

CANDIDATE SELECTION

The Christianization of environments depends to a great extent on the proper selection of candidates. For this reason, the selection of candidates is of the utmost importance.

The criteria for selection must always be the effectiveness of the candidate as the leaven of his or her environment and circumstances.

The 3-day Cursillos are for people of all social classes and income levels. This variety of backgrounds is one of the reasons for the success of the Cursillo Movement. Men and women must be selected for the same reasons, maturity being a main consideration. All candidates should be selected on an equal basis so their talents may be used to achieve the purpose of the Movement. Young adults have great potential to act as agents of change now and in the future. They are, through their natural enthusiasm and freedom from attachments, in a better position to give to Christianity its heroic dimension.

“The Cursillo will always strive for heterogeneity, both in the leadership team and in the group of people making the Cursillo. This heterogeneity is the logical consequence of the immediate purpose of the Movement, which is the living out of what is fundamental for being a Christian—a calling that all people have in common. Everyone is called to become incorporated into the community of the one Church.”²⁹

“We should not have separate Cursillos for different categories of people, such as teenagers, adults, university professors, soldiers, blue-collar workers, and so forth. The heterogeneity of the Cursillo is a clear manifestation of the unity in plurality of the Church.”³⁰

Since the Cursillo seeks to help people live what is fundamental for being a Christian, Cursillo leaders must take care that individuals are not left without a community. It is within these communities that cursillistas will be able to continue to grow in Christian love and perfection. Therefore, on each Cursillo weekend we should have a sufficient number of candidates from each natural group, community or environment represented.

PURPOSE OF THE SELECTION

The purpose will always be to give Christianity a strong backbone wherever it may be, by means of living and life-giving vertebrae.

In order to ascertain who the potential vertebrae of Christianity are in a city, group of environment, it is necessary to determine the people who already constitute the living nerve of opinion and influence.

These people are not necessarily those who occupy the highest positions or are the best situated. They are the people whose decisions count with those they work and live with. Their opinions carry weight and their activities influence others.

It is necessary to study the environments, the groups that compose them and identify the individuals who are the centers of these groups. When the lives of these natural leaders are centered on Christ, those who respect them and look to them for leadership will be forced to examine their own lives in the light of Christ's love and His gift of Himself on the cross.

Note: In some environments it is possible to have several levels or groups who either isolate themselves or are isolated by circumstances. Sometimes, the only communication between these groups and others is when it becomes absolutely necessary to carry out their mutual tasks. In such cases we should find the human groups which have the greatest influence on each level. Within each of these groups there can be found certain individuals whose opinions are heard and whose attitudes are respected. These individuals are outstanding for their sense of responsibility and their ability to unite people.

THOSE WHO SHOULD GO

Those who are already functioning as the vertebrae of their environments should go. In order to see whether they are real vertebrae and not merely apparent ones, we must determine whether or not they have strength of character and a capacity for humility.

Individuals who follow the desires of their flesh and lack strong character or "hard" individuals without the capacity for being humble cannot be genuine vertebrae.

The criterion for selection will always be the effectiveness each one will have as a vertebrae for Christianity.

In order to find out who will be the best people to structure Christianity in their environments, we must love them all, but seek to discover their capacity for awe.

It is necessary, moreover, that the Spiritual Advisor's advice and the help of the brothers and sisters in the Group Reunion come into play. For the Cursillo we must seek:

_____ Those who have strength of character and self control, who are able to make their own decisions and to be self-motivated, who are mature, free and responsible;

_____ Those who are vertebrae, leaders, self-starters, movers;

_____ Those who are concerned about the social conditions of our times;

_____ Those who have the ability and desire to live in and for the community.

Always remembering that they must be able:

_____ To understand the message and to commit themselves;

_____ To be leaven of the Gospel within their environments;

_____ To discover their individual charisms and place them at the service of the community; and

_____ To receive the Sacraments of the Church.

THOSE WHO CAN GO

Those who are in a position to receive the Sacraments of the Catholic Church, or could become so can go.

The average Catholics can go because the Cursillo enhances them, from whatever position life they are. In addition, the Group Reunion helps them find their place of evangelistic service. While we recognize this fact, we must guard against having these individuals be the majority of the candidates on any given Weekend.

Keep in mind that the Lord has His ways, and at times individuals who seem average have changed in to vertebrae once their personalities have been uplifted by His grace.

