the message, trust in the method.
- Sleep is necessary so that all can be alert.

- Participants have come to the weekend freely. They are seeking a way to enrich their Christian life. We are here for them.
- We must trust the Holy Spirit.

The general atmosphere of the weekend is to be prayerful, reflective, and above all else sincere. All participants need to feel the openness and honesty, to experience an authentic Christian community! At the end of the day no one should doubt that what is being lived is true. Things that might be distracting from the true purpose of the weekend should be avoided, especially interruptions from outside the weekend.

Connection to community is the last essential that we teach the new participants. Their connection to community is not just the small one created on the weekend but the larger community as a whole – the Via de Cristo movement, the Church, the communion of saints, and the world in which we are to evangelize. This is not always accomplished on the weekend. Assimilation may take place through Ultreya and group reunion.

Evaluation

The following is a process a secretariat could employ to evaluate their weekends. It was developed in committee by the National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) to assist in understanding the incredible diversity within the secretariats that compose the NLS.

First, a practice is run through a series of critical questions, the ones printed below were especially helpful. Then, based on the answers to the questions, it is assigned a designation. After the discussion and designation a brief summary is prepared so that others would benefit from the work. This summary provides a helpful record and should be kept available for future evaluations. Many hours of secretariat discussion can be saved by a simple review of these evaluations.

An authentic 3-day weekend will emphasize the essential, limit the adiaphorous and eliminate the detrimental. It is so easy for “neat” things to become part of the tradition and thereby alter the weekend.

The critical questions are:

1. What details are involved in the practice? How is it done and what does it take in time and resources?
2. Does the practice assist the weekend’s purpose? How?
3. Is the practice historical? Did others find it useful? Why? Does the practice meet today’s needs?
4. Does it promote spiritual growth as opposed to emotionalism?
5. Is the practice ‘fluff’? Constructive? Necessary?
6. Does it teach and encourage change (spiritual growth) leading to a change in the environment?
7. Is it a natural fit to the progression of the weekend?
8. Does it crowd essentials or “cramp” the weekend? If time runs short can it be cut or shortened without damaging the integrity of the weekend?
9. Are there other practices that could be substituted?
10. Does it involve the Via de Cristo community in a healthy way?

The 5 possible designations are:

1. Essential - as defined in The Essentials of The Via de Cristo Manual published by the National Lutheran Secretariat.
2. Recommended - A practice that by its own internal integrity has demonstrated its usefulness in accomplishing the purpose of the weekend.
3. Adiaphorous – as defined in The Essentials of The Via de Cristo Manual.
4. Discouraged – a practice that may have gained the status of “tradition” but actually works against the purpose and intent of the weekend.
5. Detrimental – a practice that has become a part of the weekend but not only works against the purpose but could have devastating consequences for some participants.

Examples

The following evaluations were conducted at the NLS and are presented as examples.

Example (1)

The practice: SEND-OFF -- On the first night of a weekend the community gathers at a designated meeting site to welcome participants. Once all new participants have arrived they sit together with their sponsors in a large enough area for all to sit comfortably. An opening prayer is offered and a simple welcome is given to all. Then the name of each participant is read alternating between new participants and team members. When a name is called the person rises offers a quick goodbye and exits to get on a bus to the actual weekend site. The route from the door to the transportation is lined with community who will applaud and offer words of cheer and encouragement (ultreya). This line may involve several hundred feet of smiling happy faces, each person clapping and wishing the participants a wonderful weekend. In places where there is no travel involved the community will line the hallways as participants walk through on their way to the next meeting place (often the dining room).

Evaluation: ADIAPHOUOUS

Pluses

1. Name is called and person is warmly recognized. This begins a long succession of events in which the person gets called “by name” and warmly received by others. This is a powerful dynamic of the weekend and needs to begin as soon as possible.
2. It is historical. From the early days of the movement when weekends were held in monasteries and camps the participants would meet at a local church and have a bus ride together to the site. Cursillistas would come to give them a big positive sendoff.
3. There is community involvement. Following the departure of the weekend participants the community will usually remain to lift the weekend in prayer.
4. A bus ride can add to the feeling of getting away on retreat and offer an opportunity for a warm-up dialogue between team and new participants.

Minuses

- 1) A new participant may feel threatened. Most people are not accustomed to such strong recognition. It can feel overwhelming. Further, a walk down a narrow aisle of people may be extremely uncomfortable, if not frightening, for individuals who have experienced abuse.
- 2) There is an expense and potential logistics problem. What was once a helpful convenience to provide travel arrangements can become “gymnastics” to create the

appearance of “getting away”. The Transportation must provide room for all the participants. This could easily mean two buses.

3. For movements that like to use a slow progressive revelation of support staff, the large group of community for the send-off might be too much too soon.

