

## Business Structure of Cursillo

An elderly woman had just returned to her home from a rosary service when she was startled by an intruder. As she caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables, she yelled, "Stop! Acts 2:38!" Which you and I know says, "Turn from your sin."

The burglar stopped dead in his tracks. Then the woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar, "Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture at you."

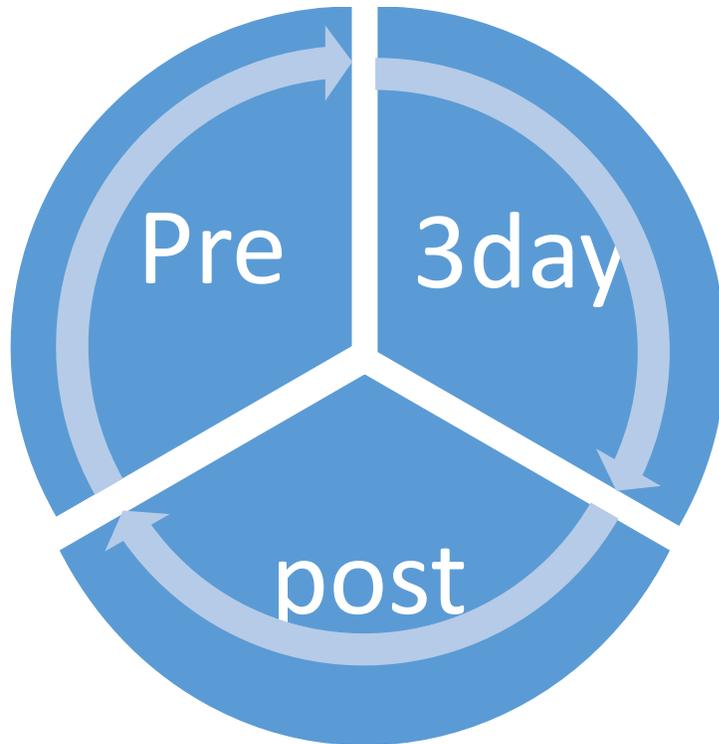
"Scripture?" replied the burglar, "She said she had an axe and two 38s!"

Introduction: Tonight we are going to talk about the "Business Structure" of the Cursillo movement. In Cursillo parlance, the administrative board that makes the weekends happen is called a Secretariat. The Secretariats exist to preserve the dynamic unity of the Cursillo Movement. The goal of my talk is to describe the Secretariat Chair positions, and then how this plugs into the bigger structure of Cursillo leadership in the region and Nation.

Let me digress for a second. "God did not become a structure, He became man". (Eduardo Bonnín) Mark 2:27 says, "Then he said to them, "The Sabbath(Law) was made for man, not man for the Sabbath(Law). Leadership in Cursillo is not about creating laws or limits, it is about sharing the Charism. However we still need people to foster team formation and to run sponsors workshops and secure a place to hold the weekend and to pay for the rent and supplies.

Everything in Cursillo begins with the person. Before we begin to study the Secretariat, let's look at what the Cursillistas see when they make a weekend?

First they are approached by a friend and asked to consider making a weekend. They might get invited to an Ultreya or a reunion group. After trying for a couple of years to get out of it, they finally fill out the application and send it to a Cursillo address with a check. A few days later they get information about what to pack for the weekend. On the Thursday of the retreat they are picked up by their sponsor and driven to the weekend. They live their weekend and the friend who asked them in the first place helps them get into a group reunion. They might try out more than one group reunion so they might go to a few Ultreys to meet people from other groups. For most that is it.



Next, I need to describe how Cursillo defines the phases of a weekend. We divide the “cycle” into three phases. We call the time and activity that needs to happen before a weekend the “Pre-Cursillo”. We refer to the weekend as the Cursillo. And the time after the weekend that we tell the Cursillista to call their “fourth day” as “Post-Cursillo.” Remember that the focus of our efforts is to bring Jesus into our environment.

What needs to happen in the **Pre-Cursillo** phase? Remember the motto, Make a Friend, Be a Friend, Bring a friend to Christ. Everyone who has made a weekend is involved. We are to be a witness of Christ. The best tool that we have for attracting potential candidates is to show enthusiasm and joy. People will see this and they will want to also be like that. Our objective should be to serve in our environment. Our objective should not simply be to get people to make a weekend. This is not a numbers game. Yet, Cursillistas should always be on the lookout for leaders to sponsor as potential candidates. Candidates can come from your current friends, or they can be new friends that you meet and discover to be good candidates for a weekend.

Notice that the fourth day is connecting back to the Pre-Cursillo. That connection is through sponsorship. To that end the Pre-Cursillo offers Sponsorship workshops to help coach new sponsors through the process of getting their candidates signed up. In addition Pre-Cursillo has a team of parish representatives that are there to offer more support during the Pre-Cursillo phase. I will talk a bit more about Parish Representatives a little later on.

