

**BY-LAWS
FOR THE CURSILLO SECRETARIAT
OF THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE, ALBANY, NY**

PREAMBLE

The Cursillo Movement pursues two purposes: an immediate purpose -- to provide a channel for living what is fundamental for being a Christian and the end purpose -- to “vertebrae” (support) Christianity in society by means of persons who live what is fundamental for being Christian (the love of God and neighbor) in their daily lives.

Unity of purpose is essential if there is to be a natural and complete service of Jesus Christ through the Cursillo Movement. Individualism can cause the advancement of the Movement to become stagnant. The Secretariat unifies the Movement on all levels and indicates the path to be followed in essential matters of practical details as indicated in the official literature. However, Leaders should be consulted in all matters of importance before deciding what should or should not be done.

The members of the School of Leaders will be in constant communication with the Secretariat. The members of the Secretariat, for their part, should remember that the Lord, through His Bishop, has entrusted them with the responsibility of implementing an authentic Cursillo Movement in the Diocese of Albany. Conscious of each other’s talents, the Secretariat should coordinate individual contributions into a total effort in support of the Movement in all its phases – Precursillo, Cursillo and Postcursillo.

Making decisions is a difficult process and a great responsibility is assigned to the Secretariat. The support of all the Cursillistas is needed in prayer and Palanca. In guiding the Movement, the Secretariat must determine its individual potential, and contribute to the building up of the Kingdom of God.

Although the Secretariat has the Bishop’s authority to implement the Cursillo Movement in this Diocese, it should not be dictatorial but should view its authority as one of service to the Movement as a whole. The members should keep in mind that, Christ entrusted the Movement’s direction to it, through the Bishop, to whom the Secretariat will have to give an account.

The Secretariat, as a service unit, has not been established to be served but to serve the entire Cursillo Movement. In this sense, the Secretariat must be a Group Reunion whose apostolic plan is the same endeavor of the Cursillo Movement itself, planned and carried out with the idea of the greatest service to all.

Just as on the Cursillo Weekend, priests, deacons, and vowed religious bear the responsibility for spiritual guidance, and laity regulate its overall functioning, so priests / deacons / vowed religious and lay members of the Secretariat cooperate to promote the aims and objectives of the Cursillo Movement as a whole.

Article I – In the Diocese of Albany there shall be only one Secretariat for the Cursillos in Christianity which will be a functional and autonomous organism under the immediate direction of the Bishop of Albany, and dependent upon the Lay Director and Spiritual Advisor.

Article II – As a group, the members of the Secretariat shall guide and coordinate all phases of the Cursillo Movement in the Diocese of Albany, within the pastoral plan of the Bishop and the Cursillo Movement. Annually, the **Articles of Operation of the Cursillo Movement of the United States** as established by the National Secretariat, will be reviewed; a notation will be included in the Secretariat’s Minutes. Specific responsibilities of the Secretariat include:

- A. Support and communicate the policies of the National Secretariat.
- B. Receive the services of the National Secretariat and National Cursillo Center.
- C. Work with the National Secretariat for the unity and authenticity of the Cursillo Movement throughout the Regions in the United States.
- D. Respect the established copyrights and trademarks held by the National Secretariat.
- E. Support the Cursillo Movement of the United States on the Regional and National levels; this support includes:
 - 1. Ensuring Palanca for the Cursillo Movement is happening at all levels Diocesan, Regional, National, and World.
 - 2. Submitting the Regional dues and affiliation fees in a timely manner.
 - 3. Ensuring the participation by Diocesan leaders at Regional and National levels, including Regional Spring and Fall Meetings / Encounters and National Encounters.
- F. Maintain a set of By-Laws modeled on those in the latest edition of the **Leaders’ Manual**.
- G. Prepare and maintain a current and viable **Pastoral Plan** for the Albany Cursillo Movement that addresses the three phases of the Movement (Precursillo, Cursillo and Postcursillo).
- H. Maintain affiliation status with the National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement of the United States.

Article III – Members of the Secretariat, with the exception of the Spiritual Advisor(s), will be nominated by the School of Leaders and selected by the Secretariat, with approval of the Bishop, for a three (3) year term. The Spiritual Advisor(s) will be nominated by the School of Leaders and recommended by the Secretariat for appointment by the Bishop for a five (5) year term.

To assist the School of Leaders with the nomination process, a three-member Nominating Committee, designated by majority vote of Secretariat for a three year (3) term, will identify and recommend prospective members of Secretariat to the School of Leaders and Secretariat, for their consideration and approval, as vacancies occur. The Nominating Committee will consist of one current Secretariat member and two non-Secretariat members, active in the School of Leaders. The Committee will conduct its activities with prayerful discernment and outreach.