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*Example (2)*

The practice: SERENADE – The community sings for the participants of the weekend. This is to be “music from the heart.” -- a gift of grace (not entertainment!). It is to focus attention on Jesus Christ and His great love for us. It also, in a subtle and powerful way, assures the participants that there is a whole community committed to assisting them in reaching out to change environments. This gift may be offered on Saturday night, Sunday morning, and/or Sunday afternoon. The singers may be seen or unseen. The placement and visibility will often depend on the facilities and logistics.

Evaluation: RECOMMENDED

Pluses

1. It shows God’s love and grace.
2. Music is a vital part of life and touches the heart – the angels sing!
3. It is a sacrificial gift in that many community members travel great distances to serenade the participants.
4. It passes all the critical questions for evaluation.

Minuses

1. It may impact a “hurting” participant negatively (divorce, death of a loved one, etc.).
2. It can disrupt the integrity of the team through competition and jealousy.
3. There are opportunities for inappropriate contact and inappropriate responses on the part of all participants on the weekend.
4. Anticipation of the serenade by team members can distract and adversely affect the dynamics of the weekend.
5. Hurt feelings do occur when there is a large turnout from one church, spouse or family group and not from another. “There wasn’t anyone here for me.”

There are few dynamics within Via de Cristo that have evolved into more diverse practices. This speaks to its power in communication, but like any source of power, it needs to be used with care and understanding. It should lift up and engage the participants in the weekend. It should be placed to enhance the natural progression and not overshadow the essentials. It is **strongly** advised that any participation by spouses or people very close to first time participants be discouraged (in this case prayer out of sight is the best route for them). There are several additional factors to consider. Should serenaders be seen? Who can and/or should participate? What music will be used? When does it fit into the weekend? Below are some reflections on these factors.

SEEN

When serenaders are seen, it puts faces on the love being expressed. Participants feel that there is a tangible, visible connection. The disadvantages include the possibility of inappropriate contact, it is unnecessary for there to be any touching, hugging, etc. for the participants to experience the gift. Some serenaders feel the need to put on a production – this distorts the “gift from the heart.”



## UNSEEN

When singers are unseen there is a sense of mystery and wonder. Spouses can participate, but should not be encouraged. The fact that singers are unseen significantly reduces the temptation to entertain. A potential disadvantage is that not all facilities have space to hide the singers. Further, Americans are visual people, this channel is lost when the singers are hidden.

## WHOLE COMMUNITY SERENADES

More involvement by more people! The participants begin to sense the larger community that will be available to them for support. But, it invites outside influences into the weekend.

## TEAM ONLY SERENADES

Another channel to demonstrate love without the contamination of outside influences that disturbs the cloistered environment.

## OPPOSITE SEX SERENADES

“God created them male and female.” There is a natural impact that is created because of who we are as people.

## MUSIC

Singing songs familiar to participants can punctuate the progression of the weekend and enhances the theme. (Opposite sex voices can be very powerful)

## WHEN AND WHERE

Do not over do it. Strategic placement of serenades and songs for the serenade is always crucial. It is too easy to disrupt the flow of the weekend with inappropriate songs or to crowd the schedule for the serenade's sake. Be very cautious about ever invading private space (like sleeping rooms).

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Example (3)

The practice: FLOWERS – In addition to their role as table and altar decoration many movements will use flowers for distribution to participants on the weekend.

Evaluation: DISCOURAGED/DETRIMENTAL

Pluses

1. Love gift
2. Symbol of grace and beauty
3. Speaks from the heart of both Christ and the serenader
4. They are PRETTY!! Colorful –de colores!

Minuses

1. ALLERGIES!
2. Expense
3. Opens and even encourages favoritism
4. Logistics -- What do we do with them after?

The possibility of allergic reaction overshadows most benefits. A secretariat will want to be *extremely* careful about introducing flowers to any part of the weekend. Those who already do may want to revisit the practice.

Conclusion

Eduardo Bonnín was once asked by a well-meaning inquirer, “How did you develop the Cursillo®?” With a look of surprise and consternation he said “We never developed the Cursillo®? ... the Holy Spirit gave it to us!” In a similar fashion we can not create an authentic 3-day Weekend ... the Holy Spirit gives it to us! The whole Via de Cristo is a gift of God’s grace and we are truly blessed when we allow God to perform His work in our lives.

If pressed, we might say that The authentic Three-days will be realized when:

- At the end of the weekend, everyone will know a method of renewal that works
- Prayer is offered for the Church, the movement and all who are responsible in them
- Attention is turned from "doing" the Three-days to "living" its message
- Past participants seek more to serve Christ and His Church and less the Via de Cristo
- Via de Cristo leaders read widely and well in the literature of their movement
- Units are formed to live both the structure of Via de Cristo and the spirit of Via de Cristo
 - this is done through service to the Church
 - this is done by evaluating
 - this is done by the secretariat
- Leaders of the movement work with their clergy, bishops and church leaders developing a plan which gives the Via de Cristo its distinctive mission as a movement of the Church