Next we have the Cursillo **Weekend** phase. While we try not to make any phase more important than any other, this phase has the most details. We start with team formation months before a weekend. We discern a rector or rectora. Then we gather a team. The team gets their assignments. The team spends months in preparation. We need a place to live the weekend. We have supplies to gather. We need to ask other Cursillo communities to pray for our candidates and the success of our weekend. Ideally the sponsors will have prepared the candidates for both during and after the weekend. Then we hold the weekend.

The third phase of Cursillo is the **Post Cursillo**. This begins right away after the weekend. The sponsor should invite their candidate to attend their group reunion in order to see how the meeting is structured. If necessary the sponsor and Parish representative should be ready to introduce the new Cursillista to other group reunions in the area. The second responsibility of a sponsor is to take the new Cursillista to an Ultreya. Then the new Cursillista sponsors their own candidate.

So the first three chair persons on the Sacramento Secretariat are to support the three phases; Pre-Cursillo chair, 3 day Chair and Post Cursillo Chair. But we have a little more work to do.

We need to have a method of training leaders how to serve on a weekend team and how to serve on the Secretariat. We call this the School of Leaders.

From the book, Fundamental Ideas. "The School is an instrument of apostolic outreach to people who have lived the experience of a Cursillo weekend. It helps them discover, accept, and grow in their vocations, bringing them together so that together they can take on the responsibility of being leaders in the Church, in the Movement and in their respective secular environments."

On the night of the school and after we receive the lesson we breakout into small groups to discuss the challenges of the Pre-Cursillo, 3 Day weekends and Post-Cursillo. Notice the School of Leaders points back to the 3 day weekend. We have a chair position who oversees the School.

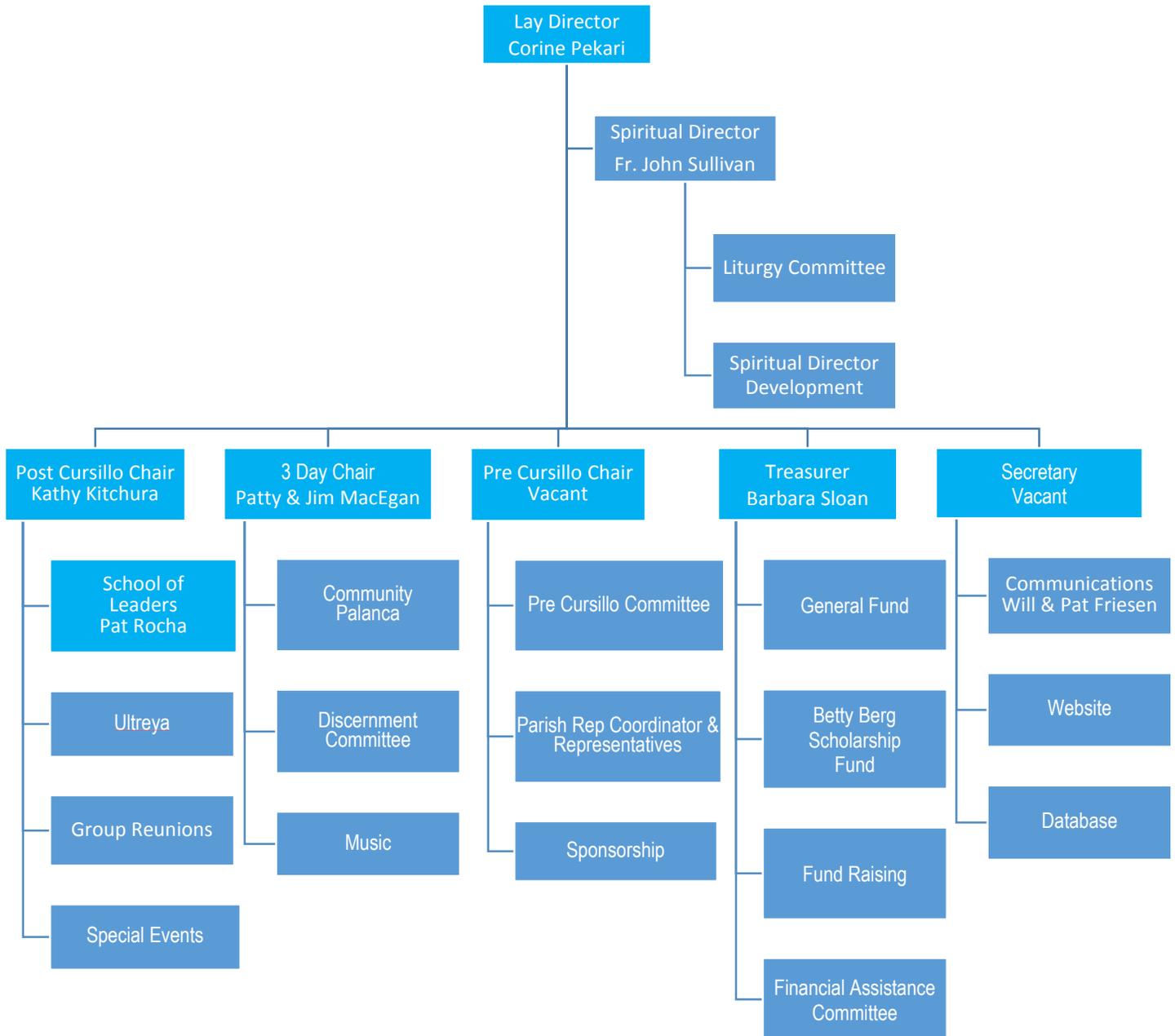
We need someone to watch our money and pay the bills. We need someone to document the Secretariat meetings and to manage the communications out to the community. So we call upon a Treasurer and Secretary.