Article IV – The School of Leaders, a community of service consisting of lay persons and clergy, is the cornerstone of the Cursillo Movement, the complement and extension of the Secretariat. The School is the instrument for the Secretariat to accomplish its work. The School supplies the Secretariat with leaders who exemplify a spiritual life and are living the Cursillo method, so that these leaders may be the ferment of the Cursillo Movement in the Diocese. It is essential to have leaders in Precursillo, Cursillo, and Postcursillo phases of the Movement, who are prepared and knowledgeable of the Cursillo technique, mentality, and purpose so to effectively conduct the responsibilities of each of the phases as described in Article V.

Article V – The Secretariat shall be composed of lay persons and a Spiritual Advisor. The duties are as follows:

Members – There shall be a Lay Director, or Co-Lay Directors (one vote only), Spiritual Advisor(s), Chairperson of the School of Leaders, Chairperson of the Precursillo section, Chairperson of the Cursillo section, Chairperson of the Postcursillo section, Treasurer, and Secretary, who will be selected by a majority vote of the members of the Secretariat. Note, the Spiritual Advisor is appointed by the Bishop of Albany.

Responsibilities:

A. Lay Director: The Lay Director, in consultation with the Spiritual Advisor, will convoke, preside at, prepare and direct all meetings of the Secretariat. The Lay Director will do everything possible to promote a spirit of unity, not only among the members of the Secretariat, but also in the School of Leaders and throughout the entire Diocesan Cursillo Movement. The Lay Director will see to it that all members of the Secretariat fulfill their assigned duties. In addition, the Lay Director will make sure to provide an Annual Report and interim reports, as required, to the Bishop with the approval of the Secretariat. The Lay Director shall serve a term of three (3) years and only for a serious reason, may be re-elected for another term of office. The Lay Director cannot serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

B. Spiritual Advisor: The Spiritual Advisor(s) will oversee the spiritual needs of the Secretariat and the Movement. The Spiritual Advisor(s), who is appointed by the Bishop, maintains a link between the Movement and the Bishop's Office. To ensure proper spiritual assistance to the Movement, the Spiritual Advisor(s) will be responsible for acquiring other priests, deacons, and vowed religious to assist with the Doctrinal Rollos and Meditations during the Cursillos, as well as in support of the School of Leaders, and in the Spiritual Advisor's role during the Ultreyas. The Spiritual Advisor(s) will continually encourage Secretariat members to discern all their activities. The Spiritual Advisor(s) shall refer to the **Cursillo Spiritual Advisor's Manual**, provided by National Secretariat, for his / her responsibilities regarding the Cursillo Weekend.

C. Chairperson of the School of Leaders: The Chairperson of the School of Leaders will convoke, preside at, prepare, and direct all activities relating to the School of Leaders, with assistance from other School of Leaders participants, including the Spiritual Advisor. Upon the recommendations of the Secretariat, the Chairperson of the

School will coordinate the presenters and the Doctrinal and Technique presentations for the School, including study of the *Articles of Operation* and official Cursillo literature, as well as special activities such as workshops, seminars, etc. The Chairperson of the School will ensure that all the essential elements of the School are maintained, for continual growth of its participants. The minimum composition of the School of Leaders will be all members of the Secretariat, the selected Rectors / Rectoras for future Cursillo Weekends, and all other Cursillistas who intend to train for responsibilities in the Sections or on Cursillo Weekend Teams. All Cursillistas are welcome, and encouraged, to participate.

D. Chairperson of the Precursillo: The Chairperson of the Precursillo and his / her committee will ensure the selection and preparation of candidates who will live a Cursillo, within the Diocese, is properly implemented. The Chairperson will ensure an application for each candidate is submitted in a timely manner, as well as providing the necessary support according to particular circumstances. To ensure that this process and the necessary follow-up exists for each candidate, the Chairperson, with the assistance of his / her committee, will ensure that the sponsor or group sponsoring the candidate knows him / her and has established a sincere friendship, so as to ensure a smooth transition from the Precursillo to the Postcursillo by way of the Cursillo. Specific duties of this Committee include:

1. Ensure that each candidate / friend has received sufficient preparation and information to make an informed decision as to whether or not to attend a Cursillo Weekend. A member of the Secretariat or Precursillo Committee should conduct an information session or similar program that each candidate and his / her sponsor should attend prior to the candidate attending a Weekend.
2. Use the *Sponsor's Booklet* to educate sponsors as to their responsibility to the candidates and the Cursillo and the "*Cursillo...What Is It?*" booklet to inform candidates about the Cursillo Movement.
3. Prepare candidates for the Weekend as outlined in the latest edition of the **Leaders' Manual** and other literature of the Cursillo Movement related to candidate guidelines.
4. Establish a viable process for review of all candidate applications by the Precursillo Committee.
5. Adhere to the "Couples Policy" as set forth in the latest edition of the **Leaders' Manual** concerning those instances where either the candidate is a partner in a denominationally mixed marriage or the candidate's spouse does not intend to attend a Cursillo Weekend.
6. Provide on a regular basis a Sponsor's Workshop to inform Cursillistas about their responsibilities as Sponsors.
7. Perform such other duties as shall be assigned by the Secretariat.

E. Chairperson of the Cursillo: The Chairperson of the Cursillo ensures that all the necessary elements for the Cursillo Weekend, in coordination with the Rector/a, are available. Of note, the Cursillo Rector/a is selected by the Secretariat. The administrative / logistic support for the Cursillo Weekend program includes such things as: (1) Team

selection (approved by the Secretariat, with recommendation by the Rector/a), (2) Team preparation in coordination with the Rector/a, (3) Oversight of the Cursillo Weekend facilities, (4) Comfort (proper nourishment and rest), and (5) Necessary supplies. Specific duties of this Committee and the Teams conducting the Cursillo include:

1. Conduct the Cursillo, without variation, for three full days.
2. Use the schedule, sequence, number and content of the Rollos in the latest edition of the Step by Step, **Rector Guide** of the National Secretariat.
3. Conduct Weekends in which all candidates and lay team members are baptized Roman Catholics of the same sex who are able to or could receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.
4. The make-up of the candidates should be diverse in nature, as described in the latest edition of the **Leaders' Manual**.
5. Conduct Weekends with teams of Roman Catholic Cursillo leaders who are living in Christ, formed in the Cursillo mentality, essence, purpose, and method living the Cursillo methods of perseverance, Group Reunion and Ultreya, and have been regular participants in the School of Leaders for at least one year prior to team service.
6. Schedule a Cursillo Weekend only if an active Postcursillo is available to integrate new Cursillistas.
7. Emphasize the importance of Group Reunion and Ultreya throughout the Cursillo Weekend.
8. Perform such other duties as shall be assigned by the Secretariat.

F. Chairperson of the Postcursillo: The Chairperson of the Postcursillo and his / her Committee ensure that every Cursillista within the Diocesan Movement has the opportunity to grow in their Fourth Day. This is accomplished by ensuring a link between the School of Leaders and the Ultreyas within the Diocese. Furthermore, the Chairperson ensures that the Ultreyas maintain their essence, by their living and sharing of the love of God and of neighbors in the environments. The Chairperson is also responsible for scheduling and coordinating Diocesan, Regional, and National Workshops. Specific duties of this Committee include:

1. Encourage friendship and personal contact with Cursillistas in their Fourth Day.
2. Encourage participation by Diocesan Cursillo leaders in the various Cursillo Workshops and Cursillo de Cursillos (CDCs) that have been developed for use on a Regional level, and on a Diocesan level, to enrich and educate the Cursillo leaders as to the proper and authentic purpose of the Cursillo Movement on the Diocesan, Regional and National levels.
3. Coordinate a periodic Spiritual Retreat for all Cursillistas that fosters an opportunity to make friends, rekindle friendships and deepen the three encounters with self, Christ and others discovered during the Cursillo Weekend.

4. Encourage and facilitate the formation and sustaining of friendship Group Reunions and Ultreyas at both the diocesan and sub-diocesan levels.
5. Ensure that the Ultreya(s) is (are) offered for all Cursillistas and conducted following the essential elements described in the latest edition of the **Leaders' Manual**.
6. Perform such other duties as shall be assigned by the Secretariat.

G. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall handle the financial matters of the Albany Cursillo Movement. The Treasurer ensures that the Movement is financially solvent at all times, and that all Secretariat, Regional, and National financial obligations are met. It is also the responsibility of the Treasurer to order the required books, publications, and other supplies, needed by the Movement. Specific duties include:

1. The Treasurer shall have the duty to receive and care for all monies belonging to the Albany Cursillo Movement.
2. The Treasurer shall also have full authority to receive and give receipts for all amounts due to the Movement, endorse checks and warrants in its name and on its behalf and receive full discharge for the same in accordance with these By-Laws.
3. The Treasurer shall prepare the annual operating Budget. The Secretariat shall review and approve the Budget.
4. The Treasurer shall render to the Secretariat, at regular meetings of the Secretariat, or whenever it shall be requested by the Secretariat as a whole, or by any member of the Secretariat, an account of all transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the Movement, and shall have the power to require all Albany Cursillo members to submit upon request any and all reports and statements as may be required relative to all financial transactions of the Albany Cursillo Movement that are necessary to permit the carrying out of the duties and obligations of Treasurer.
5. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as shall be assigned by the Secretariat and as are incidental to the office of Treasurer of a not-for-profit corporation in New York State.

H. Secretary: The Secretary will record the Minutes of all Meetings of the Secretariat and ensure they are distributed promptly to all who should receive them, upon review and approval by the Secretariat. Annually, copies of the approved Meeting Minutes will be forwarded to the Bishop of Albany, as well as the Regional Coordinator and the National Cursillo Center. The Secretary will ensure all mailing lists are current and will assume responsibility for maintaining copies of all correspondence and mailings sent out by Secretariat. He / she will retain all documents, records, and Minutes of Meetings of the Secretariat, in a proper and safe manner; and perform such other duties and responsibilities as shall be assigned by the Secretariat.

Article VI. The Diocesan Secretariat will maintain communication with the Regional and National Secretariats, which shall be supported by the entire Cursillo Movement, spiritually through prayer and Palanca, as well as materially through the necessary financial contributions.

Article VII. The Diocesan Secretariat will implement the Cursillo Movement in the Diocese of Albany according to that which is essential and fundamental as outlined in the official literature of the Movement in the United States.

Article VIII. Since the Secretariat is itself a unit of service, and serves as a Group Reunion, there shall be sharing of Piety, Study and Action among its members.

Article IX. Amendments to these By-Laws need to be proposed by a member of the Secretariat. Amendments may be made, subject to approval by the Bishop of Albany, at any regularly scheduled Meeting. Approval of an Amendment requires at least two-thirds vote of the entire Secretariat. Proposed Amendments must be submitted to the Secretariat at least one month in advance of the Meeting at which the proposed Amendment is to be discussed. Voting on the proposed Amendment will take place at the next regularly scheduled Meeting, following the Meeting at which it was discussed.

Article X. The terms of all Secretariat members may be extended up to a maximum of an additional full-term or to a partial term, by majority vote of the Secretariat, so to accommodate the needs of the Movement, by ensuring a continuity of members, while preventing a loss of expertise or an unfilled vacancy. The pertinent Secretariat member must be agreeable to any such extension. At the end of a normal term, or extended term, members will accept a one year waiting period before any further reappointment to any Secretariat position.

Article XI. Temporary committees / sub-committees and other support positions may be appointed by the Secretariat by a majority vote.

Article XII. Vacancies on Secretariat: If there is a vacancy in the position of Lay Director, the Chairperson of the School of Leaders shall assume duties of Lay Director until a new Lay Director is nominated by the School of Leaders and is subsequently selected by the Secretariat pursuant to Article III. A vacancy in any other position on the Secretariat shall be filled by nomination of the School of Leaders and selection by the Secretariat members pursuant to Articles III and X.

Article XIII. Participation in Meeting by Telephone and/or Video Conference: Any one or more members of the Secretariat may participate, *due to unusual circumstances*, in a meeting by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment or by electronic video screen communication. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such meeting as long as all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time and each member can participate in all matters before the Secretariat, including, without limitation, the ability to propose, object to, and vote upon specific action to be taken by the Secretariat. This flexibility is limited in nature to unusual circumstances only, because the Secretariat is a Group Reunion under the Cursillo Charism requiring personal interaction.

Article XIV. Review of By-Laws: The By-Laws will be reviewed annually, with notation in the Secretariat Minutes. Copies of the By-Laws and any Amendments will be forwarded to the Bishop of Albany, as well as the Regional Coordinator and the National Cursillo Center.

Rev. January 2021

The foregoing By-Laws were approved and adopted by the Secretariat at its regular meeting on January 26, 2021.

/s/ Robert Van Alstine
Secretary
Albany Cursillo Movement

References:

1. *Articles of Operation, United States Cursillo Movement* (Rev 1, Nov 2018)
2. *Leaders' Manual*, United States Catholic Cursillo Movement (9th edition, June 2006)
3. *NYS Non-Profit Revitalization Act*