THOSE WHO SHOULD NOT GO

Those who have psychological or emotional problems or whose moral life is contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church should not go.

In the case of candidates who belong to other religious denominations, we must follow the direction of the guidelines of the National Secretariat.

The National Secretariat disallows the participation of non-Catholics in Catholic Cursillo activities, and encourages their participation in other renewal programs, including Cursillo, available to them within their own denominations.

Vertebrae who are non-Catholic can be evangelized by channeling them into some other program through which Christ may transform them. They can also be invited to assist in the work of an environmental Group Reunion, if one exists, or help to develop one, if one does not exist. The emphasis must be on environmental transformation and not on the 3-day Cursillo. The important things are to help people to be transformed by Christ and become active in the work of brining their environments to Him, not necessarily to have them go on a Weekend.

CANDIDATE PREPARATION

It is absolutely necessary to prepare the candidate adequately. It is paramount that the preparation helps the candidate benefit from the Cursillo and join a Group Reunion or community in the Postcursillo.

WHEN FRIENDSHIP IS ESTABLISHED WITH THOSE SELECTED

Explain to the potential candidates the reason for the Cursillo in such a way that they will become enthusiastic about it. Since those who are interested in becoming more of a person should attend the Cursillo, it is necessary that they see the Cursillo Movement as a means for attaining their desires.

In this way, they will already be cursillistas by desire before attending.

If they are not interested either in becoming more of a person in their own sanctity, it would be much better for them (and others) not to go on a Cursillo Weekend. If they have not longing for, or interest in, the Truth (which almost always appears as a thirst for good or for some of its aspects: justice, liberty, etc.), it is much better for them not to go on a Cursillo Weekend. Whoever, in his innocence, has no problem has no need for solutions either.

If they do not have these concerns, show them the Cursillo as a solution to their problems. Once people realize their need for a deeper life in Christ, and in service to Him and others, it is then merely a matter of helping them to see that Cursillo offers them a means for fulfilling.

THE CANDIDATES DISPOSITION

1. The candidates must desire to grow in perfection as persons and as Christians.
2. They must have an attitude of listening, of friendship, and a disposition to change (a willingness to be converted).
3. The candidates must understand clearly that they are not going to attend a mere theoretical course, but that the 3-day Cursillo is about life, about persons, about the Church, about a concrete, visible and experiential community.
4. Candidates must have an eagerness for redemption and have the hope of meeting their Savior.
5. There must also be awakened, the candidates' ability to recognize and interpret the signs of the times, an attitude necessary for anyone on pilgrimage with the Church in the world.

WHO SHOULD DO THE PREPARATION?

The School of Leaders should oversee the preparation of the candidates. The actual preparation should be accomplished as an evangelization activity of a community (a Group Reunion or an Ultreya). It could also be done by an individual, who would ordinarily sponsor the candidate after a process of making a friend, being a friend to Christ, or a better relationship with Christ.

PREPARATION IN COMMUNITY

In order to achieve the goal of the Cursillo, that is, to structure Christianity, we must first have a sense of ourselves as part of Christ's Body, the church, and live as Church. Since life is only lived in concrete ways, in specific times and in specific places, one can only have a sense of Church in a given community. Therefore the best approach is to help the candidate come into contact with the community before the Cursillo Weekend itself. At the least, there must already be a community ready for the new cursillistas so that when they return from the Weekend they may find an atmosphere where they can live in a Christian style.

THE SPONSOR (GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL) MUST:

Know, at least in its general outline, the goal of the Cursillo.

Have read and agreed with the information contained in *The Cursillo Movement's Sponsor's Booklet*.

Know the candidate as well as possible and pray for direction from the Holy Spirit: Speak to God about the candidate before speaking to the candidate about God.

Give witness of an authentic Christian life, that is, live the message being given.

Provide the candidate(s) with as much information as possible. Each sponsor (group) is encouraged to provide each candidate with a copy of: *The Cursillo Movement—What Is It?*

Spark the desire for God and make it grow.

Promote an attitude of conversion.

Take responsibility for the perseverance of the candidate until he or she is fully incorporated into his or her own Christian community.

The sponsors must see that the Secretariat has all the relevant facts about the personalities and dispositions of the candidates for the Cursillo.

²⁹ *Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement*, National Ultreya Publication, 1992, section #305, page 125.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, section #307.