You can infer by the fact that all of our chair positions are held by Laypersons" that we are run by laity. Cursillo is a "Lay" movement. We need a person from the laity to direct this group of chairpersons. This function is appropriately named a Lay Director.

Although we are a lay movement we still need to ensure that we do not wonder too far off of the right path, so we need an Advisor. The advisor is a member of the clergy. We call him our Spiritual Advisor.

Within each diocese, the Cursillo Movement is allowed to exist with the blessing of the local Bishop. Our secretariat provides a written plan and a financial report to the Bishop each year. The Bishop has the authority and responsibility to control the movement.

Here is our Secretariat.



Notice each Chair person has its focus and subcommittees.

**Parish Representatives** support activities in Pre-Cursillo, Post-Cursillo and sometimes the Secretary, but for simplicity sake they are connected to the Secretariat under the Pre-Cursillo. Our goal is to have a parish representative in every parish in the diocese.

Each Secretariat has a set of “**By-Laws.**” These are written by the Secretariat to further define the roles of the members. These By-Laws are ratified by a consensus of the Secretariat. Because each Diocese puts together their own By-Laws, the structures tend to vary a little.

Finally, in the Sacramento Diocese we have an English Secretariat, an Hispanic Secretariat and a Filipino Secretariat.

### **The Regional Secretariat**

We are part of region eleven. Region XI is comprised of California, Nevada and Hawaii. In this Region we have English, Spanish, Filipino, Vietnamese, Portuguese and Korean communities.

The Regional Secretariat is composed of all the Diocesan Lay Directors and the all the Diocesan Spiritual Advisors within a region. One of their responsibilities is to determine and meet the needs for the various diocesan Cursillo Movements within the region. This Secretariat has voice and vote and is responsible for selecting the Regional Service Team members who will serve all the dioceses of that region. Non-voting members of the Regional Secretariat include the Regional Coordinator, Regional Spiritual Advisor, and the three Regional Service Team Members.

Besides being an agent to safeguard the Cursillo Movement’s mentality, essence, and purpose, the Regional Secretariat is also responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

- Determine the educational needs for the various diocesan Cursillo Movements within the region.
- Determine the educational needs of those attending Regional meetings and functions.
- Encourage the Regional Coordinating Group and Regional Service Team members to promote and conduct nationally recognized workshops throughout the region.
- Provide an atmosphere for open sharing among the various diocesan Cursillo leaders.
- Help ensure proper communication between the Regional leaders and the Cursillistas within the diocesan Cursillo Movements.

Regional XI puts on two “Encounters” each year. Our representative of the English speaking Cursillos in regional XI is Linda Bryant [ljbryant@roadrunner.com](mailto:ljbryant@roadrunner.com).

### **The National Secretariat.**

The National Secretariat is composed of 28 Regional Coordinators from the 12 Regions in the United States. The Regional Service Team Members and the Regional Spiritual Advisor selects the Regional Coordinator. The newly selected Regional Coordinator automatically becomes a

member of the National Secretariat for a period of 3 years. This Secretariat includes a National Episcopal Advisor, ??? and a National Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Alex Waraksa. The Secretariat is responsible for providing a National Policy and Articles of Operation that promotes unity in the creative expression of the mentality of the founder of the Cursillo Movement.

The National Secretariat serves the needs of the 12 Regions, the Regional Secretariat serves the needs of the Dioceses and the Diocesan Secretariat serves the needs of all the Cursillistas in their Diocese. All Secretariats have one thing in common; they are a community of service – Servants of the Servants.

From the 1974 edition of “The Fundamental Ideas”, page 176)

“The organization should accelerate, not provide obstacles to the Movement: The authority of the Movement must not go against the liberty of the individual, but should value and foster charisms; Norms should serve only to give greater effectiveness to initiatives; Structures cannot replace life; Criteria should guide (center) the spirit without smothering it; Common objectives are achieved by means of distinct vocations.”

(page 178) It is quite clear that the spirit of the Secretariat should be the spirit of group reunion, which is based on friendship. “It will be difficult for the secretariat to become a dynamic reality within the greater community if it does not itself possess a true community spirit,” (which is also the spirit of friendship). The literature goes on to say, “In an atmosphere of team work (or friendship): where speaking the truth and freely expressing one’s own opinion are not only possible, but appreciated; where, upon finding differences, friendship will not suffer, nor willingness to come to an agreement; where, once a decision has been reached, all will be unconditionally loyal to carrying out that decision.” Now that’s real friendship!