

GUIDE TO SPONSORS

GENERAL

The Cursillo movement is meant to be a means of renewing and revitalizing the Church. It seeks this renewal by taking Christians who are potential leaders into a three-day “Course in Christianity,” which impresses leaders with the need for a closer relationship with God through a life of piety, study, action and leadership in his environment. A plan for achieving this is presented. Essential to the plan for continued growth toward God is contact with Christ and with other committed Christians for sharing and mutual support.

The key role in the movement is that of sponsor. The sponsor is essential to the selection of candidates before the Cursillo: he/she shows his/her Christian love and concern by Palanca during the weekend, and he/she helps the new Cursillista weather the adjustment to a new life in the days after the weekend. If sponsors fail in any of these areas, the whole Cursillo movement loses its vitality. Let us consider the areas of sponsor involvement more thoroughly.

SPONSOR ATTITUDE

Sponsorship must be viewed as a total commitment, not just a partial act of selection. Sponsorship means to help someone grow through the Cursillo experience. Essentially the attitude of a sponsor should be:

1. Recognition that Cursillo is not for everyone. This is for my benefit as a sponsor and not meant to be exclusive. It helps me realize that sponsorship is not a prime apostolate in itself but as outgrowth of another apostolate. It’s something that I can offer a person in my working for the Lord but not the end result of my working for the Lord.
2. Offering the Cursillo to someone comes only after I’m willing to make a commitment to that person. If I’m not willing to go all the way, I should think twice about sponsorship.
3. Have I prayed and asked myself if this is the will of God? Have I honestly looked at my reasons for sponsoring?
4. If I have doubts about sponsoring, have I taken counsel with others?
5. Do I KNOW the person or do I just know ABOUT the person?
6. Am I open to the Spirit in the situation? Be patient and let God work.
7. How do I feel regarding sponsorship of this person’s spouse?

CANDIDATE SELECTION

Like everything in the Cursillo movement, candidate selection should be done prayerfully and thoughtfully. Cursillo is a means of providing leaders for the Christian Community and candidates for Cursillo should be capable of leadership. This does not mean only the obvious leaders – the parish council, CCD teachers, commentators, etc., but also those who by their quiet words to friends or by the example of their lives are able to lead people to God. On the other hand, people with serious personal problems – mental, emotional, marital problems, alcohol, drugs, etc. – are not the best candidates for Cursillo.

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Does this mean we reject our fellow Christians with problems? Certainly not. Our apostolic action must be more than just recruiting people for Cursillo. Listening and talking to them might help some of these persons; others might be steered to professional counseling, to a sympathetic priest, to a mission or retreat or to Alcoholics Anonymous. In these ways a troubled person might be helped to solve his or her problems, be led to a closer relationship with God, and might later become a candidate for Cursillo.

CANDIDATE ATTITUDES

Some helpful hints on candidate attitudes are as follows:

1. Does the person demonstrate a seeking attitude in his relationship with God? Is he trying to grow? If you really explore this, it will force you into discussions that will bring out true attitudes of seeking.
2. Look for signs in persons or about persons that will lead you to the timing of sponsorship or the decision to sponsor at all; i.e., pregnant women, heavy smoking, extreme marital problems, serious health or mental problems. These may lead to something else before sponsorship.
3. Is the person truly seeking to grow in his relationship to God or to solve some of his problems? This may be very hard to split apart but only the sponsor can judge this.
4. Is this person interested in a serious commitment or a weekend kick?
5. Do I see leadership potential in their activity?
6. How does the potential candidate's spouse feel about spiritual growth? What is his/her attitude?

BE TOTALLY HONEST ON THE APPLICATION!!

WEEKEND SUPPORT

Sponsors must support candidates on the weekend by providing transportation, praying and sacrificing for the success of the weekend, sending Palanca letters to the Candidate, offering help to the family, providing babysitters for children (if required) attending the Clausura.

FOURTH DAY SUPPORT

The sponsor should recognize that he/she has made a commitment to the candidate by sending him/her to the Cursillo. The sponsor must now help him/her live the Fourth Day as it was taught on the weekend, by inviting him/her to join (or form) a Group Reunion and to attend Ultreyas. In general, a sponsor must be responsive to the needs of the new Cursillista until he/she is firmly established in the Fourth Day.

<p><u>PLEASE NOTE:</u> IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE BEEN A CURSILLISTA AT LEAST SIX MONTHS BEFORE SPONSORING A CANDIDATE. YOU CAN ASK AND EXPERIENCED CURSILLISTA TO CO-SPONSOR WITH YOU.</p>
